

THE OBSERVER

Broward College Student Newspaper

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Broward College Celebrates MLK & Black History Month

Megan Vineberg

Editor-in-Chief

Falling on Feb. 1 and continuing until March 1, Broward College has dove into the celebration of both Black History Month and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. As mentioned in a prior press release, Broward College has a long standing commitment to equity, social justice and inclusion.

Adjustments were made to the event due to the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing for a virtual event to be held on Jan. 14. Historically, the holiday always fell on the third Monday in January. This year, the actual day that honors King takes place on Jan. 17.

Guest speakers presented the history of how Martin Luther King Jr. Day became a holiday in 1986, thanks to President Ronald Reagan, and how societally we can be more mindful and respectful of others.

Martin Luther King Day was the first holiday to truly recognize and honor an African American's achievements on a federal

level. To accompany the holiday, a National Day of Service was brought about in 1994 by former Pennsylvania Senator Harris Wolford and Atlanta Congressman John Lewis. It was signed by then-President Bill Clinton.

Jacksonville News reports that, in celebration of King's life and message of equality, opportunity and service to others, community members will be joining parades, breakfasts, events and more.

A Nobel Peace Prize winner, Martin Luther King Jr. was born January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia to Martin Luther King Sr., a Baptist minister and Alberta Williams. King passed away in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968.

In life, he went as far as receiving his doctorate degree in theology. As reported by history.com, King helped organize the first civil rights movement known as the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955. A powerful communicator, King appealed to the masses, even those with vastly different ideals about how, as a people, we should conduct ourselves in society.

He even won favor of government officials and Northern Whites. King's speeches gathered a crowd, his "I Have A Dream" with over 250,000 in attendance outside the Lincoln Memorial.

Guest speaker Dr. Valerie Patterson, Director of the FIU African American Diaspora Studies Program, explains, "It starts with us [as a community]. We must shift priorities to create community."

To have the power to influence others and to use it for good doing is what he stood for. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 then abolished poll tax, and prohibited racial discrimination. In the words of King himself, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only light can do that."

It is an unfortunate setback that, for the time being, no formal grants for the MLK Day of Service at Broward College will be awarded this year due to budget cuts at Broward College. For 2020, Broward College awarded 29 community groups with the Broward College MLK Day of



Martin Luther King, Jr. gives his famous "I Have A Dream" speech during the march on Washington. Photo courtesy of the Washington Examiner.

Service Award to help nonprofits and community organizations create impactful service projects in the community. In 2021, the MLK Day of Service awarded \$120,000 to 29 community organizations to fund initiatives ranging from beautification to education projects that support veterans and low-income populations, made possible through the Florida Legislature and MLK Day of Service Advisory Board.

Wolford, who co-authored the original documentation for the

National Day of Service, led 150 service projects with thousands of corporate sponsors, community leaders, and students throughout the region all participating to honor King's legacy. Wolford, who co-authored the original documentation for the National Day of Service, led 150 service projects with thousands of corporate sponsors, community leaders, and students throughout the region all participating to honor King's legacy.

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The Next Big Thing: COVID-19 Vaccination, Booster Shot Incentive

Megan Vineberg

Editor-in-Chief

As students return from the Spring semester at Broward College, the COVID-19 pandemic spikes.

With a new variant of the Corona virus known as Omicron, and cases rising in the state of Florida, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) remains steadfast on vaccination to those who are eligible as the best way to protect against severe illness that require hospitalization.

From Miami Dade to Broward County, hospitals continue to run understaffed, and a number of new patients are being admitted daily.

In order to assist with vaccination efforts and prevent spreading the virus, Broward College is providing on-site vaccinations and testing through UrgentMed, and incentives for students to prioritize their individual health as well as that of their families.

Broward College will remain in Action Plan 3 with measures still in place to maintain student, faculty, and

staff health.

On-campus events with more than 10 people will be suspended for the time being, and additional adjustments will be made as needed.

Classes will be held in-person and will be prioritized over recreational events on campus.

Spread of COVID-19 and all known variants will be minimized in accordance to the following regulations:

Vaccination remains the best defense against the COVID-19 virus, and known variants, whenever possible.

The COVID-19 booster shot for those 18 years and older at least two months after receiving initial Johnson & Johnson vaccination or six months after receiving the Pfizer or Moderna vaccination. Those who are 16-17 years of age may also receive booster shots. Further detail can be found on the CDC webpage.

While indoors, masks are strongly recommended. Masks should be worn covering the nose and mouth.

Regularly getting tested for COVID-19 and other variants

is advised, especially if/when exposed to any persons who are positive for the virus.

When ill, stay home in order to avoid contact with others and prevent spread.

Those students and employees who test positive from within the college should report online as designated.

If not already vaccinated, students can find the COVID-19 vaccination and booster shot incentive applications online.

As provided by Angela Rodriguez-Soto of Broward College Talent and Culture, 418 employee applications were approved for the booster initiative.

Also, 129 applications were approved for the vaccine incentive.

In regards to Broward College students, Tara Jones of Student Financial Services said 1378 were approved for the student vaccine incentives, and 466 were approved for the student vaccine booster incentives.

Vaccine incentives began in mid-August of 2021, while the vaccine booster incentive



Broward College aims to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus and additional strains through the Vaccine and Booster Shot Incentive program. Photo courtesy of Getty Images.

program was jumpstarted in December after a rise in cases similar to that of August 2021.

According to Jones, both incentives have been extended through May 3, 2022.

Additionally, testing and vaccination will be offered through Feb. 2 through UrgentMed from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Mondays at Central Campus in bldg. 10, room 115 and 115 A, on Tuesdays on North Campus in bldg. 60, room 207 and on South Cam-

pus in bldg. 65, room 110.

To apply for the vaccine and/or booster incentive, visit broward.edu/coronavirus.

According to Tashika President, District Director, Emergency Management, Broward College, will reevaluate extending testing and vaccination services.

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Keep up with BC: what's going on around campus?

THE OBSERVER

Broward College Student Newspaper

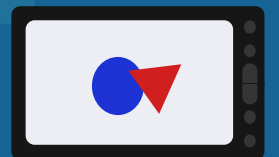
WANTS:



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GRAPHIC DESIGNERS



PHOTOGRAPHERS



VIDEOGRAPHERS



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Campus Safety at Broward College Conducts Safety Walk

Maya Mohan
North Bureau Chief

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Broward College Logo

Broward College takes campus safety and security very seriously with plenty of resources like the Broward Safety Connection App that contains tools such as the campus safety call button, SOS button, safe corridor, and check in feature in order to provide a safe and secure experience to all students.

Broward College also has the BC Alert System to provide notifications to students about any incidents that take place on campus. According to the 2021-2022 Annual Security Report, Broward College employs “non-sworn, unarmed Campus Safety Officers (which include Officers, Corporals, and Sergeants).”

They provide public safety

assistance to students, faculty, staff, and visitors as well as respond to and investigate any incidents on Broward College campuses. Broward College has a Campus Safety Office located at: Central Campus - Bldg. 20, North Campus - Bldg. 46, and South Campus - Bldg. 71. Students, faculty, staff, or visitors can reach any Campus Safety Office by calling 954-201-4357.

While there are not many direct reviews about safety at Broward College, it is ranked #233 out of 1,387 for safest college campuses in America, according to Niche. However, this does not necessarily reflect how safe the student’s feel on campus. When asked, “On a

scale of 1-10, 1 being unsafe and 10 being safe, how do you feel on campus?” Tori Wilson, a student on North Campus responded with a 6

One of the reasons for Wilson’s score were the unsettling encounters with individuals seeking signatures for petitions on campus. Another student named Drekaria Miller also had something to say about these individuals. “Some petitioners don’t know how to take no for an answer.” This issue further strains how comfortable students may feel on campus.

According to Lt. Terry McDonald, “we recently did experience some solicitors who were seeking information related to voting, campaigns, and

COVID.” The Lieutenant also stated, “we have had a small number of students and faculty alert us about solicitation.”

If any student does spot individuals asking for signatures, let campus safety know so that they can be moved to a specific “free speech” location that does not interrupt the learning environment on campus.

On Oct. 26, 2021 at 8 p.m., North Campus conducted a safety walk to identify and report any areas of concern around the campus. The walk was carried out by the Department of Safety, Security Emergency Preparedness (DSSEP), Security Operations Center Manager Michaela Scott-Williams, Access Control Manager Timothy Andrusek, Lt. Terry McDonald, Sgt. A J Castellon, Cpl. J Sapon, CSO A Lowe, Facilities Supervisor Harold Celicourt, ASC Employees, and finally students from Science Club and Student Life.

During the walk, some issues were found. First off, the back entrance of the Library/ASC could become a blind spot when individuals leave the building; therefore one of the recommendations proposed is that the door should have either a monitor or window to view outside before exiting.

Secondly, walking along Building 41 to the bus stop appeared to be very dark, including the bus stop itself. Recommendations were made

to add extra lighting. The same suggestion to add additional lighting was made for the tennis court, as well as between Buildings 51 and 52, the Lake/East gate, the southwest side of Building 60-300, and lastly the walkway between Buildings 46 and 47.

The surrounding bushes also needed to be trimmed down. During the walk, participants found that the Omni Cave could potentially be unsafe with benches and seats in isolated areas. The area could become dangerous for students who walk in that direction to go to the parking lot.

The possibility of adding security cameras and the removal of various seating was recommended. According to Sgt. Andres Castellon, “for the campus safety walk, the majority of the recommendations have been completed or are in progress.” The safety walk provided students and staff the opportunity to work with Campus Safety and voice their concerns.

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Journalism Boot Camp Gives Students Chance to Learn from Pros

Ryan Marin
Staff Writer

The 17th annual Observer Journalism Boot Camp will be held on Feb. 11th via Zoom.

This boot camp allows students to participate in various workshops led by professionals in the communication field, receive feedback on their work, discuss journalism and news media with journalists currently working in the industry, and ask any questions they may have about the challenges and unique opportunities provided by working in this field.

With the rise of Covid, the boot camps the past two years have been done remotely.

While remote events have a unique set of challenges, holding the event over zoom has its benefits, says Jennifer Shapiro, Coordinator of Student Publications at Broward College.

With the convenience of Zoom, speakers do not have to be local to South Florida; they can simply call in from anywhere around the world. This offers students the opportunity to speak with guests they would not have had the opportunity to speak with otherwise.

The speakers for the 2022 bootcamp include Adam Thompson from the Wallstreet

Journal, Lauren Fyke, Public Relations executive with JM Lexus, and Broward College and Observer alumni Jossie Carbonare, reporter at WPBF Channel 25 News, with other speakers possibly announced later.

Carbonare found great value in the boot camp she attended 15 years ago when she was a BC student, as the event inspired her to stay in the journalism field.

“I brought a brand-new notepad to my first boot camp and left with it entirely full of writing and notes,” she said. “I used it as a reference point for a long time and I still have it in storage somewhere. I learned so much at these boot camps.”

Carbonare also looks back fondly on her time with the Observer, as learning how to work under deadlines helped prepare her for her current job in television news.

This boot camp is geared towards allowing students the opportunity to discover a love for journalism they may not know they had as well as giving them an insight into a variety of professions they can have in the field of journalism, and also network, said Shapiro.

“I hope students take advantage of the opportunity to learn

from professionals in the field and network with them. You never know where the connections you make today will lead you in the future,” said Shapiro.

Shapiro recalls that during previous boot camps, former students made connections with speakers, which led to some of them getting internships at CBS News and a magazine.

Aside from the Annual Journalism Boot Camp, the Observer also hosts a weekly Observer Workshop Series, featuring more speakers in the communication and journalism field.

Last semester, some of the speakers included Deb Wilker from the Hollywood Reporter and Billboard Magazine; Brittany Wallman from the Sun-Sentinel, and Katrice Graham from UF’s College of Journalism.

This semester, some of the speakers include Dave Hyde, sports reporter with the Sun-Sentinel and Sun-Sentinel photographer, Joe Cavaretta.

For a schedule of the upcoming boot camp and Zoom link, or to find out about the Observer Workshop Series, please email Shapiro at jshapiro@broward.edu.



Madeline Fox from WLRN News speaks at the Journalism Boot Camp in February, 2020. Photo Courtesy of Jennifer Shapiro

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It's All About The Wipeout: Students Have Fun at Welcome Back Event

Naomi Volcy
Staff Writer

Broward College's Central Campus Student Life hosted a Wipeout event Wednesday, Jan. 12 on the patio and lawn area behind building 19.

This event was one of three in the series of "Welcome Back" events that occurred the first week of the Spring 2022 semester.

The Wipeout event had two bounce houses and one trampoline from SouthFloridaBounce.com – the K2 Cliffhanger Slide 33 Ft Tall, the Toxic Revenge Obstacle, and the Bungee Trampoline.

There was a DJ playing music, Icestasy Italian Ice for refreshments, and Student Life blankets given to students, so they can lay down and relax on the lawn area.

The event was free for students to enjoy, though the only stipu-

lation was that students sign a waiver form.

Lauren Adamo, Director of Student Life, explains, "Because this involves physical activity we have students sign a liability waiver and get a bracelet, so we know that they signed in. Usually, we swipe (Student ID) them in, so if we want to follow up with surveys and get more information from them. If they enjoyed the event, do they want more events, did they meet other people, which is always our goal to have other students connect with each other and connect with Broward College."

Alexander De Jesús, a College Academy student, states, "I was not expecting the event, I was just coming out of class and was like some bouncy houses? Let me check out what is going on... for the Italian Ice,



Broward College hosts a Wipeout Event to encourage students to engage with one another in a fun, interactive environment. Naomi Volcy/The Observer



the guy was nice and gave it out really quick, for the cliffhanger it was pretty hard. The Toxic Revenge Obstacle was easier and more light-hearted. For the Bungee Trampoline, I hit like four flips. They (South Florida Bounce workers) will help you out if you want to do a trick...they show you how to do it step by step. It (Wipeout Event) is overall fun."

Adamo mentions that "This was actually an event we planned to do. Honestly, it is easier when we work with

outside vendors to put the events together... The big events are easier than our smaller ones because they are more labor intensive. We still need more student volunteers... Our campus activities board, which is a scholarship position, is still recruiting students. The students help us come up with the events, set-up, and work the events."

For more information on Student Life events at Central Campus, or to keep up with the dates of these events, be sure to follow the Student

Life's Instagram page @bccentralsl.

If you are interested in becoming a student volunteer, visit your campus's Student Life office.





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South Campus: paggrey2010@fau.edu
Central&Downtown Campus: hadley@fau.edu

Did you know?

FAU ranks as the most diverse public university in Florida

University of Central Florida



ucf.edu

Location

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Contact

admission@ucf.edu

Did you know?

UCF ranks 8th among national universities "least likely to leave graduates in debt"

Florida International University



fiu.edu

Location

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Contacts

Jawhara Graham, jhgraham@fiu.edu

Did you know?

FIU Law School Students have for 7 years consecutively earned the highest scores on the Florida bar exam

University of North Florida



unf.edu

Location

Jacksonville

Known For

Business and Jazz Studies

Contact

Tori Dillard, tori.dillard@unf.edu

Did you know?

UNF owns 1,050 acres of wetlands for research

University of Florida



ufl.edu

Location

Gainesville

Known For

Overall great academic programs, such as their journalism and engineering programs

Contacts

CLASTransfer@advising.ufl.edu

Did you know?

UF has its own house on campus for bats, part of the Florida Bat Conservancy program

University of West Florida



UNIVERSITY of WEST FLORIDA

uwf.edu

Location

Pensacola

Known For

Leads the Gulf South Conference in all-time championships and all-sports trophies

Contacts

transfer@uwf.edu

Did you know?

UWF's campus is encased in nature, and even has its own gator, Captain Thunder

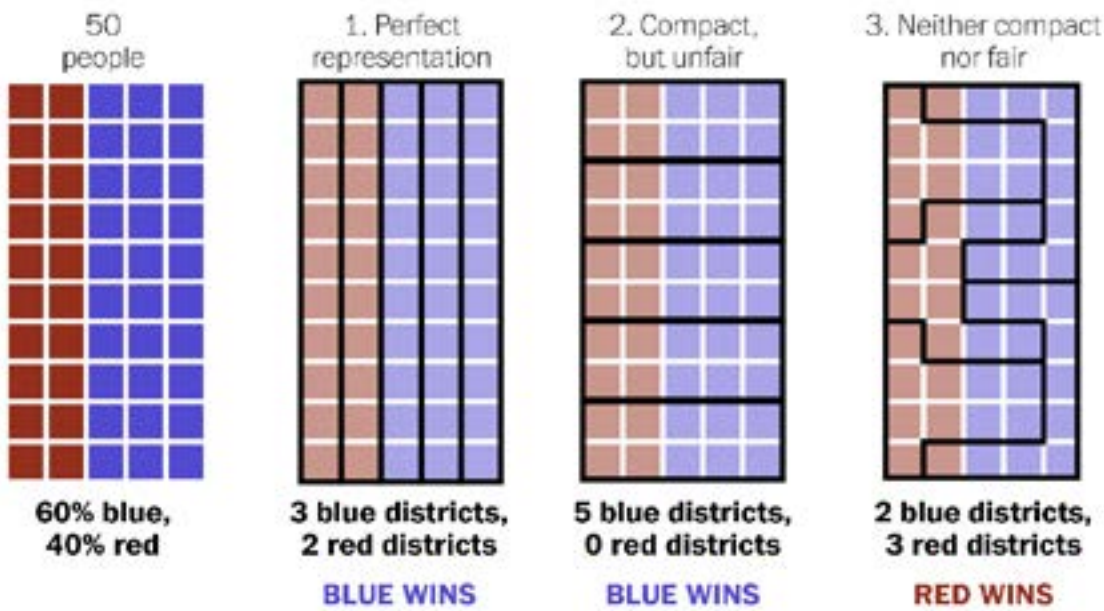
smalg5@mail.broward.edu

All on the Line Non-Profit aims to end gerrymandering

Maya Mohan
North Bureau Chief

Gerrymandering, explained

Three different ways to divide 50 people into five districts



WASHINGTONPOST.COM/WONKBLOG

Adapted from Stephen Nass

Image courtesy of Washingtonpost.com

Gerrymandering is a process that has been restricting voting rights for centuries. “All on the Line” is an organization that’s sole mission is to end gerrymandering by creating fair maps.

According to the organization’s website, “Gerrymandering contributes to polarization

and dysfunction in our political system.” The concept is named after Massachusetts Gov. Elbridge Gerry. When he was elected into office in 1810, the party he affiliated with, Democratic Republican, redrew district maps to weaken the opposing party for future elections.

Redistricting has posed a problem for many underrepresented minority groups. Recently, Latinos located around the Dallas-Fort Worth area have dramatically increased, allowing for them to potentially become their own congressional district. This would give that community the power to

elect someone that best represents them and their needs.

However due to Gerrymandering, this idea was crushed. During the redistricting process, the politicians that represent the Republican state of Texas had redrawn the lines to give the most power to the Majority-white congressional districts of Texas.

This misrepresentation could have dire consequences. Policies and laws that are introduced out of areas that have been gerrymandered are not a true representation of what people want.

According to Former United States Attorney General Holder, in 2011 Democrats ended up with less seats in the House of Representatives due to gerrymandering.

According to All on the Line, Florida is one of the nine priority states in need of fair representation for the next decade. Currently, the proposed map for Florida Redistricting 2022 favors the GOP especially with the high increase in population since 2010.

More specifically, according to the University of Florida’s Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), over the past ten years, Broward County has seen a large increase in the population of Hispanics and Latinos.

Redistricting in Broward should reflect those changes by increasing the diversity of com-

missioners, who are elected to represent these areas. During an event sponsored by “All on the Line”, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton raised the question, “How can we be in a congressional district that represents us equally?” The answer to that is simple. Ending gerrymandering starts with the people.

We underestimate the power of ordinary citizens. Having the freedom to vote and acting on it can jump start the process to fair and equal representation. As ordinary citizens, it is important to get in touch with the senators and representatives that are in charge of the redistricting process. Keep the pressure on the people responsible.

Disinformation is part of the problem as well. Getting information from unreliable sources such as social media can mislead and spread false news, causing citizens to vote without knowing all the facts.

Instead, get information from the least biased and credible sources such as C-Span, The New York Times, or The Washington Post. Also, be willing to compare and contrast news sources with left and right wing bias such as CNN and Fox News, in order to form a well-informed opinion.

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Theranos: a thin line between Fraud & Visionary.

Khian Reid
Staff Writer

How did a company set to revolutionize the healthcare industry by placing affordable diagnostic tests in the homes of consumers become a global symbol of “fake it till you make it” gone wrong?

For John Carreyrou, the Wall Street investigative journalist whose article led to further investigations by the United States’ Department of Justice, it does not come as a huge shock that Theranos turned into a flop and quite essentially and deservingly, a perceived criminal enterprise led by Founder Elizabeth Holmes.

According to Carreyrou, the Nobel Peace Prize in medicine is usually awarded to candidates at least 60 years old and there is a valid reason for this, “it is after a lifetime of research and work, that they’ve added value.”

This is contrasted by Holmes’ resume, which in-

cludes starting her medical engineering company at the age of 19 having dropped out of Stanford University at the end of her sophomore year. Surely, the success stories of tech entrepreneurs like Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg shares the similar young college dropout factor; but, for Carreyrou, this is where endeavors in medicine and technology differ, with medicine requiring the more conservative journey.

While it is true that all great inventions begin with an idea, one must ask the question, where did Theranos go wrong? According to the prosecutors in the trial of Elizabeth Holmes, it was Holmes’s manipulation of the truth, the lying and deceiving actions towards her investors that was the beginning of the end of the rise of Theranos.

The prosecution was able to call 29 witnesses to the stand, some of whom were investors, doctors, patients and scientists, who all helped layout the deception and fraud which placed



Elizabeth Holmes.

Image courtesy of Inc.com

founder Elizabeth Holmes at the center of this fraud.

Holmes’ main defense seems to have been that she was a victim of her partner’s control and abuse, and that she had no intention to commit fraud. The witnesses, however, did not excuse her and found her an es-

sential ringleader of manipulation and deception who was in charge of the company and a primary force influencing her investors.

So where do we go from here? The Securities Exchange Commission advises future entrepreneurs to learn from the

mistakes of Holmes and advises that “innovators seeking to disrupt an industry must tell investors what it can do today and not just what it hopes for in the future.”



Image courtesy of Wikipedia.com

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Why You Must Experience *Don't Look Up* At Least Once...

Yestin Arvin Gochuico
Staff Writer

American filmmaker Adam McKay and his latest political satire film have audiences divided, and it's unironically proving the film's premise.

Don't Look Up follows a story of two astronomers on a press tour to convince the world and its leaders of an extinction-level event after discovering an imminent comet impact on Earth. The film's satirical comedy displays how American tribalism in modern partisan politics is detrimental to initiatives against existential threats, primarily climate change, and exposes humanity's greatest pitfall: gullibility to misinformation.

Boasting a star-studded lineup, McKay's production team cast blockbuster giants Leonardo DiCaprio as Dr. Randall Mindy, and Jennifer Lawrence as Kate Dibiasky — the main leads trying to save the world from extinction. Award-winning legend Meryl Streep also joined the cast as an apathetic US President named Janie Orlean.

The main cast's stellar performance earned them a nomination for Best Actor and Best

Actress at the recent Golden Globe Awards; several analysts expect the film to get more at the coming Academy Awards.

Even with nominations from prestigious award ceremonies, the public opinion of the film has been erratic, garnering mixed reviews from audiences and critics alike. It failed to appease top critics on film review websites, gaining a measly 54 percent on Rotten Tomatoes and 7.3/10 on IMDb. In contrast, it had massive success in viewership with favorable audience metrics showing otherwise, setting a new Netflix record as the most-watched film during the first week of release at 152 million streamed hours.

Audiences who loved the film praised the storytelling of its not-so-subtle irony that righteously delivered grittiness and in-your-face humor. While the film had its fair share of laughs, the impending doom after realizing that there's "nothing to do" felt the most unsettling. Those who didn't love it shared how it trivializes climate inaction while painting media and politics in a bad light under a liberalist lens.

While reviews are heavily



Image courtesy of Netflix.

divided, one thing is for sure; this film succeeded in making people aware of today's political climate.

The conflicting emotions delivered by the film through a humorous take on a hopeless atmosphere had people grasping at straw. The seemingly controllable comet situation becomes uncontrollable because of capitalist greed, science denialism, and idiocracy. It makes sure the viewers grab ahold of the notion that, although such scenarios were considered unrealistic before, they're a harsh reality—coincidentally similar to the pandemic desensitizing people to the point of denialism.

McKay expressed to digital publisher Space.com how he decided to make a disaster film from a realist perspective. He revealed that the comet was "a Clark Kent-level disguise for the climate crisis," calling out the people who deny climate change, who reduce it to mere "careerism." He also noted similarities between his film and that of the pandemic with "incredible amounts of COVID denial [and] foot-dragging." He aims to expose red herrings, not necessarily life-changing outcomes. Throughout this interview, it was clear that *Don't Look Up* delivers a jarring message so obvious yet so avoided. The

world doesn't need a 10-kilometer-wide comet approaching impact to end itself, as the hands of humanity are just as capable of doing so. That's why we should try to look up when there's still a chance.

The film premiered in theaters on December 10, 2021 and Netflix on December 24, 2021. *Don't Look Up* is currently available for streaming on Netflix today.

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Unexpected Viral Trends of 2022

Gaby Small
Layout Editor

The third year of the decade is already off to a turbulent start. With the discovery of new COVID-19 variants, the lack of testing availability and cold medicine, and the CDC's constant back-and-forth about COVID-19 guidelines, the year is already proving to be stressful for many people around the country and the world. Thankfully, though, the citizens of the internet have not let the stress get to them and have instead dedicated their time to contributing to wholesome and hilarious internet memes and trends, some even related to COVID-19.

Jokes and memes have been made about COVID-19 and its variants before, and even the name "Corona" led to some people thinking the virus had something to do with the beer brand, Corona.

Recently, internet users found the COVID-19 variant, Omicron, quite similar looking to the stage name of the former B2K lead singer, Omarion.

In fact, the term "Omarion Variant" and the name Omarion itself ended up reaching its peak popularity on Google Trends from December 25th all the way to January 1st.

Coinciding with the popularity of the mistake, people started to post jokes on twitter, with Netflix writer Sylvia Obell tweeting, "Got my

booster yesterday. Omarion already ruined my life once (when he broke up B2K), I'm not about to let him do it again." Omarion has responded to the trend on TikTok on January 1st, stating that he is an artist, not a variant, and people will not have to quarantine if they see him on the street and will not have to test negative to enjoy and dance to his music.

Another COVID-19 related joke that started gaining traction in late December and is still going strong is the "The CDC says" trend. Frustrated with the CDC constantly making confusing and dangerous changes to the COVID-19 related health guidelines, Twitter users started to write out their own parody guideline announcements.

One Twitter user with the handle @catladyactivist posted "The CDC says you can now run with scissors," while another Twitter user with the handle @BookSyrup posted "The CDC says that the 5 second rule has been changed to 15 seconds. Pick that cookie up off the floor." Twitter user @zak_toscani, in stark criticism of the CDC's decision to cut the recommended duration of isolation after initial COVID-19 infection from 2 weeks to a measly 5 days, tweeted "CDC recommends splitting up your quarantine over your two 15min breaks." Though this trend does re-

mind people of how terrible the COVID-19 situation has gotten, it also gives people an outlet to express their frustration through comedic means.

By far, the trend that has really caught people's attention this month and is the most unexpected out of all of them is the Elmo vs Rocco meme.

A clip from the 4,077th episode of *Sesame Street*, which aired in 2004, was posted onto Twitter, depicting the puppet's uncharacteristically rude behavior towards his friend Zoe's imaginary friend, Rocco (who is a rock).

In the clip, Zoe withholds the last oatmeal raisin cookie from Elmo, claiming that Rocco told her he wants the cookie. Elmo then starts to go off at Zoe, telling her that Rocco will not be able to notice the difference if he gets another cookie since he is a rock, and he certainly is not alive.

Elmo's contrast in personality in this scene ended up being hysterical to many, with the original poster of the clip, @wumbooty, captioning it with "there are tears in my eyes y'all my stomach hurting." The initial tweet garnered around 450,000 likes and 25,000 retweets as of January 18th and has caused a wave of more clips being posted that highlight the one-sided feud between the two. The feud gained so much attention that Elmo himself ended up responding to the sudden



Elmo and Zoe in *Sesame Street*

Image courtesy of IMDB

exposure of his behavior by claiming that he and Zoe practiced sharing and that they are best buds forever, but also said "Elmo doesn't want to talk about Rocco."

Those 3 trends are not the only standouts of the month, as there are countless others that completely swept internet communities as well.

For one, another Elmo-sourced meme highlighting the way he pronounces "Balsamic Vinegar" went viral on TikTok and Twitter.

On the other hand, a decade old early-access game, *Project Zomboid*, trended heavily on gaming platforms such as

Twitch and YouTube, and its player base rose from 3,000 concurrent players to a steady 30,000 after the release of its upgraded multiplayer build.

2022 is already off to a great start in the world of trends and with how things are seeming this month alone, the trend landscape for this year is looking to be a diverse and creative one.

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New Movies You Won't Want to Miss

Lachin Kerbabaeva
Online Editor

Harry Potter 20th Anniversary: Return to Hogwarts has been out on HBOmax since Jan. 1.

This documentary is dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of the release of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. However, it tells the audience about the entire cycle of films.

Footage chronicles revive the brightest moments from filming, and grown actors share their memories.

For unknown reasons, actors such as Maggie Smith (Professor McGonagall), Michael Gambon (Dumbledore), Emma Thompson (Sybill Trelawney), David Thewlis (Remus Lupin), Julie Walters (Molly Weasley) did not take part in the documentary.

Also, due to the recent Twitter controversy, writer J.K. Rowling was not invited to the film. However, the genuine magic of the unity of all other actors and directors who created these extraordinary films had a great atmosphere.

For almost two hours, the audience has a chance to witness the sincere happiness of a reunion, and the real magic of love, to which so many words are devoted in Harry Potter's books.

Scream is the fifth film in the slasher franchise. It was

released on Jan. 13 as a sequel to *Scream 4* (2011).

Filming was supposed to begin in May 2020, but it was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Filming began in Wilmington, North Carolina, only on Sept. 22 under the working title *Parkside* and ended on Nov. 17, 2020.

Twenty-five years after a series of brutal murders rocked the quiet town of Woodsboro, a young woman returns to her hometown and faces horrific murder cases involving a notorious masked serial killer.

Soon another maniac begins to pursue a group of teenagers, revealing dangerous secrets of the past.

Matthew Bettinelli and Tyler Gillett directed it. Many actors from the old movies returned to their roles, such as Neve Campbell (Sidney Prescott), David Arquette (Dwight "Dewey" Riley), Courteney Cox (Gale Weathers).

Licorice Pizza was released on Dec. 25, 2021. It is an adventurous comedy by Paul Thomas Anderson about first love.

In the center of the plot is 1973, the San Fernando Valley. Gary Valentine (Cooper Hoffman), a 15-year-old actor with business acumen, meets 25-year-old Alana (Alana Haim) in line who works part-time in a school photo studio.

Gradually, the heroes become friends and business



Images courtesy of IMDB

partners, getting into comical situations involving celebrities of that time.

The Worst Person in the World hits theaters on Feb. 4. It is a dark romantic comedy-drama directed by Joachim Trier.

The film premiered at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival, with Renate Reinsve, who played the leading role, winning the award for Best Actress.

The film's narrative is conditionally divided into twelve parts, covering different episodes in the life of Julie, a 30-year-old girl living in Oslo.

At the story's beginning, she is in her early twenties, dropping out of medical school and taking photography classes.

Then there is a lull in her life - she gets a job in a bookstore, where she calmly indulges in dreams. This film spans four years of her life and tells the story of her love life, career endeavors, and search for her true self.

Cyrano was released on Jan. 20. It is a musical romantic drama film based on Edmond Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Joe Wright directed it.

The plot centers on the story

of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, who yearns for the love of the beautiful Roxane, who has fallen in love with another man named Christian de Neuvillette.

Although *Cyrano* understands that his social status and physical flaws will forever separate him from his beloved, he offers Christian his abilities as a gifted poet to bring the two lovers together. The movie played Peter Dinklage, Haley Bennett, and Kelvin Harrison Jr.

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Locke & Key Television Series Takes you on a Wild Ride

Jamonique Waite
Staff Writer

Locke & Key, a TV series on Netflix based on the comic book series written by Joe Hill and published by IDW Publishing, is centered around three children, who after the mysterious death of their father, moved into his family home with their mom. However, the past has a way of coming back to haunt us and the children are forced to run a race against time. They and others seek to hurt them - maybe eventually the world.

While the description "Chronicles of Narnia" meets "Stranger Things" meets "Riverdale" meets "The Haunting of Hill House" may suffice to bring in fans from these respective franchises to watch

this show, the storyline is great, with plot twists and scenery, and the music is also stunning. Netflix originals are a hit or miss depending on what you like, I find there is something for everyone in the realm of Netflix originals.

The cinematography is splendid and vibrant like *Stranger Things* or *Harry Potter*, with a lot of suspense and thrill and the bonus is there is no violence, which I appreciate. It displays cool sets and magic; they got these amazing keys with power which whisper to find them. However, with every new key awakens a new demon with no soul who is on the hunt for all the keys but fortunately can't hurt or take them from the Locke family because they are the rightful owner. As a result,

they prey on the bubbling emotions of love, hate, sadness and loneliness among family and friends and even between sibling rivalry to retrieve them.

Despite my love for this movie series, it left me with a few gaps when it came to the house, keys, family, and the history of it all. Where did the keys come from? What is the history of the house? Why aren't the two older kids trying to help the youngest find the keys and the origins of the well lady? Why can't adults remember the keys afterwards? Thus, leaving me with more questions than answers but I presume that it was done intentionally by the creators as this did nothing more than increase the dramatic flair and suspense.

All in all, it is the perfect balance of suspense, horror, sci-fi,



Image courtesy of IMDB



Image courtesy of Netflix

mystery, comedy (you know the little amount of comedic relief while you scratch your head trying to figure out what's going on - just enough comedy for it to still be a mystery sci-fi type movie). With a four- and half-star rating on Rotten Tomatoes and IMBD, this thriller

series is sure to take you on a wild ride; keeping you at the edge of your seat as you watch the secrets of a father unfold before your very eyes.

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'Single's Inferno' and South Korea's Obsession with Beauty

Christy Joshy
Social Media Editor

With the rise of Korean pop music or K-pop, South Korea's entertainment industry is booming. More and more international viewers are tuning into Korean dramas, films and shows. However, with this relatively newfound fame that South Korea's entertainment industry is receiving comes a lot of criticism. One example is the new Netflix dating show, *Single's Inferno*.

Single's Inferno showcases attractive Korean singles on a deserted island for nine days. During those nine days, they must "couple up" with another contestant so they can escape to Paradise, a hotel containing luxuries and privacy—a refreshing contrast from the sweltering Inferno.

However, much like the temperature of Inferno, international viewers are heating up due to the behavior displayed by some of the contestants on the show. One male contestant, by the name of Moon Se-hoon, described female contestant Shin Ji-yeon as "So white and pure."

Another male contestant,

Choi Si-hun, also added, "I like people who have light skin," when describing his ideal partner. These comments regarding appearances sparked much controversy as a discussion on South Korea's harmful beauty standards emerged.

The idea that pale, light-skinned women should be associated with purity and frailty is declining in Western society, but not so much in South Korea. Products and procedures marketed towards skin-lightening remain in high demand and have seemingly gained normalcy. Despite the country's incredible technological and economic advances, South Korea seems to be trailing behind in dismantling extreme societal expectations.

For avid fans of Korean entertainment, it's no surprise that a staggering majority of entertainers in the industry undergo numerous procedures and surgeries to achieve a look that satisfies Korea's standards.

Single's Inferno is no exception, as several fans suspect that the attractive contestants haven't always looked this way. Dr. Charles S. Lee, a plastic surgeon who is famous on the social me-



Image courtesy of Netflix

dia platform TikTok, even posted a video claiming that all but one contestant most likely had some procedure done to achieve their look, which leads one to question if South Korea's beauty standards are realistic—even for its own people.

Eurocentric ideals are rampant throughout Asia and much of the Eastern world, and South Korea is no exception.

According to Business Insider, studies have shown that one in three women in South Korea from 19-29 undergoes plastic surgery. The most common procedure is double-eyelid sur-

gery, which shapes the eye to appear larger and more prominent.

Other common surgeries include nose surgeries and glutathione injections, which aid in lightening the skin. The Korean beauty standard defines these features as "the most beautiful" but isn't concerned with the financial and psychological consequences.

As most Korean entertainers have undergone some procedures, it can have profound emotional impacts on viewers at home who don't have the luxury of altering their physical appearance. Many people idolize those they see on television and become disappoint-

ed and frustrated when faced with the mirror. Children are the most vulnerable, which reinforces the beauty standard in their minds and harms their perception of themselves, thus repeating the cycle.

Single's Inferno is a stark reminder of just how demanding beauty standards can be. However, despite the controversy, it remains a popular up-and-coming source of entertainment for the world.

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The Observer

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Nets @ Cavaliers: NBA Celebrates MLK Jr. Day

Jordan Stephenson
Staff Writer

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Kyrie Irving and the Nets participated in pregame warmups against the Cavaliers, wearing a shirt that reads, "Now is the time to make justice a reality for all."

According to the NBA, the league has been celebrating MLK Day with basketball games ever since it was first observed in 1986, and this year will be no different. More often than not, the slate of games on MLK Day each year features games in Memphis and Atlanta, as reported by Nick Gallo for NBA.com. I

n 1968, King, the civil-rights leader, who was in Memphis to support a strike by sanitation workers, was assassinated while standing on the balcony at the Lorraine Motel.

"It's a special day, a special moment, a special game," said Thunder Center Davis Favors. He continued, "It's an oppor-

tunity to come out there and remember what he represented, remember what he stood for and make that a great day to play basketball. Pretty much the whole of Atlanta is MLK. It shouldn't take something that happened for everyone to bring up that conversation. It's something that should always be up for talking about, for discussions, and hopefully we can keep improving and moving in the right direction. It should be something that is always talked about and always thought about, and also something that people are doing, not just talking about. Actions speak louder than words."

Favors continued on, stating, "As [my daughters] get older, we'll start having those type of conversations and definitely make sure that they learn not only about MLK, but about all the good historical figures in the world and know what they meant, what they stood for."

As pictured here, Kyrie Irving dribbled up the floor against the Cavaliers while wearing his new "I Love You Mom" shoes, the Kyrie 7's, which are dedicated to his late mother Elizabeth Irving. DeMar, DeRozan, and the surging Bulls prepared to face Ja Morant and the surging Grizzlies. Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Bucks face Trae Young and the Hawks, with Trae watching from afar as Giannis dunks.

The Miami Heat celebrated Dr. Marvin Dunn, the president of the Miami Heat, with a jersey and \$5,000.

According to the NBA, the Knicks enter MLK Day on a three-game win streak that coincides with a great stretch of play from RJ Barrett.

During the streak, he is averaging 29.7 points on 53.2% shooting from the field and 56.3% from 3-point range on 5.3 attempts per game. Mitchell Robinson (15.3 ppg, 11.3 rpg) and Julius Ran-



Kyrie Irving dribbling up the court vs the Cavaliers on MLK DAY; wearing his new shoes, dedicated to his late mom Elizabeth Irving, called "I Love You Mom" Kyrie 7's.

Image courtesy of NBA.com

dle (14.3 ppg, 10.0 rpg) are both averaging double-doubles.

The Hornets won the first meeting with the Knicks, 104-96 on Nov. 12, behind a combined 46 points from Miles Bridges (24) and Gordon Hayward (22) as well as LaMelo Ball's near triple-double with 12 points, a career-high 17

rebounds, nine assists and a career-high-tying five steals.

The Hornets held Barrett to a career-low-tying two points on 1-for-9 shooting; Hayward defended Barrett for 5:32 (50.9% of Barrett's offensive matchup time) and held him scoreless on 0-for-4 shooting.

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NFL Super Wildcard Playoff Weekend

Jordan Stephenson
Staff Writer

When talking about the NFL Super Wildcard Playoff Weekend, the first two playoff rounds date back to the postseason format that was first used in 1978, when the league added a second wild-card team to each conference. The first round of the playoffs is dubbed the

wild-card round (or super wild-card weekend).

The NFL does not employ a fixed bracket system; instead, the results of the Wild Card games determine the Divisional playoff pairings, with the lowest remaining seed in each conference traveling to the first seed and the second-lowest remaining seed traveling to the second-highest remaining

seed.

As reported by Manca, only seven wild card teams have won the Vince Lombardi Trophy: the Oakland Raiders in 1981, the Denver Broncos in 1998, the Baltimore Ravens in 2001, the Pittsburgh Steelers in 2006, the New York Giants in 2008, the Green Bay Packers in 2011 and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Four other teams also reached the Super Bowl as wild cards, but were unable to become champions: the Dallas Cowboys in 1976, the New England Patriots in 1986, the Buffalo Bills in 1993, and the Tennessee Titans in 2000.

Monday, January 15, the Cincinnati Bengals took on the Las Vegas Raiders on NBC and Peacock in the inaugural 2022 NFL Playoff game beginning at 4:30 Eastern time. At the beginning of the 2021-22 season, the NFL extended the regular-season plan from 16 games to 17, according to Yahoo.

Monday night's game saw Joe Burrow and the Bengals taking on Derek Carr and the Raiders in a postgame interview after the Bengals defeated the Raiders 23-16 to earn their first postseason victory in 22 years. Josh Allen and the Bills face up against Mac Jones and the Patriots, with Devin Singletary scoring from 16 yards out.

Mike Evans catches a

wide open 18 yard pass from Tom Brady and the Buccaneers vs. Jalen Hurts and the Eagles as a controversial play or ruling during the final seconds of the game proves costly to the Cowboys fans delusional playoff expectations.

Pat Mahomes and the Chiefs embraced Ben Roethlisberger, ahead of what could be Ben's final game as he approaches retirement.

Matt Stanford and the Rams took on Kyler Murray and the Cardinals, with Cam Akers gaining 11 yards before injuring strong safety Kyler Murray inadvertently.

Following the Wildcard games will be the Super Bowl LVI. The game is set to air on the second Sunday in February.



Josh Allen and the Bills vs Mac Jones and the Patriots

Image courtesy of NFL.com

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