‘Build bridges, not fences’

Brookelyn Parslow
Senior Reporter

“We deserve transparency,” chanted students during a peaceful demonstration that began between Ames Eaton Hall and Lally Hall at 4 pm on Friday, October 13, 2017. Earlier that day, the Save the Union organization emailed an invitation to the demonstration, or “lab safety class,” to the Rensselaer community. The intended message of the protest was that “the overwhelming majority of the RPI community wants the Rensselaer Union restored to a student-run entity.”

The protest originated outside of the fences enclosing the south side of campus. It was initially scheduled to take place next to the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, the location of the spring 2016 protest. However, temporary barriers erected by the Institute and entry restrictions enforced by the Department of Public Safety prevented demonstrators from reaching EMPAC.

According to an email from Strategic Communications and External Relations, “event boundaries” were meant to protecting safety for the hundreds of various Reunion & Homecoming event guests; this also included the closing of the tunnel connecting the Jons- son Engineering Center and the Jonsson-Rowland Science Center. In an email to The Poly, Vice President of Administration Claude Rounds stated that the tunnel “does not serve as a required fire exit for either [the] JEC or JRSC.” The gate in the tunnel is a security gate that can be closed and locked to restrict access and pedestrian traffic; and that the “locking of the gate in the tunnel is not a fire exiting compliance issue.”

Before the protest, Director of Public Safety Jerry Matthews asked reporters of The Poly to vacate the area inside the fence, saying that it was restricted to people with credentials from the Division of Institute Advancement. At 4:30 pm, a portion of the fence was moved by demonstrators as they migrated onto the grass on the north side of the Voorhees Computing Center. According to Dan Seel ’18, “there were zip ties on that section of the fence, but they had vanished by the time the fence was moved.”

See PROTEST, Page 2

See CAPITAL, Page 2

RPI launches $1 billion campaign

David Raab
Senior Reporter

On Friday, October 13, President Shirley Ann Jackson officially launched the public portion of Rensselaer’s new capital campaign, Transformative: Campaign for Global Change, with an event held in the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center.

During the keynote address, Jackson announced that the campaign’s goal is to raise $1 billion over several years. The Institute has already raised over $400 million dollars. Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Travis Appar said in a Union Executive Board meeting on September 7 that institutions typically raise a majority of the money in the “silent phase.”

The Polytechnic reached out to Jackson to determine when fundraising began and why the decision was made to announce the campaign before it reached the fifty percent milestone, but did not receive a comment. The night’s events started with a cocktail hour in the science quad and moved into the Folsum Library for dinner. Though the event was sold out, many of the tables that were set up on the second floor of Folsum had empty chairs. A reception in EMPAC followed dinner.

After a concert from the Rensselaer Orchestra, Jackson gave a keynote speech. She outlined many of RPI’s accomplishments from her 18-year tenure as president. Specifically, Jackson stated that for the last year’s admissions, the Institute had 20,000 freshman applications—a number that is “quadruple what it was 20 years ago.” She then reiterated the three goals of the campaign: closing the financial aid gap, expanding the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty to 500 people, and modernizing the Troy campus.

After Jackson spoke, a few members of the Board of Trustees shared how RPI has affected their own lives and the ways through which they personally give back to the Institute. Campaign Co-Chairs Paul Severino ’69 and Kathleen Severino gave a few remarks on how they have contributed to Rensselaer through the endorsement of the Severino Center for Technological Entrepreneurship. Jackson described him as a serial entrepreneur who has successfully founded and operated several businesses in the technology sector.

After the Severinos spoke, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Arthur E. Golden ’66 delivered his own brief set of remarks on how he has given back to his alma mater. Specifically, he addressed the many changes that Jackson and her staff have implemented at Rensselaer by saying that “transformation is the new baseline, not the endgame—not by any means.”

See PROTEST, Page 2

See CAPITAL, Page 2

Composting has many benefits

Elena Perez
Anahit Hovhannisyan

Networks and competition at MS&T

Editorial Staff

Fence offensive, encouraged protest

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**STUDENT SENATE**

**Handbook tasked to SLC**

Darby Burns  
Senior Reporter

On October 16, 2017, Grand Marshal Justin Etzine opened the Student Senate meeting by welcoming its new members, asking them to introduce themselves by sharing their majors, and reasons why they chose to join the Student Senate.

After a series of brief committee reports, Jennie Miller ’19 moved to endorse the revisions to the Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities. At the start of the queue Hannah Merrow ’18 moved to charge that motion to Student Life Committee Chairperson and to the GM with the full authority to act. This means that it would be their responsibility to meet with Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students Travis Appar to decide if the changes should be endorsed, then report back to the Senate. Joshua Thomas ’20 raised the question of whether the revisions could go in effect with or without Senate approval. Etzine responded that this would be just an endorsement and changes could go in effect either way. The new motion passed unanimously.

Another motion was made by the Undergraduate Council to resolve and enact the amendments to the Undergraduate Council Bylaws, which was presented by Stefanie Warner ’19. The motion was to open the pool for candidates for vice president and president of a class to the entirety of that class after two separate meetings with inconclusive voting. The motion passed 18-0-1.

Finally, Etzine opened a queue on the Student Handbook changes. Recent alumnus Evan Barr ’17 expressed concern that one of the amendments did not include alumni in its definition of the Institute community. He said that, "I believe that everyone who has attended this institute has a powerful interest in the direction it takes, and protest is one of the few ways that our voice can be heard." Within the comments section of the Facebook livestream, Alex Norman ’18 stated his concerns regarding the limitations the changes place on freedom of speech. Appar clarified that the two main stages the administration wishes to follow are to, "First, update the handbook as shared with the Senate," and, "Second, work with Student Senate to explore additional updates."

The Student Senate meets Mondays at 8 pm in the Shelnutt Gallery in the Rensselaer Union.

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**Protest: Student concerns voiced, heard**

From Page 1

The crowd later transitioned to the grass surrounding the walkway near EMPAC, where they continued to chant, display signs to alumni, and take turns speaking through a megaphone. Chants included phrases such as, “build bridges, not fences,” and “our Union, our voice.” Concerns raised by speakers covered “RPI’s demotion to a tier-two research institution,” the “steady increase of undergraduate tuition,” the “drop in RPI’s credit rating,” and the “weakening of the Faculty Senate.”

A boundary of police officers separated the protesters from alumni going from the Cogswell Laboratory and the Folsom Library to the capital campaign launch event at EMPAC.

The protest included both undergraduate and graduate students, along with alumni. “I think what students are doing is absolutely the right thing,” shared Ted Mireczak ’66. “I was here before there was a student union building...and it was in those early years that we taxed ourselves in order to build the Union...The thing that baffles some of us is: what went wrong? The students are doing nothing wrong. They’re running a fiscally sound operation, the Union is in good shape. Why would you want to say it needs administration?” he continued.

“Before we worry about student union governance, we need to worry about university governance—in particular, better transparency, and better accountability,” stated John Kroh ’78.

Toward the end of the demonstration, Professor of Practice and former Vice President for Student Life Eddie Ade Knowles dedicated a song to students “in the spirit of this event,” and expressed that “we are very proud of our Union.”

The demonstration ended at 6:15 pm.
**Fence installed, motivation questioned**

Brookelyn Parslow  
Senior Reporter

On Wednesday, October 11, Rensselaer erected a fence around the side of campus. According to an email sent by Strategic Communications and External Relations on October 12, this was put in place "to ensure the welfare of event guests.

In an email to The Poly, Interim Vice President for Student Life LeNarson Strong wrote that "the use of security barriers is a current standard in event management." He continued, "The only barrier was minimal as it could be. Rensselaer determined that a more extensive separation of our student protesters from the event was not desirable.

The culture of student expression at universities is an important aspect of student leadership, development, and a part of one's citizenship. At the same time, campus safety was, and always is, our first priority for our faculty, staff, and students.

Strong also expressed his interest, Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students Travis Aggar invited the student to discuss their concerns.

According to Strong, an alumni spokesperson was able to describe the intentions of the demonstration, but was "not able to discuss alternatives." Strong stated that "The lack of dialogue between student protesters and staff in the Dean of Students Office only complicated matters. As a major advocate for students, the dean of students is a key resource who can help students determine a path for expressing issues important to them."

However, there were concerns that safety was not the administration's primary motivation. On October 9, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education responded to Aggar's denial to the application for peaceful demonstration. "Aggar’s denial letter is predicated on a decision some time ago that [RPI] would not approve demonstration applications whatsoever during the homecoming weekend."

That suggests that RPI's motivation is not safety, but message—and that administrators are seeking to limit students' ability to protest when their voices may be heard the loudest.

On October 12, FIRE also published an article in response to the installation of the fence around campus, in which Senior Program Officer Adam Steinbaugh expressed that "Rensselaer promises its students the freedom to express their views. But, that promise apparently comes with a big asterisk: it doesn’t apply on some weekends, when it’s inconvenient, or when the university might be criticized in front of donors."

Ultimately, the fence only kept the protest out of the restricted area for 30 minutes before it was moved by demonstrators. The email from the Office of Strategic Communications and External Relations said that the boundaries would be enforced by the Department of Public Safety, but no visible action beyond the fence was taken by the officers present to prevent the protest from moving.

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**RENSSLEASE COMMUNITY MEMBERS PROTESTED behind event boundaries for only the first thirty minutes of the demonstration.**

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**Save the Union poster misleading**

Brookelyn Parslow  
Senior Reporter

In posters distributed across campus and online through its website on October 10, 2017, the Save the Union organization drew upon the "voluntary method of information from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education that was created in 2016. On the poster, the Middle States Accreditation [sic] requirement. Is there a pattern of student complaints that raises concerns? The institution is not in compliance with this requirement.

"This quote was attributed to the 2016 MSCHE report, which is available as the "Rensselear Team Report" at https://poly.rpi.edu/56. The poster included early findings without supporting evidence. By the time of release, the MSCHE team had been given sufficient information to show that the institution was in compliance with the accreditation requirement.

In June 2014, Rensselaer began the process for reaccreditation through the MSCHE. According to RPI's website, this is a "voluntary method of self-regulation adopted by the higher education community to strengthen and maintain the quality and integrity of higher education in the United States."

In November 2016, President Shirley Ann Jackson received a letter from Chairman of the Middle States Commission George A. Pruitt, in which the MSCHE acted "to reaffirm accreditation."

"(RPI) is not in compliance with the quality of the self-study report," and schedule the next evaluation "for the next 3 years 2024." On December 5, 2016, Jackson sent an email to the campus community in which she shared the contents of this letter and the report's existence.

In the report, there is a section of tables detailing the Institute’s compliance with certain categories, including "Institutional Records of Student Complaints." There are three columns titled: "recommended review," "evidence," and "findings." The "recommended review" section poses the question of whether the evidence is "in compliance" or "not in compliance." The findings are "supported by the "evidence" column."

The question "Is there a pattern of student complaints that raises concerns?" is under the column for "recommended review in one of these tables. The question and statement about lack of compliance on the Save the Union posters were taken from this portion of the document. The "evidence" column included the statement, "No evidence of student complaints was supplied, so no patterns can be discerned from submitted documentation."

Additionally, in the beginning of the MSCHE report, a Verification Report by Tom Gregory was given to the MSCHE team on March 30, 2016. "[Gregory] found Rensselaer to be in compliance with seven of the eight categories, but noted that additional action would be required to verify the institution’s compliance with the category on Institutional Records of Student Complaints."

In response to this, the team noted that, during its visit in April, additional review was conducted that included the production of additional documentation. The team then decided that "the institution is in compliance with this category."

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**Mueller Center staff hiring recommended**

Jonathan Caicedo  
Senior Reporter

On Thursday, October 12, President of the Union Matthew Rand '19 opened the meeting of the Executive Board. Consideration of Stabler and Waldorf’s request for new coaches was the first item on the agenda. Due to the recent renovations to the Union’s third floor, in accommodation for the new Student Veterans Lounge, S&W’s previous coaches were thrown out due to their poor condition. S&W specifically requested coaches instead of desks and chairs due to the size and shape of their office; the number of desks and chairs they would require would not be feasible. After discussion, a motion to approve the reassignment of $1582.40 from the Union’s facilities budget for the purchasing of two coaches for S&W’s office passed, 15–2–1.

After S&W, President Bryan Johns ’19 and Business Manager Anastasia Feraco ’19 of the RPI Players came before the board with two requests. The first was for $149,255 to purchase scripts for the fall mainstage production of Arcadia. All of the licenses and materials for Arcadia were to be purchased last fiscal year. Due to an administrative error by the Union, the rights were purchased. A motion to approve $147.25 from the club contingency fund for the purchasing of scripts for Arcadia passed with a vote of 17–0–1.

The Players’ second request was for $1770 to purchase the license and materials for their spring musical A Little Night Music. Similarly to Arcadia, the license and materials for A Little Night Music were to be purchased last fiscal year. Due to another administrative error by the Union, the contract expired, and the rights were not purchased as scheduled. A motion to approve $1770 from the club contingency fund for the spring musical passed 17–0–1.

Business Operations Committee Chair Kay Sun then mentioned that they have 14 projects in total, the two big ones which are carpeting for the third floor of the Union and acquiring furniture for meeting rooms. Director of the Mueller Center Steve Allard then gave the director’s report. He stated that on-campus interviews for Assistant Director for Student Activities are coming up, and that new equipment has been put in the Mueller Center. He also announced plans that the Mueller Center will be hosting a Thanksgiving dinner for students over the break. While this will be aimed primarily at international students, every student who pre-registers will be able to attend. When asked about using the McNeil Room instead of the Mueller Center, Allard stated that they would have to use Sodexo, and it would be seven times more expensive.

Rand then moved on to the president’s report. He outlined all the events happening for Reunion & Homecoming Weekend, including fireworks and cupcakes, and mentioned the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Student Veterans Lounge that will take place on November 8.

The Board then motioned to close the meeting, with a vote of 16–0–1. During the closed meeting, the E-Board passed a motion that read, "I move that the Rensselaer Union Executive Board approve the Executive Search Committee’s recommended candidate for the position ‘Assistant Director Mueller Center and Wellness,’ pending the approval from Human Resources and the Division of Student Life.” The vote was 11 in favor, and two against, with four abstentions.

The Executive Board meets Thursdays at 8 pm in the Shelnutt Gallery of the Union.
Football

Bombers bombed, Engineers victorious

Jacob Kaplan
Senior Reporter

Rensselaer won 27-14 against Ithaca College after a last-minute surge in the fourth quarter gave them four touchdowns. The victory puts the Engineers at 4-2 overall for the season.

Ithaca scored the first touchdown of the game after driving the ball 75 yards on six plays and completing four passes, the last of which was a 26-yard strike into the end zone in the 13th minute. The game remained at 7-0 until the fourth quarter, despite the Engineers making it to the red zone multiple times.

In the third quarter, Rensselaer began a game-tying drive, going 88 yards on 13 plays. The biggest play was a 33-yard completion from quarterback George Marinopoulos '21 to running back Maleik Kelly '20, making it to the seven yard line. In the next play of the drive, linebacker Alec Hazard '20 intercepted a pass and returned it the 8-yard line, and running back Mike Tivinis '18 took it to the end zone. Both touchdowns were followed up immediately with kicks by Christian Kapp '18, bringing the final score to 21-7.

Ithaca made up some ground in the end of the fourth quarter, driving the ball 75 yards on 11 plays and making a touchdown with just 36 seconds left in the game. Ackermann recovered the ball, but Rensselaer was forced to punt. Ithaca got the ball to their 15-yard line and gained another 10 yards in their first play, but in their second play and the last play of the game, defensive back DJ Stefonsky '19 fell on the ball in the end zone after a series of laterals, putting the final score at 27-14.

Rensselaer will play a non-league away game this Saturday against Alfred University.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Rensselaer faces two consecutive defeats

Goalie Joey Lyons manages several saves

Jacob Kaplan
Senior Reporter

Rensselaer lost 1-0 against Rochester Institute of Technology on Friday, and 2-0 against William Smith College on Saturday. Both games were away. The losses dropped the Engineers to 6-5-2 overall for the season.

No goals were made during the first half of Friday's game. Rochester made an attempt in the 15th minute, but it was saved by goalie Joey Lyons '20. An attempt by Rensselaer in the 37th minute went wide. Rochester controlled the ball for most of the second half. They made a shot in the 75th minute that was again saved by Lyons, but a few minutes later, Rochester took a shot 20 yards out that made it to the goal before it could be saved. Rochester’s defense was too strong for Rensselaer to get through, maintaining the shutout for the rest of the game. Overall, Lyons made five saves, and Jacqui Richard '20 made two shot attempts.

William Smith College scored just five minutes into Saturday's game. They scored again in the 51st minute, after catching a rebound. Dali Alarian '18 almost made a shot in the first minute of action, but it was saved. Lyons finished with 10 saves, and Richard had two attempts.

The Engineers will play two home games this week. The first will be against Mount Holyoke College on Wednesday, October 18, and the second against Ithaca College on Saturday, October 21.

Scores from the Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, October 13</td>
<td>Field hockey at St. Lawrence</td>
<td>3-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's ice hockey at RIT</td>
<td>3-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's soccer at RIT</td>
<td>0-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men's soccer vs. RIT</td>
<td>0-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men's hockey at Ohio State</td>
<td>1-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, October 14</td>
<td>Women's swimming and diving at RIT</td>
<td>203-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men's swimming and diving at RIT</td>
<td>216-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Football vs. Ithaca College</td>
<td>27-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's soccer at William Smith College</td>
<td>0-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men's hockey at Ohio State</td>
<td>1-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men's soccer vs. Hobart College</td>
<td>0-1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's ice hockey at RIT</td>
<td>4-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, October 15</td>
<td>Field hockey vs. Skidmore College</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
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Help! I'm trapped in the printing press!
MEN'S SOCCER
Pair of defeats from Statesmen, Tigers

Jacob Kaplan
Senior Reporter

RENSSELAER LOST 3–0 AGAINST ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF Technology on Friday and lost 1–0 against Hobart College on Saturday. Both games were at home and part of Rensselaer's Reunion & Homecoming weekend. The losses dropped the Engineers to 7–5–1 overall for the season.

Rochester scored two points in the first half of Friday's game after cutting through RPI's defenses. The Engineers made some attempts in the second half to make up the goal difference, but their one on-target kick into Rochester's goal was saved. Rochester made another goal in the 68th minute, outshooting Rensselaer 12–8.

Goalkeeper Matt LaBranche '20 made four saves and Trevor Bison '21 made two shot attempts.

Saturday's game was completely scoreless until the 89th minute when Hobart made a corner kick. The Engineers had no time to make up the difference before the game ended. LaBranche prevented the Engineers from losing by a wider margin early in the game, after stopping a few of Hobart's early shot attempts. Captain Steve Collins '18 made three shot attempts. Austin Betterly '20 and Joe DiMiceli '21 each had one attempt. LaBranche had four saves. Hobart ended the game with a 12–5 advantage in shots but Rensselaer had a 4–3 advantage in corners.

The Engineers will be away Saturday to face Ithaca College, and will play Vassar College at home Wednesday.

MEN'S SOCCER
Team falls short of expectations
Loss after preseason victory

Nick Sanchez
Staff Reporter

On Sunday, October 15, the women's field hockey team competed against the Skidmore Thoroughbreds. Fans predicted that RPI would have defeated Skidmore after annihilating them in a scrimmage during pre-season. Although they came very close to victory, the Thoroughbreds closed out the game with a 3–1 lead. In the first half, the Thoroughbreds quickly took a 2–0 lead. However, the Engineers wouldn't surrender.

The RPI Engineers constantly put the Thoroughbreds on the defense. As a result, the Thoroughbreds led the game in fouls. In fact, throughout the game, RPI missed several opportunities to score off Skidmore's excessive fouls.

After the Thoroughbreds took a quick 2–0 lead, the RPI offense sprang into action. Skidmore fouled and Mekayla Wakema '18 missed a precious opportunity, hitting the ball too far right of the goal. Then, after a perfect assist, Skidmore's ample defense prevented Mikaela DiBello '18 from scoring five meters away from the goal. Then, after another foul, Christina Hans '20 missed an excellent longshot in the top right corner of the goal. Lastly, later in the first half, DiBello scored a superb goal after the ball ricocheted off a Thoroughbred. However, the referee called a foul and penalized the Engineers, which dismissed their goal. Nevertheless, DiBello returned with the ball and scored in the top left corner after Jena Dolinar '19's assist, making the score 2–1. Unfortunately, RPI did not score any more goals.

In the second half, RPI had a raging offense, and Skidmore was continually counterattacking. After a few foul plays, Skidmore took the ball, sprinted down the open defenseless field, and scored a last-minute goal on RPI, bringing the score to 3–1. The Engineers play against Union College at home on Friday and will play at Ithaca College on Sunday.

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Rap has never stayed stagnant, and that fact alone makes it a genre worth exploring. From old-school ’90s tapes, to mainstream stadium sound, to the more underground era of SoundCloud rappers, the rap game is constantly evolving, with something for everyone.

Seven Days, by Canadian artist PARTYNEXTDOOR, is a great look into the more chill, underground scene through the lens of an up-and-coming superstar. PND, whose legal name is Jahron Anthony Brathwaite, is an artist most commonly associated with cultural icon Drake. Being a frequent collaborator and the first artist signed to Drake’s OVO Sound label has let PND enjoy his own brand of success while becoming inspired by Drake’s own style. Seven Days is the result of PND’s creative juices flowing over the course of half an hour, and the result is absolutely worth a listen.

Every song on the EP is similar, yet incredibly unique in its own right. Consisting of seven songs and two guest features, it flies by rather quickly, but manages to create a lasting impression. For example, take the first song, “Bad Intentions.” The most striking thing about it is the irregular drum beat. Not in sync with anything other than itself, it draws the focus of the listener to each clashing note and provides relief when notes match up to it, perhaps by chance. The lyrics themselves are very much inspired by slower Drake songs: it feels like a reworked “From Time” from Drake’s hit album Nothing Was the Same. PND is talking about how his girl isn’t just a one-time deal, but how she’s worth all seven days of his week, similarly to how Drake talks about how his current girl might be the one for him. Both, however, end up brooding about how they might be bad influences on the women of their lives.

Another certified banger on Seven Days is “Damage,” featuring Halsey. The least Drake-like track on this EP trades its similarity to the rest of the tracklist for addictive beats and pop-inspired vocals. A smooth synth is complemented with loud, muted drums, with Halsey and PND singing at the same time about someone who’s always on their mind. This is, in my opinion, the most mainstream song on the EP; it replicates successful elements from pop while adding its own twist. Similar to “All Night” from Chance The Rapper’s Coloring Book, the song is a welcome distraction from the overall chill vibe of the rest of Seven Days. Drake’s influence is hard to ignore, however, as the break down and additional drum beat toward the end remind me of “Too Good” off of Views.

Continuing through the EP, the song “Best Friends” pops out as PND’s take on modern trap music. With ad libs, lower key vocals, and muted drums, the song is something you would want to play in your car while driving at night with the windows down and the bass up. The haunting synth notes throughout the song provide audio peaks that serve as relief from the pure bass that is the drum track. In terms of Drake similarity, I’d venture to say this is more like Drake and Future’s joint album, What A Time To Be Alive, due to the trap-like vocals and similar drum beats. Specifically, the song “Big Rings” is very close to “Best Friends”—both have similar vocals, similar bass lines, and similar synth notes. Yet, I vastly prefer PND’s song, as it is less harsh and more casual than the aggressive Drake track.

In conclusion, Seven Days is an EP of songs influenced by Drake’s ideas, with PND’s own unique style added. That’s not saying it’s a bad album; on the contrary, I enjoyed most, if not all, of it. I can’t wait to see what he has in store for the lyrical world next.  

ALBUM REVIEW

Seven Days shows heavy Drake influence

PARTYNEXTDOOR, pictured above, released his latest EP, after making it in just seven days.
ALBUM REVIEW

Somber feel, sound

Emma Goldman
Staff Reviewer

After more than three years of silence following the release of their self-titled album, Alvvays dropped what I believe may be one of the best pop albums of the year. The transition from their original poppy, upbeat style into a more dreamy alternative style is one of the most prevalent shifts in Alvvays’ sophomore album, Antisocialites, and the grace with which they handled this transition still strikes me on every listen.

This album encapsulates the way it feels to break up with someone all the way through to the end of the relationship, as well as describing the way it feels to get caught up in that end of relationship purgatory that can sometimes arise while working to move forward. This shift in itself was quite dramatic, coming from the stories of their first album with the most popular song, “Archie, Marry Me,” embodying a sort of proposal remarkably rhyming “alimony” with “marriage”.

Though this new album lacks that same “Archie” musically and lyrically, it still encapsulates the sound that listeners have come to know and love through Alvvays’ career.

This new album encapsulates growth and change in more than just style. Beyond the shift toward a more shoegazing, dream pop sound, this band has grown emotionally since their debut. This emotional change is beautifully exemplified through the musical change that premieres in this album, showing the way we are able to learn from our experiences as we feel their effects. The way their slower songs are presented amidst their more standard fast-paced jams, while still maintaining a sort of excitement might be surprising, considering the stories being told, but follows very well. This can be seen clearly in the album’s fifth track, “Not My Baby,” which opens with a much slower, certainly more forlorn beach vibe that tells the story of a relationship that ended, and the more immediate moving on that comes with that sort of transition. Through this whole song, however, singer Molly Rankin maintains a more melancholic tune that shows very well that this is not just a feel-good breakup song; there is still some sadness involved in the moving on, something that most people who have been romantically involved at any point in their life will understand. Of course, the following track jumps right back up to their more familiar funky pop sound that reaffirms the necessity to recognize people as they are through all hardships. Rankin sings, “it feels like forever since you’ve held me like a human being/ and I am a human being,” as we’re all worthy of love no matter what we’re feeling like.

Through their whole album, a more ethereal, dreamlike sound is maintained, that fits beautifully with the story they’re telling. Growing from the more standard, excited love songs of their first album onto the fuller sound found in Antisocialites, Alvvays curates a sound that exemplifies a sharpening of focus in their music without losing sight of what they’ve worked to define themselves as.

MOVIE REVIEW

Laughable thriller

Crystal Vejar
Senior Reviewer

Happy Death Day is a fun mash-up of comedy, thriller, and parody all pulled together in 96 minutes by a hint of romance. I would rate it a three out of five in the “scary” department, only because of its maturity rating. Overall, it really only had two or three jump scares, but not much horror, which could be expected of a PG-13 movie.

The movie starts out by running through Tree Gelbman’s (Jessica Rothe) day and introducing us to all the main characters in the first ten minutes. She wakes up on the morning of her birthday in Carter Davis’ (Israel Broussard) room—a random guy from the previous night of drinking, and does the walk of shame back to her sorority house. There, we meet Danielle—Rachel Black—the star of most of the comedic plays on stereotypical sorority girls, followed by Tree’s roommate, Lori Spengler, played by Ruby Modine.

As you see from the trailers, Happy Death Day is about Tree being stuck in a loop where she is forced to relive the day she dies, over and over and over again. Tree’s character is, at first, extremely ill-mannered, which leaves little room for sympathy. Overall, it really only had two or three jump scares, but not much horror, which could be expected of a PG-13 movie.

So far in the movie, Tree is given some time to feel sorry for herself, but she quickly realizes she is stuck in a loop and that there is a way to break it by finding out who her killer is and stopping them before she dies again.

Near the end, the movie adds a few small twists which keep the audience interested and allows Tree’s character to make a complete U-turn. Ultimately, though advertised as more of a horror film, Happy Death Day is a fun comedy and mystery movie for October, but lacks what it takes to become a Halloween classic.

Chapel + Cultural Center

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FALL 2017

OCTOBER

10/28 — Saturday, 5:15
Wine and Cheese Reception
The Catholic Community at Rensselaer invites you to join us for Mass followed by a wine and cheese reception.

10/29 — Sunday, 10:30am
Family Weekend - Coffee Hour
Join us for coffee and refreshments immediately following Mass.

10/31 — Tuesday, 10:00pm
Halloween Party
Join us for an evening of frightful fun and feasting. Mass for the feast of All Saints starts at Midnight.

NOVEMBER

11/10 — Friday, 8:00pm
Rensselyrics Invitational
The Rensselyrics will be hosting their semesterly invitational on Friday, November 10th at 8 PM in the C+C-CC.

11/15 — Wednesday, 7:00pm
Religion and the Arts
Times Union Journalist Joe Dalton will moderate a panel discussion. Please check our website for more information.

11/16 — Thursday, 7:00pm
Capital Pride Singers Concert
Join the Capital Pride Singers at the C+C for their fall performance.

11/22 — Wednesday, 6:00pm
Celebrate Thanksgiving
Mass at 6:00pm will be followed by a soup and salad dinner. No Mass on Thanksgiving Day.

DECEMBER

12/5 — Tuesday, 7:00pm
Why get so Religious about Star Wars
A special talk led by Alissa Wilkinson ’05 grad from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Associate Professor of English, Kings College.

12/24 — Sunday, 10:30pm
Christmas Eve
The University Parish of Christ Sun of Justice at the Chapel + Cultural Center invites all of God’s people to join us as we celebrate the Christmas Season. Mass at 5:15pm will focus on children. Prelude of Carols will begin at 10:30pm followed by the Mass of the Deepest Night.

All Are Welcome. ChapelandCulturalCenter.org
Competitive materials

As a materials science and engineering student in the Material Advantage Club, I had the opportunity to attend the Materials Science & Technology Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference attracted materials students and professionals in academia and industry from around the country. Held in the David L. Lawrence Convention Center between October 9 and 12, it featured technical lectures, student competitions, industrial tours, and an exhibition with companies in the field, available to all who register. MS&T is one of the largest student-friendly conferences, attracting nearly 3,000 attendees—of which 27 percent are students.

This year, the Rensselaer Material Advantage student chapter funded three materials science and engineering students to attend the conference, myself included. Students participated in the Geodesic Dome Design Competition—Dome Day competition—hosted by the American Institute for Metals; the Undergraduate Student Poster Contest, and the Undergraduate Student Speaker Contest. The Dome Day competition—a contest in materials selection—is designed to challenge students to create a dome that meets various criteria, such as high mechanical strength and general aesthetics. In previous years, student teams from RPI presented domes built out of wood and steel, placing fifth and fourth, respectively, in the competition. This year, Justin Weinstein '19 and I participated as Team RPI and designed a geodesic dome out of PVC pipes for the competition. I also presented a poster on my research in glass for the Student Poster Contest. Monica Mazur '18 presented on biomimicry in materials science in the Student Speaker Contest. Finally, Material Advantage received “Chapter of Excellence” for the 2016–2017 academic year, among 101 competing chapters, after having received “Most Outstanding Chapter” last year.

MS&T has been yet another packed conference for RPI Material Advantage, and the chapter hopes to bring success in the years to come. Student competitions at the conference allow students to challenge themselves and apply the skills they have learned thus far to real-life design problems. The poster competition pushes students to become involved in research and present their findings to fellow members in the industry, while the speaking contest pushes students to perfect their presentation skills. Ultimately, MS&T is a wonderful opportunity to network with professionals in academia and industry while exploring a new city. I would highly recommend taking advantage of such an opportunity, especially while in college.

For more information, visit https://poly.rpi.edu/si/i/can5 for the conference, and https://poly.rpi.edu/i/dj4e for the RPI Material Advantage Student Chapter. Interested in attending next year? Contact the chapter to learn about how to participate next year!

Prohibiting student self-expression by physically fencing them off short-sighted, counterproductive

On Wednesday, October 11, Rensselaer established a perimeter surrounding a large portion of the south side of campus. The capital campaign launch event was held inside these boundaries, which included the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, the Folsom Library, and the Jonsson-Rowland Science Center. On Friday, October 13.

The approximately four foot tall fence prohibited students from approaching most of the area that was capital campaign events were held. This move was, ostensibly, to ensure “the welfare of our community and guests” who were attending Reunion & Homecoming events. Regardless of the publicized intent, the fence undeniably served to suppress the planned demonstration. It was to keep protesters’ voices from being heard by alumni and donors attending the launch of the capital campaign—people whose financial contributions to Rensselaer ensure that they have the attention of administrators. Preventing students from accessing such a large portion of campus is unprecedented. Although this is not the first time that the Institute attempted to prevent protests on campus, there has never before been such a determination to challenge themselves and apply the skills they have learned thus far to real-life design problems. The poster competition pushes students to become involved in research and present their findings to fellow members in the industry, while the speaking contest pushes students to perfect their presentation skills. Ultimately, MS&T is a wonderful opportunity to network with professionals in academia and industry while exploring a new city. I would highly recommend taking advantage of such an opportunity, especially while in college.

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Students, passion, respect, unparalleled.

Concerns regarding Union's student-run nature relayed, plan potentially forthcoming.

"HERE’S TO OLD RENSELLAER, SHE STANDS TODAY WITHOUT A TEAR,"

RPI. I am proud. I am proud to call myself a part of a student body that expresses, with utmost respect, their opinions. Furthermore, I am proud to have contributed to the number of you chose to make your voices heard. On Friday, you once again validated the above line of our alma mater. I am hard pressed to find another institution with a student body that is capable of the same level of simultaneous passion and respect. On Friday, I was awed by how respectful, calm, and lawful you were, and I assure you that your voices were, in fact, heard.

As I have shared before, many of you have expressed your reasoning for why the Union has not union-affiliated. I have relayed these concerns to the Student Life Committee Chairperson Hannah Merrow ’18 and myself to investigate. The Student Life Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, October 18, to discuss the Student Handbook section on Student Rights and Responsibilities. The meeting is open to the public, and I invite you to attend if you have thoughts you’d like to contribute! Alternatively, Hannah can be reached by email at merroh@rpi.edu.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me at ejzh@rpi.edu. I am looking forward to hearing your thoughts and passion as student government continues to advocate for the student body.

Justin Etzine
Grand Marshal

DERBY

‘Save the Union’ not Union-affiliated.

Hello everyone! I hope that you all enjoyed your weekend. I know that it was a very busy time on campus, filled with old friends, exciting new experiences, and many laughs and memories. I know that I had a great time at all of the events on campus this weekend, and I enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with some of our distinguished alumni. Though I didn’t get to spend as much time with all of you as I would have liked, I can tell you that the student body that expresses, with utmost respect, their opinions is to be lauded. While I do not feel comfortable expressly condoning the act of blatantly disregarding the denial for the right to protest, I will always support the freedom of speech on our campus for our students. Cannot the Rensselaer Union Constitution and the Executive Board look to RPI as an example for how students should be conducting themselves in the pursuit of peaceful discourse. I urge our students to continue with this at respect for all members of our campus, to refrain from personal attacks, and to continue to be passionate leaders.

Thanks for everyone who gave me your opinion on this article, and as always, be sure to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Matthew Rand
128th President of the Union

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Students deserve respect, recognition.

It is with great interest that I have followed the unfolding story of the “hostile takeover” of the Rensselaer Union by the administration, in particular the head of the administration. I can only assume that, however accurate their understanding of the facts may be, that the administration has, in fact, a clear understanding of the facts. After all, their name is on it and they may or may not have ultimate legal responsibility over what happens.

But I say to my constituents—not being a “helicopter parent,” or worse, one that tells the child exactly what to do. You might do it if the child is 10 or 12, not when they are 17. Not when they have demonstrated over that span of time an exceptionally high degree of responsibility and success. Not when they showed the ability to forego short term gain and instead tax themselves for years in order to be able to move to their own homes and raise their own children. Hannah Merrow ’18 has done this.

I, like many (if not all) alumni received an email from Arthur F. Golden ’66, chairman of the Board of Trustees and President Shirley Ann Jackson. It states, “In my lifetime, I have never known of a student leader on our campus to whom the students have demonstrated better judgment over these last 127 years!”

But today’s Union is a much different entity than it was 50 years ago, or even 20 years ago. The generation that I was a part of that building to continue uninterrupted until such time as they should have demonstrated the ability to spend many more hours discussing issues for the broadening and improvement of the student body. The Board remains an unbiased organization. One of the duties of the Executive Board, as outlined in the Rensselaer Union Constitution, is to classify new organizations on campus.

As the organization that publicly sponsored the Greek day of service, where members of the Greek community would be, for students, for students. The meeting is open to the public, and I invite you to attend if you have thoughts you’d like to contribute! Alternatively, Hannah can be reached by email at merroh@rpi.edu.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me at ejzh@rpi.edu. I am looking forward to hearing your thoughts and passion as student government continues to advocate for the student body.

Justin Etzine
Grand Marshal

Ed/Op • 9

Ed/Op, Wednesday, October 18, 2017
Patronizing misjudgments

President Jackson, Board of Trustees, and the RPI Community.

As an alumnus of Rensselaer, I’m writing to express my deep concern with the Institute’s plans to wrest control of the Rensselaer Union away from the students. As a student, I found the opportunities for leadership presented by involvement in student government and the activities of the Union to be one of the most important parts of my undergraduate education.

As a small business owner today, I draw on the real-world leadership and management skills I learned through my participation in the student life of the Institute—and would not want future graduates to miss out on those opportunities that I benefited from.

Most alarmingly, I have also detected a coddenscending tone in the communications about this issue from the Board of Trustees and President Jackson—this implies that students are incapable of appropriately managing the responsibility of stewarding the future of the Union, when the reality is that students have done so for decades.

I sincerely hope that you reconsider this course of action.

Thank you for your consideration,
Nathan Woodhall
ITWS/STSO ‘05

Why are you at the protest?

Ted Mirczak ‘66

“I think what the students are doing is absolutely the right thing. I mean, I was here before there was a student Union building, but we had a very strong organization in, as you know from history, what is now the Lally Center, and it was in those early years that we taxed ourselves in order to build the Union. I never got to see it finished, because I graduated in ’66, but it was all students, students did it all, and continue to do it all. The thing that baffles some of us is: what went wrong? The students are doing nothing wrong. They’re running a fiscally sound operation, and the Union is in good shape, why would you wanna say it needs administration? I have a hard time understanding this from the alumni perspective... In 1966, students didn’t do this, We were noses to the grindstone, shoulders to the wheel; we didn’t have time for this kind of thing, which probably we should have... And the other thing that I’m really impressed with is, this is a peaceful demonstration. And that’s what they said it would be. So what’s with the fences, and the jackbooted police, and the police dogs, and all the other damn contradictions? I mean, why? What did they think was gonna happen?”

Raymond Parker ‘77

“I was a member of the E-Board, Student Senate, Polytechnic, WRPI, ESA. I’m outraged that the Institute would attempt to take the Union over. I’m very bothered by Shirley’s arrogance; I believe that the spirit of a student Union being student run should continue. As a patron member, I will no longer give to the school, except directly to the student Union. And if there’s anything else that I could do to be of assistance, I am an attorney, and would be available to help the students... I’m glad that there’s this level of activism, that students are willing to come out and voice their opinions. They need to find more ways to reach out to alumni, and to their parents, I don’t think that they realize that, when you’re paying 70 thousand dollars to go to a school, if you’re a customer, you have more say, as a customer. Here, it’s almost as if you’re treated as an employee, just doing what the president wants you to do. I think that the student Union and the opportunities that people have had in student government have really been transformational in the education of students here, in ways that that opportunity does not exist in other schools.”

Curran Kalia CS/MATH ’18

“To learn about what specifically is happening to the Union and why students are so upset.”

Liam Bartley PHYS ’21

“Because it’s my duty to stand up for what is right.”

Samantha Doles IME ’17

“I support free speech, the Union, and students’ rights to have fun at their school.”

Dalton Towers CHME ’19

“I’m the manager of Pep Band, and I’m concerned about the future of the club.”

The Question:

Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885
**Dilbert**

by Scott Adams

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**Cryptogram**

A Cryptogram is a simple substitution code where each letter that appears may stand for a different letter. The substitutions are consistent throughout the puzzle. Punctuation is not translated.

Ldmox nvg easw zIpo lvfbk, nvgx pvp, wio wlas wvpomiabk mv po A botox hgamo gbsoxwmvvs. Wio wlas, “Bvq, qo’xo jgwmiwxmv co popyxaw dvx vgx easw.”

A miabe bvq A gbsoxwmlbs qilm wio polbm. Vbzo nvg’xo lvlobm, nvg’xo mio kiwwm vd nvgx ziafxsob’wdgmgxw.”

Zvvyox,

Abmoxwmofflix

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**XKCD**

by Randall Munroe

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**Sudoku**

Instructions

Fill in the grid so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 subsquare contains exactly one occurrence of the numbers 1 through 9.

Last Week’s Answers

6 9 8 1 7 2 3 4 5
9 1 6 7 3 4 8 5 2
8 4 2 3 7 6 9 1 5
1 6 3 5 4 9 7 2 8
9 2 4 8 5 7 6 3 1
2 3 7 6 8 5 1 4 9
4 6 5 3 1 9 2 8 7
5 7 9 4 2 8 1 6 3
7 5 8 9 6 1 4 2 3

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**Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885**
STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Sheer Idiocy cast welcomes back alumni

Chris Leong
A Special to The Poly

As an undergraduate, I loved going to Sheer Idiocy shows. The troupe’s on-the-spot humor, combined with their ridiculous games, always made for a hilarious display. Not only that, but their jokes are clever (and usually PG), which is difficult to accomplish in an improv setting. By no means am I a professional improv actor, but as an avid improv observer, I give applause where applause is due. And this was probably my favorite show—not just of Sheer Idiocy shows—of all improvisational comedy shows I have attended.

For their 20th anniversary, Sheer Idiocy invited their alumni to perform at the Saturday show. In preparation, on Sunday afternoon, the current troupe held a workshop to refresh everyone on old games and elaborate on new ones. Though many of the alumni were out of practice since graduation, they all picked it back up seamlessly. Their performance in the show reflects that; I guess improv never left their lives.

Although the age range was wide, the troupe’s camaraderie was unmistakable throughout the show. Over 20 people performed in the show and, instead of overwhelming the audience, the sheer number of the diverse group gave the production a lively dynamic. No one acted selfishly, and everyone played their hilarious parts. From what I have seen, the best improv shows are those that embody the idea of “yes and…” and that’s exactly what happened last Saturday.

There were a total of 15 alumni in attendance, with an additional two who could not make the show, but supported the group during the Sunday afternoon workshop. Visit https://poly.rpi.edu/s/ek6oa to view the performance.

SHEER IDIOCY CELEBRATES 20 years of preforming with a show featuring recent alumni.

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Food shines at cafe

Joseph Lyon
Senior Reviewer

As I walked up to the Illium Cafe & Bistro, located on Broadway in downtown Troy, I was greeted by an older building similar to others in the area. As someone who is from the area, Illium is one of those places that is frequently referenced in local media stations. I had been hearing about it since I was young, so it carried a lot of clout. I decided to visit Illium on a whim after hearing about it and walking past it so many times.

Walking into Illium, the first thing that caught my attention was the older decor in the cafe. Everything feels and looks old, from the antiques behind the glass, to the display case for the various desserts. The different elements of the decor give the store a cozy and authentic feel. Overall, it gives off more of a diner vibe than that of a coffee shop. This makes sense, as Illium is a restaurant and cafe, first and foremost. I took a seat at the bar, which faces the dining area, and ordered a latte and bagel, and began to listen to the music.

After settling in, it was immediately clear that this is not a place to sit down and finish work; the atmosphere didn’t lend itself to this. Overall, the cafe just didn’t feel designed to allow for laptops and notebooks, and instead felt like it came from a time before people brought computers everywhere. It is also not the place to grab just a coffee and bagel, unless you happen to bring cash, as the $10 credit limit makes smaller purchases difficult for those who only carry cards.

Moving past this, however, Illium has its own authentic feel, which while very pleasant, does not necessarily cater to my taste. Despite the atmosphere, the bagel was exceptional. This is where Illium shines. The food is above average, and the coffee is cheap, which makes it a great spot to visit with friends and catch up after a week of hard work, or to simply decompress. If anyone is looking to visit a new cafe, I would recommend giving Illium a try.

SHEER IDIOCY CELEBRATES 20 years of preforming with a show featuring recent alumni.

Join us as the Rensselaer Lally School of Management hosts a co-term program information session for current Rensselaer students. At this event, you can learn more about the Lally MBA and the five M.S. graduate business programs, and how you can earn your business graduate degree in your fifth year!

Eng/Sci+MBA Info Sessions:
9/19, 2-3, Fishbach Rm, Library
9/20, 10-11, Union 3511
10/17, 2-3, Fishbach Rm, Library
10/18, 10-11, Union 3511

Co-Term Info Sessions:
9/19, 3-4, Fishbach Rm, Library
9/20, 11-12 Union 3511
10/17, 3-4, Fishbach Rm, Library
10/18, 11-12, Union 3511

If you’re interested in attending, please RSVP:
Email lallyms@rpi.edu.
Contact: Shan W. Quinn 518.276.6947