



The Yellow Jacket

Volume 134 Issue 5 American International College 1000 State Street Springfield, MA 01109
www.aicyellowjacket.com

March 2020

2020 Election Race Heats Up

“Meet the Campaigns” event at Springfield College informs students ahead of Super Tuesday

Ave' Mullen
Staff Writer

Did you vote on Super Tuesday?

Several campaign representatives who gathered on Monday, March 2 for a “Meet the Campaigns” event at Springfield College, sponsored by their Office of Multicultural Affairs, sure hope you did.

Voting is important because it gives citizens the power to choose the best candidates to represent them in office, where they can pass laws and make a difference.

However, this power has its limitations.

The 2020 election, which will be the 59th presidential election in America, is already shaping up to be a controversial one. The current President, Donald Trump, won in 2016 by electoral votes, but he ultimately lost the popular vote, which has happened only three other times in American history.



Super Tuesday means elections right around the corner.

U.S. EMBASSY PHNOM PENH

This year, after general votes are cast in November, electoral college votes will be cast to make the final decision for each state. At least 270 of the 538 possible votes are needed in order to determine a winner.

There are only two Republican candidates running for President, Donald Trump and Bill Weld.

Bill Weld is a former federal prosecutor and was also the governor of Massachusetts from 1991 to 1997. The Harvard and Oxford graduate has ample experience in politics. Throughout his career, he has been nominated for several important political posts, including Senator, the Ambassador to Mexico, and the Governor of New York. However, after the

results were in on Super Tuesday, Weld only received one delegate vote, leaving Donald Trump as the lead Republican candidate.

Donald Trump is a businessman and former reality TV host of *The Apprentice*. He graduated from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania with a bachelor's degree in economics. With his ample experience in business and \$3.1 billion net worth, Trump is promising to “Keep America Great” for the next four years.

The Democratic party currently has three running candidates: Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders, and Tulsi Gabbard. Michael Bloomberg and Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth



Tulsi Gabbard's Information Table.

AVE' MULLEN



Joe Biden's Information Table.

AVE' MULLEN

Super Tuesday results further narrow the field of Democratic candidates

Rose McCaffrey
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, March 3, 2020, fourteen states, including Massachusetts, voted for who they thought would be the perfect fit for the Democratic Presidential Nominee. The Super Tuesday election was very close, closer than other elections.

As of March 3, there were still five democrats fighting for the Democratic nomination: former Vice President to Barack Obama Joe Biden, Vermont senator Bernie Sanders, Massachusetts senator Elizabeth Warren, former New York City mayor Mike Bloomberg, and the congresswoman from Hawaii Tulsi Gabbard.

This past weekend, moderate

democrats Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar dropped out of the race and endorsed Joe Biden. Beto O'Rourke, a former candidate as well, also endorsed Biden.

Mariah Mauke, a junior majoring in political science, commented on the result of their endorsements. “It... seemed well thought out,” Mauke said, “because they both immediately put their support behind Joe Biden, which I think caused that increase in support that I wasn't expecting.”

After the polls closed on Tuesday, the two front runners of the democratic party are Joe Biden, a moderate Democrat, and Bernie Sanders, a democratic socialist.

Bishop Bryan, a junior majoring in public health, said that he

“doubts that there will be a Warren surge or a Bloomberg surge, even though he spent a lot of money.”

Mauke added that it is “definitely going to come down to Biden and Bernie for the nomination. At this point, I can't see any of the other candidates catching up to the momentum that they've gained on Super Tuesday. But as we saw four years ago, anything can happen. So we'll just have to wait to find out for sure.”

Biden's campaign was considered dead after major defeats in Iowa, New Hampshire, and Nevada, but he somehow managed to come back with an impressive win in South Carolina. This win gave him a boost among moderate

Democrats all over the country.

Sanders, on the other hand, was always a stand-out candidate, taking wins in Iowa, his neighboring state of New Hampshire, and more recently in Nevada.

There are 1,344 delegates up for grabs in the Super Tuesday primary. In order to get the nomination, a candidate must receive a total of 1,991 delegates from all of the different primary elections and caucuses.

Joe Biden had a stellar performance on Tuesday, considering that many of his critics said his campaign was nearly dead. Biden won nine out of thirteen states: Massachusetts, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Oklahoma, Texas,

Minnesota, and Maine.

Bernie Sanders won three states: Vermont, Utah, and Colorado. He is expected to take California, but issues with their voting machines have led to a delay in the final results.

Bryan thinks that the narrowed field of candidates contributed to Biden's success. “Bernie won the biggest prize of California” he said; California carries 415 total delegates. “Biden picked up a lot of unexpected states because Amy Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg dropped out,” he continued.

More election coverage inside!

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We gratefully acknowledge the support of AIC Student Government and The Hon. Taylor Campos, Student Body President; Vincent Maniaci, President; as well as the Trustees, Faculty, Staff and Students of American International College.

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Sports statistics and pictures courtesy of aicyellowjackets.com, unless noted

Bernie Sanders rally in Springfield attracts AIC students

Bishop Bryan
Staff Writer

Thousands gathered in the MassMutual Center on Friday, February 28th to attend the Bernie Sanders rally. The line stretched far with people young and old anxiously awaiting to see the Democratic presidential nominee speak.

Some people arrived as early as 3pm to stand in line ahead of doors opening at 6:30pm. The line wrapped around from the front of the MassMutual Center to the back entrance.

“We arrived at 3:30 and waited in line to get to the front,” said Rose McCaffrey, a first-year communication and political science major at AIC.

The rally took place just before Super Tuesday on March 3rd when Massachusetts and fourteen other states cast their votes in their Democratic Primaries. This was the first of two rallies that were held in Massachusetts for Sanders’ campaign; the second took place the next day on Saturday, February 29 in Boston.

The most recent Massachusetts poll from Suffolk University had Sanders at 24% leading Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren who was at 22%.

People were let in at 6:30 and the event began with a performance by banjo player Béla Fleck. Around 4,750 people were in attendance, and Sanders took the stage at around 7:40. He was introduced by educator and union leader Barbara Mandeloni, State Senator Jamie Eldrich, and State representative Lindsay Sabadosa.

After thanking the previous speakers, Senator Sanders began speaking about the purpose of his campaign.

“We are here together for two fundamental purposes. Number one: we are united as a people... to make sure we defeat Donald Trump, the worst president of the modern history of this country.”

Justin Leaphart, a graduate student at AIC, explained why he is voting for Sanders. “I mainly support Sanders because of his promise of Medicare for all, and his opposition to the current ad-

ministration.”

Throughout the rally, Sanders “played the hits,” speaking on the core messages of his campaign: opposing Donald Trump, Medicare for all, criminal justice reform, raising the minimum wage, fighting against the 1%, and the Green New Deal, amongst other topics. His sentences were all punctuated with cheers from supporters waving their signs in support of their candidate.

“Bernie brought a lot of energy to the stage. I feel like he speaks the minds of his supporters,” said another AIC student in attendance.

Since his back-to-back wins in New Hampshire and Nevada, Sanders has stood out as the Democratic front runner, and by virtue of that has received the ire of many of his competitors and the media establishment.

News figures such as Chris Matthews have been unabashedly anti-Bernie. Matthews went so far as to compare the Senator’s victory in Nevada to the Nazi occupation of France in the second World War. Other Democratic hopefuls,

like former presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, have said Sanders is too nostalgic for the revolutionary politics of the 1960s.

But the negativity from the media and candidates has done little to drop Sanders stock. Polling site fivethirtyeight predicted he would take a majority of states on Super Tuesday, including Texas, California, and Massachusetts.

The negativity has actually spurred Sanders’ base. After coming second-place in South Carolina to Joe Biden, the Sanders campaign received an influx of new donations. In February, they raised \$46.5 million overall.

In 2016, many people called Bernie Sanders a spoiler and suggested he was being too divisive with unpopular and unrealistic ideals. Now in 2020, he is emerging as one of the frontrunners. His ideas have become the new mainstream in the Democratic party, specifically Medicare for all.

With all of this taken into consideration, will the supporters of other candidates “vote blue

no matter who” if Sanders is the nominee?

The answer is unclear and the future is uncertain. To this writer, it seems the DNC is doing everything in its power to keep the corporate wing of the Democratic party alive and to keep Sanders away from the nomination.



Sanders supporters hold their signs high for Bernie.

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Presidential candidates’ representatives ready for the Q&A session.

AVE’ MULLEN

Super Tuesday results further narrow the field of Democratic candidates

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According to nbcnews.com, Joe Biden currently has 565 delegates out of the 1,344 and Bernie Sanders has 506 delegates. But Sanders is expected to take the state of California which has 415 delegates up for grabs. Currently, Sanders has 161 of California’s delegates to Biden’s 100.

Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders come from the left of the Democratic party, and some AIC students feel that if Elizabeth Warren took the same move Klobuchar and Buttigieg took, Bernie might have gotten more votes.

Alyssa Kelleher, a first-year student majoring in political science, remarked that Warren is potentially hurting Bernie’s campaign. “If Warren dropped and endorsed Sanders, Bernie would have secured more delegates,” she said. “But I don’t think he would’ve won more states because Biden

and Sanders’ endorsements were uneven.”

Elizabeth Warren has since withdrawn her campaign, but she has still refused to endorse either of the leading Democratic candidates.

Mauke was surprised that Warren did not have more support in Massachusetts, her home state.

“There was a lot more support for Biden than I had expected,” Mauke said, “and a lot less support for Elizabeth Warren—especially in Massachusetts—than I thought there would be.”

A number of states will hold their primary elections next week, including Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, and Washington on March 10, and Arizona, Florida, Illinois, and Ohio on March 17.

“Meet the Campaigns” event at Springfield College informs students ahead of Super Tuesday

Continued from page 1

Warren both announced they would be withdrawing from the race shortly following the results of Super Tuesday.

On March 1, Springfield College’s Office of Multicultural Affairs presented “Meet the Campaigns,” an event on their campus where representatives of the Democratic Presidential campaigns visited for a forum and an open question-and-answer session.

Campaign representatives from Bernie Sanders, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Elizabeth Warren, Joe Biden, and Tulsi Gabbard were present. Attendees had the opportunity to browse information booths for each candidate and discuss social issues and political opinions with representatives.

With primary elections favoring Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders thus far, the race is between the progressives and the moderates.

Joe Biden’s campaign representative spoke first at the forum about why Biden is the best candidate for President. Biden is a moderate Democrat who believes that “slow and steady wins the race.”

His representative clarified the importance of ethics, values, and American’s reputation in the White House. He also touched on the Coronavirus and the need of a leader who can give citizens the information and confidence they need in order to protect themselves. Joe Biden served as Vice President while Barack Obama

was in office, and plans to support similar policies on healthcare, the environment, and the economy.

Bernie Sanders’ campaign representative spoke next about why Sanders is what the country needs and why he is advocating for legislation for universal healthcare. His representative brought up the coronavirus and pointed out that testing and vaccinations for the disease can cost up to \$3,000 for those without health insurance. Sanders’ representative also stressed the need for bold policies in “these unprecedented times,” and the need for a candidate who can move America forward in a bigger way.

Primary elections for all states will be over by June 3, 2020. Election day this year will be Tuesday, November 3.

The 15th, 19th, and 26th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution were passed to ensure that every American over the age of 18 has the right vote regardless of race or sex. The power of voting goes way beyond voting for officials, but for the protection of the liberties we enjoy as Americans.

Readers can tune in to the second episode of The Hum in the Hive podcast this March for more information about the 2020 presidential campaigns and elections.

Black Women Reflect on Black History Month



Briana Sutton, Essence Perry, Ananda Burnard, Gakeesha Bernadin joined for a picture at an event on campus.

Ananda Burnard
Staff Writer

Sundays are meant for meaningful conversations. Six women of color sat down to speak about what the month of February, Black History Month, truly meant to us. When a new month starts, reflection begins.

As black women, especially black women in college, we never stop and realize the world we are living in today would not be the same without black activists. Many of us wake up every day and strive for the best out of ourselves because we look up to someone that made specific things possible for us.

For Essence Perry, her Black History icon is Michelle Obama. “She is the first black woman to

be in the White House,” Perry said. “She created a name for herself. She has a law degree. She inspires a lot of young black women. These are all my reasons why I wake up every day wanting to be a better black woman for my community, because of women like Michelle Obama.”

Reflecting on my own, this writer couldn’t agree more with Perry.

Then Asyera Clarke reminded us of all the inventions to which black women have contributed. Clarke reminded us that some black women have been given credit for their innovations, while others have not—innovations which include a “number of inventions, like ironing boards, se-

curity systems, heaters, [and] rock and roll....” The room sat quietly, as we all contemplated those who had come before.

“I look up to all black entrepreneurs and businesswomen,” said Jalah Oates. “Black women must be surrounded with businesswomen, establishing organization and money skills early on.” It is known that black women have an important role in changing societal norms.

“They create history every day, making something that seems impossible for my community possible for the next black women,” continued Oates. Our icons have taken positions in the world that were once seen as out of reach for a black woman.

Regine Winifred is passionate about celebrating Black History. She reminded us that the black community would not be where we are today without being able to stand on the shoulders of those who came before. “Black history has a huge impact on what we’ve become, to this today,” she said. “It gives us a sense of integrity and pride to become more than our ancestors.”

“Black women have begun movements,” Clarke reminded us. “I know a lot of people know of Rosa Parks, but without her and the people before her that spoke up, a lot of black activists after her would have never begun

to stand up for themselves and our people.”

Keesha Bernardin reminded us, “Even on our hardest days, we need to remind ourselves every day that we would not be able to express ourselves freely. We could not take advantage of our opportunities to be better than a stereotype.”

Clarke’s message of implementation spoke volumes with the women in the room. Many black women have decided at a young age to stand up for their community. So much of the work they have done has been unrecognized over the years. The black women of the past have made many careers possible for women now, and future opportunities may seem endless thanks to them.

With all of those achievements to celebrate, Bernardin wondered, “Why do we have the shortest month of the year to celebrate the pride of our skin color? Black history needs to be celebrated all the time.”

“I agree with Keesha,” Briana Sutton said. “But on campus this month, I am proud of the many programs that are thrown about black people and our history. I have thrown a program myself on-campus that tested the knowledge of our black community.... We must start on campus because these are the skills we are going to take beyond the college campus.”

Black people may rightly feel

like the odds are stacked against them. We must work harder than our peers to reach the same goals. And that is okay because that is what makes us special.

Many of us at American International College are first-generation college students. We may have never thought that attending college was a possibility, yet here we are. The black community on campus needs to remain strong, and we need to remember to constantly lift one another up.

The Hum in the Hive Launches

For more on AIC student, faculty and staff discussing Black History Month, check out our new podcast *The Hum in the Hive* <http://bit.ly/AICPod>.

In episode 1, host Ave’ Mullen celebrates Black History Month on campus by leading a discussion with Assistant Director of Diversity Education Alicia McKenzie, Vice President of Academic Affairs Mika Nash, and President of the student group Persons Ready In Defense of Ebony (PRIDE) Oshinofa Lakoju. Ave’ also talks with Professor of American History Gary Jones. The guests provide insight into issues of diversity and inclusion on campus, discuss the importance of celebrating Black History Month, and respond to the lecture given on campus by Dr. Yohuru Williams on February 11: “And Justice for All: What African American History Can Teach Us about Participatory Democracy.”

The Hum in the Hive is a student-run podcast at American International College in Springfield, MA. This podcast is a collaborative project from the Yellow Jacket student newspaper and the AIC Radio Club. Episodes provide in-depth content about what’s happening on campus with faculty, students, and staff. Tune in to catch the buzz on campus!

P.R.I.D.E. hosts Red Table Talk

Marquis Walker
Staff Writer

On Friday, February 21, 2020, Persons Ready In Defense of Ebony (PRIDE) held a “Red Table Talk,” inspired by Jada Pinkett Smith’s Facebook Watch show. The discussion was held in the West Wing at American International College at 7pm.

Seated at the table were President of PRIDE, Oshinofa Lakoju, Vice President of PRIDE Jamila Davis, as well as the student representative for PRIDE, Deshawn Givens and Siale Alatini, PRIDE’s secretary. The special guests included Odo Butler, the Director of Institutional Research, Mika Nash, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Alicia McKenzie, Assistant Director of Diversity Education. The panel discussed the use of the N-word, the economy, and gentrification in certain areas. Their discussion was based on their own experiences.

The first topic that they covered during the table talk was the use of the N-word. According to Deshawn Givens, the N-word derives from “an Ethiopian word which doesn’t even spell it the way we use it. It is spelled ‘Negus’... and the meaning behind the word means ‘ruler’ and ‘king.’” Givens explained the positive connotations attached to the etymology of the word to explain the way he uses the word and how he sees the word.

Alicia McKenzie was the first guest and provided her input on the word as well. “I go back and forth with the word... because it is usually used among friends and family,” McKenzie said. She added, “We also have it being used in a hurtful or aggressive way towards African American men.”

McKenzie’s comments were followed by Jamila Davis, who had something totally different to say about the use of the N-word. Davis’s outlook on the N-word is very straightforward. “I grew up in the South,” she said. “That word gets thrown out at certain people in negative ways.” Davis argued that if the N-word has the

potential to hurt others, “then the word shouldn’t be used at all.”

The economy was the next subject up for debate at the Red Table, and Dr. Odo Butler, the Director of Institutional Research at AIC, was invited to replace McKenzie. PRIDE President Oshinofa Lakoju posed a question about why the money used by certain ethnicities is less valued in certain communities. She introduced her question by explaining a statistic she read in an article, saying, “In comparison to Asian communities, the Asian dollars stay within their communities a hundred and twenty times longer; in the white communities, it stays within them

twenty times longer; in the Latino communities, six times longer. But in Black communities, it literally said zero.” Lakoju wanted to know why this was the case.

Butler replied in response, “Your grandparents probably had farmland and other stuff, including stores and wealth in their communities. And as times goes on, [that wealth] began to disappear. And it is because someone probably wanted to kill them. And they run off and, ‘Look! Land is taken!’” Butler explained that generational wealth is less common in African American communities.



Alicia McKenzie sits at the table.



Dr. Odo Butler sits at the table.

MARQUIS WALKER

MARQUIS WALKER



The 413 Conference committee smiling after a successful event.

MARIAH MAUKE



Jordyn Isaac presents her Across the World session to fellow Residence Life staff.

MARIAH MAUKE

Students Hone Leadership Skills at the 413 Area RA Conference

Mariah Mauke
Staff Writer

AIC's campus was buzzing with Resident Assistants last month during the 6th annual 413 Area RA Conference. The conference has occurred at AIC since 2015, and this year the event fell on February 22.

Katelyn Hurley, the Coordinator of Student Life at AIC, participated in the conference as the Graduate School Showcase chair. She described the event as "a way to bring together all the Residence Life staff in the greater New England area to a conference where students can really hone their skills, talk to their peers, professionally develop, network, and even do mock interviews. It's built to really help Residence Life staff."

The conference began with activist Caitlin Clark Pereira as keynote speaker, followed by a series of workshops and sessions for both students and professionals who attended the conference. The conference also featured vendors and graduate school fairs to aid in professional development. The day came to a close with a speech from Springfield College's Vice President for Student Affairs, Patrick Love.

Hurley's position as Graduate School Showcase chair had her working with different graduate schools for the 413 Conference's

first graduate school fair.

She said, "We reached out to all the local New England colleges and their graduate schools to see if anyone would be interested in coming because we understand that a lot of our upperclassmen Residence Life staff are looking to continue their education, and we wanted to start that conversation at this type of conference."

The various student sessions covered a wide range of topics, including many that were aimed toward helping Residence Life staff in their work, both pre- and post-graduation.

Shawn Tremblay, AIC's Associate Director for Student Life as well as co-chair of the conference, spoke about the participants' experience. "They're not only going to workshops and presentations related to the work that they do in their role," Tremblay said, "but also helping them grow on a more broad scale. One of the sessions this year was 'I Can't Afford to Graduate,' so it was all about tracking their budget and income to make sure that after graduation, they're successful financially and able to live within their means."

Another topic discussed was "Across the World: Supporting International Students," which was presented by junior sports management major Jordyn Isaac. She explained how she became involved in the conference. "Going

Continued from page 3

Butler also said, "Look at America. Everyone wants to come here because we give better opportunity to other countries trying to make sure history doesn't repeat itself in their part of the world. So, 'Come and get jobs in America, because we pay good and support their families.'"

Jamila Davis asked Butler how to become something or someone in today's economy. Butler responded, "As an individual, you have to believe in what you

stand for and figure out what gifts you have... [Find] ways to put them together and manage them and keep that vision and save your vision."

Lakoju also talked about gentrification in her home city, which Harlem, New York. She shared that she grew up in Harlem, where black culture and wealth were in the majority. "But lately," she added, "there has been an influx of different organizations and corporations, whether it be Whole Foods... which is a health supermarket, but not the

most affordable spot to shop at. It bothered me... They put it there because more white people were coming to my area." Lakoju also noted that there are "Three prominent things that they say can help you identify a low-income or impoverished neighborhood: funeral homes, fast food [restaurants], and liquor stores."

The "Red Table Talk" was one of many events organized by Persons Ready In Defense of Ebony this semester. Be sure to come out to the annual PRIDE Fashion Show on Friday, April 10.

P.R.I.D.E. hosts Red Table Talk

"He was all I listened to": Pop Smoke's Life Taken Too Soon

Robert Courchesne
Isaiah Morales
Staff Writers

At the start of 2020, the music industry lost another young star with a bright future.

On Wednesday, February 19, Bashar Barakah Jackson, more popularly known as Pop Smoke, was pronounced dead on the way to a hospital near his home in Beverly Hills. It was reported that his death was due to a gunshot wound to his torso.

Pop Smoke was a rising star in the hip-hop industry and was only twenty years old. There have been several theories as to what happened at Pop Smoke's house to lead to the shooting, but evidence points to a home invasion.

His death has left many in disbelief. He had a unique voice and his uplifting, catchy music brought a sensation of happiness and excitement to his listeners.

The death of Pop Smoke has even affected students at American International College.

First-year student Emma Otero said, "Honestly, I am hurt. He was different from [other artists]. Besides his music being so energetic and getting me pumped for the gym, he was an inspiration to the kids of his community."

His differences from his peers in the music industry seemed to be what people loved about Smoke.

Rayna Ford, a first-year biology major, was also deeply affected by the loss. "He was all I listened to, day in and day out. He was different and brought a new flow, which is what the world needed."

According to FNR Tigg of *Complex*, while it seems like robbing the home was an afterthought, there is no indication that a rival gang from the East Coast traveled to Los Angeles to target Smoke. It is unclear if the rapper or his gang had any rivals in the Los Angeles area.

Tigg explains that an important piece of evidence in the case of Pop Smoke's murder is the fact that "the day before his death,

a gift bag Smoke received was posted to social media revealing his address. Police are leaning towards this being the cause of the crime which adds to the potential number of suspects."

A transfer student from a college in Connecticut echoed the shock of her classmates at AIC. "I really can't believe he was gone in a matter of minutes as I was listening to him," she said. "It is scary and sad because he just came out, and his music brought the dancing out of me. Mind you, he was so young... too young."

"I just cannot believe he was our age," said Otero. "And he literally was just getting started."

The feeling that this was only the beginning for the artist out of Brooklyn, New York was shared by Ford. "I am more devastated at the fact that he was our age," Ford said. "He barely enjoyed his career."

It seems one of the reasons Smoke's death has affected his fans so much is that they are so close in age.

After his death, Pop Smoke's music began trending. According to Kevin Rutherford of *Billboard*, Pop Smoke's songs collected millions of on-demand streams in the U.S. Many were playing his music across social media in order to honor the artist's short career.

Rutherford explains these streams should translate into movement on the *Billboard* charts for Pop Smoke's catalog, possibly giving him his first top 10.

Pop Smoke saw so much success in such a little time. It's a shame that his career was cut so short.

Pop Smoke's Top 5 on Spotify

Never heard of Pop Smoke? Listen to these songs first.

Dior

GATTI

Shake the Room (ft. Quavo)

Welcome to the Party

Invincible

Shooting on Northampton Ave—AIC reacts



The Shooting Occurred on Northampton Ave. near Magna Hall on AIC campus.

DANNY JAMES

Rose McCaffrey
Elijah Barriga
Staff Writers

On Wednesday, February 19th, students were startled when they heard gunshots on Northampton Avenue, across the street from the Magna Dorm building. The shooting took place around 4:15 PM. Then at 4:30 PM, there was a report of shots fired on Andrew St. AIC students in Amaron were asked to remain inside while Springfield Police Department took a suspect related to the second shooting into custody.

All students and staff, even those who were not on the main campus, were notified by campus security through both text message and email when these events took place. The text gave some in-

formation about the suspects and what car they could be driving, an orange Jeep Wrangler.

One person had serious injuries during the shooting. Ultimately four suspects were arrested relating to the two incidents, although two of the arrests were ultimately deemed unrelated, according to WLLP. The identities of these suspects have been released by the police.

The shooting has caused some talk around campus about the safety of the students.

Sarah Tomczyk, a first-year new media student, was outside when the shooting occurred. "I was outside the Arts Center waiting for the shuttle and I heard three gunshots."

Other students were in their



View of Magna Hall from the corner of Northampton Ave.

DANNY JAMES

dorm when it happened. Some students in Magna Hall were startled, so a couple of them went to look out the window to see what was going on.

The students looked outside and saw ten police cars speeding on State Street. They didn't realize what was going on until they all received a text from campus police.

It is important for the students here at American International College to be aware of the situation as events unfold. More shootings are taking place, and we need to be prepared for the worst. Tomczyk felt like the campus security could have done a better job communicating the situation to students.

There was some confusion as to whether students needed to

shelter-in-place during the events. Lieutenant Richard Alexander, head of AIC Campus Police, said, "No shelter-in-place order was broadcast, as the situation developed, and ended, quickly." He believes the confusion may have come when SPD officers were taking a suspect into custody and officers may have asked students in Amaron to "stay put" momentarily while they secured the area.

Lizzie Fisher, a junior majoring in occupational therapy, said, "I was on the shuttle back to Edgewood when the shooting happened. I saw the jeep and a guy running down the street being chased by a cop."

"We were on the corner near the parking lot of Magna and State street," another AIC student

reported. "Cops were banging on the police car doors to get inside and chase the suspect. It was extremely chaotic."

Creating a secure and stable routine, whether in the classroom, dorm rooms, dining commons, or elsewhere is important. When a crisis occurs, controlling people's emotions is key. Drills can be used so students feel prepared for moments like this. Students need to know what can happen in the blink of an eye in order to feel safe day to day.

We, as a community and school, need to come together and make these situations as calm as possible for everyone. This will help everyone during these circumstances.

Fisher described the confusion and lack of awareness of the situation on campus. "I heard that one building was on lockdown, but people from the Hive could come and go as they pleased."

Overall, students believed that the text message was helpful, but some felt that there was a long gap between the time the shots were fired and the text message.

The important thing is to make sure students at American International College feel as safe as possible when these situations take place. Having multiple updates for the students, faculty, and staff could give peace of mind for future events. Being safe and feeling safe in the environment is the number one thing.

Meet Three Nominees for the Most Prestigious Hockey Award

Esterina O'Donnell
Staff Writer

AIC is known for its talented students inside and outside of the classroom, so it is no surprise its hardworking athletes have received numerous recognitions and awards. Three members of this year's AIC hockey team have been nominated for this year's Hobey Baker Award.

The Hobey Baker Award has been awarded to the most prestigious college hockey athletes across the United States for the past 39 years. The award was named after Hobey Baker, a World War I veteran and hockey icon. The winner will receive a 40-pound detailed trophy that features a stitched jersey and lettered hockey stick.

Senior forward Blake Christensen, senior goalie Zackarias Skog, and junior defenseman Brennan Kapcheck have all been nominated, and are now part of the pool of 75 college players eligible for the award. These talented players are full-time students who have played for more than 50% of the season.

Athletic departments are able to submit up to three players. To be nominated, the players must "exhibit strength and character, both on and off the ice; contribute to the integrity of the team;

display outstanding skills in all phases of the game."

Recently, the AIC hockey team took home the Atlantic Hockey regular-season title for the second season in a row. Now, the team progresses to the playoffs. The AIC team is ranked in the top twenty teams across America for Division I Hockey according to USCHO, and ranked in the top thirty by RPI.

Senior forward Blake Christensen beat the all-time AIC scoring record this season. Christensen was honored to be recognized with his nomination for the award. But he also noted that his nomination wouldn't be possible without the help of his teammates.

"You don't have personal success without playing on a great team," Christensen said.

Christensen elaborated on how well the end of the season is going. He cannot wait for the playoffs. "We have put ourselves in a position to do something special again this season."

Senior goalie Zackarias Skog hails from Gothenburg, Sweden. He has over 400 saves in goal this season. Skog explained the season got off to a slow start, but now the team has really picked up and is playing their absolute best. The goaltender was very pleased after hearing he was nominated.

"This is a pleasure to be nominated," he said. Like Christensen, he is also focused on finishing the season strong: "Winning another championship would mean everything to me and my team."

Junior defenseman Brennan Kapcheck began playing hockey at just two years old. All of that practice paid off, and he had over 60 assists this season.

Kapcheck expressed how unbelievable to him it is to see his family, friends, and teammates support him throughout the years. He mentioned how he and his teammates are looking forward to this intense period of the season.

"We're at the end stretch of the season and we are on our game right now" Kapcheck stated. "That's important because playoffs is what really matters. And we have a head of steam as we roll into our final games of the season."

None of the three members have official commitments after college yet, but they are all planning to continue to play hockey professionally.

Although a member of the AIC hockey team has never won the Hobey Baker Award, the three candidates have a great chance to receive the prize.

Best of luck to our players!



Senior forward Blake Christensen, senior goalie Zackarias Skog, and junior defenseman Brennan Kapcheck.

ESTERINA O'DONNELL



The Hobey Baker Award.

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AIC Volleyball reflects on past season and looks to the future

Andjela Public
Staff Writer

AIC women's volleyball went 14-17 last season, but had a dominating 10-3 record in the conference. Ten of the 14 wins over the season came on their home court. The Yellow Jackets went all the way to the NE-10 finals, but gave up a two-set lead to lose to their rival, Bentley. In the off-season, the players and coaches reflect on how to best prepare for next season.

A number of the players were recognized for their skills on the court, with Andrea Serra-Rosa, Naomi Eckert-Rivera, and Sarah Lowery all receiving recognition from the American Volleyball Coaches' Association (AVCA). Serra-Rosa, Eckert-Rivera, and Lowery were joined by Diva Rivas-Reyes and Jana Potic as being named all-conference selections.

If you ask the team, the player who stood out the most this season is Andrea Serra-Rosa, a junior from Puerto Rico. Serra was named the East Region Player of the Year by the AVCA and earned first-team honors from the AVCA, the NCAA Division II Conference Commissioner's Association (D2CCA), and the Northeast-10 Conference. She was also named NE-10 Player of the Year.

Another player from Puerto Rico, first-year setter Naomi Eckert-Rivera, has made a big impact



Andrea Serra-Rosa in NE-10 competition.

RJB SPORTS

on the team in a short space of time. Eckert-Rivera was named the AVCA Freshman of the Year. While she was not named to the AVCA First Team, she and Lowery received honorable mentions. Eckert-Rivera was selected for the Conference First Team, and was voted to the All-Rookie team in the conference. Potic earned NE-10 Second-Team honors. Lowney was named to the NE-10 Third-Team.

Despite all of the awards, the loss in the final left a bitter taste in the mouths of the players.

"Last season was a tough one," Serra-Rosa said. "One of the most important things I learned from last season was never give up when things get tough and to

keep working hard every day."

Eckert-Rivera added that the team is looking ahead, and hoping to finally clinch that final this year. "For next season our goal is, of course, to win the NE10 championship," she said. "We've come so close each year."

Serra-Rosa added, "My goal for next season is to get better as a team and overcome our weaknesses." Eckert-Rivera agreed, and she hopes that the team can learn from last year, and start strong, instead of having a rocky first-half of the season.

Serra-Rosa's dreams don't stop at just winning the NE-10 though. "The long term goal," she said, "would be to win the NE10, the East Regional, and to win

the first round of the Elite 8, and make history."

Eckert-Rivera's own goal is that she can help more around the team. "My personal goal for next season is to be more individualized with my sets. By that, I mean knowing what each player wants and trying to accommodate them, and know who's hitting on the pins and in the middles, and what I can do to better help them be successful."

This kind of preparation and attention to detail is what Serra-Rosa thinks will bring the team to the next level. "In practice, we are focusing more on our ball control and our passing as a team," she said. "Last season, that was one of our weaknesses."

It's not just about physicality, however. The mental side of the game is just as important as the physical. Eckert-Rivera felt that this off-season, the team was "preparing more mentally than physically... We have a very dynamic team with great athletes and are loaded with talent. But what brought us down last year was our mental aspects in the attitude on the court during the finals and just throughout the whole season."

The way that athletes prepare mentally for a competition can be a huge factor throughout the season, as Eckert-Rivera explained. "I think as a team we can learn

a lot from last season," she said. "We took a really long time to gel as a team and to get to know each individual player and how they play. For this upcoming season, I think we can take what we learned from each player and use it to become a stronger team for this upcoming season."

Working on chemistry is something Serra-Rosa noted as well. "Besides practices, we have a team lift that helps us get fit," she said. Group exercises allow the team to spend more time together and become more cohesive.

But the athletes still have their individuality. Each gets ready for the game in her own way. Serra-Rosa said, "I like to listen to specific types of music before the game. That helps me focus, and I always say to myself that I need to enjoy and play hard each game."

As for Eckert-Rivera's mental preparation, she would rather prepare herself with the team. "I really don't have any rituals personally," she said. "But as a team, we do certain handshakes and say certain things before a game that gets us into the right mindset to go out on the court and forget about everything else and just play volleyball for a couple of hours."

Fran Healy Returns to AIC

Jorge Diaz Delgado
Staff Writer

On Friday, February 21, AIC received a visit from one of its graduates, Francis Xavier Healy. Healy, a Holyoke, Massachusetts native, is one of the greatest baseball players that Massachusetts has produced. He is also an accomplished broadcaster.

Healy, a history major at AIC in the 1960s, spoke to the current AIC baseball team and to other students about his time as a player, his favorite interviews, and the teammates alongside whom he had the opportunity to play during his career.

Nick Callini, head coach of the baseball team, thought that it was a "fantastic" opportunity for his players and other students to hear about Healy's career firsthand. "The more people that we can bring in to talk to them about their experiences, both in baseball and in life, is hopefully something that student-athletes can take something out of," Callini said.

Healy was drafted by the Kansas City Royals straight out of high school. But he knew it was important to get an education while he was playing in the minor leagues. Healy studied history, and ultimately went on to find success as a broadcaster.

Healy had to transition from playing for the New York Yan-

kees to calling games for the New York Mets. "At the time," he told a crowd of AIC students, "there was one sports channel. They did the Yankees and the Mets. So they told me that they could put only one announcer for each team."

There had been a lot of turnover in the Mets broadcast booth, so they asked Healy to step in and steady the ship. After working with the Yankees when his playing career ended, Healy had to choose whether to take a move for the good of his career or stick with the team he won the World Series with in 1977. "So I ended up going to the Mets."

Callini felt like this was a good takeaway for our student athletes. He hopes that they can achieve "that kind of success in their life, same as Fran. [Healy saw success] not only in his baseball career but in his other side of his career, which is broadcasting."

Clearly, this decision worked out well for him in the long run. His stats off the field are almost more impressive than his stats as a catcher. According to MassLive, shows he has worked on have won 51 New York Emmys.

Before Healy joined the Yankees, he was with the San Francisco Giants for two years, but spent the majority of his time with the Kansas City Royals, the team that drafted him while he was in high school. He moved back to

the Royals because he saw an opportunity to work with a manager that he respected and who he knew valued his work.

"Jack Mckeeon became the manager with the Royals," Healy said, "and I played with him in the minor leagues... And they [the Giants] traded me back. Jack wanted me back, thank God, because he was the best. He was a heck of a coach, he won a thousand games in the minor leagues."

Working with a good team is important in life as much as in sports. Healy knows the importance of chemistry on a team. Sometimes, healthy conflict can raise the game of everyone involved. He felt like that was the case with the Yankees team at the time.

"There's nothing like the New York Yankees, maybe in all sports," Healy said. "We were involved at the time—not only as a good ball club, but in a lot of controversy as a team." Speaking with the AIC baseball players in front of him, Healy said, "You know how it is fighting? It probably made the Yankees a better team. I know coaches don't want to have that kind of behavior on a ball club, but I thought it helped the Yankees."

He was good friends with his teammate Reggie Jackson. But Jackson wasn't always appreciated in New York—by the media, by his teammates, or by his manager.

Healy said that Jackson was "controversial," but that the two of them together made a good team.

Jackson came to the Yankees right after they lost the World Series in 1976. Healy said the team felt "they didn't need a guy with this kind of personality—a personality to steal the light. Although most of the players didn't want to deal with the media in New York... Reggie didn't care. He talked to the media. Players are upset that there's somebody out there dealing with the media. He could handle it in English; he could handle it in Spanish."

But Jackson was key to the Yankees winning the World Series the following year. Healy has nothing but positive things to say about his time in New York. "As far as the Yankees were concerned,"

Healy said, "when I played in the 70s, they were an excellent team. The players were terrific and won the American League Championship in '76, then in '77, won the World Series Championship."



Healy interviewed before his talk.



AIC baseball team waits for Fran Healy.

JORGE DIAZ DELGADO

With the Inception of the New XFL, It's Always Football Season

Danny James
Staff Reporter

Around this time of year, most football fans start to feel a bit sad, and maybe a little bored. The Super Bowl is the culmination of the sport, but once it's over, football is over... Until now.

The XFL has what it takes to satisfy football fanatics year-round, and the XFL has lived up to the hype so far.

The XFL began the week after the Super Bowl, and not a moment too soon for fans across the country.

It's the same old football everyone loves, with a few adjustments. And it's all to make the game more entertaining than its NFL counterpart.

This is a new era of football in America where you no longer have to struggle through the spring and summer, anxiously awaiting the

start of the NFL season.

The XFL may not be for everyone, but true fans can appreciate the sport and the product that the XFL is delivering.

"I heard about the XFL through Twitter," said Austin Savard, a junior at AIC and a sports management major. "My favorite team right now I would have to say is the Houston Roughnecks, because they're exciting and off to a hot start. They also have my favorite player, PJ Walker, tearing it up at quarterback."

The Roughnecks have dominated the XFL so far and have a 4-0 record. They seem to be the team everyone else is chasing.

They have the best player in the league so far in PJ Walker, who has a league-leading 15 touchdowns, as well as many offensive weapons around him.

The defense has also been playing lights out, and the coaching

and play calling is clearly on a different level than every other team in the league.

When asked about what he thinks the biggest difference is between the NFL and XFL, Savard said, "The kickoffs. I've never seen anything like that, but I understand why. It's to reduce collisions and concussions, and I like it. And it's really a revolution in the sport because kickoffs are where a lot of dangerous plays happen."

In the XFL, one team kicks the ball off from the kicking team's 30-yard line, while all the kickoff team players and opposing players look to block them. The returners line up on the returning team's 35 yard line.

Unlike in the NFL, the kicking team cannot move until the returning team catches the ball, and this drastically reduces the speed at which collisions usually happen on kickoffs.

In the NFL, the whole kicking team lines up on their own 35-yard line and runs down full speed untouched at the returning team, which is very dangerous.

This is a welcome change, and something the NFL should adopt as well.

David Lopez, a junior communication major at AIC, highlighted a different aspect of the new league. "My favorite part about the XFL is the Saturday-Sunday format," Lopez said. "It gives you pro football all weekend instead of one day of college, one day of pro, like how it is in the fall. I don't care for college football as much."

When asked about what the XFL should take from the NFL, David said, "The PATs. I don't like the one-, two-, and three-point conversions."

The XFL does a 1-, 2-, and 3-point conversion option after the touchdown, instead of

the traditional 1-point field goal or 2-point conversion from the 2-yard line.

In the XFL, you can either do 1 point from the 2-yard line, 2 points from the 5-yard line, or 3 points from the 10-yard line.

This is a controversy among fans because it goes from being almost an automatic guarantee of points with the PAT kick to something a little more challenging, which can cost a team the game if they don't choose wisely.

This of course is in an attempt to make the XFL more exciting to fans, and to further distinguish the league from the NFL. In many ways, the XFL has achieved their goal.

The best part about the XFL is the fact that it doesn't have to compete with the NFL, because it's not in the same season. Nevertheless, for now, the NFL is still king.

AIC Students React To NBA All-Star Weekend



The United Center hosted this year's NBA All-Star Game.

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Javon Flynn
Staff Writer

The 69th NBA All-Star weekend was held in Chicago, Illinois on Friday, February 14-16, and it did not disappoint. Events such as the celebrity game, rising stars, the three-point contest, the Sprite slam dunk contest, and the highly anticipated All-Star game brought millions of viewers to their feet with unreal highlights and contests that went down to the wire.

Day One

Friday kicked off with the annual NBA celebrity game. The game brought out big rappers and recording artists such as Common, Quavo of the rap group "Migos," and Bad Bunny. Actors such as Hannibal Buress and LaRoyce Hawkins also participated. ESPN commentators Michael Wilbon and Stephen A. Smith coached the two teams. The final score was team Wilbon 62, and team Stephen A. 47.

The first night ended with the rising game. These teams are made up of first and second-year NBA players. ESPN reported that Team USA would feature top-

er rookies such as Zion Williamson of the New Orleans Pelicans and Ja Morant of the Memphis Grizzlies. Both men are in the running for rookie of the year, according to nba.com. Team World had their own big names such as Dallas Mavericks star forward Luka Dončić and RJ Barrett from the New York Knicks.

Team USA blew away Team World by a landslide score of 151 to 131. Team USA had 8 of its 12 players scoring in double digits, with Golden State Warriors Rookie Eric Paschall leading all scorers with 23 points. RJ Barrett was the leading scorer for Team World with 27 points. Charlotte Hornets star Miles Bridges was named MVP.

Shamar Schand, a first-year Sports Management major, said, "That game was really a blessing to watch." He felt it was the best rising stars game he has ever watched. "There were so many highlight plays," he said, "I couldn't take my eyes away from the TV screen."

Day Two

The weekend continued on Saturday with the Taco Bell skills challenge, the MTN Dew 3-point contest, and the AT&T Slam Dunk contest.

The Taco Bell skills challenge featured players such as Brooklyn Nets point guard Spencer Dinwiddie, Toronto Raptors All-Star forward Pascal Siakam, Miami Heat All-Star big man Bam Adebayo, and Boston Celtics All-Star Jayson Tatum. Tatum was the defending 2019 Taco Bell skills challenge champion.

In the first round, Miami's Bam Adebayo knocked out Brooklyn's Spencer Dinwiddie. Adebayo then proceeded to the semi-finals where he eliminated Toronto's Pascal Siakam. Adebayo would go on to win the challenge after defeating Indiana Pacers star big man Domontas Sabonis in the final round.

The MTN Dew 3-point contest featured players like Davis Bertans of the Washington Wizards, Devin Booker of the Phoenix Suns, Devonte' Graham of the Charlotte Hornets, Joe Harris of the Brooklyn Nets, Buddy Hield of the Sacramento Kings, Zach LaVine of the Chicago Bulls, Duncan Robinson of the Miami Heat, and Trae Young of the Atlanta Hawks. The contest saw Buddy Hield from the Sacramento Kings taking home the victory after edging out Phoenix's All-star Devin Booker by a final score of 27 to 26 in the final round in a nail-biting finish.

The last event of what had been a spectacular Saturday was the Sprite Slam Dunk Contest. Participants included Pat Connaughton of the Milwaukee Bucks, Aaron Gordon of the Orlando Magic, Dwight Howard of the Los Angeles Lakers, and Der-

rick Jones Jr. of the Miami Heat.

Derrick Jones Jr. and Aaron Gordon faced off in the final. Each had received all 10s, 50 points total, for their previous dunks. The high flying Gordon was shocked when he was awarded a 47 after jumping over Boston Celtics big man Tacko Fall who stood at a record-breaking height of 7 feet 7 inches for his final dunk. Jones scored a 48 after a soaring tomahawk dunk; he would be crowned champion.

"My man got robbed again! For the second straight year," said Albert Onivogui, a first-year business major. "He jumped over a dude who was damn near eight feet tall and he got a forty-seven. Are you serious?! I'm not saying that Derrick Jones Jr. didn't deserve to win, because he showed out with his own jaw-dropping dunks. But I believe what Aaron Gordon did should have easily gotten him the win."

Judges Dwyane Wade, Chadwick Boseman, and Bulls Hall of Famers all gave Gordon 9s rather than the 10s he was awarded for all of his previous dunks. According to sportswriter Adrian Wojnarowski, Gordon told media reporters that he was done with the dunk contest and felt he had been robbed for the second straight year.

Day Three

The weekend was capped off with the 69th annual All-Star game. It was the first All-Star Game with a new format and was highly anticipated.

The teams played a mini-game in each of the first three quarters. The scores started at 0-0 in each of those periods and the winning team in each one earned \$100,000 for their Chicago-area children's charity. The final period

would start with the totals each team had scored in the previous three quarters on the scoreboard. \$200,000 was at stake for the final period.

Team LeBron played for Chicago Scholars and Team Giannis played for After School Matters. James' team won the first quarter 53-41, Antetokoumpo's team won the second quarter 51-30. The third quarter would end in a tie and that \$100,000 carried over to the fourth, putting \$300,000 total at stake in the final period.

The total score at the end of three quarters was Team Giannis 133, Team LeBron 124 going into the fourth quarter. The NBA decided to add a plot twist. The winner of the All-Star Game would be the team that added 24 points to whatever the leading total score was after three quarters. This was one of many tributes to Kobe Bryant, who wore number 24, during the weekend. That meant the target score was set at 157, as team Giannis had 133 points at the end of the third.

The game clock was off but the shot clock stayed on. Team LeBron would end up getting the victory with the final score 157 to 155. Kawhi Leonard of the Los Angeles Clippers took home the Kia All-Star Game Kobe Bryant MVP Award.

Sean Johnson, a first-year sports management major remarked, "The 2021 All-Star Game is said to be held in Indianapolis, Indiana but I don't think there will ever be another game like the 2020 All-Star Game in Chicago. And it will go down as one of the most entertaining weekends in NBA history, no doubt." He added, "I truly believe Kobe was somewhere in that arena, watching with the biggest smile on his face."

Spring Friendlies Prep the Yellow Jackets' Soccer Teams

Beatriz Correia
Staff Writer

Last season was another strong showing for both of the Yellow Jackets soccer teams, with both the men and women making it to the semi-finals of the NE-10 conference tournament. They are now preparing for next season and Coach Isa and Coach Perry are looking at a bright future ahead for their teams.

Women's Soccer

After finishing the season with an in-conference record of 6-5-2, the AIC women's soccer team will play some challenging matches this off-season to prepare for next season. The women's team is set to play teams from Division I, like University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Siena during their spring season of 2020.

Head coach Kevon Isa said these games would shape the team for the coming year. "The spring season is the perfect time to make decisions about next season," Isa said. "There are a few international [students] coming in and some fresh feet that we are going to integrate to the team in early August."

Makayla Bigard, a transfer junior from a Division I school (Central Connecticut State University) noted that the style of play is different between the two divisions. In Division I, "it is less physical and more technical and tactical. But, like everyone else,



Jake Durham playing in a game at the Abdow Field. RJB SPORTS

you end up adapting to it and understanding the game better."

The Yellow Jackets will begin their spring season the first week-end of March, facing off against an International Japanese team. They are preparing the last few weeks before games start with intensive training on the turf and inside the gym.

"I think we have a good team this spring season," Coach Isa said. "The girls have been working hard since they came back from winter break, and I believe we are up to the teams we are facing."

Bigard agreed. "I believe we have a good group this year and the upcoming fall. We've been a long way since the beginning of the season."

"It is hard to focus on making

a good team and having chemistry on the field when you come one week before the season starts," Bigard added. "It is a tough process to make everyone able to connect on and off the field because we jump right into the games." But she and the other women on the team are up to the challenge.

Men's Soccer

The men's soccer team had a good chance of making it to the finals last year after finishing the season 6-5-2 in the conference. But they fell just short, losing the semi-final game of the NE-10 conference playoffs to Assumption, 3-2.

David Harper, a red-shirt freshman defender from Ireland, thought that the team "had perfect chemistry last season. But I



Mikayla Bigard, a transfer junior, battling for possession of the ball. RJB SPORTS

believe it was the small mistakes that did not let us pass to the final. We fought hard till the end, but sometimes it is not meant to be."

Men's soccer has also been practicing since early January. Coach Luke Perry has been training the team so that they are prepared for the spring season of 2020.

"We have what it takes to make a better team and... to not commit the same mistakes we did in the past that cost us the semi-final game," Coach Perry said. "This spring season is about focusing on those mistakes and creating a better environment."

Harper noted, "We lost a lot of seniors this spring season, but the ones that are still here are working hard every day to bring back the possibility of winning the NE-10 final. There is a good build-up

of the team this year and I am confident that we are capable of even more. And the players that are coming in August will help us make a better team as well."

The Yellow Jackets—both the men's and the women's soccer teams—are now focused on the preparation for the coming conference season. Even though it starts in September, their mindset is to start focusing on the games now.

The spring season kicks off for the women on Ronald Abdow Field when they play an international Japanese team on Friday, March 6. For the men's team, their first friendly will be Friday, March 20, against the Western Mass Pioneers, a USL League Two semi-pro team from Ludlow Massachusetts.

"I want to go out on top!": Yellow Jackets hope to finish historic hockey season strong



The AIC Hockey Team huddling up before a big game.

ESTERINA O'DONNELL

Austin Albrecht
Staff Writer

The Yellow Jackets ice hockey team had a historic season, and they broke many different records along the way.

After last year, many people wondered, could American International College do better than their previous run in 2019, when they beat St. Cloud State in the tournament? Well, the answer is yes. They went 20-6-1 in their respective conference. Although out of conference, the Yellow Jackets have struggled a bit since their

win against St. Cloud, they seem to play their best when things really start to matter: in the playoffs.

If the Yellow Jackets had won one or two of their conference games, they would have secured a bid to the NCAA tournament without even having to win their league.

As of now, the Yellow Jackets are ranked 20th in the nation, having a better position in the standings than teams such as Notre Dame, Michigan State, and a

lot of well-known programs. The team is really starting to draw a lot of attention and there is no sneaking up on anyone anymore. Everyone knows that the Yellow Jackets are the real deal and they mean business, so every night the team gets the very best from their opponents. The team is getting ready for another long playoff run this season and it starts on March 13 and 14 when AIC hosts the second round of playoffs.

Captain Joel Kocur has few regrets about the season. "We played really good hockey for a long period of time," Kocur said. "Maybe a few games we would like back, but we really can't complain where we have set ourselves up to make another run." Kocur is also looking forward to the upcoming games. "We are ready to make another push and make some more noise in the playoffs and in the tournament this year," he said. "This is the best part of the year, and I want to finish out my senior year on top... making more memories with this group."

Although the Yellow Jackets are expected to make it to the tournament again, it is no guarantee, and there is a lot of work to be done before getting there. Any team in this league can play good

hockey night-in and night-out, so AIC is going to have to be sharp in playoffs in order to get to the tournament and win the Atlantic again. The biggest question mark that the Yellow Jackets have to face before punching their ticket to the tournament lies with the Sacred Heart Pioneers. They have been very solid this year and have beat the Yellow Jackets twice this year. They have one of the best offensive teams in the country and have a lot of firepower.

Freshman goalie Jarrett Fiske has had a rewarding first year as a Yellow Jacket. "This year has been incredible for me," he said. "Everything since day one has been first-class, and I am very thankful I decided to come here. The two other goalies are very talented and have taught me so many things, off and on the ice. I can't wait to see how this season shapes up." Fiske, who goes by "Cheese," has been the third-string goalie this year. He will play a huge role in the years to come for the Yellow Jackets, and has been a huge part of the team this year. The feeling, it would seem, is mutual. To Fiske, the Yellow Jackets are "one of the best teams in the country, and that I have ever played for."

Senior Jared Pike is ready to

give a strong finish to his college career. "It has been a long journey for this team, and we are more than ready to get playoffs going," Pike said. "The team from top to bottom has been outstanding this year... I want to go out on top!"

The Yellow Jackets host whatever opponent is the lowest seed after the first round of playoffs at the MassMutual Center on March 13-15. Come out and support this group as they look to make another run for a national championship this year.

Read more about AIC's exceptional Ice Hockey team inside.

Meet Three Nominees for the Most Prestigious Hockey Award

Plus:

Black History Month

The Hum in the Hive Launches

Pop Smoke taken too soon

Volleyball Preview

and Fran Healy visits AIC