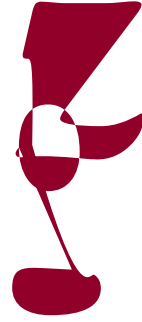


a student publication

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Serving Montgomery County Community College and the surrounding community



Hello, hello, hello, I am TJ Grumm, the other half of this semester's dynamic duo of co-editors-in-chief. By the time you read this, we all will be preparing for the end of the semester. Whether that means panicking while we wrap up our studies or just making plans for the summer, we are all ready for this semester to end. I share those sentiments, which is funny given a year ago I was dreading being in college again. In fact, this time last year, I was having near panic attacks about enrolling at the College.

You may be reading this and wondering, what was so daunting about college? College is a natural progression for most: You graduate from high school, and you go to college to further your education. Then, more and more students each year forgo college all together, and enter the work force or seek an alternative form of post-high-school education. Finally, there are the few like me, who took all three of those paths.

I am 32, which is fun to

tell my fellow students because either they are really nice and tell me I look 25, or they tell the truth: that I do really look my age. I did the college thing over 10 years ago. I graduated from Upper Moreland High School in 2010, I went to Temple University for Broadcast Journalism, and I immediately found myself woefully unequipped mentally for life. I was depressed beyond measure. I took out loans to sit in my dorm and do nothing. I partied excessively on the weekends, and during the week I would just not go to class. I did not know why I could not muster the energy to physically go to class, I was a good student in high school, after all. No matter, by the end of the fall 2011 semester, I had failed out of college in three semesters.

Not to give up on my dream, I tried the alternative school path after Temple, attending a broadcasting trade school, where I got hands-on experience. As a student at the Connecticut School of Broadcasting, I even got to be the game-day

production coordinator for a developmental arena football league run by the Philadelphia Soul. It was a great experience, but that path only took me so far, especially as the internet content machine exploded, and companies preferred someone with a traditional degree in the face of such unpredictability.

All this time, and still to this day, I work at a cemetery, truly a dead-end day job. I have worked there for 14 years, and it has proved to be consistent employment. For example, when people lost their jobs during the pandemic, my job was busier than ever. It became a constant in my life, and it was reliable: I was not struggling to get up and go to work. I did not have to worry about whether going through an alternative school was going to hold me back. I was content with my place in life.

At the risk of sounding like an old man, let me tell you, though, that as you get older, being content with life is not enough. That's why I am back in school, 14 years later: a

whole "Infinity Saga" later, 10 whole iPhone generations, three different presidential elections later. And everything I had feared about going back to school, I am not going to lie, they are all true, they are just not as big as I thought they would be.

Yeah, I am the oldest in most of my classes by a significant margin. Yeah, I have to balance school, work, and all the joys in life. Yeah, I am exhausted from it all. Through it all, though, something that a close personal friend of mine once said kept echoing in my head, "Life doesn't get easier. You get better." So, if you are reading this wondering, after this semester, what your next move is, or if it is the right move for you, or if you are afraid of what is next in general, I hope these words help you out: You are better today than you were yesterday. You will be better

As a new semester started at Montgomery County Community College in September, fresh faces appeared on campus with new ambitions and goals set for the future. New students tried to make their way, adjusting to college, whereas others were already in the swing of things. And, from semester to semester, the truths are the same.

At the College, there was a vast array of students who had just started classes and also many students who had been on campus in the semesters prior.

First-year students seemed to have a grasp on college within their first few weeks. First-year student Alex Bucio, majoring in Liberal Studies, says he chose the College “a warm-

At the start of the 2024 spring semester, students were notified that the Associate of Arts in Dance degree program was no longer going to be offered to students. While the dance department has had to undergo changes caused by this decision, it has still proven to be an active, creative outlet for students at the College.

Currently, what is left of the 63-credit program are two dance-related courses that are available for enrollment: Fundamentals of Modern Dance and Fundamentals of Hip Hop Dance. The former one-credit Dance Performance Ensemble class is now only offered as a club. While the class was still active, students could participate as noncredit club members.

To keep the spirit of the program alive, the club continues to hold its fall and spring dance concerts, to highlight all original choreography by students at the College. These are fully produced dance concerts with lighting, routines, and costumes, and they are open to all members of the College community.

The program's mission had been to encourage the student body to foster collaboration, creativity, and leadership. Students could learn the art of creating original choreography and improvisation, while also gaining knowledge of dance theory.

The brain behind the creation of the expressive program is its founder, Melinda Copel, who served as the coordinator of the dance department from 2004 to 2023, when she retired.

Copel earned her Ed.D. with a dance focus at Temple University. Copel then went on to pursue several teaching positions at Widener University, and Rutgers University.

Following Copel's retirement, Heather Dougherty became the acting coordinator of the

Meet the tutors

Asking for help from a tutor can be intimidating, especially when they may be a stranger. That's why The Montgazette wants to do its part by introducing some of the tutors you can find here at Montgomery County Community College. Tutoring is offered both in person and online, so choose whichever method fits your needs and schedule. You can go to mc3.edu/tutoring to learn more about the College's free online 24/7 tutoring services and schedule a session today. If you are interested in becoming a tutor, go to mc3.edu/tutoring today to start the process! See below to "meet" three of your College tutors.



* UDFH , ¿ HJEX

Peer Tutor

Chemistry, Biology, Spanish

What most impresses you about Montco students?

I am most impressed by the resiliency shown by Montco students. They put a lot of effort toward their

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The social media platform that gained all its popularity during the pandemic, and became one of the main sources not only for new trends to follow but also for news and relevant information — TikTok — is now facing a possible ban in the United States of America for allegedly jeopardizing the safety of its users' personal data.

In the beginning, when TikTok was still a much newer app, many people saw it as a joke, but the quick sharing of information on the platform has drawn all kinds of people to it. For better or for worse, TikTok became the number one app that Americans use and download daily, according to Statista.

But this may be coming to an end. NPR reports, "The [U.S.] House passed a bill that would require ByteDance, the parent company of TikTok, to sell the app or face a ban on U.S. devices."

This is not the first time the U.S. government has challenged TikTok: In 2020, under former-President Donald Trump's administration, the app faced a shutdown attempt due to the fear of the Chinese government having possession of American data and the fear of communist propaganda interfering with the U.S. elections processes.

Social media platforms, especially TikTok, are among the first sources of news and reviews of an incredible number of products and places. However, if the Senate

clears the TikTok ban bill and makes its use illegal, where would all this information be found?

There is no guarantee that every American will erase the app from their phones as soon as it gets banned, and the people who rely on TikTok financially will likely find a way to still use the app by getting a VPN (virtual private network) or stretching its use until it slowly dies. The app will crash regularly since it will be pulled out of the App Store for Apple and the Google Store for Android, making its updates and future downloads impossible. Its web access will also be restricted nationwide.

TikTok, as a company, has stated that the possible banning of the video-sharing app would be a violation of free speech. Many people before came forward fearing TikTok's use of their



Opinion

2024 Phillies preview

Jesse Cherone
The Montgazette Contributor

The Philadelphia Phillies have very high expectations coming into the 2024 Major League Baseball season. After finishing 2023 only one win away from the World Series, the team is primed to get over that hump and win the whole thing for the first time in 16 years.

The Phillies began building this World-Series-worthy roster almost immediately. They started by re-signing pitcher Aaron Nola to a huge 7-year, \$172 million dollar deal. Nola admittedly did not have the best season last year, struggling with the new pitch clock rule and finishing the regular season with a 4.46 earned run average (ERA). But Nola seemed to turn a corner come playoff time, finishing with a much more respectable ERA of 2.35 in the 2023 playoffs. That to me, and I assume the Phillies, ended up being a huge reason Nola got the deal he did.

The next move the Phillies made came a few months later when the team signed super utility player Whit Merrifield to a one-year \$8 million contract. This deal, in my opinion, was one of, if not the best, things the Phillies front office did this offseason. Merrifield is the perfect guy for the Phillies offense for one crucial reason: All the guy does is hit.

The career .284 batting average hitter spent

most of his time in the major leagues with the Kansas City Royals, a team that hasn't even sniffed the playoffs in almost a decade. Because of that, the team's lineup stinks. The reason this is noteworthy is because Merrifield was usually the best offensive player on that team, prompting opponents to choose to pitch around him.

With an already elite lineup consisting of Trea Turner, Bryce Harper and so many more, a pitcher just cannot pitch around Merrifield because then they'll have to worry about guys like Kyle Schwarber hitting a ball 500 feet and driving himself and Merrifield home.

The last big move the Phillies made was signing pitcher Zack Wheeler to an extension. Wheeler was due to be a free agent at the end of the year, so the Phillies had to retain the ace of the staff, and they did exactly that. On March 4th, the Phillies announced that they and Wheeler had agreed to a new 3-year deal. This keeps him in Philly for the prime of his career, which is a win for both sides.

Because of all this, I think this year is one of the Phillies' best shots in long time to win a trophy for the city of Philadelphia, and I frankly cannot wait for the season to start!

For more Philly sports coverage and opinion, you can listen to Jesse Cherone on Sports on Broad, 9 AM EST Wednesday mornings on Montco Radio and follow on Instagram @sportsonbroad.



Phillies branded water bottle
on a white board on March 25, 2024.
(Photo / TJ Grumm)

TikTok

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According to USA Today, TikTok stated, "We are hopeful that the Senate will consider the facts, listen to their constituents, and realize the impact on the economy, 7 million small businesses, and the 170 million Americans who use our service."

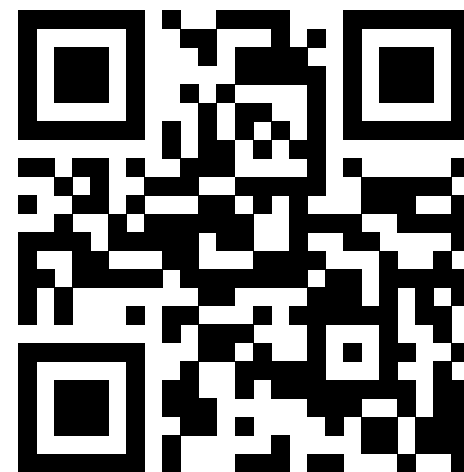
TikTok's CEO, Shou Zi Chew, commented, "I encourage you to keep sharing your stories.

Share them with your friends, share them with your family, share them with your senators. Protect your constitutional rights."

The future is very uncertain for TikTok now, and if the ban were to happen, then the bigger tech companies would keep getting larger, as in the case of Meta. Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts will become the

new short-form content videos available, enabling Meta to rule every other social media platform. Since another big tech company cannot buy TikTok because of the Biden Administration's strong antitrust law enforcement, which prevents these companies from getting even bigger, everything is in the hands of the Senate.

Calendar





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