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SGA gears up, kicks off 2009-10

By **MICHAEL BROPHY**
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

This year the Student Government Association (SGA) covered what used to be an entire week-long, summertime orientation into one intense, nine-hour introduction on Sunday afternoon. The change was made because of last year's amendment to the SGA constitution moving dorm president elections to the fall. "I didn't know what to expect as a first year dorm president, and I had heard that the meetings sometimes get a little chaotic, but I thought Sunday went really well and set a great standard for how the rest of the year will hopefully go," Treworgy President Shreya Balakrishna '12 said.

SGA members began orientation at noon in the Millet House, learning and reviewing their general responsibilities—what their roles are as dorm/class presidents, what their roles are both in SGA and as leaders on campus—as well as more technical aspects of the job, like how to write and introduce a movement and proper meeting etiquette. Representatives then went through the Campus Culture Working Group (CCWG) report, held a mock meeting, and enjoyed a kickoff dinner.

The main event of the day, SGA's first formal meeting of the year, finally started at 7 p.m. in the Schair-Swenson-Watson Alumni Center (SSW Alumni Center). The hot topic of the meeting was, appropriately, one of the hottest topics among students on campus and on the digest of civil discourse this semester: the CCWG-proposed "ban" on hard alcohol and other changes to the alcohol policies.

The CCWG report was introduced by special guests Mavrick Afonso '11, a representative of the CCWG, and Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs Jim Terhune. Afonso gave a brief introduction of his role on CCWG as a student representative, a role in which he says, "we [students] were very vocal about every issue." An hour-long discussion ensued, in which Publicity Chair and acting scribe, Ricky Schwartz '11, typed over nine pages of notes.

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MILLER IN AUTUMN



Miller framed against a cloudy, October sky. With midterms on the horizon, students have been spending many afternoons and evenings of study there.

New state law targets distracted drivers to make Maine roads safer

By **ALEX MURRY**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Drivers beware: the carefree days of texting, talking, eating and reading at the wheel are over. As of September 12, Maine has joined the 21 other forward-moving states that have deemed some form of distracting driving illegal. What makes it different though, is that Maine, unlike the others, has not only set limits on cell phone use—the most commonly outlawed distraction—Maine has also included many other activities under the new law. Among them are watching TV or videos, brushing teeth and even curling one's hair. As the author of the law, Maine State Senator Bill Diamond told Capitol News Service, "We cannot focus on just cell phones, people are doing all sorts of things."

And, if you think that people eating entire meals and reading newspapers while on the highway are rare occurrences, think again. Diamond was reportedly prompted to enforce a distracted

driving law after witnessing someone going through turnpike toll booths and watching *Gilmore Girls* episodes on her laptop at the same time.

Similarly, Sergeant Jeff Bearce of the Waterville Police remembers once encountering "a young lady putting on eye makeup." Apparently, common sense is not as universal as one would think, as people seem to be taking everyday safety for granted.

As reported in *The Boston Globe*, Lieutenant Chris Grotton, one of the key developers of the law, said, "Roughly 12,000 crashes in Maine each year—about a third of the total crashes in the state—stem from some kind of driver distraction."

Cell phone use—texting, calling and, now, email-checking—is still the main culprit of this statistic, thus prompting California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Oregon and Washington to ban the use of hand-held mobile devices. No state has banned the use of phones completely, though, with most allowing hands-free



Texting while driving is now an illegal activity on Maine roads.

methods, such as Bluetooth or headsets. Eighteen other states, such as Alaska, California, Louisiana and Minnesota, have outlawed text messaging while driving. Few states, however, treat cell phone use as a part of a larger distracted driving issue like Maine does.

Now, if caught on the road

doing anything but concentrating on the task at hand—driving—Maine drivers are eligible for a fine of up to \$500.

So, play it safe. Maine legislature has decided to crack down on all forms of distracted driving, and will enforce the new law on any person they see multi-tasking in the driver's seat.

COLLEGE SERVICES

Students get help in job search

By **ANNA KELEMEN**
SENIOR NEWS AND FEATURES EDITOR

As September drew to a close last week, it brought with it noticeable changes on the Hill. Students walked more briskly to class and traded T-shirts for sweaters and sweatshirts. The leaves began to show their red and yellow hues more brilliantly and, as midterms began, the library cubicles filled with students and there was no longer any use in denying that the academic year was in full swing. However, some changes this fall were less visible. Unemployment across the country continued its relentless rise, further exacerbating a shift in the mentality of the senior class as students begin to make plans for next year.

As reported by *The Chicago Tribune*, the unemployment rate rose to 9.8 percent in September, marking a 26 year high. The number reflects a total net loss of 263,000 jobs over the course of the month, adding to concerns that the economy is not yet recovering from the recession. In addition to that number, millions of Americans were forced to work part-time due either to employers scaling back hours or to the lack of available full-time jobs.

Due to lasting effects of the recession, recent graduates and seniors preparing to enter the workforce are faced with a stark picture. Nevertheless, according to the Colby College Career Center, the difficult market is by no means a cause for despair. "The main message I would give to seniors is to stay aggressive," Roger Woolsey, director of the Colby Career Center, said. According to Woolsey, the difficult market does not mean that there are no jobs to be had, but it does mean that it takes more work to find employment. "Understand the market in relation to the work that needs to be done in a typical job search," he said.

The Career Center offers a variety of workshops exclusively for seniors ranging in topics from career exploration to resume building, and to the importance of pursuing advanced degrees in professional and graduate schools. They also offer a job fair and interviewing day as part of the Liberal Arts Recruiting Consortium

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TAKING TO THE AIR



Julia Essenburg '11 on her horse Africa (left) and Charlotte Olena '12 on Nick (right) ride at an Equestrian team fundraiser.

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