On Wednesday Feb. 6, an artists’ reception of the art exhibition “Impact” in PSC’s Christopher Art Gallery was scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. After this reception was a film viewing of “Chasing Coral” and a discussion followed shortly after in the Proven IT Conference Room in the PSC Conference Center.

“Chasing Coral” is a documentary, directed by Jeff Orlowski, about coral bleaching, a phenomenon that happens when corals give up their vibrant colors before changing to a ghostly white and then dying. The cause of this death spiral is global climate change, in other words, “global warming.”

The whole film follows Orlowski’s team and the process of the efforts they go through to document this devastating change in this underwater ecosystem. The beauty of this film is that after showing the shocking truth of these negative changes happening in our oceans, they end it by sending the message that we can restore coral life, however, only through awareness of the problem and changes in our human behavior.

Helen Dannelley, one of the artists who contributed her art to the “Impact” exhibition, shared that what inspired her to create her piece was this same documentary. After watching this film, she came up with the idea of creating a visual representation of the corals going from very alive and colorful to slowly bleaching, to turning dark black and gray.”

However, she did not want to execute this idea alone. She recounted, “I remembered a very good friend of mine and artist in California, Sandi Miot.”
By Esmeralda Manzo | Impact: Chasing Coral | Cont.

She does these gorgeous colorful sculptures of corals, and I called her, and I said, ‘Sandi, I have an idea for a collaborative show. I said, you need to watch the film ‘Chasing Coral’ and then call me.” Once they were both on board with this idea, Helen approached Beth Shadur, the PSC gallery director and curator, about the idea. The rest is history. Helen also went on to name her art piece “Chasing Coral.”

Next was Damien Bryant. Damien was the guest speaker who gave his presentation after the film viewing. He’s a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago and his research focuses on questions of climate change, climate action, and climate science.

Beth Shadur and Helen Dannelley both invited him to this event after meeting at a previous show where they discussed Helen’s work on coral. Since coral was his research interest, he was invited to give a presentation on his work.

Coincidentally, in 2016, he was in Hawaii doing research while the filmmakers of “Chasing Coral” were finishing up their film, and they presented a preview of this film to him and the other scientists.

The filmmakers filmed their reactions and put this clip into the film itself towards the ending, funnily enough, Damien ended up being an “unintentional extra” in this film.

While discussing this issue of coral bleaching, he said, “We know that the impacts and effects of this phenomenon are going to be uneven; it’s to say they won’t be felt equally, so it is, I think, a very important question that we need to be centering in different scales of human activity.”

In other words, you may not fear the impact of this issue because you are not keeping yourself informed about it. You do not see its impact; therefore, you do not feel its impact. After discussing the effects of this film and the realities of the negative effects we humans have left on our oceans, he spoke about the concept of fear, and how it plays a different role in different people.

For example, when someone asks “What you most afraid of?” it’s common to hear people say they fear clowns, or spiders, or heights, while others may respond with natural disasters or the loss of natural habitats and species.

He concluded, “There’s almost always going to be a multitude of fears and threats that tie us together in ways that often are very violent and dangerous, but they can be for the good.

So how do we make sure that when we’re protecting ourselves we’re not hurting others? Or we’re not denying others the legitimacy of their fears?” While restoration is possible, it is only through awareness of the problem and changes in our human behavior.
Two months ago, Jussie Smollett, a Chicago resident and black, openly gay actor of the hit TV show “Empire,” was the target of a suspected hate crime when two men verbally berated him, assaulted him, and tied a noose around his neck near his home in the Streeter-ville neighborhood.

After two months of investigation, Jussie Smollett has become a person of interest in his own investigation, as police began to suspect him of fabricating the entire attack. This is the timeline that has been put together based on information gathered by the Chicago Police Department.

Jan. 22, Jussie Smollett reports to the police that a letter addressed to him was received at a production studio on Chicago’s west side. The letter was postmarked in Bedford Park.

Jan. 29, Jussie Smollett reports that he was attacked by two men at roughly 2 a.m. outside a Subway restaurant on the 300 block of East North Water Street. These two men supposedly were screaming racial slurs and chanting, “This is MAGA country.” Once close enough, Smollett reports, the two men began hitting him and wrapped a noose around his neck.

Over the next few days, from Jan. 30 - Feb. 3, Jussie Smollett receives an outcry of support from powerful figures all over the country as police begin their investigation. Via social media, figures such as Kamala Harris and Ellen DeGeneres exclaim their support, and even President Trump tweets, “It doesn't get worse, as far as I’m concerned.”

Feb. 12, Chicago Police say that Smollett was not entirely cooperative when asked for his phone records of the nights leading up to the attack.

Feb. 14, Smollett holds an interview with “Good Morning America” where he tries to dispel the now-rising doubts. Smollett says, “You do such a disservice when you lie about things like this.”

Feb. 15, two brothers, who are the suspected attackers, are taken into police custody as the two persons of interest. After twelve hours, both brothers are released and police state that due to new evidence, they will be looking into a new primary suspect.

Feb. 20, the Cook County’s State’s Attorney Office approves charges of filing a false police report against Jussie Smollett and hints more charges may be coming soon.

Feb. 21, after being charged, Smollett surrenders himself to the Chicago Police department. After a judge places Jussie Smollett’s bond at $100,000, Smollett pays his $10,000 bail, surrenders his passport, and remains under police supervision until the trial is concluded.

As this is an on-going case, the Pioneer is looking forward to continuing to inform our readers about Jussie Smollett’s story and the battle for the truth. Keep on the look-out for updates in future newspaper editions.
Prairie State College

TRANSFER FAIR

- Find where to finish your Bachelor’s degree
- Connect with university admissions officers
- Learn valuable course planning, transfer, and scholarship information

Wednesday, March 6
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. | Atrium

Universities and special programs attending as of 2/20/19:

Alabama A&M University*
Alabama State University*
Benedictine University
Calumet College of St. Joseph
Chicago School of Professional Psychology
Chicago State University
Chicagoland Regional College Program
Columbia College Chicago
Concordia University Chicago
DePaul University
DeVry University
Dominican University
Earlham College
Eastern Illinois University
Elmhurst College
Evangel University
Fayetteville State University*
Ferris State University
Florida Memorial University*
Governing State University
Governor's State University - Dual Degree Program
Illinois Institute of Technology
Illinois State University
Illinois Student Assistance Commission
Indiana State University
Indiana Tech
Indiana University-Northwest
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Indiana Wesleyan University
Iowa Wesleyan University
Judson University
Lakeview College of Nursing
Lewis University
Lincoln College - Normal
Loyola University Chicago
Marquette University
Midwestern University
Morgan State University*
National Louis University
National University of Health Sciences
North Central College

North Park University
Northeastern Illinois University
Northern Illinois University
Olivet Nazarene University
Purdue University Northwest
Purdue University Northwest - College of Engineering and Sciences
Purdue University Northwest - School of Education
Resurrection University
Richmond The American International University in London
Robert Morris University
Roosevelt University
Saint Xavier University
School of the Art Institute
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Tennessee State University*
Trite University
Trinity Christian College
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Illinois at Chicago - College of Applied Health Sciences
University of Illinois at Chicago - College of Business
University of Illinois at Chicago - College of Engineering
University of Illinois at Chicago - College of Nursing
University of Illinois at Chicago - College of Pharmacy
University of Illinois at Springfield
University of Missouri - Saint Louis
University of Saint Francis - Crown Point
University of Saint Francis - Joliet
University of Saint Francis - Joliet - Online Programs
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Valparaiso University
Wayne State University
West Virginia State University*
Western Illinois University
Wiley College*

*Historically Black College or University (HBCU)

Check prairiestate.edu/collegefairs for the most up-to-date list of those attending.
This month, Prairie State College held its 31st annual Jazz Fest. The festival is a three-day event where students from 22 surrounding middle and high schools get the opportunity to perform for both each other and the public.

This year’s event ran from February 14th to the 16th and was held primarily in Prairie State College’s Barnes & Noble College Auditorium located in the Conference Center in the main campus building on the north side.

The event was capped off by its “Jam Masters Jam,” a performance opened by a student band conducted by Prairie State’s own Phillip Crews, Director of the PSC’s Wind Ensemble, and headlined by six nationally recognized Jazz artists: Orbert Davis, Edward Petersen, Ernie Adams, Valerie Nicholson, Larry Gray, and Ruben P. Alvarez. Despite being “Jam Masters,” the jazz veterans had a pretty tough act to follow with the students putting on a remarkable opening performance which got the crowd swelling with emotions.

When asked what she thought of the opening performance, PSC nursing student Jennifer Lewis commented, “It was lovely, moving… I almost cried.”

With the crowd still high off the energy and exuberance of the opening performers, the Masters took the stage. True to their name, the Jazz Masters put on an unforgettable show. Their ability to fill the room with bursting energy one second, then instantly bring the tune down to a soothing pace the next was nothing short of brilliance. The way the artists played off one another so seamlessly would leave the average onlooker convinced they all could read each others’ minds, as no note seemed misplaced or out of step. As the evening came to an end, Valerie Nicholson, who is the event’s coordinator, founder, and one of the performing artists, was kind enough to give a few words after the concert.

Though admitting the festival entailed a demanding schedule, Prof. Nicholson seemed no less committed to the musical and educational mission of the festival. After 31 years, festival has had quite an impact on many peoples’ lives; some of the Fest’s attendees have gone full circle, going from students themselves to bringing their own students to the event.

When asked, Prof Nicholson believed there were four such instructors this year who had previously been attending students.

Saving toughest for last, I asked the Professor what she’s enjoyed most about putting on Jazz Fest over the years, to which she replied, “I just love the spontaneity of it, and the unpredictability of it.

I just love connecting with the students, and hearing them play.” When I teased that spontaneity and jazz seemed good bedfellows, “Right,” she smiled, “Right.”
The Black Student Union held their 15th annual “PSC’s Got Talent!” show, Feb. 21, 2019. One of the first things BSU did was pay tribute to last year’s co-host, Destiny Webster, who died February 2019.

After a moment of silence and an explanation of who Destiny was and a brief video about her, the judges sang the Black National Anthem.

Bre’onte started the night out by performing a drum solo, which, according to the judges, was “full of energy” and “marvelous.”

Destiny performed a song and then Moriah sang Rihanna’s “Stay.” Next up was Nick who sang “Hellfire” from “The Hunchback of Notre Dame.”

Akram, a familiar face from last year’s talent show, danced again, and one of the judges said he remembered Akram from last year and noticed he had improved from last year to this year. The judges also said he should consider a choreography career. Peter finished the night with a gospel song that had the crowd out of their seats cheering and clapping.

Eventually, the judges left to discuss the performers and decide who they would name 2019’s “PSC’s Got Talent!” winner. The attendees also had the opportunity to vote via Facebook for who they thought should win the “fan vote.” Just like last year, the contestants and the BSU went up on stage to freestyle dance, and then another round of “Guess that theme song” was played before it was time to reveal the 2019 winners.

The third place winner was Nick, and second place went to Akram, who was last year’s first place winner. The winner of the fan vote was Moriah, who also won the entire show.

I attended the talent show last year and wrote about it for the Pioneer, and I personally thought the acts were better this year as there was more of a competition.

Once again, thank you to the Black Student Union, the judges, and contestants for putting on a wonderful show, and thank you to all who came out not just to support our winners but everyone. It definitely was a night full of talent.
Charles Darwin was born in Shrewsbury, England on Feb. 12, 1809, and died Apr. 19, 1882. He was known as a naturalist and geologist, but his most well known contribution to science was the study of evolution.

He was hired to sail on the HMS Beagle -- a ship that went on an around-the-world exploration from 1831-1836. More specifically, his job was to observe people, rocks, fossils, plants, and animals, and collect all the data he could and go back to England to report on what he had discovered.

He is best remembered as the first man who discovered and explored the Galapagos Islands to study and collect data of finches. Darwin’s discoveries helped shape science to what it is today.

Therefore, Prairie State thought it was fit to celebrate him and his studies.

On February 12, 2019, students and staff at Prairie State College honored Charles Darwin’s legacy in the Conference Center from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

There were scientific exhibits dating back to the Precambrian Period through the Cenozoic Era, each with displays of rocks and fossils.

Posters explained information from the eras, and there were activities that involved the scientific method and assigning organisms to their correct era.

For students taking science courses, it was helpful and interesting to see how the scientific method played a role in every scientific discovery.

Science professors from Prairie State were there to assist students and other observers to answer curious questions. In particular, Professor Burrough (Earth Science) insisted her students attend and complete a worksheet filled with questions about the earliest organisms and plants on Earth. There was a great turnout.

In the auditorium, speakers from the area came to express their knowledge and passion for science, many of whom were college professors; for example, there was a speaker from the University of Chicago. Along with the guest speakers, PSC professors from different departments gave talks and discussions, exercising their thoughts on science and evolution. Most of their talks revolved around Charles Darwin while others spoke of other scientists and their works. Each speaker talked for an hour, and the audience was able to ask questions during and after their presentations.

When all the presentations came to an end, the staff had one more surprise. What’s a birthday party without a cake? Birthday cake was served to all who attended to celebrate the birthday of Charles Darwin.
ILLINOIS - Carla Reynolds*

Solemnly remembers the day in court when she learned that her mother would be sentenced to prison for nonviolent offenses she had committed eight years prior to March of 2014. “I couldn’t believe that the judge sentenced her. My mom had never been in trouble. She was a professional and had transferred professional fields way before the Feds ever came to question her about business dealings she knew of in 2006. I thought for sure that she would get probation and be allowed to continue working because she was the sole provider for my brother and [me].

We read letters to the judge about my mom’s character before she was sentenced. I remember my brother and I begging the judge not to take our mom away. She did so anyway.” In the United States of America, there are approximately 2.7 million children, 1 in 15 Black, 1 in 41 Hispanic, and 1 in 110 white, with a parent behind bars.

Two-thirds of these children’s parents were incarcerated for nonviolent offenses. According to a report published by The Sentencing Project, today, people of color make up 67 percent of the prison population even though they only make up 37 percent of the U.S. population. Illinois ranks the ninth highest when comparing the racial disparity of blacks versus whites who are incarcerated.

Carla was a senior at Homewood-Flossmoor High School in Illinois when her mother was sentenced. Her younger brother was entering his freshman year of high school. She tearfully confided, “We were devastated. My mom was the center of our lives and really everyone in our family’s lives. Everyone contacted her for advice because she knows a little or a lot about a lot of things.

I remember my brother telling the judge if she took my mother away, it would be like taking a tire off a car that is driving on the highway. He was so right. The stress I was dealing with was so great, I came down with Bell’s Palsy. One half of my face was paralyzed for about two or three weeks. My brother stopped praying.”

The offender suffers the detrimental effects of incarceration that equally shouldered by their children and families. Ex-convicts who have completed their sentences face laws and punishments that follow them for decades after their official punishment ends, even as a first-time nonviolent offender. Finding employment, for example, can be quite difficult.

Incarceration allows a vast percentage of people of color to be locked out of mainstream society and the economy. Once convicted, discrimination can become legal. No law disallows a landlord to discriminate against a felon with a drug-related charge. Across 48 states, convicted felons are barred from voting for some time.

Even though we have laws strictly prohibiting discrimination based on race, we also have laws that make it
possible for people to be legally discriminated against based on record. For instance, if you have a felony drug conviction, you are not eligible to receive financial aid.

Although Carla’s father stepped in to assist in her mother’s absence, Carla felt an immense amount of pressure to maintain her enrollment in the nursing program at Prairie State and convert into a “mother” to her younger brother.

She stated, “It was the hardest thing I ever had to do. My mom had never missed the first day of school for us ever. The first day of my freshman year in college and my brother’s freshman year in high school were among the saddest we can remember. I failed miserably and could not maintain my spot in the nursing program. I was so lost.”

Carla was not alone in dealing with the devastating effects incarceration had on her family. According to a survey conducted in 2017 on the Prairie State community, many have firsthand experience with having either a nonviolent, immediate, or distant family member imprisoned.

Both pie charts demonstrate a narrative that remains consistent. Hispanics are convicted more than Caucasians. African Americans are convicted far more than Hispanics and much more prevalently than Caucasians. Local levels mirror what is captured at the state level.

Surprisingly, Carla shares the sentiment that people who commit a crime should be punished. However, she is hopeful that the law will be revised when punishing first time, nonviolent offenders with the opportunity to experience a measure of punishment while being a productive and contributing member of society and their families. As a result of her mom being incarcerated, her mom lost a job where she was earning a salary of over $80,000, their home went into foreclosure, and she and her brother suffered both emotionally and physically.

According to a study conducted by the Vera Institute of Justice, incarceration rates have no demonstrated effect on reducing crime and, in some instances, may increase crime. The compilation of criminal justice facts found at sentencingproject.org indicate that crime rates have declined substantially since the 1990s. “Because recidivism rates decline markedly with age, lengthy prison sentences, unless they specifically target very high rate or extremely dangerous offenders, are an inefficient approach to preventing crime by incapacitating.”

According to Families Against Mandatory Minimums, “Alternatives to incarceration can repair harms suffered by victims, provide benefits to the community, and rehabilitate offenders.” Based on research conducted by FAMM, alternatives to incarceration allow courts more sentencing options, save taxpayers money, strengthen families and communities, and reduce crime.

As a result, Carla is one of the eight in ten adults who believe that alternatives such as probation, restitution, community service, and/or rehabilitative services are the most appropriate sentence for nonviolent, non-serious offenders.
SINGLE PARENT DAY

PANEL DISCUSSION
March 21, 2019 | 10 a.m. - Noon
Main Campus | Board Room (room 2274 on the second floor)
Join us for panel discussion on single parenthood and learn about resources and support available in the community.

Guest Moderator: Minister Jelaine Bell -
Director of the “God See Me - Single Parenting Ministry.”
Victory Apostolic Church

RESOURCES. FOOD. RAFFLES. MORE.

The event is FREE and open to the public.
For more information, contact Tracy Jones at (708) 709-3594.