

REPORTER

09 25 09 | reporteromag.com



petticoat/crinoline

pumps

The Right Stuff

A spotlight on student-run businesses

Entrepreneurship in Action

So you want to start your own company?

Secret Society Suspected

Reporter sniffs out the Claw and Compass

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE BEER SUMMIT

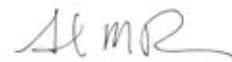
One day, while I was stumbling around the internet, I happened upon a website full of video interviews done by an NPR reporter named Alex Chadwick. The idea was this: Everyone has a story to tell. His concept was simple: Set up a card table with two chairs on a sidewalk, and pay passers-by 50 cents to interview them.

I watched a few interviews but eventually moved on and forgot about the entire thing. That is, until this summer, when President Barack Obama held the “Beer Summit” on the lawn of the White House. With nothing on the table but four pints of beer, the president, vice president, a harvard professor, and a Boston cop discussed the state of racism in America.

The scene was just similar enough to Chadwick’s project that it gave me an idea. Why not combine the two?

My offer is this: Send me an email (eric@reportermag.com) with a topic you’d like to talk about. If I like it, I’ll buy you a beer (for those of you who abstain or are under 21, I’ll buy you a root beer), and we’ll sit down for an interview. It doesn’t matter who you are – an administrator, a student, a professor. All will be considered.

Selected interviews will be transcribed and published. This is your chance to chat about something you care about, to tell your story, and get your voice out there. I look forward to hearing from you.



Andy Rees
EDITOR IN CHIEF



CARTOON by Jamie Douglas and Andy Rees

“just think, after we graduate we can do this all day.”

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Birthday sex?

SECRETLY INSIGNIFICANT

Forget Freemasons.

Cover Design by K. Nicole Murtagh & Georgi Unkovski

Reporter Magazine is published weekly during the academic year by a staff comprised of students at Rochester Institute of Technology. Business, Editorial, and Design facilities are located in Room A-426, in the lower level of the Student Alumni Union. Our phone number is 1.800.970.5406. The Advertising Department can be reached at 1.800.970.5406 ext. 0. The opinions expressed in Reporter do not necessarily reflect those of the Institute. “As much as I’d like to be a little Filipino girl, I’m not.” - M. Barbato. Letters to the Editor may also be sent to reporter@rit.edu. Reporter is not responsible for materials presented in advertising areas. No letters will be printed unless signed. All letters received become the property of Reporter. Reporter takes pride in its membership in the Associated Collegiate Press and American Civil Liberties Union. Copyright © 2009 Reporter Magazine. All rights reserved. No portion of this Magazine may be reproduced without prior written permission.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NOTE

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Dear Reporter,

After reading through Evan Stark's "The Difficulties of Distance" article in the latest issue of the *Reporter*, my fiancé Summer and I felt the need to share our own experience on the topic.

It shouldn't be a surprise to anyone that a romantic relationship involves real effort and work from both sides, but to claim a long-distance high school sweetheart relationship is "doomed to die a depressing death" is one of the most pessimistic and hopeless views you could possibly adopt.

We started dating during my senior year of high school and naturally had to face the reality that I was going five hours away to RIT at the end of the summer. But, you know what? We didn't quit, even though most of the people around us said it wouldn't work out, or it wouldn't last.

For two years our relationship was long-distance, and it tested us. We talked to each other every day for about an hour and a half

and visited when we could. Claiming you "will not have enough time" shows a lack of caring about your relationship (and an inability to manage your time). We didn't skip on hanging out with friends, going to the movies, or whatever shenanigans we got into; we just rolled with our schedules and made it work.

Now we're both at RIT, and it's safe to say our relationship has become stronger because of our long-distance situation. We have been happily together for almost four and a half years (and engaged for over a year) and have proven everyone wrong along the way.

We won't deny that sometimes a long-distance relationship can be tough, but if you feel you should throw it all away, then you probably didn't have much of a relationship to start with.

Ryan Ammerman & Summer Naugle

TO SEND LETTERS | Email reporter@rit.edu. | *Reporter* will not print anonymous letters.



The words "We are Watching" may stand as the most memorable part of the September 6 club fair. They were written in a picture frame placed at a conspicuously unattended table with a banner reading "Claw and Compass." This cryptic message at the club fair is more than just a practical joke. A secret society in the tradition of Yale's Skull and Bones has formed at RIT and is beginning to make its presence known.

Present at the club fair was Student Government (SG) President Matt Danna. Thinking back to the event, he said, "I saw people taking papers and writing their contact information down ... I think it's by invitation only."

Danna previously dodged association to the group in a September 6 tweet reply to BookMaid stating, "I never remember approving a Claw and Compass club in the past three years..." Danna now claims he was approached by students interested in creating this society, not as a club, but an independent organization recognized by the school. Once recognized, they would not be responsible to SG or any organization below SG.

"Secret societies" are known for their exclusive membership and exist as a way for peers to honor each other for outstanding academics, service and leadership. These

traditions are often found in colleges with a rich history. In fact, secret societies have been practically synonymous with the establishment of higher education in the United States. The Skull and Bones society of Yale is probably the most infamous example, with former President George W. Bush,

"I think it's a grass-roots way to bring about school spirit."

Senator John Kerry and Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart in membership.

Dr. Heath Boice-Pardee, RIT's associate vice president for Student Affairs, previously worked as Rutgers's Dean of Students and has researched the various roles that secret societies have played in campus life. While at Rutgers, Boice-Pardee experienced this dynamic with the Cap and Skull, a secret honor society created in 1900.

While working with the Cap and Skull, Boice-Pardee observed that "many of the activities that the students engaged in, [while in the Cap and Skull] they didn't engage in as a society. They engaged in them through ... their leadership positions within the

by Michael Conti

university." Students will often convene and make decisions about how best to use their talents to influence the school.

Boice-Pardee has been in contact with the students who have created the society and sees their role as a way to establish tradition at RIT. "I think traditions help people connect to their school ... a community, a family."

Forging a new tradition, he says, could also benefit RIT financially. "The people [who] are typically associated with secret societies are very successful and very successful with giving back to the university."

An immediate expectation for this kind of presence on campus is a way to get

students excited about being part of the RIT community, despite diverse interests. "I think it's a grass-roots way to bring about school spirit," commented Danna.

For now, the Claw and Compass Society remains as mysterious as it did on club day. With no major public appearance, it has yet to be determined what the society's tangible goals are or what they expect to do as a group. The few who know about the group have expressed little concern for a co-ed society with an agenda that is not necessarily in public record. When asked whom he expected to be picked by the Claw and Compass, Danna commented: "I hope the people they choose are true leaders." **R**



THE PROVINCE: APARTMENTS BUILT ON JOHN STREET

by Chris Zubak-Skees
photograph by Rob Luessen

On the east side of campus, between Park Point and Colony Manor, a new graduate student-focused development is taking shape. Targeted for completion in the fall of 2010, construction at 220 John Street will yield 13 apartment buildings (each three stories tall) and a recreational center.

The development, named The Province, is being built by subsidiaries of Edwards Companies, an Ohio-based housing and construction group that has recently opened similar properties near three other schools.

Those complexes, also branded The Province and managed by Edwards Student Housing Management Company, have almost identical features and branding. One is located near Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio; a second near University of Louisville in Louisville, Kentucky; and a third near University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. All three opened this fall. Listed monthly prices for those locations range from \$540 per person for a four bedroom apartment in Dayton to at least \$875 for a large one bedroom in Louisville.

The company says it is consciously targeting

RIT's roughly 2,700 graduate students. 144 of the 336 apartments will have a single bedroom and two of the buildings will contain only one-bedroom apartments. Brad Brown, president of Edwards Student Housing, says that single bedrooms appeal to graduate students who want privacy and relative peace.

The Province's location is particularly notable given its proximity to Park Point – another privately-owned housing complex bordering on John Street that began operation in the fall of 2008. Unlike Park Point, The Province is not being built on land originally owned by the university, but instead on land purchased from private owners.

Jim Frey, a vice president of land acquisition for Edwards Companies, says he arrived to assess the campus in the same week of May 2007 that Wilmorite Inc. began building Park Point. "We, at first, thought we were too late," says Frey, but he and others in the company reached the conclusion that Park Point's nearby shopping and wider focus complemented rather than scuttled their plans.


Randy Vercauteren, director of Parking and Transportation Services, says The Province will be treated the same as Park Point, Colony Manor, and Perkins Green apartments for transportation. Residents will have access to a dedicated shuttle with regular stops and

will be excluded from parking in academic lots during the day.

The center of the development will host a 1,800 square foot recreation center. That space will contain rooms dedicated to home theater and gaming systems. A fitness center and outdoor pool will also be available for residents.

Security will be aided by two to three off-duty police officers who will stay on the premises and panic buttons will be located in rooms. Brown, the Edwards Student Housing president, says the company can partner with campus security departments like Public Safety to respond to panic alarms but will use local law enforcement if that isn't possible. Chris Denninger, director of Public Safety, called such an arrangement unlikely given that the development is located on property not owned by the university.

Although unable to discuss specific pricing, Frey promises that it would be "competitive with Park Point and the university [apartments]." Other The Province-branded properties may be a general indicator, but Brown cautions that final prices are subject to local conditions and have not yet been set.

For more information about the sister developments visit <http://livetheprovince.com/>. Representatives will be present in the SAU and a trailer will visit campus this fall. 

RIT FORECAST

compiled by Jill McCracken

25
FRIDAY

ARTS & CRAFTS AT SPOT COFFEE

SPoT Coffee. 200 East Ave. Stop in at SPoT Coffee Friday through Monday to explore or buy homemade arts and crafts by talented local artisans. You'll find handmade jewelry, ceramics, purses and many more innovative creations. Cost: Free.

26
SATURDAY

GIRL TALK AT RIT

Clark Gym. Doors open at 7 p.m. College students' beloved Girl Talk will be electrifying Clark Gym for a high-energy, dance-filled evening. Get your tickets while they last! Cost: \$15 for RIT students, \$21 for staff, \$28 for

27
SUNDAY

public. TRADITIONAL IRISH MUSIC SESSION

Johnny's Irish Pub. 1382 Culver Rd. 5 p.m. Get out your Bouzouki's because every last Sunday of the month is a time for traditional Irish music. Cost: Free. (21+)

28
MONDAY

TRIVIA NIGHT

lovin'cup. Park Point Dr. 9 p.m. Put your knowledge to the test at lovin'cup this Monday. It's going to fill up so arrive early to make sure you can play! Also, stop by from 2 to 6 p.m. for \$1 off any gourmet drink. Cost: Free.

29
TUESDAY

BACHATA & MERENGUE DANCING

Flat Iron Café. 561 State St. 9 p.m. Looking to spice up your Tuesday night? Head over to the Flat Iron Café for some Bachata and Merengue dancing. Whether you're an experienced dancer or just learning, this is bound to be a fun time had by all. Cost: Free.

30
WEDNESDAY

OPEN JAM AT ABILENE

Abilene Bar & Grill. 153 Liberty Pole Way. Abilene has hosted a wide variety of outstanding musical acts such as Johnny Cash, The Shins and Regina Spektor. Now, you can bring your instrument and find fellow music lovers to jam with every Wednesday at 8 p.m. until December 30. Cost: Free.

01
THURSDAY

ROCHESTER INDIE MUSIC FESTIVAL

German House. 315 Gregory St. 7:30 – 11 p.m. The first of a three-night concert series, the Rochester Indie Music Festival is a must-see for the Rochester music community. Come out and support local musicians. Cost: \$10 per night.

SG UPDATE

by Jessica Hanus

CAMPUS CENTER UPDATE

Construction has begun on the new Campus Center and it is set to open in November. Dr. Heath Boice-Pardee, SG advisor and associate vice president for Student Affairs, visited the facility last week and gave an update on the construction's progress. Heath noted that tiles are being installed in the fountain, glass is being installed in the walls, metal "clouds" are being placed in the ceiling of the multi-purpose room, and furniture is going to be purchased soon.

CLUB CLEANUP

Club spaces need to be cleaned out by October 2. Items in lockers and storage bins do not need to be moved, but clubs need to make arrangements for any other items during the transitional period into the new Campus Center. Transitional space is being researched for items in lockers and storage bins, but Karey Pine, SG advisor and director for the Center for Campus Life, encourages clubs to bring her suggestions.


POSTING PUBLIC SERVICE PROCEDURES

The current procedures for posting advertising and announcements are being updated. Cory Gregory, OUTspoken president, proposed new ideas to help make the campus walls, floors, stairways and buildings cleaner.

Inspired by Washington University's current posting procedures, Gregory wants to see fliers placed either on bulletin boards or in strategically located glass cases. Banners would be posted where most flyers are now. Gregory added that glass cases would be particularly useful outdoors so that posters aren't "flying all over the place."

ROOM RESERVATIONS

One of SG's major goals for this year is to update the room reservation process on campus. There are currently over 25 different locations that students may need to visit in order to plan an event on campus. This can become, as SG President Matt Danna put it, "a wild goose chase." Each department has their own system ranging anywhere from advanced technology like the Event Management System to the more simple pen and paper system.

A task force has been proposed to analyze the current situation, research what other colleges are doing, make technological and cultural recommendations and, hopefully, submit a report and proposal by May with changes taking place as early as summer of 2010. 

THE LEDGENG OF THE RIGHT TRAILS

by Derrick Behm | Photograph By Jake Hamm

Have you heard about the Right Trails? If you are a BMX or a MTB rider, you probably just sighed and grumbled — or perhaps you stared at this with intense loyalty and love for the Right Trails. If you don't even know what BMX means... well by golly, we need to get you up to speed!

HUMBLE BEGININGS

For starters, BMX means Bicycle Motocross and MTB is short for Mountain Bike. BMXers like smooth trails with jumps to do different tricks. MTB riders, on the other hand, prefer rugged natural trails; these bikers' goal is to navigate down a mountain, drop to unfinished landings, and use fallen trees to ride over ditches with many quick stops and tree dodges along the way.

Over the years, passionate RIT BMX/MTB riders wishing to pursue their hobby at school, found their way to the wooded area by the Perkins Green Apartments (behind K lot) where they

have continued to construct and ride dirt trails. These hidden campus trail entrances are discreet and for some, it takes a second look to discover.

Brian Lewis, a Rochester local and fourth year Packaging Science major, first heard about the trails last spring. Lewis is a very experienced biker and has had a decade building experience from constructing several local skate parks and other dirt bike trails. When RIT riders learned of his history, they approached Lewis for advice on how to make the Right Trails better.

"When I first saw the trails, they were in a very poor state," Lewis stated. "I could tell that inexperienced riders had been trying to build for the first time and had very little understanding of line layout."

After offering some guidance and checking in every so often, Lewis began to notice that interest was picking up. "By the final month of classes [last year] it appeared that dozens of people had been going back to contribute." With the support and effort of so many riders, soon the trails were equipped to serve bikers with little or no experience to even the most "fearless shredders."

WHERE WE STAND

With plastic milk jugs, shovels, rakes, buckets and pure man-power, the Right Trails meager beginnings have transformed into packed mounds, a trail of pump lines (or a series of mini mounds) and slopes.

The number of riders using the terrain doesn't make construction and maintenance on these trails easy. Dirt needs to be shoveled into mounds and raked evenly into perfection. The dozens of milk jugs on the premises are filled with water and carried back to pour on the soil to pack it in.

Riders of the Right Trails are very careful to respect the environment. At the park, there is a recycle bin where all of the bottles and cans from thirsty bikers are collected. Branches that fall on the trails are scattered among the wetlands untouched by bikers.

Along with their environmental concerns and efforts, trail users established guidelines on how to respectfully and safely use the park:

THE BATTLE FOR THE LAND

Despite the sport's hazardous reputation, studies show that BMX and MTB are relatively safe when compared with contact sports such as football and soccer. As far as Lewis knows, nobody has been severely injured — except for perhaps a nasty poison ivy reaction while building the trails. However, the future of the Right Trails has been at risk due to RIT administrative involvement.

RIDE WITH AT LEAST ONE OTHER RIDER. DISCRETION IS ADVISED. FIRES ATTRACT UNWANTED ATTENTION. BE RESPECTFUL OF NATURE. DON'T LEAVE TRASH OR REMOVE LIVE TREES. DO NOT TRY TO REPAIR WHAT YOU DAMAGE IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW. DO NOT ALTER TERRAIN BEFORE CONSULTING OTHER RIDERS. HELP MAINTAIN, IMPROVE OR EXPAND JUMPS IF YOU VISIT FREQUENTLY. BEWARE OF POISON IVY. BRING BUG SPRAY. HAVE FUN!!!

Rumors broke out during the first week of September that Risk Management ordered FMS to remove the trails due to safety concerns. The trail members staged a jam of 25 members, but no bulldozer came and FMS and Risk Management remained silent.

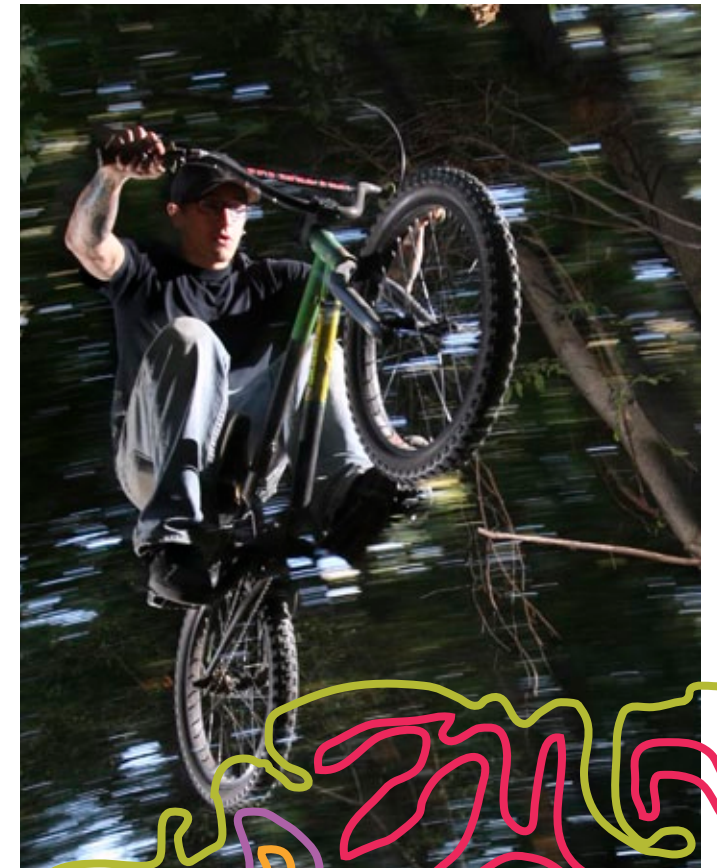
On September 16, the FMS surprised riders by showing up at the trails to survey for removal. The riders, who as an unofficial club sought support from different clubs and new riders, immediately negotiated the removal date to be moved to September 17.

The success of further negotiation lies in the hands of the trail supporters, but the fate of the trails is a decision for Melinda Ward, director of Risk Management and Insurance. The Ombuds Office, responsible for conflict resolution, has pleaded for an official hearing.

Lewis said, "Until then, the trails will continue to be built at full steam with 20 rider/builders stopping by each day." If dismantled, Risk Management's decision will affect a strong campus group of nearly 50 riders. "Each student has assumed full risk of injury and the responsibility to maintain what is built. The advocates of the trails will do anything to protect the community that matured with the trails."

The next step, according to Lewis, is for RIT riders to discuss a formal argument to be presented at a Student Government meeting. In the meantime, supporters can sign a petition to save the trails.

With recognition that the battle is far from over, Brian Lewis wishfully added, "I think that RIT could contribute so much to students' creativity and imagination by providing use of land for students to make a park for everyone to enjoy." **R**

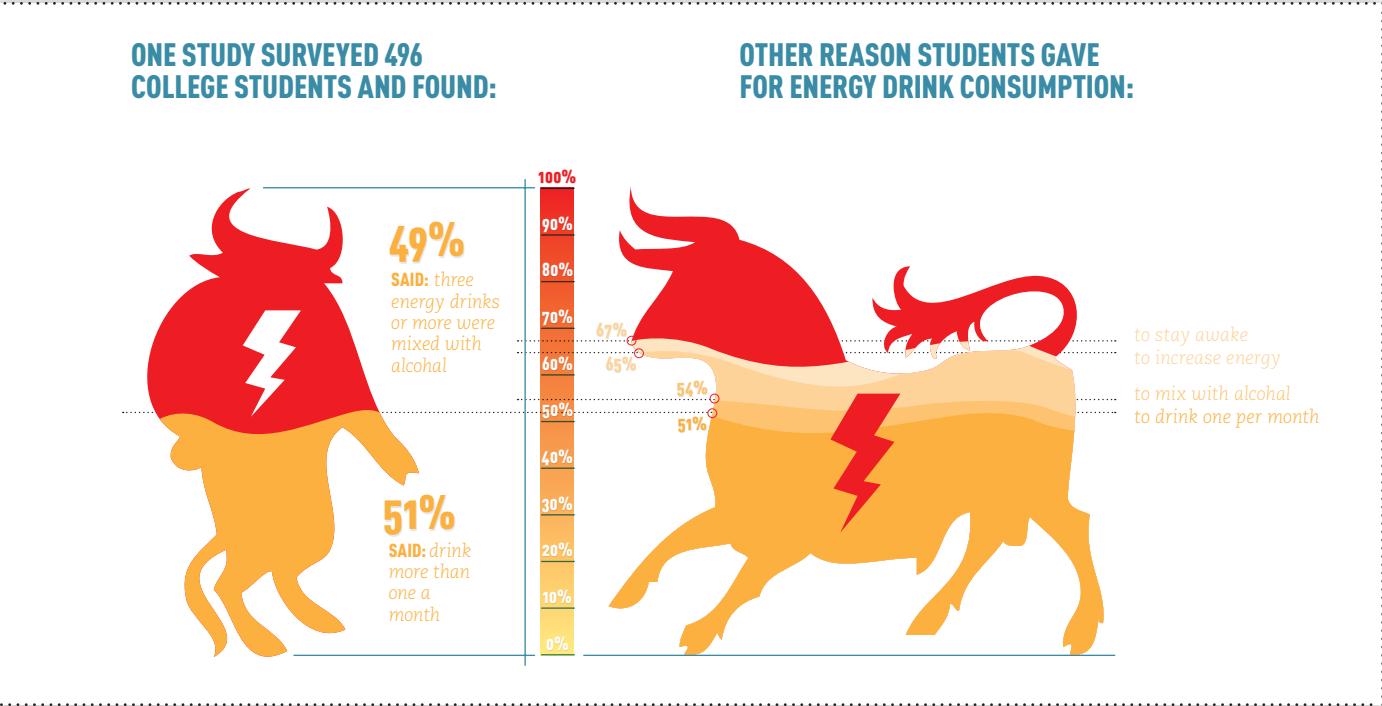




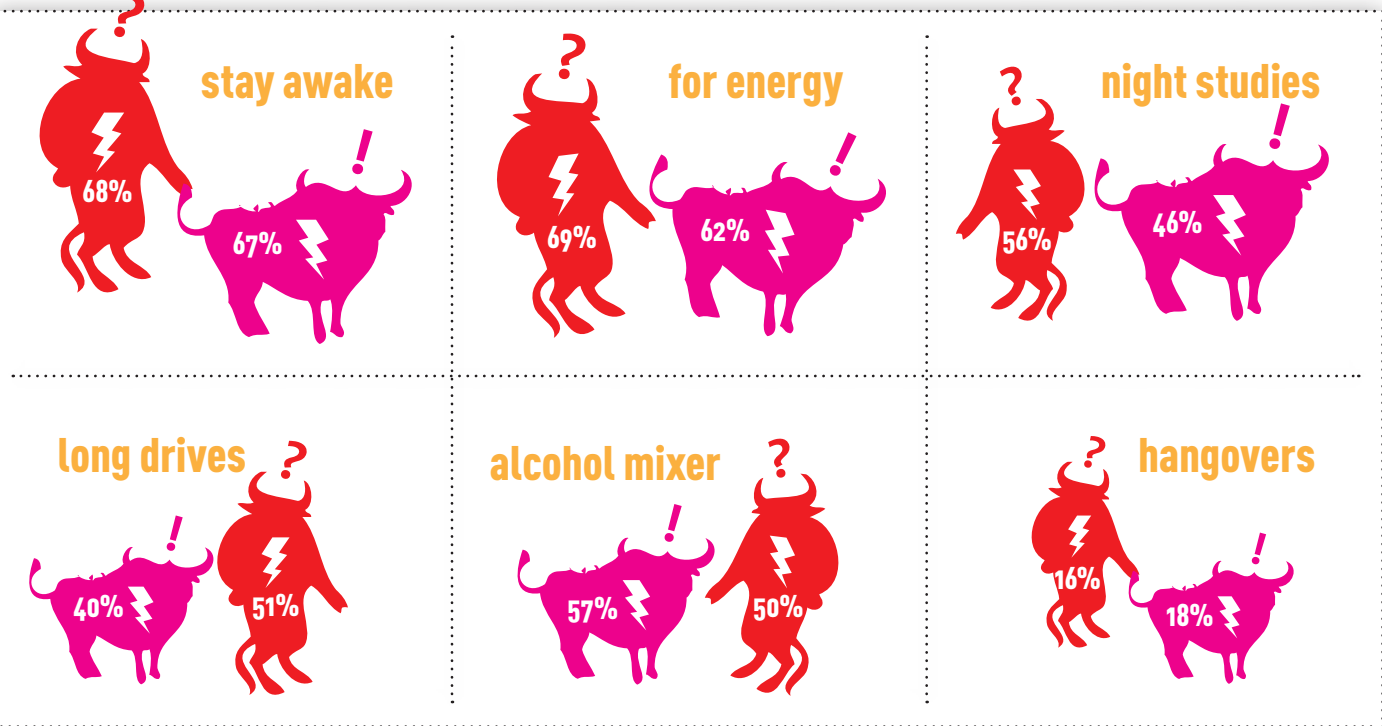
ENERGY DRINK MARKET

Info Graphics by Kelvin Patterson

With a 65 percent share of the energy drink market, Red Bull certainly has done their research. After doing a little of our own, Reporter found some interesting facts you might like to know about. Check out the review of Red Bull Energy Shots on the next page.
http://researchwikis.com/Energy_Drinks_Market



It was further broken down into male and female usage:
<http://scribd.com/doc/3553606/A-Survey-of-Energy-Drink-Consumption-Patterns-Among-College>



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www.rit.edu/careerfair

SEPT 30th
11am - 4pm
 Gordon Field House

POWER-UP YOUR CAREER!

R-I-T
 Sponsored by the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services

ALBUM | ELECTRONICA | 43 MIN
OCEAN EYES

OWL CITY
When it comes to unsigned, lesser-known bands, few ever receive the attention they deserve. Fortunately for Owl City (and us), a lucky sequence of events carried this artist into the limelight.

After the self-released "Maybe Dreaming" (2008), solo act Adam Young signed with Universal Republic for this sophomore album, "Ocean Eyes."



A member of several synthpop, indie-rock projects, Adam Young has collaborated to create this latest work. The single "Fireflies" was the key to the album's success. The track put the artist on top of MySpace's Top

10 unsigned artists list and was then featured as "Single of The Week" on iTunes. This fun, catchy track received half a million downloads and got the album a lot of at-



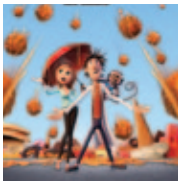
FOR PEOPLE WHO LIKE:
HELLOGOODBYE,
THE POSTAL SERVICE

by Alex Pagliaro

FILM | ANIMATED COMEDY | 90 MIN
CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS

Part of a recent trend of classic childhood memories turned silver screen blockbuster is "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs," a story that today's parents grew up loving and their children will happily discover.

What sets this film apart from the book is the vibrant life that has been given to the residents of the little island where the story is set. Instead of food randomly raining from the sky, it is a local inventor named Flint Lockwood whose obsession with helping people triggers the



odd events. Special food requests cause problems with the invention, while an intern meteorologist Sam Sparks tries to make sense of it all.

Though irresponsible with its "science" — hotdog DNA is literally a hot dog — the film has references to popular culture that older generations will find amusing. The cast is another bright spot in the piece. With the comedic styling of Anna Faris giving life to Sparks, Andy Samberg portraying the town has-been, and Mr. T as the histrionic town police officer, the voices of each character are colorful and engaging.



The writers did a fantastic job of making the movie its own entity while maintaining the original story. However, the vague references to immigration (the camera guy is a Guatemalan doctor) and the status of women in the media (the news anchor tells his audience that hopefully the female meteorologist can "look more attractive") were interesting, but should have been omitted.

If you're going to go out and see the film, do so on a full stomach or be prepared to make a Jay's run afterwards. You'll be craving by the time the credits start rolling. Mmm... roll.

by Carolyn Dunne

PRODUCT | ENERGY DRINK | \$2.79
RED BULL ENERGY SHOTS

A familiar name has entered the energy drink shot category: Red Bull. As of June 2009, Red Bull has released two shots — regular and sugar free — to match its offerings of standard energy drinks. But with the promise of increased performance, emotional status, concentration and reaction speed, comes much disappointment.

Though the outward appearance is very similar to its full-sized companions, Red Bull Energy Shots do not share many of the characteristics fans have come to love. Opening the container is not as simple as popping a tab. First, you undo the shrink-wrap. Next, you unscrew the



lid. Then, finally, you remove a white covering similar to that of a ketchup bottle.

The familiar Red Bull aroma will greet you as you begin to take a sip, but forewarn your taste buds. Although the shot is filled with the same ingredients as its regular-sized counterpart, you're not about to experience that Red Bull taste that you know and love. The drink is overly sweet, medicinal and has a bitter after-taste. It is not carbonated and does not require refrigeration (though, a chilled version, as tested by Reporter, lacks any kind of benefits).

Even though each two-ounce shot is packed with 80 mg of caffeine, the overall effects of the drink were

not felt until about 45 minutes. At this point past consumption, this writer noted feeling less tired and in a better mood, but reaction time was not increased much (which was tested by random objects thrown at me before and after drinking the shot).

Overall, if you're a die-hard Red Bull fan you'll probably like this, but if you're a casual Red Bull drinker, stick to the full-sized can — if only just for the taste.

Red Bull Energy Shot contains 25 calories and 6 grams of sugar and Red Bull Sugar Free Shot contains 2 calories and 0 grams of sugar. \$2.49 at most grocery stores. **R**



by Emily Mohlmann

AT YOUR LEISURE

09.25.09

“A great many people think that polysyllables are a sign of intelligence.”

-Barbara Walters

REPORTER RECOMMENDS

The Wizard of Oz. This week, the classic 1939 film turns 70 and to celebrate, your friends at Warner Bros are releasing a re-mastered, 70th Anniversary, Ultimate Collector's Edition Blu-ray

disc on September 29. This ain't your typical two disc-er to leave on the shelf. Packed with 16 hours of bonus features, collector's watch, 52-page History of Oz, and a replica of the Original Film Budget, this set comes with enough features and a big enough box to require its own shelf. But that's not all: This Wednesday, for one night only, check out the Tinseltown IMAX and Eastview theater locations for a special HD screening of the re-mastered film. It's time to get your Pink Floyd, Dark Side of the Moon, poppy party on — or whatever you college kids do.

WORD OF THE WEEK

THRENODY: (θ.ɹɛ.n.ə.di) n. a song of lamentation for the dead.

Definition taken from <http://merriam-webster.com>.

For more information, check out <http://thewizardofoz.warnerbros.com>.

STREAM OF FACTS

When flying on separate poles, it is considered proper flag etiquette for a United States flag to be on the same level as other state flags, as long as it is to the **RIGHT**.

The **Price is RIGHT** had Vanna White as a contestant in 1980 before her days as a letter turner on the Wheel of **FORTUNE**. In the **FORTUNE** 500, a list started by Fortune magazine in 1955, there are only 10 female CEOs and none of them have yet made it to the **TOP** 100.

The **TOP** ten of the Billboard Hot 100 was home to the Los Del Rio for 23 weeks in the mid-90s for their infamous **MACERENA**.

The name **MACERENA** was chosen for the pop song when the original name, Magdalena, was already used as a song title by **SPANISH** singer Emmanuel.

The **SPANISH** corridas de toros, or bullfighting, consists of three parts

(tercios) separated by bugle calls before the fighter kills the bull in the end with his **SWORD**.

A 43.18 cm **SWORD** chained to a 2002 Audi Quattro was in Ryan Stock's throat as he set the record for "Heaviest Vehicle Pulled by a Sword Swallower" last **FALL**.

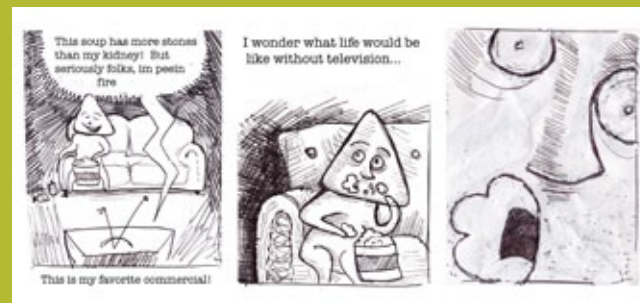
The longest free **FALL** ever survived was by Czechoslovakian flight attendant, Vesna Vulovic, in 1972 when her plane exploded at 33,000 **FEET**.

Averaging four **FEET** in height, the emperor penguin is the largest of all penguins and can dive deeper than any other living bird, staying under for upwards of **20** minutes.

A storm reaching **20** miles into the stratosphere with 700 mph winds, called a Hypercane, is one theory to why 75 percent of life vanished from earth 65 million years ago.

CARTOON

by Jamie Douglas and Ben Rubin



					2		
	6	3					
9	8		6				
	9						8
		2		4			
5		8				6	4
	3					9	
	2	9		7			
		7		1	2	4	

SODUKU
Difficulty
Rating: Hard

OVERSEEN & OVERHEARD

"I swear. Even on my deathbed, I'll be like, 'I remember the time when he flashed me his penis.'" - Girl outside Gibson Hall.

"I ate a salad for lunch today. You know how gay I felt?" - Macho student to male friends in residence halls.

"You Belong to Me" by Taylor Swift blaring out to an empty Gleason Circle. **R**

Send your Overseen and Overheads with the phrase "Overseen and Overheard" in the subject line to leisure@reportermag.com.

reportermag com

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Slideshow: Girl Talk @ RIT

Reporter photographers capture the dance party of the year.

<http://reportermag.com/go/girltalk>



TV Show Review: Vampire Diaries

Confused whether you should skip it or dig it? Log on and find out what our experts have to say.

<http://reportermag.com/go/vampirediaries>



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- **Savings Account with Keep the Change®** — save money effortlessly
- **Online and Mobile Banking²** — check your available balances, get e-mail and text alerts, transfer funds and pay bills 24/7

Manage your funds the easy way.

Get your Student Package from Bank of America today. Visit bankofamerica.com/oncampus or any local banking center.

Bank of America 



¹CampusEdge® Checking is free of a monthly maintenance fee/service charge for five years. CampusEdge® Checking is MyAccess-CampusEdge™ Checking in Idaho and Washington. Students age 16 or older are eligible for this account, subject to confirmation of student status. After the first five years, CampusEdge® Checking accounts will be automatically converted to MyAccess® Checking. Fees for overdraft and other account-related services still apply. Programs, fees, terms and conditions are subject to change. ²Mobile banking available to online banking enrollees only. Not available for accounts in WA or ID. Online Alerts not available for accounts in ID or WA. You will be charged access rates depending on your carrier. Check with your carrier for details on specific fees and charges. Keep the Change® patent pending. Bank of America, N.A. Member FDIC. © 2009 Bank of America Corporation. Bank of America and the Bank of America logo are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation. ARB3872



by Michael Barbato

It was not so long ago that the value of the U.S. dollar dipped below its Canadian counterpart. With an economy as weakened as our nation's in recent history, new business and entrepreneurial ventures have never been more difficult or more vital.

Currently, one in every hundred students enrolled at RIT runs or has run their own business. If that seems like a lot, it's because it is. This large number of student entrepreneurs is largely due to the successful nature of an average RIT student, as well as to the large value placed on them by fostering programs like the RIT Business Incubator.

The Incubator offers a physical location to support the creation and exploration of business opportunities and entrepreneurship among RIT's students and faculty. The business park provides: assistance with evaluating business opportunities; support with developing business plans; business mentoring and guidance; access to RIT's faculty and laboratory resources; student co-ops and interns; and low-cost space. Over 17 faculty and student-run ventures currently use the facilities.

Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Inc., once said, "Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower." Several RIT students have proven to exemplify this notion with their venture creations. Several recent developments have arisen from a diverse range of fields from social networking to hospitality. Hotel Proxy provides a clever way for hotels to save time and money when sharing rate and availability information. BookMaid.com is a money-saving alternative site for textbook exchange. Jorsek, a student creation, is now a prospering software company.

HOTEL PROXY

"Hotel Proxy provides an online community for hotels to share rate and availability data in order to reduce or even eliminate the need to gather this information through a timely series of phone calls to neighboring hotels," said co-founder Marc Baumbach, a Software Engineering and Communications graduate (2008). He and his close college friend, Chris Geiss, a Computer Engineering graduate (2008), together with Brianna Sneizek came up with the idea.

The inspiration arose from the desire to eliminate one of the most hated aspects of the Hospitality major: the call-around process. This is a time- and labor-intensive procedure for manually gathering information about local hotels. From the need to make work more efficient and less agonizing, Hotel Proxy was born. Recently emerging from its beta testing, Hotel Proxy hopes to be completely launched and available for hotel and motel services soon. Pending official release, features will be available to help users monitor market shares, execute revenue management and implement marketing and sales strategies.

The original idea and service has been innovative with very little competition. Currently, Hotel Proxy is looking to broaden its services. "We were dealing with technology that didn't exist so our challenge was not competitors but trying to extract the requirements from our potential customers," remarked Baumbach. "It's all about adapting to what is necessary as we enter areas of the market with competitors already." The business strategy must change to compete in the new areas. Hotel Proxy hopes to gain market share by undercutting larger, more established businesses while providing increased value for lower costs.

"It's all about **adapting** to what is **necessary**"

Just like any nascent company, Hotel Proxy is always looking for business opportunities, while managing the hiccups associated with growing a business. Baumbach believes it is impossible to predict where he or the business will stand in the near future but has high hopes for continued success.

“Freedom,” summarized Baumbach in regards to the best part of running his own business. “If we don’t like something about our business, we can change it,” he added. With larger corporations, employees are very limited on what procedures they can modify. This often causes tension in the work place which often bleeds frustration into home life. Baumbach confessed, “With your own business, the responsibility lies with you to limit frustration; nothing is more satisfying than changing something drastically about your business and reaping the benefits.”

Baumbach had a few words of wisdom for budding entrepreneurs, “Don’t be afraid to take risks.” Sometimes it is always a smart decision to spend time on a good idea even if it seems like a waste of time or doesn’t pan out. “Sometimes those risks are exactly why a company becomes successful.” Hotel Proxy wasn’t the first idea that the three founders had, and they have promised it won’t be their last. It has just been one of the many ideas that have produced a favorable outcome. “We have certainly invested a lot of time in other ideas that didn’t work and none of it was wasted in our eyes,” concluded Baumbach.

BOOK MAID

“BookMaid is a textbook exchange for RIT students. Students can buy and sell textbooks on site listings, then they negotiate the transaction at their discretion,” informed, the creator, Dan Leveille, a fourth year New Media Interactive Development major. Leveille was spurred to action when he felt robbed, as many of us do, by the RIT bookstore. The bookstore sells over-priced books just to buy them back for nearly nothing. They then resell them, making nearly as much as they would for a new book. “I got ripped off and I knew everyone else was too. So, I started BookMaid,” said Leveille. Unlike the campus bookstore, his goal isn’t to take advantage of students in order to make money; it is to spare people like him from getting ripped off.

The common hostility students feel towards spending hundreds of dollars each quarter for books is a real advantage for BookMaid. “Their prices are ridiculous — so students will use any alternative that has the books they need,” added Leveille. BookMaid is a small startup competing with a lot of big name companies such as Amazon, eBay and Craigslist. BookMaid gains an edge because it is catered specifically to RIT students’ needs. Another advantage is the ability to eliminate the time and costs of shipping. Most transactions can conveniently transpire on campus because the majority of items are in the possession of current students.

BookMaid is presently one of the most used book exchange alternatives at RIT and its future looks positive. BookMaid has a lot of room to grow. “After I graduate, I am going to get some students to help me manage the site and publicize it from campus,” expressed Leveille. Currently, Leveille doesn’t make very much profit from the site, but he sees a lot of potential. He has several features he’d like to add and would like to set up “BookMaid” sites for other colleges after he perfects his craft for RIT.

“I got ripped off and I knew everyone else was too. So I started BookMaid.”

JORSEK

“Jorsek Software LLC provides the only web-based software as a service platform for managing and editing complex XML documents in an easy to use manner,” said co-founder, Casey Jordan a physics graduate (2007). XML is a universal structured document format that allows computers and humans to keep documents consistent and derive meaning from the data. Jorsek software is designed to help organizations save time and money by providing non-technical tools to manage, author, revise, publish and secure structured information in one place. These tools help businesses reduce errors in information and optimize their processes by putting the power in the hands of the information experts.

Without Jorsek software, businesses previously required several separate, expensive, complex and very technical platforms to accomplish the same task. Additionally, the Jorsek platform makes the information highly searchable, reuseable, storable, sortable and easily shared. Businesses can then seamlessly publish this information to websites, technical documentation, marketing materials, mobile devices and many more platforms.

“When my business partner, Patrick Bosek, and I started this company, all we knew was that we did not want to work nine-to-five jobs and thought we could develop better technology than what was available,” answered Jordan. A lot of hard work and some tough lessons in business practice have led to a thriving company for the two founders. “Our inspiration came from the idea that we could control our own destinations in life and that has kept us going through some of the hardest times,” said Jordan.

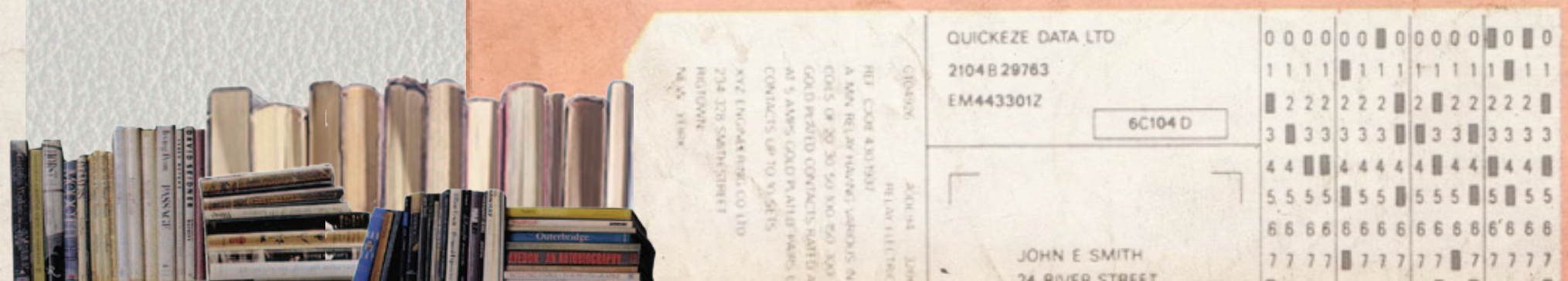


As an entrepreneur, you may find that you will have to change your idea, target market and general direction many times before you are successful. To stay competitive, businesses have to fundamentally understand why someone would buy their product or service for the price they are offering instead of a competitor’s. The most successful businesses are those who understand their customer and actively listen to their needs.

The future of Jorsek is overflowing with promise and self-imposed goals. Jorsek plans to become an international leader in on-demand content management and publishing within the next five years. “We are a young company with a strong drive to produce the best solutions for dealing with the problems of high growth markets,” announced Jordan.

“My personal goal is to be in a position where I can help foster the growth of new businesses and the entrepreneurial spirit in Rochester,” he continued. In closing, Jordan posed some inspirational words for the entrepreneur: “Visualizing success and believing 100 percent that you are doing the right thing can help overcome obstacles.” In the beginning, “being super-broke, not having a car or even a place to live at times can quickly make you think twice about what you are doing ... It is exciting, fun and scary at times, but I couldn’t imagine doing anything else.”

All of these students exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit. The most common advice for anyone wishing to be fearless in a struggling economy is, “Just do it!” Go for the glory, be original, and solve the problem on the tip of everyone’s tongue. As students, we are young and have so many resources at our fingertips. Now is the perfect time to explore new and interesting ideas. If it doesn’t work out, there is plenty of time to think of something that will.



IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY NOTICED, RIT takes pride in its rigorous academic curriculum and its ass-whipping quarterly system; but what really sets RIT apart from most higher education institutions is its philosophy of "learning by doing."

Entrepreneurship in *Action*



\$\$\$

by Madeleine Villavicencio | illustration by Ben Rubin

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THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS: There are just some things you simply cannot learn in a classroom.

You can't set up a successful business by learning pure theory alone. In fact, some of the most successful business men of our time never completed a single degree.

Milkshake machine salesman Ray Kroc did not sit in an Economics class before purchasing and building the McDonald's empire. Steve Jobs dropped out of Reed College only one semester in. And multi-millionaire Richard Branson dropped out of school at the age of sixteen.

Now before you start running to your home department to withdraw from all your courses and declare a leave of absence, let me clarify. You can't just major in Entrepreneurship. (No, really. RIT has a minor and an Master of Business Administration (MBA) concentration, but there is no major.) But if you're interested in possibly starting your own business, RIT has a number of resources available at your fingertips -- some of which you may have never known existed.

Bootcamps and Conferences

IF YOU'RE LOOKING into just dabbling and aren't sure if you want to commit to taking a full four-credit class, then the Simone Center offers other programs and events. "We have about 20 speakers [come] a year. We have two all-day Entrepreneurship bootcamps and a big Entrepreneurship conference -- which is going to be Oct. 9," stated DeMartino.

The last bootcamp was held

on March 28 and featured speakers and sessions focusing on topics such as "Financing Your Business," "Business Formation in the USA," and "Understanding Markets and Marketing Basics of the Business Plan." The next bootcamp has yet to be scheduled. However, preparations for the next Entrepreneurship Conference have already begun.

This year's conference will be held on the Friday of Brick City weekend, convening at the B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences (GCCIS) atrium before breaking out into different sessions spread across the

academic side of campus. Although the sessions have not been locked in and more will be added, some of the interesting topics that will be tackled are: opportunities in social media and sustainability, entrepreneurship in specific fields such as Industrial Design and communities such as the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and minority entrepreneurship in high growth industries.

The conference will also feature a keynote speaker, Elan Lee. A member of RIT's class of 1998 and a Computer Science graduate, Lee is known for his influence in the gaming and entertainment industry. He was the lead designer

for the XBOX launch portfolio, the co-founder and vice president of 42 Entertainment (responsible for marketing "The Dark Knight" and the creation of "Dead Man's Tale", an interactive adventure designed for the "Pirates of the Caribbean" trilogy) and the co-founder and chief designer of Fourth Wall Studios (responsible for "Watchmen"'s "Six Minutes to Midnight" campaign and "Eagle Eye"'s "Free Fall" interactive experience). "He is the pioneer of the alternative reality game and he is working with the community here with the 'Picture the Impossible' game," added DeMartino.

Minors and Classes

FOR THOSE OF YOU who came in with enough college credit to graduate early, you may want to fill your time with some extra courses instead of fleeing this brick city as quickly as possible. Take an extra quarter's worth of courses (give or take a course) and you could complete a minor in Entrepreneurship. According to Dr. Richard DeMartino, director of the Albert J. Simone Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 95 percent of the students enrolled to pursue an Entrepreneurship minor are non-business majors.

It is important to note that Entrepreneurship, as well as every other E. Philip Saunders College of Business (SCB) minor, does not count toward your liberal arts concentration. So, if you're looking to hit two birds with one stone, that isn't going to fly. However, if you're currently an SCB student, there will be some overlap with your core classes

and minor requirements -- for example, Principles of Marketing and Management Accounting can be counted towards a minor as well. That being said, only up to two out of the five courses required to complete the minor can be taken from required major courses; three courses must be taken out of your area of expertise, so to speak.

If you've got a little bit more time (and money) on your hands and an MBA is what floats your boat, there is an Entrepreneurship concentration available. SCB even offers an Accelerated MBA program that will enable you to complete an MBA with just one extra year in school.

These two options will not only postpone your launch into the *real world* but will also bulk up your résumé.

For more information on pursuing an Entrepreneurship minor or MBA concentration, visit: <http://saunders.rit.edu>

The Business Lab and the Technology Commercialization Clinic

IF YOU FEEL that you have a solid business idea and would like to take the appropriate steps to make it a reality, then the Simone Center has the resources to help you out. Just for starters, they will help you find a group of students with the necessary skills to work with if needed. If you push your concept far enough, you may even gain access to the facilities within the RIT Incubator. In fact, according to DeMartino, "[the Business Lab generated] about 30 percent of all the companies into the RIT Incubator." Additionally, they can set it up so that you can receive course and sometimes, with department approval, co-op credit.

For those interested in helping a local entrepreneur with his or her business concept, the people at the Simone Center has something else up their sleeves. "I will take student teams and give them course credit for helping another person start a business too and

that's called the Technology Commercialization Clinic. And in that case, they work with real technology entrepreneurs or real technologists," described DeMartino.

However, DeMartino warns that these programs will not be a *walk in the park*. "Anybody that does something with me doesn't get it easy. It's not going to be a blow-off class. You're going to meet with me for an hour every week and [you're] going to have to do real analysis of the opportunity, real analysis of [your] competitors," he explained. Setting up focus groups of potential customers and communicating with potential suppliers are just some of the additional responsibilities a student may be taxed with.

Once you have solidified your business concept to a certain extent, DeMartino will pair your team up with a professional -- either alumni or faculty -- in the industry that best fits you.

"When someone has matured their business concept to a point where they know enough about it, where they talk about it very coherently, and where they understand the markets, we will link them with mentors that can help them execute," said DeMartino. Only groups who have taken the initiative and are serious about their projects are given a mentor. This is to ensure that the program can maintain its standard and retain good mentors.

Unfortunately, few make it this far. The Business Lab houses approximately 15 to 20 business teams and only two or three projects a year actually make it to that level. It's difficult to say how long it might take for a team to reach this level of maturity; it varies from group to group. But according to DeMartino, "When they're ready, they know they're ready and we know they're ready."

Entrepreneurship Hall at Global Village

NOW, FOR THOSE OF YOU who live and breathe the entrepreneurial spirit, RIT's got something else in the works: the Entrepreneurship Hall program. As described by DeMartino, "This is a program that brings [together] one-third technology, one-third design or art and one-third business and communication. [They will] take five cohort classes together; the fifth of which is developing and furthering their business concept." Additionally, participants will have the option of living with their cohorts in the Entrepreneurship Hall which will be located in the top floor of Global Village. In the meantime, the Entrepreneurship Hall will continue to be a "virtual" program.

For those students interested in applying, they must have at least 18 months left at RIT and have a GPA of 2.8. Applications are available online.

The Business Plan Contest

RIT HAS HELD an annual Business Plan Contest for the past five years where students can compete for over \$10,000 in cash prizes. The competition is separated between an undergraduate and graduate track and requires each entry to create a five-page business plan. Not included in the five pages are an income and start-up cost statement.

The entries will be evaluated by RIT faculty and outside entrepreneurs based on its feasibility, professionalism, definition and accessibility of target market and accuracy in understanding potential start-up costs and revenues.

For more information about the other Entrepreneurship initiatives here at RIT, visit: <http://entrepreneurship.rit.edu> or contact Dr. Richard DeMartino at rdemartino@saunders.rit.edu



WOMEN'S TENNIS SQUEAKS A WIN AGAINST ST. JOHN FISHER

by Jack Reickel
Photograph by Evan Witek

Walking up to the RIT Tennis match on Wednesday, September 17, was unlike the arrival to any other sporting event I have ever attended on campus. There was very little evidence of any sort of collegiate competition. Looking over the courts, I saw girls in black playing against those dressed in red and white. This helped me confirm that I was at the RIT-St. John Fisher College women's tennis match.

The game's crowd proved to be small; most of the fans present seemed to be the players' significant others or family members. Although, for the few of us watching, the Tigers kept the excitement level high.

Though they struggled through doubles, when it came down to the more crucial singles matches, the girls came through. Second year Biomedical Imaging major Lindsey Gibson's match ended up being the deciding point for the Tigers at the very end of the game. She lost the first set but came back by winning the following two sets, garnering a crucial win for the team. Her final set score of 6-0 demonstrates that when

the pressure was on, Gibson excelled. Her opponent, however, rivaled back, making several questionable line-calls in an attempt to stave off defeat down to that last set. Despite the adversity she faced, Gibson delivered the smash that sent the St. John Fisher team packing.

With this win, RIT's Women's Tennis team delivered St. John Fisher its first loss. RIT also advanced to a winning 2-1 record in the Empire 8 conference and an even 2-2 overall record. Should any RIT students want to deliver the Tigers some much-needed cheering, their next home match is October 7 at 4 p.m. against Alfred University. **R**

Tennis Stats – The Season So Far

Singles Wins — Losses

Amanda Berg	4	1
Julie Burkett	3	2
Michele Caporali	3	2
Lindsey Gibson	2	3
Samantha Noe	0	1
Marie Revekant	2	2

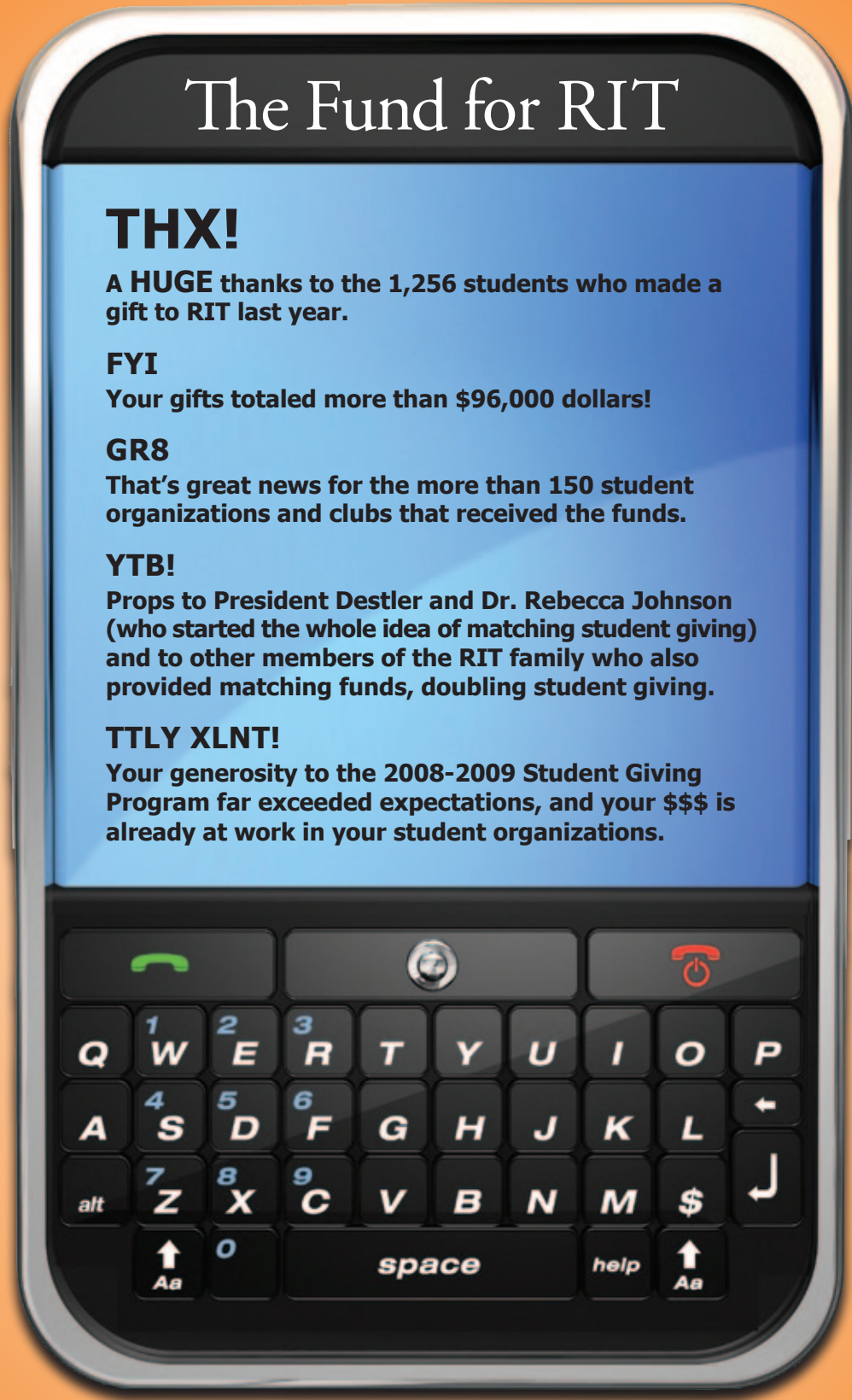
Alexis Stanley	1	3
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Doubles

Berg/Stanley	4	1
Caporali/Gibson	1	4
Burkett/Revekant	1	2
Burkett/Noe	0	1

RIT vs. St. John Fisher Throughout the years

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Winner	RIT	SJF	RIT	RIT	RIT



The Fund for RIT

THX!

A HUGE thanks to the 1,256 students who made a gift to RIT last year.

FYI

Your gifts totaled more than \$96,000 dollars!

GR8

That's great news for the more than 150 student organizations and clubs that received the funds.

YTB!

Props to President Destler and Dr. Rebecca Johnson (who started the whole idea of matching student giving) and to other members of the RIT family who also provided matching funds, doubling student giving.

TTLY XLNT!

Your generosity to the 2008-2009 Student Giving Program far exceeded expectations, and your \$\$\$ is already at work in your student organizations.

R·I·T

FIND SOMETHING COOL? Slide it under the door of the Reporter office, along with a note about where you found it. We're located in the basement of the SAU, room A-426.

ARTIFACTS

Found in the box of a coffee maker.



**WARNING: TO AVOID DANGER OF SUFFOCATION
KEEP AWAY FROM BABIES AND PENS.**

THIS BAG IS NOT A TOY.

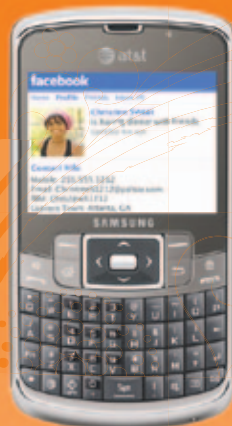
**"CAUTION - KEEP AWAY FROM SMALL CHILDREN. THE THIN FILM MAY
CLING TO NOSE AND MOUTH AND PREVENT BREATHING."**



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\$36 per line Sponsorship Fee may apply when enrolling your account to take advantage of corporate discounts.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Limited-time offer. May require a 2-year agreement on a qualified plan. Other conditions & restrictions apply. See contract & rate plan brochure for details. Subscriber must live & have a mailing addr. within AT&T's owned wireless network coverage area. Equipment price & avail may vary by mrk & may not be available from independent retailers. Purchase of additional equipment, services, or features may be required. Not all features available on all devices or in all areas. **Early Termination Fee:** None if cancelled in the first 30 days, but up to \$35 restocking fee may apply to equipment returns; thereafter up to \$175. Some agents impose add'l fees. **Unlimited voice services:** Unltd voice svcs are provided solely for live dialog between two individuals. No additional discounts are available with unlimited plan. **Offnet Usage:** If your voice or messaging service usage (including unltd svcs) during any two consecutive months or data service usage (including unltd svcs) during any month on other carriers' networks ("offnet usage") exceed your offnet usage allowance, AT&T may at its option terminate your svc, deny your contd use of other carriers' coverage, or change your plan to one imposing usage charges for offnet usage. Your offnet usage allowance is equal to the lesser of 750 mins or 40% of the Anytime mins, the lesser of 24 MB or 20% of the MB incl'd with your plan, or the lesser of 3,000 messages or 50% of the messages included with your plan. AT&T will provide notice that it intends to take any of the above actions, and you may terminate the agreement. **Monthly discount:** Available to qualified employees of companies and/or government agencies and qualified students and employees of colleges/universities with a qualified business agreement ("Business Agreement"). Service discount subject to corresponding Business Agreement and may be interrupted and/or discontinued without notice to you. Service discount applies only to the monthly service charge of qualified plans and not to any other charges. A minimum number of employees, minimum monthly service charge for qualified plans, additional AT&T services, or other requirements may apply for discount eligibility. Discounts may not be combined. Offer subject to change. Additional conditions and restrictions apply. If you have a question about available discounts and/or your eligibility, you can contact your company's telecommunications manager. Excludes iPhone™ plans. Copyright ©2009 Samsung Telecommunications America, LLC ("Samsung"). Samsung and Jack are both trademarks of Samsung Electronics America, Inc. and its related entities. Other company and product names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. Screen images simulated. Facebook is a trademark of Facebook, Inc. ©2009 AT&T Intellectual Property. Service provided by AT&T Mobility. All rights reserved. AT&T, the AT&T logo, and all other marks contained herein are trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property and/or AT&T affiliated companies. All other marks contained herein are the property of their respective owners.



RIT RINGS

585.672.4840

NOW TAKING UR TXT MSG!

compiled by Neil DeMoney

All messages subject to editing and truncation. Not all messages will be run.

REPORTER reserves the right to publish all messages in any format.

SATURDAY 3:05 A.M.

GIRL, YOU KNOW I DON'T NEED CANDLES AND CAKE. JUST NEED YOUR BODY TO MAKE BIRTH-DAY SEX... BIRTH-DAY SEX. OOHOOH-OOHOOH. IT'S THE BEST DAY OF THE YEAR GIRL. BIRTH-DAY SEX... BIRTH-DAY SEX. OOHOOH-OOHOOH. G-SPOT, G-SPOT. LET ME HIT THAT G-SPOT, G-SPOT, GIRL.

from voicemail

TUESDAY 7:34 P.M.

DEAR RINGS. THE CORNER STORE NO LONGER SELLS ARNOLD PALMER CASES THIS YEAR. FURTHERMORE, INDIVIDUAL CANS COST \$1.29 EACH. I'M SWITCHING TO THAT TASTELESS PISS WATER PEPSI MAKES.

from text

SATURDAY 3:24 A.M.

HI RINGS, MY NAME IS [WONDER] AND I DON'T GO TO THE RIT BUT I'D TOTALLY GO HERE. I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I DO INDEED ENJOY PEANUT BUTTER ALL OVER MY BODY. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. CHEERS.

from voicemail

SATURDAY 2:19 P.M.

Umm Rings is it possible you could kick out everyone who hangs out in the laundry room? It's so packed in here that I can't even do my laundry. from text

MONDAY 2:23 P.M.

Once again Reporter has failed to mention RIT Crew in the fall sports review. They'll probably forget in the spring too.

from text

TUESDAY 5:41 P.M.

SO I WALKED IN MY LIVING ROOM TO HEAR MY ROOMMATE SAY, "I JUST DISCOVERED THAT DICKSSPORTINGGOODS.COM IS NOT THE SAME AS DICKS.COM."

from text

MONDAY 7:41 A.M.

So, the Quarter Mile is now this nice walk zone, right? If so, why do I see FMS vehicles DRIVING in the walk zones?!? Follow your own rules RIT?

from text

WEDNESDAY 4:03 P.M.

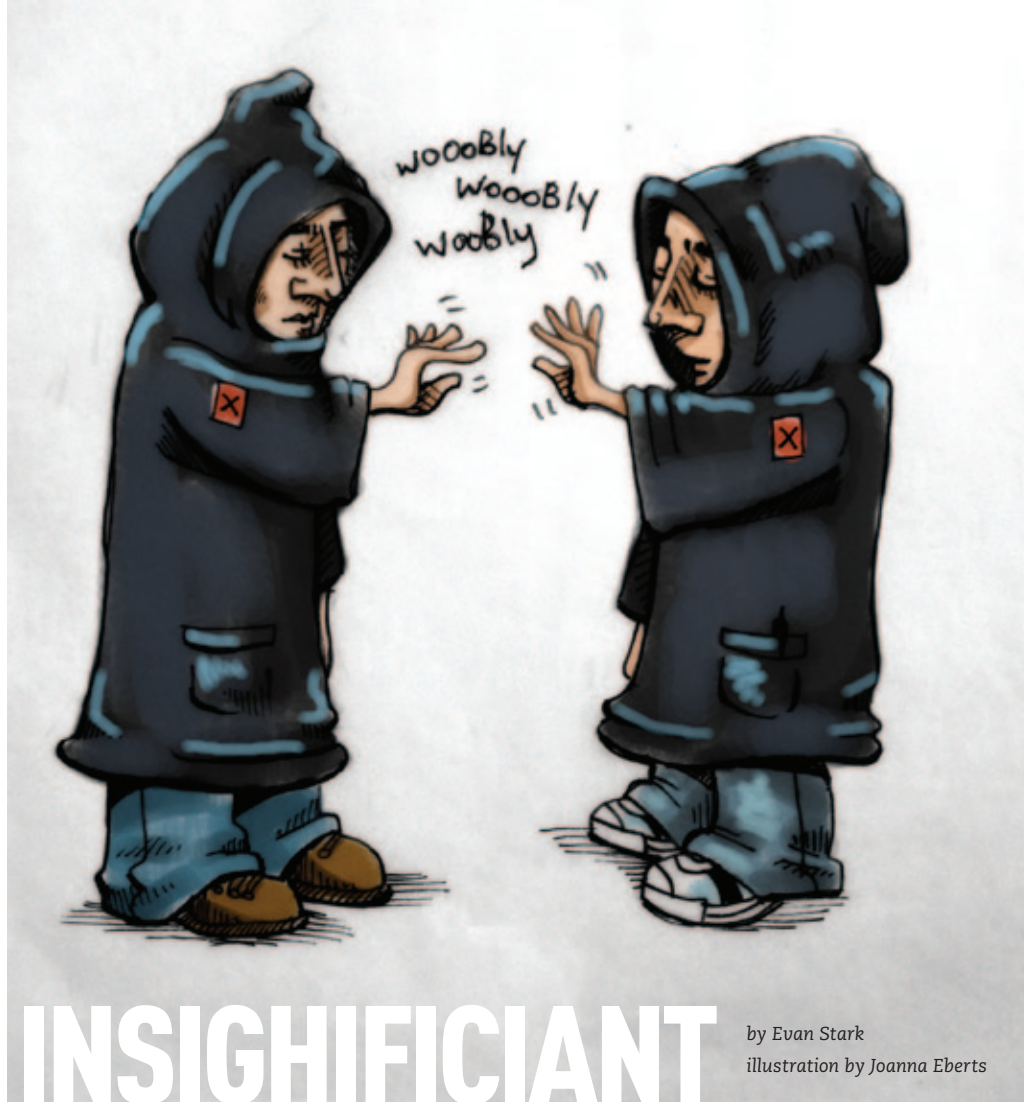
Have you ever clubbed a bee with a Wiffle ball bat? Greatest sound ever.

FRIDAY 5:23 P.M.

RINGS FOR REAL. IF SOFA DOESN'T GET OUR LABS CONNECTED WITH DSS THIS YEAR, I'M GOING TO GET FREAKING AIDS FROM EDITING MY FILMS IN IT.

from text

“Your grandfather was a Freemason. You could probably claim lineage and get in if you wanted.” Lights poured on from the heavens, my eyes were opened, and my life was never the same. Until five seconds later, when I realized exactly what being part of a secret society means: **Jack.**



SECRETLY INSIGNIFICANT

by Evan Stark
illustration by Joanna Eberts


We're all familiar with the concept of "Secret Societies." The majority of us are familiar with the names "Illuminati," "Freemasons" and most recently, "Claw and Compass." Movies like "National Treasure" and books like "The DaVinci Code" are rife with extensive fantasies based on half-truths and coincidences that fuel our imaginations about the influence of these shadow groups. Theorists and conspiracy fanatics point at large companies (McDonald's) or prominent families (Kennedy and Rockefeller) and align the groups either satanically or with an obscure Christian sect. A simple search online for "secret societies" yields approximately 53.8 million sites. Most of the sites are filled with connections and outrageous accusations one would expect from an inpatient in a psychiatric ward. (There's even one about Dick Cheney that's worthy of a romance novel.)

When we take a step back and look at what effect these fraternal orders have had

on our society, we realize there's a great deal of fuss over nothing. I know, I know. "That's the point. You're not supposed to see their influence! That's what makes them so secret!" I think that's a load of crap. It's real easy for a society without an official face to be attributed with the sub-surface influence of an event that happened nearly 50 years ago. It's even easier when they don't show up to press conferences to deny everything! It seems like the best method for these shadow organizations to gain infamy is, in fact, the distinct lack of coherent evidence connecting them to these events. Without clear connections, conspiracy theorists are free to play the most erratic game of connect-the-dots imaginable. They can and do create the most sordid relationships and the most outrageous networks of spies and brainwashing imaginable. The more far-fetched a connection, the more mystical and powerful these clandestine operations are for supposedly executing them.

Secrecy is the groups' best weapon. The

Skull and Bones is nothing more than another fraternity, giving one another a business leg-up in the world. The Freemasons began in lodges in the United States and operated as a men's club. The Illuminati were originally a political organization from the mid-1600s. While these groups do have extensive histories, it does not necessarily mean that they are on a mission of world domination. None of these groups actually carry the influence they are supposed to, but because we can't watch them from behind closed doors, we assume they're out to control the world.

Try creating your own secret society sometime. Find a group of friends and start meeting in places around campus. Make sure you don't tell anyone why you're meeting. Slowly pool whatever measly influence you have for any kind of end and you too can participate in your own secret society! Remember though, mum's the word. The public will make your society cooler than you could ever hope to do on your own. 

REPORTER

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