

# THE COLLEGIAN

VOLUME LXXX ISSUE NO. 5 SERVING THE BALTIMORE CITY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY SINCE 1929 SPRING 2009



A Catwalk model shows off an outfit made from recycled newspaper.

## Improved Spring Fair

Eliana Fabiyi

Spring this year brought exciting events and changes to Baltimore City College. To celebrate this new beginning as well as the good weather to come, a half day with a carnival was in order. The Spring Fair, on May 1, was a huge success thanks to the incredible efforts of teachers and students alike, despite some belated April showers.

Many of our very own student clubs and organizations were featured at the fair. On the main stage, the Spring Fair Committee supplied the fair with great music and MC-ing by DJ Mike Bean. Mr. McBee's 11<sup>th</sup> grade IB theater class gave an energetic, hilarious performance of a classical "Commedia Dell'Arte" show—complete with colorful costumes and expressive masks. Then, City's Catwalk models graced the runway with their sassy and original outfits. Some of the more notable outfits were those made out of recycled newspaper.

Whether it was due to the food, the music, the performances, the souvenirs, seeing Mr. Joyner do the "stanky leg", or just simply for the company, this year's Spring Fair was an unquestionable success. As Ms. Kriewald said, "The Spring Fair involved a lot of hard work and it was a lot of fun. I'm very proud of the kids who worked on the committee—next year we'll be back, bigger and better." ●

## School Satisfaction Survey

Zoe Rammelkamp

Throughout the month of March, students, teachers, and parents at Baltimore City College High School took the Middle States Accreditation for Growth Survey; a survey whose purpose was to identify the school's weaknesses, strengths, and areas for improvement. Mr. Rodney Joyner, the Dean of Students, says that overall, he is pleased with the results from the survey. He says that, "The biggest comment we got was that the building needs a lot of work," but he also adds that the survey showed that "Students and parents really love what's happening here educationally."

The results from the

survey indicate that 94.7% of students agree that the school is trying to improve student learning and performance. Shawn Black '12, considers these results accurate; he believes that in the school is improving in terms of "behavior in the hallways and cleanliness of the school."

The school received its poorest results in the Finances category; only 73.8% of students said they believed that there are adequate financial resources available to support the educational programs at City. Only 77.5% of teachers at City reported that they consider the facilities at City to be "safe, clean and well maintained." Assistant Principal

## From Freshmen to Seniors: Four Years at City

Nia Hampton

This feels nice. This new sense of self. This new feeling of "completion." Congratulations. Class of 2009, we made it! We're finally graduating. We've served four long hard years in this institution and on the sixth of June we will have the diploma to prove it. Serving time at the "Castle on the Hill" has been memorable to say the least. The class of '09 is more than ready to take our final bow. But saying good-bye will most definitely be hard. Seriously, hasn't your time here at City College been some of the best times of your life?

Remember Summer Bridge? How scared and excited and hot we were. Who could have imagined that the girl in the Aeropostle polo giggling in the back of your ninth grade Latin class would become your best friend? What about the boy in the over sized white tee, who would have thought that you would be going to senior prom with him? What about the first time you experienced the infamous senior prank day? Was I the only one who got hit with a water balloon? I know I wasn't because I saw the stains, and the pained looks on my fellow classmates' faces. But wasn't it exhilarating? Didn't it make you think that City College was "the" high school? And what about that ring? I know, I know; it's everything you thought it would be. Just like City has been, hasn't it?



A group of seniors cheer for City at the annual City-Poly football game

When Mrs. Givens told you to look to your left and right in orientation, did you really believe that someone sitting next to you wouldn't be here to see Graduation? I didn't, because I was sitting on the end of the row. But I digress. For the most part we're all here aren't we? When I look at the transcript, I have seen little change in the class number. It is impressive compared to other Baltimore City Public Schools. Of course, we have lost some friends along the way, and we'll be sure to pour some out for the homies at the Meyerhof. But right now, it's time to celebrate with the true knights.

True knights are the ones that braved numerous Honor Society Assemblies and Damseaux's geometry tests. The ones that can remember Mr. Dobbins soulful solo at the Holiday Assembly, better yet, the ones that jumped up and did the

Electric Slide with you when the choir sang "This Christmas." The ones that skipped class with you that day to get chicken boxes. The ones that can remember playing a school wide game of tag the day before break, in tenth grade. The ones that never forget to ask you if you want something when they're about to order some food. The ones that make sure they don't turn in their class work without making sure that you're finished. The ones that dance on top of cafeteria tables just to get a laugh. And the ones that give you rides to school when they see you on the bus stop. The ones that hate the glare of that bright orange suit as much as you do. These "ones" are also known as true friends. And they deserve to be rewarded with hugs, smiles, tears of joy, laughter, memories, and most importantly, more chicken boxes. ●

Finances - Do you agree that adequate financial resources are available to support the educational program?
Teachers - 80.0% Agree
Students - 73.8% Agree
Do you agree that the curriculum is interesting, instruction is effective, and textbooks are available?
Teachers - 97.1% Agree
Students - 90.5% Agree

Cindy Harcum says that it is, "the school's responsibility to look at the problem areas and to address them."

Overall, students at City consider these results accurate. Yonas Tsegaye '09, agrees that the school deserves the high numbers that indicate that the curriculum at City is interesting, instructive, and effective. Evangeline Cheetam

'09, agrees with the other 89.6% of students who say that City offers a wide variety of activities. She says that not only are the students active around City, but so are the teachers. Evangeline points to several teachers who both coach sports and teach, like English teacher Mr. Miazga and math teacher Mr. Birenbaum, who both coach baseball. ●

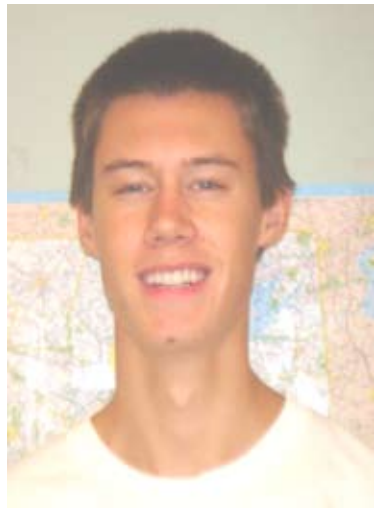
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Baltimore City College  
3220 The Alameda  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
410.396.6557  
bcc.collegian@gmail.com

## Final Words of Wisdom

John David Merrill



Last month I sat down for an interview with an alumnus who asked me quite simply, "What does 'City Forever' mean to you?" I responded with, "It means that you never truly leave City in spirit. It means that you never forget where you come from, and

it means that you never stop giving back. There is a reason that City has such a distinguished alumni association, and it is because of our motto, "City Forever." As I sat and pondered my response, I realized how soon it would be that I would be leaving City, and I resolved that I would never leave City in spirit.

Part of making the City legacy last is passing down knowledge from generation to generation. I had so many mentors in my four years at City who taught me so many different things. It is the people that get you excited about learning that you should cherish the most and hold close. It is because of those people that learning at City College was so enjoyable for me, and it is because of those people that it is so much harder to let go. But now that my time is done, I want to pass on some lessons that I have learned, in my last editorial as a writer for

*The Collegian.*

The first lesson I want to leave you with relates to every single student that attends Baltimore City College. If you go here, you are smart. Or should I say, you have the capacity to be intelligent. You may not make the best decisions, but more or less, you are smart. That is a fact. What is also a fact is that almost all of you are not living up to your potential. I am one of those under achievers. It took me until second semester senior year to learn that I could get higher than a seventy in English if I would just text mark the books. I always used the argument, "Well if you text mark the whole book, then how are you supposed to identify the important passages? It will all look the same." It took three and a half years until I actually tried it and realized that text marking kept me focused on both the literary elements of the plot as well as what was actually happening in the novel. When I text

marked I got hundreds on reading quizzes, and had more intelligent contributions in class discussions. The larger implication of my story is that you are all capable of accomplishing anything you want if you just put the time and effort into it. Our school's motto is "Palman Qui Meruit Ferat" for a reason. It means "Honor to the one who earns it." Make an effort to earn it.

I bet you that every student in this school knows how to communicate properly with an adult, and act respectfully, but for some reason, some of us neglect the lessons our mothers taught us. I have always said, but not always followed, the great wisdom that "You should never do anything you wouldn't want your mother to see you do." Clearly, we are all teenagers and do things we wouldn't want our mothers to see us do, but we can still be teenagers and make our parents proud. The best way to do that is to develop good relationships with your teachers. If you know that you are in a sport and will be missing a teacher's class often, give them your schedule, and remind them when you will be missing their class. Get the work ahead of time and do it. The same thing goes for any other absence. Giving your teacher notice ahead of time and addressing them in a respectful manner goes far. You will see the results the next time your teacher doesn't call home when you get caught on your cell phone during class again. Treat others the way you want to be treated does actually work sometimes.

The third and final lesson I want to leave you with applies to everyone planning to go to college after high school, which should be all of you. Too often, students get caught up in the rankings. Well I have a lesson about that too. It doesn't really matter where you end up going to college. You will get a great education no matter

where you go; it is just a matter of finding the college that feels right to you. That means actually going and visiting the colleges, sitting in on classes, watching how the students interact with each other and the professors, and most importantly checking out the dorms and trying the cafeteria food. If you get caught up in what number your college is ranked and ignore all the intangibles, you lose sight of what is really important.

I know a kid who recently turned down his acceptance letter to Johns Hopkins University for University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). According to U.S. News and World Reports ranking system the young man must have lost his mind. But to him, UMBC was just the better fit. On the other hand I know kids that have just picked their colleges based on ranking and ignored things about their college that may have raised a red flag if noticed earlier. So when you start looking at colleges, make sure that you take the time to get to know the colleges you think you may want to apply to by more than just looking at the name and the numbers. It's amazing what finding the right fit can do for you.

Now there are hundreds more lessons that I could have passed down to you, but I feel like those three are really important, and having them in mind as I journeyed through my high school years was extremely helpful. If you would like me to answer any of your questions, or if you would like to hear more of my stories, do not hesitate to send me an email at [johndavid.merrill@gmail.com](mailto:johndavid.merrill@gmail.com). I may not be here next year to help you in body, but I will be here in spirit (at least via email). I believe in "City Forever," and this last editorial is merely a start to my lifetime of dedication to the Baltimore City College community. ●

### THE COLLEGIAN

Editors in Chief

Eliana Fabiyi Maia Gottlieb

#### Section Editors

- News: Zoe Rammelkamp
- Opinion: John David Merrill
- Features: Eliana Fabiyi
- Clubs: Kaitlin Meissinger
- Sports: Henry Waldron
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**Staff Writers:** Joshua Beckett, Kate Bouth, Debra Brown, Simone Davis, Casey Durkin, Kenesha Gray, Briana Haley, Shakira Hamilton, Nia Hampton, Daisy Hart, Tanasia Hazelton, Sakiera Malone, Julien Polililo, Julia Queale, Sierra Richmond, Lanee Rudolph, Joshua Russakis, Nhandi Singleton, Anias Stambolis-D'Agostino, Arielle Taft, Sparkle Taylor

**Staff Photographers:** Auriel Carter, Nekia Hampton, Nicholas Hill Nancy Morales

**Copy Editor:** Agata Nowosadko

**Cartoonist:** Christopher Clemens

**Publisher:** T Dawson

**Advisor:** V Valcik

**Printer:** Homestead Publishers

### EDITORIAL POLICY

The Collegian, Baltimore City College's student newspaper, provides for communication among all citizens of the Baltimore City College community. The Collegian exists as an open forum to reflect student opinions, report student issues, and entertain.

Students write all articles and editorials. On occasion The Collegian prints individual writing as signed articles on the editorial page. The byline shows that the opinions are those of the writers. The staff examines articles for fairness and accuracy; the advisor assists with mechanics, structure, and legal issues.

A decision by The Collegian Editorial Board, composed of the Editors-in-Chief, the business managers, and other section editors, determines the content of all unsigned editorials. Unsigned editorials are allowed at the discretion of The Collegian Editorial Board, as are anonymous sources.

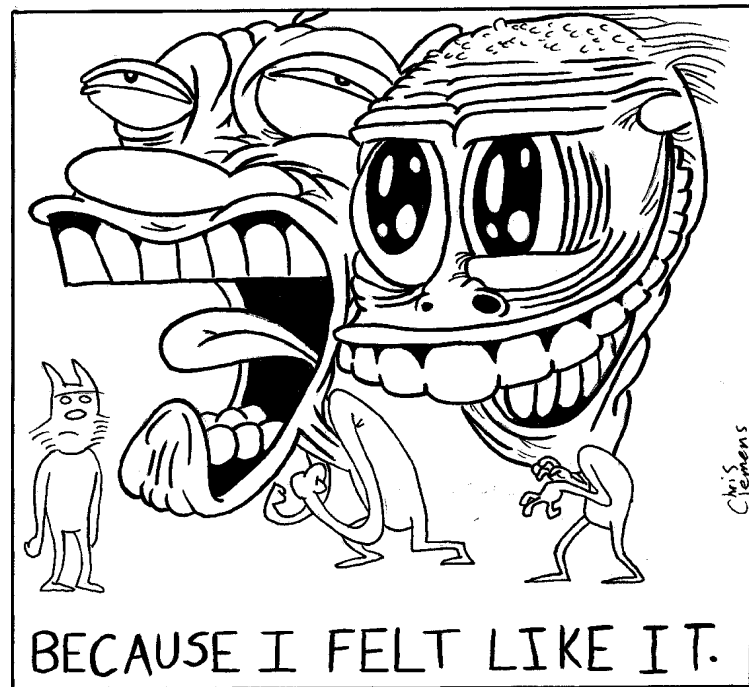
The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters that it considers libelous, obscene, or too lengthy. Only signed letters are accepted, however, names may be withheld upon the request of the writer.

The First Amendment to the Constitution grants the student press rights and privileges as long as the reporter or the paper does not abuse the guaranteed rights of any citizen. Abuse may be in the form of libel, obscenity, invasion of privacy, or material interference and physical disruption of the educational process. The Collegian will not intentionally commit any of the above abuses, and if accidental abuse occurs, will rectify it immediately.

The Collegian will do its utmost to retain an independent point of view and be free of any biases. According to the law, the principal, as publisher of the paper, may censor the paper if necessary.

The Collegian is the newspaper of the Baltimore City College community. If any member of the community sees errors, it is that person's duty to inform the staff.

The Collegian welcomes letters from all readers. To send us letters, or to access our Editorial Policy, simply email us at [bcccollegian@gmail.com](mailto:bcccollegian@gmail.com).



## Planting Trees With Obama: An Interview With Christopher Jackson

Nhandi Singleton

Baltimore City College Collegian, Christopher Jackson '10, had the privilege of planting trees with President Barack Obama on Tuesday, April 17 2009. Christopher has developed a natural ability to tackle public speaking and manual environmental labor. His hard work and dedication to environmental improvement has led to a great payoff. Christopher agreed to have an interview conducted for *The Collegian*.

**Nhandi Singleton:** So, how were you given the opportunity to meet the president?

**Christopher Jackson:** Well first I worked for the Student Conservation Association. We do environmental projects all over the country, at national and local parks. I met a lot of presidents of organizations, and I went to environmental conferences, such as the one of A.P.P.L., (Association of Partners for Public Lands) and their ninety partners. At this conference there were over hundreds of environmental agencies across the country, coming in to know how they could get more youth involvement in their agencies. So they asked me to come in because I wanted to apply for my second year, for an internship for this year. So I went in, it was kind of like a screening process for me, to line up and get that job. So I went in, and told them about what I do and how you can get more youth involvement and they were very impressed. So they came back and they really liked what they saw and they relayed it back to the SCA about my performance. After that, I was trying to encourage more student activism, so I went in the school and printed out applications for SCA and I got 58 back. The organization was very impressed with my involvement and nominated me to be a part of the event.

**N.S.:** That's very interesting! So where was the event held? And what was its purpose?

**C.J.:** The event was at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. Actually before Obama came to the event, he was signing a bill to triple the funding for AmeriCorps, which would lead to more job opportunities for youth. The event was to see how there is an increase in youth involvement and just to have fun. Also Obama wanted to interact with the youth and witness the work that they are involved with and for us to see how he works in an environmental setting.

**N.S.:** Other than the president, were there any other attendees?

**C.J.:** Vice president Joe Biden, Jill Biden, first lady Michelle Obama, and former president Bill Clinton.

**N.S.:** What was actually done at this park?

**C.J.:** The project was for us to help the water quality of the river in the aquatic garden and we planted trees to create better quality water for the river. In the garden, when it rains, there is a lot of soil run off that contaminates the lake, which in turn results in bad water quality. So that's why we planted the trees to feed on that excess water.

**N.S.:** Did you have the chance to actually talk and engage in a conversation with any of the attendees?

**C.J.:** Oh yeah, I talked to Barack Obama and asked him how it was to be living in the White House and how the signing of the bill

## Summer Festivals

Joshua Russakis

Although the school year is almost over, the summer music festival season has just begun. If you weren't able to make festivals like *Coachella* and *SXSW* earlier this spring, don't worry, there are tons of other music festivals to check out all through the summer.

**Bonnaroo**

**When:** June 12-15

**Where:** Nashville, TN

**Headliners:** Kanye West, Death Cab For Cutie, M.I.A.

**Ticket Price:** \$249.50

**Website:** [www.bonnaroo.com](http://www.bonnaroo.com)

**Worth it?** Definitely. There are so many artists here that it is well worth it. There is more to Bonnaroo than just the music; check out all the awesome activities and events going on during the festival!

**Popped! Philadelphia Music Festival**

**When:** June 20-22

**Where:** Philadelphia, PA

**Headliners:** Vampire Weekend, The Ting Tings, Dan Deacon, and Gogol Bordello

**Ticket Price:** TBA



President Obama, left, and junior Christopher Jackson, worked together on Earth Day. Courtesy of the AP.

went. I also told him about my dedication to my job and how I handed out the applications for the SCA and I pitched to him a couple of my ideas about how to create more environmental projects across the country and more city projects. Other than that, it was pretty chill. We were all laughing. There was just a back and forth between Michelle and Barack because Michelle's group was right next to ours. I also got the chance to talk to Michelle Obama, and I asked her if she had planted any trees before and if she was enjoying this experience.

**N.S.:** What were your first impressions of all of the participants?

**C.J.:** I can remember seeing Barack Obama coming down the hill, and I'll never forget seeing him and Michelle coming down together. I was the first one to be paired up with him, so I walked over toward him and said 'Hello Mr. President' and I was just very cool about meeting him. It wasn't like I was under some script or anything. Michelle was really sweet actually. Bill Clinton, he was the nicest guy there. He was telling us about how he used to plant trees all the time in his backyard. He said he had planted over a thousand trees and he was just very nice. Joe Biden, he just talked a lot. He was just extremely silly.

**N.S.:** So how did you feel about the interactions between the group leader, as in the politicians, and the student workers, like yourself?

**C.J.:** The event was so great because it wasn't just one set of people from one place, there was diversity. There was one girl from Sri Lanka, one from California. And I was the only African American male working there. It was just fun and free-wheeling.

**N.S.:** How many students were selected to participate?

**C.J.:** There were six students selected out of 50,000 SCA alumni and current workers.

**N.S.:** What were your parents' reactions to your opportunity and you being on television?

**C.J.:** My mom was hysterical. She was so excited to see me on TV and in pictures with President Obama. My dad was very proud of me too. It meant a lot to me to hear that from him, so it made me proud of myself too.

**N.S.:** You seem very involved in your work and school, so what are your future plans as far as environmental work efforts?

**C.J.:** I plan on continuing my pursuit in Environmental Studies when I go to college. I am hoping to continue to get more youth awareness and involvement because they are the people that will be most affected by the many environmental crises that are underway and they are the one that can fix them. I also enjoy the actual physical work related to the environmental field and I would like to continue my efforts in solving these worldwide issues. ●

**Website:** [www.poppedphiladelphia.org](http://www.poppedphiladelphia.org)

**Worth it?** I give it a maybe. The headlining bands are half of the artists playing the festival. It doesn't look like there will be that many events outside of the music. It's not really worth the trek up to Philadelphia for all three days, but I would suggest going on the second day when the line up is at its best.

**Essence Music Festival**

**When:** July 3-5

**Where:** New Orleans, LA

**Headliners:** Kanye West, Rihanna, Jill Scott, LL Cool J, and Mary J. Blige, Beyoncé

**Ticket Price:** \$135.50 - \$544.50 (Depending on seat location)

**Website:** [www.essence.com/essence/emf](http://www.essence.com/essence/emf)

**Worth it?** It is expensive. The festival has a philanthropic cause; giving money to Katrina victims, so there's an added reason to support it. The artists are good and should make it a pretty good festival.

**The Roots Picnic**

**When:** June 6

**Where:** Philadelphia, PA

**Headliners:** The Roots, Kid Cudi, Asher Roth, Santigold, Public Enemy, The Black Keys, TV On The Radio

**Ticket Price:** \$47.50 - 51.00

**Website:** [www.rootspicnic.com](http://www.rootspicnic.com)

**Worth it?** Yes! For the price you can't beat it, plus, the line up is amazing!

**Vans Warped Tour**

**When:** July 14

**Where:** Columbia, MD

**Headliners:** 3OH!3, Anti-Flag, Bad Religion, Flogging Molly, NOFX

**Ticket Price:** \$32.75

**Website:** [www.warpedtour.com](http://www.warpedtour.com)

**Worth it?** It's not a bad value at all. If you like to rock out for a relatively inexpensive price this is your festival! ●

# COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES 2009

Allegany College of Maryland  
Amherst College  
Anna Maria College  
Baltimore International College  
Bethune-Cookman College  
Boston College  
Bowie State University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Chatham College  
College of Notre Dame of Maryland  
Coppin State University  
Daemen College  
Davidson College  
Delaware State University  
Drexel University  
Eckerd College  
Emory University  
Ferrum College  
Frostburg State University  
Goldey-Beacom College  
Goucher College  
Hampton University  
Howard University  
Johnson & Wales University  
Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus  
McDaniel College  
Mercersburg Academy  
Mercy College  
Morehouse College  
Morgan State University  
Neumann College  
Norfolk State University  
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical-  
State University  
North Carolina Central University  
Oberlin College  
Old Dominion University  
Potomac State College of West Virginia-  
University  
Purchase College, State University of New-  
York  
Saint Mary's College of Maryland  
Stevenson University  
Syracuse University  
Temple University  
The College of Wooster  
The Community College of Baltimore  
County  
The Evergreen State College  
The George Washington University  
The Johns Hopkins University  
The Pennsylvania State University-  
University Park Campus  
The University of North Carolina at-  
Asheville  
Towson University  
Union College  
University of Baltimore  
University of Maryland Eastern Shore  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County  
University of Maryland, College Park  
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Phoenix—Maryland Campus  
University of Rhode Island  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Virginia State University  
Wesley College  
West Virginia Wesleyan College  
York College of Pennsylvania