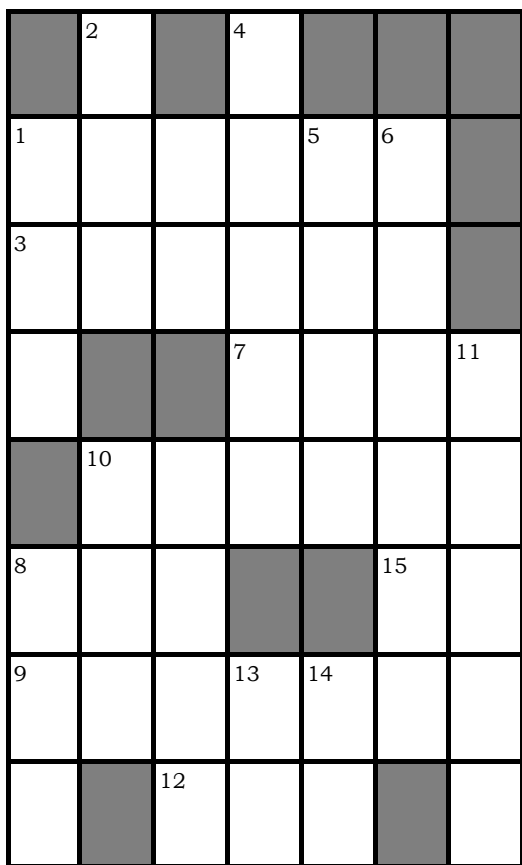


- PUZZLE KORNER -



NOVEMBER CROSSWORD

Down

2. Voluntary abstinence in the month of November
4. Descendant of a family or heir
5. Often done by grandmas and with yarn
6. Stoic Roman Philosopher
8. Mode that saves power or fuel
10. Past tense of lie
11. Will and Bill in Happy Feet 2
13. Opposite of out
14. Connecticut

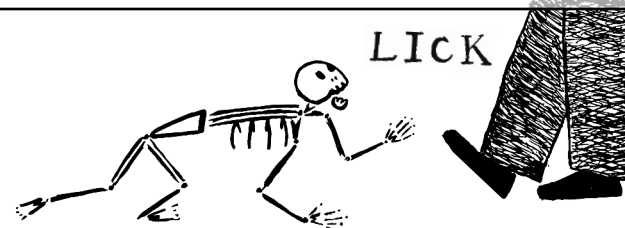
Across

1. Stuff you can get at S1-12
3. Under the hood
7. Sound a pig makes
10. Jack-o-_____
8. Water in French
9. Cup half empty mindset
12. Red and white Minecraft block
15. Abbreviation for a Soviet Sub-

marine tactic. If the crew suspected strongly enough that they had a submarine tailing, the skipper would pull a surprise maneuver called a "Crazy Ivan." "Crazy" because of the sheer riskiness of a submarine collision at depth, and "Ivan" as military slang for the Russians (equivalent to a basic American name like "John").

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for more articles

IndependentPhiladelphia725@gmail.com



AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF OF CCP,

Be advised; this is a crucial academic year for Philadelphia's own community college, CCP.

In the final year of their 2017-2025 Strategic Plan oriented towards increasing enrollment, the graduation rate, and career opportunities, the CCP administration and governance is investing millions in renovations and opening the new City College for Municipal Employees while stonewalling union bargaining, forcing faculty and staff to work with expired contracts since August.

After this academic year, CCP President Dr. Donald Guy Generals is due for his own contract renewal. Dear reader, how about a report card?

Under his command, much of the gathered funding from city, state, and student tuition is funneled towards sustaining his own bloating administrative body, which operates largely isolated from the daily college life of students and faculty. This current administration is committed on paper to creating an inclusive and supportive environment, but are these promises consistently fulfilled? or are they just words crafted to meet the expectations of the mayor and the Board of Trustees, the college's governance board?

How often do you see members of the administration walking through the halls, visiting classrooms, greeting students at the doors? Save your laughter. An attitude of consistently overlooking students trickles down from leadership into the body and leaches out to any employee even mildly annoyed with students. Ultimately, any isolated system will exist solely to perpetuate itself and not perform its function.

Student life administrators put on their own campus programming using funding usurped from student fees, while the other half of the fees go to their paychecks. They drive up attendance by offering free food at the cost of swiping your school ID. Administrators and administrative staff consistently attend these events more often than students, but the ability to report ID swipes of students merely seeking a quick snack validates their events rather than seeking to genuinely improve the student experience. Does this constitute student engagement?

And what of our amazing extracurriculars? How can diverse voices be included when the official school newspaper has been inactive for the entire first half of the semester and severely underfunded. Likewise, the budget for student governance is still severely restricted, limiting opportunities for equitable student leadership. What has the Student Government Association gotten done in the past several years? The administration expects faculty members to volunteer for advising positions. While they are paid, the time commitment is added on top of classes. How could a teacher be expected to teach four, five, maybe six classes and give their full advising support to a newspaper, student government, or any other high-functioning club? Without a platform for students to publish with editorial independence nor a respectable governing body to represent student interests, “diversity, equity, and inclusion” are just buzzwords.

A thriving student culture of engagement will lead to increased enrollment and retention, yet the administration’s actions are not reflective of their commitment to student engagement and success, rather to maintaining tight control over their own priorities. Their promises directly contradict their greatest revenue source: packing in classrooms with as many students - to as few teachers - as possible.

CCP is meant to be fully funded in equal thirds by the state, the city, and student tuition, however, the city and state fall short of their thirds. Student tuition is the greatest contributor to the revenue for the college, despite a multiple-year freeze on tuition.

Even without a fully funded college, surpluses have swelled in the past years by millions. Still, much of the faculty must operate in a “toxic culture” that requires “volunteered, unpaid work” on top of classes, as some teachers familiar with the matter have stated.

Every four years the union fights for smaller class sizes, more man-

ageable teaching schedules, and better pay for the welfare of our teachers and college employees. In 2019, the union caved without a striking to pressure from the administration to an increase their class load. Now, full-time teachers must teach five classes under contracts. Even teachers who have been with the college for years and could teach four in the fall often opt to overload their schedules for a livable salary.

Numerous adjunct professors teach and have no office to hold office hours for students. Their schedule and pay force them to teach at multiple schools or work at other endeavors to supplement income for their families.

As president of CCP, Dr. Generals’ main priorities are to advocate and fundraise for the college. In testimony months ago, Philadelphia Councilman Isaiah Thomas said to Dr. Generals “We want to be able to pay the people who work at CCP a quality wage. We can’t go back to the mayor and say ‘CCP needs this much money to get rid of the contract dispute’ if you don’t give us that dollar amount.” Instead, the union took its own initiative without his aid in City Hall this summer, securing \$5 million for the college’s operating budget.

How are contract disputes still not resolved then? Union Co-President and Professor Junior Brainard has said “What we want largely reflects what we want for our students,” but the fight need not be endured by the union alone. When students remain oblivious to bargaining in the past, the administration can quietly pressure the union into concessions without a strike that hurt faculty, staff, and students alike. Students and the union together can push for change that does not trickle down from the administration, ensuring that promises of student success and engagement are not just words on paper.

His own salary, appended with a car stipend and housing stipend, far outweighs the now-expired contracts for faculty and staff. Does his office in Mint Building purposefully isolate from daily college life to perpetuate his own corporate way of life?

Dr. Generals has stated his office has an open-door policy. Raise your own critiques to the Man. We suggest funding student-led programs and ending contract disputes, but if he wants his final letter grade from *The Independent*, he can see me in my office.

With Respect,

M.P. Hassel

A Disconnect in Student Government: Advisor and President at Odds

A.C. WARD

In recent weeks, a series of emails between Student Government Association (SGA) President Frank Scales and SGA Faculty Advisor Jeffrey Markovitz reveal a rift in communication and cooperation. As Faculty Advisor, Markovitz is contractually tasked with duties such as attending meetings, guiding SGA officers, and reviewing drafted documents. Scales claims Markovitz’s absence from meetings and lack of feedback on SGA documents have hindered the organization’s progress this semester. Markovitz, however, has pointed to issues of professionalism and mutual respect in his correspondence with Scales.

In the first email, sent on October 22, Scales cites contractual obligations, such as attending SGA meetings, reviewing a proposed constitution, and responding to requests to meet, alleging breaches on Markovitz’s part.

From:	Francis Scales
Sent:	10:18AM Tuesday, October 22, 2024
Subject:	Contractual breach(es)
Hello Dr. Markovitz, I hope you are well. I am reaching out for the second time regarding a few points of concern with your conduct as the SGA faculty advisor; <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Failure to attend the SGA executive meeting and the SGA General Assembly Meeting. Additionally, you have failed to provide any reason for your absences.2. Failure to respond to the student government president's request to meet.3. Refusal to review the constitutional draft that student government officials have proposed.4. Refusal to speak to student journalists.	

I have attached an SGA Advisor contract which you are in direct violation of. (Please note that the student government's request for access to the contract that you signed was denied by our administrative advisor, Mrs. Jenavia.)

Dr. Markovitz, specifically you are in breach of the following stipulations;

- "Attend all Student Government Association meetings;"
- "Meet on regular scheduled basis with the Student Government Association president to provide guidance and counsel;"
- "Provide workshops and individual meetings for the new executive officers to promote continuity and leadership development;"
- "Review all important Student Government Association draft documents to assist in meeting professional standards;"
- "Other duties as required to support the student leaders and members of Student Government Association and Community College of Philadelphia student body."

I hope we can remedy these issues without formal processes for the good of the student body.

Sincerely,
Frank Scales

Markovitz responds with an plea for boundaries, stating he will not tolerate any communication he perceives as hostile or accusatory. He reaffirms his dedication to advising respectful SGA members and maintaining a professional atmosphere.

From:	Jeffrey Markovitz
Sent:	10:24AM Tuesday, October 22, 2024
Subject:	Re: Contractual breach(es)
Frank, I'd like to clearly articulate a boundary for you. I will not respond to any messages that are hostile, accusatory, disrespectful, or otherwise toxic. I believe I deserve better than this.	

I agreed to advise the SGA because I truly care for students and this college. I will continue to support all officers and initiatives, as I have all semester, who engage in a respectful and professional manner.

Jeffrey S. Markovitz, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English
Community College of Philadelphia
BR47-K

Two days later, the two exchanged further messages. Scales responds by asking Markovitz to specify any past instances of unprofessional conduct in their exchanges and requesting clarification on Markovitz’s stance regarding the SGA’s constitution draft.

From:	Francis Scales
Sent:	10:57AM Thursday, October 24, 2024
Subject:	SGA President Meeting

Hello Dr. Markovitz, I hope you are well.

Just to follow up on previous emails, please share any particular incidences where my communication patterns were inappropriate or unprofessional so that we can strive to correct them. Additionally, please provide any documents that govern how we must interact, and also your preferences so that we can continue the school year sharing a productive professional relationship.

It is appropriate to have a meeting by the end of next week to discuss the SGA calendar and our constitutional draft. Before this meeting takes place, please read our constitutional draft to provide advice on its contents and aid in ensuring it meets professional standards.

Additionally, please provide a reason as to why you were absent from the SGAs executive meeting and general assembly.

Sincerely,
Frank Scales

Markovitz responded, offering to meet if Scales adopted a more respectful tone, maintained his stance against reviewing the constitution.

From:	Jeffrey Markovitz
Sent:	2:12PM Thursday, October 24, 2024
Subject:	Re: SGA President Meeting

Frank,

I am willing to meet with you next week. All I ask is basic courtesy. It is clear to me that you do not wish to receive my advice and that you view myself and others as adversaries. I cannot help that. As I said before, I will not tolerate disrespect or any hostility toward myself or others. If you would like to advance your ideas with my help, we can remain strictly professional.

I mentioned earlier this semester that I will not review your constitution. I believe that your interests are singular and personal, and that they do not reflect the wishes of the rest of the SGA nor benefit students at this college. You have a right to continue with your revisions, but I will not assist with them.

Please also understand that I do not report to you, so I do not feel the need to explain or excuse myself to you.

This is my final olive branch; if I see any further hostility in writing or in person, in any medium, I will not be able to work with you.

Please let me know of your schedule next week.

Jeff

On October 29, Markovitz sent a memo to all SGA members noting that he is separating from Scales.

From:	Jeffrey Markovitz
Sent:	4:00PM Tuesday, October 29, 2024
Subject:	Memo to the SGA

Good Afternoon All,

This message serves to note that, from this moment on, I will not associate in any way with Frank Scales. His ethics and behaviors are in direct conflict with mine, and I will no longer compromise my values.

I will continue to serve the rest of the SGA with pride.

Jeffrey S. Markovitz

From:	Francis Scales
Sent:	11:32PM Wednesday, October 30, 2024
Subject:	Contractual Obligation(s)
<p>Hello Dr. Markovitz, I hope you are well.</p> <p>I received your memo which you sent yesterday on October 29th. This memo was sent to all members of SGA. In this memo you stated "I will not associate in any way with Frank Scales. His ethics and behaviors are in direct conflict with mine, and I will no longer compromise my values."</p> <p>I ask that you provide answers to the following questions so that I can understand how your stance fits with your contractual obligations and role as SGA advisor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What legally binding document supersedes your SGA contract that allows you to shun me, miss meetings, and intentionally fail to review SGA draft documents? 2. How do my ethics and behaviors directly oppose yours? Please be specific. 3. What was your intention when sending your memo to the entirety of SGA. 4. Have you done this sort of thing to SGA officials in the past? <p>Considering that this may be unprecedented, I believe that if question one and two cannot be answered it is prudent of you to write your letter of resignation and deliver it to me as I am the administrative head of the student government. I ask this of you because this is the process outlined for SGA officials who would like to resign in our constitution.</p> <p>I would like to add that your memo led me to feeling rejected and isolated and that it was not an appropriate or effective way to communicate your feelings. If you have any complaints about my behavior, the college provides procedures to ensure your voice is heard.</p> <p>Please remember that if you are willing to fulfill your contractual obligations, I would be happy to work with you to ensure the welfare of the student body.</p> <p>Sincerely, Frank Scales</p>	

For student government officials, the role of Faculty Advisor is a resource meant to foster leadership skills, continuity, and collaborative governance. A divide between president and faculty advisor, as these emails indicate, hinders all initiatives SGA would otherwise work on to benefit the broader student body.

Revising the SGA Contracts and Constitution have been interests for members of SGA in the past, including the faculty advisor.

In an interview on the SGA election earlier this year in April, Markovitz spoke of his own initiative to reassess the SGA contracts and constitution. "There are certain aspects about the SGA constitution and the contracts that... I thought was a problem," he said in that interview. "And so, this winter, actually, I went and redid them all. I just, I rewrote all of the contracts and made the language clearer." Dr. Markovitz revising language may entail different changes than the revisions Scales and his SGA peers have proposed for the contracts.

"I didn't do the Constitution," Markovitz continued, consistent with his current position. He has told Scales via email that he "will not review your constitution" this semester.

Dr. Markovitz reasoned that he could not review the Constitution on his own in the past. "I started to, but it was like a 60-page document. I'm like, I don't have time for this on my free time, you know." The current SGA Constitution is 12 pages, including a title page. Now, Dr. Markovitz will not review Scales' proposed Constitution because he believes Scales' "interests are singular and personal, and that they do not reflect the wishes of the rest of the SGA nor benefit students at this college."

In the past, Markovitz has criticized previous journalistic coverage of his involvement in SGA, responding he did "not believe previous reporting on the subject has been ethical and fair" when asked for comment earlier in the semester. Trusting this critique was given in good faith, we have attempted to approach these leaked emails and past quotes in an even more dispassionate, ethical, and fair manner.

The Independent will follow developments closely to see how SGA leadership and college administration respond to these issues, especially as the semester progresses and key projects await. This article is not just a report of conflicting communications; it's a reminder of the importance of transparent, cooperative leadership in student government.

Supporting Students, Unsupported: Shomari Weedor in the Learning Lab

HAMED BENENGELI

The Learning Lab is a busy space for studying and meeting up at CCP's main campus. At the center of it all is Shomari Weedor, who has worked here since 2018. With his signature shades and leather bucket hat, he's a familiar face known for his style and steady support. But behind that, Shomari deals with challenges—both personal and work-related—that reveal the lack of support he gets from the college.

Shomari has lived with a neurological condition. The LED lighting in the lab often triggers painful migraines, and his neurologist has recommended he work every other day to help manage these symptoms. Shomari has requested this accommodation several times, but so far, the administration has not responded. For a college that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), this lack of support doesn't match its stated values.

The Learning Lab's equipment pose their own problems. The computers, which are essential for students, often shut off because of low-quality adapters that don't provide a steady current. When the lab is full, students end up facing blacked-out screens instead of functional computers. Shomari spends a lot of time resetting these systems, one by one, every day.

Shomari is also responsible for keeping the lab's four printers working, handling constant issues from paper jams to toner problems. Despite these obstacles, he works hard to keep everything running for the students.

This isn't just about broken equipment or unanswered requests. It's about a dedicated staff member who continues to support students despite being overlooked by the institution. Shomari's resilience shows that a college's true commitment to its community is reflected in the support it gives to those who uphold its mission each day.

Conversations
by the
Water

By Anna Hampton

I'm talking to you
But I don't know if you're listening.
You're responding, sure.
The movement of your mouth glistening,
lips in the Sunshine
reminiscent of lapping waves.
You're responding to me, sure.
But are you listening?

I hear the plosive sounds of your speech,
The cracking and popping of your words.
From your lips and teeth you speak,
mouth flapping like wings of a bird.
But you seem to fly north
this time of year,
why do you do so?
I know you're used to the shiver
down your spine
and the crunch
beneath your feet,
But you can't feel your toes!
and the snow blinds.
Baby, you can't see where you're going.
Or can you?

We've already established that
this is what you prefer.
But it's not what you need.
So don't speak to me
talk with me.

A Bonkers Arena Proposal in Chinatown

ASHTON ARELLANO

In 2022, the Philadelphia 76ers proposed constructing a new \$1.5 billion dollar arena on Market Street, between 10th and 11th streets, adjacent to Chinatown. This proposed location has become a hotbed for heated debate as the city wrestles with the potential benefits and significant risks posed by such a massive project. Infringing upon the historic Chinatown district, the proposal has ignited a firestorm of protests and growing opposition as the plan approaches a City Council vote in the Fall. Backed by the 76ers ownership and Mayor Cherelle Parker, the arena is pitched as a solution to bring life back to the declining Market East area, believing that the surrounding areas and currently used lands can be better used to benefit the city. However, the project has met strong opposition from Chinatown residents, community activists, and business owners, who are deeply concerned about the impact such an endeavor can have on their neighborhood. They fear that the arena could lead to displacement and further gentrification, causing a rift within the long-established community. Now, with the bill introduced by Councilmember Mark Squilla, at least nine out of 17 council members must approve the proposal for it to proceed.

The once thriving and bustling hub of Philadelphia, Market East has experienced a steady decline due to factors such as the growth of online shopping, suburbanization of shopping, and the economic fallout from the pandemic. Supporters of the 76ers arena argue that it will bring significant economic benefits to Philadelphia. They emphasize that the \$1.5 billion dollar project is privately funded, requiring no taxpayer dollars, and will create thousands of jobs. Proponents believe the arena will boost tourism, attract visitors, and generate long-term growth. Additionally, they highlight a \$50 million community benefits package designed to support local businesses and affordable housing.

In contrast, the project has faced large opposition towards the proposed arena. The neighborhood has been targeted by predatory development for years. Chinatown has faced multiple large-scale development threats, including the Vine Street Expressway in 1966, a proposed casino in 2008, a federal prison in 1993, and a baseball stadium for the Phillies in the early 2000s. In each case, strong community opposition

successfully prevented these projects from moving forward, demonstrating Chinatown's long fought history of battles. As one local activist put it, "Every single time that Chinatown has been

targeted for a project like this, people say Chinatown will survive. But is that really how we should be treated as a community?" Chinatown is a historic neighborhood, deeply rooted in its immigrant history. The community, already dealing with pressures from past developments, fears that the arena would put the unique character of Chinatown at risk due to the influx of commercial interests catering to sports fans and tourist, further marginalizing a community that has fought for decades to maintain its presence.

Once thriving and bustling the arena has been in decline due to factors like, the rise of online shopping, and the impact of the pandemic.

Among the strongest proponents of the 76ers arena within Philadelphia's City Council is Jim Harrity, an At-Large representative. Harrity is currently the only council member who has explicitly expressed support for the bill that would place a new arena in Chinatown. Under the belief that it will bring significant economic benefits to the city without placing a financial burden on taxpayers. Most other council members have either remained undecided or are waiting to review the full details of the proposal before taking a public stance. However, Harrity's stance highlights a broader issue within Philadelphia's almost uniformly Democratic City Council: shows a willingness to embrace the flashy, big-ticket project without fully grappling with the social consequences.

Despite their claims of being the party of the people, most council members have remained noncommittal on the arena. Hesitating to either fully support or oppose a project that many see as detrimental to Chinatown's future. It raises questions about whose interests the council is truly prioritizing. In a city where Democratic leaders claim to champion inclusivity and protect vulnerable communities, the silence from most council members is deafening. As residents, activists, and small businesses fight to preserve Chinatown unique history, it seems many council members are taking a "wait and see" approach rather than taking a firm stance against the corporate interests of billion-dollar

THOUGHTS ON THE 76ERS

ARENA PROPOSAL?

Write a letter to the editor:

aarella2@student.ccp.edu

developers. Mark Squilla, the council member representing Chinatown, introduced the legislation but remains noncommittal, signaling an alarming willingness to proceed with the project despite community outcry.

“I wholeheartedly believe this is the right deal for the people of Philadelphia,” Parker said in announcing her support in September, while pledging to protect what she called “the best Chinatown in the United States.”

|||||

A Ticket to Campus: CCP Students Push for SEPTA Trans-Passes

R.J. FLARE

Faced with the steep costs of commuting, Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) students are rallying behind the free daily SEPTA Trans-Passes initiative. Members of the Student Government Association (SGA) have gathered over 1,700 student signatures, uniting the CCP community behind a shared vision for equitable, accessible transit. Ongoing discussions between CCP’s administration, union representatives, and SEPTA sales signal the possibility of free transit passes for students in the near future.

If implemented, CCP’s transit pass program would require a substantial financial commitment, enrolling all students and employees at a monthly cost of \$30 per person. This totals nearly \$2 million annually—a significant investment aimed at broadening educational access. SGA suggests introducing a small transportation fee for students, which would be covered by financial aid for eligible students. To accommodate remote students, the college could offer an opt-out option.

Providing Trans-Passes could ease parking demand, potentially reducing the strain on CCP’s limited parking facilities. However, the road to funding is riddled with political hurdles.

On Monday, October 21, the last day of voter registration before the election, Senator Bob Casey, Mayor Parker, and Councilmen Isaiah

Thomas and Kenyatta Johnson visited CCP. Councilman Johnson urged students to advocate in Harrisburg for a portion of the available \$15 billion surplus to help fund SEPTA’s estimated \$240 million budget deficit. According to Johnson, Republican state representatives and senators are holding up funding for Philadelphia’s public transit. With this support, SEPTA could stabilize its services, which may boost the student fight for free Trans-Passes at CCP.

“This is something that the union wants; this is what SGA wants, and it’s what the college’s own transportation survey shows what the students want,” said FSFCCP Co-President Junion Brainard. The union has integrated the demand for free SEPTA passes into its bargaining platform. With this solidarity, CCP’s transit initiative is poised to become a shared mission for student retention.

As CCP’s SGA continues to push for subsidized transit access, they are calling for direct student involvement in Harrisburg. The next step in this initiative is for SGA leaders to organize a petition drive and student delegation to advocate for funding that could make free transit access a reality. CCP students have the chance to secure lasting change and forge a more accessible path to higher education.

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NOVEMBER CROSSWORD

ANSWERS:

Op-Ed: Student Conduct Cases and the Persecution of CCP's SGA President

FRANK SCALES

The fairness of our justice system, although not without its shortcomings, separates the United States and western culture from social and economic instability that often characterizes other countries. Barack Obama said it best while addressing the Democratic National Convention in 2004 when he said that the “true genius of America” is that we can “say what we think, write what we think without hearing a sudden knock on the door.”

The virtuous belief that life, liberty, and property cannot be justly deprived without due process of the law was inscribed by our founding fathers in the 5th and 14th amendments of the United States constitution and has been upheld and expanded by the United States Supreme Court. Due to the work of many patriots during the Civil Rights Movement, due process is finally supposed to protect all of us. Unfortunately, some of us fail to realize the power of what we have inherited. Our rights, which are protected by the due process our justice system provides, were not given; they were fought for.

In *Goss v. Lopez* (1975) the Supreme Court ruled that all students at public colleges are entitled to the due process protections of the 5th and 14th amendments. The implication of this ruling was that it guaranteed students due process-or procedural protection-in conduct cases that minimally include a notice of charges, an explanation of the evidence being used against them, and an opportunity to refute against said charges. The rationale being that a pupil's progress towards a degree and academic record qualifies as both property and liberty interests. Therefore, suspending or expelling a pupil equates to property deprivation and harming their good name equates to liberty deprivation.

After personal experience and research, I wish I could report that colleges and universities uphold a high standard of justice in disciplinary proceedings. I wish I could say that a student charged with a conduct infraction will always be given notice of said charges. I wish I could say that a college will give the accused student all evidence supporting

the alleged violations. I wish I could say that members of the judicial committees tasked with judging conduct cases are impartial and knowledgeable enough to make prudent decisions. I wish I could say that when a college finds a student responsible for a conduct violation, they are provided with a rationale that explains the decision. I wish I could say colleges keep a certified record of all meetings and proceedings that take place regarding a conduct case. Sadly, all I can confirm is that students' rights will not be upheld unless they understand what those rights are, and exactly how to exercise them.

College administrations across the United States have not only hollowed out the procedural due process rights guaranteed by the United States Supreme Court but have gone a step further. Many colleges also violate students' substantive due process rights. An individual's substantive due process rights protect them from unreasonable government interference through unnecessary or excessive investigation. Unfortunately, many colleges' codes of conduct are riddled with ambiguities which enable them to initiate conduct cases against any student. To add icing and rainbow sprinkles on this very corrupt chocolate cake, colleges do this while marketing themselves as our society's staunchest social justice warriors.

College administrations have weakened or ignored these protections by taking advantage of students' naivety and lack of legal expertise. Colleges have justified their actions by arguing that due to the educational purpose of conduct cases, expansive due process rights are not warranted. In other words, 'shut the hell up and learn your lesson dumb student, we know what is best.' This stance ignores the devastating impact these cases often have on students' lives. A suspension or expulsion from a college can severely limit a student's job prospects and even serve to blacklist students from other educational institutions and organizations.

Considering the serious nature of these cases, some may wonder why a college administration like the administration at Community College of Philadelphia would violate student's substantive and procedural due process rights. The obvious answer is leverage. CCP's administration which is headed by President Dr. Generals feels they must maintain absolute control over the judicial process so that even if they violate a student's substantive due process rights by initiating a case on weak

merits, it will still work out in their favor. General's administration has enacted ambiguous rules that can be levied against students they deem a threat to their power. For example, two ambiguous rules that could be used against any student include "Physical/Verbal Abuse" and "Threatening Behavior/Harassment/Bullying."

Some will say this analysis is unfair. They reason that President General's administration would not engage in such corrupt activities. More seasoned members of the CCP community would respond by saying that they have not known this administration for long enough. Another, albeit more valid, point is that those rules are straightforward. They may argue those words have definitions that identify distinct patterns of behavior. To an extent I would agree. The issue arises when the administration either does not define those words in the Code of Conduct or creates their own woke definitions up out of thin air.

You may be wondering why some of the things I am saying seem oddly specific. If so, your hunch is correct. CCP has been investigating me for the past 4 months. Throughout this time General's administration violated both my substantive and procedural due process rights. To encapsulate my experience, I was left with no choice but to spend 3,000 dollars on legal representation just to get copies of the evidence that was going to be used against me.

To start from the beginning, on July 23rd I received a letter from the Community College of Philadelphia which informed me that the college was investigating whether I committed, "Physical/Verbal Abuse", and "Threatening Behavior/Harassment/Bullying." In this letter the chargers were summarized stating "Specifically, you are accused of using derogatory language in reference to people of color and other marginalized groups, disrupting queer-sponsored events, and being verbally abusive in your tone and words towards other (not just students)." The letter went on to demand that I schedule a meeting with the Conduct Coordinator, Juanita Henry, or be subject to "disciplinary holds". Some still may be wondering: "What did he do?", I wish I could tell you. Much later, in my judicial hearing, I asked the complainant that same question. The only response I received was that "There were too many incidences to cite."

After receiving this conduct letter, I emailed Mrs. Henry on July 24th asking a series of procedural questions. Specifically, I asked:

"What is the nature of this meeting?", "Is this being put on any records, meaning my records, the colleges records, or any other records?", "May I see any and all evidence that will be presented at this meeting prior to the meeting?", "Who will attend this meeting.", and "What authority do you have to summon me and proceed?" Mrs. Henry responded on July 25th only to explain that "The nature of this meeting is to discuss the allegations informally, answer the questions you submitted and see if the issue can be resolved by mediation." In a follow up email on July 27th in which I included the Dean of Students, Brad Kovaleski, I restated my previous questions with more precise wording and asked what "informal" meant. Both administrators failed to respond to my queries or provide copies of the evidence. However, Dr. Kovaleski sent a text message where he explained that "the questions about the process you asked would be what is covered in your initial mtg with Mrs. Henry. Its basically a convo to talk through processes, answer questions and provide options."

Being naive and eager to clear up confusion. I scheduled a meeting with Mrs. Henry for August 7th from 9:00 am – 9:30 am. Before this meeting took place, the complainant and her friends spread messages on Discord where they said I was under investigation and encouraged other students to report me. In response, on July 26th I posted a letter on my personal Instagram in which I explained the situation.

On August 7th I walked into Mrs. Henry's meeting expecting to be provided with the evidence and all other pertinent information relating to the case. Instead, an interrogation ensued. Mrs. Henry failed to provide copies of all the evidence, instead she continued the meeting pressing me about whether I was racist or not. Mrs. Henry explained that it was alleged my presence made people uncomfortable at the queer prom and that I popped balloons. I responded by explaining that I did not pop any balloons and that it was out of my control how people felt about my presence. I furthered my point explaining that just because an individual felt uncomfortable did not mean I violated the code of conduct. Mrs. Henry argued that if someone felt uncomfortable, this meant that I was responsible for bullying regardless of what happened. Then, Mrs. Henry threatened to personally sue me for the letter I posted on my social media account regarding the case. She explained that I defamed her because in the letter I stated, "I received a letter from a student conduct

coordinator who seems to baselessly accuse me of what appears to be hate speech.” Mrs. Henry went on to tell me that conduct cases ought to remain confidential and only the parties involved should know about the case. However, when I mentioned that the complainant and her friends were telling people I was under investigation and motivating students to file reports against me, Mrs. Henry shrugged it off like that was acceptable behavior.

I left this meeting questioning my own sanity. I felt as if the world was against me. Later I returned to my resolve and realized that Mrs. Henry had made a prejudgment. She treated me as if I were guilty before allowing me the opportunity to examine the evidence and refute the allegations. This confirmed the suspicion that simmered in my gut when I first received the letter on July 23rd. I was being persecuted for my advocacy and I needed the help of a lawyer. On August 9th I forked over three thousand dollars to retain a lawyer from Jefferson University who wrote the school a long email which demanded the college hand over all evidence. Days later, Mrs. Henry sent copies of all the evidence which consisted of two Power Point slideshows, two anonymous reports, a report made by the complainant, and another report made by the complainant's closest friend.

After reviewing the evidence, I understood why Mrs. Henry withheld it. The evidence was inconclusive at best and libel at worst. One anonymous report said in its entirety, “He kept harassing me during election season urging me to vote for him it was like catcalling but a little bit racist. It made me uncomfortable.” The complainants report said, “They partially got into office by piggybacking off of my campaign,” “They are damaging the reputation of CCP by representing us at City Hall and attending meetings around the city without supervision..” “They often promote a one-sided American co-founder narrative without showing empathy or understanding of the struggles faced by students of color or the disturbing history associated with these founders.” The complainant's friend's report was even more revealing stating, “He’s been, depending on the incident or situation, anything and everything from among condescending, facetious, ignorant, belittling, thoughtless, un-receptive, arrogant, brash, and rude.” “He talks abouts the Founding Fathers like they're saints.” “There are many little things that you can't describe to someone who hasn't been there (not to insult the insight of whoever is

is reading this).”

To be frank, I was incredulous to find that while I spent my summer working to reform student government, the complainant and her “friends” planned a bone-headed coup d’etat by initiating a conduct investigation in bad faith. The complainant, a member of student government, had no time for SGA meetings, yet she had time to help create a 42-page slideshow slandering my character. The purpose of the Power Point slide show that “various contributors” wrote was to compile “The various reasons a multitude of students are dissatisfied with Frank’s presidency.” It nakedly proposed “Frank’s abdication or removal from the role of SGA President as soon as possible.” General’s administration who I speculated were agitated because of my advocacy, which included questioning where 42,000 dollars went that was supposed to be in student government's budget, were simply taking advantage of an opportunity to unperson me.

With the trial approaching I reached out to FIRE, “The Foundation of Individual Rights and Expression.” They took an interest in my case and wrote a letter on my behalf. Then proceeded to hand deliver it to the administration. President Dr. Generals, and other prominent members of the administration including Mrs. Henry received this letter. FIRE argued that my first amendment right to free speech was being violated. They reasoned that putting me through the judicial process for speech protected by the first amendment was a punishment in and of itself and a violation of my first amendment right. Specifically, they stated that “Investigations of constitutionally protected speech can itself violate the First Amendment even if concluded in the speaker’s favor.”

On September 12th, the day of the judicial hearing, over twenty students showed up and showed out, not only to support me, but to testify on my behalf. Each witness refuted the unfounded allegations. The complainant had no witnesses and at one point she read what one of her absent friends wrote as if it were a witness testimony. Yes, that is hearsay. Unfortunately, the chairperson of the hearing neglected to point this out and allowed the complainant to continue. At one point in the trial, I asked a remarkably simple question: “Can you name an incident where I harassed or bullied you?” After several minutes of shuffling through papers, she answered saying that there were “too many incidences to cite.” The fact that she could not name a single incident

makes sense considering the allegations were false.

The judicial hearing started seven minutes late. Only five of my witnesses were allowed to speak. Paulina Reyes, the Editor and Chief of the Vanguard Newspaper, got her testimony cut short to thirty seconds. I was only allowed to cross-examine the complainant with two questions. The administrative and faculty chairpersons were very disrespectful to me and my witnesses. For example, they rolled their eyes and became aggressive in their tone numerous times. They even locked the door stopping a few of my witnesses who arrived late from attending the hearing. There was a clear bias throughout the trial.

I left the hearing knowing that it was rigged and that the administration was attempting to assassinate my character. However, I remained hopeful because the complainant failed to provide any incidence where I harassed or bullied her and the high quality of my witness's testimonies. The Second Vice President of the Student Government, Jaritsa Hernandez-Orsini, informed the committee that the complainant had mocked me in the past, going as far as to nickname me "Cisco" so that she could talk about me in Spanish while on campus. She made jokes about my speech impediment by mocking my pronunciation of "CCP" and called me illiterate in iMessage group chats. Ivy Yim, creative manager for my Instagram account, informed the committee that I was a passionate person who helped her secure a job with the teacher's union, took time to invite the complainant to events and even to film videos. A member of the Queer Student Union told the judicial committee that I did not pop balloons or eat too much food at the queer prom. Yes, you read that right. The complainant alleged that I ate too much food at the queer prom. Paulina Reyes, although her testimony got cut to thirty seconds, explained that I was a pleasure to work with and was always respectful towards her.

The judicial committee claimed that they would render their decision within "72 hours". "72 hours" turned into 2 weeks. On September 26th, I received the findings of the judicial committee. After opening the letter, my girlfriend and I were shocked to see I was found responsible for "Threatening Behavior/Harassment/Bullying."

Mrs. Henry nor the judicial committee explained what I did or provided any rationale for their decision. Also, Mrs. Henry initially neglected to provide contact information for Appeal Advisors, which the code of

conduct mandates the school provide to students who are found responsible for conduct infractions.

Despite not having access to an Appeals Advisor, I filed an appeal. At my appeals hearing on October 15th, I showed up with twenty-two students who were all ready to testify on my behalf. The chairperson of the appeals committee stumbled as he tried to answer basic questions. One being why I "was not given a rationale for the judicial committee's decision" or an explanation as to why it took so long for the college to provide me with copies of the evidence. Then, the chairperson became irate, aggressive, and started demanding I answer questions that were unrelated to my appeal. He did this despite Article IV of Judicial Policies in the code of conduct which states "The accused student will not be compelled to answer questions, and no inference may be drawn from the accused student's failure to answer questions. No person will be compelled to answer questions that could incriminate themselves."

I thought this fiasco was over until Mrs. Henry sent a letter to an editor of The Independent newspaper. The letter alleges that he broke the same rules that I was alleged to have broken. I am determined to ensure all students' due process rights are upheld and that the college stops persecuting student advocates. God only knows how long they have been doing this sort of thing. For these reasons, I will be advising him through his case. Additionally, I urge any student facing conduct cases to reach out. Students' rights will finally be upheld under my presidency.

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THE PRETTY PAINTING BY KALLI RIVERA