



## COLLEGIAL WELCOME

Greetings from the  
editor of the College's  
newest publication

## BOARD OF VISITORS AND GOVERNORS HOLDS SUMMER MEETING

New Leadership, Enrollment, AI and Fundraising Discussed

At the Gadfly, I've long worked to report on the affairs of the college, from momentous decisions to day-to-day events. In doing that, I've found that delivering this news in the necessary timely manner is often a challenge.

This is not because of a lack in the existing campus publications. The kind of quick, short and to the point reporting that I feel the polity needs to be informed simply does not belong in the Gadfly. There needed to be another space for reporting on campus, ideally one coordinated with the Gadfly's extensive resources.

I brought this up to some other people on the Gadfly staff, and from our discussions, the Collegian was born as a weekly newspaper, with short articles and easy formatting, to best reach the whole polity.

Informing the polity, however, can only work with your help. We need you, dear reader, to help, by contributing articles for our publication. It doesn't take much; only 200-300 words on a topic you care about. With your help, we can build a more informed, more engaged, and closer connected Polity.

The Board of Visitors and Governors meeting this summer was both one of transition and stability. It was the last board meeting for our dean, Joseph Macfarland, who will be succeeded by Susan Paalman, and Associate Dean for the Graduate Institute, Emily Langston, who will be succeeded by Brendan Boyle. Additionally, it was the last meeting for board chair Ron Fielding (A70), who will be replaced by Warren Spector (A81).

The meeting painted a mixed view of the college's financial status. The finance committee reported that there will be a deficit of around \$1.1 million. Fielding noted that tuition revenue is stagnant, while the cost of building repairs and upkeep continues to rise, putting more weight on the college's philanthropic efforts. In the past decade, the college's tuition revenue has declined by \$10 million, only a third of which was covered by increases to the endowment. In a more positive light, Nora Demleitner, Annapolis President, celebrated the completion of the College's Freeing Minds campaign, which raised \$326 million, exceeding its initial goals, while noting that "we do need to focus clearly on the challenges of the future." Chief among those is enrollment.

The Annapolis campus is facing what Demleitner called soft enrollment: "We are meeting targets, barely," while Santa Fe is failing to those targets. "Low enrollment means stagnant class size, which means stagnant tuition, which means low compensation for faculty and staff."

Part of this enrollment problem stems from the national demographic cliff, with there being less college age students every year in the US. While there are more international students applying than ever before, that does not entirely make up the drop in domestic students. To recruit a larger share of that shrinking pool of domestic students, Demleitner highlighted national surveys of high school students that said they are concerned with four things when looking for a college: prestige, career outcomes, strength of the academic program and belonging to a community. She claims that to recruit more students we must work on building a meaningful life and a meaningful career for students by funding internships for every student, build resources for different career paths and highlight internships and scholarships.

Demleitner also emphasized the importance of data to these efforts. "We need to overcome our reluctance to... build measurements and collect data." The college will be hiring a Chief Information Officer based in Santa Fe to do this and help target the four things high school students are said to care about. An additional part of this effort is partnerships with other colleges and universities for joint degrees and programs, starting with a partnership with Johns Hopkins. **Cont. on page 2**

## This Week in Seminar

Freshmen:

- 9/7: Homer, Odyssey I-VII
- 9/11: Homer, Odyssey IX-XVI

Sophomores:

- 9/7: Bible, Leviticus 11, 18-20; Deuteronomy
- 9/11: Bible, Samuel I, II; Kings I, 1-4

Juniors:

- 9/7: Pascal: *Pensées* (See official list for selections)
- 9/11: Pascal: *Pensées* (See official list for selections)

Seniors:

- 9/7: Hegel: Phenomenology of Spirit, The Truth of Self-Certainty (177 only), Lordship and Bondage (178-196)
- 9/11: Hegel: Phenomenology of Spirit, Stoicism and Skepticism (197-206)

## Friday Night Lecture:

Document Your Optimism: Mexico Writing Humor by Álvaro Enrigue

## Upcoming Events:

Saturday 9/9

- 5:30 a.m. Homerathon, front steps of McDowell
- 11 a.m. Auditions, Importance of Being Earnest, Studio Theater.
- 3 p.m. Mitchell Museum Workshop: Making the Front Page of "End of Times." Mitchell Museum, RSVP required.
- 8 p.m. Contra Dance, hosted by the Folk Life club, Great Hall
- 8 p.m. Sailing Under the Stars, hosted by the sailing team, Boathouse.

Wednesday 9/13:

-2:30 p.m. Career development office open house, Mellon 124

SPECIAL DISPATCH: The Vital Importance of Being Earnest

Announcement from KWP of a new show coming very soon to a campus near you

*The Importance of Being Earnest: A Trivial Comedy for Serious People* is coming to the FSK at the end of this semester. Set in England at the turn of the century, the three act comedy centers around John (Jack) Worthing and his friend and tormentor, Algernon Moncrieff. Both end up donning the name “Earnest” in an attempt to win the affections of their respective love interests. The lie goes poorly and misunderstandings ensue. The entire state of affairs is presided over by the dower and imposing Lady Bracknell; Miss Prism, an austere and nervous governess; and the Rev. Canon Chasuble, a bumbling parish priest.

While there was an audition on Tuesday,

September 5, there is another round of auditions this coming Saturday, September 9, from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M. Callbacks will be held in the evening on Sunday, September 10th. All are welcome to audition with no prior experience nor prior sign-up needed. Those interested in auditioning should check their e-mails for further information. The characters of Algernon and Lady Bracknell will be gender blind when cast. While Algernon is not usually gender-blindly cast, Lady Bracknell often is.

Playing Lady Bracknell have been such notables as Sir David Suchet (*Poirot*), Geoffrey Rush AC (*Pirates of the Caribbean*), and Dame Judi Dench (*Cats*).

The play will run for approximately two and a half hours with an intermission between Acts Two and Three. The performances will fill a 7:30 lecture slot on December 8th with an additional performance at 7:30 on December 9th.

The play is directed by Mr. Caleb Briggs, with Ms. Georgia Green as Stage Manager, Mr. Nichols-Kaufman as Set Designer, Ms. Keely Schrantz as Technical Director, and Ms. Magnolia Vandiver as Costume Designer.

Caleb Briggs

ALL COLLEGE SOCCER  
GAME A ROUSING  
START TO ATHLETIC  
YEAR

To kick off the school year the college gathered for an age-old tradition, the Means Versus Extremes soccer match. The “Means” team led by Junior intramural captains destroyed the extremes led by the Seniors intramural captains in a thrilling 6-3 victory. Sophomore Beeri scored twice for the Means and Sophomore Laish scored an impressive goal from outside the box. Junior Captain James Reeher (Hustlers) laced a shot from the right side for another goal for the Means. Although the Extremes lost handedly they still managed to put some points on the board, with the help of some alumni and some newcomers. Freshman Charlie made his splash scoring his first St. John’s College goal, in his first game as a Johnnie. On the flip side Senior Andrew Selway tapped one in after an assist from Santa Fe graduate Sam Housley who also scored a goal of his own. This was Selway’s first St. John’s College goal. The Means of the week were Andrew Selway and Charlie who both scored their first goals and the Extreme of the week was Peter Quinn, who held down the fort in the goal. Overall, the vibes were good and everyone who came out had a great time.

Lainey Rendelman

BVG Meeting

Cont. from first page

Beyond the issue of recruiting new students, the visiting committee highlighted the college’s difficulties retaining students who are already here, and ways they are working to address that. Retention has improved over the past few years since the pandemic, but the college is still not on track to meet its own goals. The primary reasons students leave, however, are medical and academic, both of which the college has relatively little control over. Despite overall low retention rates, retention rates amongst Pell Grant recipients are higher than the national average, indicating that the college’s work to make itself more accessible to lower income students has been somewhat successful.

Additional topics discussed at the meeting included the extensive construction occurring on both campuses, including the renovation of Campbell Hall and the bathrooms of Pinkney and Chase-Stone in Annapolis, continuing to further the college’s partnership with the United World Colleges, as well as the challenges posed by AI. Board members noted that new large language model chatbots are not yet threatening for the college, as they are not good at writing the kinds of essays we are expected to write and cannot be used in the variety of oral forms of assessment the college employs.

ABOUT THE ST.  
JOHN’S  
COLLEGIAN

The St. John’s Collegian is the weekly newspaper of St. John’s College Annapolis. We work to bring quick and timely coverage of important events going on, to help develop a more informed student body. If you’re searching for more in-depth investigations and reporting, as well as essays, art and culture, check out the Gadfly, our affiliated publication, which is published once every three weeks.

Want to submit an article? We always need more writers, whether for opinion or reporting! Submissions for news articles should be between 300-400 words, while opinion should be kept short at 200 words. Just email [eanicholskaufman@sjc.edu](mailto:eanicholskaufman@sjc.edu) with your article, and we will work to get it in print! Longer form articles and more in-depth exploration of ideas should go to the Gadfly, which accepts submissions at [lbriner@sjc.edu](mailto:lbriner@sjc.edu) or [djnathan89@gmail.com](mailto:djnathan89@gmail.com).

Contributors for this issue:

El’ad Nichols-Kaufman, Editor

Lainey Rendelman

Caleb Briggs

FROM THE POLITY:

Do you have an opinion? We bet you do! You go to St. John’s, after all. Send short opinion pieces, around 200 words to us, and we will publish them here, anonymously or with your name attached. If you’ve always thought that what this campus needed was another way for people to voice their opinions loudly and publicly, this is it! Don’t miss your chance!