

FEATURES Page 8



Inside Out, right side up

NEWS Page 3



Quad undergoes renovations

EDITORIAL Page 4

Justin Etzine	Advice from a former first-year student
Maria Kozdroy	Explore opportunities as a first-year
Staff Editorial	Academic calendar causes headaches

STUDENT LIFE

Institute receives new VP for Student Life
Frank E. Ross, III possesses extensive student life and related experience

Samantha Notley
Staff Reporter

ON JUNE 22, 2015, RPI WELCOMED A NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE TO campus. Dr. Frank E. Ross, III was announced as the new vice president after the previous vice president, Timothy Sams, moved to a new position at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year. In a statement released on May 15, President Shirley Ann Jackson detailed Ross's responsibilities in the position to be "providing the strategic direction, vision, and leadership for the Division of Student Life. As the Institute's chief student life officer, Ross will assume oversight, coordination, and management of all student programs at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute."

Ross previously served as vice president for student affairs at Northeastern Illinois University. In that position, Ross provided leadership and oversight for over twenty student organizations on campus, including student government, student rights groups, cultural groups, and other student programs. Prior to that, he served as associate provost for student success and dean of students at University of North Texas at Dallas. Additionally, he served as multiple positions, including assistant vice chancellor for student life, for more than 10 years at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Ross received his Ph.D from Indiana University, a Master of Arts degree from Western Kentucky University, and Master of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees from Ball State University. Additionally, he took part in the Higher Education Management Development Program at Harvard University.

Since assuming the role just a few weeks ago, Ross has taken an active position in RPI's social media presences, most prominently with his personal Twitter account, @DrFrankERoss. Ross has interacted with the Rensselaer social media ambassadors, tweeted and retweeted about upcoming events and student life activities at RPI, and has even begun promoting season tickets for RPI Engineers Hockey teams.

In the email announcing his appointment, Ross praised Rensselaer for "contributing to a preeminent research university with global reach



Courtesy of Frank E. Ross, III
NEW VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE FRANK E. ROSS, III SERVED in a similar position at Northeastern Illinois University.

and global impact." He also expressed that he has "been impressed with the transformation of Rensselaer under President Jackson's leadership, and appreciates her very strong commitment to students." He concluded his statement by saying, "I look forward to leading the Student Life team and supporting the *Rensselaer Plan 2024* while advancing a robust student experience through Clustered Learning, Advocacy, and Support for Students."

CAPITAL DISTRICT

Local pizza sign causes misunderstanding

Justin Etzine
Senior Reporter

ON JUNE 27, A PHOTO SURFACED ON AN online RPI-related Facebook group that showed a Cusato's Pizzeria sign with a message that read "HAPPY 4TH / GOD PLEASE / FORGIVE N BLESS / USA." The sign, found outside the Schenectady location of the company that also operates a store in the Rathskellar dining area of the Rensselaer Union, caused discomfort with some students because of the close proximity of the posting to the recent Supreme Court ruling that effectively legalized same-sex marriage across the United States. By the following day, the post had been deleted from the Facebook group from violating the group's posting guidelines.

RPI students and alumni appear to have mixed opinions about the sign's intentions. "I can see why some might consider it to be offensive if they relate it to any specific current event in the United States. However, I couldn't see this before I read the comments in the Facebook thread relating to the photo. I don't think it is an inherently offensive message, however," believes recent graduate Eric Penniman '15. "I don't see any evidence to prove that it was intended to be offensive. In my



Courtesy of Overheard at RPI
THE CUSATO'S SIGN WAS ORIGINALLY CHANGED ON JUNE 16, 11 days before the photo was posted on Facebook.

opinion, there are people trying to find reasons to be offended, but anything can be offensive if you try hard enough. In my opinion, there are far better issues to focus our time and energy on such as the national debt, net neutrality, and more others than is possible to name."

Conversely, Theo Browne '16 believes that "the Cusato's sign, in the perspective of an LGBT person observing it, is both offensive and oppressive. After a conversation with the owner of the store, it was made very clear that his interest was more in defending his rights than considering

others, and I don't believe RPI should support a business with these beliefs."

Other students expressed a similar sentiment to that of Penniman. "When I first saw the sign, I thought the worst, that the owner was being homophobic, but when I found out it had been up for several days before the decision I realized that was not the intent," said Noah Roby '17. "The owner meant nothing offensive by it, and it had nothing to do with the decision on gay marriage. So at that point I don't think there's any reason to be offended by it or to really care about it at all. And I think anyone who chooses to be offended by it, despite knowing the context of it, is being ridiculous. There are more important things to worry about than a completely innocent sign put up by a pizza parlor."

Alex Roumanidakis '13 believes that, regardless of the sign's intentions, attacking the poster of the sign would not be the appropriate response. "I think they are jumping to conclusions since the sign could easily be otherwise construed and was posted days in advance. It is admirable that students are working to further LGBT issues, but going on witch hunts isn't going to convince the business owner or anyone else

See CUSATO'S, **Page 2**

Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885

Inside

- Comics 5
- Editorial/Opinion 4
- Features 8

Connect

Visit us online at: poly.rpi.edu
 Like us on Facebook: [facebook.com/thepolytechnic](https://www.facebook.com/thepolytechnic)
 Follow us on Twitter and Instagram: @RPIPoly



Scan the QR code on the left with your phone to go to our website!

E-BOARD

E-Board communicates electronically over summer

Jack Wellhofer/*The Polytechnic*

THE RENSSELAER UNION BOOKSTORE HAS BEEN VACATED in preparation of the upcoming opening of the Rensselaer Collegiate Store.

Jack Wellhofer
Senior Reporter

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD COMMUNICATED ELECTRONICALLY IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS TO RESOLVE issues surrounding the Rensselaer Union Bookstore just before the end of the semester. Because most E-Board members are away from Rensselaer during the summer, President of the Union Nick Dvorak determined it would be necessary to adopt special rules of order, as stated in Article V section 7 of their bylaws, to allow easier electronic voting for proxy meetings. The Policy Committee, a subcommittee of the E-Board, approved the change to the special rules of order 3-0-0. It was then approved 11-0-0 by the E-Board.

The full text of the special rules of order, including revisions, is available in the Summer E-Board Dropbox at <http://poly.rpi.edu/s/qt5cl>.

On June 6, there was a motion to allow a closed discussion relating to the bookstore and allow Joe Cassidy, Ron Moraski, Rasika Ekhalikar '17, and Ines Roman '16 to be present for the discussion. This motion passed 10-3-0.

On June 8, there was a motion to "approve the contract allowing Follett Higher Education Group Inc. to operate the Rensselaer Union Bookstore in accordance with the terms presented to the Board." This motion passed 7-3-0.

The bookstore has been temporarily moved next to the games room while Follett renovates the space. The bookstore will return to its previous location in the Fall 2015 semester.

Cusato's: Owner clarifies

From **Page 1**

who disagrees that gay people deserve love like anyone else. It's mob mentality, and we shouldn't sacrifice the right to speak an unsavory political opinion for a world where everyone is safe from being offended. Rather, if the owner meant ill will, he is someone who most needs to be shown sexual orientation does not change your value as a person. If love wins, why aren't we using it?"

To determine the true purpose of the sign, a member of *The Polytechnic* reached out to the owner of the store to comment on the sign. The owner began by apologizing for any offense he unintentionally caused, and proceeded to explain that the sign had been placed on June 16, ten days prior to the Supreme Court's ruling. He clarified that the use of the word "forgive" was intended as a commonly-used word in Christianity to ask God for a blessing with the national holiday approaching. He explained that

he commonly includes religious messages when both national and Christian holidays approach, as he feels it appeals to both his faith and his Christian customers.

The store owner also made a post on the store's Facebook page about the incident to clarify, "To anyone who I may have unintentionally offended, I am sorry. To anyone who questions why I posted these words ... on June 16, 2015—it's simple. We all need forgiveness. And anyone who knows me, knows that I post statements of faith throughout the year and will continue to do so with no intent to offend anyone else. Also, anyone who knows me, knows that I struggle with being 'politically correct.' I spoke the truth, but never with malicious intent. It is my belief that we, as Americans, are too afraid to speak the truth, to each other because of the possible aftermath that may ensue."

**VISIT US
ONLINE AT
POLY.RPI.EDU**
(YOU'RE ALREADY HERE!)

INCIDENT BLOTTER

INFORMATION
PROVIDED BY
PUBLIC SAFETY
INVESTIGATOR
TERRANCE BURNS

Thursday, May 14

East Campus Athletic Village

Suspicious Person: A student reported that an unknown individual asked for the location of Lake George from a vehicle. The reporting person claimed the person driving the car was acting suspiciously, and ran away. The driver did not follow the person. The Department of Public Safety and the Dean of Student's Office were notified.

Beman Lane

Harassment: A student reported being harassed via Facebook by a fellow student. The harassing content was not of a threatening manner, but the harasser was making false claims against the student. The student filed a harassment complaint in late April or early May, but the harasser was not known at that time. A harassment report was completed, and Residence Life and DOSO were notified.

Friday, May 22

Peoples Avenue Complex

Vandalism: A cleaner working in the J-Building reported instances of vandalism that occurred overnight, including overturned chairs, pictures removed from the walls, and pizza boxes left across the building. An incident report was filed.

Saturday, May 23

Mueller Center

Larceny: A student reported that a wallet with cash, a set of car keys, and various credit cards had been stolen from a cubby. A video of incident was obtained from the Mueller Center and a copy was sent to the Troy Police Department. The suspect was using a stolen device to take pictures, and the pictures of the suspect were accessible from the student's tablet.

Larceny: Another wallet was stolen from a cubby. The wallet contained a military ID, a credit card, and a small amount of cash. As a precaution, the responding DPS officer instructed Mueller Center front desk staff to discourage students from using the cubbies. The officer also proceeded to man the Mueller Center desk in plain clothes. The surveillance footage was reviewed, but the cubby containing the reporting person's wallet was out of the view of the camera.

Larceny: A DPS officer reported seeing an individual matching the description of the suspect from the previous larceny incidents. The person was seen walking on 15th Street, headed towards the Mueller Center, wearing shorts and a striped shirt. The individual left campus and was stopped by TPD and DPS. A TPD officer completed a field investigation with the individual, and a follow-up was done.

Wednesday, May 27

Mueller Center

Injury: An elderly individual fell out of a wheelchair. The person was conscious, breathing, and alert, and there was no bleeding. Troy Fire Department transported the patient to Samaritan Hospital, and a medical report was filed.

Off-Campus Location

Battery: A student was punched in the face by a fellow student on the Senior Week cruise. TPD was notified, and a DPS officer completed a report on the arrest of a student.

Saturday, June 13

On-Campus Location

Drug Abuse: A student under the influence of LSD punched out a window with a bare hand and was bleeding. TFD and DPS officers responded to the person. The call also mentioned a domestic incident, so TPD also responded for a report. The subject was transported to Samaritan Hospital by TFD. The other individual involved in the domestic violence incident was provided with information about domestic violence. The individual declined to press charges. A medical report was filed for the medical incident, an incident report was filed for the domestic violence incident, and a grounds for disciplinary action report was also filed. DOSO was notified about the incidents.

Sunday, June 21

Ricketts Building

Chemical Incident: A fire alarm was received. Upon arrival, DPS officers discovered an injured subject outside the building, who stated that two chemicals, ammonium perchlorate and aluminum nanoparticles, that were being mixed together exploded in the subject's face. TFD responded to the scene. DPS left a message for the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. The patient was transported to Samaritan Hospital by TFD. DOSO was notified. DPS put a "do not enter" sign on the door to the room and taped the area off.

Wednesday, July 8

Jonsson Engineering Center

Gas Leak: An odor of gasoline was coming from a room in the building. The reporting person was unable to locate the source or the cause. TFD responded and Rensselaer County was notified. National Grid responded as well, but by then, the odor had dissipated. No gas was located at the location. A fire report was completed.

RESIDENCE LIFE

Quad undertakes summer renovations

Duncan and Cahill, Inc. replaces windows, bathrooms, sheetrock and plaster, and furniture

Dan Bruce

Senior Reporter

NEW RENOVATIONS IN QUAD Residence Hall will update some of the 100-year-old facilities with dorms receiving their first major overhaul since the 1970s, and

almost everything but the internal walls are being replaced.

Duncan and Cahill, Inc., a Troy-based company, was hired by the Institute for the renovations which include new windows, bathrooms, sheetrock and plaster, paint, and

furniture. The company was hired by RPI in the past to renovate the Rensselaer Apartment Housing Projects and “improve campus compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act,” said Duncan and Cahill project superintendent William Bornt.

“The renovations over the next several years will help to update Quad and make it even more desirable for students to live in,” said Kyle Neumann ’17, Class of 2017 president and former two term Quad Hall Council chairman. Neumann lived in the dorms during his freshman and sophomore years, and he plans to live in them for the 2015–16 year. Other past Quad residents attributed its popularity to its proximity to academic parts of campus.

The hall is broken up into 19 stacks, each with its own entrance. Several pairs of the stacks connect on the top floor. Officially called The Quadrangle, its name is a bit of a misnomer as the buildings form a three-sided shape with 18



Dan Bruce/The Polytechnic

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS MOVE in and out of Quad Residence Hall.



Jack Wellhofer/The Polytechnic

THE QUADRANGLE WAS INTENDED to be in a quadrangular shape, but RPI could not acquire enough funds to complete the project.

of the stacks, leaving Church VI alone near Russell Sage Dining Hall. According to RPI folklore, the Quad was actually intended to be a quadrangle, but Rensselaer couldn't find enough donors after whom to name the stacks. Because donors wanted the prominent locations, i.e. the

corner stacks, Church VI was paid for. No buildings around it could be funded, so it was left alone as a standalone building.

This summer's project is phase I of the Quad renovations and includes Quad stacks White I, II, III, and IV and Hunt I and II. Phase II will be undertaken next summer.

ENROLLMENT

Wexler appointed VP

VP of Enrollment will oversee Office of Financial Aid

Chris Leong

Senior Reporter

PRESIDENT JACKSON ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF Jonathan Wexler to the position of vice president for enrollment management. Wexler will assume the role on Wednesday, July 15 after serving as vice president for enrollment management for Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck, NJ.



Courtesy of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

JONATHAN WEXLER HAS HELD admissions-related positions at other institutions.

During his time at Fairleigh Dickinson, he brought enrollment for the incoming freshman class to a record high for the university, and oversaw the enrollment of the incoming class in Fall 2015, which will be the university's strongest academically accomplished class ever.

In an email to the RPI community on May 15, 2015, President Jackson described the position's responsibilities as “setting long- and short-range strategies for the Office of Enrollment Management in the recruitment of undergraduate, full- and part-time graduate, and international students, for both the Troy and Hartford campuses.” Wexler will also be responsible for overseeing the Office of Financial Aid.

Wexler was quoted in Jackson's email, saying, “I am honored to have been selected to lead the enrollment management division at a premier national institution such as Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. I look forward to working with President Jackson, academic and administrative leaders, faculty, staff, students, and alumni and alumnae in continuing to build on the outstanding academic reputation of Rensselaer and the pursuit of accomplishing the goals outlined in the Rensselaer Plan 2024.”

In addition to his time at Fairleigh Dickinson, Wexler has also held admissions-related positions at the University of Puget Sound, at Polytechnic University, and at Drexel University. He received a master's degree in higher education administration from the University of South Carolina. He received a dual bachelor's degree in political science and communications from Goucher College.

ADMINISTRATION

Brond resigns



Courtesy of David Brond

DAVID BROND OVERSAW the creation of the student social media ambassador program at RPI.

Justin Etzine

Senior Reporter

ON JUNE 1, 2015, PRESIDENT SHIRLEY ANN JACKSON ANNOUNCED THE resignation of David Brond from the position of vice president for strategic communications and external relations, which took effect on June 12, 2015. Brond, who assumed the position on April 14, 2014, accepted a position as director of account services at Aloysius Butler & Clark Creative Intelligence in Wilmington, Delaware.

In a short email to the RPI community, Jackson described the importance of the position, calling it “responsible for advancing public understanding and advocacy for Rensselaer, its educational opportunities and research discoveries, and its growing position of importance in science, technology, and public policy.” Jackson proceeded to announce that a nationwide search for Brond's replacement has begun.

In his time at Rensselaer, Brond saw the creation of the student social media ambassador program, which enables students to present their personal views of RPI using Twitter. The program has continued since Brond's departure. Additionally, the RPI home page saw a redesign that many students have called “a much needed face-lift.”

RPI also found itself in a national media spotlight after UPAC Cinema postponed the showing of American Sniper to include a medium for educational discourse prior to the movie's showing. Some media outlets reported this as censorship.

It is unclear why Brond departed after his short time at RPI. However, during and following his transition, Brond has proven to be on positive terms with RPI, occasionally tweeting about the university.

Welcome to RPI!
Have Fun at SO,
Class of 2019!