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"Intimacy #2" by Alexander Rothery. Photo credit: Ismael David Mujahid

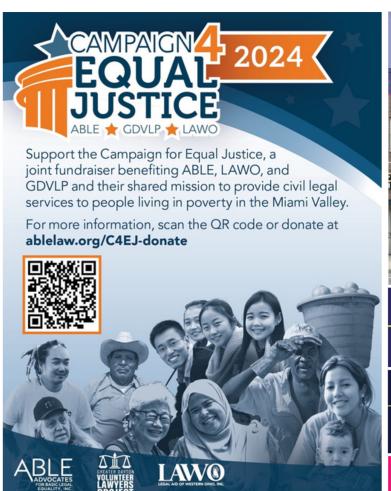
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Photo Credit: Alexander Rothery







If we had a theme for the semester it was dreams. Our singular vision was to put a turbulent period behind us and reach for the stars. And despite great difficulty to give our readers the best. We held true to our ambition of giving 110%.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Here's Ismael chilling in Rabat. Photo provided by: Ismael David Mujahid



The response to our March issue showed we have some of the best readers on earth. The outpouring of support was tremendous. I don't know if or in what shape we'll be in come Fall. But that we made it this far is thanks to all of you. I need to give a special shoutout to Professor Derek Petrey who has been a tireless supporter in this fight for survival. Ultimately, our future is up to the Dean of Liberal Arts.

If it came down to whether or not we gave our all this publication would last 100 years. Which brings me back to dreams. As a kid that always wanted to be a writer, my first time meeting Macaiah Johnson was something special. She was hosting a tabletalk at a convention and was joined by Stina Leicht. Their words still resonate with me till today. It's absolutely surreal that I got to thank her in person. Johnson represents so many of us and her success so welldeserved I had to share it with our readers (pg.16).

A dream is what life for Alexander Rothery (pg.6) feels like as he prepares to head to Japan in May. In our interview with him we got to see just how much his meteoric rise means to him. But that's far from all.

Macey Heys leaves us a Sinclair graduate as well as an award-winning writer and poet (pg.5). Carly Webster is heading to Cleveland after working wonders this semester. Davis Miller leaves with plenty of bylines, goodwill, and two more wonderful articles in print (pg. 15 and 22). Dreams are definitely possible, they prove it. But let us not forget that nightmares are too.

woes as 'disheartening' and 'painful' was the worst. But I choose to focus more on how they turned up day after day, worked their office hours, and held firm despite a flood of bad news. I urge them not to let this experience knock them down, to protect their dreams, and keep at it. Those hopes and aspirations aren't just about them but those they carry, literally and in their heart, along for the ride.

I write this the day before my birthday. All my life, the one constant on April 5, was that I would receive a message from my mother. Sometimes it would be handwritten, emailed, or a voice note. No matter where I was in the world she made sure I received it. For the first time in my life I won't be getting one.

While some might think that thought depressing others will know it for the sobering reminder it's meant to be. You only live once and your dreams are bigger than you. As Macaiah's story illustrates, it's also about who you choose to represent and the ideals that make you who you

That list for me begins with my Mother and extends to Professors Echols, Waggoner, and Dunham among others. I owe it to them to protect my dream and one-day sit next to best-sellers on the other side of the table.

So let us offer a salute to those who carry dreams too broad for their shoulders alone, ambitions that honor those they love, and everyone helping them along the way. Every one of us has a chance to leave behind a legacy, their chronicle in stone. I know what I want mine to be. How about you?

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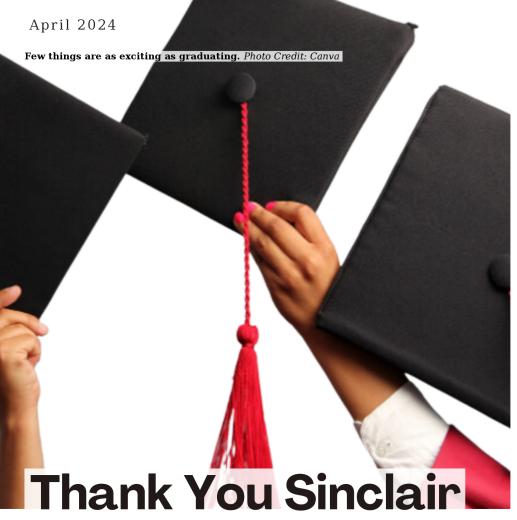
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Graduates reflect on their most memorable semesters

Macey Heys, Managing Editor

The shortest two years of my life. Those are the words that initially come to mind when I reflect on my time at Sinclair. Admittedly, back in 2022 when I was filling out college applications, a community college seemed the least appealing option because all my friends were going to live in dorms hours away from home. I, however, was going across the street, and somehow I felt that this would put a stain on my "college experience" (whatever I thought that meant at the time).

Fortunately, my time at Sinclair was more than I could've ever asked for. I made important relationships with peers and faculty, met incredible people doing incredible things, and had the opportunity to reflect about what I want out of life and who I aim to be in the future. I probably couldn't have done much of that from the comfortable bubble of an overpriced dorm.

Now, I invite you to stop for a moment, to not think about tomorrow or what's to come after graduation. Rather, go back in time for a second. Did you have a favorite class? Was there a particular semester that stood out to you? Who did you meet? What did you learn?

I spoke with Nikki Huber, a Liberal Arts major who is set to graduate in May.

"A good memory was a field trip where I toured the Appalachian areas. Everyone was super sweet and welcoming, and it was a good learning experience," she said.



She added that her favorite thing about Sinclair was the community.

"You get to meet a lot of people from across the world, plus it's a 'community' college, so it's not like a university where a bunch of kids are just trying to finish their college classes," she said.

Certainly, we are all trying to finish our classes in order to reach some sort of goal. But the community-focused nature of Sinclair is quite difficult to overlook, which, for Huber and I, makes the memories stand out.

One of my favorite aspects of Sinclair is the fact that you are in classes with people of all different ages and backgrounds. Having conversations with international students, getting the chance to learn with and from people who are three times your age, among many other things, are what I really love about the community here.

Sinclair graduates aren't the only one's donning a cap and gown this May. High school seniors also look forward to the important transition. Sinclair's College Credit Plus (CCP) program gives these students the chance to get a head start and introduce them to the campus.

Benjamin Treadwell, a CCP student, who looks forward to pursuing a degree in English out of state in the fall, had this to say about Sinclair:

"The faculty have done a good job helping me learn, and want to learn, and the CCP program has been helpful in getting some gen-eds out of the way, so when I go on to university I can focus on my major. It has helped me develop my critical thinking and writing skills."

Treadwell added, "I managed to find one of my friends from youth group on campus, and we've seen each other around."

Not only is the community of Sinclair a great place to make new friends, it is also a great environment to stay in touch with old ones. For me, it was as simple as a smile, and initiating a conversation that led to friendships I expect will last a lifetime.

I feel now more than ever that a new chapter is among us graduates. I know it's a cliché to compare life to chapters in a book, but regardless of where we are in life at this very moment...our stories are just beginning.

Portrait of An **Artist and His World**

Meet Alexander Rothery, Sinclair's Latest **Art Prodigy**

By Ismael David Mujahid, Executive Editor

Some of the most exceptional journeys are memorable because of how relatable they are. In the case of Alexander Rothery, Art Major extraordinaire, few have tales the majority of Sinclair's student body can connect to. Where it differs, veers off from the norm, is why Rothery has quickly become an artist people in Ohio and beyond will want to keep an eye out for.

Today he's won scholarships, is preparing for dream trip to Japan as part of a study abroad program and continues to earn praise from his professors. And its all thanks to his pursuit of a passion that's been with him his whole life.

"There was a point last semester where I had a bunch of things to apply for and work on," he said in an interview with The Clarion.

"Things just started to roll in. I won the Spring Scholarship, was accepted for the study abroad trip to Japan, and was producing a constant stream of art in three studio classes. Working so hard and getting that payoff for pursuing my art career was massive. The biggest thing, however, was having such a supportive environment full of professors helping me thrive," Rothery added.

He's come a long way from his days drawing during 15minute breaks as a manager at Chipotle. But while the road to where he is now has been far from easy it has certainly helped him reach the level he's at now.

"I feel like I've always been drawn towards art at least as early as I can remember. It doesn't really feel like a thing that started, it's just kind of always been," the Daytonian

Like many kids growing up in the 2000s, Rothery was exposed to a wide variety of art through TV. That included cartoons and the first major Shounen animes to go mainstream in the US. He wanted to create what he saw and as early as Elementary School was part of his own group of burgeoning artists.



the Dayton native is therapeutic. Photo Credit: Alexander Rothery

"At that age we were just doing it for fun. Growing up, I sensed it was not something I could pursue as a career. It was intimated that if I tried to be an artist I'd have to go art school and that art school wasn't a viable option. Then there was the idea that it didn't lead to a career that paid off art school."

That didn't stop him from drawing every chance he could get. Rothery, like any Manga fan of taste, found himself gravitating towards the work of the late Kentaro Miura and Junji Ito. Moving out aged just 18, he began working for Chipotle in Columbus. Despite art school still not seeming plausible Rothery still drew. A collision between his passion and job would pave the way for him to head to Sinclair.

"It started with hating my job. I was just overworked really badly and was even injured a few times. Once I got a really bad staph infection in my right hand and had to face the reality that I might need to have three fingers amputated and would never draw again. In a way it was kind of

A particularly bad supervisor was the straw that broke the camel's back for Rothery. Just a year before leaving the conventional life he'd built behind, Rothery would attempt his first abstract work, and hasn't looked back since.

"I feel like that experience kind of led me to make this one painting that felt a lot deeper and a lot more personal as well as symbolic compared to the small but detailed drawings I'd been doing before. Having the motivation and inspiration to make a piece based on how I was feeling and enjoying that so much really led me to try to pursue this path," he said.

It was far from easy. For years Rothery was used to drawing with a pencil on small sketch pads. He had to move away from line drawing, learn new techniques, and embrace new mediums.

Since deciding to pursue a career in art, his life has changed for the better. Photo Credit: Alexander Rothery

"I definitely was not looking at enough art. That was the first thing. I was very isolated to the styles and art that I liked," he said in reference to the challenges he faced as a first year art major.

"But coming to art school it was like 'look at this Still Life, look at this Matisse, look at all these things you would normally never look at, appreciate, and would probably scoff at'. So it was definitely important to keep an open mind."

Since then, the progress he's made has been nothing short of tremendous.

"I rarely use line. I've almost completely abandoned it because I just enjoy finding shape so much and not having to be so meticulous and being able to express myself a lot quicker and more authentically. That change is really a result of the art I look at and how I approach things."

"I'm always thinking about art, compositions, colors, and ideas on how I can make them all come together into something I'd like to create. At times its almost stream of consciousness for me.

His preparations start on a typical car ride home after class. It's usually a 30-minute trip that he uses to zone out and confront the parameters of whatever assignment he has to do.

"How can I express what I'm feeling in this moment with the conflict or joy that I'm having? How can I translate that into a composition that is pleasing, not too straightforward, and doesn't have a lot of generic elements?"

Next comes the preparation process, which Rothery finds calming. Selecting his paper, taping it down, and choosing what pastels he'll use brings an almost ritualistic tranquility to the artist. It sets the stage for the frenzied creation of his basic layout.

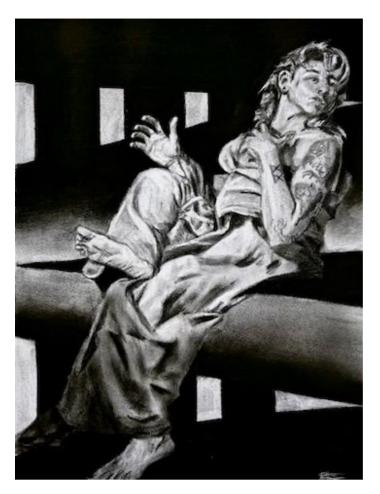
"Usually after that I walk away and think a little more. I'll do a couple of other sessions, drawing until I don't feel like drawing anymore. I'll come back to it until I feel its done," said Rothery.

An important part of his art process is music. It helps break the tedium of long hours working and reworkings aspects of a painting. Instead distracting him, Rothery finds that music helps tame his own sense of anxiousness and self-criticism.

"I tend to have a racing mind so I often need things to calm those thoughts down while the other part of my brain makes art. But I also feel the tone and expression of music can help develop the tone of painting. How I feel determines what genres I listen to and how fast I work, how my artistic expression moves with the rhythm."

Rothery's playlist is almost as varied as his artistic inspirations. Soul Scream, Japanese City Pop, MF Doom, Mac DeMarco, indie rock, and just about everything in between. He's a bit broader in terms of his own creative fuel. Every piece has its own inspiration from the challenges of being queer in today's environment to Hokusai and Hiroshige.

"These days I've gravitated towards artists like Francis Bacon, Aleksander Rostov, and a move away from representation towards ambiguous art that's open to interpretation. I want viewers to find their own meaning in how I express myself. Because I don't like art that straight up tells people how they're supposed to feel. I really like people being able to look and develop their own connections with what I create."



The artist's style has evolved since coming to Sinclair. Photo Credit: Alexander Rothery

Most importantly, however, has been Rothery's free spirit. It's what allowed him to defy those voices that warned him against a career in art and chart his own path to success.

"As a queer person, I have this natural inclination to do what makes me happy instead of following what others tell me. Life experiences have also driven me to be more free spirited. I tried to live a life that was what most would consider by the book and realized that it wasn't for me. That's what led me here," said Rothery.

Its certainly paid off. Now members of his family are showing just how proud they are of his work and he's excitedly preparing for his first trip to Japan in May. Following his dreams has certainly opened tons of doors for the art major.

"Of course, I'd like to have exhibitions one day. I would love to become an illustrator as its what I'm drawn towards and been influenced by most of my life. Overall, I'd like to transfer either to an actual art school or somewhere that has a more rigorous art program so that I can really nail down the things I need to learn still and if that fails just continue to teach myself beyond Sinclair," said Rothery.

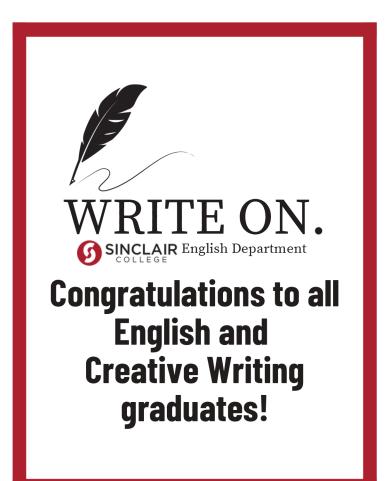
The innumerable skills he's learned will serve Rothery well no matter where he ends up. Don't be surprised if the painting maestro is Sinclair's next best export. Just remember you heard it here first.



Sinclair's Department of Mechanical Engineering Technology would like to congratulate our graduating students of 2024:

Marwan Almuqbil
Mohanad Alqahtani
Abdulaziz Alshamrani
David Brewster
Tyler Cox
Cameron Davis
Luke Fox
Felix Garcia Santana
Noah Magrum
Robert McWharter
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- Art Department Faculty & Staff

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Tartan TOPS and the
parents of the students
in Mini University



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From the Biology/Biotechnology Faculty

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We are proud of you and wish you great success in achieving your next academic and professional pursuits.

Psychology Department Faculty: Mary Wells, Elaine Isbell, Mark Humbert, Brandon Jablonski, Kristin Kwasny, Melvin Johnson, Jessica Turpin, Luis Sanchez Alcazar, Jaclyn Tyler, Roger Carpenter, and many adjunct faculty.





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Digital Media Design Interior Design Visual Communications



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Sincerely,

The Geography Department



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Congratulations to you, Sinclair Social Work graduates. We can't wait to see where your journey takes you.

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Sincerely,

The Sociology Department



Poetry with The Clarion

"Spring" by Carissa White, Creative Writing graduate

> Spring flowers Gentle rain Warm sunshine

Springtime is here New life begins A time to start again

Fresh start The past put to rest The past does not define you

"Thoughts" by Joseph Dacsil, Creative Writing student

Thoughts. They play with you. Through you. Begging to be played in your mind. They linger like the smell of blueberry wine. She dances under the moon. Only to fade into the distance. Her voice, the voices inside your head. You hear before you go to bed.

"Class of 2013" by Haylee Eyler, Creative Writing student

I've long outgrown the pencil marks in the doorway The corners of my childhood bedroom, Peel to reveal,

the shades of my adolescence. I think that's where they hide in each and every color Younger versions of me that I will never know again Who whisper and wish their dreams to me at night,

And dance with the headlights

from the street-view window in my bedroom.

Hushed and hopeful That I fell in love Or became a marine biologist Or learned to hula-hoop So I could beat Marney Tompson, Once and for all. They walk with me,

hand in hand And tug me around. So that I might continue to be Each and every person I was In this bedroom before



CONGRATS TO OUR THEATRE GRADS!

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From your Theatre and Dance Faculty and Staff



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Wishing you much

From the Music Faculty and Staff

Photo Credit: Canva



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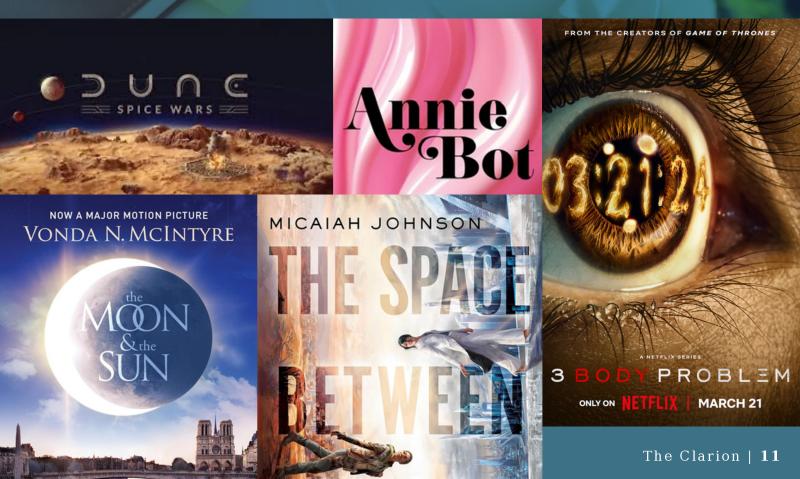
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'Annie Bot'

A revelation of all our dark places

Macey Heys, Managing Editor

Dating AI. Yes, you read that correctly. Put yourself in a world where we are reluctant to have relationships with one another and thus rely on second-hand versions of humanity for anything meaningful.

Sierra Greer's debut novel, "Annie Bot," doesn't quite go that far, but certainly makes it seem possible, or perhaps just out of reach.

Annie, a didactic robot (meaning she has more capacity for human intelligence) finds herself becoming curious about the world and what exists outside of the closet where she charges. However, her (human) owner, Doug, still has the reins.

This complex novel asks important questions about the history of the roles of women and their relationships with men, and how past stereotypes of the housewife, nanny, and pleasurer have trickled over into the present in various ways. How do these expectations on women influence behavior and thoughts of everyone around them?

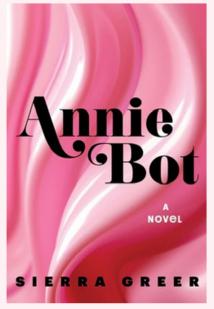
The overarching theme that percelates throughout the story is that of the idea of freedom. Annie is constantly torn between wanting to please Doug (as that was what she was created for) and wanting to sever her ties to him so she can explore without the innate desire to exist for another person.

I know, you're probably thinking: "Annie's a robot, how is she considering what freedom even is?" At first, I felt the exact same way. I was questioning every thought she had, imagining her as how we see AI right now-as formulaic, prewritten words on a screen-not as a conscious, thinking thing.

Then, I understood Annie's character what she was representing/symbolic of: The price of power.

Her character highlights what makes us human, but it also reveals the inhuman characteristics that plague us within. While we can be intensely empathetic creatures, we also desire to "own" and control things. Often, this greed overtakes our humanity.

Ultimately, this coming-of-age, speculative literary fiction novel will have me thinking for a while about one of the many potential directions that society is headed. Among subtle allusions to a failing education system and characters that you find yourself sympathizing with or absolutely abhorring-in many cases, both-there's no reason why this book shouldn't head straight to your reading list.



Having just been released in March. this book has drawn attention to thousands of readers across multiple platforms, and has acquired a dazzling four stars on Goodreads. Photo Credit: Mariner Books

"The more aware she is of her own mind, her own personhood, the more she realizes she has no agency of her own. It's a dazzling paradox."

-Sierra Greer

'The Moon and the Sun'

Historical fiction meets fantasy

By Ismael David Mujahid, Executive Editor

As a lover of history and speculative fiction I'm a sucker for mash-ups of the two. When done well, you end up with a work that uses what both genres do so well to complement each other. "Lord of Light" and "The Man in the High Castle" are two examples that come to mind. Yet, even among such prestigious company, what the "The Moon and the Sun" achieves is incredibly special.

For one, despite its speculative elements, the book's attention to historical detail is fabulous. The court of Louis XIV is rendered with a level of precision that puts the many other depictions of Versailles to shame. Every ritual is shown in all its flamboyant glory from the meticulous hierarchy of the morning toilette and to mass at the Royal Chapel. The amount of detail Vonda N. McIntyre packs into every sentence and paragraph is next-level. Never does it feel tedious, overbearing, or out of place. As readers, we are dropped into the mad and marvelous world of France's Grand Century.

Most importantly, however, is how that precision and specificity serve the plot. The narrative revolves around Marie-Joseph of Martinique and her brother Yves, a Jesuit who recently captured a sea monster on the orders of Louis. The discovery and detainment of such a strange yet humanlike creature is expected to have a massive effect on France and the rest of the world. It certainly changes the lives of the Martiniquais siblings

There's never a dull moment with "The Moon and the Sun"'s extensive cast of characters. We are introduced to a bewildering array of princes, counts, messieurs and madams. In fact, it can at times be a bit confusing which, given Marie-Josephe and her brother both being out of place at court, adds to the novel's charm.

We see a number of the great themes of the age rear their heads in McIntyre's tome. Science vs. religion, Catholicism vs. Protestantism, enlightenment vs. the past, and women threatening to break away from their assigned roles in society. It's fascinating to see the many characters clash in vicious court duels while wearing the most elegant clothes in France's most extravagant setting. And above them all, at least as far as the structure of society is concerned, looms the Sun King.

This isn't your run of the mill alt history or fish-out-of-water story. It's a literary treat, a feast for the eyes, and salve for the heart that yearns for something new. This is a marriage of historical and speculative fiction done right and a powerful example of how each brings the best out of the other.



The book is one of many stunning works by the late author. Photo Credit: Ouercus

'3 Body Problem'

Where is everybody?

Macey Heys, Managing Editor

Have you heard of the Fermi Paradox? It goes something like this: given the unimaginable vastness of the universe, the likelihood of the existence of extraterrestrial life is highly likely, so how come we haven't been contacted by these extraterrestrials? Where is everybody?

"3 Body Problem," adapted from Cixin Liu's "Remembrance of Earth's Past Trilogy", is an eight-episode sci-fi thriller that captures the audience in a riveting, multifaceted story about the looming threat of advanced aliens, science, mortality, and the consequences of war.

The first two episodes flawlessly set up the mystery that would eventually unravel. Following two timelines, one in the 1960s in China, and the other in modern day England, we see how the stories of each character converge.

The cast of characters was wonderfully diverse, each of who created some sort of reaction out of me; all the way from crying on the floor to laughing to flipping off my tv. The characters we see most prominently throughout are Dr. Ye Winjie, Mr. Wade, Clarence, Saul, Jack, Jin, Auggie, Will, and Tatiana.



The show is an adaptation of the acclaimed "Remembrance of Earth's Past" series by Cixin Liu.

Photo Credit: Netflix



Viewers are taken through two compelling timelines that each boast a range of fascinating characters. Photo Credit: Netflix

My favorite characters were, without a doubt, Clarence and Will. Clarence is the primary detective or spy who follows all the main characters. He's funny, often overlooked, and has a layer of complexity in his relationship with his son that isn't quite fully fleshed out, but nonetheless, made his character captivate me.

Will, another funny character, is put into a situation that adds another important theme and conflict to the storyline and, for me, really grounded the show, to make it more relatable and realistic... even though it's ultimately about aliens potentially coexisting with humans.

One of my favorite aspects of the show that I hope to see more of in the next two seasons, was the "video game" (comparable to our modern day virtual reality) that Jin and Jack were invited to play. This game ended up being a critical clue for the mystery of the plot and comes back around even after the mystery of the game is solved... perhaps implying that there's more to it.

In addition to compelling characters, a plot that forces you to binge watch the show, and extremely convincing CGI, I found that with each web that was satisfyingly untangled from within the plot, it was impossible to keep my mind from thinking about the deeper meaning behind the story as a whole and the reaction of the society who were living in the story.

Honestly, I'm not an avid sci-fi fan, but this show is for anyone. I couldn't find one aspect that wasn't enjoyable, but more importantly, I think there's something we can all learn and take away from the characters and situations they overcame, as well as the situations they didn't.

'Dune 2' Hollywood has a

By Davis Miller, Intern

co brina Herbert's magnum opus to life. Photo new emperor Credit: TheWrap

Chalamet and

"Dune: Part 2", released on March 1, 2024, does not dissapoint. The film, directed by Denis Villeneuve and starring Timothée Chalamet, recounts the ascension - or descension depending on one's own perception - of Paul Atreides to messianic status and Emperor of the interplanetary universe.

The initial release date, in November of 2023, was delayed due to strikes from the Writers Guild of America and the Screen Actors Guild as they demanded better compensation in the era of streaming. Despite the wait, the film did not disappoint.

Whether recency bias or true amazement, the widespread public reaction placed the film on par with legendary sci-fi sequels like "The Empire Strikes Back" and "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers".

Some might think it a simple task to render a film from pre-existing source material, especially given the acclaim of the novels. Villenueve walks the line between honoring Frank Herbert's story and splicing his own vision. The breadth of characters like Chani, played by Zendaya, and Feyd-Rautha, played by Austin Butler, is enhanced by Villeneuve and masterfully portrayed by their actors.

Chalamet plays his character wonderfully. His emotion and tone throughout the film portrays the director's intended feeling of the story, especially during his dramatic, awesome monologue at the movie's climax. As Elijah Wood is Frodo Baggins and Mark Hamill is Luke Skywalker, so Timothée Chalamet has become Paul

The supporting cast is filled out with stars like, Stellan Skarsgård as the Baron Vladimir Harkonnen, Rebecca Ferguson as Lady Jessica, Javier Bardem as Stilgar, Christopher Walken as Shaddam IV Corrino, and Florence Pugh as Princess Irulan.

The only noticeable negative in the film is some lackluster, on-thenose dialogue. These moments remove a degree of profundity of the characters and diminishes their connection with the audience. However, when introducing a story with such vastness, there doesn't seem to be much room for mysticism and subtlety.

The cinematography is a masterclass performed by Greig Fraser, who worked on beautiful films such as "Vice", "The Batman (2022)", and "Zero Dark Thirty". Hans Zimmer's score brings an aural accompaniment that perfectly complements Fraser's grandiose and intimate shots, lifting and dropping the tone of the movie in synchrony with the visual enthrallment.

The story itself is a tragedy. The tale of a boy whose destiny is corrupted by the scheming powerful. Strange and terrifying abilities of prescience are willed upon him until he is corrupted by the inevitable. Paul desperately tries to avoid his fate, but succumbs to the pressure of the future laid before him. It's a warning against religious fanaticism and untempered faith in heroes.

This is a film for sci-fi lovers; for movie lovers and story lovers. It tells a profound chronicle in a spectacular manner. It has imposing and modest moments. Themes of romanticism, ecology, the cost of political power, religious optimism and the purpose of war, all on the backdrop of an epic sci-fi universe. Nearly three hours pass in a moment. Dune: Part 2 sets a new standard for the genre science fiction and for the entire art of filmmaking.

'Dune Spice Wars'



Let the games begin

By Ismael David Mujahid, **Executive Editor**

Dune makes its long-awaited return to the RTS-genre. Photo Credit: Shiro Games

If there's one thing that has caught the public's imagination in recent months its Denis Villeneuve's second Dune movie. The rhetoric, image, and discourse around the series has changed thanks to the Canadian director's efforts on the big screen. Many may not know, however, that Herbert's magnum opus has remained a source of inspiration for a number of other adaptations that have sated the hunger of fans. Among the best and most faithful is Shiro Games' "Dune: Spice Wars".

Arrakis' return to the real-time strategy space was a longtime coming. The 1992 Sega-cd and floppy disk release is often credited with inventing the genre that has since gone on to include Command & Conquer, Age of Empires, and Crusader Kings. Before the political intrigue of Westeros became a byword for the Byzantine politics of court, there were the Great Houses of the Landsraad and their battle for control of the space trade. It is in depicting this struggle that Spice Wars soars head and shoulders above its competition.

Since being in Early Access, the game has given players the opportunity to control a faction, fight for control of spice on the sands of Arrakis, and oppose their rivals. From an initial roster that included the Harkonnens, Atreides, Smugglers, and Fremen the game has since expanded. To date, the version that is now out of Early Access boasts the addition of House Corrino and House Ecaz not as DLC but free updates. And that is far from all.

Spice Wars has benefited massively from its developers care with a ton of new modes and features. That includes a tutorial, Kanly Duel, and dedicated campaigns among others. Where previously you had to learn on the fly and likely endure one beating after another the game now gives players a chance to learn the rules in a stress-free environment. Because out on the sands of Dune a single mistake could be the ruin of your

The game is full of flavor to get you in the mood to dominate your foes and master the spice trade. Players are treated to a beautiful artistic design that keeps the series' identity while being unique among the many other adaptations out there. Add a soothing soundtrack that fits the desert setting and wellappointed voice acting to the heap and you have a good time waiting to be had.

RTS games have made a helluva comeback in recent years. The drought is over and with games like Spice Wars fans will be eating well for some time to come.

April 2024

The Marvelous Macaiah Johnson

Dreaming and achieving

By Ismael David Mujahid, Executive Editor

From the outside looking in Micaiah Johnson might seem like a diamond in the rough. After all, how many bestselling authors represent the High Desert community she calls home as proudly as she does? But unlike the diamonds we are used to the Californianative earned her award-winning status through her own merit. She represents wave of writers transforming bookshelves in America and beyond after years of polishing their craft.

Where once, like many of us, success was a dream Johnson's debut changed all that. "The Space Between Worlds" set a powerful foundation she is building on with her sophomore novel "Those Beyond The Wall". For many fans of the genre, her success and what she represents, have been a longtime coming.

"It feels amazing but bear in mind I'm not even the first wave of this, I get to stand in places that N.K. Jemisin, and so many others carved out with difficulty.

What we're seeing is that those of us were kept out immediately had the mentality of sharpening their skills. We've just been working and reading to make our craft so tight that now that we're being let in, we're really bringing it," she told The Clarion.

And bring it she certainly has. To date, she's been nominated for the Best Astounding New Writer Award at the 2021 and 2022 Hugo Awards. Her debut would be a finalist for the Locus Award for "Best First Novel" and win the Compton Crook Book Award in 2021.

"It was very wild," she said about "The Space Between Worlds" reception. "I was just hoping to maybe sell 5,000 books, maybe get a second print run. Then COVID happened and I thought no one would read it because there was just so much going on in the world but then it ended up having a much larger reach than I anticipated."

Things have only grown from there. But where some might be overwhelmed by the pressure of writing a follow-up to such a beloved novel, Johnson's met the challenge head-on. She already has years of experience defying the odds.

"I think we tend to have this picture of who is or who isn't allowed to be a writer. On my Mom's side I'm a first generation high-school graduate. Not only should I not be a writer I certainly should not be a PHD. Like many of us, I'm a statistical anomaly," said Johnson.

Since she was a child, Johnson knew she wanted to be a writer. In the high deserts of California where she comes from, factory and warehouse work was the norm. A scholarship to study Creative Writing at UC Riverside would help her defy the odds stacked against her.



Johnson poses with Ismael David Mujahid and author Stina Leicht. Photo provided by: Ismael David Mujahid

"When I was a teenager, I went to this yard sale and they had a book there. It was 'How to make Money as a Novelist' by Donald J. Maas. It was one of those magic beans or cows situations. I had so little money. But I told myself I was investing in my dream. I don't know if anything came out of reading that book but 10 years later I'm signed with Karen McClure who was at Donald J. Mass's agency," Johnson said.

Throughout this process her upbringing in the desert outside of Barstow would serve as a source of inspiration. In fact, the high desert continues to a polestar in the author's life.

"The desert is unignorable so you don't have to learn to pay attention to a setting the same way you do if you're in an area that doesn't have droughts, earthquakes, or water that catches fire sometimes. But it also makes community not easy but inevitable. It's part of survival, poverty and living in an extreme place. It makes it much easier to imagine a world where we depend on one another because you already have to exist in that kind of environment."

Where she described The Space Between Worlds as a passing narrative, Johnson believed it was vital her next work take a different approach.

"And so with the second book I wanted to root it in the desert, in community, and have a character that is deeply connected to her culture and community and has no desire to go to the city, no desire to ascend if ascend means shunning what she is."

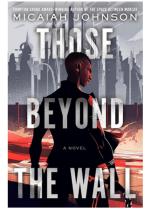
Work on her sophomore effort would face a different challenge. Johnson wrote her first book for fun and without the expectation it would be published. Its smash success brought an on-spec contract, an editor, and legions of fans hungry for more.

"I'm a great underdog, I do great when people underestimate me, I so rarely in my life am in the position where people have high standards for me that I'm just like 'I don't like that, I don't like it at all'. It was a bit harder to get out of my head and discover the writing process outside of the chaos and the noise of reception and public, "said Johnson.

Caring for her readers is of the utmost importance to the author. As a writer, Johnson strives to be a safe place for the communities she so proudly represents.

"I want them to feel seen and cared for and don't want to do any harm. Until it first came out I was worried about how they were receiving it, I was very tense. But thankfully it started coming out and people were resonating with it, they feel seen. Now those are the kinds of five-star reviews that make all the one star ones

On and off the page the award-winning writer continues to fight for the causes closest to her heart. That includes working with up-and-coming writers on keeping their voice, writing query letters, and breaking in to the industry. As she explains, the elevator has to be sent back



Iohnson's new novel is already making waves. Photo Credit: Del Rey

Just a decade or so ago the idea of so many new, inspiring voices duking it out on the best-seller list seemed farfetched. But as tastes, readership, and times have changed so has the genre for the better.

"I think what we're seeing is that people that have spent so long honing their skills, having to work twice as hard to just get in the room, and so we are in this golden age," Johnson said.

For writers like Johnson that means a chance to stand shoulder to shoulder with some of the greatest literary minds of recent years. It means a chance to create daring narratives and fulfill sci-fi's potential as a vector of the possible.

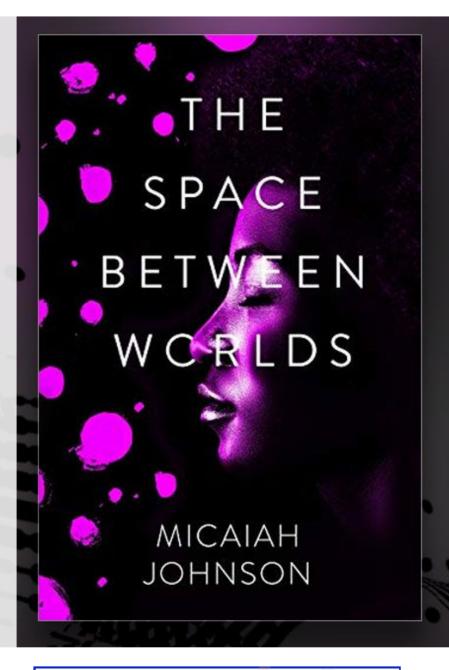
"It means the world to me and I think that's what makes so many of us attracted to science fiction and fantasy: their infinite possibilities," said Johnson.

As she explained, both give readers room to imagine more promising and hopeful lives. It is one of many things that has made them a natural magnet for people of color.

Johnson said, "One of the things I say in that letter that opens up my book is that protest is born from a belief in a different possible future and science fiction is too. It becomes this site of possibility and if Philip K. Dick can predict the fax machine among other technologies, then we can possibly predict less exploitative futures that we can one day see fulfilled."

In the words of Johnson, Samuel Delaney walked so that the writers that came after him would run. Thanks to her and the many other authors creating stunning works of art, sci-fi and fantasy are sprinting ahead. Lovers of the written word and well-crafted tales can experience the current golden age for themselves by picking up "Those Beyond The Wall" from their favorite bookstore.

> Johnson's debut, "The Space Between Worlds", catapulted her to fame. Photo Credit: Hodder & Stoughton





Graduating Clarion, Communication Studies and Multimedia Journalism stud<mark>e</mark>nts. We are so proud of you! In the words of —Henry David Thoreau "Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined." The Communication Department Faculty and Staff

Patiently Waiting For Winter:

The dedicated fans of George R.R. Martin

By Ismael David Mujahid, Executive Editor

HBO's "House of the Dragon" is yet another hit adaptation of Martin's fantasy world. Photo Credit: Ollie Upton HBO



Jon Snow and Samwell Tarly are two of many fan-favorite characters from the series. Photo Credit: Helen Sloan HBO

When it comes to fandoms few are as passionate as the thousands upon thousands of readers that continue to be drawn to George R.R. Martin's work. Even among passionate fantasy fanbases, 'A Song of Ice and Fire' devotees are a dedicated bunch. Long after the ending of the series' HBO adaptation, they remain, united by a love for a series that has transformed so many lives for the best.

The podcast Radio Westeros is just one example of how Martin's fans have kept the flame burning. Hosted by Jen and Matt, known as Lady Gwynhyfvar and Yolkboy respectively, the platform has become a haven for fans. For nearly a decade they've offered fans detailed analyses, stirring readings, and a positive atmosphere that keeps them coming back for more.

"We met on the Westeros forums in about 2013 and we both were contributing analyses, wacky theories, that sort of thing. We hit it off and eventually decided that we wanted to funnel our energy into something. I suggested a podcast, she agreed, and in 2014 our first episode came out," Yolkboy told The Clarion.

Those that have not read the books or seen the show may find their dedication odd. But anyone familiar with Martin's style of writing most definitely does not. Lady Gwynhyfvar cites his attention to detail and penchant for embedding mysteries into his work as major reasons that have kept readers devoted all these years.

"There's such richness to the material. The way George lays out mysteries is much more than your typical fantasy, there's mysteries everywhere so part of the fun is in trying to solve them. Because it's unfinished there's also room to speculate on what will happen next in the book we thought was going to come out within a year or two of us starting the podcast," she said.

Both found their way to online communities for the same reason: a lack of people in their local community they could deeply converse with about the series. It's had a massive effect on their lives to say the least.

"When we started out it was about season two or three of the show. It was just starting to snowball into this phenomenon. There was a really thriving community of likeminded people that wanted to explore, indulge discourse, and share theories all in a community setting where you're making friends and so on," Yolkboy explained.

Thanks to the series the two would go from meeting on westeros.org to being happily married.

"We've been to conventions and given talks, done panels, and stuff. The online community became a real-life community for a lot of people. There's been a lot of marriages, many friendships, and relationships that have endured beyond the shows ending," Yolkboy said.

Joe Magician is another ASOIAF content creator that has built lasting friendships and a dedicated following based on a mutual love for one of the most epic fantasy sagas of all time. Like many he started on the ASOIAF subreddit looking to escape a boring job by trading posts with other fans. Going from a moderator known for detailed essays to a YouTuber has taken him further than he imagined.

"I love deep dives, picking a topic and learning everything I can about it. And ASOIAF is strange in that I can never find the point where I'm tired of it or there's not more to go into. For someone like me that's so rewarding," Joe Magician said.



Audiences will be heading back to Westeros when the second season of "House of the Dragon" comes out this summer. Photo Credit: Ollie Upton HBO

At nearly 10 million views his YouTube channel continues to grow. It's thanks to a community that enjoys his livestreams, listens to his podcasts, and interacts with him in the positive environment he's created.

"There are so many different characters, so many different POVs, so many things you can dig your teeth into it sort of ends where you find yourself in the books. You find different characters who are like you in different ways," Joe Magician added.

Like Joe Magician, Yolkboy finds himself drawn to Sam the Slayer. Lady Gwynhyfvar, on the other hand, is a firm supporter of House Stark, Catelyn, and Brienne.

"I love reading Jaime, not necessarily Jaime Lannister but I love his chapters. And I love Tyrion for the same reason. I think with Tyrion we get the closest to George's mind. Samwell too. I think the two of them are the two sides of George's personality so they're both quite enjoyable," she said.

Just as vivid are the tapestries Martin has woven for his characters to operate in. Duels, court scenes, and executions are just the tip of the iceberg on Planetos.

"I've read it many times now but thinking back to when I first read it and I was reading what the show hadn't covered. I remember reading the Oberyn vs Gregor showdown and I remember just being wrecked, I couldn't believe what I was reading. It was so twisty, so devastating, and so awesome at the same time. From one sentence to the next there were massive shifts of emotion in my heart," Yolkboy said.

While she cites the Trial by Seven in The Hedge Knight as probably her favorite in the series, Brienne's stand against Rorge and Biter includes her favorite line.

"I think 'No chance and no choice' was incredible because I'm a sucker for selflessness," she explained

For his part, Joe Magician doesn't have to look far to find his favorite scene. He need only flip open the first page of book one.

"That whole first chapter was just amazing but the thing that was really compelling about it is the way George strings you along. Waymar dies, one of them makes it back, but then everybody just ignores it. It's like, you guys are fighting over all this stuff, there's House politics, is no one going to pay attention to the ice zombies? Contrasting Waymar dying with the Starks getting the direwolves creates sort of the perfect opening for people to get into," he said.

The trio and many millions around the world have waited patiently for Martin's next instalment in the mainline series. No one could have predicted the wait following the release of "A Dance With Dragons" in July 2011 would last this long. Yet Martin's readers are, for the most part, an understanding bunch. But that doesn't mean some of the negativity and abuse the writer has been subjected to goes unnoticed by them.

"I find it incredibly sad to think about George seeing this endless parade of comments about the winds of winter whenever he posts anything remotely off topic. 'How dare you talk about football, why aren't you writing?' I find it very sad for him and I find it disrespectful," said Lady Gwynhyfvar .

As Lady Gwynhyfvar explained, some fans have developed a strong sense of ownership over the series because they have invested so much into it.

She said, "But look, we don't own it, we're just borrowing it, but we aren't entitled to what George hasn't given us. And the book will come out when it comes."

Until it does, there's still plenty of characters to analyze and scenes to dissect.

"There's about 24 different POVs in ASOIAF. Although we think of it as this one overarching story it's really these 24-ish novellas stitched together into one whole," said Joe Magician. "I've done something around eight hours on the Blackwoods and they aren't even in the show."

Not to mention the plethora of other writers that have been strongly influenced by Martin. Many authors cite his example in helping them learn to put their characters through hell for the entertainment of readers. In Yolkboy's words, it's the tragedy of the Red Wedding and Ned's execution that has kept people hooked.

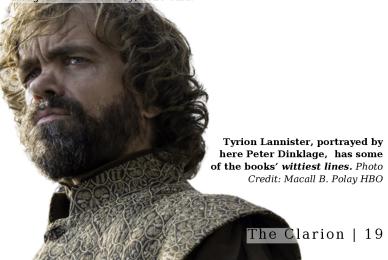
"The idea that nobody is safe may sound cliché but at the time you didn't have your main character die in the first book of a series then do the same thing to his son. It was just audacious," said Yolkbov.

For that reason and more, when 'The Winds of Winter' comes out the author will have millions of readers touched by his work eager to support him like they always have.

"If I could say anything to him it would be 'thank you, George.' I have a wife and a family because of what you've done," said Yolkboy.

It's a statement Lady Gwynhyfvar and many others share.

"I'd tell him thank you but would also say 'don't let the trolls or negativity get you down because the vast majority of your fans are here and we're happy to take it as it comes. And we will. When that book comes out we will read it as eagerly as we did 'A Dance With Dragons'. End of story," she said.



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Making the most of scholarships

Taking your search for scholarships to the next level

By Carly Webster, Business Manager

Like many other Sinclair students, I am preparing to graduate this spring. I will be making the transition into life at a university, which comes with a lot of responsibility - financial and otherwise.

My biggest fear throughout my college career has been burdening my family with debt. My brother, who completed eight years of higher education, is still working to pay off some of his student loans. And while I have not had to take out any yet, I see it in my future.

Thus, I wish to exhaust every possible resource - including scholarships.

Considering I opted for Sinclair over a four-year university coming out of high school, I have not had much experience with scholarship applications thus far. However, after reading books, having my essays reviewed by the Writing Lab, and talking with a few scholarship professionals, I have learned some important tips and tricks that I want to share with those who may also be new to this process.

Make a plan - for everything

Whether you are figuring out how much money in scholarships you are looking for, or what you wish to communicate through an essay, you will want to develop a system for conquering that task.

Michelle Brown, Director of Scholarship Services at The Dayton Foundation, said that one student covered her entire college career by tracking her scholarship applications in a spreadsheet.

They figured out what worked for her in order to "treat [scholarship applications] like a part-time job," as Brown said.

Brown had a piece of advice that we as students already get quite often: don't procrastinate!

"The last week our application was due, we had 600 students submit," she said, comparing that to the just over 1000 applications received this year.

Creativity and out-of-the-box thinking don't just apply to essay writing but searching for opportunities as well. Even if the more accessible scholarships promoted by your school are not for you, there will be some out there!

"Students should never feel like they shouldn't look for scholarships just because of what their situation is," said Brown.

In fact, the more niche you can get with your search, the better.



Scholarships can make a big difference. Photo Credit: Canva

"You have the best chance with specific scholarships," Alex Harter, a scholarship assistant at Sinclair, said.

Think about it this way: are you better off vying for \$1,000 against 50 applicants locally or 500 applicants nationally?

Scholarships offered by community foundations, charities, and professional associations, for example, tend to be less competitive because they may be more difficult to find. So, if you know you're going into a specific industry, use associated keywords in your search.

Harter also recommends scholarship databases, which typically have the capability to search by amount, due date, GPA, and other criteria. Some well-known databases include the U.S. Department of Education, Scholarship America, Scholarship Owl.

But be careful - a legitimate scholarship website will never guarantee winnings or ask you for money to apply! These resources should always be free.

Pay attention to directions and qualifications

Both Brown and Harter said that not following directions is a common reason for students not receiving scholarships.

Harter pointed out 'yes/no' questions in particular. Many of the scholarships in Sinclair's database require you to answer these, and doing so incorrectly could unknowingly disqualify you.

Speaking from experience, writing a 1000-word essay for what seems like a measly \$500 can feel useless and unproductive. But every little bit counts toward your future education and your overall success.

Remember that scholarship committees want to hear your authentic story, so don't overthink it. Be yourself, be professional, and be optimistic.

Even if you do not see success right away, keep going. Putting your best foot forward is better than not putting your foot forward at all.

To read the article in its entirety, head to sinclairclarion.com.

Makerspace is the youngest club at Sinclair and brimming with opportunity. Photo Credit: Canva

For Sinclair students looking for a creative outlet and an intramural community, the Makerspace club offers this and so much more. Makerspace is the newest edition to Sinclair's list of student clubs and organizations.

Their mission is to provide a communal and educational environment for students. A place to have fun, meet friends, relieve stress, foster creativity, and realize ideas. Also, a place for hands-on learning and problem solving. Members may learn 3D printing, coding, and robotics among more. No matter the major or career goals, there is something to take from this community.

The club will utilize Sinclair owned tools and equipment, like laser engravers and 3D printers, which would otherwise remain unused, and plans to give relatively free reign to participants to create what they wish. The only costs forecasted for members are the materials used to create, like fabrics and cardboard, which would amount to cents per month.

The Clarion met with one of the club's coordinators, James Davidson, who preached the value of the mission and encouraged prospects to recognize the advantages in joining student organizations in general, and specifically Makerspace.

"A club like this does open a lot more opportunities to people by being able to see what all is possible that they might not have realized was possible to do. . . You can also utilize any of this machinery to create a hobby or small business for yourself," said Davidson.

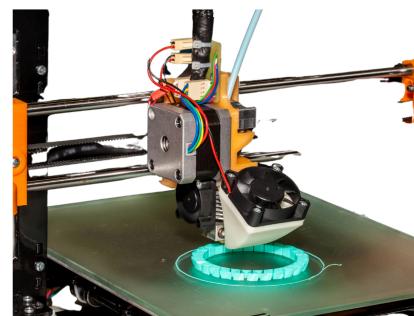
In a world with more and more technological implementation in businesses, from top to bottom, having these tools on your proverbial belt is invaluable. Many students find visual and auditory learning burdensome, preferring the sort of kinesthetic learning offered at Makerspace.

"I want people to feel like they can create anything that they can imagine, that's what we are, I want to provide a place where we can help you create anything you can dream of, that you might not have believed you could by yourself," said Davidson.

Davidson stressed the importance of expressing your creativity. Learning becomes infinitely easier when it's enjoyable and stress is alleviated. Despite this, traditional educational institutions seldom foster creativity within the classroom or without. Although Sinclair won't uproot this traditional approach to education entirely, a leap forward consists of their offering the Makerspace club.

Student communities are so important, both for their collaborative and communal benefits, and the education they provide. Makerspace perfectly encapsulates this importance. With little cost and high potential reward, why not give it a

A club for leisure or learning in a community of like-minded individuals. Photo Credit: Canva



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