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FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

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GUEST EDITORIAL

SMALL SCHOOLS OFFER REAL HOPE FOR COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

By **DR. AUGUSTA SOUZA KAPPNER**

Not long ago, I traveled to Seattle to join a group of multicultural scholars and practitioners and the nation's leading small schools (K-12) scholars. We were meeting to discuss the potential benefits of small schools reform for minority communities. On at least one point we were unanimous: for urban centers and communities of color, most high schools are failing. The news out of our high schools is bleak:

- High dropout rates continue to plague communities of color.
- African-American and Latino students are retained (required to repeat a grade) at alarming rates.
- Students of color continue to trail their peers on achievement indicators.

Leaders, both within and outside minority communities, have been searching desperately for answers. But surprisingly—at least from my perspective—few have embraced a strategy that offers a tremendous amount of promise: small schools reform.

Small schools work. And they appear to work particularly well with disadvantaged students. Last year, Bank Street College of Education's study, *Small Schools: Great Strides*, chronicled the success of small schools reform in numerous Chicago public schools. The average school size nationwide is 741 students, and it is not uncommon for urban children to attend elementary schools with more than 1,000 students and high schools with 3,000 students. By contrast, small schools in the Bank Street study enrolled between 200 to 400 students. The difference between the small schools we examined and their larger counterparts was striking.

We found that smaller learning communities diminish school violence, raise academic engagement and performance, and increase attendance and graduation rates—the very issues with which minority communities across the nation are grappling. Our research affirms the mounting mass of evidence of those who have studied small schools over the past decade. Most promising, small schools reform works within a public school framework—an important fact for leaders of color given that approximately 95 percent of African American and 91 percent of Latino students currently attend public schools.

Why are there not more leaders from communities of color championing small schools efforts? Why do we allow communities to continue to build the sort of gigantic schools that breed alienation and low expectations? I believe that information about the value of small schools has simply not reached a broad enough audience. A just-released survey from

Public Agenda confirms that the majority of America's parents and teachers do not place school size high on their lists of educational concerns. Small school reformers are now recognizing the need to reach out to leaders in communities of color and welcome them into small schools efforts.

I recognize the honest concerns some have about small schools. Many fear small schools may be prohibitively expensive. Some others—many from African-American or other underserved communities—worry that overly sympathetic teachers in highly personalized learning environments, in recognizing the disadvantages faced by their students, may not hold students to sufficiently high standards of achievement.

The evidence gives us confidence that these concerns can be surmounted by a thoughtful, coherent and diligent approach to the creation of small schools. We have seen that small schools can be affordable for even the poorest communities. (Research by Fruchter, Stiefel et al. shows that the cost per graduate is actually lower in small schools than in large.) We have found that most small schools hold high expectations for their students. Small school populations, like large school populations, generally reflect the ethnic makeup of the communities they serve; where integration is the goal, small schools are often more likely to be able to achieve diverse populations. In systems that establish clear, progressive guidelines, small schools are actually less likely to be segregated than are larger schools.

Interestingly, some minority leaders have recently spoken out in favor of charter schools and voucher plans. Their explanation has been not so much an embrace of these strategies as a rejection of the status quo. The frustration they feel with the ongoing failure of our urban public schools to adequately serve students of color is certainly understandable. But what is needed now is not an abandonment of public schools but rather a commitment to establishing more effective—and smaller—learning communities.

Leaders of color should endorse the small schools movement within public school systems, because small schools offer the potential for quality education, provide educational opportunities, and foster academic and social success. Small schools may well provide an answer to much of what ails today's most difficult-to-reform educational systems. Consequently, now is the time for leaders of color to propel this movement forward. #

Dr. Augusta Souza Kappner has been president of Bank Street College in New York City since 1995, and was the assistant secretary for Vocational and Adult Education for the U.S. Department of Education from 1993 to 1995.

PRAYER FOR SEPTEMBER 11

By **LUCY FRIEDLAND**

Will the sun ever shine there again?
Will the sky ever be blue there again?
Will the grass ever grow green there again?
There where people worked with purpose—
Will laughter be heard there again?

The giant towers were the redwoods in the
forests of steel and glass
In the great city called New York.

They were the pride of those who built them,
Of those who worked there,
And of those who visited there.

Men built them,
Other men destroyed them.

Now there's talk of debris.
Hey! my brothers and sisters lie in that debris.
Move that debris ever so gently,
Aborted lives are to be discovered there,
This is the Pompeii of the 21st century.

We will never forget those heroes, these patriots,
Oh say can you see,
It's still the land of the free.

Lucy Friedland is a retired NYC high school teacher who is now living in Los Angeles.

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Special Approaches to Education: The Importance of Creative Arts

By MATILDA RAFFA CUOMO
and JENNIFER WARD



Mentoring USA recognizes that the value of dance, drama and the visual arts in these uncertain times are particularly crucial. Youth often do not know how to express their inner feelings and many

may not want to speak about their fears and anger. The arts can provide them a less-threatening outlet to communicate. Many volunteers have come forward to Mentoring USA to offer their talents at sites, working to provide youth and mentors alike with creative projects. Week after week we have seen these projects flourish and allow children moments of pride in their own work and opportunities to express, and talk about, what is troubling them.

As Howard Gardner taught us many years ago, there are multiple intelligences and therefore different ways of looking at and interpreting the world and of learning. Many youth find conventional classroom settings, with their emphasis on reading, writing and quiet learning, difficult environments. Special approaches to education, particularly those that rely on creative and often physical expression, are important to utilize and respect.

The arts in education should be encouraged and supported in all our public and private schools.

Here is one teacher-mentor's story of how yoga and dance led two young women to find pathways to success.

Alicia: She had ponytails in her hair, and a smile that was as bright as the sun. Born in Japan, she and her seven sisters were raised solely by their mother. When we met, she was in third grade. I was her yoga teacher. Alicia struggled with her math homework, hated science and history and had difficulty communicating. English was not her first language, and others thought of Alicia as shy and withdrawn, a loner. Yet, I could see that she wanted to communicate. It took about three months for us to become comfortable with each other; some days she would stay after class to talk about creativity and to show me her own yoga poses. Over time, I saw a shy little girl start to embrace her own individuality. She started to label qualities she previously viewed in herself as "faults" as "unique."

Alicia turned out not only to be a great student, but also a great teacher. She taught her poses to the

other children, all of whom admired her for her creativity and dedication. The changes spread. Alicia's grades began to improve, she raised her hand more in class, and she spoke up when she did not understand something. She found ways to use the arts to understand academics — creating dance rhythms to learn addition and solve mathematical problems and yoga poses to depict historic events and people. Alicia taught me the invaluable lesson of how expression through the arts can profoundly change a youth's sense of self and relation to formal schooling.

Vanessa: She was a high school sophomore, on probation because of low grades, and raising her own child. She took a dance class for "easy credit." But then she fell in love with dance. She brought her little girl to the classes and stayed after class to learn and perfect techniques. As her love of dance blossomed, her grades started to improve and she felt more confident asking for extra help when she needed it. In her junior year, Vanessa started to talk about college, a word that was not even part of her vocabulary a year earlier. We came up with a plan: to apply to the dance department at New York University. Together we wrote essays and choreographed audition pieces. Not only did Vanessa gain acceptance to New York University's Tisch School of the Arts but she received a partial scholarship as well. Vanessa's passion and persistence were born out of a love of dance but now underlie a broad and firm personal and academic base.

Sister Ona Bessette has written about "Dance as Healing Prayer," — "an invitation for a greater integration of the body and spirit in a moment of communication with the source of life and love... a medium of reflection that opens the soul to insight and strength." Particularly for troubled youth, we should remember the lessons that Alicia and Vanessa teach of the power of art and movement to lead a child back to the classroom as a reinvigorated learner.

Mentoring USA is reaching out to children early to prevent school dropout with an effective intervention strategy and one-on-one relationships. Resources such as books and art activities are valuable; however, what really matters to a child is the human touch of caring. This is irreplaceable and invaluable to any child.

Matilda Cuomo is the Founder and Chairperson of Mentoring USA. Jennifer Ward is a Program Manager at Mentoring USA. Previously, she was Dean of Dance at a public high school.

Teachers College Talks About Islam

By SYBIL MAIMIN

Following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it became clear that knowledge in our society about the world of Islam is skimpy, at best. To address this problem, Columbia's Teachers College drew upon several relevant departments in the university to present a one-day workshop for educators about the histories, cultures, and current status of Muslims in a wide range of countries. Discussion and an exchange of ideas about related curriculum development followed the presentations.

Muslims are as diverse as the countries they come from. States such as Nigeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, Sudan, and Iran have Muslim majorities. India, the United States, and France are nations with significant Muslim minorities. Several themes emerge as the end of the Cold War and globalization, which is seen as passing them by, affect the mood and outlook of many in the Muslim world. Feelings of hopelessness and defeat have often led, in both majority and minority com-

munities, to a reactive mentality that is phobic about modernity and focuses on roots and strict interpretation of doctrine.

The Muslim communities in a New York City Project in Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs reports that 600,000 Muslims reside in New York City. Of these, 42 percent are African-American, 24 percent South Asian, and 12 percent Arab. Thirty-seven nationalities are represented including 12 from Arab-speaking countries. New immigrants often compare New York City to the hajj, because like the pilgrimage to Mecca, many different groups of Muslims come together here. The city has 100 mosques, with most in Brooklyn and the Bronx, followed by Queens and Staten Island, but 95 percent of Muslims do not attend regularly.

It is no longer sufficient to just teach about the Five Pillars of Islam, agreed educators at the workshop. The curriculum must delve into history, culture, diversity, and living Islam. Concepts of imperialism, colonialism, nationalism and author-



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itarianism must be explored. Students must be helped to think critically about the all-important events taking place around them. They must consider whether one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist, the relativist approach, or whether there is such a thing as absolute evil.

Various organizations are developing materials to

help teachers cope with the attack and its aftermath. Columbia University's Eastern Europe, Russian, and Eurasian Resource Center is dedicated to teacher training and outreach. Op-ed pieces in newspapers such as *The New York Times* present differing views. And, Educators for Social Responsibility offers a range of aids and activities. #



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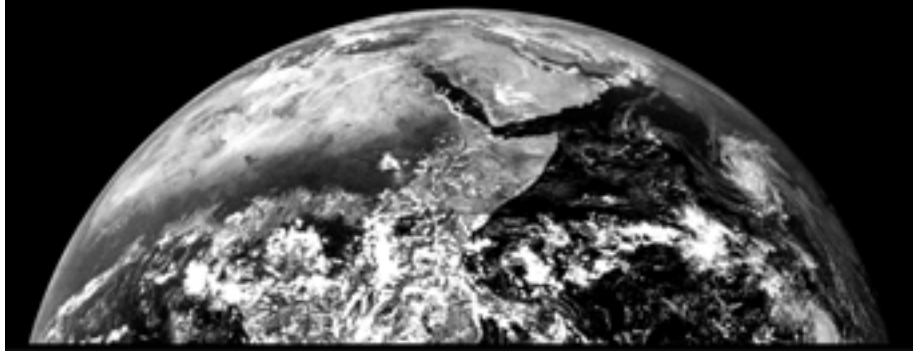


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Special Feature: Homeschooling *Homeschooling as Alternative to Classrooms*

By SARAH ELZAS

Is a classroom education essential to the educational and social development of a child? With teachers and legislators debating 'accountability', parents taking a closer look at school safety, and students exposed to ever-changing cultural and media influences, more and more parents and students are asking this question. Since John Holt started a school reform movement in the 1960s advocating homeschooling, increasing numbers of parents have looked to this option as a viable alternative to classroom settings, challenging traditional notions of how children learn.

Celine, 12, and Julian Joris, 13, are homeschooled by their parents in New York's Greenwich Village. But it is a wonder that they are ever home, with weekly Shakespeare rehearsals and sketching classes at the Met, various Tai-Chi classes, violin lessons and other activities. Yet neither has ever gone to school.

"I am not against school," says their mother, Françoise Joris, who was exposed to John Holt's ideas by her parents when she was in high school. "Great schools are wonderful," she says.

But unschooling her children was more appealing. Unschooling is a term that has been coined for a method of homeschooling in which the student's interest directs the course of study—a laissez-faire approach that, while it does not necessarily have to be unstructured, differs from other, curriculum-driven homeschooling methods.

"We don't have time to do all the things they want to do," explains Joris in mock-exasperation. Julian is currently writing a science fiction novel, a project that can take up to six hours a day. The challenge for the parent in homeschooling, says Joris, is that she needs to be one step ahead of her children, anticipating what they might be interested in next, so that she can frame a history, math or reading lesson around it.

Parents have always homeschooled their children, whether because there was not a school available, or because they wanted to ensure a certain kind of religious or moral education, or even because they felt they could do a better job. But since the 1970s, homeschoolers in New York and the rest of the country have increased rapidly.

The Joris family is part of the New York Home Educators Alliance, the secular homeschooling network for New York City. Françoise estimates that the Alliance encompasses over 200 families with about two students each. New York homeschoolers are required to register with the school district; however, many choose not to do so. It is therefore difficult to know exactly how many there are. Another organization, NYS Loving Education At Home (LEAH), the Christian network in New York State, has 150 local chapters serving over 3,700 families. Researchers have estimated that there are from 700,000 to 1.15 million homeschoolers nationwide.

The Jorises were drawn to homeschooling because they were worried about the increasing emphasis on testing in New York City public schools. Susan Madley and Jesse Phillips of Santa Monica, California, who homeschooled

each of their three children in their junior high school years, did so for a different reason. They moved from urban Santa Monica to a cabin in the northern California woods when their oldest son, Ben, was 11. Phillips says they "really didn't have any choice" but to homeschool him. Madley describes the experience as "everyone's Laura Ingalls Wilder dream," referring to the *Little House on the Prairie* books where the author recalls growing up on the Midwestern frontier in the 1870s and 1880s.

But even after they left the woods and moved back to Santa Monica, their daughter, Cory, and other son, Lincoln, both decided to homeschool their junior high school years, despite available schools. "One of the most powerful times a parent can homeschool their kids is in the junior high years," explains Madley who, along with Phillips, holds an education degree from University of California at Berkeley. The subject matter in junior high school will all be repeated later, she explains. "All you have to make sure is that they are reading, writing and doing math," which can be accomplished at home.

"This period of time is when a child is susceptible to moral education," continues Madley. Thus, history lessons can bring up ethical issues that may not be raised in a junior high school classroom. "I think Ben's love of history comes out of discussions with me," explains Phillips.

While their reasons for homeschooling are different, both families have the same attitude towards classroom-based schools: it is "a logistical nightmare" as Françoise puts it. Students really only need a few hours of "book learning" during the day, the rest of which should be devoted to play, says Madley. Yet, she says, "the most curious, alive and verbal kids are trapped in the classroom."

Robert Culpepper, a second year law student at the University of Mississippi who was homeschooled through junior and senior high school, agrees. "It seems kind of inefficient," he says of the traditional classroom education. Culpepper, like Jorises, was unschooled, but he took it a step farther. He spent most of his time on his own reading, relying on his interests to guide him—history, geography, and eventually, film. He describes his schooling as "pretty much hands off," although his parents were very interested in what he was reading and how he was doing.

Culpepper attributes the success of this method to his personality. His two younger siblings tried homeschooling as well, but found they could not stay focused. He admits that there were gaps in his education—science and Shakespeare, in particular—and he did feel unprepared for deadlines and writing papers when he got to Columbia University. But he also emphasizes that "I never got bored."

The library was Culpepper's biggest resource, as it has been for Viki Kurashige who has been homeschooling her two sons, Sotarou, 12, and Hanjirou, 9, since Sotarou was in kindergarten.

Continued on page 10

CALVERT SCHOOL OFFERS HOMESCHOOL FAMILIES TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

By Bob Graham, Manager of Publications, Calvert School

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Special Feature: Homeschooling

THE LEGALITY OF HOME EDUCATION

By MARTHA McCARTHY, Ph.D.

The number of parents deciding to educate their children at home has steadily increased since the 1980s. Recent estimates indicate that between 850,000 and 1.8 million children are being educated at home. Estimates vary because even though parents may be asked to register their homeschooled children with a state agency, this is difficult to monitor and enforce.

The most common reason for parents to educate their children at home is that they do not want their children exposed to content that conflicts with their religious beliefs, but some parents are dissatisfied with public school academic standards, fearful for their children's safety, or simply want to be more involved in their children's learning experiences. A few teach their children at home because of geographic isolation. The current availability of commercial materials over the Internet, especially Christian-based instructional packages, has made instruction easier to provide at home.

All states now allow home education, but some features have generated legal controversies. Most courts have upheld requirements that home instruction be substantially equivalent to public school offerings, but a few courts have found challenged "equivalency" requirements too vague to impose criminal liability on parents for noncompliance. Although the judiciary has recognized states' authority to regulate home schooling, the clear legislative trend is toward reducing curricular requirements and standards for home tutors. The Home School Legal Defense Association has reported that about three fifths of the states have eased restrictions on home education programs since the early 1980s when almost half of the states specified that home tutors had to be licensed. Now, no state requires home instruction to be provided by licensed teachers.

However, courts have upheld requirements that students educated at home be tested to ensure mastery of basic skills. Also, when homeschooled students attempt to enter the public school system, school personnel can test the students and use other assessment criteria for placement purposes. Several courts have ruled that parents who homeschool their children with disabilities cannot assert that the public school district must provide such children special education and related services at their homes.

One often thinks of homeschooling in connection with elementary grades, but some recent controversies have focused on the high school level. For example, some parents have requested that their homeschooled children be allowed to enroll in public schools for specific classes (e.g., band, laboratory sciences) and to participate in interscholastic athletics, other extracurricular activities, and statewide competitions. The legality of these practices varies across states, and the Supreme Court has not yet recognized that homeschoolers have a federal constitutional right to such dual enrollment or extracurricular participation.

State policy makers face difficult decisions in striking the appropriate balance between state interests in ensuring an educated citizenry and parental interests in directing the upbringing of their children. If homeschooling continues to become more popular, the state's regulatory role may come under increasing scrutiny. Some school voucher proposals being considered would allow public funds to flow to parents who educate their children at home. Although such initiatives have been rejected by voters in several states, if such a provision is enacted, the number of children being educated at home might increase dramatically. #

Martha McCarthy, Ph.D., is the Chancellor Professor, School of Education, Indiana Univ.

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HOME STUDY INTERNATIONAL 

The Makulu II crew and NYC students before the ship departed from the 79th St. Boat Basin.



The Makulu II: The Field Trip to End All Field Trips

By TOM KERTES

More than 600 students from 20 New York inner-city elementary classrooms are going to be fortunate enough this year to have the Reach the World Company reach the world for them.

Reach the World (RTW) sponsors the *Makulu II*, a rugged Nautor Swan ketch that just sailed from Manhattan's 79th Street Boat Basin for a 26-month voyage around the globe. Though the 43-foot boat appeared shockingly small in the vastness of the surrounding waters—and, for the launch, we're only talking about the Hudson River—it aims to accomplish a truly enormous task.

"I love history and always wanted to learn about it by sailing around the world," said RTW President Heather Halstead. "And since I graduated from Dartmouth—perhaps the most technologically advanced college in the country—I figured that by the use of technology and telecommunication tools aboard the boat, we could bring the entire world to children who otherwise would not have the opportunity to experience much of it outside of their immediate neighborhood."

Halstead feels that, given the current world situation, the mission of the *Makulu II* may be more essential than ever.

"In light of what we now face, there may be no more important long-term goals than to educate children about the cultures, environments, and traditions that populate our world. It's only through the teaching of tolerance and global understanding that we will prepare them for the heavy responsibilities they must bear in the future," she said.

"Students are confused and scared," said 23 year-old Captain Erin Myers. "It's important for them to understand that we're all part of a

global community."

Myers, Halstead's fellow Dartmouth graduate, is one of the five brand new crewmembers embarking on the boat's second global trip. It will cover 27,000 miles over three oceans and six seas, while making stops in 36 countries.

"This trip is much better organized," Halstead pointed out, "because we've learned from the experience of the first voyage." The crewmembers come from varied educational and academic backgrounds and are ready to put themselves and their skills to the test as field educators for hundreds of deserving children."

The ultra-committed crew, serving as adventurer-educators who will create a "virtual classroom" on the boat, is taking two years-plus to experience this "once in a lifetime" voyage. The youthful quintet—not one is over 28—will gather information en route and transmit it to students and teachers via the Internet and the project's website (www.reachtheworld.com). Students can transmit and receive messages within a weekly framework, as well as track the boat's progress on the RTW website. Reach the World will also provide special educational materials and create new projects as the voyage unfolds. Teachers can build lessons around the boat's voyages.

Famed broadcaster and RTW Advisory Board member, Walter Cronkite, was the Master of Ceremonies at the *Makulu II*'s wonderful bon voyage party. "The current world situation only proves that we need to know far more about people around the world than we do now," he said. "This wonderful educational adventure will accomplish this for thousands of schoolchildren."

"Fair winds and good going, *Makulu II*."#

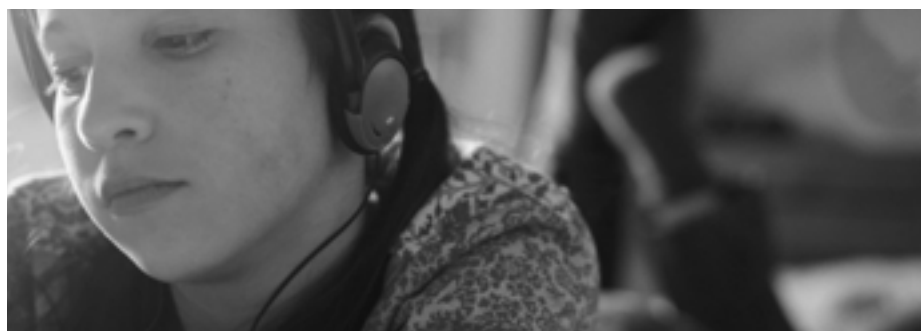
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After School Chess Games in Harlem

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

That's chess absorbing them after school at the Harlem Educational Activities Fund (HEAF) center on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard, but behind the plotting of moves on an eight by eight

is a rehearsal of general strategies of success for youngsters, primarily African-American and Dominican, from Harlem and Washington Heights. Through the HEAF chess programs these young people are taught that every act has consequences; that while minor errors might be overcome, some actions cannot be taken back; that learning involves pattern recognition, evaluating alternatives, considering short and long-range goals. Beyond that, they are exhorted to exercise a will to succeed, extend courtesy to others, value teammates, be respectful of opponents. "Chess is not the end but the means" is the mantra at HEAF, though no doubt when the kids hear it from none other than Maurice Ashley, the first Black International Chess Grandmaster who directs HEAF's chess initiatives at the Center and at Mott Hall at IS 223 in District 6 (where chess is part of the curriculum), they know this game's for real, "a metaphor for life." In the words of Daniel Rose, the indefatigable and passionately dedicated president of the Harlem Education Activities Fund, you can't get a better role model than Maurice Ashley.

Certainly, the affable, energetic, supremely articulate 35 year-old Brooklyn Tech graduate who went on to City College to study creative writing radiates a cool that comes from more than winning chess games. His confidence comes from being not only accomplished but happy. He truly enjoys what he does as chess director and wears his sense of mission with grace as well as enthusiasm. He lingers unobtrusively in a doorway, watching one of the teachers lead a class of boys and girls, a mix of grades four to eight. Black bishop's contemplating a move. Looks good, but down the line, could be threatening. How far down the line, how might a short-range advantage be a long-term mistake? What kinds of questions need to be asked, how imaginatively can the problem be framed? Almost unwittingly, he leans into the classroom, pleased with the analysis but wanting to hear more. "C'mon," he challenges one rapt nine-year old, chin in hands, who seems mesmerized by the play, "what else can happen?" She tells him. He beams.

Earlier, Ashley recalled the start of his own love affair with chess, a game he started playing casually in a local library but then felt the pull of the "mystery" of the game, the sense of its appeal to the imagination as well as its reliance on the protocol of play. He recalls a competition HEAF kids faced not too long ago with a team whose members had memorized opening gambits. As play began, HEAF was not doing well against its

well rehearsed opponents, but Ashley had faith in the larger game plan, considerations of the big picture and long-range strategies he'd been pushing. And sure enough, by midgame HEAF was ascendant. The Dark Knights have since gone on to win city, state, and national competitions against public and private schools.

At HEAF, incidentally, girls constitute approximately 50 percent of the after school chess classes. If the programs can sow good seeds, it is likely that the girls will continue to value intellectual achievement when they get into high school, but like so many, particularly those from broken homes, families where learning is not a tradition, and cultures that tend to undervalue the potential of women, girls can easily succumb to stereotype. As Rose, Welsh and Ashley reiterate, the Center is committed to turn out not so much good chess players as good students throughout high school who will be motivated to go on to college, even to graduate and professional school. It is significant that in the HEAF Annual Report the chess program is described in a section headed "Laying the Groundwork for College."

Dan Rose takes a visitor by the arm and commandeers a tour of the Center, pointing out inspirational sayings in the halls that he has personally selected for blowing up and framing. One wall is lined with tributes to the HEAF kids who have made it—a whopping success story that validates the Harlem Education Activities Fund mission statement to develop and sustain "attitudes and skills" in disadvantaged youngsters that will "enable them to lead satisfying and productive lives in mainstream American life." "So much of life is psychological," says Rose, but these children are capable in "both subtle and unsubtle ways" of changing their views of themselves. HEAF also invests in its young participants in ways that have in fiscal as well as educational payoff. As Rose notes, HEAF graduates are all gifted with three shares of stock—IBM, AT&T and Disney.

Among programs that resemble one another, HEAF stands out. As Courtney Welsh, HEAF's executive director points out, the HEAF success story of the last 10 years is due to an unprecedented amount of screening and close monitoring that concentrates on close involvement of parents in all HEAF efforts. And to an unusually active, professional top staff, who are smart as well as sensitive. #

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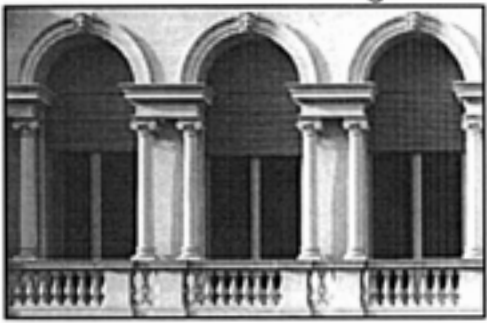
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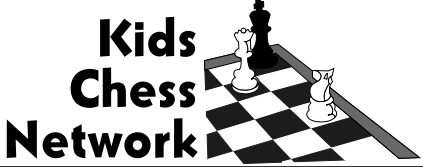
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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME, AT LEAST IN THE BEGINNING

Homeschooling reflects a parent's desire to take control of their child's education as opposed to a condemnation of traditional schooling. Homeschooling families have a broad range of philosophies concerning the contents and pace of education, the ideal "class size", as well as the teaching/learning methodology. All have one thing in common however, the desire to have their children educated, at least for some period of time, at home.

Utilizing home as the classroom has several benefits. Most importantly, a home provides children a secure and comfortable environment. With their inner security needs met, children are free to focus all of their attention and energies in the learning activity. This sense of security must also be maintained as a child begins the separation from mom. Over the years we have worked with more than one thousand preschoolers, many as young as 18 months, all within a home environment. Each child is different and develops a sense of security and comfort when mom is away in their own unique time. We have observed a natural progression where in the beginning a child functions best when mom actually participates in the class. Soon mom's role is relegated to a back of the room observer, then to a different room altogether, until finally her presence is not needed for the child to function confidently with our curriculum. The entire succession often takes only a few class meetings, however the long term benefits of letting it run its course are immeasurable.

In addition to providing much needed security for a child to function at a higher level, schooling at home has other benefits. When home serves as the classroom, education becomes part of life's daily routine and is not bounded by a class period or setting. I believe this provides a lifelong disposition to learning regardless of the physical surroundings, should they be a traditional classroom or not. For many parents this readiness to move beyond happens by preschool age while many home school parents believe it can be as late as the college years.

Debby Gibbs is a homeschooling mother of five and the founder of Homeschool Programs, a provider of preschool and learn to read classes. Their programs address the specific developmental requirements of early learners by providing an age appropriate curriculum that is developed and conducted for small groups. Their classes are conducted in homes to ensure a comfortable and secure environment that often serve as a gradual transition to a conventional classroom setting for their students.

THE BALL-STICK-BIRD PHONIC READING SYSTEM

The Ball-Stick-Bird phonic reading system, developed by psychologist Dr. Renee Fuller, derives its name from the way it teaches the alphabet. With Balls (circles), Sticks (lines), and Birds (angles), the student can make all the letters of the alphabet. But story reading does not wait for alphabet mastery. Already with the presentation of the fourth letter the hilarious adventures of Vad of Mars begin.

These adventures package principles from neuroscience and child psychology thereby greatly increasing learning ease, speed, and reading pleasure. Instead of senseless drill, the repeated phonic lessons are immediately utilized in another goofy science fiction adventure.

Immediate immersion into story reading allows for code approximation. The student is told the truth—the letters are a sloppy code. Therefore, "You are a detective and the letters are your clues. The only way you can be sure of the exact sound of a letter clue is to see if it makes a word that makes sense in the story," says Dr. Fuller, former chief of psychological services at Maryland's Rosewood Hospital Center. Her experimental program in applied and basic research on cognitive changes involving Ball-Stick-Bird intervention won her work Fairleigh Dickinson University's Distinguished Achievement Award.

Research has shown that with Ball-Stick-Bird there was no such thing as dyslexia or learning disability. Pre-schoolers and elementary students became avid readers with astonishing speed. Adults with a history of learning disability—and even the severely retarded—easily learned to read with comprehension. These data and the questions they raised about human intelligence were reported and discussed at several symposia on Ball-Stick-Bird, as well as during Continuing Education workshops and at Annual Meetings of the American Psychological Association.

The Ball-Stick-Bird successes, conflicting as they do with achievement expectations based on IQ and psychological evaluations, led to a new theory of cognitive organization. Called the story-as-the-gram theory of cognitive organization, this theory has fascinating implications for the wide-ranging potential of the human mind.

About Ball-Stick-Bird the Journal of Developmental Education said "Dr. Fuller provides us an unparalleled opportunity for a paradigm shift with potentially far-reaching consequences for education, not just in reading but in total intellectual development."

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Thinking of homeschooling, but don't know where to turn? Of the many choices available, you may want to consider Home Study International (HSI). HSI has the distinction of being the only accredited curriculum provider for kindergarten through college. Established in 1909, HSI provides an American education for any student anywhere in the world (hence the name). HSI's flexibility allows students to enroll for one course or an entire grade. Each course includes a minimum of a textbook and a guide that maps the textbook into daily assignments and then navigates the student through them. The elementary (K-6) guide is written for the parent who acts as the teacher. Standard curriculum is offered for the elementary grades. The junior high level (Grades 7 and 8) offers standard curriculum as well as Spanish and keyboarding.

High school courses include business, English, fine arts, health and home economics, history, foreign languages, math, science, and religion. HSI offers a state-approved high school diploma. HSI manages the distance learning programs of three colleges, making it possible to obtain a B.A. or a B.S. degree at home as well. Consider Home Study International, a good homeschooling option for the discerning parent.

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Holiday Events & Music in NYC



Radio City Christmas Spectacular, Nov. 1- Dec. 30

This long-running staple stars the world-famous Rockettes. Go and check it out for yourself. Playing at Radio City Music Hall (50th Street and Avenue of the Americas). For tickets, call (212) 307-1000 (\$3.50 surcharge per ticket).

George Balanchine's The Nutcracker, Nov. 23-Dec. 31

New York City Ballet does a fantastic *Nutcracker*. A favorite with New Yorkers, this show may sell out early. Playing at Lincoln Center (64th and Columbus). For tickets and information, call (212) 870-5570.

A Christmas Carol, Nov. 23-Dec. 29

Tim Curry stars as Scrooge in this holiday classic. Playing at the Theater at Madison Square Garden (7th Ave btwn 32nd & 33rd Streets). For tickets, call (212) 307-1000.

Scrimshaw Violin, Dec. 3 & 4

Bruce Salyor's musical work tells the story of a rabbi who takes a journey to Nantucket, where he meets a beautiful woman with a violin carved from whalebone.

92nd Street Y Tisch Center for the Arts; (212) 415-5500.

Kwanzaa Fest 2001, Dec. 7-9

Celebrate the African-American cultural holiday. Includes vendors, children's activities, art, dancing, concerts for all ages.

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center; (718) 585-3530.

Candlelight Tours, Dec. 8

One-hour guided tours begin with a Wassail Bowl reception at the Third County Courthouse and continue through historic buildings that are traditionally lit and decorated. Games, food and drink, and music. Historic Richmond Town; (718) 351-1611.

A Choristers' Christmas, Dec. 9, 3:00 pm.

The Cathedral Choristers present a holiday concert of Christmas songs and seasonal readings with special guest, television personality, John McDonough. Johnson Flucker, conductor. \$15.

For Tickets Contact the Cathedral Box Office (212) 662-2133 or CityTix (212) 581-1212

TubaChristmas, Dec. 9, 3:30pm

Holiday cheer with tubas. Rockefeller Plaza (50th Street and Fifth). For more information, call (914) 273-2254.

Continued on page 12

Workshops, Conferences and Events

OPEN HOUSES

Although it is not specifically requested by every school, readers are strongly advised to call schools to confirm dates and times and verify if appointments are needed.

Community School District 3:

Gifted & Talented Program,

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Dwight School,

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291 Central Park West, NYC.

Grades K-4: Dec. 4 and 11; Grades 5-8: Dec. 6; Grades 9-12:

Dec. 5. All open houses begin at 9 am and end at approximately 10:15 am.

Poly Prep Country Day School The Lower School,

(718) 768-1103;

50 Prospect Pk. West, Brooklyn

NY. Lower School: Weds., Dec. 5, and Feb. 6

from 9 am to 10:30 am.

Smith School:

(212) 879-6354

7 East 96th Street (between 5th & Madison Ave.),

NYC. Call for appointment.

York Preparatory School

40 West 68th Street

Thursday, December 4th, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

RSVP: (212) 362-0400 ext. 127

CONFERENCE

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Classroom Computing in Language Study;

December 8 and 9

Instructors: Mari Haas and Judith Cramer

Cognitive Therapy of Depression and Anxiety Disorders:

Earth 2 Class;

Fall: Dec. 8

Spring: Jan. 26, Feb. 9, March 9, April 13, May 11

Instructors: Michael Passow & Christiana Assumpcao

Playwriting Workshop: Trauma/Drama: Writing the Drama Narrative

December 17

Instructor: Cecilia Petit-Hall

School Violence Training

Sessions Available: December 7

Instructor: Erwin Flaxman

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Memory In Everyday Living, (1:30 pm - 3:00pm Est.)

Wednesday, December 5, 2001

Emotions & Epilepsy, (1:30 pm - 3:00pm Est.)

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Cognitive Skills - Use It Or Lose It, (1:30 pm - 3:00pm Est.)

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

CONCERTS

CHRISTMAS CONCERTS AT THE METROPOLITAN

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For tickets, call the Concerts & Lectures Department at 212-570-

3949. Updated schedules and programs are available at the

Museum's Web site, www.metmuseum.org.

Tuesday, December 18, at 6:30 & 8:30 p.m. -

Ensemble for Early Music - "A Baroque Christmas"

The Ensemble for Early Music, Frederick Renz, director, performs

"A Baroque Christmas" program of Scots carols, English ballads

with Christmas texts, ca. 1642, and German lieder settings.

Medieval Sculpture Hall. Tickets: \$50

Wednesday, December 19, at 6:30 & 8:30 p.m. -

The Aulos Ensemble - Christmas Concerts

The Aulos Ensemble is joined by countertenor Derek Lee Ragin

for a program of works by Bach, Vivaldi, Couperin, and Rameau

as well as Christmas carols.

Medieval Sculpture Hall. Tickets: \$50

Thursday, December 20, at 6:30 & 8:30 p.m. -

The Four Nations Ensemble - Christmas Concerts

The Four Nations Ensemble, with director and harpsichordist

Andrew Appel, violinists Ryan Brown and Claire Jolivet, violist

Peter Bucknell, cellist Loretta O'Sullivan, soprano Miriam Dubrow,

alto Barbara Hollinshead, and baritone David Newman, performs

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strings and harpsichord; Purcell's vocal quartets and trios; Byrd's

Mass for Four Parts and Agnus Dei; and works by Biber,

Couperin, and Merula. Medieval Sculpture Hall. Tickets: \$50



Voters Support Afterschool Programs

The results of a new public opinion survey, which was conducted recently for the Afterschool Alliance by Lake Snell Perry & Associates and The Tarrance Group, indicate that large, bipartisan majorities of American voters support expanding afterschool programs in their communities and around the nation.

Seven in 10 voters want afterschool programs to be available to all children even if it means increasing the current \$846 million federal appropriation by an additional \$800 million per year. That support crosses all lines: Republicans support the increase by a margin of 62 to 26; Democrats by a margin of 78 to 10; women by a margin of 2 to 17; men by 66 to

18; married voters by 70 to 16; and single voters by 71 to 15.

According to the poll, the fourth one in a series funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation and JCPenney, most voters are also willing to pay \$100 more per year in state taxes to make afterschool programs available.

The poll found that almost nine in ten voters (86 percent) agree that "there should be a national commitment to making sure every child has a space in an afterschool program." In addition, nearly three in five voters (58 percent) say they think the federal government is spending too little on afterschool programs, and 59 percent say their state governments are spending too little.

The Afterschool Alliance is a coalition of public, private and nonprofit entities dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to afterschool programs by 2010. Information on the Afterschool Alliance and the public opinion survey are available at www.afterschoolalliance.org. #

CAREERS: A WOMAN PILOT

By SARAH ELZAS

Devon Dunning is a pilot for Continental Express, a regional subsidiary of Continental Airlines. She flies small, 46-passenger ATR-42 airplanes in and out of Newark, NJ, four days a week.

Given the recent attacks in New York and Washington, DC, Dunning's job may seem terrifying. But, she seems to trust the new safety regulations.

"I look at it from a pretty logical point of view," she says. "I do believe that the security has been improved."

She will comply and trust any new Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) regulations, although she draws the line at pilots carrying guns.

"It seems like it may cause even more problems," she says. She is more worried about the industry, in particular, how smaller airlines will fare with drops in airline use.

That Dunning is thinking in economic terms is not surprising, as she never intended to become a pilot at all, but rather, go into business. Dunning holds a BA in finance from SUNY-Albany, and she started an internship at an investment company when she moved to Manhattan after graduation. However, things did not go as planned.

"About two months later, I was miserable," she says of starting her new job. She enjoyed neither the work nor the hours, and at 21 years old, she had to reevaluate what she wanted to do. While on an airplane going to visit a friend, she realized that she really enjoyed flying. Why not make it a career?

Dunning grew up with a father who flew a Skyhawk—a small, four-person airplane. She never thought about becoming a professional pilot, even while she was taking flying lessons during her summers in college. She recalls flying with her father at night as a

young girl.

I would always be baffled at how he could find his way home at night, she said.

Now, of course, after nearly three years of training and over 1,500 hours flying, she knows exactly how. In order to log the more than 1,500 hours of flying, Dunning, like many of her peers, received an instructor rating, which allowed her to teach flying, and thus pay for her flying hours as well. She joined Continental Express in January 2001 as a trainee, and in March she received her commercial rating.

"You have to go through the natural steps," she explains of the path towards becoming a pilot for a major airline, which she says is what she eventually wants to be doing. "I had a five-year plan that just turned into a seven-year plan," she explains.

When the economy is good and people are taking airplane trips, the industry tends to move pilots up the ranks quickly—in two or three years. However, these days, with confidence in the airlines waning, Dunning wonders how long it will take for her.

At 25 years old, Dunning may seem like a young pilot, but she says this is not unusual. "I have been running into many people my age," she says. As for being a woman in an industry that has, according to Dunning, 10 to 12 percent women, she has not felt it make a difference. "Everyone throughout my training has been professional," Dunning says.

She says, that it is her coworkers that makes the job worthwhile, and, of course, the landings. "It's the most thrilling part of the ride," she says. What is the worst part of the job? There isn't really one. When pressed, she says, "My biggest headache is when I am done with the trip and I have to drive home."#



Interested in International Adoption?

Infants and toddlers are available for adoption for singles and couples. Programs include children from China, Korea, Russia, Cambodia, the Ukraine and others. For more information call Lisa Doyle at 212-570-3793 daytimes. It's never too late to build a family.

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Study Abroad Options



COMPILED by MARIE HOLMES

Considering study abroad? More students than ever are taking advantage of the opportunities that study abroad offers. Whether your interest is language learning or service learning, there are hundreds of programs all over the world for you to choose from. If you are a student looking to receive college credit for courses taken abroad, the best place to begin your search is the study abroad office at your college or university.

These websites may also be useful:

- Institute for the International Education of Students: www.iesabroad.org
- College Consortium for International Studies: www.ccisabroad.org
- International Partnership for Service Learning: www.ipsl.org
- School for International Training: www.sit.edu
- Council on International Educational Exchange: www.ciee.org
- Cultural Experiences Abroad: www.gowithcea.com
- International Studies Abroad: www.studiesabroad.com
- Studyabroad.com: www.studyabroad.com

The following sites provide information about financing studies abroad. Again, you should first check with your home college or university. Many students are able to use grants and financial aid from their schools to help fund their studies abroad. If the study abroad program is officially approved by your school, you will also be eligible to receive federal aid.

- The Financial Aid Information Page: www.finaid.org
- National Security Education Program: www.ndu.edu/nsep
- University of Minnesota Online Study Abroad Directory: www.istc.umn.edu/OSAD/Scholarshipsearch.html

Homeschooling As An Alternative

continued from page 4

She uses a Waldorf curriculum, and is dependent on interlibrary loan to get the books she needs in rural Chattaham, NY.

Many battles between homeschooling parents and school districts have been fought in courts across the country since the 1970s, but now homeschooling is a legal and viable option in all 50 states, although regulations vary. In New York, a homeschooling family must register with the local school district and submit an annual notice of intent, a plan of instruction and four quarterly reports, all paperwork that many homeschooling families resent.

Often, homeschooling families feel at odds with school districts and legislatures because public schools see homeschoolers as lost revenue. "My own feeling is that nothing good for homeschoolers is likely to come out of the New York Legisla-

NEW YORK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WINS SUMMER IN LONDON

By MARIE HOLMES

Rachel Moran, a student at Pittsford Sutherland High School in Rochester, New York, has won first prize in InternationalEducationWeek.com's inaugural essay contest. Rachel's essay, "Sending Postcards Without Stamps," was chosen from among numerous submissions from high school and college students across the country. In her winning essay, Rachel describes her art history classes as "imaginary field trips" and explains that international education need not require costly trips around the world. "With the right education," she writes, "students will encounter far off lands from inside their schools."

Rachel's prize includes three weeks of summer study at Richmond—The American International University in London, including housing, meals, tuition and airfare, courtesy of the American Institute of Foreign Study (AIFS).

Rachel will soon join thousands of American students who study in the United Kingdom each year. Long the top destination, the U.K. hosted 29,289 American students during the 1999/00 academic year, more than double that of any other nation, according to the Open Doors 2001 report on study abroad. Other popular host countries include Spain, Italy, France, Mexico, Australia, Germany, Israel, Ireland, Costa Rica, China, Japan and Austria, almost all of which experienced an increase in U.S. enrollment over the past year. The number of international students who study in the U.S. also increased by over six percent, to 547,867. The majority of these students receive no U.S. funds to finance their studies, making higher education the country's fifth largest service sector export.

New York is a national leader in hosting

international students, second only to California. New York University boasts the largest foreign student enrollment for the fourth year in a row. Columbia University ranked third, after the University of Southern California. Leading places of origin for international students were China, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Canada, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey and Mexico.

This year's Open Doors report, released November 13 during International Education Week, also included a recent online survey

about study abroad in the aftermath of

September 11th. Ninety-seven percent of the 600 educators

who responded to the survey

reported that study abroad

was regarded as more

important or equally

important on their campuses

after September 11th, and that

few to none of the interna-

tional students on their

campuses had decided to

return home early in response

to concerns about security. The

majority (91 percent) of respondents

also reported that 90 percent or more of their U.S. students had made no changes in their plans to study abroad.

International Education Week, sponsored by the U.S. Departments of State and Education, was first established by the Clinton Administration in 2000. This year, StudyAbroad.com launched InternationalEducationWeek.com to promote the week's events. The essay contest was held in celebration of the site's launch.#



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ture," writes Mary O'Keefe in *Growing Without Schooling*, the newsletter about homeschooling founded by John Holt in 1977.

The majority of homeschooled students come from white, non-Hispanic, two-parent households, with one parent not working. This is according to a new study released by the US Department of Education. In New York, Françoise describes a spread of families in her organization— from single parents to two working parents.

While homeschooling families often share similar ideologies about education and ethics or towards school districts, the sheer number of homeschooling resources in books and on the web reveals that this is an option that can be approached in any possible way. How to homeschool is up to the families, but the ways and means are as varied as the people themselves.#

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Best Five Toys for the Holidays

By DR. TOY
(STEVANNE AUERBACH, Ph.D.)

Parents and teachers are always looking for the products that have enduring qualities, are reasonably priced, and help children to learn. These selections will provide children from preschool through older children with learning and fun, plus they will be used well into the new year. **Tips on Selecting toys:**

Finding the right toy starts with your child's interests and some research. Ask yourself: Is the product appropriate? Does it fit the child's age, skills and abilities? Is the product well-designed? Easy to use?

Is the product appealing to the child? Will it frustrate or challenge? Play is a perfect way to introduce reading. Use these suggestions and look for more guidance on our web site. Reading can be a natural part of the child's activities if you provide the tools the child needs for success.

1. Battat, Phone Station 3-5 yrs. (\$36.00) 800-822-8828

<http://www.battat-toys.com>

This is a unique new telephone that will thrill your youngster. Children enjoy conversations on phones and this one adds to the value of the play with on buttons with sounds, pre-recorded buttons for messages, and sounds that are realistic. Talking on the phone is a natural process to help them expand their communication skills. They will learn about 911 emergency number and also ways to answer the phone and expand their talking on the phone. There is a washable notepad built into this practical and clever new phone system.

2. Fisher-Price, Play With Letters Desk 3-7 yrs. (\$29.99) 800-432-5437

<http://www.fisher-price.com>

When a child rolls a letter on the desk, the desk magically knows which letter was rolled and rewards the child with a fun response. Children can see and hear the letters and also trace them with their fingers. By incorporating all the senses, sight, sound and touch, this learning toy teaches pre-reading skills including letter identification, word association, spelling, and more.

3. Folkmanis, My First Puppets Soft Book 6-36 mos. (\$35.00) 800-654-8922

<http://www.folkmanis.com>

This new soft book features four spreads each with a hand puppet and matching finger puppet. It emphasizes discovery tools such as color, texture, shape, movement, sounds and surprise to stimulate development. Puppets will bring joy to your child plus it will also help her/him learn the fun of reading. Use the colorful finger puppets while you talk and read along to your child.

4. Get Real Girl, Get Real Girl 6-12 yrs. (\$25.00) 866-474-4747.

<http://www.getrealgirl.com>

The Get Real Girl dolls are each unique for action and adventure. They provide girls with role models from everything from soccer, basketball to backpacker and surfer. The dolls help girls to be inspired and develop their own role model. They provide support for greater self-esteem and will help girls to imagine play and adventure. The dolls are diverse in ethnicity as well as in their interests and they each have unique aspects. They carry passport journals that give them a path to their adventures. The founder of the company, Julia Chavez,

continues on page 23



From the Superintendent's Seat A Feast Beyond Compare Focus on Special Education

By DR. CAROLE G. HANKIN
WITH RANDI T. SACHS

I attended a pre-Thanksgiving feast at one of our district's middle schools recently. This annual tradition has always been a special occasion, but this year's was truly outstanding. The food was delicious, but it was the smiles of the children there that warmed the room. The feast was put together by all of the middle school's students who utilize special education services. They prepared the food and the decorations, and many came in costumes. For some students special education may mean time spent with a resource room teacher; for others it may mean that many, some, or just one of their classes is taken with other students who have difficulty learning those specific subjects.

This year, we have a new program in middle school called the Life Skills Class. These students require more specialized instruction and a curriculum that is appropriate for their individual needs and abilities. All children participating in our special education programs are given many "mainstream" opportunities. All of our schools in Syosset plan a significant amount of school-wide programs, such as concerts, science fairs, plays, guest speakers, dance programs, and more, which all students attend together.

Special education teachers, regular education teachers, and related service providers collaborate to provide the support a student may need to participate in a mainstream class. When it is determined that several students need more individualized attention and smaller classes to succeed, the teachers work together to make sure

the curriculum mirrors what is taught in the larger classes.

We believe that every child is entitled to an education that enables him or her to learn all that he or she is capable of. The services we provide our students may adapt the methods they use to learn, but for all who are able, the quality and breadth of the subject matter need not be compromised, particularly as the student's learning abilities progress. In fact, almost all of our students do graduate with a regular academic diploma and a plan to continue their education in college or another post-secondary program. Many students who utilize services have abilities and disabilities that cover quite a wide range. But what is most important is that we recognize that every child with or without disabilities also has abilities—and nurturing these abilities is what education is all about.

On the other end of the spectrum of special education is what is often referred to as gifted education. In Syosset, our gifted students in the elementary schools participate in a special program we call Project Beyond. However, because we have found that the teaching methods used in this program are so beneficial to our students, we have expanded our enrichment education to include a program called Talents Unlimited, which is provided to every single child in every class—and that includes our self-contained special education classes. Each week the school's enrichment teacher brings a new lesson to each class that centers around developing one's talents. It has proven to be a favorite lesson for children and teachers alike.#

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Holiday Events & Music in New York

continued from page 8

Holiday on the Hudson, Dec. 14

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Paul Winter's Annual Winter Solstice Celebration, Dec. 13,14, at 7:30pm; Dec. 15, at 2 PM & 7:30 PM

Featuring the Paul Winter Consort and guest artists Valerie Dee Naranjo Arto Tunçboyacıyan and Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Ensemble \$65 reserved; \$39, \$29

general admission.

For Tickets Contact the Cathedral Box Office 212 662-2133 or CityTix 212 581-1212. Click here to purchase tickets through CityTix.

Holiday Brass, Dec. 16 at 3pm

Join members of the Principal Brass Quintet from The New York Philharmonic and the Canadian Brass for carols and classics. Playing at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center (64th and Columbus). For tickets and information, call (212) 721-6500.

Handel's Messiah, Dec. 19 at 8pm

Enchant your spirit with New York's favorite

holiday tradition. The Oratorio Society began this festive annual tradition on Christmas night 1874, and has continued this tradition for 127 years. Playing at Carnegie Hall. For tickets and information call (212) 228-5307.

Kwanzaa Celebration: The Language of Music, Dec. 28, 3:30-5pm

The holidays are a time for seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Join us for an afternoon of music and singing as we celebrate Kwanzaa together. At the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center (5th Ave and 110th St). Call (212) 860-1370 for more information.

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The Maestro & the Little Orchestra – Dino Anagnost in Top Form

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

It's as difficult for organizations as it is for individuals to think business as usual after September 11th, but the fact is that everyone has been adversely affected by the tragedy and by the continuing terrorism that has made New York City for some a place of fear. More than most organization heads, however, Dr. Dino Anagnost, Music Director of the Little Orchestra Society, knows he is in a prime position to make a difference, for if music cannot soothe the savage breast, as the expression goes, nothing can. "Now more than ever," he says, people need music, none more so than the young. The Maestro is passionately serious about how art can educate minds and move souls. If there are some school districts that have temporarily cancelled field trips, afraid of bridges and tunnels, and teachers who will not be taking classes to Lincoln Center, well, then, the Maestro is poised to take more performers and performances to the schools, which he does anyway.

His dedication is palpable and infectious. A

man of expansive manner, an enthusiast who seems never to have lost a childlike sense of discovery and wonder, the Maestro clearly loves what he does. And what he does ranges over an incredible array of interactive music education programs for children and adults. Since commitments are set a year in advance, nothing is being changed because of September 11th, he notes, except perhaps his deepening sense of music as therapy for the "emotionally devastated," such as the "kids downtown, who have heard the constant sounds of emergency vehicles." An Anagnost favorite, Victor Herbert's *Babes in Toyland* is obviously going to be playing to babes no longer innocent. To be sure, however, music for the Maestro is essentially neither therapy nor consolation but joy. If music instruction is not fun, he says, his blue eyes beaming wide with playful conviction, it's not worth the investment. Watching him punctuate the air as he conducts his conversation, one is reminded of that other joyful music communicator, Leonard Bernstein whom he knew.

Artistic head as well as Conductor of The Little Orchestra Society, the dynamic director is also Dean of Music at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral of North and South America and a faculty member at Teachers College, Columbia University, not to mention being the recipient of numerous international honors from governments, universities, and professional and civic associations. With all that involvement he continues to be personally instrumental in all the programs under his wing, especially ensuring that children's programs are not redesigned or watered down courses for adults. He and his staff work closely with teachers in the schools on age-appropriate curricula, and if numbers count as evaluation, the programs have been marvelously successful, with waiting lists to get in. Parents accompanying their youngsters usually wind up gleefully wailing, "Why didn't I have this as a child!" and then sign up for Maestro's classes for adults – "Vivaldi's Venice" and "Sound Discoveries," both longtime favorites that are given at Lincoln Center.

Although the programs are many and diverse, it is the Lollipop series that particularly claims the Maestro's heart because working with 3-5 year olds can have immediate and significant influence. Helping children learn how to listen is an incredibly important skill that goes way beyond music education, he points out. And encouraging them to hear rhythms, recognize passages and delight in classical sounds cannot be done by watching TV. Interactivity is essential. Hand in air, like a baton, he coaxes a telling figure out of his memory bank: one district in Harlem with 15 years associating with the Little Orchestra Society wants to expand, heartened by the fact that its participating K-6 group tested higher on standardized exams. Typical? Who knows, except that listening skills are obviously transferable and the earlier they are inculcated, the better.

A new program in the Lollipop concert series particularly delights the Maestro – the Kitchen percussion group, he calls it, and indeed the idea seems wonderfully imaginative – a competition between a regular general kitchen and one where lids and pots and pans are noticed for their pitch. The Maestro suddenly shifts keys to extol Mozart for eight-year olds in the "Happy Concerts for Young People," a series for ages 6-12, where he gets kids to create a



Dino Anagnost with a joyful child attending the Lollipops Concert.

score with the audience. Then there is Mozart the child, who greets youngsters in his own period clothes, writing music (in German of course), but very fast to show how quickly he composed! And isn't that 11-year-old sitting at the piano Mozart's sister? And, lo, Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn appear, giving off some subtle resonance about the role of women in the music world then.

Many Little Orchestra activities take place at Alice Tully Hall and are for adults, including programs to introduce audiences to neglected works and composers. A special desire is to generate appreciation of 20th century American music and he does so by exploring the genre most people know – movies. With scores from the likes of Korngold, Shostakovich, Copland, Virgil Thompson, Bernstein, Villa Lobos, Bernard Herrmann (who did the music for *Citizen Kane*). And so it goes, with a good admixture of cultural and personal lore that helps bring modern music into the entertainment mainstream.

The 60-member Little Orchestra Society, founded in 1947 by Thomas Scherman, has been directed by Dino Anagnost since 1979. Concerts and outreach activities extend from October through June and cover close to 20 different kinds of programs, including Cathedral Concerts and Lollipops in New Jersey, and Project 65 for seniors. The underserved could not be better served . . . and at reasonable prices. For further information about The Little Orchestra Society call (212) 971-9500.#

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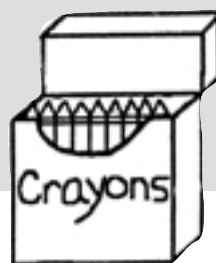
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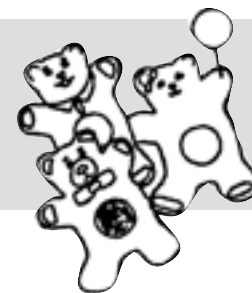
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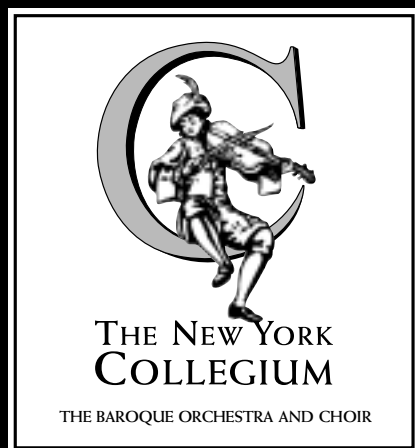
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MEDICAL UPDATE



New York City • DECEMBER 2001
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

• 15

Sloan-Kettering Researcher Makes Difference in Lives of Three HS Students

By MARYLENA MANTAS

Last winter Dr. Sat Bhattacharya, a research scientist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, ventured into inner-city, public high schools searching for students who possessed a certain motivation and something that he calls “the initial spark.”

“I wanted to influence more minds,” he said. “I wanted to go below the university level and get students interested and motivated in science.”

He found one of them at the Frederick Douglas Academy in Harlem and two at the Union Hill High School in New Jersey. The students—Tray Vone Anderson, a senior at the Frederick Douglas Academy, Rina Shah a junior and Paulo Lizano, a senior at Union Hill HS—spent the summer of 2001 at Sloan-Kettering conducting research in the molecular detection of circulating cancer cells in blood and bone marrow in various types of cancer, including breast, prostate, melanoma, lung and thyroid cancer.

The knowledge they acquired during the internship, which was funded by a grant from the American Chemical Society’s project SEED (Summer Experience for Economically Disadvantaged Students), was put to the test at the National Poster Presentation sponsored by the New Jersey Chemical Society, last September.

The student rose to the occasion and excelled, as Lizano came in first place and Shah second out of the 140 students that presented. The high caliber of their work was also acknowledged when Lizano and Anderson were among the 10 students from the Metropolitan area selected to present at the National Convention of the American Chemical Society held in Chicago last summer.

“Their presentation and the research were considered among the best of the best nation-

ally,” said Dr. Bhattacharya. “I am proud of my students.”

The awards and honors, came after three months of challenging work, as the students spent long hours in the lab, attended seminars, and wrote papers. Yet, hard work did not intimidate these students, whose acute spirit of teamwork and determination is evident.



Dr. Bhattacharya, his students, and other researchers in their lab at Sloan-Kettering.

“The internship gave me a chance to work in the lab and experience the field,” said Shah. “All students don’t get this type of an opportunity. It was a lot of work. But, I’m glad I took the opportunity. It gave me hands-on experience. That’s how you learn best.”

These days, the students laugh when they recall their first days at the lab and their initial feelings of fear of making a mistake.

“The first day, I felt that I had two shadows watching me,” said Anderson, who is interested in computer science. “If I had a computer science internship the worse thing that could have happened would be for my program to fail. Our work here was crucial in detecting cancer. We were doing real work and working

with real blood.”

Lizano who was interested in medicine and engineering was looking for a summer internship that would help him decide what career path to follow.

“It was a great opportunity and exactly what I was looking for,” he said, adding that the internship allowed him to realize that he wants to stay in the field of medicine. “I did not know the specifics. The micro level.”

According to Dr. Bhattacharya, the students worked with cutting edge, patented technology. They were joined by a graduate student and were in daily interaction with other researchers.

“No one made us feel that we were two inches long. They took the time to help us,” said Shah. “The environment was great. I was surrounded by people in a career that I am thinking about pursuing. It encouraged me.”

Yet, the students indicated that the major source of encouragement and motivation came from Dr. Bhattacharya.

“Dr. Sat has been my first mentor,” said Anderson. “I am thankful this been so good. He had a personal way of explaining concepts. We need more teachers like that.”

Very often, mentoring transcended lab related material. “Dr. Sat was the best. I had conversations with him about things not related to the research. Career options, schools,” said Lizano. “He made me feel that he is the kind of person that I can come and talk to. I never had that with anyone else.”

Hoping to expand the program and reach out to more students, Dr. Bhattacharya has been working with the Board of Education. He plans to bring individuals whose work is related to science into the schools to give presentations and attract students to work with them on year-

long internships.

That, as he explained constitutes the short-term goal. The long term goal? To get the neighborhoods from which the students come from involved in the project.

“In order for the impact to be really tangible it has to spill over to the community,” he said.

For now, Dr. Bhattacharya continues to motive and inspire his own three students.

“If there is the best you have to be better than that,” he tells them. “Enough is not enough. You always have to move forward.”#

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Special Education Resources on the Internet

COMPILIED By M.C. COHEN

With the countless number of websites devoted to children with special needs, the following are helpful sites in searching the web.

- <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/IDEA25th/>
Website for Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.
- <http://www.ideapractices.orgite/tour.htm>

U.S. Department of Education website devoted to the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA.

- <http://www.nycenet.edu/>
NYC Board of Education website.
- <http://www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.html>
A collection of Internet accessible information resources.
- <http://www.nysed.gov>

The New York State Education Department website.

- <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/specialed>

Special education resources from the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia.#

UNDERSTANDING APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

By George Linke, Psy.D. and Stephen C. Luce, Ph.D.
Melmark, Inc.

Parents and professionals alike frequently approach us with questions about Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). What exactly is this model, and why is it so popular? What impact can it hold for educating school-aged children with special needs? We provide this article for readers interested in the parameters and methods that make up ABA. Future articles will offer a more thorough explanation of this outcome-driven model.

ABA is not a new methodology. Beginning in the early 1960's, scientists very carefully examined different ways to teach new skills to various populations. We base today's projects on thousands of books, articles and teaching materials that used scientific methods to improve teaching techniques and better understand individual children.

ABA is not, in itself, an intervention; it is a very precise tool that measures the effectiveness of teaching methods. The model helps us understand behaviors individuals engage in each day. And it proves especially useful in discovering and refining effective strategies for specific children, especially those with disabilities. As teachers, we use what we learn to ensure that students experience positive consequences whenever they learn, because people tend to repeat behaviors that are rewarded in some way. Of course, what some find rewarding, others do not. Thus we need to carefully assess what motivates someone and ask how we can increase his or her learning opportunities. We can take advantage of multiple opportunities that occur each day, especially those that occur naturally. Most important, after learning what procedure most effectively teaches a new skill, we can use that approach throughout a child's day to help him or her acquire other new skills.

Children with special needs often miss daily learning opportunities that benefit typical children. For example, the hustle and bustle that occurs in a household provides many chances to learn a new skill by watching someone else perform it, but only if a child can attend to the task and understand how it is accomplished. Applied Behavior Analysis can help us find ways for all children to learn throughout the day, in schools and homes as well as other parts of the community.

Programs across the country very successfully integrate ABA into the daily routines of their students. Typically, the goals outlined in a child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an adult's Individualized Program Plan (IPP) guide day-to-day service provision. The ABA model therefore helps select effective procedures for teaching someone with special needs and assists in quantifying progress towards goals and objectives.

Everyone in contact with each student must use similar methods—an absolute essential when teaching skills to individuals with special needs. We accomplish this level of consistency only through extensive communication and training. For example, in a school setting, ensuring consistency involves sharing specific methods and goals for each child with all staff, parents, siblings, and guardians working with the child. At Melmark, many of our children live with us, so the number of people who interact with each child can be quite high. Therefore, we set up systems to share information with everyone from classroom teachers and assistants to program managers, residential counselors, residential teachers and, of course, families or guardians. Student progress requires working together.

In future articles we will provide you with additional information about the use of Applied Behavior Analysis with school-aged children in special education settings. Some information about the use of these methods in clinical and educational settings can be found at <http://www.behavior.org>. For more information about Melmark's programs, please visit <http://www.melmark.org>.

Stephen C. Luce, Ph.D. is Vice President for Clinical Programs, Training and Research for Melmark, Inc.

George P. Linke, Psy. D. is the Senior Executive Director of Programs and Operations for Melmark, Inc. Melmark is a day and residential program for children and adults with developmental disabilities in Berwyn Pennsylvania just outside of Philadelphia.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Many children have learning disabilities that go undetected. A "learning disability" is broadly defined as a disorder that affects a child's ability to either interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain. These difficulties can show up in many ways, such as with problems with attention and concentration, spoken or written language, self-control and self-monitoring, or motor coordination. In addition to making school and academic work difficult, a learning disability can frustrate an otherwise bright child, and lead to behavioral problems and a decline in an academic performance generally. Further complications can occur when a child has a concurrent condition, such as Attention-deficit/Hyperactivity disorder, or even be "gifted," with a superior level of general intellectual functioning. A comprehensive neuropsychological evaluation is an essential first step in clarifying a child's cognitive strengths and weaknesses, to allow appropriate treatment. Options for help include cognitive remediation, individual therapy and behavior management, and family education and support.

Gabriela Hohn, Ph.D., NYS Licensed Psychologist, Adjunct Associate Professor, Long Island University-Brooklyn, (212) 691-0291, geh6@columbia.edu, 153 Waverly Place, NYC 10014, <http://G.E.Hohn,PhD.att.home.net>

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The A.D.D. Resource Center takes a practical and positive approach towards remediating the difficulties of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD) and related neurobiological problems. The Center was founded in 1993 by Harold "Hal" Meyer and Susan Lasky Meyer, as a resource providing strategies and solutions for challenges related to this hidden disability.

The Parenting Skills Program provides practical training and emotional support for parents and caregivers of children aged 3 to 12 years old. Dr. Norma Doft teaches her proven system for successful management of difficult behaviors, using specific tools and techniques that will enable parents to minimize family power struggles, better understand their child's wiring and work *with* their differences.

Building Social Skills, for children 7-12, is both educational and fun. In small groups (by age and ability) children develop awareness of appropriate behavior and practice positive social and communications skills.

Study and Organizational Skills for older teens and young adults provides strategies to better manage homework, school papers and projects. Emphasis is placed on how to organize, prioritize, and approach multiple assignments, including techniques for time management, study and research, with the goal of completing projects on time, with less stress.

Coaching for adults is a pragmatic and results-oriented approach to coping with challenges. Coaching helps individuals to develop a realistic understanding of their difficulties and how AD/HD affects their lives, careers and relationships. The ADDRC Coach provides support, motivation and practical strategies to successfully compensate for problems in such areas as: personal productivity, prioritization, time and project management, organization, medication management, career and family-related issues, etc.

Organization for Home or Office is a service that helps individuals and small businesses to increase productivity, comfort-level and available space by reducing clutter and paper-overload, establishing "do-able" systems for filing, storage, work-in-progress, etc.

The A.D.D. Resource Center also provides consultation, advocacy and case management services. Programs are available for individuals, groups, corporations, schools and organizations. Fees vary by program.

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Regent Tisch Speaks on Special Ed

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Regent Merryl Tisch is on target and concise. As Chair of the Board of Regents Committee on Vocational and Education Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), her area of expertise is special education, a hotbed of controversy among politicians, educators, and parent groups. In a recent interview she expanded on the historical background of the problems in special education, the variety of solutions and the future for children.

Seven to eight years ago, New York State started the movement toward standards. It was decided that special education students would be included. The *raison d'être*, according to Regent Tisch, was that many special education students were in isolated or restrictive settings. With a wide range of needs, it was considered especially important that these students have as many opportunities available as possible. When special needs advocates vociferously insisted that passing regents exams would doom children to failure, a safety net was created. The students having difficulty could take a modified Regents Competency Test.

Additional problems facing special education is the shortage of certified teachers trained in

the curriculum and the transitional services that move children from school out into life in the community. These services should start at middle school instead of at the end of high school, emphasized Tisch.

Tisch underscored that as special education students progress successfully through the system, we must ensure that higher education is available.

How does the Board of Regents accomplish its goals? Tisch explained how a task force comprised of all the players had just finished coming up with recommendations for higher education. To ensure implementation, the chancellors of CUNY and SUNY and NYS Commissioner of Education Richard Mills were on the committee. Conversations with all involved individuals included legislators; school visits were also included before decisions were made.

Even when the budget is cut, as it was recently, "the greater issue is how to best use the resources you have," said Tisch.

"We need a community focus on special education needs. Our policies should be less law driven and focused on academic outcomes in a safe environment that provide for the emotional well-being of our children." #

BOARD OF EDUCATION'S ROLE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

An interview with Frances Goldstein, the Chief Executive of the Office of School Programs and Support Services, yielded some interesting facts about special education in New York City: there are about 140,000 children receiving special education services. Among the problems facing special education today are over-referral and over-classification of youngsters. To combat these problems, there is a new continuum of services—from the least restrictive to the most—along with efforts to implement the "least restrictive requirement" mandated by the government.

According to Ms. Goldstein, the direction we are heading toward is to provide inclusion and to provide general education wherever possible with appropriate support services. The trend is away from labeling children.

What is the difference between mainstreaming and inclusion, parents might ask. Ms. Goldstein explained that inclusion combines general and special education instruction throughout the day. Mainstreaming only refers to those few non-academic subjects in which special educa-

tion students can have contact with regular students, for example, in lunch or music. The remainder of the day is spent in special education classes.

Changes in educational programming must be done with parental consent.

The Committee on Special Education (CSE) is located in each school district, usually in the superintendent's office for elementary students while for high school students, a CSE is located in each high school. These Committees evaluate and make recommendations for placement. If a parent is dissatisfied, he/she has a right to have a hearing administered by an impartial hearing officer (trained by the state) who reports findings to the Board of Education as well as the family. If the family is dissatisfied with the hearing, recourse to the courts is available.

If parents can show unequivocally that the local public education is not the most appropriate one for their child, they can choose a private school and the tuition (often \$25,000 per year) is paid by the NYC Board of Education to the private school.#

STERLING SCHOOL CELEBRATES THREE YEARS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

By TOM KERTES

Just three short years ago, the borough of Brooklyn did not have a single school specifically aimed at helping dyslexic children. Now there is the Sterling School which started with three students in 1999. Now 24 happy children populate the Pacific Street building.

Has the Sterling School been a resounding

success? Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden certainly thought so as he presented Founder Ruth Arberman with a special proclamation, declaring Monday, November 19th 2001 Sterling School Third Anniversary Day. "These are wonderful kids here who will grow up to do some fabulously important things," Golden smiled as the two dozen 2-6 graders

were happily milling around him shouting things like "Mr. Golden, I want to be a doctor!" "I want to be a chef!"

"But I don't think they could have reached their full potential without Ms. Arberman and her staff," Golden said.

"I'm proud to say that we indeed have a unique place here," Ms. Arberman said after receiving her award. "While I was working as a Learning Disabilities Specialist for 25 years, I became increasingly aware that there was a need for helping dyslexic children. That was not being filled by the public schools who simply didn't have the funding or the staff. The private schools could not, as they were dealing with all kinds of different learning disabilities, mixing them into one pot."

"And the truth is, when you try to help kids with all kinds of different disabilities at the same time, you pretty much end up helping no one," added Arberman. "Dyslexia is a very specific condition, one that needs specialized, and intensely individualized, treatment by experienced professionals."

Sterling uses the research-based, and highly lauded, Orton-Gillingham methodology, designed specifically for dyslexic children. It has classes no larger than eight, with a staff-to-student ratio close to 2-1, as "individualized attention is a must," according to Ms. Arberman. "We individually design each student's program to follow a careful assessment of his or her processing strengths and weaknesses, specific language skill deficits, and learning styles." All instruction is multi-sensory and aimed to impact upon the students' dyslexia-induced self-esteem and confidence issues as

well.

"As a rule, dyslexics tend to be extremely bright children," Arberman said. "So, due to their disability, school becomes that much more frustrating for them. Thus we go way beyond just teaching reading and learning skills. We want children to become lovers of learning by stimulating their imagination and have them experience a large measure of success."

"Most important, we refuse to lower the level of teaching to the kids' level of reading," added Arberman. "Instead we use a multi-sensory approach in order to follow a rigorous curriculum that easily reaches, indeed surpasses, required mainstream standards."

Sterling costs \$20,000 a year, but "half of it is reimbursable by the State if you seek 'Carter' funding," Arberman said. "But, beyond that, most parents tell us that they save so much money on therapists, psychiatrists etc. by having their child with us that, in the end, they actually end up financially ahead." #



Sterling School students with Ruth Arberman

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THE FUTURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

By M.C. COHEN AND MIKE SALEK

From a political or academic perspective, special education is a complex topic to be discussed and debated. For millions of students and their families it is a harsh daily reality filled with frustrations and difficulties.

"My daughter and I are involved in an endless routine of tests, meetings, and school placements; it's really a horror show," said a mother of a special education student. "She still doesn't have a school that she can call home."

It is now almost 30 years since PL 94-142, the landmark legislation of 1975 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act) was enacted to prevent the exclusion of children with disabilities from schools and to ensure that they received a free, appropriate, and individualized education. Now, special education is changing. It is in the hands of politicians who are debating its future. Having undergone several revisions since 1975, at this time the Bush administration has appointed a 16 member commission to recommend changes to PL 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, better known as IDEA (the "great grand child" of PL 94-142). The committee is expected to detail their findings in the spring of 2002.

The President is urging congressional leaders to answer an ominous question: Why is 40 percent of the education budget spent on 11 percent of all students, those in special education?

"The IDEA has yet to fulfill its promise," said Education Secretary Roderick R. Paige in a testimony before the House Education and Workforce Committee on Oct. 4. "The doors are open, but the system still denies too many students the opportunity to reach high academic standards."

The Challenges

Since 1975, the number of special education

students nationally has increased from about 3.3 million students to its current swell of a little over six million—nearly an 82 percent increase. In New York City alone, 85,000 students out of 1.1 million are enrolled in special education—12.94 percent of its student body. The monetary figures are just as staggering. Students in special education cost on the average 2.3 times as much as general education students—an average of \$13,000 per special education student versus \$6,200 for all others.

More revealing than the money and the sheer number of students in special education is the over-representation of minority students placed in special education programs. According to Paige, 2.2 percent of black students are identified as being mentally retarded, a rate nearly three times that of whites. In addition, 1.3 percent of black students are labeled emotionally disturbed, almost twice the rate for whites.

A study conducted recently by New York University's Jay Gottlieb, Ph.D and Mark Alter, Ph.D. of the Steinhardt School of Education revealed similar findings in Palm Beach County, Florida. The principal investigators showed that although black students represent about 30 percent of the total student population in Palm Beach County, they make up 62 percent of students classified as educable mentally handicapped, and 53 percent of students classified as emotionally handicapped.

The basic tenet of special education is meeting a student's individual needs. Each student in special education receives an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which details his/her strengths, needs, and educational goals for the year. Optimally, students are placed in the school in which they can receive the appropriate education.

"Special education has accomplished a lot by

providing services and positive approaches, even though these students have been traditionally segregated from general education," said Dr. Beth Mount, a national consultant to education programs and adult services.

Typically, special education students have been taught separately from their general education peers to meet their needs. However, according to IDEA, special education students are guaranteed the right to be educated in the *least restrictive environment (LRE)*. This means that according to their abilities and needs students should be placed in their neighborhood schools, along with their general education peers.

Often the concept of a *least restrictive environment* is falsely associated directly with the physical space of a classroom or school. Actually, Lou Brown, a special education scholar and pioneer, argued that "special education is a service, and not a place." Some scholars believe that ideally all kids should be in the process of working towards education in the most inclusive environment.

Inclusion: A Quick Fix?

Inclusion, an education model where special education students spend their entire day in a general education classroom, may be the quick fix sought by policy makers. To get the support services they need, these students receive assistance from a special education teacher in the regular class. This practice is an outgrowth from the Regular Education Initiative (REI - 1986), and remains a hotly debated topic. Presently, the inclusion supporters have made headway, as inclusion is becoming a more common practice in education.

"There is an assumption that the least restrictive environment for an appropriate education is general education," said Professor Alter, New York University's Chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning. Experts in the field have speculated that if Bush's appointees are looking for more efficient use of money, they may see inclusion as a means of doing so. More money may be diverted to regular education once special education students are included. The idea is that all students would benefit. Special education students would get the support and services they need, while general education students get the benefit of an enriched environment. Yet, the question remains: It

makes fiscal sense, but does it make educational sense?

"The question is, how will students with a range of abilities do in a general education classroom?" said Alter. "What is the criteria for progress: IEP goals or standardized test score? There tends to be an absence of instructional accountability to make decisions regarding progress of individuals as well as groups."

Proponents of inclusion believe that students with disabilities will benefit from a non-segregated environment, and at the same time students without disabilities will learn to share a learning environment with a diverse group of peers.

Yet, implementing inclusion is complicated. For example, "in their efforts to properly implement inclusion, New Jersey has nearly eliminated special education labels," said Dr. Jerry G. Petroff, Program Specialist for the New Jersey State Education Department. "However, in order to receive federal funding for students the state must categorize students as eligible or non-eligible for special education services."

States fund the bulk of monies allocated to special education programs, even though the federal government promised to provide 40 percent of this funding in 1975 when the law was first enacted. Complicating matters even more, IDEA guarantees that special education students have access to the general education curriculum and education classes. But, this is not always happening.

"Visit your local school," said Dr. Carole Gothelf, principal of the Guild School "and then see how many children who require special services are in general education classrooms."

The one thing that is clear is that Bush's task force has their work cut out for them.

"General education is based on a homogeneous model, while special education is driven by individual students needs," said Alter.

So, as the President's task force begins to consider how to build a better educational system it is clear that bridging together the two educational systems is anything but simple.

"For inclusion to work as it was intended to, the entire general education system must be revamped," said Petroff. "We need to accommodate all students and all of their needs, not just special education students. Each child deserves to be treated as a unique individual."

Mike Cohen and Michael Salek are teachers at The Jewish Guild for the Blind's Harriet and Robert Heilbrum School in New York City.



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Solutions for a new era in education



Kaplan K12 Learning Services

By MITCHELL LEVINE

When I was a high school student in the 1980s, the name "Kaplan" was virtually synonymous with SAT preparation. With over three million students served in thousands of classrooms around the world, it's not hard to understand why this image continues to dominate the organization's public perception.

Coaching students for college admissions examinations, however, is only a small part of the services Kaplan, Inc. provides not only to those striving to enter higher education, but to educators

looking for tools to help maximize their students' ability.

Education professionals might not be as familiar with the complete extent of the Kaplan K12 Learning Services. The company provides in-school workshops at the elementary, middle-school, and high-school levels for state-mandated assessments. It also provides the possibility for complete custom program development.

A concrete demonstration of Kaplan's philosophy can be found in its print guides for teachers, such as its Test Strategies series, available in edi-

tions appropriate for various grade levels, states, and subject areas.

Kaplan's *Test Strategies* supply teachers with up-to-date research-based paradigms. Expositions of proven methods for meeting the pedagogical needs of particular students take the guess-work out of a teacher's responsibility. This provides great benefits to schools by helping them satisfy their legal mandates, but, on the other hand, also frees up a teacher's time to concentrate on what's most important.

Kaplan fully supports these conceptual guides with curricular-based items, like Skills Review and Test Readiness materials, as well as the

Kaplan Achievement Planner 2.0, a Web-based service to further supplement their print-based items. This online program allows teachers and administrators the opportunity to use test results data to automatically create student skill reports.

The diverse resources made available through the Kaplan K12 Learning Services can offer the working educator the opportunity to reach for what is often held to be one of the most important values that schools can transmit, the concept of freedom through structure. For more information on the Kaplan K12 programs, call 1-888-kaplan8, or log on to the company's website at www.kaptest.com#


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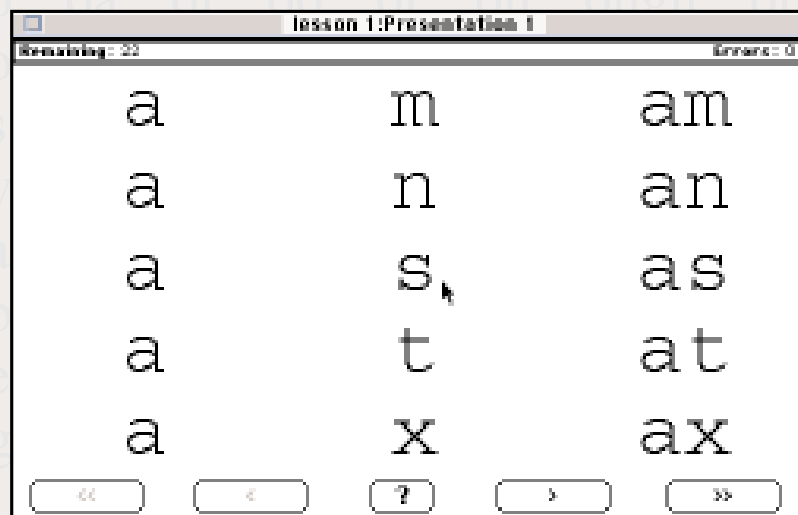
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HOLIDAY BOOK AND TOY GUIDE

Children's Books: Gift Recommendations

BY MARIE HOLMES

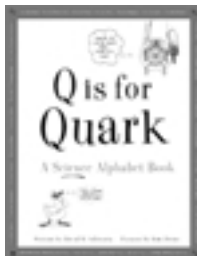
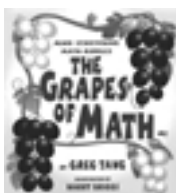
Faith's Journey. By Christine Verney Issac. Advocate House: Sarasota, Florida (2001) \$17.95.

Young readers curious about different faiths will enjoy this introduction to some of the world's religions, in which a mysterious talking cat, Sofus, leads Faith on a magical journey through the spiritual world. As Faith is introduced to the beliefs and practices of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, she discovers that learning leads to tolerance and understanding. Full of important information for all ages, this 112-page chapter book is tailored for readers ages 9-12, or for reading aloud to younger children.

Q is for Quark: A Science Alphabet Book. By David M. Schwartz. Illustrated by Kim Doner. Tricycle Press: Berkeley (2001) \$15.95.

How is a black hole formed? What exactly is a quark, anyway? Stimulate young scientific minds with this informative alphabet book, which explains a number of scientific concepts, from Atom to Y chromosome, both in reader-friendly prose and cartoon illustrations. Designed for readers ages 9-12, *Q is for Quark* can be enjoyed by anyone who wants to learn more about these important scientific concepts.

The Grapes of Math: Mind-Stretching Math Riddles. By Greg Tang. Illustrated by Harry Briggs. Scholastic: New York (2001) \$16.95.



A hardcover picture book written in rhyme – and full of math? This innovative text is author Greg Tang's creative solution to the challenge of helping young children enjoy learning math. Through colorful illustrations and riddles, children are encouraged to find different ways to solve counting problems. Rather than the usual drill workbooks, which students complete in several sittings and don't return to, the word-problems in *The Grapes of Math* can be solved again and again using different methods, helping children ages 5-10 acquire the skills needed for higher math through creative thinking rather than rote memorization.

Hide and Seek Birthday Treat. By Linda Jennings. Illustrated by Joanne Partis. Barron's: Happaage, New York (2001) \$12.95.

Whether you know a child with a winter birthday or not, this beautiful picture book makes a nice gift for any preschooler. Brightly-colored, full-page illustrations accompany the story of Leopard's birthday. As Leopard searches for his friends, children can find Zebra, Lion and others hiding in the book's pages. Leopard worries that he may have to celebrate his birthday alone, but it

seems that his friends have a surprise in store for him. Perfect for reading aloud to very young children; older children can also engage in the "hide and seek" game without an adult's help. #

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN'S AMATEUR SCIENTIST

For more than 70 years Scientific American's "The Amateur Scientist" column has stimulated hundreds of thousands of science fair projects, inspired innumerable amateur experimenters, launched careers in science, and enjoyed a place of honor in classrooms and libraries all over the world. Always accessible to an amateur's budget, projects from "The Amateur Scientist" are often elegant and sophisticated. Some designs have been so innovative that they have set new standards in a field.

Many professional scientists borrow from "The Amateur Scientist" to find low-cost solutions to real-world research problems. The Amateur Scientist on CD-ROM is an archive of over 800 columns containing over 1,000 projects. In addition there are thousands of pages of additional material that never appeared in Scientific American; essential techniques for beginners and advanced science enthusiasts. Do you want to know how to create a vacuum? Build a high-temperature furnace? Photograph a comet? Blow your own laboratory glassware? Build a laser? Extract DNA in your kitchen? It's all here (and much, much more) on one CD-ROM with its own built-in search engine.

All projects are rated according to cost, difficulty, usefulness, and potential hazards. Most of the material in this CD is appropriate for late Jr. High or High School, although there are some projects simple enough for small children or complicated enough to challenge a professional.

As an added bonus, "The Amateur Scientist" also comes with a second CD, the "Science Software Library" containing loads of free software and demos for the science enthusiast. The Amateur Scientist on CD-ROM runs on Windows, Macintosh, Linux, and UNIX platforms.

BEST FIVE TOYS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

continued from page 11

created dolls to help children appreciate diversity and understand themselves. She wants to help girls understand diversity and strengthen their own feelings of empowerment and self-esteem. Her late cousin, Caesar Chavez encouraged her to follow her dream, an important lesson for every child.

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Dr. Toy (Stevanne Auerbach, Ph.D.) selects best educational and developmentally appropriate products annually for Dr. Toy's Guide (<http://www.drtoy.com>) and her syndicated column. This report is the first monthly feature exclusively for Education Update. Each issue will focus on useful learning products for home and school. If you have any questions please write to Dr. Toy c/o ednews1@aol.com. See her book Dr. Toy's Smart Play: How to Raise a Child with a High P.Q. (Play Quotient), St. Martin's Press.



New Autobiography Makes Great Gift

By MERRI ROSENBERG

Not bad for someone from Brooklyn.

As a fellow Brooklynite, it's hard not to admire Stanley H. Kaplan's sheer resourcefulness, enterprise and energy as he describes the path that led him from a modest home-based business as a tutor to a brand-name conglomerate that was synonymous with entrance test preparations around the world. By the time he sold his business to the Washington Post Company in 1984, the testing business generated \$35 million in revenues; in 1999, the test preparation revenues were up to \$151 million.

Imagine if fictional Francie Nolan, the heroine of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, had had a head for business instead of writing. That's how Kaplan comes off in this engaging and illuminating memoir. Instead of hiding behind the brand, Kaplan reveals himself as a living, breathing human being whose roots and academic experiences help him understand the students who flock to his courses.

Born into modest circumstances in Flatbush to immigrant parents, Kaplan was aware from a very young age that education was important. Although his father ran a small plumbing business and his mother helped with the business, the family home was full of books. One of the more charming anecdotes that Kaplan shares is how, as a young boy, he charged his friends two cents a week to borrow one of his books.

As a diligent and ambitious student, Kaplan—like many of his precocious peers in those long-ago Brooklyn days—skipped some of his elementary grades, in his case part of second and third grades. The product of public schools, who got his first tutoring job at the age of 14 when he was a student at James Madison High School. Kaplan was accepted at Columbia College, but because he couldn't afford the

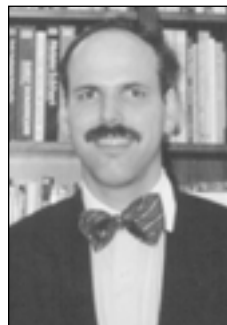
tuition, ended up matriculating at City College.

The turning point in his destiny came when he applied to five medical schools, in his quest to become a doctor, and was rejected from all of them, despite being ranked second in his class, an award winner of many academic prizes at City, and Phi Beta Kappa membership.

As Kaplan writes, "I remember the admissions process before standardized testing, and I believe these tests open doors, not close them." So, unwilling to accept defeat, Kaplan turned to his first love—teaching. To understand the source of his justifiably great pride in the business he built, it helps to understand that before and above anything else, Kaplan saw himself as a teacher. As he writes, "I loved to teach—to plant new ideas—and that interest never waned. I had a knack for zooming in on a student's weakness...And sharing in the achievements of my students ultimately became the primary reason for my success as a tutor."

For Kaplan, the emergence of the SAT wasn't a barrier for students, but a way to help students demonstrate their abilities in another way. "The SAT...could help democratize American education by ushering a larger, more diverse group of students into the world of higher education." Kaplan is careful to point out that his system—starting with the SAT and moving through the various professional graduate exams, like the MCAT, LSAT, GRE, GMAT, and licensing exams—had far less to do with cramming students with material than with coaching them through the process of understanding the material and learning how to deal with it in a testing situation. As he says, his goal was to "teach the students to be critical thinkers. My classes were not cram courses."

His sympathies were with the students who



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PKYTV Reading Group will discuss *Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban* by J.K. Rowling.#

needed to do well on standardized exams in order to move onwards and upwards in the world. Small wonder that, for generations of students, "taking a Kaplan class became a rite of passage for middle-class kids who wanted to go to competitive schools."

This book is especially timely, and compelling, as standardized tests are coming under fire yet again, with the latest salvo hurled from California, whose colleges and universities may drop the SAT from the admissions process.

To those who would see Kaplan as a businessman, that's an inaccurate and incomplete image. Of course he was successful, and flourished. But far better to see him as a teacher who simply wanted to help as many students as possible fulfill their academic dreams.#

Test Pilot: How I Broke Testing Barriers For Millions Of Students And Caused A Sonic Boom In Business And Education by Stanley H. Kaplan with Anne Farris. Simon & Schuster: New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Singapore (2001), 175 pp

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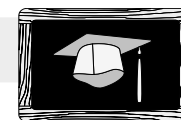
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New Center for Distance Learning at Jewish Theological Seminary

By SYBIL MAIMIN

Distance learning, the ability to study at one's convenience, whether for a degree or for enrichment, by logging onto the Internet from almost any computer anywhere has become a reality. In a dedication of The Phyllis Kaminer Center for Distance Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), Professor of Talmud and Jewish Law Rabbi Joel Roth explained that education via the Internet is just another stage in an evolution in the technologies of learning that, according to rabbinic literature, began on the eve of the sixth day of creation when God created writing, which made knowledge more widespread and accessible. Plato called writing a gift of the Gods meant to enhance memory and wisdom. Following the invention of printing in the fifteenth century, the first books in the Hebrew language appeared in Rome, then Spain, and then Constantinople. Some scribes, feeling threatened, attacked the new technology as inferior, but printing caught on and the Jewish book market rapidly changed from mainly hand inscribed to print, allowing for more complicated texts including commentaries. "Each era's visionaries have built upon the successes of the past creating a continuous stream of improvements," commented Rabbi Roth. "More recently, we have marveled at new possibilities presented by the typewriter, photography, microfilm, the telegram, TV and digital instruments. As yet unimagined technologies will inform future generations."

From ancient times to our day, students have

had to go to the place where their teacher is located. Distance learning changes this dynamic, traversing both time and space to allow interaction between student and teacher from opposite ends of the globe. The program at JTS which began as an experiment five years ago, currently offers two online degree programs: MA's in Jewish education and in Judaic studies. Non-degree courses can also be taken for professional development and for personal enrichment. Courses have been created that adapt the content and standards of the classroom to the possibilities of the Internet. Educators are being forced to think outside of the familiar box. Formal lectures are not suitable; classwork must be presented in small units. Logging on to the school's website, students find lessons which they complete and return after exploring and making their own way through the net's many linked materials. They interact with teachers and fellow students via a course bulletin board. Photos of the students are posted to humanize discussions. Everything can be downloaded. For the first time in history, a great teacher can reach unlimited numbers of students. A JTS course is taught by a professor in Jerusalem. When texts are in Hebrew, translations and comments are available.

Distance learning, a "new link in an ancient chain," is still in its infancy. It may change the nature of education, but careful oversight must be applied to its development, advised Rabbi Roth. For more information log on to <http://courses.jtsa.edu/#>

Marymount's Best-Selling Author Series

By LEWIS BURKE FRUMKES

The Best-selling Author Series began about 12 years ago when Dick Cook and Rhonda Barnat, two friends of the college's dean, Mary Kay Jeynes, asked me to put together a series of literary talks which would be funded by a small grant from the East River Savings Bank. What evolved from that meeting was a successful annual literary event that featured prominent and best-selling authors who would appear in the Spring of each year at the school. We would have a writer talk in the theatre about the writing life, followed by a Q & A and coffee and cookie reception in the Nugent Lounge where a book signing would take place. In February, another speaker would come again, meet attendees and inscribe books.

Suffice that over the years we have managed

to attract some of the finest writers in the land as our speakers. . . many before they became household names. Among the distinguished list that has appeared at Marymount are Tom Wolfe, Joyce Carol Oates, Mary Higgins Clark, James Patterson.

The series is offered free to the students of the college and to the community as part of our outreach effort to enrich the neighborhood. Each event is usually attended by 200-300 people, who enjoy the cookies and coffee at the booksigning reception that follows the talk in the theatre. Because of the popularity of the series, there is often a waiting list for tickets, and in certain cases we have found it necessary to close-circuit the event to another venue to accommodate the demand.#

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Sonnenblick Appointed Dean of City Tech

Carol Sonnenblick, a continuing education professional with more than 20 years of managerial experience, has been appointed Dean of Continuing Education and External Partnerships at New York City Technical College (City Tech) of the City University of New York (CUNY).

At City Tech, Sonnenblick directly oversees eight directors, who collectively supervise 47 staff members in the Division of Continuing Education. The division enrolls more than 10,000 students each year in over 100 courses that are offered through the Continuing Studies Center. These courses assist adults in developing new skills, exploring new career directions and keeping pace with the latest technology in their careers. Certificates are available in such programs as computer office skills, computerized accounting and medical office associate.

In her capacity as dean, Sonnenblick also manages a number of programs, including the Business and Industry Training Center, the

CUNY Language Immersion Program, the High School Transitions Intensive English Program, the ACCESS Counseling Center, and ACCESS for Women and the Adult Learning Center.

Sonnenblick worked at the College of Staten Island (CSI) since 1976 in a variety of administrative positions, most recently as director of adult education, grants and public contracts in the Office of Continuing Education. Previously, she was deputy executive director of continuing education and workforce development.

In 1976, she co-founded the Learning Institute at the Jewish Community Center of Staten Island. Sonnenblick is a member of the executive board of the Continuing Education Association of New York State and the New York City Employment and Training Coalition. She holds an AB degree from Barnard College, an MS degree from Wagner College and an Ed.D. in educational psychology from Rutgers University. #

LIU Student Awarded Watson Fellowship

A 2001 Jeanette K. Watson Fellowship was awarded to Joel Mentor, a sophomore majoring in political science at Long Island University's (LIU) Brooklyn campus. The fellowship, offered to talented undergraduates in New York City colleges, provides three consecutive summers of well-supervised, challenging internships, a series of enriching seminars, a financial award and a laptop computer.

A member of the Brooklyn Campus's University Honors Program, Mentor interned last summer at the Citizen's Committee for New York City, a non-profit organization that provides leadership training and resources for volunteer community groups throughout the city. He organized and conducted a seminar for the Youth Leadership Institute, helping young New Yorkers become inspiring leaders in the community. #

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Tots Program at Brooklyn Museum

Children under the age of five now have a special place to call their own with *Totally Tots*, the newest exhibition opening at Brooklyn Children's Museum (BCM) on Saturday, December 8. Inspired by BCM's 27,000-object natural science and cultural collection, this 1,700 square foot permanent gallery especially for the early learner provides opportunities for families to learn and play together.

"This new exhibition is the first step in accomplishing the goals of the Museum's Learning Early Initiative," said Carol Enseki, President of Brooklyn Children's Museum. "It encourages children to use their imaginations, explore the world around them, and find cre-

ative solutions. It also allows parents and caregivers to take an active role in this wonderful growth process."

Miniature trolleys link 6 activity areas. Children make "stops" along the way that are in line with their developmental stages and interests. Activities feature colors, patterns, textures, sounds, shapes and objects from BCM's collection to engage young learners and their families in interactive learning adventures.#

The Brooklyn Children's Museum is located at 145 Brooklyn Ave., on the corner of St. Mark's Ave. For more information call (718) 735-4400, or visit www.brooklynkids.org

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Biodiversity 911 (9/22/01-1/13/02)

Explore biodiversity through a series of interactive exhibits. Crawl through device that allows turtles and dolphins to escape from fishing nets, play Toxic Pinball to see the effects of toxic chemicals, explore the major causes and cures of global warming, and scores of other activities. A short, free film created by the producers of *Chicken Run* explores issues such as habitat loss, pollution, and climate change.

In the IMAX Dome Theater:

The Human Body (10/20/01-10/2002)

Follow a family through its daily life and watch as astounding microphotography, digital imaging, X-ray and other techniques reveal what goes on under the skin. Incredible time-lapse photography shows an infant as it grows from a single cell to the moment of birth.

Ocean Oasis (9/14/01-9/2002)

Baja California is an incredible area where near-barren desert meets the rich, cold waters of the Pacific, creating an amazing natural environment. Follow Mexican scientists as they introduce viewers to this unique area filled with whales, dolphins, birds, and more. For further information call (201) 200-1000

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BILINGUAL MUSICAL SPOOFS GENESIS: "SONGS OF PARADISE"

By JAN AARON

Who could imagine Abraham as a cool dude sunbathing in the Garden of Eden in a Hawaiian printed shirt? Or the scheming Laban as Groucho Marx? Look no further than the mad-cap creators of the sunny, funny Yiddish-English musical *Songs of Paradise* at Theater Four until December 23rd. This witty, satirical retelling of the Book of Genesis ushers in the 86th season of the Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre.

The show takes its cue from the Purimspiel, audience friendly folk plays presented at Purim by traveling Yiddish troupes of Eastern Europe. It is a revival of the successful 1989 presentation, which ran for 150 performances at the Public Theatre. *Songs of Paradise* is again directed by Avi Hoffman whose past successes include *Too Jewish* and *Too Jewish, Too*.

The book by Miriam Hoffman and Rena Borow, music by Rosalie Gerut, choreography by Eleanor Reissa and musical direction by Zalmen Mlotek interpret the 100 year old lyrics by the popular Yiddish poet Itsik Manger.

As before, the production is 60 percent Yid-



Theresa Tova (l) as the slave owner Zuleyka, enjoys one of the earliest beauty make-overs in recorded history at the hands of her slave played by Spencer Chandler

photos by Ritchie Fahney

dish, but this time, no simultaneous headsets into English provide help for the Yiddish challenged. (Headsets with simultaneous translations into Russian are provided). Not to worry. There is enough English and program explanation plus theater, comedy, music, and clowning to provide a good time for everyone.

Five versatile performers in fine voice playing multiple parts make the stage almost crackle with energy. Clever sets by Vicki R. Davis; costumes by Gail Cooper-Hecht and lighting by Jeff Nellis tickle the ribs. The two man ensemble, pianist Larry Goldberg and percussionist Rex Benincasa, rate hurrahs for their nimble handling of a score that incorporates jazz, rock, and gospel.

The able lampooning actors Spencer Chandler, Jake Ehrenreich, Lia Koch, Yelena-Shmulenson-Rickman, and Theresa Tova, take the audience merrily through six-well known stories of the Bible's first chapter as if they were modern folktales filled

with pop culture icons. Meet Esau as Marlon Brando in *The Wild One* and hear the angels as the Three Stooges sing in dialect.

Summing it up: This Yiddish-English *mishegoss* is fabulous fun! (Theater Four, 424 West 55th Street, 212-639-2300; \$35-40.)



The company of "Songs of Paradise" clockwise from bottom left: Lia Koch, Spencer Chandler, Jake Ehrenreich, Theresa Tova, and Yelena Shmulenson-Rickman

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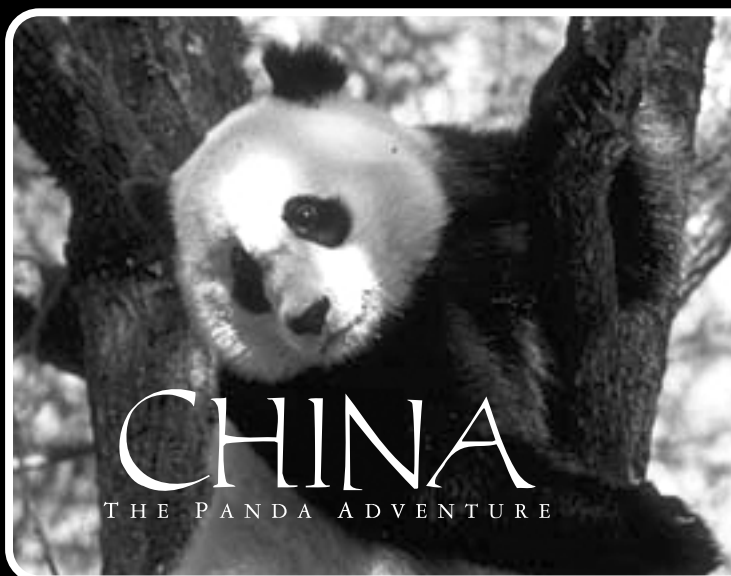
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Sparring Partners: McKellen And Mirren In "Dance Of Death"

By JAN AARON

Don't miss these two great British stars in top form, Ian McKellen and Helen Mirren as Edgar and Alice, in August Strindberg's *Dance of Death*. However, be prepared for some surprises. Director Sean Mathias' production at the Broadhurst brings out the light notes in this renowned dark drama. Written in 1901, Strindberg's play is famous as the inspiration for such marriage-on-the-rocks dramas as *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

While McKellen and Mirren always are thoroughly captivating to watch, this production punches up the play's dark and deadly humor but rarely reveals its underlying anguish. The skilled actors draw the audience into their mordant world, verbally thrusting and parrying with great dexterity and wit. McKellen's Edgar is also particularly well portrayed through intricate body language. In one stellar moment, he dances a jig falling perhaps dead to the floor. Alice's "Hurrah!" here fosters laughter.

In a nutshell: Life has left these two behind; Edgar's army captain has never been promoted from his post on a small isolated island where he

despises everyone. "Bottom feeders," is what he calls them in American playwright Richard Greenberg's new hip adaptation. Alice, too, has shattered dreams. She was a young actress with a promising career before she married Edgar, who forced her to give it up. Now she constantly reminds her husband what she sacrificed for him. His answer? A protracted yawn. Throughout the first act, they approach their silver anniversary with new assaults to rub into old wounds. Their only visitor, Alice's cousin Kurt, is played by David Strathairn who is too bland in the part.

Edgar's other sparring partner is death, but he prefers to ignore it. His spiritual awakening at the end of the play, when he realizes that the answer to life's disappointments and death's inevitability is forgiveness not vengeance, is this production's most moving moment. "Let's move on," he says, taking Alice's hand.

Mathias' plays up the drama's spooky dimension with distant foghorns, mysterious mists and flickering candlelight. Santo Loquasto's set is a tilting fortress with an overpowering white tower. The play's last performance will be January 13, 2002. #

DECEMBER IN HISTORY

COMPILED BY
CHRIS ROWAN

Christmas – In December?

Christians in Rome began celebrating the birth of Jesus in December during the fourth century. The Church of Rome began to encourage the tradition to compete against the pagan celebration of Saturn. By 350 A.D., Bishop Julius I declared December 25th as the day to celebrate Christ's birth. The real month of his birth remains unknown.

60th Anniversary of Infamy

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, bringing the United States into World War II. Germany's Dictator, Adolf Hitler, declared war on the United States four days later.

Firsts

In 1901 (on December 1) the first radio signal was sent across the Atlantic Ocean.
In 1903 (on December 17) Orville Wright

GEOGRAPHY CORNER

By CHRIS ROWAN

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, writers speculated that the carnage that occurred might surpass the carnage of another day known as "the bloodiest day in American history." What was that day and where did the carnage occur?

Answer: September 17, 1862 at Antietam, Maryland.

Background: In September 1862, the Civil War had been dragging on for over a year. Confederate General Robert E. Lee wanted a quick victory for his exhausted soldiers, so he decided to launch a direct assault on the North, into the heart of the Union. If successful, he reasoned, this campaign could cause the British Government to recognize the Confederacy, deeply demoralize the North, and bring President Lincoln to the table for peace talks.

The campaign began when Lee marched his troops into Maryland, bypassing more heavily defended Washington, D.C. Since Maryland was a slave owning state that remained in the Union, Lee figured that some sections of the local population would assist him.

His hopes were met with disappointment. Most

people in Maryland were not interested in helping him, and the fact that his soldiers paid for supplies with Confederate money didn't add to his popularity. But the most serious problem he faced awaited him at Antietam creek, near the town of Sharpsburg. When his ill-equipped troops met the enemy there, Union forces outnumbered them. The Union soldiers were led by Generals George McClellan and Ambrose Burnside, who were overly cautious, confused, and in some instances inept. As a result, both sides suffered heavy losses: nearly 6,000 men and boys who were alive at dawn on September 17 were dead by nightfall, more than the confirmed American deaths on D-Day (June 6, 1944) during World War II, and more than all Americans killed in the War of 1812, the Mexican War and the Spanish American War combined. In addition, some 17,000 soldiers lay wounded on the field.

Lee's Army was beaten but not crushed – thousands managed to join him as he withdrew to Virginia, and the Civil War dragged on for another two years and seven months.

Next time: John Gutzon Borghum is best known for which National Monument? Where is it located? How big is it and what does it represent?

made the first successful airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

In 1942 (on December 2) scientists in Chicago produced the first atomic chain reaction.

World History

In 1492 (on December 6) Christopher Columbus discovered Hispaniola.

In 1917 (on December 9) the British captured Jerusalem from the Turks.

In 1991 (on December 25) the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

American History

In 1620 (on December 20) the Pilgrims

landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

In 1776 (on December 25) George Washington led his troops across the Delaware River to fight the Battle of Trenton. Washington's Army defeated German troops (Hessians) allied with the British.

In 1791 (on December 15) the Bill of Rights was ratified.

In 1941 (on December 23) U.S. forces surrendered Wake Island to the Japanese after 11 days of intense resistance.

In 1998 (on December 19) the House of Representatives voted to impeach President Clinton.

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Education Reform Through Accountability



By MAYOR RUDY GIULIANI

Throughout the course of my administration, I have consistently emphasized the need to improve New York City's schools through a combination of new initiatives and increased accountability. Although inefficiency and bureaucratic paralysis have been obstacles in our effort to successfully reform government run schools, I am pleased to see that we have swung the debate toward accountability and the importance of dismantling the Board of Education. Many new initiatives have been put in place over the last eight years to ensure a better opportunity in New York City's classrooms.

I am proud of my administration's record of implementing many new academic programs in the classroom. Programs such as Project Read and Project Science have provided more intensive training and class time for students – especially for those who are in danger of falling behind in these crucial subjects. Project Arts has permanently restored arts education to all City schools for the first time since the mid 1970's. The addition of more than 7,000 school computers and funding for 300-book libraries in 21,000 classrooms citywide has similarly improved upon the resources available to our students. Children are also safer in school now, thanks in part to the Police Department assuming responsibility for school security services, the hiring of hundreds of additional school officers, and the creation of in-school suspension centers that help enable teachers to enforce discipline in the classroom. The public-private partnership "Take the Field" meanwhile, has helped to restore over 50 High School athletic fields, providing students with a better environment outside the classroom as well.

Over the last eight years, the successful methods

of the Police Department's Compstat program have been adopted by numerous City agencies. Through the Capstat program, over twenty different City agencies now provide up-to-date information and statistics that help determine whether current tactics and strategies are working or whether they need to be re-evaluated in order to provide better service to the public. The vast array of success stories that these agencies are reporting convince me that New York's students would also be far better served by a more transparent school system. A system where teachers and administrators are held accountable for their performance and for thoroughly, effectively, and promptly fixing problems that arise in the classroom.

I do believe that the tide of the debate on education in New York City has turned toward accountability. We have already successfully ended social promotion and abolished principal tenure, replacing them instead with stronger academic standards and performance-based pay. Much of this year's Mayor's race centered on improving education, and I was extremely pleased to see that both the Republican and Democratic nominees for Mayor agreed on the need to dismantle the Board of Education, and to hold the Mayor accountable for the City's schools. With this in mind, I am confident that Mike Bloomberg will build upon our efforts to restore accountability in the classroom and to raise academic performance standards.

On another note, I have greatly enjoyed sharing my ideas on education with the readers of *Education Update* over the past three years. Publications like this one are valuable assets in encouraging constructive debate on improving the quality of education. It is my sincere wish and belief that the trends in thought and the positive measures that we have furthered over the last eight years will continue to gain strength and will continue to improve the lives of New York City's school children in the years to come. #

Real Estate: A Great Time to Buy

By MARSHA MACK FRANCES

The New York real estate community suffered the same shock, horror, bereavement, numbness, and despair as the whole city, and now is beginning to get back to work assessing the damage, and the need to hopefully reconstitute and rebuild this, the greatest of cities. It will be months before the impact of September 11th and its effects on the value of residential real estate in different parts of the city is clear. However, some early observation may be worth considering.

Though fear, acute stress reaction and job loss and proximity to the disaster will make some people feel like fleeing the city, our Mayor is wise in encouraging New Yorkers to try to fight these impulses and get back to the daunting but imminently doable task of strengthening our determination to go back to work and rebuild our lives in a city that our state, the country and the world has come to admire.

No city in the country could have handled a disaster like this as well as New York has. New Yorkers, perhaps used to living exciting, risky and stressful lives, have immeasurable strength and personal resources and sense of community, patriotism and spirit, that gives me great hope that if initially prices dip, ultimately tourists, businesses,

and people from many places will seek to be part of its renewal.

My recommendation as a broker with 20 years of experience is that in a short time, though prices are uncertain, this may be the ideal time to take the opportunity to buy New York residential properties.

How many New Yorkers regretted not buying better apartments during the previous dip in the market? How many who fled Manhattan in the 1970s did not rue the day they sold a co-op that soared in value?

Here are several reasons to consider this disaster an opportunity to live and work in New York.

Enormous resources will come to the aid of rebuilding New York. New Yorkers will have less stress disorders if they live near their work. Children benefit from being near parents in an emergency.

New Yorkers bounce back in hard times. The esteem of New York in the country and the world's eyes has risen enormously and this will benefit the city. #

Marsha Mack Frances is a vice-president of Douglas-Elliman in New York. She can be reached for advice and consultation at 212-650-4829.

MS Settlement Would Benefit City Schools



By ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN SANDERS

The proposed settlement of more than 100 class action lawsuits against Microsoft could yield tens of millions of dollars for New York City public schools, and for this reason I have written to the U.S. District Judge who must approve the deal, urging him to do so.

Under the proposed settlement, Microsoft will provide more than \$1 billion nationwide in computers, software, cash, training and support services to help make computer technology more accessible to public schools where at least 70 percent of students come from low-income families.

While the proposed settlement has its critics, I agree with NYS Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, who certainly has been very tough on Microsoft, that this a settlement in the public interest and one which will uniquely benefit public education.

The school-computer component of the settlement would provide for the company to make grants to local foundations and community organizations for purchasing computers and software, in order to provide sustainable, long-term funding for information technology in under-served schools. Among other activities, local foundations will be encouraged to establish sustaining programs to further support schools' technology needs.

It is significant that local school officials will have the flexibility to choose either Microsoft or non-Microsoft technology, and the plan also envisions Microsoft matching a substantial amount of donations of computer technology to local schools from other sources.

While it is most certainly true that computers by themselves don't improve a school without appropriate support services, trained staff and the requisite classroom space or wiring, the impact of such a large influx of computers, software and requisite support services will be a boon for many for our city's 1,100 elementary, middle and secondary schools.

Those who negotiated this component of the proposed settlement were smart enough to incorporate aspects involving training of teachers, school administrators and support personnel not just in utilizing the technology but also in how to best integrate it into a school's curriculum.

If our children are to rise to the challenges posed by the global economy, and in an era of rising standards for academic achievement, every school needs all the resources possible, including excellent teachers, ample textbooks, safe and modern facilities, and state-of-the-art technology—with appropriate support services. Regardless of any other aspects of the long and complex Microsoft litigation, the proposed school technology component will bring tens of millions of dollars worth of much needed technology and support service to our local schools. #

JP Morgan Chase Helps Kids Cope With Sept. 11th

By JESSICA SHI

Although the immediate shock and confusion of Sept. 11th are over, the long-term effects of this disaster are still in question. While most of the monetary and personnel attention have concentrated on the rescue and recovery efforts, certain organizations, including JP Morgan Chase, are beginning to focus more on younger children.

JP Morgan Chase recently partnered with Mercy Corps and with Bright Horizons Family Solutions to launch a program called 'Comfort for Kids'.

"In launching this program, JP Morgan Chase reaches out to community groups in hopes of impacting early childhood education, especially in low-income, ethnic neighborhoods where access to counseling is limited," said Joy Bunsen, Senior Vice President and one of the coordinators of 'Comfort for Kids' at JP Morgan Chase.

The program has four components. The first component, a booklet and video entitled "What Happened to the World?" aim to help parents, teachers, and child-care providers deal with the emotions of their children, as well as their own. The set contains strategies to help children of different age groups, from pre-school to teenage with a range of behaviors and concerns.

The company also created a 'Comfort Kit' designed for preschool- to middle school-age children who have been impacted by the disas-

ter. Containing toys, books, and postcards, the kit is designed to reassure and comfort children, while allowing them room for self-expression. It also encourages a sense of community and helps promote tolerance.

The final components of the 'Comfort for Kids' program are a series of workshops and "train the trainers" sessions. During the workshops, which are designed to help parents answer their children's questions about the recent events, experienced childcare professionals will provide the parents with advice and guidance. In the "train the trainers" sessions, counselors, teachers, and caregivers are taught to conduct sessions in childcare centers, schools, community centers, and places of worship.

In addition to creating 'Comfort Kids,' JP Morgan Chase has worked with the United Neighborhood Houses of New York to improve their communities and advocate for public policy changes and social reform, to provide counseling and training to parents and caregivers in Islamic and Mexican neighborhoods.

JP Morgan Chase plans to distribute the 'Comfort for Kids' kits to the general public through their branches. Officers at the branches would assess the needs of their clients and send out these kits to the families who request them. For more details on the 'Comfort for Kids' program go to www.jpmorganchase.com, www.mercycorps.org, www.brighthorizons.com and www.unhny.org.



Knicks Zone In On Education

By TOM KERTES

For this one, you had to be there. Kurt Thomas, the New York Knicks 6-9 enforcer—a player famous for his take-no-prisoner tactics, a tough guy whose mere glare strikes panic in the hearts of most NBA opponents—lay down on the carpet. He did that so that a bunch of considerably closer-to-the-floor 10 and 11 year-olds could play with the hair on his head.

This near-unbelievable sighting occurred at Brooklyn's Beginning with Children Charter School where Thomas, along with fellow Knick forward Larry Robinson, played Pictionary with 30 tremendously thrilled fifth graders as part of a "Knicks Reading Zone" event.

"Why do I do this?" Thomas said. "Because I have children too. Because I know how important it is to stay in school and to get a good education. And, most importantly, because it is important for us as celebrities to set the right example and give back to the com-

munity."

The players do not exactly live up to the popular stereotype of the self-involved multi-millionaire ballplayer. But, when it comes to the sometimes elusive concept of "corporate responsibility" the Knicks are one big business that actually means business.

"We talk the talk and we walk the walk," said the Director of Community Relations Ayala Donchin. "We feel that using these players' power as role models for the betterment of society is extremely important. This is our philosophy, our mission that comes all the way from the top. Yes, from (Madison Square Garden President) Mr. (James) Dolan."

"That is why all our events, like The Reading Zone, are interactive, goal-oriented, and up-close-and-personal," she added. "If I have a choice between sending a player to a huge benefit dinner with a lot of attendant publicity, or an intimate school event like this with just a few people from the press, we'll go to the school every time. Because it's much more



Knicks player, Kurt Thomas, with some of the students at Brooklyn's Beginning with Children Charter School.

beneficial and important to the kids."

The "Knicks Reading Zone" was created as part of the NBA's "Read To Achieve" program that instructed each of its 29 teams to come up with its own educational initiative. The Zones are voluntary independent reading centers located in five New York City elementary schools, one in each borough. The Knicks donated a core library of 500 books to each Zone school, and each month sends 50 copies of a new "featured book"—one that's also read by a Knicks player on a special Zone Phone (1-800-NYK-DUNK, what else?) to the schools.

And then, of course, there are the in-person visits by the players, the ultimate "use of the power of celebrity to promote literacy," according to Ms. Donchin.

As it turned out, the Pictionary game—a well known Knick-like, ultra-competitive thriller—ended in a tie. And then the *real* thrills came as the two gentle giants stayed around another hour to hang out with the kids, sign autographs and to answer any and all questions.

Questions included "Are the fouls real?" and the all-time favorite "Do you know Michael Jordan?" But there was also "What school did you go to?" And "Did you graduate?"

"We travel constantly and need time for our own families as well," Robinson, who has three school-age children himself, said while looking out at the sea of shining little faces. "But you know what? I wouldn't give this up for anything."

"It's priceless."#

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To most people R & R means rest & relaxation. To Education Update, R & R means Resources & References around the city. The listings that follow will help you gain greater knowledge of the city's enormous and enriching array of offerings.

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COLLEGES

Sarah Lawrence College
www.slc.edu

READING; Alumnae/i Poets, Wednesday, December 5, Pillow Room 6:30 p.m. Free. Sarah Lawrence College undergraduate and MFA alumnae/i read their works. Joel Brouwer graduated from SLC in 1990, and will publish his second book, Centuries, in 2002. Janet Kaplan earned an MFA from Sarah Lawrence in 1987 and published her first collection, The Groundnote, in 1998. Anne Marie Marcari (MFA '99) won the 2000 APR/Honickman First Book Award for Ivory Candle. Sharan Strange's first collection, Ash, won the 2000 Barnard New Women Poets Prize. She received her MFA from Sarah Lawrence College in 1995. For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

DANCE CONCERT; Winter Dance Concert, Wednesday, December 5- Saturday, December 9, Performing Arts Center, Bessie Schonberg Theatre, 8 p.m., Free. Reservations Recommended Students from the Sarah Lawrence College dance-making class present their work. For reservations or more information please call (914) 395-2433.

LECTURE; 15th Annual Longfellow Lecture by Roger A. Hart Friday, December 7, Reisinger Concert Hall, 4 p.m.

Roger A. Hart, Ph.D. will speak on Children on the Cultural Front Line: The Challenging Vision of Children as Active Citizens. Roger Hart is a Professor in the Ph.D. Psychology Program of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and Co-Director of the Children's Environments Research Group. The Annual Longfellow Lecture is organized by the Sarah Lawrence College Child Development Institute and honors Cynthia Longfellow, an alumna who devoted her professional life to bettering the lives of young children.

CONCERT; Sarah Lawrence College Chorus and Orchestra Concert, Sunday, December 9, Reisinger Concert Hall, 4 p.m.

Free. The Sarah Lawrence College Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Patrick Romano and Martin Goldray, will perform choral works including Bach's Magnificat and Francis Poulenc's Motets for the Season of Christmas. For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

CONCERT; William Dopppman in Concert, Wednesday, December 12, Reisinger Concert Hall, 8 p.m., \$10/\$8 senior citizens and students. Pianist William Dopppman will perform works by Bach, Busoni, Liszt, Chopin and Dopppmann's Fantasy I (Winter Dreams). For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

READING; Amy Bloom, Wednesday, December 12, Pillow Room 6:30 p.m., Free. Amy Bloom has written two collections of stories, Come to Me and A Blind Man Can See How Much I Love You, and a novel, Love Invents Us. Her fiction has appeared in The New Yorker, Story and Antaeus, and been anthologized in the 1991 and 1992 Best American Short Stories and the 1994 O. Henry Prize story collection. For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

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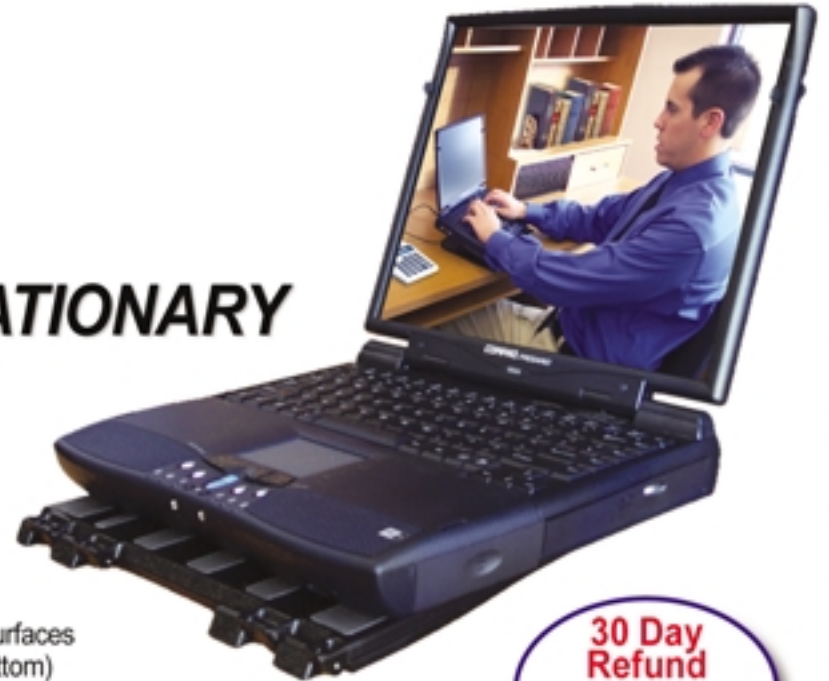
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