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JCU: Incredibly Safe Campus or Largely Quiet Community?

By Selena Handler

"Run!" Molly Dickman yelled to her three friends as the piazza opened up in front of them.

Uninhibited by untied laces and crooked cobblestones, the four young women began to pick up the pace as eight men chased them and yelled out Italian phrases they could not understand. Luckily, Dickman and her friends managed to rush up a side staircase as the Italian men continued down another ally.

Moments earlier the four women had left a bar in Campo dei Fiori when a man had catcalled them in Italian. Dickman had shrugged off the comment as nothing out-of-the-ordinary until the man and his friends had begun to mimic their every turn through the winding roads of Rome's historic center.

"It was scary," Dickman said. "Thank god I was in a familiar area, because I wouldn't have known how to get home so fast."

Dickman never formally reported the incident. Instead, she stored the unpleasant memory in a virtual filing cabinet among a slew of other incidents of harassment and assault.

Although almost every student at John Cabot seems to have a wealth of these stories, very few students report these encounters to the university or police. Title IX Coordinator Kathryne Fedele said there has only been one report of sexual assault in the last 18 months and none have resulted in an internal trial.

"Either this is an amazingly safe city and a great campus, or it is happening and we just haven't heard about it," Fedele said. "I tend to think it may be the latter."

Indeed, JCU's Title IX reports only show part of the picture because the data reflects incidents that have been directly reported to campus officials. Last semester, administrators—like Fedele and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Pamela Harris—participated in an open forum where students shared their stories of sexual harassment and brainstormed solutions. Harris said most of the students seemed concerned by problems coming from outside the university.

"Many students wanted to come forward and complain about being catcalled in Trastevere or in Rome and about the difficulties of navigating a Latin patriarchal culture," Harris said. "And what we can do here is have training sections and encounters to teach people how to respond."

To help address assault that occurs on the streets of Rome between a student and a citizen, the university can provide psychological support, practical training and assistance with going to the Italian police.

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Students Ask: Why does finals schedule come out so late?

By Samantha Abear

Students and faculty at John Cabot University (JCU) are frustrated that the final exam schedule is not available until the fourth week of the semester. Students at similar universities, such as the American University of Rome (AUR), receive their exam schedule on the first day of classes.

For some, this frustration derives from the financial burden created by having to wait longer to book flights. Senior Valentina Capotosto began studying international business at JCU four years ago and has always returned to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, during winter and summer breaks. She says she has spent more money on flights because she was not able to book earlier. "I like to fly home the day after my last final so I have as much time at home with my family as possible. It frustrates me because tickets, especially for international flights, get so expensive the longer you wait," said Capotosto.

For others, waiting to receive the final exam schedule means having less time to organize end-of-semester travel.

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Letter from the Editor

There has never been such a momentous time to be in Italy. Rome, not just capital of Italy, but also home to the Vatican, recently passed civil unions, meaning that gay couples have been granted the right to marry.
Some of the topics covered by our reporters in this issue are sexual harassment, food waste on campus, the Theater Society's new play and volunteering in the local community.
For comments, criticism and submissions, please email newspaper@johncabot.edu

Sincerely,
Lauren Cater
Editor-in-Chief

NEWS

Students believe new Barbie dolls will help Girls embrace themselves

Photo Credit: Mattel
By Valentina Calindri

Students at the John Cabot University are enthusiastic about the new Barbie collection released in January by Mattel. They think it is a great idea and a step forward in the direction of accepting new models for women.

"I think it's a brilliant idea," said Antonia Basile, an Italian student of Art History.

Laura Di Gironlamo, a Chilean and Political Science student, said the collection is a step towards in accepting diversity and it will help more girls feel good about their look.

Mattel, the multinational toy company producing Barbie, released three new body types of the famous doll - tall, petite and curvy. They are the conclusion of a Barbie remake started in 2015 with new skin tones and hair textures for the dolls. The secret project, called "Project Dawn," began two years ago, it came as consequence of people complaining Barbie was out of touch and not in line with what is going on in the world today, said Barbie general manager Evelyn Mazzocco. They hope the new collection will make Barbie more relevant.

And it seems they have succeeded so far. "It will challenge women's stereotypes and show a new idea of beauty," said Fabiana Fuschi, a Political Science student. "It is an important change because women are physically different so this new collection reflects more the current society."

Jessica Jasso, an American and International Business student, who was raised into a Hispanic family, said it was difficult growing up looking at her skinny Barbie dolls and the way women were portrayed on television. "I am a petite person and I used to think being a beautiful woman meant having a certain height, weight or a certain hair color," Jasso said.

When they were young some students would have loved the possibility of buying a Barbie that looked more like them. "If I were still young I would buy one that looked like me," said Di Girolamo.

Emanuele Cellini, an Italian and Communication student, said, "It is a positive thing that children can learn and accept diversity of all types when they are still young."

Ludovica Pizzichelli, an Italian American International Affairs student, said, "What I really like about the new dolls is the cultural diversity," because while growing up she didn't like seeing only white Barbie dolls.

On the other hand, Federica Barazzutti, a Communication and Italian student, said, "They are just toys, what really shapes children's views of the world..."
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Are yoga pants and sneakers appropriate for university? JCU students say NO

By Carly Newgard

Students and faculty at John Cabot University say there is a great fashion divide between the Americans and Europeans on campus and it has everything to do with culture. Some students went as far as to say that the American study abroad students should try to fit in more.

"It is easy to pick out the Americans, I am right about 95 percent of the time, all because of their clothes, which is often work out attire," says JCU senior Milena Rivolova from Czech Republic.

Americans seem to take on a more casual look compared to the other students, dressing more for comfort than style," says French-American Senior Agathe Farrage. She added Americans dress to be covered, while Europeans dress for style.

American students and work out attire, such as sweatshirts, yoga pants or gym shorts, seem to go hand and hand. The fast-paced, efficient and practical U.S. culture seems to make comfortable and casual clothing the popular choice among students.

But some students questioned whether it was important for American students to assimilate into all areas of Italian culture, including fashion. Italian JCU senior Axel Keicher said," I believe it is always good to try and follow the customs of the country you live in, in all aspects."

Some students took a more passionate stance, " It is ethnocentric of visiting students to not try and fit into the culture around them, if wearing flip flops in public is considered disgusting in Italy, toss them," says JCU American junior, Ahmad Kazi.

Although the majority of JCU students seem to think that visiting students should abide by the unspoken social norms that exist, such as no flip-flops in the city, some students feel differently, "I do not think it is necessary to forget the customs of America, I wear a t-shirt and jeans everyday and I fit in fine," says JCU American senior Thomas Oswald Young.

Study abroad students make the decision when they first come to Rome if they want assimilate into Italian culture, which will most likely result in a wardrobe update. Buying new threads may be worth the splurge because fellow Italian classmates take notice, "many Americans who come here cling to their American culture. When I meet an American who attempts to assimilate into Italian culture they are always dressed the part, meaning they are put together and professional, I appreciate it and want to get to know them," said Italian JCU senior Giampaolo Pericotti.

The concept of dressing professional for university may be a lost idea on Americans due to the fact that the classroom atmosphere is a lot different back home.

"I do not pay attention to how my students dress at all. However, a friend of mine who is an Italian professor sends his male students home when they wear shorts in the classroom," says JCU American Communications Professor Antonio Lopez.

In Italy students are scolded if they are not dressed up to code, "It would be unthinkable for an Italian to go to class in pajamas, or God forbid flip flops and a tank top. I would get sent home from high school if I showed up wearing that," said Keicher.

Diversity is something to be appreciated. The decision to assimilate is up to the individual, "I feel like I have become more involved in fashion since I have been at JCU. At my college in the states everyone dressed the same and I cared less, I wore sweats, but here I feel that people care, they are more fashionable, and it has inspired me," says Allegra De Leon Delli, an American-Italian junior at JCU.

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NEWS

Volunteering at La Ronda della Solidarietà

By Cristina Di Leva

Every Tuesday and Thursday students from John Cabot University volunteer at La Ronda della Solidarietà, an organization that provides food for homeless people at Piazza Mastai, in the heart of Trastevere.

"I always wanted to volunteer, so I immediately took the opportunity," said Giovanna Pino, freshman degree seeking student, "I think it is a good occasion to help people feel better and less alone, but also for me to make new friends."

La Ronda della Solidarietà was founded in June 2010 by actor Domenico Fumato (president of the association), inspired by the idea of artist Paolo Coccheri, who created a similar organization in 1993 in Florence. The organization gathers donated food from local Roman stores and provides it to those in need. The meetings in which the food is distributed are set not only in Piazza Mastai on Tuesdays and Thursdays for breakfast, but also at Piazza Venezia every Monday and Thursday for dinner.

The volunteers, who come from all over the world and range in age from 20 – 70, distribute the food, beverages and clothes donated. They also eventually get to know the homeless who usually show up every week. "They have a very hard life on the streets," said Carla Goracci, one of the volunteers. "The least we can do is to provide them a hot meal during the coldest months and refreshing food during summer."

The homeless also enjoy talking about their lives. "I once used to live in Canada, had a house, a family, work…," said Luciano, who shows up weekly for breakfast in Piazza Mastai. "Then I divorced from my wife and I lost everything." He then decided to come back to his country of origin, Italy, because "being homeless in Canada means dealing with -20 degrees every day during wintertime."

JCU also helps La Ronda by providing juices, apples, coffee and clothes donated by the community twice a week. The students who participate are a both degree seeking and study abroad students looking to give back and help those in need.

Theater Society attempts first play: 'The Mousetrap'

By Lydia Smith

This March, students and faculty from JCU will have the opportunity to attend a production of Agatha Christie's 'The Mousetrap', the world's longest running show. This is the first ever murder mystery play to be performed and produced by the John Cabot University Theater Society.

With only seven weeks to rehearse and prepare, things are already moving quickly for the student run society. Auditions were held the second week of classes, a cast and crew were announced shortly after, and rehearsals are already underway. Remarkable progress for a fairly young society in the first few weeks of the Spring 2016 semester.

Producing one of the most well known plays of the 20th century is quite an endeavor, but Co-President Joey Armenio is confident in the strengths and abilities of his team to create an exciting production. "This production will only be possible with the hard work and determination from our cast and crew. We really can't do this without them."

In the past, JCU Theater Society focused on acting games, short plays, and improv skits for their weekly meetings. This year, under the new leadership, the group decided to take a more active role in the JCU club community. This included a fresh logo, brand new Facebook page, updated mission statement, and a never before attempted feat: a full-length murder mystery.

"We decided to challenge ourselves and perform the play before spring break, in order to give our actors and crew an enjoyable and stress-free vacation. After seven intense weeks of rehearsals and line memorization, they'll have earned in," stated Armenio. "Our cast and crew is a great combination of degree seeking and study abroad students, with incredible talents and gifts, who all have a common passion for theater."

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Food waste at Tiber Cafe

By Ngoni Taruvinga

John Cabot University (JCU) students may not be aware of how much food is wasted every day at the Tiber Cafe.

Perhaps calculating the actual amount of wasted food will open the eyes of students. Most students eat half the amount of food they put on their plate during lunch and dinner.

This means that in every two plates of food, there is a full plate that goes to waste every day. The Tiber Cafe feeds about 900 people each day, both students and JCU employees, at lunch. If everyone only eats half the amount of food they put on their plates, out of the 900 plates, 450 are thrown away.

The difference between food loss and food waste is noteworthy. Food loss happens when the food is lost in the process from its production and before it is consumed by people. This can be caused by lack of efficient storage systems and delivery logistics. Food waste happens when processed food is thrown away due to excess amount, spoiled or because of people's unscrupulous behaviour.

Estimating that each plate contains 500 grams of nutrients, a total of 225 kilograms, roughly the size of three large trash cans of food, go to waste at lunch time alone. In four working days, Monday through Thursday, close to 900 kilograms of food is wasted. Take note that these calculations are only for the food at lunch. If we add calculations of the food wasted during or after breakfast and dinner, one metric tons of wasted food would accumulate in a week.

All this food goes to waste simply because most people take more than they can consume. "I have no power to change the world or how people think, but the best I can do is persuade them to only take food that they need, not food that they want," said Iva Dragolova, Tiber Cafe Manager.

JCU student clubs Grassroots and Universities Fighting World Hunger are working with Tiber Cafe to spread awareness of this issue on campus by taking photographs of the wasted food left on trays. The clubs will post the photos in an art project to show students a visual portrayal of food waste.

According to the United Nations, about 800 million people worldwide live each day without access to a complete nutritious meal.

Where are the Russian students?

By Juliana Leary

Many students at John Cabot University (JCU) have been asking, where their Russian peers have gone?

John Cabot University (JCU) is a meeting ground for international students. Study abroad students and degree seekers come from around the world.

Russian students have traditionally held a significant presence on campus. But recently the population of Russian-speaking students has declined; a large portion of Russian degree-seekers have left the school.

The current state of the Russian economy has gone down hill. Low international oil prices have taken an enormous toll on Russia's main source of revenue. The Russian Ruble, the country's currency, has decreased in value significantly.
Last year, about 100 Russian-speaking students were enrolled, totaling about 10% of the student population with roughly 30 incoming students every year. This year, there are only about 70 Russian-speaking students, and most importantly the number of incoming students has declined by half.

Regina Zubareva, a degree seeker, says she knows students who could not afford to come back this semester. "I've lost many friends during this past year due to the increase in tuition and reduction of scholarships." The small changes were just not enough for some to afford.

Zubreva remains positive, though, with the hopes of making new friends with incoming students.

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NEWS

Clinging to your own culture

By Efe Ayanruoh

Like an aquarium, John Cabot University (JCU), a small liberal arts college in the heart of Rome, attracts students of different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. At least 80 different nationalities are represented in the hallways, classrooms and cafeteria.

"It's important for everybody to be aware that our differences make us unique, and make us united at the same time," said Pilar Murguia, the Director of Student Services.

Lately, students have shown less interest in engaging with cultures they are not familiar with.

"We usually stick to people from our culture because we have a longing for that piece of home," said Jimena Herrera, the ex-president of the Organization of Latin Americans (OLA) at JCU.

The need to foster a diverse community was first expressed in 2009, by a couple Latino students and two Italians, who initiated the idea of a Latin Club.

"After much brainstorming with the staff at the student services, a new idea was conceived: the Multicultural Club," said Murguia.

The Multicultural Club concentrated on sponsoring different cultures represented at the university, including that of staff and students.

The club is currently dormant, owing to students request in creating a smaller community. Ironically, the large number of students participating in the club hindered interaction between one another.

"In the Multicultural Club, people usually stuck with their friends, instead of meeting new people," said Lisa Zheng, a board member of the Chinese Club.

Following the failure of the Multicultural Club, cultural chapters were created. There are currently three cultural chapters at JCU; the Chinese Club, the Organization of Latin Americans (OLA) and the Russian Speaking Club. Each club is open to any student interested in expanding their knowledge on any culture of their choice.

According to Zheng, the smaller clubs help create relationships, and more knowledge of a specific culture.

The newest chapter is the Chinese Club, which was established at the beginning of Spring 2016.

"Although several Chinese alumni yearned to create a club that represented their culture, it never came to fruition," said Zheng.

Zheng expressed the difficulty she had in engaging in conversations with people of different nationalities, due to cultural barriers.

"It's very hard to break the atmosphere between Italians when they're having a conversation. I don't want to feel unwelcome and impolite," said Zheng.

"The Chinese club was born in response to the cliquish atmosphere that exists among the Italians and Russians," said Zheng.

The Chinese Club shares Chinese culture with the JCU community, by teaching the language and providing knowledge of China.

The club has also helped foster relationships among other Chinese students. According to Zheng, it is common for Chinese students to distance themselves from fellow Chinese students, for fear of intruding each other's personal space, but through the club, they can get to know each other better.

Another student organization that fosters culture representation is the Organization of Latin Americans. The club began in Fall 2015 due to a lack of representation of Latinos on the campus.

Although the community is dormant this semester due to the board members dealing with more pressing responsibilities...
Continue reading this article at johncabotnews.com.

Recent terror attacks impact student travel plans

By Elisa Palumbo

Recent terror attacks across the globe have impacted the lives of many study abroad students here at John Cabot University causing unsettling feelings and ruining some of their travel plans for the semester.

"I have always dreamt about visiting Morocco and since it is so close to Europe, I thought this would be the perfect opportunity for me to go," says Heather Markert, 19, a study-abroad-student from Connecticut, "But because of terrorist attacks and everything going on in the Middle East and other Arabic countries, my parents won't let me go."

On November 13, 2015, a group of terrorist attacked various locations throughout Paris, leaving 130 dead and hundreds more injured. This was following the attacks from earlier in the year on Charlie Hebdo offices and a Jewish supermarket that killed 17 people.

According to the U.S. Department of State, Americans should be alert to possible risks of travel due to increased terrorist threats. Current threats by organizations including ISIS, al-Qaeda, and Boko Haram suggest possible attacks all over the world. The State Department alerted U.S. citizens to possible travel risks due to terror threats.

After the ISIS attacks, the terrorist organization threatened more major cities, including Rome. A video released in December shows ISIS tanks advancing on the Coliseum, promising a war. The video's narrator claims that ISIS will take over Rome.

"The terror attacks have affected my travel plans," says Apolline Pilley, 19, who is a study abroad student at JCU from Paris. "I'm not as comfortable traveling around Europe. I would rather travel around Italy and see Rome because I feel safe here."
Pilley said since the Paris attacks hit so close to home both physically and emotionally, she does not feel comfortable traveling all around Europe because she feels what happened there can happen anywhere. She added that her and her friends would always spend time right where the attacks happened, so she fears something like that could happen in Rome.

However, not all students are letting these threats or past events interfere with their travel plans.
Continue reading this article at johncabotnews.com.

Theater Society attempts first play: 'The Mousetrap'

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First performed in the London West End in 1952, 'The Mousetrap' has continued to entertain and surprise audiences for over 60 years. Famously known for its ending, the identity of the murderer is one of the best kept secrets in theatrical history. At the close of each show, a cast member comes out onto the stage to ask the audience to keep the ending a secret. This is how the show has played continuously for the past half century.

In keeping with that tradition, the JCU Theater Society is asking potential audience members to avoid researching the play and come ready to support their classmates and be immensely surprised. For those who have seen the play before, the cast and crew are encouraging them to tell their friends and professors to come and see a marvelous production.

'The Mousetrap' will be playing March 22-23 in the Aula Magna at Guarini Campus. For more information and updates please like the John Cabot University Theater Society Facebook page or contact the JCU Theater Society at theatersociety@johncabot.edu

JCU: Incredibly safe campus or largely quiet community?

(Continued from Page 5) "It's very easy to point your finger at the administration—even with rape—which is such an awful, nasty conversation, but it is something we have to talk about," Cater said.

NEWS

Students Ask: Why does finals schedule come out so late?

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Stephen Hemmersmeier, who is currently studying abroad at JCU from the University of San Diego, said, "I am used to getting my exam schedule on the first day of class at my home university. It would be better if the finals schedule here was more timely with its release as it could aid many students when planning end-of-semester trips."

On Thursday, Feb. 11, the JCU Office of the Registrar notified students and faculty that the dates and times of the Spring 2016 final exams were posted online. Both JCU and AUR prohibit rescheduling of final exams to accommodate travel. After this point, however, the universities' policies diverge. While JCU Academic Policy states that the final exam schedule will not be created until after the Add/Drop Period, AUR's requires that students be given the date and time of their final exams on the first day of class.

Even after the JCU final exam schedule is created and posted, it may be subject to change. Kiriko Mechanicus, a junior history major at JCU, works as an Orientation Leader welcoming new students each semester. "We are instructed to advise them to book their flights home for the Saturday following finals exams. It could happen that the date or time of your exam changes in the middle of the semester, and if you already booked a flight, you either have to miss the flight or your exam," she said.

Not only students are confused about the situation. Professor of Communications Antonio Lopez does not understand why it takes JCU's Office of the Registrar so long to deliver the schedule. "They have all the information they need to make the schedule earlier," he said.

Lopez, who previously taught at AUR, said he preferred being able to give students the information about their exams on the first day of class. He said, "It reduces uncertainty and questions, and it helps me when making my own travel schedule."

Margaret Kneller, Professor of Natural Sciences at JCU, said she has noticed the final exam schedule coming out quicker now than when she began teaching at JCU 10 years ago. However, she thinks it would be better to have the schedule earlier to allow professors to also organize their time better.

Registrar Carmen Scarpati said she had a discussion with Dean Mary Merva three semesters ago regarding the final exam schedule. "It was coming out too late and getting too complicated to make because we used to email faculty to ask if they had conflicts with their exams being scheduled on the weekend," said Scarpati.

To further explain the delay and why it is JCU's policy to wait until the end of the Add/Drop Period to schedule final exams, she said that the Office of the Registrar has to verify that no classes were canceled due to insufficient enrollment.

When asked if she was aware of AUR's policy of giving students their final exam schedule on the first day of class, Scarpati responded, "Really? Well good for them."

JCU: incredibly Safe Campus or largely quiet community?

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But they cannot punish someone who is not a member of the JCU community for harassment that occurs off-campus, Harris said.

In Fedele's experience, the Italian authorities tend to deter students from moving forward with prosecution. Fedele said Italian society tends to blame victims and the authorities often pose certain questions that make people doubt what actually happened and whether their experience was sexual assault.

"It's the same thing that you would see on any American campus, but what makes it more difficult here is that we are dealing with a different type of outside law enforcement,"
she said. "They may ask 'What were you wearing? How much did you drink?'"

This mentality is tied to Italy's rich history of lax penalties for sex crimes. It took 20 years of active social and political debate in the 1980's and 90's to reclassify rape as a criminal felony rather than a moral offense.

And only a few years after this reported "feminist victory," a judge in southern Italy overturned a rape charge because the alleged victim was wearing tight jeans at the time of her assault. The ruling from the court stated that the attacker could not have removed her jeans if she had been actively fighting him at the time.

Underreported sexual assault is not an issue unique to Italy, however; it is prevalent in the United States, too. In the Association of American Universities' survey of 27 major American universities, 23 percent of undergraduate women said they had experienced sexual assault. The AAU's findings revealed far greater numbers of assault on campuses than had been reported to the authorities.

Students at JCU come from a variety of nationalities and traditions, but almost universally students do not formally report sexual misconduct. Even when students do come to Fedele's door to report an incident, they often do not want to seek any legal or punitive action for their alleged attacker and the university's job is to accommodate the victim's wishes.

Fedele said that when students are asked what they want, the answer is usually that they want to move on as quickly as possible. This often means separating the accused from the alleged victim, offering counseling services and ongoing administrative support to the students.

President of John Cabot's Women's Leadership Initiative (WLI) Club Lauren Cater believes that the best way to deal with a harasser in the short term is to confront them immediately and label the behavior unacceptable.

"It's not good to stay silent about it," Cater said. "Because staying silent tells the person that they can treat a woman this way."

Although Cater acknowledges it is not the responsibility of the university to deal with incidents of harassment off-campus, she believes in the benefits of carrying on the conversation within the university's walls.

The WLI will continue to hold open-forum discussions throughout the semester where students can talk about women-related topics, their experiences and the best ways to handle incidences of assault. (Continued on bottom of Page 4)

Students believe new Barbie dolls will help Girls embrace themselves

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...is what surrounds them."

"I am afraid it might become just making money out of allegedly good intentions," said meanwhile Oleksandra Vereschak, a Ukrainian Economics and Finance student.

Clelia Clini, a professor in the Communications department, agrees. She is not sure the collection has anything to do with progress and the role of women within society, rather it may be connected to profit. "I don't think it's because they want to show that women are different, I am more concerned with the fact that they want to appeal to a broader spectrum of women," she said. Besides, some stereotypes are still there, "They are still very beautiful and fashionable," she added.

Marketing move or not, the toy's industry seems to moving in the right direction. "I do think it shows a cultural shifty so that's interesting," Pizzichelli said.
"I feel like there will be more confidence among little girls," said Jasso. "I hope in the future they will be less focus on trying to be something else and embracing who you actually are," she said.

NEWS

Photo Credit: Edgar Ives

Where are the Russian students?

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The Russian-speaking club was once an active, vibrant club, hosting events and dinners. Today, the club still exists, but it is dormant.

Arianna Catti De Gasperi, the Assistant Director of International Admissions, says that the university is looking at this as both negative and positive. Unfortunately, they have lost students from Russia, but they are seeking students from other Russian-speaking countries like Ukraine and Kazakhstan, expanding the list of international students that attend JCU.

Anastasia Komarova, a degree seeker and former secretary of the Russian Speaking Club, says that she has noticed this decline and that she is personally sad several students did not return.

When asked if the Russian community was negatively affected, Komarova said that it had not. In fact, some students say that there was never really a community at all, "I would say that Russian-speaking students don't really create a community, we form groups and don't interact a lot outside of our group."

Margarita Biryukova, a JCU alumna and intern at JCU's international admissions office, agreed with Komarova. She said that she avoided Russian cliques because Russian speakers often randomly switch from Russian to English, making other non-Russian speakers in the conversation feel "awkward."

Are yoga pants and sneakers appropriate for university? JCU students say NO

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"The point of studying abroad is to immerse yourself in a different culture, so why would you bring unwanted attention to yourself, make the effort," says Milena Rivolova. A student studying abroad at JCU will get as much out their experience in Rome as they are willing to give. If Americans ditch the sweats and invest in a blazer, it could go a long way in the eyes of their fellow classmates and educators.

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