



## SGA update: Mural, elections, spring goals

BY MADELINE RICCARDI  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The La Roche Student Government Association (SGA) planned for the upcoming campus mural, while working on other projects before the spring semester ends.

The board has been discussing a proposal to install a mural with the Black Lives Matter message on campus since early last semester. When SGA President Natasha Florence introduced the idea to the board in the fall, she described the project as “not just a work of art, but a social justice statement.”

SGA's Executive Vice-President Ammiel Francis met with Sister

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COURTESY OF ELLIOT CRAMER

La Roche Professor Elliot Cramer tapped into his creativity during the covid-19 pandemic to create a project he called “Adventures from Home,” using cardboard to create imaginative worlds for his children.

See page 6 for full story

## Graduation plans remain unclear

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

There will likely be little pomp for this year's graduates considering the circumstances.

Graduation plans have not yet been finalized, but it seems that the class of 2021 will see their celebration hampered by covid-19 restrictions.

La Roche's graduation committee is exploring multiple options for May's graduates, Provost and Senior Academic Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Howard Ishiyama said.

“Included in those options are various in person alternatives and

to understand upfront that given the current capacity constraints that there will be strict rules applied insofar as the number of participants per ceremony, including guests allowed per graduate,” he said.

La Roche has scrapped multiple attempts at hosting a graduation ceremony for the class of 2020, whose initial ceremony was cancelled early in the pandemic.

La Roche rescheduled their ceremony for October, but nixed those plans because of gathering restrictions imposed by Allegheny County at the time.

## Stricter covid test policies for spring

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

La Roche's new covid-19 strategies – which included mandatory covid-19 tests for all resident students at the start of the semester and random testing throughout – have revealed multiple coronavirus cases.

The school's online covid-19 tracker listed 10 cases during the spring semester as of March 4. Of those cases, three were employees and seven were resident students.

La Roche has employed a more aggressive covid-19 testing strategy for the spring semester.

In the fall, the university did not require resident students to be

rooms or submit to testing and quarantining on campus at the start of the semester.

Resident students are also subjected to random testing throughout the semester.

The testing strategy change, Chief Pandemic Safety Officer and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Rosemary McCarthy said, was based on guidance from local health officials.

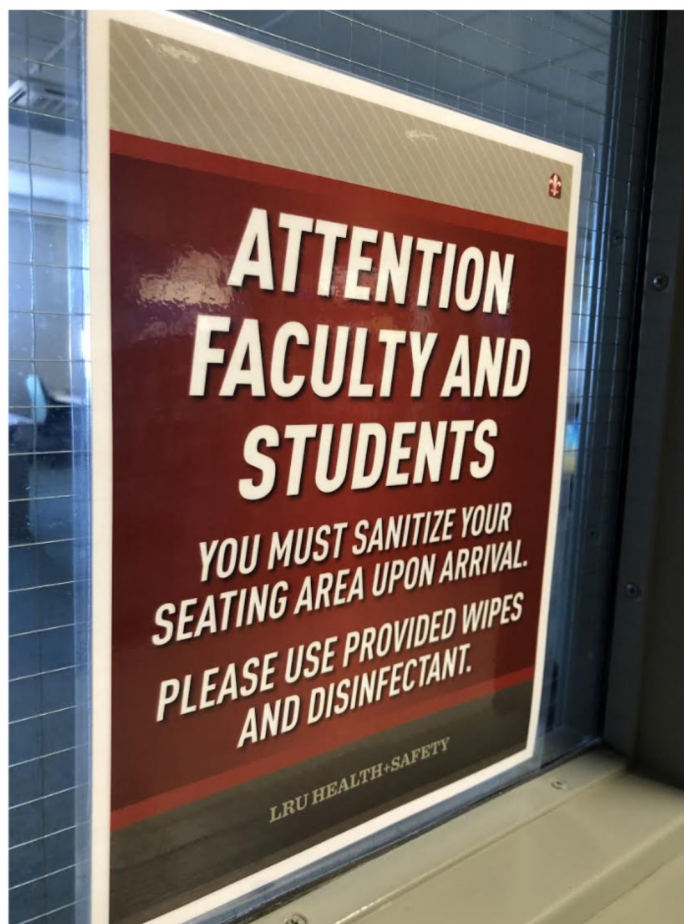
“Due to the increased positivity rate across the state, it was highly recommended by the state and local health departments that all colleges and universities implement



# Wellness

## Pandemic cleaning plans expect help from students, faculty

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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*Signs remind students and faculty to clean their spots in classrooms.*

Cleaning and sanitizing protocols have become a top priority for many businesses and schools tasked with convincing their patrons and students that their facilities are safe during the covid-19 pandemic.

At La Roche, those protocols rely heavily on help from students and faculty, who are expected to clean their own workspaces.

The school does employ a cleaning and disinfecting strategy beyond what students and faculty clean themselves, according to Chief Pandemic Safety Officer and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Rosemary McCarthy.

"We use commercial grade products for our cleaning," she said.

According to McCarthy, all classrooms are disinfected every morning and general restrooms are disinfected at least twice a day. She also identified several "high touch areas" – including door handles, panic bars, push plates, tables and railings – that are cleaned at least twice daily.

Much of the burden for cleaning, however, rests with students and faculty members. Classrooms are cleaned in the

morning, but students and professors are left to keep them clean throughout the day.

"We ask that every student and faculty member wipe down their individual desks prior to each class throughout the day," McCarthy said, noting that disinfectant wipes are available in every classroom for that purpose.

In the event of a confirmed covid-19 case, McCarthy said, the school ramps up its cleaning efforts. Staff members perform a "deep clean" in any room in which someone who tests positive for covid-19 entered for more than 15 minutes, she said. Sometimes they will also open the windows for 24 hours to ventilate the area.

Aside from cleaning, La Roche's covid-19 mitigation measures include plexiglass barriers and seats marked off with red tape to facilitate social distancing. The school requires daily temperature checks and health screenings to enter buildings.

McCarthy declined to provide an estimate on how much La Roche has invested in cleaning and sanitizing efforts during the pandemic.

## LRU unaware of students' complaints about hand sanitizer

BY MADELINE RICCARDI  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Some students claim the hand sanitizer available on campus is burning their hands, though La Roche officials seem to be unaware of the issue.

sanitizer located across campus is burning their skin, and Chief Pandemic Safety Officer Rosemary McCarthy said she had no idea.

on my hands, especially during winter months when my hands are extra dry, the sanitizer can sting," McCarthy said.

She went on to say that the

concerns.

"I am told," McCarthy said, "that some people are sensitive to the chemicals used in the sanitizer and it can irritate the



# People

## La Roche alumna returns as coordinator of student success

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Things have come full circle for La Roche's new coordinator of student success.

Lauren Vilella, who took on the role in early February, said it's been "fantastic" to return to her alma mater. Vilella graduated from La Roche with a bachelor's degree in psychology in May 2018.

"To come full circle has been an exceptional thing for me," Vilella said. "I really loved La Roche as a student here."

In her first few weeks at La Roche, Vilella said, she's been eager to reconnect with friends and mentors whose familiar faces have made her feel welcome.

She's also excited to begin helping students.

"My biggest role and my goal is to work proactively with students to help them achieve academic successes, to foster strong study skills and habits and to develop as empowered and active lifelong learners," Vilella said.



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SEE VILLELLA, PAGE 15

*Lauren Vilella, a La Roche alumna, returned to La Roche this semester as coordinator of student success.*

## La Roche professor retires after more than 30 years at university

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A professor who shared her love of language with the La Roche community for over 30 years has retired.

Dr. Carol Moltz retired in May 2020 after teaching at La Roche for 32 years.

"Dr. Moltz loved taking students on study abroad trips,

in La Roche's English department, said Moltz was among her first friends at La Roche.

"The most important thing I can share about Carol is the joy she always brought to her work," Maher said. "She enjoyed her students, and I'm sure they enjoyed her, because I would

Maher said, involved Moltz administering an oral exam for students. As each student came to her office, Moltz asked them what they like to eat at a festive meal during the holidays. One student responded in Spanish. Moltz paused at his response, before telling him, "You just told

was saying, but the musicality of her voice was wonderful."

Maher also reflected on the lessons she learned from Moltz.

"She taught me that you cannot understand a language without understanding the culture of the people who speak it," she said. "Her knowledge of Spanish-



# Education

## Writers' Center offers in-person, online support during pandemic

BY MADELINE RICCARDI  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Writers' Center tutors are just as willing as before to help La Roche students while keeping their safety in mind.

After La Roche University shut down last year due to the covid-19 pandemic, most of the offices on campus went online. It is during this time that the La Roche Writers' Center adapted to taking online appointments, both on Zoom and through paper submissions.

The Center worked primarily with face-to-face appointments, which Writers' Center Director Dr. Jessica Ganni suspended last spring. With campus open again, these types of appointments are once again available, but rarely used.

"This semester, online appointments are the most popular so far with about 73 percent of our appointments being held online via Zoom. A little more than 20 percent of appointments have been eTutoring, and only around seven

percent have been face-to-face. But it is still early in the semester," Ganni said.

The limited number of face-to-face appointments is not entirely due to a lack of student-made appointments. The Writers' Center has a six-person capacity, Ganni said, which means that if there are three tutors in the office, there can only be three students in there at the most.

"While we offer face-to-face appointments, these appointments are limited in number. We just do not have the capacity to safely offer more face-to-face options. But the truth is that with some of the necessary precautions we have added," Ganni said, "like mandatory facemasks and maintaining six feet of distance during the appointment, the face-to-face appointment wouldn't be my first choice."

Although this type of appointment has limited appointment times and strict

guidelines, it is the recommended form from Writers' Center Student Tutor Leticia Alcaraz.

"It is much easier to work on a paper when in face-to-face," Alcaraz said, "because the communication is immediate, and it is easier to understand the student's needs and preferences."

Alcaraz said that working with students in person is her favorite type of appointment because it allows her to meet new people while helping them succeed in school.

"I like feeling sure that I helped them with their concerns," Alcaraz said. It is because of this that her least favorite part of today's Writers' Center is how empty it is now that students are opting for digitized appointments.

Although digitized appointments are not every staff member's favorite, the tutors at the Writers' Center are willing to help with any form of appointment.

Writers' Center Student Tutor Lucia BouDargham said that she

feels that all appointments are equally important, and it is what comes out of the appointments that really matters.

"The important thing for students to know," BouDargham said, "is that we deeply care about their success and that we want to see them excelling. I believe that meeting online or face-to-face helps students establish a connection with their tutor, and both parties can clearly explain their thoughts."

Through the online appointments, students can meet with their tutor via zoom and screen share the paper they would like to work on. This method is effective for students who need help generating ideas because tutors can help write sentences as ideas form in the client's mind.

Lindsay Bennett, a full-time Writers' Center tutor, said she believes that her online appointments are always the ones where she gets the most done.

"For me, online appointments are (almost always) more productive. As a tutor, I have a difficult time providing thorough feedback in only an hour. In person, I can ask questions and help revise as we chat," Bennett said. "We just get more accomplished."

Bennett also said that it is through online appointments that students get the most out of their appointment because it allows for more talking time.

"We can talk about the assignment and the course so that we both have a better understanding of the writing goals," Bennett said.

BouDargham also cites online appointments as her favorite because of the connection she can form with her clientele.

"I favor online appointments





# Courier Call

**Hear the Courier Staff Answer the Question:  
If you could have any super power, what would it be?**

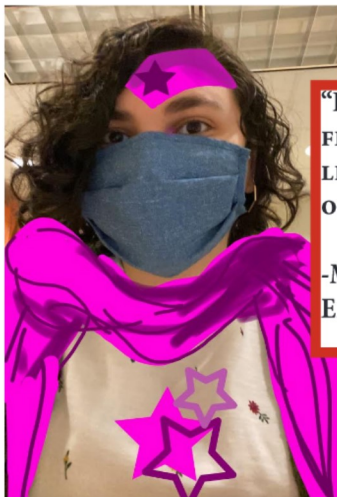


"I LITERALLY JUST WANT TO BE SPIDERMAN. IS THAT CHEATING? MAYBE. BUT THAT IS WHAT I WANT."

-STEVEN MUNSHOWER, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

"I THINK I'D LIKE TO HAVE THE POWER OF SUPER STRENGTH. HOW COOL WOULD IT BE TO BE ABLE TO THROW A BUS?"

-SARAH HEFFERIN, ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



"I WOULD WANT TO BE ABLE TO FLY. I STILL DON'T HAVE A DRIVERS LICENSE, SO IT WOULD SOLVE A LOT OF MY PROBLEMS."

-MADELINE RICCARDI, ASSOCIATE EDITOR



"I'D WANT TO BE ABLE TO READ PEOPLE'S MINDS. I'M SURE I'D FIND OUT ALL KINDS OF INTERESTING THINGS, PLUS IT'D DEFINITELY BE A HELPFUL TRICK FOR INTERVIEWS."

-JULIA FELTON, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## Interested in joining our staff?

The Courier is always looking for new writers and photographers.



# Culture

## Virgin Islands student offers fresh perspective on Pittsburgh staple

BY STEVEN MUNSHOWER  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Junior self-design major Ernie Bodley Jr. had a lot to experience upon first arriving in Pittsburgh.

Bodley is from St. Croix of the US Virgin Islands, and resides on campus during the school year. Over the past couple years, his friends have introduced him to many Pittsburgh essentials. However, their journey is far from over.

In this short video, Bodley gives his thoughts on his first ever Primanti Bros. sandwich, the Pitts-Burger. He gives his honest feedback, as well as a final verdict. Click the link below to discover what Bodley thought about this Pittsburgh staple.

Watch Here: <https://youtu.be/0hcoKQR878Y>



© STEVEN MUNSHOWER

*Ernie Bodley Jr., a student from the Virgin Islands, shared his thoughts on his first Primanti Bros. sandwich.*

## Professor garners national attention creating adventures with cardboard

BY SARAH HEFFERIN  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



When I interviewed professor Elliot Cramer, he was bent over a camera in the La Roche University photo studio. His class was learning about product photography, and he sighed loudly after the product in question—a child's light-up shoe—fell to the ground for the fourth time.

Cramer noted to me that he doesn't like to sit still; as a creative, he always has to be doing something with his hands. He doesn't like to waste his time. So, as I sat down to interview him, he paced back and forth excitedly telling his story. (He was also

in creatives that I really admire; they have to feel like they're accomplishing their calling in life. There's so much to distract us but, if you can put that time, when you don't have anything to do, into creating, to me, that's where creatives thrive. They thrive when they're bored. And I don't like to waste my time."

For all of us, the pandemic has pushed us out of our comfort zones. It has forced us to cancel plans and rearrange our lives. For Cramer, this meant he had to put a lot of creative projects on hold, and change how he was going to execute them.



# Entertainment

## PlayStation 5 shows innovation and potential

BY STEVEN MUNSHOWER  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Sony had big shoes to fill following the massive success of the PlayStation 4.

The PlayStation 4 was clearly popular, with more than one hundred million units sold. This success granted Sony the opportunity to refine existing ideas, rather than creating new ones. Sony also had to deal with much larger expectations than ever before. Thanks to their hard work and innovation, the PlayStation 5 is a nearly perfect evolution of an incredible console.

Perhaps the strongest aspect of the PlayStation 4 was its expansive selection of high-quality games, developed specifically for the platform. With the PlayStation 5, Sony looks to continue expanding this roster, while supporting the games of the prior generation. Several sequels to PlayStation 4

games have been confirmed or released for the PlayStation 5, including "Marvel's Spider-Man: Miles Morales" and "God of War: Ragnarok."

In addition to these sequels, the PlayStation 5 is able to play a vast majority of already existing PlayStation 4 games. This makes the transition between consoles painless, as virtually no games have to be left behind. In fact, the PlayStation 5 often displays higher resolutions and better framerates on these games, cementing it as the definitive platform to experience these titles.

It is worth noting that not many PlayStation 5 games exist at the moment. This may be disappointing for some, but the massive backlog of PlayStation 4

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## "Spider-Man" game features human hero

BY STEVEN MUNSHOWER  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

“Marvel’s Spider-Man: Miles Morales” is a bold entry into the new series of Spider-Man games, developed by Insomniac Games.

They developed the original “Marvel’s Spider-Man” which released in 2018 to critical acclaim. “Marvel’s Spider-Man: Miles Morales” serves as a spin-off sequel to the first game. The game was released on November 12, 2020 for PlayStation 4 and 5.

This time around, Peter Parker, the original Spider-Man, sits out a vast majority of the adventure. Instead, audiences are treated to the charming Miles Morales. Miles is intelligent, resourceful, and ready to prove himself as a hero.

The game opens with Miles and Peter working together. Peter has been training Miles, but he is

still not quite ready to be on his own. However, Peter decides he can trust Miles to protect the city after he saves the day.

At this moment, Peter leaves New York to go on vacation. Miles is entirely on his own, with a multitude of newfound responsibilities. When an unexpected danger arises, Miles must discover what it truly means to be a hero in order to save the city.

The amateur Miles Morales is a welcome change of pace compared to Peter Parker. Miles makes mistakes. He is constantly screwing things up. He cannot even seem to keep his secret identity, yet he keeps putting on the suit. It is brutally honest to the human experience.

SEE “SPIDER-MAN,”  
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# The Courier Staff

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# Obituaries

## La Roche community remembers Don Orr, retired Professor Emeritus

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**D**r. Don Orr, retired Professor Emeritus of International Studies, died on Nov. 24.

Orr worked at La Roche for 40 years before retiring in May 2018.

"Don was a powerful intellectual, and was known for his incisive commentary about any and all subject matter," Provost and Senior Academic Vice President Dr. Howard Ishiyama said. "But he was also someone who was incredibly passionate about his field, his wife and family, his friends, his students. He was a very good man, in all respects."

Dr. Jean Forti, chair of La Roche's human resources management department, said

Orr had a "lovely spirit and warmth."

"I miss Don every time I walk past his old office," she said. "He was someone I looked up to and admired as a professor. He was someone I counted on as a friend."

Orr began working at La Roche in 1978. During his time at the university, he helped to develop the undergraduate international management and international affairs programs, serving as department chair for both programs for several years.

He was also involved in the design and implementation of the human resource management master's program and he taught



COURTESY OF JEAN FORTI

*Dr. Don Orr posed with other members of La Roche's business faculty.*

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## La Roche mourns loss of former professor Harry Strickland

BY SARAH HEFFERIN  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**L**a Roche University is mourning the loss of one of their former professors. Dr. Harry B. Strickland, former Administrative Manager in the Finance Department, passed away on January 31, 2021 after a brief illness.

Strickland spent 26 years teaching at La Roche and retired in 2017. This came after a long, fruitful career as a security analyst with Merrill Lynch, and a professor, Dean of the Graduate School and a liaison for International Governmental Relations at Scranton University.

Right after high school, Strickland enlisted and served in the army for 18 months. Following his time in the infantry, he went to St. Vincent College, and later received his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh.

When Strickland began his career at La Roche in 1999, he felt that the finance department needed an overhaul. He suggested that they go for ACB-SP accreditation, which provides a student-centered teaching a learning approach to business programs. It was a significant change, but it benefitted La

at La Roche, Strickland left a lasting impact on others around him as well.

Barb Bencsics and Stephanie Marks, the administrative assistants in the La Roche faculty offices, recall Strickland as a compassionate and intelligent man.

Marks said: "It is difficult to capture what a truly wonderful person Harry was in just a few words but I will try. Harry had so many redeeming qualities but the ones that stand out the most to me are his kindness, generosity and great sense of humor. No

work while listening to beautiful classical music on his radio. He kept a keen intellect and sharp memory all the way into his old age, probably because he was an avid reader and kept up on world, local and personal events."

She notes that Strickland loved the cold.

"One cold winter day someone asked Harry why he spent most of the winter up north when he had a cozy place in Florida, he answered that there were too many old people down there," Marks said. "Harry was a gem, I miss him every day."



# Editorial

## *Editor-in-chief says farewell to Courier, La Roche*

BY JULIA FELTON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For a journalism student, there's no more valuable experience than working for a college newspaper.

At least, that's what I took away from my college experience.

Working for the Courier gave me experience that can't be gained in the classroom. I had the real-world experience of talking with members of the La Roche community, writing stories on a deadline and feeling a sense of pride at seeing my work published.

During my time at La Roche, I penned over 100 articles for the Courier and released 16 issues as the newspaper's editor-in-chief, a role I've enjoyed since May 2018.

I credit the Courier for my ability to land a job in my field before graduating and for helping me to grow as a writer and a person.

Our faculty advisor Ed Stankowski has been a constant source of support, offering his wisdom on writing and life. I could never thank him enough for everything he's taught me.

I've honed a variety of skills – ranging from communication skills to layout skills – working for the college newspaper.

I've seen firsthand the power of the press. The work of a newspaper is important, whether it's a college newspaper or a national publication.

In my time at La Roche, I saw the work a small college newspaper – one that contended with no operating budget and a staff sometimes as small as three student writers – could accomplish.

The newspaper broke the news of the school becoming a university. It highlighted high points for the school, ranging from the unveiling of the

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*My hope moving forward is that more people will come to appreciate the important role college newspapers play on their campuses.*

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in the midst of a pandemic. It helped students to understand the school's covid-19 policies when the campus reopened in the fall and shared tips for handling finances, technology and even the daily stresses of college life.

It also brought to light student concerns on important and even controversial topics. The Courier covered a student protest against gun violence. It brought to light student concerns about learning in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic and communication with student government.

Yet the important work of the Courier often seemed to go unnoticed and unappreciated. Perhaps that's another important lesson the Courier taught me: people often don't appreciate the importance of the media.

A repurposed storage closet served as our office. We got no financial support to help us buy better equipment or even print a few copies of the newspaper. We seldom got any recognition for the hours of work that goes into producing a newspaper that could inform, educate and entertain the college community in a meaningful way.

It seems that La Roche is a microcosm for a larger issue of underappreciating the press.

Journalists worldwide are not only underappreciated, but they are also often persecuted for their work. Reporters Without Borders – an international nonprofit that

plagues journalists in war-torn countries.

The problem is also close to home.

The United States has slipped in rankings from Reporters Without Borders, sliding to the 48th slot on their Press Freedom Index. The U.S. is now categorized as “problematic” for press freedom.

Just one in four countries worldwide are classified as having a “good” or “satisfactory” situation for the media, according to Reports Without Borders.

Not only does the press risk persecution and censorship worldwide, they also contend with the simple fact that it often seems people are forgetting the importance of a newspaper. Countless local newspapers have recently found themselves in financial crisis and many have been forced to shut down, leaving their communities with no good source of information or accountability.

Thomas Jefferson famously said, “Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government with no newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

Yet at La Roche, it seemed that people are quite content to choose just about anything else over the newspaper.

A recent video featured in the Courier was watched a mere 48 times. That number is quite

Perhaps more alarming is the fact that even students who profess to be interested in writing careers show disconcerting apathy toward the student newspaper. Finding students willing to dedicate time to the important work a student newspaper performs has been the most challenging part of serving as the Courier's editor.

This issue of the Courier not only marks my last issue serving as its editor-in-chief, but also marks the last issue of the student newspaper in its current format. A new version of student media will soon replace this publication.

My hope moving forward is that more people will come to appreciate the important role college newspapers play on their campuses. Without the college newspaper, there would be no one to inform the community of what's happening on this campus and no one to hold the university's leadership accountable. There would be no one to recognize the good moments or keep the community informed during the bad ones.

I am tremendously grateful to those who have helped me make the Courier the most informational, educational, thorough and accurate publication possible – particularly our faculty advisor Ed Stankowski and Courier Advisory Committee members Sarah Reichle and Rebecca Pasqua.

I hope that, for those who have read and supported the newspaper, it has been a source of information and inspiration. If even one person was able to read the Courier and learn something new or find a new source of inspiration, then my work was well worth it.

Looking back at my college career, I can truthfully say that the Courier was the most



## Saint Joseph



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### *Strickland, continued from page 8*

genuinely cared about others, and his many acts of kindness often went unknown. Great at maintaining friendships even after his retirement, Harry made sure to acknowledge birthdays with messages of good wishes and a song. His cheerful weekly phone calls always brightened my day. Dr. Harry B. Strickland truly left the world a better place, and I miss him."

Mail Services Supervisor Betty Gsell had known Strickland since 2004. Her and Strickland were very close, and she said that his passing was hard for her. But, she said that she remembers Strickland fondly.

Gsell said: "Harry Strickland and I met in 2004. It was the year I won the "Staff Recipient" award and Harry walked into my office saying, 'I just had to come meet this great employee.' I was so touched that a professor would go out of his way to come across campus to meet me and from

Strickland quickly became very close with Gsell, and she said that there was never a day that went by that the two didn't talk.

She said: "Harry became a part of my family and often spent holidays at my home where my family found him to be an absolute delight and were fascinated by his many stories. When Harry retired and moved away it was a sad time but little did I know that our friendship would turn into daily calls. Harry's kindness also included calling each and every person he knew on their birthdays always including him singing happy birthday. Toward the end when he got sick, never once did he complain, he just always wanted to hear what was new with you. I'll forever miss hearing him saying 'keep your

socks dry!'"

Justice, Law, and Security professor Lawrence Likar also knew Strickland well, and often ate lunch with him.

He said, "Harry was a good person to consult if you were interested in growing your money. He was an eclectic reader and made copies of articles concerning crime and national security, which he left in my mailbox at La Roche. Harry knew something about everything and I greatly enjoyed his company at lunch, when we were able to eat and converse together at the cafeteria."

What sticks out to Accounting professor Mark Dawson was Strickland's eccentric personality and sense of humor.

Dawson said: "I will remember

him for his generosity and his humor. In regard to his generosity, he made mental notes about what people liked and he would surprise them with a little gift from time to time. It may have been a book, a box of cookies, or just some little thing to make their day. As I think about it, the recipients were almost always female staff members whom he liked to harmlessly charm when he visited them. Regarding his humor, he liked to leave a conversation with a line from his military days, 'Take it easy, and keep your socks dry.' A frequent line he used was to walk up to two people talking and ask one of them, 'Do you want me to call Security?' while pointing at the other person. One time we arrived at the main office entrance simultaneously, so I opened the door and said, 'After you, Harry.' He quickly replied, 'No, you go first; there may be shooting.'

Strickland leaves behind

***Strickland leaves behind many at La Roche University. But nothing says more***



## Cramer, continued from page 6

to doing what he loved, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

"Adventures From Home" became a huge hit with his clients, and eventually, it landed a feature spot on "The Nightly News with Lester Holt: Kids' Edition," on NBC in January of this year. Not only was it a huge success in that way, but the entire project allowed Cramer to spend time with his kids and fall in love with creating again after such a difficult time.

"When you run your own company, you're never guaranteed tomorrow," Cramer said. "So covid shut down everything; everyone pulled the plug, and it was supposed to be the best year of my life. But what do you do?"

But as Cramer looked around his house at the mountains of cardboard he had acquired, combined with unused ideas that he has always had, it finally all came together.

Cramer said, "There's something bigger behind those pictures. Covid gave me a door, and I took it."

The project itself has been in the works for a long time. Cramer recounts that it comes from his own childhood experiences and his love of toys. With this in mind, he had this idea for a long time, and had already mentally planned many aspects of the "Adventures from Home" project—it just looked a little different at the time.

But for years, the project was in limbo. For Cramer, balancing his own photography business, being a dad, and a professor ate up a lot of his time. So, in 2020, Cramer dubbed the year, "the Year of Elliot."

"I was finally going to do all of my projects. So, I came up with five [photos]. A magician, a girl with an airplane, a pirate, and two others. But the whole idea was to advertise play with a stuffed animal," Cramer said.

The whole idea was that a scene would be constructed around a theme, a stuffed animal, and a child. Cramer planned to use his own two children, for two of the photos, and ask his friends if their kids would like to be photographed in the other three.

"For advertising purposes, I wanted to show that I could work with kids, create these wonderful worlds, and build sets, and this

And "the Year of Elliot," seemed to be ruined.

"I had everything lined up," Cramer said, "and I even had a budget planned for the year. And everything got shut down. So, I just couldn't do it."

But rather than falling into what Cramer describes as "a pit of despair," he decided to pivot. Instead of moaning and complaining about it, Cramer said that he looked to his own two children for inspiration. Rather than building elaborate sets, he stuck to what he had: cardboard.

Each scene that Cramer created was created from things he had in his house and constructed mostly from cardboard.

With each picture, a how-to instruction page was attached, showing viewers how to make their very own cardboard pieces at home. They include fun things like a sword, a rocket ship, and an airplane. It was Cramer's wife who initially inspired the how-tos, convincing him to use his knowledge of illustration to draw them himself.

After completing a draft, Cramer showed a client. She instantly fell in love.

Cramer said, "She was obsessed and said, 'I'm going to get this on the news,' and that's exactly what she did."

But fame wasn't the reason that Cramer started this project. It wasn't money, or recognition, or advertising. It spanned from an idea—a need to be creative. And, in terms of the pandemic, it's exactly what he needed to get by.

Like many, the pandemic caused him to sink into a bit of a rough spot. He didn't elaborate, but he noted that he said to a friend during the year that he was not doing great.

"To tell anyone that you're mentally okay through all of this [the pandemic] I think is a lie. So I tell everyone...I'm tired. I'm going a little crazy," Cramer said.

As he worked through this project, he discussed it with his photography friends over video chat often, explaining all the details. What Cramer didn't expect was for one of them to come back to him with a newfound inspiration.

"He said, 'you know, you really inspired me to go play with

Cramer said, "When you do your own projects, they're usually just labors of love that you do for yourself and you can bail out at any moment. But I just kept going and going and going and I'm so glad I did. My hope through it is to not only get some more work out of it, but I'm packaging it up to maybe get a book out of it or go even bigger."

On this topic of dreams, Cramer summed it up nicely: "I'm just a kid from Zelienople. Big dreams take a long time when you live in a small town."

So, what did it take to set up these epic scenes of play? The key was to do everything within a house, to illustrate how to stay busy and imaginative during Covid. All the props were handmade, and the Cramers reused string, bottlecaps, and more to make each and every tiny detail.

Cramer notes that he is very handy with glue and sewing and crafting. He's the kind of guy who makes his children's Halloween costumes by hand, and who's back-up plan in college might have actually been puppetry.

He planned every little thing down to the bed sheets. Each idea was drawn out, set up, and photographed. Often it would take an entire day for Cramer to dress each room to his liking before he could even begin photographing.

But it wasn't just Cramer. It was his kids that often played pivotal roles in the creation of these scenes. This is especially true for Cramer's photo of his son, slaying an invisible, leaf-breathing dragon.

"I just love the idea of a kid, dressed as a knight, slaying a dragon," Cramer said. "We got this stuffed dragon, but it was so small and [my son] was so big, so it's like 'how do you position this dragon in a way that he's a threat to the kid?'"

The little stuffed dragon was not working for Cramer's vision, and the concept of the photo haunted him for the entire summer. It wasn't until the leaves began to change color in the fall that his son came to him with an idea.

"The fall came and my son said, 'I'm going to fight the dragon,' and he was just hitting a

playing with cardboard and a stuffed animal. But, rules can be broken.

"Once you set the parameters, sometimes it's okay to change that rule and still be within the guidelines. With this photo, he's in that pose and we've got the leaves coming and you just get it," Cramer said. "I'm really excited about that one because it was all my son's idea."

When living with imaginative children, Cramer notes that most of the ideas came from the minds of his kids and he just helps them bring it to life. During a pandemic, it was that creativity that brought them together.

Cramer said, "I would ask them, 'what do you want to do next and what do you want to be next?'"

Cramer has always been creative and has always encouraged his kids to be creative. I asked him what he would say to a fellow creative who has an idea but doesn't know what to do next. His advice was to always keep pushing.

"Just because you have an idea today and don't know how to execute it doesn't mean you won't be able to continue it as life goes on," Cramer said. "Doors open and doors close, but if you have something inside of you that you need to get out, you should never stop. Too many people quit too soon."

He stressed to me that no idea is too weird or too crazy if you're passionate about it. You just have to do it and do the best that you can do. Because you never know when your idea could be the next famous green puppet in the Disney universe.

Cramer said: "If you have an idea and you don't think it's good enough, don't worry about that until you've given it the best you've got. When I ask someone if they know who Kermit the Frog is, they say he's a frog, he sings 'It's Not Easy Being Green,' and he dates a pig. They don't say that he's a puppet. When I ask someone, 'Who's Yoda?', they tell me that he's a Jedi Master. They don't say he's a puppet. We have these magical things as an art for and who would have thought that you could put a thing on your hand and make art? You can't worry about it, you just have to



## *“Spider-Man,” continued from page 7*

Miles deals with much more than his own mistakes, however. He is constantly being told he is not the real Spider-Man. People say he is just a kid, and that he cannot possibly be a hero. He feels as though he must prove himself.

Thanks to brilliant writing and an honest portrayal of characters, Miles Morales goes on a beautiful journey of realizing what it takes to truly be Spider-Man. Evan Narcisse, journalist and critic, joined the development team as a writing consultant. His effort to realize Miles as a modern hero fighting injustices and social standards are wildly successful.

Creative director Brian Horton championed for Miles to be a flawed hero. In the recently published “Marvel’s Spider-Man: Miles Morales The Art of the Game,” Horton offers his thoughts on the character. He says, “He has doubts, makes mistakes, but he also refuses to give up, even when the odds are against him.” Horton’s successful direction is attributable to his fundamental understanding of the character.

Composer John Paesano returns to score the series once again. This time around,

Paesano trades triumphant brass instruments for a thumping percussion set. The soundtrack reinforces the multiple emotional moments in the script. Paesano’s flexibility as a composer is something this franchise should not take for granted. Without his score, the experience would be significantly dampened.

“Marvel’s Spider-Man: Miles Morales” is not without flaws. The game suffers from jarringly inconsistent pacing. There are several emotional scenes squandered by quick cuts and strange structural choices. These moments could have been much more effective had the pacing been slowed down. Instead, the already short run time is seemingly wasted on less important moments.

With that being said, the game is still a wildly successful Spider-Man story. It is a brutally honest take on what it means to be a hero nowadays. In a genre saturated with explosions and shallowness, “Marvel’s Spider-Man: Miles Morales” is a refreshingly human story, thanks to excellent writing, focused direction, and a memorable score.

## Stuff It



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Zachary Opalko held a stuffed animal at the school’s Stuff It event.

## *Hand Sanitizer, continued from page 2*

at La Roche, McCarthy worked as a nurse. She said that her goals as a nurse include keeping people safe and healthy while relieving their illnesses.

“Nurses promote health, prevent disease, and help clients cope with illness. We have a unique scope of practice and can practice independently. Nurses treat individuals as a whole [and are] not just focused on diseases [and] illnesses,” McCarthy said.

Her time as a nurse has qualified her to be La Roche’s chief pandemic safety officer, even though she said, “There are no specific job requirements to be a Chief Pandemic Safety Officer.”

Although McCarthy had little to say about the hand sanitizer on campus, she said she was pleased with La Roche’s number of positive covid-19 tests. The implemented testing that took place at the start of the semester resulted in seven positive results

Since those initial tests at the start of the semester, random covid-19 testing has begun across campus. The La Roche athletes have a testing schedule in place, and according to McCarthy, one of those tests has come back positive.

“We do have surveillance testing in place for the spring semester. Students are notified by email if they are chosen to be tested,” McCarthy commented. “[On] March 3, I was notified of our first positive case since we began the surveillance testing.”

All the team members of the student who tested positive must quarantine either on or off campus.

La Roche requires quarantining for anyone who presents even slight symptoms of covid-19, but they do not have to do so for 14 days anymore.

“If any student or employee presents with symptoms, we do ask them to quarantine for 10 days,” McCarthy said. “We will continue to keep the same covid-19 mitigating measures in place that we had in the fall. Mask up, social distance, and wash your hands. Best advice around.”

La Roche is also continuing their daily screening for anyone looking to enter the campus buildings.

McCarthy said, “The screening we conduct on campus is effective.

Having everyone screened everyday allows us to ensure that the screening is actually taking place. In addition, since the information is submitted into a data base, if there is a need for contact tracing, we can easily follow up with close contacts.”

To ensure that she is doing everything she can for students besides enforcing basic measures, McCarthy said that she attends health-related meetings every week.

“I attend weekly health department meetings that include representatives from both the state and local health departments. Participants can ask questions and get feedback immediately. I also receive updates directly from the CDC on any regulation changes,” McCarthy said.

McCarthy said she is confident that La Roche University will have another semester with a low number of positive test results.

***“I am told that some people are sensitive to the chemicals used in the sanitizer and it can irritate their skin. I suggest either***



## Cloudy Days



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## Covid Testing, continued from page 1

On that date, McCarthy said, five students and two staff members tested positive for covid-19.

Tests offered that day were funded by the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), McCarthy said.

"The ACHD offered this service to all colleges and universities in Allegheny County free of charge," she said. "The service covered the Curative van on campus, staffing for the day, and processing of tests."

As of March 3, La Roche had conducted approximately 100 random surveillance tests. The first positive result from that process was recorded March 3, McCarthy said.

She said the school plans to conduct approximately 400 more covid-19 tests throughout the duration of the semester.

## Writers' Center, continued from page 4

hesitations or nervousness they might have had about coming in."

Students feeling relaxed and welcome in their appointments is something that all of the Writers' Center tutors strive for.

"I think students are becoming more comfortable with Zoom after all these months in the pandemic," Bennett said. "It's not as overwhelming as it was at first."

"Presenting your writing and talking about it," Student Writers' Center Tutor Katherine Friend said, "can sometimes be intimidating. I think the idea of eTutoring appeals to many students because they can kind of hang out while I read through their paper behind the scenes."

"I understand that in-person or online appointments can be anxiety provoking," Friend continued. "I have found that when a student has the benefit of a face-to-face or online appointment, they usually come in very unsure and nervous and leave feeling more confident and directed. There is a special part of working with a person you can see, and I have found that it personalizes the appointments

way more and makes the writing consultants seem more approachable to the students."

Through eTutoring appointments, BouDargham describes them as an appointment in which "a student would upload their paper and I would leave my comments and feedback directly on their work, and then I would send it back to them."

Alcaraz accounts for this semester's eTutoring popularity due to a rise of safety concerns on campus. "I think it is a mix of fear because of the pandemic," Alcaraz said, "and commodity. In eTutoring, the student does not actually have to attend the appointment, just submit a paper to the tutor."

Student concerns are the top priority of the Writers' Center, especially when it involves their writing.

Friend said that students should bring their concerns to the Center instead of feeling a lack of confidence about their papers.

"Don't stress about having a perfect paper to bring to the Writers' Center," Friend said. "If you already had a perfect draft,

there would be no reason to stop in. We understand how difficult the writing process is, so we want you to feel comfortable and confident. We are here to help, not judge."

Ganni also said she feels that student comfort in the Writers' Center is important, but she said she also believes in discomfort. She said that to succeed, some students must step out of their comfort zone and go to the Center.

Ganni said, "If we stay only in areas of comfort in life, we learn little. In the Writers' Center, we work hard to lessen anxiety. That is one of the reasons we love meeting in real-time. We can get to know [each other], and we find that helps."

Taking risks is advised by Bennett when questioning whether or not it is worth it to make an appointment at the Writers' Center.

"Many students tell me they are the worst writer I will ever meet in my life. I reassure them that I understand how that feels," Bennett said. "It is common to feel we are lacking some knowledge that everyone else has. The truth is we all have unique qualities that

## Graduation, continued from page 1

planned to attend a graduation ceremony. Students were required to respond by March 15 if they wanted the opportunity to attend the ceremony, though few details regarding the ceremony were offered.

"As we monitor the state of the covid-19 pandemic, we expect that there will be continued restrictions on the size of social gatherings to ensure the health and safety of you and your families," the email read. "For this reason, we are tentatively planning for multiple smaller ceremonies over several days during the weekend of May 8 and 9."

Those ceremonies may be outdoors with strict guest limitations, the email said.





## SGA, continued from page 1

Candance Introcaso about what the mural design will include and where it will be located on campus.

"Sister Candance has a few questions about what the design can be or the location," Francis said. "We did propose the big wall going into CC Square."

The SGA members said they are excited about the new mural, and how La Roche has approved of their mural plans.

SGA'S Director of Nontraditional and Graduate Affairs Tashai Thompson said, "It feels good to know that something we talked about was approved by the University and the Board."

Although board members approved the mural, there is a lack of direction present about where SGA will go with it.

"We have to work on a design and come up with a design," SGA's Secretary Gracie Kon said. "We had a loose design before, but we really need to start working on one now."

Fellow mural committee member and SGA's Director of Multicultural and International Affairs Richard Nziza proposed that the mural be composed by the

students from the University. "We should come up with a committee of different art majors, and we could give them inspiration and they could put that into the art," he said.

David Day, SGA Sponsor and Director of Student Development, said he liked this idea and proposed a contest in which La Roche students submit designs for the mural. He said this would be beneficial not just to the mural, but to the campus, because it will showcase students with different experiences and abilities.

Student artistic abilities are not the only ones SGA wants to showcase.

On Feb. 23, the members of SGA voted to approve of a new club at La Roche. The Tennis Club will require students to have at least a 2.5 GPA to participate and students need no level of experience.

Students also do not need experience to run for a position in La Roche University's SGA. Kon and Florence are heading the election committee for the upcoming April SGA elections.

Florence said she feels like SGA is a great starting place for

students who want to be involved in campus life. "I feel like SGA is a great place," Florence said, "to step in and be involved on campus. We have director roles that are still involved but are not as demanding as other positions."

Florence also said that you do not have to be a first-semester freshman to be involved in the organization. "I really like to recruit new or transfer students. I am looking forward to doing more to get underclassmen more involved," Florence said.

Individual SGA members also worked toward their own goals for the remainder of the academic year:

- Jared Woods, SGA's director of athletics and intramurals, said he is not hopeful that La Roche will have intramurals this semester. "There is still nothing we can really do with intramurals. The gym and fields are booked for practices, and there is not much we can do," Woods said. He said he is going to keep researching what La Roche can do as the weather becomes warmer.

- Nziza discussed the GLOBE Fashion Show that La

Roche cancelled last year due to the covid-19 pandemic. "GLOBE set a date for the Fashion Show to be April 3 of this year," Nziza said. "We need to meet and plan how we are going to do the Show, because it does not seem very promising." Whether or not the Fashion Show will happen during the spring semester is still unknown.

- Jason Saldano Jr., SGA's director of design and technology, began to head the committee for this year's SGA Project. According to Florence, it will be an event with "food trucks and music and stuff that can be done outside. We can make it a community event."

- SGA's Director of Residential Affairs Reagan Roblaski said that there might be a raffle in March for La Roche Students. "We are thinking about maybe doing a raffle in March. We are starting to work on that. Details will come soon," Roblaski said. What the raffle will be for has not yet been announced, but Roblaski said the student body will know a few days before, if they end up having it.

## Orr, continued from page 8

***"Don Orr had class. He liked to laugh and he wasn't afraid to talk about big subjects. We had many long conversations on the nature of God and existence. Don was a Buddhist and said he believed in reincarnation. I do hope that's going well for him."***

***-Ed Stankowski***

in the program in its early years.

"Over his 40 years at La Roche, he has been a mentor, advisor and friend to countless undergraduate and graduate students. Having been a hallway neighbor of his for over 15 years, I would see Don meeting frequently with students to discuss course materials or life in general. Don always appeared to be genuinely interested in his

Academic Senate committees at the school. He was the chair of the Contracts Committee for 15 years, according to Forti. He was also involved in the Curriculum Committee and the Human Resources Committee.

Forti described him as a "tremendously supportive colleague."

"I have counted on him to

where he would provide me with perspective and share his wisdom."

Other members of the La Roche faculty also remembered Orr fondly.

"I had the opportunity to work with Dr. Orr for many, many years and thought very highly of him," Lynn Archer, professor and chair of the information systems program, said.

Ed Stankowski, a professor in the English department, said he considered Orr to be a friend.

"Don Orr had class," Stankowski said. "He liked to laugh and he wasn't afraid to talk about big subjects. We had many long conversations on the nature of God and existence. Don was a Buddhist and said he believed in reincarnation. I do hope that's going well for him."





## Villella, continued from page 3

So far, her biggest project has been hosting a four-part virtual workshop series to help students hone important study skills.

Villella said she's available to meet with students individually to offer extra help with an array of topics, ranging from time management and goal setting to study skills and exam preparation.

She'll also be assisting with the Providence Institute, a program that offers extra support for students who struggled academically in high school.

Villella said it's important for students to know that they can turn to her for help. She said she's able to assist students in person, via email, over the phone or on Zoom.

"If you're not doing as well in your classes as you'd like or you feel swamped with everything you have on your plate, reach out for that assistance," she said. "You're never alone here at La Roche. You have resources and help and support – and I want to be a major person for that on campus."

Villella holds a master's degree in student affairs from Carlow University. She said her time at Carlow allowed her to gain experience in teaching workshops, working with students with disabilities and helping students through their career development office.

But her intimate knowledge of La Roche is what is best helping her thrive in her new role, Villella said.

"I am so familiar with the values that are ingrained in La Roche and the way that's woven into everything. To be able to come full circle is so important. Being a student here, it makes a great strength for me in knowing firsthand that student focus," Villella said.

As a student, Villella said she felt she found a family within the La Roche community. It's been touching, she said, to see that family welcome her back.

"As a student, La Roche was also so student-centered and student-focused," she said. "No matter what I was involved in, whatever activities or whatever classes I was involved in, the care and concern for the student, for me, always came through."

Now, Villella said, she's eager to offer the same support for

Villella highlighted certain experiences at La Roche that are helping her adjust well to a job at her alma mater. The most important experience, she said, was serving as the editor-in-chief of the La Roche Courier, the school's student newspaper.

"That was one of the most exceptional experiences at La Roche, because it really gave you the opportunity to appreciate the story that everyone has to tell and to really be in touch with the La Roche community," she said.

Not only did Villella use the Courier to hone skills in writing, editing, photography and layout, but it also provided an opportunity to form connections with important resources on campus that help her as the Coordinator of Student Success.

"Being a part of the Courier really helps me in this role today," Villella said. "I see a direct connection because it helps me to know the structure of the institution, it helps me to know direct contact people for different resources. I don't think that would be as strong if I hadn't been involved with the Courier."

As a student, Villella said, the thought of returning to La Roche was always a hope in the back of her mind.

But what she never could have expected was beginning a new career in the midst of a global pandemic.

Finding new ways to connect with students when much of the college experience is virtual, Villella said, has been the biggest challenge for her.

"Ideally, you want to be here, you want to have availability, you want to be there as much as you can for the students," she said, explaining that she's on campus Mondays, Wednesdays and alternating Fridays.

Once pandemic restrictions ease, Villella said she's eager for more large-scale in-person workshops and the opportunity to talk with students in the classroom.

"I think once we get to a point where that's possible, it'll be fantastic to be able to engage with students that way," Villella said.

In the meantime, however, Villella said she is excited to connect with students in whatever way is easiest for them. Students can reach out to Villella at Lauren.

## Snow at Magdalen Chapel



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## Play Station 5, continued from page 7

games ensures that there is always something to do. However, it is not a bad idea to wait until the PlayStation 5 has a larger library to experience.

Beyond the increased performance, PlayStation 4 and 5 games are a joy to play thanks to the massively improved controller, the DualSense. The DualSense is a monumental leap forward from its predecessors, offering increased ergonomics, stronger vibrations, and adaptive triggers.

The adaptive triggers aim to increase immersion, providing resistance when nocking an arrow or swinging from rooftop to rooftop as Spider Man. They are mostly successful, but often come across as a rarely used gimmick, rather than a groundbreaking feature.

The increased vibration is truly impressive however. The controller rumbles in specific patterns to simulate the movement seen on screen. The roar of a car engine or wind whipping by is extremely immersive thanks to

console is perfect for those with a busy schedule seeking to play video games.

A PlayStation Plus subscription is still required to play online, but Sony has introduced several benefits to increase value. PlayStation Plus on PlayStation 5 grants access to the PlayStation Plus Collection, a group of twenty games included with your subscription. This, along with new free games every month make PlayStation Plus an excellent purchase.

The PlayStation 5 costs \$499. The all-digital version, which lacks a disc drive and is based entirely on streaming and digital purchases, costs \$399. The value is truly remarkable, considering that the performance is on par with a high-end gaming computer. Furthermore, the option between standard and all-digital means that nearly anyone can experience the PlayStation 5 without breaking the bank.

Sony has created something special with the PlayStation 5. While games are limited