

# The Kingsman

"THE VOICE OF BROOKLYN COLLEGE SINCE 1950"

FALL 2018 - ISSUE 5

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018

## COME OUT, COME OUT

## WHEREVER YOU ARE

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The Brooklyn College

# KINGSMAN

## 10/17 - Names to Watch Out For

Z	H	R	B	I	N	Y	S	I	R	C	N	R	H
C	R	S	I	T	R	A	D	J	C	C	C	C	K
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H	T	U	A	R	Y	A	N	E	I	I	I	H	N

Hidden in this word search are the first and last names of five people quoted in this week's issue of The Kingsman. Can you find them all? If you do, snap a pic and send it to us on social media for a shout-out in next week's issue!



## Talk to us!

Are you a CUNY student or faculty member with something to say? The Kingsman's Opinions section is accepting submissions. Send your op-ed to [kingsmanbc@gmail.com](mailto:kingsmanbc@gmail.com) before 11:59 PM Saturday. (The Kingsman only publishes articles written by Brooklyn College students and faculty, related to goings-on at Brooklyn College or CUNY. We reserve the right to reject submissions which are off-topic, obscene, or excessively wordy.)

# Rogue E-Mail Chain Breaks Bulldog Connection

By Ryan Schwach  
*Managing News Editor*

We all know Brooklyn College has several websites whose functions could probably all be folded into one site. You have Blackboard for assignments and grades, CUNYfirst for tuition and schedules, Degreeworks for tracking credits, and of course, Bulldog Connection for connecting with the various student clubs and organizations.

This past Friday, Oct. 12, students on Bulldog Connection experienced their own “Hawaii is being nuked” type of error when 30,000 students received an e-mail chain of nearly 60 messages. According to Benjamin Kats, VP of the Computer Science Club, the problem arose when OrgSync, the website used by clubs and organizations updated their system, which accidentally created a profile for 30,000 BC students under the Bulldog Connection

group of Orgsync. The chain quickly grew larger with various students asking what in the world was happening and several demanding to be taken off whatever just sent them a dozen e-mails, which only made the situation worse by adding to the number of e-mails.

“After receiving three emails which I absolutely did not care for, I logged in and had a moderately hard time figuring out how to turn off e-mail notifications,” said Kats, who quickly put together a tutorial on how to end the barrage of emails and posted it on the thread. The tutorial which had over 400 views.

Soon, once people realized they had the attention of 30,000 unwilling college students, they began to send their own spam and chain e-mails, advertising their social media pages and passing along music recommendations.

“The more people voiced their frustration, the more e-mails were



sent out, resulting in an endless loop,” explained Kats.

The whole ordeal ended a few hours later when the Bulldog

Connection group was just deleted from the website.

“So yeah,” said Kats, “that was an interesting Friday afternoon.”

# In Black Panther-Themed Course, Students Explore Art of Wakanda

By Samantha Castro  
*Layout Editor*

Every Thursday night at Brooklyn College, students take a “Journey to Wakanda.”

It is part of a special topics art class where, as the name suggests, students explore the fictional world of Wakanda from the recent Marvel movie Black Panther. The class focuses on the art side of the world, from costumes to set design, and discusses where in African culture it derives from.

“Black Panther is a great way to take something that is popular culture and then relate back to something academic, and to get people interested in learning about African art cultures,” said Christopher Richards, the art history professor who teaches the class.

The art aspect of the movie heavily inspired viewers to wear prints similar to those in the movie, Richards took notice of this. Being knowledgeable in art history and African cultures, he thought that he should teach students where in history these art elements came from. However, Richards considers his class to be a two-way street when it comes to talking about different aspects of art and film.

“My favorite thing about the class is that it’s one big discussion,” said Bob Szantyr, a graduate student in the class. “Instead of a lecture, it’s an

open forum and space.”

An example would be the Ndebele wall paintings, which are colorful geometric paintings, used on houses in Wakanda and in the background multiple times when in the city. Richards informed his students that the wall paintings are historically known to be used in South Africa by the apartheid government to further segregate black populations. After sharing this information, he asked his students if they felt it was okay for the filmmakers to include this in the film.

The amount of engagement from his pupils surprises Richards. “It’s partially because of the subject matter that they’re really personally invested in,” said Richards. “It’s about their own identity and their heritage. So they want to have these conversations.”

He explains that through this dialogue he gets to learn from the students. Even though he has physically done research in African countries, he still gains new perspective from his students. During the discussion about the Ndebele wall painting, one of the students viewed it as a reclamation of the art. Richards never thought of it that way and he agreed.

Richards hopes that teaching this class will broaden his students’ knowledge of African cultures, and that with the information they learn, they will be able to teach their



A costume from Black Panther in the “Heroes and Sheros” exhibit. / Christopher Richards

family and friends.

“I hope that these students will look at things in a new light and not

take things superficially,” he said.

# For National Coming Out Day, LGBTQ Community Shares Their Stories

By Allison Rapp  
*Managing Digital Editor*

Last Thursday, Oct. 11, the LGBTQ Resource Center held a day long event in honor of National Coming Out Day.

Beginning at 11 am, students and faculty were invited to spend time with representatives from other LGBTQ centers, listen to lectures, and participate in a workshop with Honest Accomplice Theatre. Though there was plenty to do, the highlight of the day was the final segment, a “Living History” dinner, in which both students and staff were able to discuss their personal coming out experiences and talk about their journeys.

Presiding over the evening was a large painting of Marsha P. Johnson, a transgender woman, pioneer of the gay rights movement, and Stonewall riot participant. Painted by Brooklyn College student Gwen Roman McCarthy, Johnson appeared angel-like, such that David McKay, the director of the LGBTQ Center, referred to her as the center’s “patron saint.”

Thursday’s event was the first of its kind, and McKay considered it an experiment of sorts.

“One of the challenges that the LGBTQ community faces is owning our collective history,” he said, adding that the idea behind the name of the event came from the idea that members of



One of the various paired discussions that took place, this one between Miggy Castellano and Professor Paisley Currah. / Allison Rapp

the community are both “living history” and “living IN history”.

The evening revolved around a series of paired discussions between various members of the community. Matthew Burgess, a professor of poetry at Brooklyn College, spoke about the various influences he encountered in his life before coming out at the age of 23. He discussed how it was difficult to find examples of gay people on television and in the media who weren’t portrayed so

stereotypically. He found that it was actually writers with whom he felt the deepest connection: poets like Walt Whitman, Frank O’Hara, and Allen Ginsberg.

Jamie O’Malley, Vice President of the LGBTQ center spoke about how she has struggled over the years to determine her self-identity, which is ever changing, comparing herself to a Russian nesting doll.

“What is being ‘out?’” she asked the audience rhetorically. “There’s so many options for coming out, it can mean so much.”

Another Brooklyn College professor, Paisley Currah, discussed how transphobia manifests itself in the workplace. Currah explained that after he transitioned some years ago, he actually found that he was given more authority at the university he worked at, and that the amount of late papers he received from students decreased significantly from when he was a woman, indicating that in fact, misogyny often trumps transphobia.

Concluding the evening was a truly special guest. Sitting with Gwen Roman McCarthy was Victoria Cruz, a veteran gay rights activist, Stonewall participant, and friend of Marsha P. Johnson. Cruz also starred in a 2017 Netflix documentary

entitled *The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson*, in which she attempted to reopen the cold case of Johnson’s death. (Johnson was found dead in the Hudson River in 1992, and though her death was ruled a suicide, many believed this could not be possible.)

Cruz, a Brooklyn College graduate herself, spoke surely and confidently about the need for activism now more than ever. She noted that up until the mid 90’s, the word “transgender” didn’t even exist, and gay people were frequently banned or thrown out of bars and other institutions.

“The more visible we are, the more vulnerable we are to haters,” she said, agreeing that there are often obstacles that come along with coming out.

She listed her role models as Eleanor Roosevelt, fellow BC graduate Shirley Chisholm, and Christine Jorgensen, the first person who was widely known in the United States for receiving sex reassignment surgery.

Cruz wrapped up the evening’s discussion by encouraging students and staff alike to remain strong and continue to fight for their rights as members of the LGBTQ community.



Victoria Cruz (left) and Gwen Roman McCarthy (right) ending the night. / Allison Rapp

# Q&A with Rashan Castro, Filmmaker



Rashan Castro / Illustration By Quiara Vasquez

By Quiara Vasquez  
*Editor-in-Chief*

Filmmaker Rashan Castro honed his skills behind the camera first at Borough of Manhattan Community College, then here at BC, where he got his BA in Film in 2014. 2018 was a big year for Rashan: he got his MFA in Directing from the Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema, and he finally released his latest project, a black comedy called “The United States of Paranoia: Or How I Stayed On the Line to Repair My Air Conditioner.”

I met up with Rashan to talk about race, baseball, and the unlikely influence of Robert Downey Sr.

**Quiara Vasquez: When did you first want to get into film?**

Rashan Castro: I’ve been an avid watcher of movies since I was a child, but it took awhile for it to grow and manifest in me that I wanted to make films. Originally I wanted to do TV... but I wasn’t interested in the narrative aspects.

I took a photography class at BMCC. There was an editing class and we had a television production class. That laid the foundation for me. I made a few little short films at BMCC. I tried

to make little shorts here and there: one was on my mother, one was a little spy thriller... That one was ridiculous.

After BMCC I transferred to Brooklyn College and entered the film program there. That’s where my passion for film really started to grow. Once I got past the thought of being camera guy for ESPN or the local sports networks, I wanted to be a cinematographer. It blended two things I love - technology, and the artistic side.

**QV: Talk about your thesis film at BC. That was also sports-related, right?**

RC: I made that in the winter to spring of 2014. It was called *Balk*. It’s a term they use in baseball - I’m a nut for baseball. I’m a Met fan, unfortunately. This was at a time I was more deeply into the Mets and sports talk radio.

The movie was about a former player who has a vendetta against a current player on the local sports team. He feels jilted by this ball player. He felt that that era [the “steroid era,” where many prominent ball players were using performance-enhancing drugs on the sly] took away his potential in the major leagues.

But I didn’t want to make it just about that. There’s a scene in the

beginning where he goes into the batting cage and he’s missing every ball. It was moreso about an individual who missed an opportunity and wants to right a supposed wrong in his life.

**QV: You were in the inaugural class at Feirstein. It’s almost like you were pioneering it.**

RC: Right. We were sort of the guinea pigs of Feirstein. The students don’t know what they’re doing and the faculty don’t know what they’re doing. There was a curriculum for the next three years, of course, but they had to amend some classes after we took them. We were taking a risk and they were taking a risk on us. Grad school is already hard. But I would say I learned a lot. I think I’m a better filmmaker than when I made *Balk*, but I can still learn, I can still grow, I know there’s still room for improvement. But I couldn’t have improved without going to Feirstein, getting that kick in the pants.

**QV: Was it comparable to undergrad?**

RC: No, it’s totally different. Definitely the scrutiny was a little higher. In undergrad it’s like... “get out there and good luck.” Well, kind of. In undergrad you didn’t need someone from

the college to shoot your film, it’d just cost you more. But at Feirstein, you had to shoot with your cohort.

[At BC] We had thesis screenwriting, production, and post. Which was the same sort of structure as at Feirstein, because a lot of professors came over from Brooklyn College and there was a lot of carry-over. But at Feirstein, we had a thesis development class. And there was definitely more pressure from the development stage on up.

**QV: How did United States of Paranoia change throughout the production process?**

RC: Well, my actor got sick two days before we were supposed to wrap - that put a monkey wrench in the gears.

But it evolved at every step. With each stage of the filmmaking process, from the screenplay to the shoot to the editing, the film was constantly evolving.

I always knew what the story was gonna be. I had a clear idea of what I was trying to say.

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# Q&A with Rashan Castro, Filmmaker



A shot from Castro's film BALK. / [brooklyn.cuny.edu](http://brooklyn.cuny.edu)

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**QV: What were you trying to say?**

RC: I was trying to convey how... how the history of a marginalized class of people can stay with them forever, and how that history shapes how we see and feel our way through the world. If you're African-American, Hispanic, gay or lesbian, of Asian descent... the history of this country can lead this very day to paranoid thoughts. But I also wanted to not bang people over the head with that. It's not a message movie with a capital M in any way. It's kind of farcical, satirical... more than anything I wanted it to be funny, and fun. The real story is about a man trying to get his fucking air conditioner fixed! But he's being plagued by the heat, and his grandfather and his son and this grand conspiracy, so he himself feels the weight of being African-American. The biggest fear was, comedy is the hardest thing you can do in film, but to also have this sort of sociopolitical bend to it - I was afraid I wouldn't be able to nail it.

**QV: I mean, I think you nailed it.**

RC: I think comedy is able to drop the guard on people so it's easier to digest than the didactic. People don't feel like you're being talked down to in a comedy.

Sometimes drama can be like, "yeah, we know!" But when you can make fun of it or subvert expectations, there's something about that. I'd like to think I have a decent sense of humor - not everyone would agree with that. As an African-American, shying away from race is pretty funny. I don't always feel like I'm the person to talk about these things, but I don't feel like I'm on the wrong side of history when I express my opinions on what's happening with all these totalitarian governments rising up again!

**QV: That's a big part of United States of Paranoia, that fear of government oppression.**

RC: The paranoia of thinking the government will bring back slavery - it's totally asinine, but when you're a minority you wonder if they would try that shit.

**QV: What went well with USOP?**

RC: There are some things I was very happy about. But my success was mostly due to the people around me and how well they did. But also how I communicated my vision and my needs from them. I'm proudest of the performances. I feel the acting was much better than in Balk - not to pooh-pooh them, but I felt I was very green there, and that I have a better eye for casting, and how to communicate with the actors. I

felt I was good in that sense.

**QV: You've said that Spike Lee is a huge influence, and I saw shades of Do the Right Thing in United States of Paranoia.**

RC: I stole from Spike, and I don't apologize for that. Spike Lee stole from his favorite filmmakers too, and Tarantino has definitely commandeered a few shots and lines from his favorite films. I wanted to make it look hotter than Do the Right Thing, with haze and filters and that sort of thing.

**QV: Any other influences?**

RC: One major influence, moreso than Spike - Robert Downey Sr. made a film called Putney Swope, this sociopolitical satirical film about an ad agency where the CEO dies during a meeting and they take a vote after they die to see who the new CEO is, so as a joke they all vote for the only black salesman in the agency. So he's risen to the seat of CEO, and their fears of him as CEO come true. And this was 1969, the height of the civil rights movement. It's bizarre as hell, and when it works it's fuckin' brilliant. Also the Coen Brothers - A Serious Man was a big influence. I don't watch as much right now. 70's style cinematography, using zooms and wide angle lenses. Probably some Spielberg in there? Who knows. I went with my own tastes - where that

taste comes from, I can't tell you where.

**QV: Any projects after this?**

RC: There isn't anything I'm working on diligently. I'd like to go on vacation. I'm really not kidding. Every step was a challenge. It was a taxing experience, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. There were times I wanted to drop out and never show my face again. I felt ashamed of my work ethic. But it was an important experience. I work at Feirstein - hopefully I get a full time job there and get to go on a long, long vacation around the world. I just feel like I need to leave this city and country for an obscene amount of time. No bullshit? Once I get past my fears, I think I'm pretty damn good. I'm not the greatest, I wouldn't go that far. But I'm pretty damn good. I didn't go through all this, and my mother didn't sacrifice as much as she did for me to stop making films.



# OP-ED: Roadsick: A Traveler’s Journal

By Noah Daly  
*Staff Writer*

There’s a condition that afflicts those who wander the open road. A fever of heat and euphoria that has befallen many of the doomed who pass through Bridger -Teton and the ghostly hills outside Cokeville. As if spirits swoop down to offer us brief moments of clarity. Like the delusions of heat stroke, or the weepy wonders of childbirth, you can look on the outstretched miles and feel it.

In the last days of June, I agreed to drive a Mustang across the United States with my friend. He bought the cherry red car for less than \$3,000, and thought that “it will look great next to a couple of girls with surfboards on Mission Beach.” We had exactly one month to be at the gates of Camp Pendleton, a United States Marine Corps station just north of San Diego. And though I had never driven any distance like this before (and never once touched a manual transmission), I accepted without hesitation on principle.

A good student should take on educational challenges whenever possible. Particularly when those challenges involve driving a sports car on open highway. Yes, it’s important to complete your due diligence and hand in every assignment, but what about that time after the final exam?

Our route cut a zigzagging path across the belly of the United States. From Brooklyn, we made it as far as the West Virginia-Tennessee border on our first day. Passing through the Smokey

Mountains, we weathered a torrential storm that washed an eighteen-wheel truck right off the highway and into the woods. In Nashville, we drank with a nuclear scientist as we discussed Fission waste and listened to bluegrass in the Ryman Auditorium. A delicious smoky smell forced us to pull over at Central BBQ in Memphis, and as soon as we sat down, three cars came to a ear-splitting, fender-bending halt just in front of the restaurant. The things people do for good food.

In order to afford meals like this, we slept in a cramped two-person tent. We would pitch our home away from home in campsites or on the side of country roads. We figured if there’s flat ground and room enough to park the car, it’s prime real estate. But as

the rolling foothills of Missouri gave way to the Great Planes, something began to come over us. Each day the smells of warm leather, sweat, and granola bars blended into a sort of musk that clouds the senses. When we stopped in places like Yellowstone or Seminole Reservoir, we would stand next to the car, taking it all in, saying nothing for a long time, only to get back in and keep on driving.

We soon learned that this was a condition unique to long bouts of car travel. We took shifts between four and six hours long behind the wheel. Even with plentiful music libraries, we found ourselves falling back on the humming engine and the rushing air coming through the uneven cracks in the window. It’s not unlike meditation: after

long enough you’re no longer able to distract brain. Its superficial layers begins to peel away one by one with the mile markers.

In Kansas, green oceans of corn and young wheat began to change into a solid mass against the pale sky. This scene remained unchanged for hundreds of

miles, and eventually hypnotized me. As opposed to driving into a ditch, I parked on the cracked driveway of an abandoned farm. It was 5:35 in the morning on July 19th. I had been driving since before midnight, and there were still 161 miles between me and Denver. I had learned to read how many minutes I had until sunrise by checking the position of Venus, the morning star. With the oils of sleeplessness stuck firmly to my face I unwrapped another peanut butter bar and watched trucks drive into the still dark horizon.

It’s a peculiar sickness: Stomach hurts. Palms sweat. Mouth dry. Overcome by a sense of familiarity in a place you’ve never been before. There are no buildings, no screens; barely any signs of Man at all. It’s not the fumes from the subway, and it’s not your new meds. You may very well be dehydrated, but it’s the land: As you process the distance and the detail, your body struggles to focus. The body sinks into the driver’s seat and the vanishing point begins to seem like wallpaper. Even when you have your pedal on the floor, the trees seem to approve as you speed by. You’re sure someone gave you a nudge, but there’s no one awake. Not even you. The fever has swept you up in a dream and carried you off, far over the desert.



Open road near the Seminole Reservoir in Wyoming. / Noah Daly

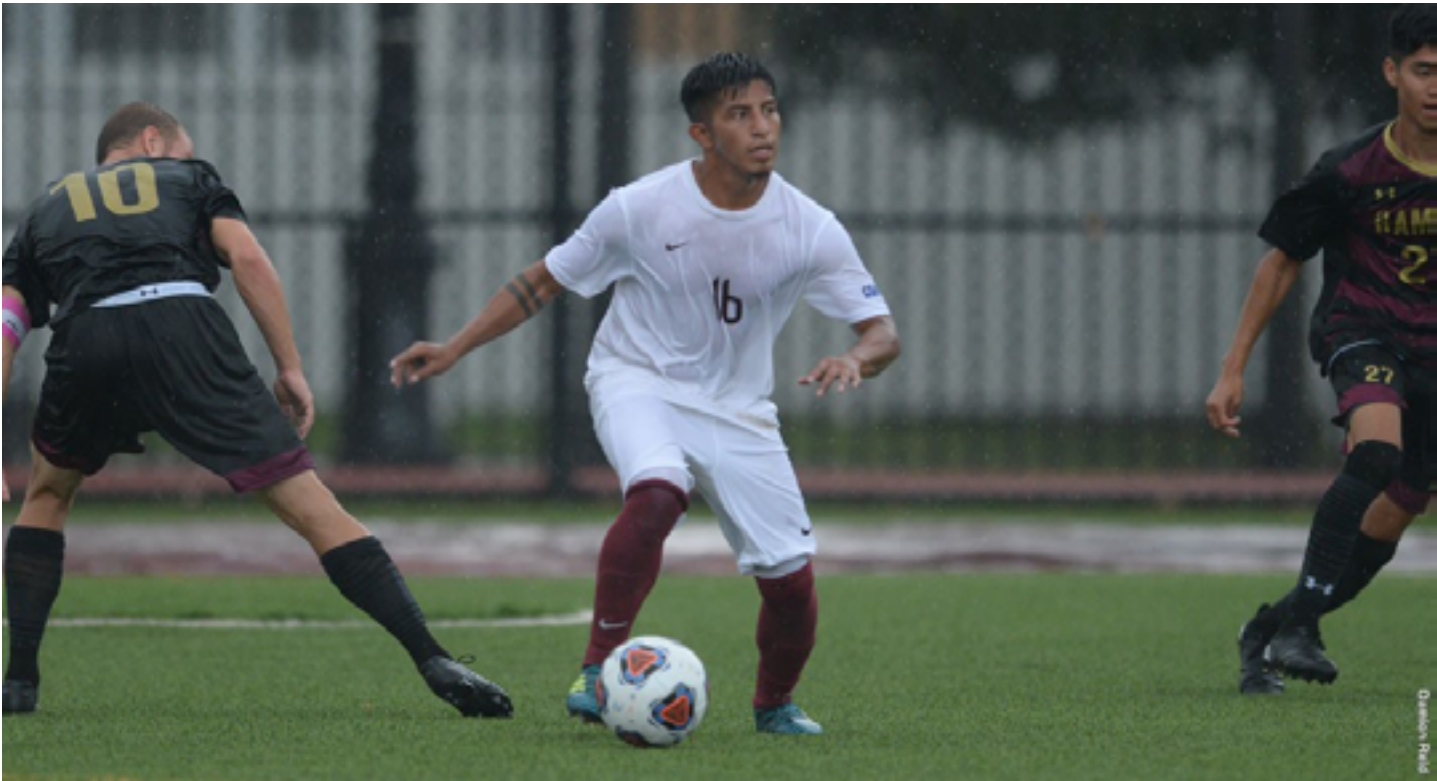


On Route 70 in Wyoming. / Noah Daly

BROOKLYN COLLEGE SPORTS

THE VOICE OF BROOKLYN COLLEGE SINCE 1950 – KINGSMANBC.COM – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2018

# Men’s Soccer Crumbles, Goes 0-9 Against Lions



Bulldog Stewart Bailon navigating the ball through the field/ *Damion Reid / Brooklyn College Athletics*

By Cheyne Sullivan  
*Staff Writer*

The Brooklyn College men’s soccer team faced off against the College of New Jersey Lions in a non-conference affair at Brooklyn College Field Monday afternoon. Plagued by injuries, the Bulldogs were down a man on the field to start the game with no reserves

on the bench. The College of New Jersey took advantage of that, dismantling the Bulldogs 0-9 through 90 minutes. The Lions wasted no time scoring when senior midfielder Nick Sample scored from the left flank at the four-minute mark. This was the first of eight more goals, as the Lions kept finding ways to blow past the Bulldogs. Five minutes after the

first goal, the Lions’ freshman right-back, Dante Bettino scored on a thunderous kick from thirty yards out at the left top of the box to make the score 2-0. At the end of the first half, the score was 0-4 with added goals from Kevin Esteves (30’) and Dylan Teixeira (41’). The Bulldogs were outshot 18-2 at the end of the half.

The Lions continued on their

route in the second half by adding a fifth goal at the sixty-two-minute mark when sophomore forward Abdullah Afridi scored. Six minutes later Dylan Teixeira would score his second goal of the match on a breakaway. The College of New Jersey would tack on two more goals (Kevin Ordonez (75’), John Taylor (77’)) before an injury would cause the Bulldogs to be down another player. With only eight players on the field for the Bulldogs, the Lions scored one more goal when Dante Bettino scored his second of the match when from the top of the box. The Bulldogs did not record a single shot in the second half, while the Lions added twelve more.

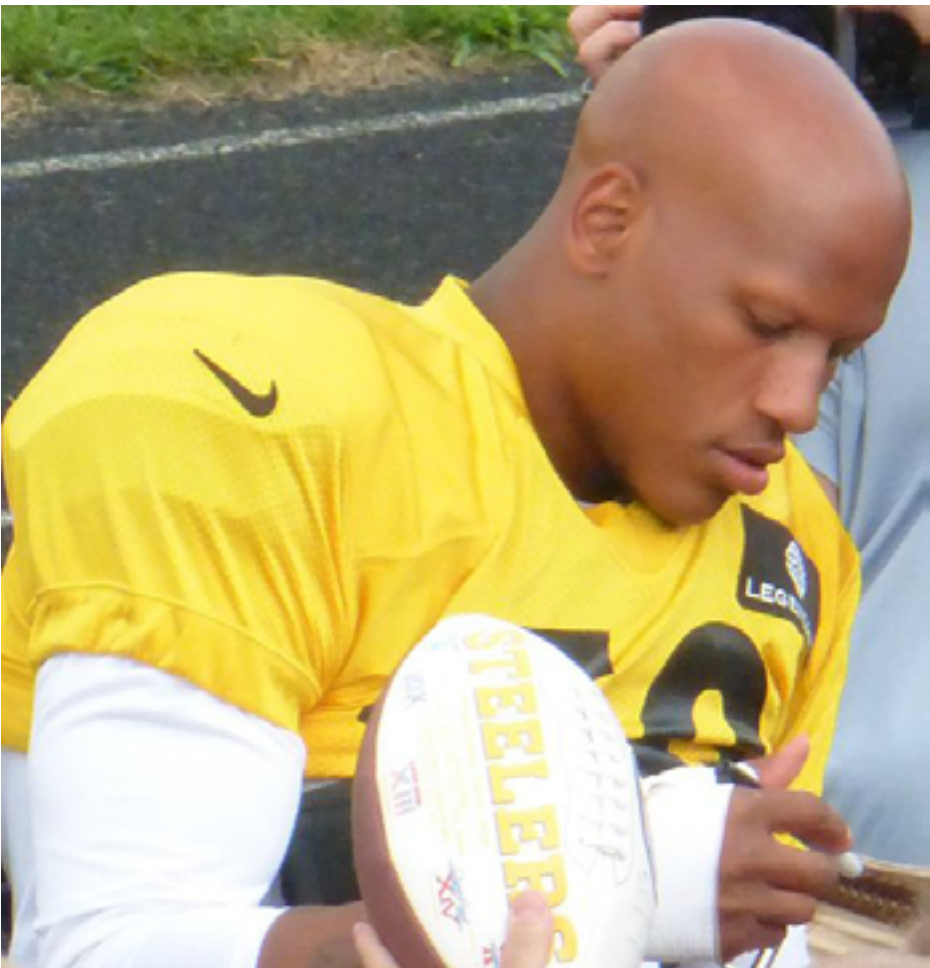
The 0-9 deficit put the Bulldogs at 3-13-1 on the season, placing them in sixth place of the CUNYAC. Men’s soccer looks to turn the page for their next match against Medgar Evers College, who are 1-11 on the season. The match begins at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 17 at the Brooklyn College Field. The first 150 fans in attendance will receive a free T-shirt.

# Ryan Shazier’s Emotional Return to the Field

By Jasmine Peralta  
*Sports Editor*

On Sunday, Pittsburgh linebacker Ryan Shazier made an emotional return to the field, walking for the first time since suffering a severe spinal injury last season. On Dec. 4, 2017, the 26-year-old Shazier suffered a spinal injury during a tackle that left him without feeling in his legs, and he found himself on the verge of being paralyzed. While his chances of being able to walk again were predicted to be very slim, Shazier beat the odds when he walked out on the field before the Pittsburgh Steelers’ game against the their main rival, the Cincinnati Bengals, last weekend. “It’s been a long journey, but this is still a ways to go. But it all started here in Cincinnati. Today was an amazing day I was so thankful to be able to tell everyone thank you #shalieve,” said Shazier on Twitter on Sunday. He shared a video of himself being escorted off the same field in December the day of his injury.

Via social media, Shazier shared his journey to recovery by posting videos keeping his fans up to date on his revival and, of course, his urge to get back to the game. Before their game on Sept. 24, when the Steelers made their Monday Night Football appearance, ABC’s Lisa Salters spoke to Shazier. “He’s feeling really good, he is taking things a day at a time. He wants to play football,” said Salters. “We just want to be there as a team to support him in whatever decision he decides to make for himself in the future,” Steelers coach Mike Tomlin stated. Shazier’s decision to surprise his teammates and fans before the game left them emotional. From using a wheelchair in April, to being placed on the physically unable to perform (PUP) list in May, to getting back on his own two feet in August, the linebacker has proven himself to be relentless in his path to a full recovery. The progress Shazier has made in such little time has been incredible to watch.



Ryan Shazier signing autographs. / *WikiCommons*