

# EDUCATION UPDATE

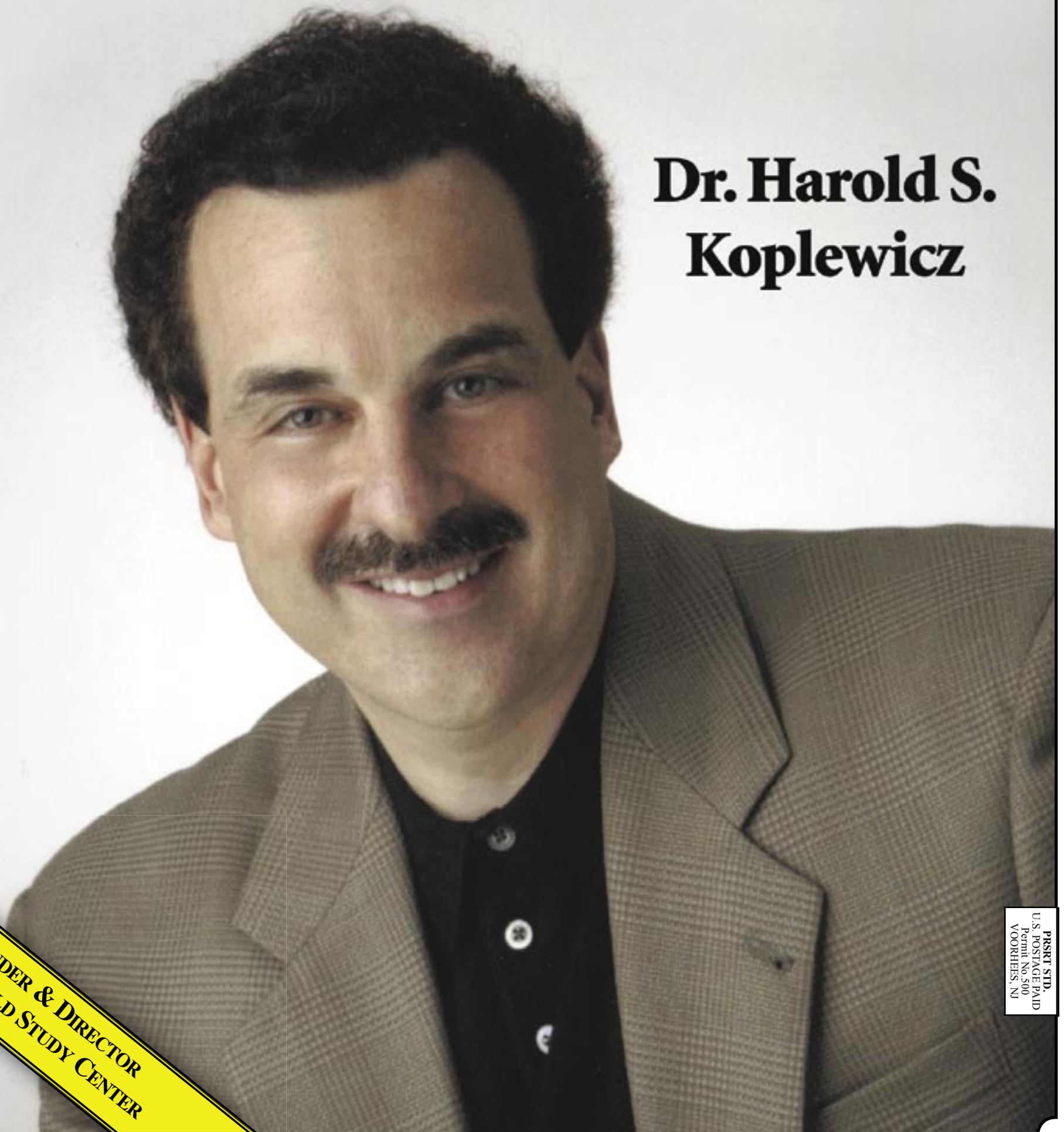
EDUCATION NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER WORLD TOMORROW



Volume X, No. 4 • New York City • DECEMBER 2004  
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

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## SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADER



**Dr. Harold S.  
Koplewicz**

**FOUNDER & DIRECTOR  
NYU CHILD STUDY CENTER**

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

**Reflections on Special Education, 2004**

By HAROLD S. KOPLEWICZ, M.D.

This month's issue of Education Update is dedicated to special education, which usually connotes images of students in wheelchairs or with severe learning disabilities. However, the 10 million children and adolescents in the United States who suffer from a psychiatric disorder are rarely considered, yet these disorders are also barriers to learning.

While most schools now recognize that Autism, Asperger's and even Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) impair learning without effective intervention, students with ADHD in particular are more likely to drop out of school and spiral into a downward cycle involving substance abuse and incarceration. But most do not realize that two million teenagers in the United States suffer from depression. These are not simply spoiled, demoralized or sullen teens; they have a medical condition that affects their appetite, concentration, sleep and motivation. Because of these symptoms, these students often have trouble with school attendance and performance, and some try to medicate themselves with alcohol, marijuana and other illicit substances.

Unfortunately, due to the national shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists (under 7,400) and lack of health insurance parity, many teens were receiving antidepressant medications from primary healthcare physicians. While the over-

whelming majority of children and adolescents who took these medicines had only nuisance side-effects, a small percentage developed agitation and disinhibition, which sometimes led to self-destructive behaviors and suicidal thoughts. In controlled studies of over 4,000 teenagers with depression, not a single teenager committed suicide. But in the general population, there have been tragic scattered reports of suicides. This led to a new FDA "black box" warning on all antidepressants, which will unfortunately lead to fewer teens with depression getting the treatment they need.

It's important for us to note that during the past decade, the suicide rate among teenagers, while still too high, decreased by 30 percent. This welcome change coincided with the availability and increased use of the new "SSRI" antidepressants. The best evidence is that these antidepressants are not bad medications, but there are tragic cases of bad practice of medicine. The diagnosis of depression requires extensive training and takes time, but pediatricians are reimbursed for about seven minutes of face-to-face contact with their patients. What we need is not to restrict or eliminate the use of SSRIs, but to better educate parents about how real depression is and that we have effective treatments, but with limitations. More importantly, pediatricians and family practitioners need to be systematically trained on how to evaluate this important medical condition, how to initiate treat-

ment, and how to monitor it effectively to achieve optimal results.

Special education was conceived in order to overcome barriers that prevent learning. We have come a long way, but we have to recognize that beyond ramps for wheelchairs and programs for dyslexia, we must acknowledge that students with psychiatric disorders as common and potentially lethal as depression need health services in school as well. While students with depression do not need a special curriculum, their teachers and parents have to be able to recognize their suffering, and their doctors must be able to provide effective treatment and careful monitoring while they are improving.#

*Dr. Koplewicz is Founder and Director of the NYU Child Study Center and the Arnold and Debbie Simon Professor of Child Psychiatry.*

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## LETTERS

**RESPONSES TO**

*An Interview with Arnette Crocker, Principal, Young Women's Leadership School*

To the Editor:

I have known Ms. Arnette Crocker for the past ten years as a colleague and as a friend. I am extremely proud of Ms. Crocker for her achievements and I want to commend EU for recognizing The Young Women's Leadership School in the Bronx.

*James F. Rodriguez  
Bronx, NY*

To the Editor:

What exciting news! A school with this philosophy and leadership can answer the needs of so many gifted and talented young women waiting for the right opportunities and supports.

*Rose Marie Lundy  
Bayside, NY*

**RESPONSES TO**

*Sir Edmund Hillary Brings Schools to His Beloved Himalayas*

To the Editor:

I am 11 yrs old and from Pukekohe Intermediate. I think your article was well written and it has a lot of good quality in it and heaps of interesting facts. I got to choose to study anything anyone who has made a difference to Antarctica and I choose you because you have climbed the highest mountain in the world and you are from New

Zealand. I also think you are a really great person and I hope to meet you some day as you are one of my heroes.

*Alexa Freeman  
Auckland, New Zealand*

**RESPONSES TO**

*Against Testing and Retention*

To the Editor:

Parents need much more information/data than the sound bite (and bytes) salvos launched by representatives from both sides of the issue. Parents want to see local and national data from longitudinal cohort studies on what has happened with and without retention; timing and nature of interventions to prevent retention and what is provided to students that have been retained or required to attend summer school.

Most importantly, strategies are needed for adult/family education if we are to reduce the need for retention in any significant manner.

*Granville I. Stevens, New York, NY*

**RESPONSES TO**

*An Interview with President Ruth Simmons, Brown University*

To the Editor:

Dr. Simmons' success is definitely awe-inspiring. It is a "feel good" article that has inspired me to try harder in high school! Thank you so much for publishing this article!

*Ms. Perini Shah, Plano, TX*

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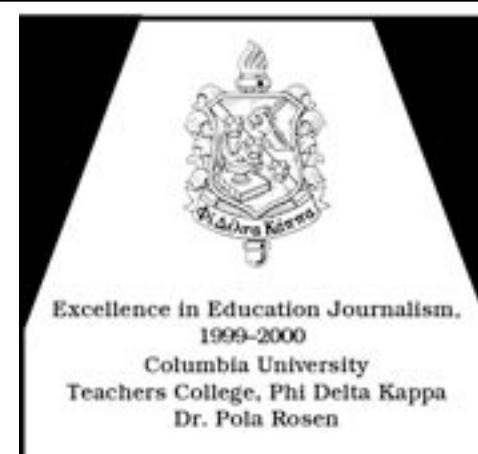
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P.O. Box 1588  
NY, NY 10159  
Subscription: Annual \$10.

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**EDUCATION UPDATE**  
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# Reading Reform Foundation Hosts Annual Conference

By SARAH ANN MOCKBEE

Dr. Agnes Howell-Jack, an aspiring principal with the Chancellor's Leadership Academy, recently attended the Reading Reform Foundation's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference with the hopes of becoming more familiar with innovative teaching approaches that were being introduced and discussed. Reading Reform Foundation, a not-for-profit literacy organization based in New York, hosted the conference, "Effective Techniques for Teaching Reading, Writing and Spelling." The conference included 24 workshops on specific teaching strategies as well as a keynote address given by Dr. Diane Ravitch, noted author and Research Professor of Education at New York University.

"As educators, it's our responsibility to be exposed to new ideas," Howell-Jack said. She noted that "following a routine" will never be a successful strategy in education and that the Reading Reform Foundation Conference offered her an opportunity to stay on the cutting edge.

Marcelina E. Lyew, a kindergarten teacher at PS 166, already knew the value of Reading Reform Foundation's educational seminars. She took a course with the Foundation last summer in which she was introduced to a reading program called the Spaulding Method. "I have been teaching for 30 years in the New York City school system," states Lyew, "and I have been through many reading programs. The Spaulding Method, which I discovered late in my career, is the best program I've used." After seeing the progress her students made with the program, she was eager to attend the conference to learn if there were other methods she could supplement into her daily curriculum.

Administrators and teachers like Howell-Jack and Lyew are part of a target audience the



Dr. Diane Ravitch

Reading Reform Foundation hoped to reach through its conference. The Foundation's mission is to influence and encourage educators of both children and adults to teach reading, writing and spelling by using phonics methods that employ multi-sensory techniques. Dr. Ravitch honed in on that very principle with her address, "Why Content Matters."

Speaking to hundreds of teachers, administrators, tutors and parents, Dr. Ravitch spoke about the benefits of a phonics-based approach for teaching students how to read and, more importantly, how to comprehend what they are reading. "Children need to understand the connections not only between letters and sounds but also between what they read and what it means. [They] must be able to make a large leap from being able to decode words to being able to comprehend words in different contexts."

Dr. Ravitch, who holds the Brown Chair in Education policy at the Brookings Institute, also stressed the importance of a coherent curriculum that builds on vocabulary and knowledge incrementally, but she concedes that this

is where education has fallen short. Curricula tend to be more random and less integrated. She maintained that an aligned curriculum helps children establish a foundation of background information that will prove critical once they begin to approach larger, more complicated subjects. Dr. Ravitch insists that as long as curricula lack continuity, students will miss valuable opportunities to connect ideas and concepts across disciplines.

Phonics-based learning, coupled with a coherent curriculum, has earned Dr. Ravitch's backing not simply because it makes good sense to her but also because it is a proven method of learning. "Study after study, underwritten by the National Institutes of Health, affirmed that teachers must use a variety of strategies, including phonics and phonemic awareness, especially when teaching beginning readers." The research has been overwhelmingly convincing, yet it has taken many years for the program to be endorsed officially by state departments of education and schools of education, which dramatically influence the way future teachers educate students.

Dr. Ravitch noted, however, that the New York Department of Education has yet to approve a phonics-based program and has instead adopted a reading program that does not place emphasis on phonemic awareness. She suggested that the test results for New York City public schools have been less than satisfactory. "Not only is the current achievement gap growing between the have and the have-nots under the current program, but the population of excellent readers is rapidly declining." Dr. Ravitch acknowledged that the Department of Education stands behind their program and that they strongly believe that it is good for students, but she disagrees.

Dr. Ravitch was quick to point out that

because most departments of education around the country have endorsed a phonics-based reading program, youth literacy was on the right track. She was also optimistic about New York's position, thanks in part to private institutions like the Reading Reform Foundation. "Things are looking up in reading and much of the credit goes to the stalwart members of the Reading Reform Foundation who have steadily and quietly done the right thing for year after year, decade after decade, helping teachers learn to be effective in the classrooms whether or not it was fashionable to do so."

Leona D. Spector, Vice President of Reading Reform Foundation, Trustee Sandra Priest Rose, and President Aileen Lewisohn Godsick were all in attendance at the conference. Obviously pleased with the turnout, Spector felt confident that the workshops that followed Dr. Ravitch's address would prove beneficial to both teachers and students. Most workshops focused on the importance of content and were conducted by education experts as well as some of New York's most prestigious cultural institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History and the Lincoln Center Institute. Spector assured attendees that the workshops would reinforce what teachers were already doing and would offer many ideas to take back to the classroom.

So why does the Reading Reform Foundation host a conference like this year after year? Rose enthusiastically summed up the answer when she stated unequivocally, "We love teachers." We can unequivocally add that teachers love the Reading Reform Foundation because they are taught how to convert their children into fluent readers and lifelong learners.#



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## MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCE AT BANK STREET

By SYBIL MAIMIN

At its first annual Middle School Conference, Bank Street College Division of Continuing Education captured for participants the excitement in learning that comes from bringing imagination to curriculum strategies. The conference, organized by the college's Center for Middle School Practices, headed by Davia Franklyn, was designed for practitioners who interact with youngsters whose ages are around 10-14. Increasingly, it is recognized that during this "difficult" time, children have special needs. "Events of this crucial formative phase can change a life and our community," explains Continuing Education Dean, Fern Khan. "Our goal is to set the middle school child on the path to becoming a lifelong learner." Despite frequent complaints by teachers about the stifling of creativity in the classroom imposed by No Child Left Behind and its emphasis on testing, Khan maintains there is "no conflict between creativity and standards." "We must learn how to bring all these demands together so that you don't lose the standards and excellence but help children use their minds in new ways."

Franklyn, along with head of Professional Development for After School Educators, Marnie Ponce, bring to the Center enthusiasm and shared experiences as former colleagues in a successful public school where "the system was left out" and middle school students had a voice, respect, and incentives to remain engaged. Ponce points out that afterschool programs have become special opportunities for creative, enriching activities as funding for classrooms is cut and emphasis on testing increases. The conference included workshops, interactive exercises, films, a student panel, and resource guides and tips designed to

stimulate new ideas and strategies for curricula with a special focus on "Using the Arts to Enrich Content." Participants saw a film that recorded the experiences of an artist, Richard Lewis, in a middle school in Queens where, over a 10-week period, pupils used their imaginations to create a virtual meadow in their classroom. Students used their bodies, movements, and sounds to create birds, wind, flowers, rain, and clouds. They wrote poems that revealed "secrets of the mind" and made pictures that illustrated "inner thoughts." Their engagement was palpable as they reveled in their powers to create. Following this delightful and instructional film, participants engaged in their own version of mime as small groups acted out messages about educational goals for others to decipher. Expressing themselves "outside of pencil and paper" was both fun and challenging.

A panel of four students reflected on their own middle school experiences. They stressed the importance of finding a teacher who is supportive and willing to listen. They revealed that bad behavior that got "a pass" from parents when they were younger was more likely to be punished now, and they asked that teachers come to class with "a positive attitude." The students, from Promise Academy and Bank Street's Liberty Program, were well-spoken, open, and even precocious, illustrating positive outcomes from small school, supportive learning environments.

Commenting on the conference goals, Dean Khan expressed the hope that attendees "take the fun and joy of learning back to the classroom and keep it alive." The Center for Middle School Practices, with a variety of professional development opportunities at Bank Street or on site, is ready to help.#

## LAW & EDUCATION

### The Ten Commandments Revisited

By MARTHA MCCARTHY

No school issues are more emotionally and politically charged than church/state concerns, and posting the Ten Commandments on public property is among the most volatile recent controversies. Although in 1980 the Supreme Court invalidated a Kentucky law calling for copies of the Ten Commandments to be posted in public school classrooms (*Stone v. Graham*, 1980), there have been numerous legislative efforts to authorize these postings in public schools and other public buildings. During the past decade the Supreme Court has declined to review several challenges to such displays that have been enjoined by lower courts. However, the Supreme Court recently agreed to review decisions from Texas and Kentucky in which federal appellate courts reached opposite conclusions regarding the constitutionality of displaying the Ten Commandments on government property.

In the Texas case, a six-foot granite monument with the Ten Commandments was donated to the state in 1961 by the Fraternal Order of Eagles, which works to curb juvenile misconduct. The Commandments are displayed about 75 feet from the state capitol in Austin. The Fifth Circuit found no religious establishment in the display that includes other historical documents. Noting that the Ten Commandments monument has stood without any legal complaints for more than 40 years, the court reasoned that it and the other items in the display commemorate important historical influences in the state.

The Sixth Circuit in a Kentucky case came to a different conclusion, ruling that the display of copies of the Ten Commandments in two county courthouses and a school district abridged the Establishment Clause. After the complaint was

filed, state officials placed other historical documents in the county displays and invited community members to post additional documents in the school display that would contribute to students' character development. But the Sixth Circuit held that such efforts did not reduce the constitutional violation because the clear purpose of the displays was religious and not educational. Thus, the government was enjoined from continuing the displays or erecting similar displays in the future.

The Composition of the Supreme Court has changed significantly since it invalidated the posting of the Ten Commandments in public schools in 1980. At that time, the Court rejected the contention that such displays are constitutional because the Ten Commandments represent a fundamental code of conduct embraced by most of western civilization. However, some of the Court's recent decisions have supported greater governmental accommodation toward religion. These church/state decisions have often been sharply divided, so it is difficult to speculate regarding whether the Court will use these two cases to strengthen or overturn its 1980 precedent. Either way, this is a case to watch.#

*Martha McCarthy, Ph.D. is Chancellor Professor, School of Education, Indiana University.*

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# BILINGUAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By OFELIA GARCIA, Ph.D.

Bilingual education in the 21st century must face the complexity brought about by the freer movement of people, services, and goods that characterizes our more globalized and technological world. In the second half of the 20th century, bilingual education grew around the world as a way to educate children who didn't speak the state's language or, in some cases, to recapture the heritage language of a group. This in itself was an innovation over the use of bilingual education only to educate the children of the elite.

In the 21st century, however, the complex and dynamic links created by technology and globalized markets, coupled with the importance of English and other "big" languages, challenge our old conceptions of bilingual education. UNESCO in 1953 declared that it was axiomatic that the child's native language be used to teach children to read, but basic literacy, even in one's own language, is insufficient to be a world citizen in the 21st century. And although places such as Catalonia and the Basque Country developed excellent bilingual education programs to advance Catalan and Eusquera (Basque) in the latter part of the 20th century, it turns out that Catalan/

Spanish or Eusquera/Spanish bilingualism is no longer sufficient in a world in which English plays an important role. In Canada, where immersion bilingual education programs succeeded in the last part of the century to make Anglophones bilingual, French/English bilingualism is not sufficient when the other languages of Canada, both indigenous and immigrant languages, are increasingly important. And the success of bilingual education programs in such places as Friesland, where Frisian/Dutch bilingualism started enjoying some stability, are being challenged by a renewed interest in becoming competent trilinguals in Frisian/Dutch/English.

In the United States, bilingual education in the last part of the 20th century grew as a way to educate the children of immigrants, especially Spanish-speaking children from Mexico, Puerto Rico and Cuba who were arriving in increasing numbers and who were failing in the nation's schools. Although the majority of Spanish-speaking children in U.S. schools are still of Mexican background, today there are increasingly children from other parts of Latin America, some who bring their own bilingualism to bear, as evidenced by the growing number of Spanish/Quechua and Spanish/

Mayan language bilinguals in the New York City area. Immigration from all over the world has also brought to the nation's schools children with very numerous languages, most importantly Chinese. For example, in New York City, a full 48 percent of the school-aged population, between 5 and 17 year olds, speak a language other than English at home. Of those, 406,000 students speak Spanish. Although there are a great number of Spanish-speakers, Spanish is spoken by only one-third of the students who speak languages other than English. Besides Spanish, there are large numbers of New York City students who at home speak Chinese (51,000), languages from the Indian subcontinent (29,000), Russian (27,000), Yiddish (25,000), French Creole (20,000) and Korean (11,000). There are school districts in New York City where many languages other than English are represented in the same classroom. Clearly, the sociolinguistic situation of the children has gotten more complex.

It has been predicted that by 2050, English will be accompanied by Chinese, Arabic, Spanish and Urdu, as the world's big languages, ordered not only with English at the top as it has been up to now, but with an increasing role for the other four "big" languages. But as the world has tried to respond to its increasing needs for multilingual citizens, capable of living and working not only in the language of the state and the region, but also in at least two of the international languages, the United States has increasingly turned to higher standards in English-only as a measure of school success.

States throughout the world are providing options to their children to be schooled in two or more languages. The European Union has recently adopted a policy of "Mother Tongue + 2" encouraging schools throughout the EU to develop children's trilingual proficiency. For those purposes, a model of teaching is being promoted that encourages the use of the languages other than the child's mother tongue in subject instruc-

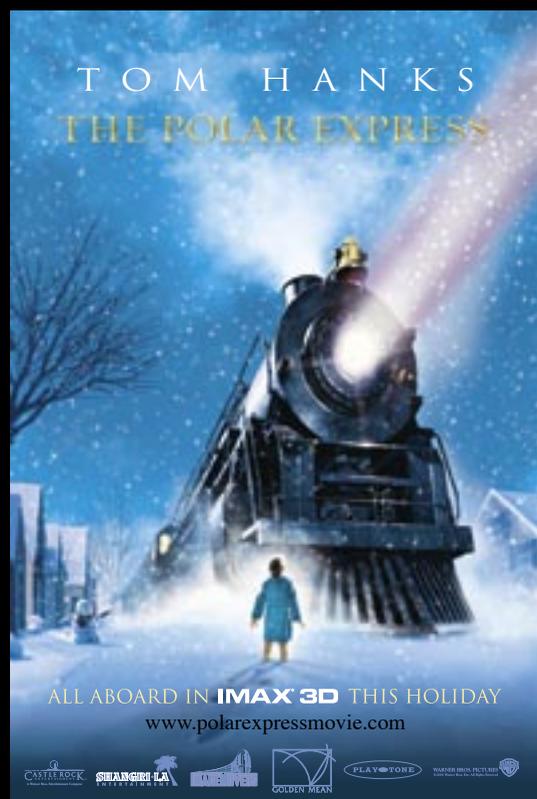
tion. Throughout the European Union, programs of Language Awareness have cropped up even in countries that hereto have been suspect of bilingualism—France, for example. And children go from grade to grade with a "Language Passport", documenting their use of languages other than their mother tongue in study, travel, visits to other countries, other places.

Yet, the United States has reacted to the world's increased multilingualism, a dynamic multilingualism that others start referring to as "plurilingualism" because of its hybrid character, by tightening its grip over English-only instruction. Bilingual education programs in the United States are enjoying less status than ever, many are closing. As a result, transitional bilingual education programs for immigrant students have all but disappeared, with children being robbed of the greatest strength they have to learn a second language—the ability to use their own language to make sense of the second one. And the much talked about alternative—dual language programs—programs in which both immigrant and native-born children who speak English only are schooled bilingually, are almost non-existent.

Bilingual education around the world seems to be doing so well it is no longer sufficient, and multilingual education systems, such as the ones of the European Multilingual Schools are being developed, building on today's technological advances and our more fluid identities. And yet, bilingual education in the United States is being reduced to standards in English-only, maintaining its name, but not its potential to develop the multilingualism that will be so important for American citizens in a world where English will increasingly compete with other languages, especially Chinese and Arabic. The victims of this narrowing of the U.S. schooling potential might not only be the children. Ultimately, our democracy and values might be the victims. #

*Ofelia Garcia is Professor of Bilingual Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.*

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## Outstanding Teachers of the Month December 2004

### Robert Mc Duffie

**Principal:** Robert Zweig

**Superintendent's Name:** Bernard Gassaway

**Name of School:** Offsite Educational Services, Jamaica School, Queens

**School District/Region:** Alternative High Schools and Programs

**Student Progress:** Robert Mc Duffie has been the flagstaff teacher at Jobs For Youth, an Offsite Educational Services site, for 6 years. During that time, he has mastered the art of instruction with heart for the hundreds of Brooklyn youths who



have turned to OES programs as the answer to their educational predicament. These are students who had previously dropped out of school, often for one or two years. Their skills are often undeveloped; their knowledge of standard high school curriculum often limited. He has brought them to an expanded consciousness of themselves, their communities and the world. Consequently, students have shown progress in their motivation and their work.

Evidence of student progress is available from objective data. During the 2004-2005 school year, there were 25 GED diplomas facilitated through Jobs For Youth. Ninety-three percent of students who took the GED passed. Attendance for the same period was 75 percent, which is impressive for students who had previously dropped out of school and very often, still had daunting issues, such as homelessness, with which to deal.

A lesson taught by Robert Mc Duffie, a master teacher, is disarming in its simplicity and connections to the current and potential reality of students. As he moves from the aim to the final assessment of student understanding, Mr. Mc Duffie exudes his dramatic and thoughtful development of a topic as facilitator of students who take charge of their own learning. From small group to class projects, his genial presence and guidance is evident. For example, his Mastery Portfolio Project is designed to show proficiency across subject areas. Students are required to submit proposals for the content of portfolio elements, which include short stories, nonfiction essays, urban folk tales (issues impacting society) and one act plays with three scenes. Students are graded on adherence to timelines, scope, attention to detail, thoroughness and effort. Although his class is on the high school level, elements of college courses are infused within curriculum resources and engaging strategies. These projects augment exams given by Mr. Mc Duffie in Language Arts and Social Studies.

His program recently moved to the Medgar Evers College campus and Mr. Mc Duffie has facilitated student use of physical education, library and technological resources to further enhance research and creative projects.

**Innovative Teaching Strategies:** He has guided students through a variety of projects that enrich their educational experience at OES. His innovative teaching strategies, including student exposure to business and government, have resulted in diverse teaching situations. Mr. Mc Duffie has met each challenge by motivating students with his customary interest and enthusiasm, and perhaps most importantly, guiding them to achieve well beyond the scope of their prior experiences.

His strategies are experientially based and project oriented. Students work in teams and are motivated to use standard business practices such as task orientations, teamwork, reporting and adherence to deadlines. These skills will continue to support their future college and work experiences.

Through tireless preparation, he has equipped students with the knowledge needed to participate in the Model U.N. for several years. His students have become ambassadors of nations in the annual simulation as they advocated for U.N. action related to peace and justice.

Some of the many projects done by Mr. Duffie's classes have included: Creation of independent student companies that engage in business within their communities; Direct advocacy for youth employment programs with Albany legislators; Participation in Teen Talk Radio productions, including public service announcements; Creation of videos, in conjunction with the OES Media Center, which included one video currently nominated for an Emmy Award and the creation of a video entitled "Habitat" which explained norms and values.

**Motivating Students:** An entrepreneurial person himself, Mr. Mc Duffie has exposed students to the possibilities beyond high school. Upon his invitation, Junior Achievement presented introductory seminars on business start-ups to students during the 2004-2005 school year. Through Mr. Mc Duffie's cultivation, real companies were created with business plans, presentations and the selling of wares at the Fleet Business Fair held at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. Through the empowerment of students with youthful creativity and enthusiasm, he made an impact that will inspire students to business careers.

As a community activist, Mr. Mc Duffie has developed student awareness of the communities in which they live through research-based projects about community boards and profiles of community residents. He has visited Borough Hall and City Hall with students, thereby introducing them to the possibilities of public service.

**Parent/Community Involvement:** Mr. Mc Duffie knows every student and the path of achievement that each can follow. He is always ready to support students; his door is always open for a student who needs to talk. Through communication with parents and students, he facilitates additional support through agency-provided counseling and other community resources that may be needed by students.

Parents and the community share all activities as they experience project presentations and celebrations of student achievement.

Mr. Mc Duffie has imparted a sense of the possible through visits to colleges, which he began in 2004. His classes, along with several parents, visited colleges in Farmingdale, Sullivan County and Rockland County to impart a vision of what is possible. Mr. Mc Duffie is an enthusiastic participant at regional meetings for teacher as he shares innovative ideas with more traditional teachers. In addition to sharing exemplary lesson plans, he recently presented a workshop, "Engaging Students Through Political Awareness."

### Angelita Untalan

**Principal:** Joan M. Indart

**Superintendent's Name:** Bernard Gassaway

**Name of School:** Career Education Center, Manhattan School District/Region: District 79/Region 8A



**Student Progress:** Career Education Center is a high school program that services at-risk adolescents who

have dropped out of traditional high schools. Currently we have 35 sites throughout the five boroughs. The teacher that we are nominating is Ms. Angelita Untalan. She has been a teacher with Career Education Center for 10 years. She works with homeless, single mothers and other residents at one of our shelter locations in Manhattan. Ms. Untalan works individually with students as well as in a group setting.

For the past 5 years, 90 percent of Ms. Untalan's students have passed the GED exam. She has created a nurturing environment that is conducive to positive student learning outcomes. Ms. Untalan provides the students with extra curricular activities such as class trips to museums, in-house guest speakers, multicultural conferences and theater trips.

**Innovative Teaching Strategies:** Ms. Untalan utilizes innovative teaching strategies such as Balanced Literacy and Numeracy. Each student in Ms. Untalan's classroom has their own classroom work folder where all assignments and testing assessments are kept as well as report cards. Having this folder enables each student to follow his or her own progress. These strategies, combined with her unique classroom set-up, set the tone for a student-centered classroom. Ms. Untalan is a founding member of the Asthma Awareness Committee. Soon after being assigned to the shelter, Ms. Untalan realized that many of the absences of her students were asthma related. She then became a valued member of the Asthma Awareness Committee and developed lesson plans that she utilizes in her classroom to educate young adults about asthma and allergies and methods of control. The Asthma Awareness Program also reinforces the reading and mathematics skills of students.

**Motivating Students:** Ms. Untalan motivates and involves her students in class activities by providing them with themes and activities that are of great interest to them. Using the Balanced Literacy philosophy, Ms. Untalan employs the following techniques: Read Aloud; Shared Reading; Independent Reading; Guided Reading; Interactive Writing; Independent Writing and word study. Students at the shelter participate each year in the poetry and theater arts festivals. Ms. Untalan teaches her students how to write poetry, which results in their poetry being published in a magazine published by the school. In addition, her 90 percent pass rate on the GED exam speaks volumes of her students' motivation to succeed.

**Parent/Community Involvement:** Ms. Untalan has worked closely with the Career Education Center's Parent Coordinator. She has open communication with all parents and employs an open-door policy. Most of Ms. Untalan's students are

parents themselves. These single mothers attend parent conferences hosted by the Alternative Superintendence. Ms. Untalan has encouraged her students to work with CEC's college advisor. They have visited many colleges in New York State and have applied and been accepted to college. For students to transition from a homeless shelter to college speaks to the dedication and perseverance of Ms. Untalan. Currently Ms. Untalan recommended five students for the Co-Op Internship Program at Tweed. They have all been accepted and are currently working in various positions at Tweed.

### Ms. Della Furiano

**Principal:** Stephen Callari

**Superintendent's Name:** Dr. Kathleen Cashin

**Name of School:** Middle School 210, Queens School District/Region: 27/5

**Student Progress:** Ms. Della Furiano is a Speech Teacher and one of the best in the field. Many times these teachers are the "unsung heroes." There are no formal tests in her class, yet the skills taught by Ms. Furiano are carried into all areas and classes.



Ms. Furiano works with General Education students, as well as Special Education students. These Special Education students have a wide variety of handicapping conditions: severely retarded, emotionally disturbed, learning disabled and speech impaired. What great progress to hear a student who is non-verbal, call out the word, "Della." How about listening to a girl with Down Syndrome read a story to a General Education student. The scores of these students on the English Language Arts exam have gone up, showing progress. Through formal assessments and teacher assessments, Ms. Furiano has been responsible for beginning the process to decertify a number of students from speech services.

**Innovative Teaching Strategies:** Ms. Furiano has set up a buddy system where the advanced students will assist the mentally retarded students. They will also share lunch with each other. The mentally retarded students are thereby teaching the advanced students about differences and similarities in people.

**Motivating Students:** Ms. Furiano has students who volunteer to give up their lunch periods so that they can be peer tutors.

**Parent/Community Involvement:** Every year, Ms. Furiano holds a fall festival in which parents

*continued on page 7*

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## Teachers of the Month

*continued from page 6*

come to school to witness the remarkable work created by the students.

For the past two years, Ms. Furiano has organized a Buddy Walk for Down Syndrome. Parents, community members, staff and students participate. Ms. Furiano has elicited the assistance of many local vendors to assist in the Buddy Walk. Local merchants donated water awards and small trinkets for the "walkers."

Ms. Furiano has had her students participate in the Very Special Arts Festival at St. John's University. Last year, under the direction of Ms. Furiano, the students created a "Box of Dreams." This box received such recognition that it was displayed at Teachers College, The Smithsonian Institute.

### Sharon Davis

**Principal:** Yvette Beasley

**Superintendent's Name:** Althea Serrant

**Name of School:** IS 129, Bronx

**School District/Region:** 12/2

**Student Progress:** Ms. Davis is a grade-8 math teacher who also teaches Home and Career Skills to all of the grade-7 students. Along with teaching Home and Career Skills, she is "sizing up" the students for her "exclusive" class 800



for the following year. She takes students under her wing in her homeroom class, class 800, who she teaches math to. She nurtures the students, builds up their self-esteem and watches them succeed on their statewide math assessment exam to levels beyond their dreams. She tutors students on her lunch hour, after school and on Saturdays. Last year, every one of her students in both her homeroom and other grade-8 math class moved up one level as well. In class 800-93 percent of her students performed at or above grade level in math, including one special education student who was mainstreamed into her class for math. Out of her 31-homeroom students who began the class at various levels including level 1, 28 scored at or above grade level. Her homeroom class wins our monthly school wide competitions for highest attendance and best-behaved class.

Our students, under Ms. Davis and Mr. Clarke's direction, won a math competition on the NYC level, competing against parochial and private schools in math and went onto the statewide level.

**Innovative Teaching Strategies:** What Ms. Davis provides for her students is a firm, strict but loving learning atmosphere. She builds up their self-esteem by proving that they can succeed. She works closely with all of her students' subject teachers and troubleshoots if any of her students have any academic problems. She is available to tutor her students after school, during her lunch hour and she works with her class on Saturdays in both literacy and Math. She takes pride in her profession and it shows by her students' test performance.

**Motivating Students:** The evidence that Ms. Davis has motivated her students to be more involved in classroom activities is clearly demonstrated by how well her classes perform on the grade-8 standardized math test. In her homeroom, 93 percent of her students performed at or above grade level. Ninety three percent of her students did not enter her class in grade-8 on grade level. Ms. Davis worked very hard to get them there. Her motivation and competitive nature boost her students' academic performances from average to above average in a single school year. Her class attendance averages 90 percent or better and because her students want to come to school, want to learn and do not want to miss out on any work.

**Parent/Community Involvement:** The students in Ms. Davis' homeroom class apply and are accepted as graduation committee members. These students assist with planning school social events, are school spokespeople and promote school unity. They also apply to become and are

## OUTSTANDING TEACHERS OF THE MONTH

*Education Update* welcomes our Advisory Board, Dr. Charlotte K. Frank, Senior Vice-President of McGraw-Hill and former Regent of New York State; Dr. Augusta Souza Kappner, President of Bank Street College of Education; Dr. Alfred Posamentier, Dean of School of Education of City College of NY; Dr. Pola Rosen, Publisher, *Education Update*; Adam Sugeran, Publisher, Palmiche Press; Laurie Tisch Sussman, Chairman, The Center for Arts Education and Honorary Chair, Children's Museum of Manhattan. The Board makes the final decisions on the teachers to be honored each month.

In 2003, *Education Update* began the tradition of honoring teachers each month for their outstanding work on the "frontiers" of education. We are now continuing the tradition which will culminate in a ceremony in June 2005 with Chancellor Joel Klein in attendance. Superintendents, principals and colleagues may nominate teachers by filling out a form online. The information has been emailed to all principals in NYC public schools. If you have not received the email please contact [ednews1@aol.com](mailto:ednews1@aol.com). Deadline for Submissions: **December 17, 2004.**

Teachers are the backbone of our educational system. They richly deserve the recognition that *Education Update* gives them. Congratulations to this month's Outstanding Teachers of the Month in recognition of the vital role they play in our children's lives.

—Dr. Pola Rosen, Publisher

accepted as tutors for elementary school students in the Read Program, which is connected to the Hayden Foundation. The students tutor, help elementary school students with their schoolwork 2-3 times per week. The students receive training through the Read Program and if they are successful and continue working with the Read Program, they are able to seek summer employment as a tutor, with a "high" paying summer job through Read.

### Marcia Arcentales

**Principal:** Jeanette Sosa

**Superintendent's Name:** Reyes Irizarry

**Name of School:** PS 151K, Brooklyn

**School District/Region:** District 32 / Region 4

**Student Progress:** Ms. Marcia Arcentales is a very accomplished teacher who has taught at PS 151K for her entire career - twenty-one years! During these years, she has taught a variety of grades—2-3-4-5-6—and for the past four years has been in charge of the Math Lab, and is largely responsible for delivering Professional Development in Math to our staff. This year, Ms. Arcentales can be especially proud, as we have recently been informed that seventy-five percent of our students scored Levels 3 and 4 on last spring's standardized tests. That is a great accomplishment!

Ms. Arcentales gives students individualized instruction, using the Everyday Math Program, supplemented by her own teacher-made materials. She teaches them test-taking techniques, giving her students the necessary tools to pass upcoming standardized tests. She uses a wide variety of techniques to assess each student's progress—portfolios, informal assessments and standardized tests.

**Innovative Teaching Strategies:** Ms. Arcentales is a master of innovative teaching strategies in the Math Lab. Much of her motivation for students comes from food and eating—a real pizza box with a cardboard pizza inside for work in fractions really gets the students' attention; how about an apple? How much do you estimate it to weigh? How many bites will it take for you to finish eating that apple? How many times will you chew each mouthful before you can swallow?

**Motivating Students:** Ms. Arcentales excites her students to makes them think about math in their everyday experiences. They see math everywhere—how many angles can they count in their home? How far is the distance between home and school? Estimate first—then measure and prove. Her students bring in beautiful projects for the schools Annual Math Fair. Math Lab students always look forward to participating in the grade level Math Bee that Ms. Arcentales runs in our auditorium each year.

**Parent/Community Involvement:** Ms. Arcentales is very popular with our parent community. Her "Family Math" workshops are always very well attended, so well in fact, that she must have daytime and evening sessions. This is where she teaches parents to do math activities with their children in a fun way! She sends home a monthly math calendar with math activities to be done, parent and child working together, explaining their work, then signed by the parent and returned at the end of the month.

She recruits volunteers from the community to be presenters at her annual Math Career Day. Presenters tell about their careers- and how math is utilized in that career. Everyone gets involved with Ms. Arcentales' 100th Day of School, even kindergarteners (with their parents.) Last but not least is Pi Day—(3.17) celebrated on March 17th.

### Judith Caputo

**Principal:** Robert Zweig

**Superintendent's Name:** Bernard Gassaway

**Name of School:** Offsite Educational Services, Queens

**School District/Region:** District 79

**Student Progress:** The students in Ms. Caputo's classes are both HS teachers and HS students. Ms. Caputo's interesting and unusual job description includes being an itinerant teacher trainer, English teacher, workshop presenter (for both the school and district), co-editor of our school newsletter "Bridges," and producer of our school's annual poetry slam.

**Innovative Teaching Strategies:** Ms. Caputo dedicates herself to keeping current in her classroom materials and techniques.

She is the one person in our program who reads all the new teen novels and suggested HS reading. The teachers in our program depend on her to give ideas and suggestions for their NYSTL orders. Her workshops, offered on our staff development days, are always over-crowded.

Ms. Caputo keeps current on both pop and rap lyrics, which she uses as both a classroom management tool and motivation for English lessons. She can play a rap CD, use a poem to compare themes and then have the class read a scene from Shakespeare that they are now prepared to interpret as the result of the first two activities.

Computer savvy, Ms. Caputo has followed up student activities where she took digital pictures with "smart board" presentations of the pictures for students and parents to enjoy.

**Motivating Students:** For the past four years Ms. Caputo has participated in the Model United Nations. Through her work with students from several different sites she prepares students both academically and emotionally for the task of working with and competing against the brightest high school students that travel from all over the world to come to NYC to participate in the Model UN.

**Parent/Community Involvement:** Ms. Caputo is actively involved in the Consultative Council, Safety Committee, and UFT. She works closely with our parent coordinator to develop parent workshops, trips and activities to encourage parent participation. Her poetry slam has been one of our largest activities with parents. Ms. Caputo has also been one of the major organizers of our college fair. This college fair attracts parents, students, OES teachers, as well as teachers from other alternative programs in our district. This year she is also working with our parent coordinator and our science teacher to develop a "Health Fair" with representatives from eye clinics and health centers for screening and information. Parents are the target population for this activity, along with students, teachers and community members.

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We will help teachers arrive to the theater prepared. For every show, Disney has developed study guides that help teachers develop projects, discussions and activities. And, for those students who always have a question after most Wednesday matinees, members of the cast, orchestra or crew are available to appear for special Q & A sessions with students.

Students can also enjoy discounts on *Disney on Broadway* souvenir merchandise, as each member of your group will receive a merchandise coupon for great savings at the theater. Teachers can also arrange special lunch savings at McDonald's Times Square location, which, seating over 2,000, specializes in school groups customized for any budget. Finally, groups save on Gray Line New York bus charters, as special Disney promotional rates are available. #

For more information or to book call 212-703-1040 or 1-800-439-9000, fax 212-703-1085 or email [BVTGrouptix@disney.com](mailto:BVTGrouptix@disney.com). Or visit [www.disneyonbroadway.com](http://www.disneyonbroadway.com).

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## STUDENT JOURNALIST

**Budget Cuts**

By SOPHIE SOLOMON

It was the first day of junior year, and I was waiting to receive my schedule. I was excited to see if I received the classes that I had requested the year before. When I received my schedule I did a double take—there was no way it could be mine. Unfortunately, it was. I was not in the orchestra, where I had been playing the oboe for the past two years; neither was I in Latin nor Italian, two requests for language I had bubbled in with my pencil the winter before. Instead the school placed me in Spanish conversation, which is equivalent to fourth year Spanish—yet I had never even taken Spanish! One bureaucratic mistake I could deal with, but it looked like things were going to get worse before they'd be resolved. I had to wait until the next day to resolve my schedule. It was only after I had waited on extremely long lines that I found the culprit was budget cuts so severe, the likes of which hadn't been seen in years.

Because of these cuts Latin and Italian had become even more limited in terms of how many students could be accommodated. Freshmen were given priority so they could begin their Regents requirement in language. I had already completed the requirement with French. After talking to the conductor of the orchestra, I found out that I was purposely dropped from the class because they needed the spots for the freshmen. Although, another reason I was dropped was because he said I did not practice enough, which I knew was true. I was still disappointed because I enjoyed the class, but even more so because it was now too late to take another elective.

I was not the only one at my school who was affected by budget cuts. None of my friends who applied for a painting class were placed in it this year, because, well, there is no painting class at Bronx Science—arts are always the first to go

because they are considered elitist. Rakesh Roy, a junior at Bronx Science, had to say: "I was looking forward to it and they cut it two years in a row, so I don't think that is really fair." Classes should not be offered if they are not going to exist. Even though this was not the first year for budget cuts at my school. Last year the Junior Band and the Woman's Ensemble (girl's chorus) were cut; the budget cuts were felt considerably more this school year.

Although the Board of Education promised to reinstate some of the money that was cut, the flow of the money, if it was replaced, was not felt. The cuts are especially harmful to juniors who can not write on their transcript when they apply to college during senior year, "The only reason I have three free periods a day is because, my school had to cut the art class that I wanted to take." Junior year programs are what College Admissions look at the most. At least if a student is a freshman or sophomore they still have one or two more years to build up a more impressive transcript.

My friends and I have started to wonder—if the cuts are affecting an elite city school like Bronx Science, then what is happening at the more depressed areas? In our conversations at lunch and in-between classes, despite the anger, an empathy has developed for the less privileged students. So ironically because of the mess we are in, we have learned to identify with those who may not go to an elite school like Bronx Science. This is something that no rigorous class could have taught us. #

*Sophie Solomon is a student at the Bronx High School of Science.*

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outstanding educators at  
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**CAN WE AFFORD TO LIMIT OUR MOST MATHEMATICALLY TALENTED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS?**

As an increasing number of high schools, nationwide, strive to offer additional Advanced Placement classes, a study conducted in 2002 by the National Research Council, a division of the congressionally chartered National Academy of Sciences, found that the nation's honors programs for high school students fail to offer an enriched learning experience to mathematically gifted and high-achieving students. It is clear from these findings that secondary schools must develop new alternatives to provide mathematically talented students with the opportunity to do challenging work that is well beyond their traditional grade level *with students of their own age.*

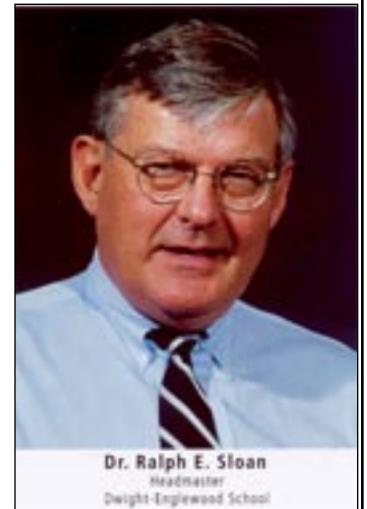
For too long, mathematics at the secondary level has been viewed as a fixed progression of topics, often not going beyond Advanced Placement BC Calculus. However, there are a large number of very able students who naturally "see" math (as opposed to students who work hard and are considered "good" or even "excellent" at math by traditional standards) and who are not well served by this approach. These are students, who naturally think algebraically, long before they are actually taught algebraic manipulations, and who express an interest in mathematical topics such as fractals or non-Euclidean geometries that are not usually included in high school curriculum.

Identification of these talented math students can and should begin in middle school, and a program addressing their needs should be implemented. At Dwight-Englewood school, where I am headmaster, mathematically talented students identified in sixth grade study advanced topics by solving complex problems in grades seven through nine. Often, as many as a third of our graduating class—some years as many as a third of them females—will graduate having multivariable calculus, and a number will have studied non-linear dynamics, linear algebra, and beyond.

At the high school level, these students should be identified by the school and invited to participate in the alternative math track. Schools that endeavor to attract students with these special abilities enjoy the benefits of developing a well-populated program, rather than designing independent study arrangements that cause students to feel isolated or simply placing students in classes with significantly older peers, which can lead to social difficulties. We have found that many of these talented students are strong across all academic subjects and enhance not only the profile of the class, but also the performance of their classmates.

By devoting resources to developing math curriculum for mathematically talented students, schools will keep and attract new students who will enhance the institution as a whole and will give students the opportunity to be challenged and to learn at a pace commensurate with their abilities and interests, without experiencing boredom, and feelings of isolation. #

*Dr. Ralph Sloan is Headmaster of Dwight-Englewood School, a highly selective, co-educational day school in Englewood, New Jersey. Dr. Sloan holds Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts and Doctor of Education degrees from Harvard University. He serves on the board of directors for New Jersey SEEDS, a scholarship program that places academically talented, financially disadvantaged students in private schools; the Educational Records Bureau (ERB); and the Englewood Community Chest.*



Dr. Ralph E. Sloan  
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PROFILES IN EDUCATION

## Joseph P. Viteritti, Hunter College

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Hunter's newly appointed Blanche D. Blank Professor of Public Policy in the Department of Urban Affairs, Joseph P. Viteritti, is thrilled at coming home. Dr. Blank was Viteritti's special mentor at Hunter when he was an undergraduate there, and though he went on to hone a professional career teaching and conducting research on education policy and state and local governance at Princeton, NYU and Harvard, getting back to Hunter—"a special place"—is a particular delight—Hunter students "are the most interesting students I've ever encountered." Dr. Viteritti's wide-ranging public service in the city, not to mention extensive research, including collaboration on four books with Diane Ravitch, should serve him well, he trusts, especially as he also brings to his new position years of experience in civic life, including assisting past Schools Chancellor Frank Macchiarola, another special mentor, advising Attorney General Eliot Spitzer on non-public schools, and working on various mayoral transition teams, Democratic and Republican. Dr. Viteritti is a strong believer in mayoral control of education.



Joseph Viteritti

At Hunter Dr. Viteritti, who has a Ph.D. in political science from CUNY, will continue to study the relationship of charter and parochial schools to local governance. He wants to "change the discourse" on urban education in general, and to that end is particularly pleased that Roosevelt House, the Upper East Side town house which Hunter owns and which Eleanor Roosevelt once called home, will again be a venue for intellectual and cultural activity. He's excited at the prospect

that the space might be used for dialogue on domestic policy and urban affairs issues, that discussions would be open to the entire university, and that lectures could draw on Hunter faculty expertise in areas such as immigration, health science and women's issues, as well as education.

Much of the current debate about education is being conducted with misinformation or no information, he suggests. For example, take two scenarios: a school sends home a note to parents saying that their child is performing at level 2. Sounds terrible. But what if the note also contained the information that 85 percent of the children in that grade were performing at level 2? The difference would be dramatic. In the first case, the child would be having difficulty, in the second, the school. And if the latter were the case, then parents should have the right to choose another school through vouchers. He would like to see Roosevelt House discussions refocus what for him has become a divisive way of framing school choice, with left and right squaring off

against one another. "Getting people to think more broadly is what academics should do." His most recent book, *Choosing Equality: School Choice, the Constitution and Civil Society*, shifts the discussion from marketplace considerations to issues of "social justice" and emphasizes how low-income parents in inner cities would have the same options as those in the middle and upper classes. Though impassioned about vouchers and charters, Dr. Viteritti says his goal is fair discussion, not proselytizing. The symbolism of choice may even be more important than its

*continued on page 31*

## Mortimer Levitt: The Author at 97

By DOROTHY DAVIS

His name is Mortimer Levitt but it should be Mortimer Live It!

*Education Update* Publisher Pola Rosen and I spent an afternoon with the spirited 97-year young author in his sumptuous Upper East Side townhouse. The occasion? His latest published book, *Ninety-Six and Too Busy to Die*.

The dapper retailer and namesake of the society hangout Mortimer's wore black, white and gold:

black velvet slippers, white silk stockings, white cotton trousers, and a black cashmere v-neck vest over an elegantly tailored white shirt with exquisitely detailed double globular gold cufflinks. His gray hair was slick, combed back; his eyes mischievous and alert. Very much the author not only of *Ninety-Six* but also of *The Executive Look and Class*.

"Of all your many achievements what are you the proudest of?" asked the forthright Pola.

"That I should write six books alone. I have no ghostwriter, no collaborator, and the first one

when I was 75," replied the formidable Mortimer. His other three books? *How to Start Your Own Business Without Losing Your Shirt*, *Thinking About Management*, *The Marketing Imagination*. And he's just finished one on aptitude.

"I feel the biggest mistake in education is not looking to uncover a person's aptitude," he said. "If you're a Rembrandt, a McEnroe, a Mozart, your aptitude is so strong it cries to be free. But most people don't uncover their aptitude. If they have an aptitude and look into it there are certain things they will do well. In my new book we find it the easy way. The reader will do it!"



Mortimer Levitt

Levitt's talents cried to be free. He has a near genius IQ but flunked out of Boys' High in Brooklyn. He got a job as an office boy, later became founder and sole owner of the Custom Shops Shirtmakers with 82 stores nationwide. Soon after starting it he got someone to run it for him. He became an art gallery owner, and found someone to run that for him.

When not overseeing his enterprises and writing he has played sports, traveled, lectured and created courses on how to listen to music. "There is a tremendous shrinkage of audiences for classical music. I've written a course for Bard College to stop that shrinkage and a course for high school students, 'An Insiders Look at Music from Rock to Bach'."

He eschews the label "philanthropist" but has given money and time generously to Lincoln Center, Young Concert Artists, Daytop Village and others. With his daughter he's building Levitt Pavilions for the Performing Arts—outdoor stages for entertainment on summer nights, with no admission charge. They're in Westport, Pasadena, Harrisburg, with many more on the way. Levitt founded a high school essay contest through the prestigious Writing Center at Marymount Manhattan College.

Tom Wolfe is his favorite author. He loves his essay collection, *Hooking Up*, his novel, *Bonfire of the Vanities*, all of his work. It's not hard to see why, for they both look with humor at the world as it is while exploring it on many levels. Wolfe writes it. Levitt Lives It! #

*Mortimer Levitt's books are available at Amazon.com.*

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## HS DROPOUT RATES REVERSED

By NAZNEEN MALIK

Recently, the U.S. Department of Education held a program in its series, "Education News Parents Can Use," entitled, "Dropout Prevention and Recovery: Catching Students Before It's Too Late," which discussed the issues surrounding high school students' decisions to dropout and programs that are being implemented to rectify the situation.

Research has shown that a person lacking a high school diploma will earn less than half of what a college graduate earns and only two-thirds of what a high school graduate makes because the individual lacks the necessary skills to compete in a highly competitive market. Hispanic, Native American, and African American students along with disabled students and those living in low income households are found to be at the greatest risk of dropping out of high school.

"Students without strong parental support often say this [school] is not meaningful, this is not getting me anywhere, I'm better off just leaving," says Susan Sclafani, Assistant Secretary of Education for Vocational & Adult Education Students.

The No Child Left Behind Act holds schools to very high standards for test scores, and for high schools, the graduation rate is a key piece of accountability," says Christopher Swanson, a research associate at the Urban Institute. The graduation rate has been redefined as "on-time completion of high school with a regular, standard state's diploma." Schools can no longer try to "game the system" by pushing out academically weak students to raise test scores. "Knowledge is power when it comes to the dropout rate," says Swanson. "We need to keep better track of students, know what type of support they need to keep them in school or bring them back, and we need to worry about how to identify those at-risk students, early."

Although the dropout situation seems bleak, there are programs that have been successful at preventing dropouts and re-introducing them into the educational system. One such effort is the Gateway to College program which offers high school dropouts ages 16-20 an opportunity to complete high school and earn college credit. Students learn in a cohort and master basics like reading, writing, and math, while working on skills needed for college. The goal of the program is to move students from a history of failure to hope to success. In fact, the program has been so successful that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have invested in replicating the Gateway model on other college campuses throughout the nation. To be effective, such programs require strong relationships between colleges and local school systems.

The National Football Foundation's "Play it Smart Educational Program," is another effort to keep students in school. The program targets kids from tough inner city environments, and provides support where it is lacking. It is designed to take "a student athlete's passion for sport and transform it into a force for greater good in their lives." The graduation rate is 98 percent for the whole program and the average GPAs of students are higher than the school's average.

Changing a school's curriculum to better suit the changing needs of society is another way to combat the dropout situation. One of the poorest communities in Ohio, Pine Valley Local School district drastically altered its curriculum in response to being placed on the state's "academic watch" due to poor academic performance. After changing the curriculum, raising standards, and providing students with additional support, college attendance and academic performance rose.

Therefore, from these programs, it seems evident that understanding the challenges that at-risk students face, and providing them with the

## Baruch College & Stanton Lynch Foster Student Achievement & Economic Growth

By LIZA YOUNG

Recently, the fourteenth floor of Baruch College's Vertical campus was filled with great energy and vitality, generated by the launching of the IPO (Investment Pays Off) challenge, a joint collaboration of Baruch College and Merrill Lynch.

The day marked the fifth anniversary of the competition on the college level, but the present launching is the first call for participation from high schools. Students from eight high schools around the city, in addition to students from Baruch College will compete in the task of creating novel business ventures with the generous prize of \$100,000 awarded by Merrill Lynch to the winner.

The eagerness of the students was apparent just by looking at the sharp suits with which they were attired and listening to the sound of competition in the air.

The collaboration of the two major institutions, educational and financial, is a remarkable coming together of theory and action. Participants in the competition will have access to the expert advice of members of the Baruch faculty and the mentorship and support of the adept staff at Merrill Lynch.

As illustrated by the key speakers at the launching, the project is instrumental to the hands on learning of students as well as to the financial future of the city. Speakers were united in their enthusiasm for the competition, expressing their excitement about a project which teams the fostering of education with the economy. As pointed

materials and support they need, is crucial to their academic and personal success.#



out by the President of Baruch College, Kathleen Waldron, students will have the ability to interact with real time financial data and on an international scale. Jason Wright, Senior Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs at Merrill Lynch, illustrated the impact such competitions have on the future of our economic growth as a nation given that "entrepreneurship is the backbone of our economy." Matthew Goldstein, Chancellor of the City University of New York as well as School's Chancellor Joel Klein, were present at the IPO launching, lending their staunch support to the branching partnership of two great institutions, Baruch and Merrill Lynch.

Additional inspiration was provided to the audience through the presentation of the first Baruch College and Merrill Lynch IPO Challenge Award for Leadership and Innovation to Laima Tazmin, a fifteen year old who at the young age of seven began a web based consulting business.

Overall the latest IPO launching represented the coming together of a first rate academic institution with a top-rated financial institution to potentially brighten the future of students and the economy overall.#

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## America Israel Friendship League: Fighting Terror in a Peaceful Manner



(L) Dr. Charlotte Frank  
& (R) Gold Medalist Lenny Krayzelberg

By LIZA YOUNG

With the war on terrorism and debates surrounding it dominating the news, it is refreshing to hear of an organization which addresses the issue in a manner that can be appreciated by anyone wishing for world peace. The America Israel Friendship League (AIFL) is such an organization. Started in 1971, this non-profit, non-sectarian organization has been working towards fostering the friendship between the democracies America and Israel. Through the AIFL's Youth Ambassador Student Exchange Program, students have the opportunity to forge friendships, learn leadership skills, and discover the perspective of other cultures. On a broader scale, the program allows for the fostering of democratic ties, a key instrument in the fight against terror.

This year marks a special event for the AIFL as it moves from a bilateral union to a trilateral one through the incorporation of Russia into the program, thus increasing the web of democracy.

Kenneth Bialkin, Chairman of the Board of the AIFL, enthusiastically embraced the move from a bilateral to trilateral approach. He underscored the move as containing the "hope of strengthening the relationship among people and nations and strengthening the fabric of freedom throughout the world." The expansion of the organization to include Russia is "important in the struggle against terrorism. We are committed to the spread



Students from the Bronx (L) & Israel (R)

of freedom and human rights and dignity and only if democracy can be introduced can we see the prospect of peace."

The Youth Ambassador program is invaluable to the social and academic development of youth. Fredi Malik Chairman of the Israel Youth Exchange Council explained how the project helps children become better, more informed citizens. He shared his view of how the program allows students to develop a better understanding, beyond exposure received from television and magazines, of what is going on in each other's countries. Lenny Krayzelberg, four-time Olympic gold medal winner in swimming, who has been actively involved in the program for three years, emphasized the value of the program in terms of the importance of leadership skills for personal growth. He also pointed out the program's benefit in terms of the enriching traveling opportunities involved. The experiences of youth ambassadors will stay with them in an academic sense as pointed out by Dr. Charlotte Frank, AIFL Vice President. It is an excellent experience to put down on ones' resume, she pointed out, and thus has the additional benefit of helping one's future career.

Chaperones of the 2004 Student Exchange Program trip highlighted the blossoming of friendships and the opportunity to learn about similarities and contrasts between different educational systems. Limor Ben David, a social worker from Haifa, and Marina Geletko, a teacher from

## Expeditionary Learning Engages Middle School Students at Bank Street

By NAZNEEN MALIK

As seventh grader Janeese aptly states in a matter-of-fact way, "Education is the key to life." Her teachers nod their heads approvingly and smile; her seriousness is refreshing. Janeese attends The Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies (BCS), an Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound School (ELOB) for seventh graders. At a recent conference at Bank Street, she spoke about her school's program along with several of her classmates and teachers.

Unlike traditional schools, the BCS curriculum is centered around learning expeditions which are multi-disciplinary projects that weave together the Humanities, Social Sciences, Math, and Science to create a hands-on, balanced approach to learning while meeting district and state standards. Fieldwork is the medium through which students gain real world experience and is fundamental to the school's philosophy. Students conduct surveys and interviews on various topics derived from the school's three directive questions: What does it mean to be successful? What is our identity? What is the culture of BCS? As a result, students are able to think critically and make conclusions based on observations. Furthermore, the skills learned through fieldwork become unconsciously embedded in the way students think about their surroundings and the way they think about the world.

Moscow, emphasized how the students learn about each other's culture, but also have the shared camaraderie of being teenagers, which transcends the boundaries of country and language.

Students of this latest Youth Ambassador meeting expressed excitement about the program, highlighting the bonds of emotions and friendships

In addition to an applied, inter-disciplinary approach to education, BCS also places an emphasis on community and teamwork for both its students and its teachers. Students are almost always working in teams, and teachers collaborate with one another to plan interdisciplinary expeditions. They also critique each other's plans, and develop ways to improve the curriculum.

Although BCS is a fledgling ELOB School, it is already considering expansion to the eighth grade. If so, teachers would stay with the same group of students in order to strengthen classroom relationships and build community. Parents who were initially skeptical of The Brooklyn School's unconventionality grew comfortable with its educational approach as they began to witness the positive effects it had on their children's motivation and performance.

"Students are more motivated when they have an interest in what they are doing," says Vincent, a Math teacher at BCS. Students take pride in their work and present their projects at an Expeditionary fair held at the end of the school year. Projects that were presented during the Bank Street workshop sessions included investigations into school drinking water, ethnic diversity among students, and the effect clocks had on a student's ability to perform. Students delivered their projects with passion and spoke like experts.#

shared which will continue, they vowed, beyond this time and place. Indeed, one wept at the podium at leaving the group evoking teary eyes around the room.

If democracy and world peace are dreams that can become reality, surely this program will be instrumental in achieving that goal.#

## Calendar of Events

December 2004

### Camp Fair

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RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, INC. PUBLISHES SECOND EDITION OF AFTER SCHOOL AND MORE

First Directory of Before- or After-School Programs For Children & Youth with Special Needs

Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc. (RCSN) announces the publication of its **second edition of After School and More** - the first comprehensive resource of its kind - for caregivers and professionals in search of the right after-school program for children and teens with disabilities or other special needs. Fully updated in 2004, the popular directory of more than 450 before- and after-school programs covers special, inclusion and mainstream programs from education, remediation, homework help, sports and the arts, to travel, day trips, social life, respite, zoos, playgrounds and child care.

*After School and More, 2nd ed.*, is based on RCSN's proprietary and comprehensive database of more than 4,700 organizations and 8,500 sites. Other directories available include: THE COMPREHENSIVE DIRECTORY; CAMPS 2004 (annual editions); TRANSITION MATTERS - FROM SCHOOL TO INDEPENDENCE, all including programs and services for children and youth with disabilities and their families in the New York area, and SCHOOLS AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS, a directory for children and youth in New York City and the lower Hudson Valley.

*After School and More, 2nd ed.*, is much more than just a list of names and addresses. The directory also includes: contact information, ages, population served, program capacity, staff/child ratio, program hours/days, fees, transportation, medication, administration and description of services.

*After School and More, 2nd ed.*, provides comprehensive information in an easy-to-use format for both parents and professionals. The directory contains service, population served, time of operation (before- or after-school, weekend or holiday), borough and zip code indices for quick searching, as well as an index of legal services.

*After School and More, 2nd ed.*, is available at local and online booksellers, or can be ordered by sending a check for \$25 (plus \$8 shipping and handling) to: Resources for Children with Special Needs Inc., Dept. PRAF04, 116 East 16th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10003. For more information, or details on multiple-copy discounts, contact Lisa Talley at Resources for Children with Special Needs Inc., (212) 677-4650/ext. 30.

Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc. (RCSN) is an independent, not-for-profit information, referral, advocacy, training and support center in New York City for parents and professionals looking for programs and services for children from birth to 21 with learning, developmental, emotional or physical disabilities. RCSN is one of a national network of more than 100 Parent Training and Information Centers designated by the U.S. Department of Education. For more information see [www.resourcesny.org](http://www.resourcesny.org).

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### Conferences

32ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON DYSELXIA AND RELATED LEARNING DISABILITIES on Monday, March 14 &

Tuesday, March 15, 2005 at the Marriott Marquis in midtown, New York City. 1,200 educators, healthcare providers, administrators and parents of children with dyslexia choose from over 95 sessions on dyslexia. For more information, call 212-691-1930 ext. 13 or visit us online at [www.nybida.com](http://www.nybida.com)

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### Events

THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM  
144 West 125 St., NYC 10027  
Phone: 212-864-4500 Fax: 212-864-4800  
Web: [www.StudioMuseum.org](http://www.StudioMuseum.org)

Through the Department of Education and Public Programs, The Studio Museum in Harlem offers a range of programs that engage a diverse cross section of artists of various disciplines, including writers, scholars, musicians and critics who share their perspectives on contemporary subjects. Public programs are presented in conjunction with exhibitions on view and in tandem with various cultural conversations that address concerns and ideas relevant to art and artists of African descent.

Exhibitions on view thru January 9, 2005  
- Kerry James Marshall: One True Thing, Meditations on Black Aesthetics  
- Harlem Postcards Fall 2004

HOOFERS' HOUSE  
Friday, December 19, 7pm

Heavily influenced by the styles of old school tap, dance phenom Jason Bernard will host this evening. Have you ever heard of the legendary "Hoofers' Club?" From the 1920s through the 1940s, Harlem's Comedy Club on 131st, owned by Lonnie Hicks, was the home of the Hoofers' Club. This back room was a site for learning, listening and creativity for those interested in tap dance. Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, King Rastus Brown, John Bubbles, Charles Honi Coles and many more crossed the threshold of this intimate room. In honor of this important aspect of Harlem's history, SMH now serves as a new home for hoofers! Tap dancers - elders and young people alike - are invited to take the floor at these

quarterly jam sessions! This fall the sessions will be hosted by various dancers presenting original choreography in response to works on view.  
Free! Space/seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

INTERSECTIONS:  
CONVERSATIONS ON ART & CULTURE  
Ronald K. Brown,  
Thursday, January 6, 7pm.

Waiting for just the right critical, controversial, conversation to get you thinking? The dance world has surely been waiting for this one. Sandra D. Jackson, SMH director of education and public programs, will discuss notions of the black aesthetic with one of the most talked about contemporary dancers/choreographers working today—Ronald K. Brown. Praised for his ability to communicate powerful social and political messages through dance, Artistic Director Ronald K. Brown founded Evidence in 1985. Named after the first solo piece he created, Evidence has performed in premiere halls around the world, halls around the world.

### Test Preparation

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### Lectures

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2005 Institute for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity and Behavior Disorders Family Education Series For Family Members of Children Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Disruptive Behaviors ADHD's "Relatives": Oppositional Defiance Disorder and Anxiety  
Time: 6:00-7:30 pm  
Place: NYU Child Study Center, 577 First Avenue, New York, NY 10016  
Price: \$15 per session, per family  
For more information: Steven M.S. Kurtz, Ph.D., ABPP at (212) 263-8915

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2005

The Sunny and Abe Rosenberg Foundation Lecture Series Asperger's in the Classroom: Helping Students with Social Deficits  
Time: 4:15-6:00 pm Place: 215 Lexington, 16th Floor Auditorium Cost: Free  
For more information: contact NYU Child Study Center at (212) 263-8982

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2005

Institute for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity and Behavior Disorders Family Education Series For Family Members of Children Diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Disruptive Behaviors, Session 6: Learning Disabilities and ADHD: What's the connection?  
Time: 6:00-7:30 pm  
Place: NYU Child Study Center, 577 First Avenue, New York, NY 10016  
Price: \$15 per session, per family  
For more information: Steven M.S. Kurtz, Ph.D., ABPP at (212) 263-8915

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## STUDENTS TAKING THE HIGH ROAD TO RELIGION

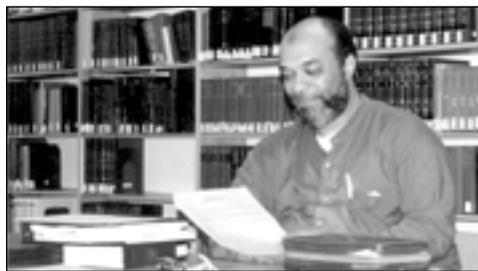
### IMAM OLIVER MOHAMMAD

By NAZNEEN MALIK

Oliver Mohammad never really had a desire to become an Imam; it was more of a calling. Instilled with a natural inclination towards helping others, Mohammad converted to Islam 32 years ago and worked with Muslim inmates as a prison chaplain before even considering becoming an Imam. "I wanted to help inmates change their lives," he says, "and as I became more active in leading them in Friday prayer, having classes, and sharing with them everything I already knew about Islam, [my role] kind of evolved."

A part-time student in the Master of Religious Practice (MRP) program at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS) in Virginia, Mohammad is already an Imam at his local mosque and only one paper away from graduating. Mohammed actually became an Imam shortly before gaining admission into the MRP program. "I thought I was equipped," he chuckles, "but when I saw the scope of the position, I figured I needed some concentrated study." Most students often go abroad to study, and as a result many Islamic institutions in the United States do not offer programs that sufficiently serve those students who wish to become Imams here. The GSISS is one of the few institutions that does.

The MRP program can be completed in three years of full-time study and it prepares students for service-oriented careers in the Muslim community such as chaplaincy or other leadership roles like that of an Imam. The curriculum includes, among others, courses in the Quranic Sciences, Islamic Jurisprudence, World Religions, the Hadith (teachings of Prophet Muhammad), and Islamic History. Classes are taught primarily in English; however, emphasis is placed on achieving Quranic proficiency. "Prayers have to



be led in Arabic," states Mohammad, "and we lead prayers with the Quran; we don't recite anything else so learning the Arabic of the Quran is essential. An Imam should be able to read it and understand it but not necessarily be able to speak Arabic conversationally."

The word, "Imam," itself, means leader. Essentially, any mature male can be an Imam without any formal education, however, as the community grows and its needs grow, so too do the roles and functions of an Imam. When asked how to determine who can be an Imam, Mohammad relates a well known hadith, "First, the Imam is the person who knows more of the Quran. If that condition is met, then he is the one who is aware of the Sunnah (life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad). Next, the person who has been Muslim longer, [after that] the one who is most senior in age." These criteria seem necessary for this complex and varied role. Imams act as counselors; they deliver sermons every Friday prayer as well as on other religious occasions, perform funeral services and marriage ceremonies, teach classes in various areas of Islam, participate in interfaith dialogues and outreach initiatives, and build bridges in the community.

Although Imam Mohammad is very active in his community, the humility in his voice is unmistakable. He fervently believes that the greatest gift anybody can give to their community is a better improved self and a persistent dedication to improving the welfare of others.#

### SEMINARIAN JAMES GRACE

By SARAH ANN MOCKBEE

James Grace has known since he was in junior high school that he wanted to be a priest, but his desire to serve his community through ministry has not stopped him from pursuing other interests along the way. While in college at Southwestern University where he majored in Communications, Grace spent his last few years working as an on-air personality at two commercial radio stations in the alternative music market. After graduation, he worked at an investment firm for a year, but the first few weeks of data entry were enough to convince him that this was not his calling in life.

Traveling through the Middle East and visiting Biblical archeological sites rekindled his interest in theology and spirituality. For him, visiting locations found in the Bible was an "earthy" way to get in touch with the Biblical and theological story that has spanned so many years. Soon after, Grace decided to take a job as a director of Youth and Young Adult ministries at Trinity Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas.

After receiving the blessing of his home parish, Grace entered Virginia Theological Seminary where he will earn a Masters of Divinity degree next May. Upon completing the three-year program, he and his wife, Marla, will move to Houston where he will serve in a parish for the next two years.

When asked about the pressures that accompany a priest's job description—most notably the expectation to be a positive role model for his parishioners—Grace is quick to point out that while priests are human, it is incumbent upon them to live a life that complements their theological, spiritual, and ethical beliefs. "It's not about forcing other people to subscribe to your



moral agenda, but living a life that is a loving response to the true 'role model,' or moral authority, God. However, I don't see being a role model as a job in which I must live up to people's moral expectations twenty-four hours a day, because that's not realistic. Being a role model to me means being self differentiated enough to be able to function in periods of anxiety without allowing that anxiety to regulate my responses. I hope that by modeling this behavior, others will see that it is a healthy way to live."

Along these lines, Grace notes the importance of religious leaders having interests other than theology. Grace is proud to boast the fact that he loves heavy metal music—an admitted anomaly among his fellow seminarians—but no one judges him because of it, rather they embrace the idiosyncrasies that make Grace who he is. For Grace, music of all kinds is an opportunity for God to speak to him. "God doesn't just speak to us through Scripture. God is present everywhere, incarnated in the words of a close friend or lover, the rhythm of a song, and in the image on the screen." One could say that this is the crux of Grace's calling—an attempt to bring others closer to God in a way that celebrates a personal connection to their world.#

### THE ROAD TO THE RABBINATE

By LIZA YOUNG

Elie Kaunfer did not always have the aspiration to become a Rabbi. "As the son of a Rabbi and nephew to two out of three uncles who are Rabbis, I knew I wasn't going to be a Rabbi," Elie reminisced.

This was of course his perspective when he was younger. After attaining his BA from Harvard in 1995, with a major in sociology and government, he embarked on different careers that included journalist and corporate fraud investigator at an investment bank. These past endeavors have become part of his repertoire of skills, which will be useful to him in his future career as Rabbi.

Elie's interest in pursuing the path of the Rabbinate was sparked through his involvement in the formation of a special prayer group, called *Kehilat Hadar*. It was in April of 2001 that Elie, together with two friends, decided that they wanted to create a different option for prayer, one that maintained the traditional prayers, but that had a more spirited approach as well as an egalitarian aspect. In other words, the prayer group would involve the introduction of new melodies to the traditional text and allow the participation of women in leading prayers. The group quickly exploded to include 60 people, and from there grew even further.

The formation of *Hadar* helped Elie attain the realization that he was interested in general community concerns and that he could best serve the community through becoming a Rabbi. He could not think of a better place to pursue this goal than the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). Having some background in Judaic Studies, he felt that the seminary offered a "fantastic array of courses that enrich his knowledge base."

Elie, now a third year student at JTS, received a Fellowship from the Wexner Foundation, an organization that funds various areas of Judaic Studies, such as the Rabbinate, the Cantorate and Jewish education. The fellowship is awarded



to students who in addition to academic excellence also demonstrate leadership qualities and a dedication to the Jewish community. Elie finds that the Wexner program provides him with the opportunity to be a part of a "great network of people to share experiences with."

Among Elie's role models are his parents. His father, Rabbi Alvan Kaunfer, a Congregational Rabbi in Rhode Island, revealed to him how one can be a "caring as well as knowledgeable Rabbi within the community." His mother, Marcia, was inspirational in the formation of *Hadar*. She believes firmly in the egalitarian approach to prayer and was a pioneer in women's involvement in prayer beyond traditional involvement.

In the future, in addition to his involvement with *Hadar*, Elie wishes to respond to community interests and concerns. He also expressed an interest in academia. He is completing a master's degree in Jewish Liturgy, studying the structure and history of prayer and may teach this in the future.

With respect to global concerns, Elie explained how it is a Jewish value to be hopeful for world peace and believes that communication between different cultures is a key element towards the path to peace.#

**The  
Education Update  
Family Wishes  
Your Family  
A Happy And  
Healthy New Year!**





## The Salzburg Festival Der Rosenkavalier in a Bordello!

By IRVING SPITZ

There was a startling new production of Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Salzburg Festival this year. Time and its inexorable progress is a major theme in this operatic masterpiece. All the characters reflect on the past, the present or the future. This is what is foremost on the mind of the thirty-two year old Marschallin, wife of a Field marshal. She fears that it is only a matter of time before her current lover, the seventeen year-old Count Octavian, drops her for someone considerably younger. While the Marschallin reflects on the past, her lecherous and boorish cousin, Baron Ochs, who is engaged to Sophie, muses on the immediate present and the rich dowry he is expecting from Faninal, Sophie's father, on the occasion of his marriage. Sophie, a mere teenager and just out of a convent, as well as the young Octavian bridge both present and future.

*Der Rosenkavalier* is set in Vienna in the 1770's during the reign of the Austrian Empress, Maria Theresa. Canadian director Robert Carsen has fast-forwarded the current production to Vienna immediately prior to the First World War, at the time that Strauss and von Hofmannsthal were in fact working on this opera. At the end, with the conclusion of the famous duet between Sophie and Octavian, we see an interesting new twist. Instead of the curtain falling on the two lovers and the Marschallin's young servant who has been sent to retrieve Sophie's handkerchief, in the current production the stage is suddenly populated by a large number of soldiers and Octavian is served his draft papers, presumably to enlist in the coming First World War.

The cavernous stage of the Grosses Festspielhaus always represents a challenge to any director. Act I is set in the bedchamber of the Marschallin. To put this into realistic proportions, Carsen surrounded it on both sides with two anterooms in which her liveried servants could congregate. In Act II, Carsen utilized the whole stage, which was transposed into the salon in the palace of



Faninal and was dominated by a huge table set for a wedding feast. An ostentatious mural formed the backdrop. The highlight was the dramatic appearance on horseback of the impeccably dressed Rosenkavalier, Octavian, ready to present the silver rose to Sophie.

Carsen set Act III in a bordello. Here the different rooms were utilized for the usual and expected activities, including nudity, stripping and various sex acts. Although this was somewhat overdone and it upset many in the sophisticated audience, the approach worked and represented an interesting new take on what is usually shown as a private room in an inn. In passing, it is worth noting that this kind of production with overt and explicit sexual overtones is currently the "in thing" in many European operatic productions.

*Der Rosenkavalier* ends with the most sublime trio and duet for the sopranos, among the most beautiful vocal music composed in the twentieth century. The three sopranos gave their all with wonderful ensemble singing. To his credit, Russian conductor Semyon Bychkov didn't draw out this conclusion with exaggerated sentimentality, as is often done. He led a powerful well-paced performance with the Vienna Philharmonic although on occasion, especially in the fortissimo passages, the singers had a hard time competing with the orchestra.#

## ANESTHETIC OR AESTHETIC: ARTS EDUCATION AT THE CROSSROADS



By SCOTT NOPPE-  
BRANDON

Over the past few years at Lincoln Center Institute (LCI) I have had the great pleasure of hosting visitors from around the globe, representing over 40 countries. Many of these countries have begun developing their own institutes of aesthetic education. As we discuss the meaning of "aesthetic" education, one point is a given: it is the opposite of what John Dewey calls "anesthetic" education. By that I mean that we are advocates of education that creates an environment of wakefulness and awareness, as opposed to numbness. An education that educates through intellectual and imaginative development, that integrates learning across the grade levels, creating what Howard Gardner calls "Pathways of Knowledge." Such education contributes to the creation of an informed citizenship, a society in which each student is a vital member—here or abroad.

Which brings me to the recent U.S. presidential election, many of the congressional and gubernatorial races, even some of the local campaigns. Sixty percent of voters voted, the largest voter turnout in many decades—but that still leaves us with 40 percent of the registered voters who did not vote. Do they feel so disenfranchised by political process, that they have "elected" to opt out? Have they tuned out the white noise of political banter? Have they become weary of candidates

who tell them whatever it takes to get elected? This white noise is so overwhelming that following the debates the major networks felt compelled to have "truth squads" analyze the (mis)information slung by one candidate or another. How can these actions lead us toward awareness, toward the values implicit in aesthetic education?

Perhaps we should turn the tables, by implementing a system of penalties that would give something back to our schools. What if financial penalties were leveled on any political candidate who knowingly told an "untruth" to the voting public? These funds could then be used to support a curriculum designed to teach our nation's youth to develop informed viewpoints. In other words, a curriculum preparing them to live as informed individuals in a democratic society. What if another penalty was to withhold a block of votes on Election Day from the guilty candidate(s), based on the theory that the votes were received through deceit? How about if the candidate was required to write, "I am sorry for lying" 100 times on a blackboard, Internet-based, of course?

Far fetched? Of course it is. But don't our children deserve honesty from our nation's leaders? Isn't it time to take back the moral playing field and demand that all our leaders, both parties, in all our elections, stand firmly as role models of the clear, informed discourse we are trying to teach our children in schools? Horace Mann knew that "education is the balance wheel of the social machinery." Let's keep that machinery running smoothly by educating our students, and, respectfully, those around the world, to grapple with the truth; to be imaginative and informed thinkers.

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## THE STEPHEN GAYNOR SCHOOL: PROVIDING A WARM AND ENRICHING ENVIRONMENT TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

By LIZA YOUNG

Dr. Scott Gaynor, Head of the Stephen Gaynor School, recently shared his dedication, passion and vision for his school. Housed in a landmarked townhouse on the Upper West Side, Dr. Scott Gaynor, whose grandmother founded the school which bears the namesake of his uncle, helps children with learning disabilities overcome the challenges they face so that they can ultimately transition to a mainstream environment. The school's mission is based on the idea that there are intelligent children with learning disabilities who can potentially thrive in a mainstream environment through proper social and academic support.

Woven throughout the endeavors of the Stephen Gaynor School is a nurturing and caring environment. The school itself contains a relatively small population, only 120 students, divided into small class sizes, with two skilled teachers per class. Every member of the educational staff knows the student population personally, being familiar with the specific strengths and needs of each child. Teachers are highly dedicated and intricately involved in the education of their students. Dr. Gaynor describes the approach at the school as being one of "multiple lenses, with all teachers involved, looking at the child and how can they can best address their needs."

An important feature of the Gaynor School is that classes are not based strictly on chronological age, but all relevant factors are weighed in creating classes. They are generally based on academic and social needs. Further homogenization is created through breaking up classes into groups. The goal is to create as homogenous a group as possible. At the same time, the school contains a "student driven curriculum," where stu-

dents are provided with "Diagnostic Prescriptive Instruction, a term coined by Yvette Siegal, one of the School's Founders and current Director of Education, where each child is provided with support and instruction specific to their needs. This approach involves the idea of taking a child who is intelligent but has a disability in an area, and allowing them to learn about the topic through overcoming the barrier. This can involve, for example, teaching a child with decoding problems—who is capable of understanding a complex, abstract story—through making the story accessible to them using tools and resources to overcome the decoding barrier.

Technological resources are readily available and used to help students learn in a way that meets their needs. Software such as Kidspiration and Inspiration, are used, which are excellent resources that employ visual tools into the learning process in an interactive fashion. Note-taking programs are also available for children who are dysgraphic.

The curriculum at the Steven Gaynor School is comprehensive, covering areas that are part of a mainstream program, such as history, science, music, art and physical education. Speech and language pathologists as well as occupational therapists meet regularly with students to help develop speech skills and organizational skills. The program is also cross-categorical, enriching a child's knowledge of a subject through multiple approaches.

Additional means of preparing the student towards the future of transitioning to a mainstream environment are through the learning of organizational skills, having the opportunity to learn from social studies textbooks, learning research skills, and for the older student, interview skills.

Recently, Dr. Gaynor has embarked on the most ambitious undertaking in the history of

his school: a \$19 million capital campaign for a new school to be opened in the fall of 2006 and located at 90<sup>th</sup> Street between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenue. The new state-of-the-art-facility will be able to accommodate 45 additional students. Further, each of 18 classrooms will contain a breakout room, which can be used when classes are divided to create further homogenized

groups. There is an additional plan of launching a Community Learning Center, providing special education support to children outside of the enrolled population. Dr. Gaynor's wish is for this state-of-the-art-facility to remain true to the mission of the Stephen Gaynor School, providing an individualized approach within the context of a warm and nurturing environment.#

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# MEDICAL UPDATE



New York City • DECEMBER 2004  
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

• 15

## Dr. Norman G. Levinsky: A Great Teacher Remembered Forever

By POLA ROSEN, Ed. D.

Recently a memorial service was held at Boston University for Dr. Norman Levinsky, a great medical school professor, teacher, clinician, and researcher. About 300 of his mentees gathered together from all parts of the country to pay homage to this great teacher. Dr. Levinsky was praised during the eulogy for never repeating a question or an answer. Instead he presented it in four or five different ways so that if you didn't understand it one way you would get it the second, third or fourth way. By the time he was finished, you understood the concept.

Dr. William Couser, Belding Scribner Professor of Medicine from Seattle, delivered the eulogy that poignantly described what so many felt. It helped to shed light on my ongoing lifelong question: "What are the ingredients of a great teacher, one who can help to shape and influence the lives of others?"

William G. Couser, M.D.

I'd like to speak about Norman's role in career development with examples from my own career. It was about 32 years ago that I first met Norman Levinsky in person, when I was about half as old and perhaps less than half as wise as I am now! His influence on my life and career in medicine after that was enormous.

The BU renal service, run by Norman, was busy

and active and my first exposure to Norman was viewing him from afar as an intense pied piper-like figure leading a team of students, residents and fellows through the underground caverns of the Boston City Hospital (BCH).

The Harvard service that I was part of, in contrast, had one faculty member, one fellow, myself—and no patients. And so, unencumbered by clinical duties, I began my career as a nephrologist at the BCH by becoming the world's expert on renal disease in the guinea pig, the only mammals with renal disease at BCH that were not taken care of by Norman. And so began my career in renal research which has lasted now for over 30 years.

My next encounter was a more personal one. After a brief sojourn to the University of Chicago to complete the fellowship, I yearned to return to Boston. So I wrote to Norman to inquire about possible faculty positions at BU where he by then served as both Chairman of Medicine and Chief of the Renal Section. He invited me to meet with him for the first time in the spring of 1973 in a restaurant at Haddon Hall in Atlantic City. Norman sat down and, as a waitress approached, told me our conversation would not be of sufficient duration to bother to order any food. He asked me what I wanted to do. I said I wanted to continue a career in renal research in Boston.

Without batting an eye, he told me I was, in his view, quite inadequately trained to do any meaningful research. But before I could leave, he went on to say that he already had three excellent faculty doing research but only one, Dr. Beldon Idelson, taking care of patients. Since Beldon was getting too busy, he offered me a junior faculty position at BU as Beldon's assistant.

But there was an important caveat which was that, although he would not pay me to do research, he would allow me to use the Renal Section research facilities in my spare time on nights and weekends to pursue my strange interests in the immunology of renal disease, a discipline about which he readily admitted to knowing nothing. Whether it was just to prove him wrong, or for more enlightened reasons, I accepted the job on the spot, and Norman got up, thanked me for meeting with him and left me at the table!

The 10 years that followed before I left BU to Head the Division of Nephrology at the University of Washington in Seattle in 1982, were some of the happiest and most productive of my professional career. I remember many things from them, most related in one way or another to Norman

Like touring the facilities in the old blue building on Albany Street where we worked in those days with Norman, who told me at least three times that I must remember that any commitments made by him were only likely to be good for 6-7 years, the average tenure of a Chairman of Medicine in those days. He retired from that position some 30 years later in 2000.

I remember how hard I worked in my little laboratory space in the blue building on most nights and weekends, partly because I really loved the research, but partly, I have to admit, because I so desperately wanted to prove that Norman was wrong in his assessment of my research abilities!

My research progressed, and I published a few papers and got my own grant funding from the NIH, and as that happened Norman very slowly but very fairly allowed me to give up a month of clinical responsibilities to do research.

And I remember the annual evaluations we all had with Norman. On the dreaded day, his secretary Janet would call to say that "Dr. Levinsky wants to meet with you at 4 pm to discuss your annual evaluation." We all hated these sessions, which were characterized by one person, like putting on a wet bathing suit in a cold room. We all assembled on the fourth floor to support the summoned person before he or she went down to Norman's office, and then we all waited for the always precise 30 minutes to pick up the pieces afterward. And I would go into those meetings each year cautiously optimistic that my 4 papers and new grant would get me Norman's approval and a 10 percent pay raise. And I'd always be

told that 4 could have been 5, that the new grant could have been larger or longer, and that "By the way, Bill, although your teaching evaluations were generally very good, one resident did write an evaluation saying your teaching was terrible!" And you can guess what happened in the next year. There were 6 papers instead of 4, a second new grant and perfect teaching evaluations.

There is a very thin line between many human emotions, love and hate, fear and exaltation, joy and sorrow. And it is at a point closest to that line that inspiration lives, not at the margins. With respect to his role as a mentor and developer of young people, Norman walked that line like no one else I've ever met. We all had this intense and consuming love/hate relationship with Norman because he had this uncanny way of perceiving in each of us what we were capable of and letting us know what that was. With Norman, the prize was always just out of reach, the rabbit just ahead of your nose, the bar always one inch higher than you thought you could jump. But it takes more than just being able to confront people with their unfulfilled potential to get results. It would be easy to characterize the things he said as being insensitive statements from a person in a position of authority and some took it that way.

But to me, and I think I speak for my colleagues as well, they were inspirational. And they were inspirational not just because Norman was the Chairman. They were inspirational, and empowering, because Norman was the most honest and fair and ethical man I have ever met in medicine. His own standards were so high, and we respected him so much, that we all jumped higher, ran faster and worked harder to live up to his standards and expectations. And in doing so we grew, each of us grew, and the whole of the Renal Section at BU became greater than the sum of the parts.

Very high expectations delivered in a way that was carefully calculated to get your attention by someone who you so respected that no mountain was too high to climb, inspired us to live up to what he asked of us.

I will close with just a final comment. The film that won the Oscar in 2002 for best picture, and won a Tony award before that for best Broadway show, was Chicago. My favorite song in Chicago is called "Class" and begins "What ever happened to fair dealing, and pure ethics, and old values and fine morals" and I would add honest evaluations, and fair treatment? What ever happened to class?

Norman Levinsky was class. And because he was, and because so many of us were made better by it, Norman will live forever in the careers in medicine of each of us he touched, and even further beyond us because of the generations and careers that we touch. Very few people will ever leave that kind of legacy.#

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## BEYOND THE STETHOSCOPE

By DONALD A. FEINFELD, M.D.

At some point in the program  
the computer directives  
menace the last free space;  
the hidden command comes  
CLEAR SCREEN  
Sudden failing of light  
in the phosphorus fires—  
in one second, words vanish;  
their after-image blinks out  
CLEAR SCREEN  
Primitive nerves, purged,

separate from paths that ran before.  
Fossils vaporize, leaving  
unexplained creation  
CLEAR SCREEN  
Male and female figures planted  
in Paradise, not knowing  
how they got there, cling  
naked to each other  
CLEAR SCREEN  
Cain, sullen beside  
his brother's body, reasons  
when the story of drying blood

grows tiresome: the order comes  
CLEAR SCREEN  
Now he may move to Nod,  
content his children  
won't notice the thumb-print  
flecking his face  
CLEAR SCREEN  
History can rise from ashes  
after the arsonist's match,  
but the wise know those cinders  
scatter with any breath of wind  
END PROGRAM

## ABOLISHING HOMELESSNESS: INTERVIEW WITH MARIA FOSCARINIS, ESQ.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY

By NAZNEEN MALIK & LIZA YOUNG

**Education Update (EU):** Given that a fraction of eligible homeless persons are receiving benefits, what efforts are being made to assure that homeless individuals are adequately receiving access to assistance programs?

**Maria Foscarnis (MF):** This is a large part of our work here at National Law Center of Homelessness—advocating to remove the barriers that prevent homeless people from receiving the benefits they need and to which they are entitled. We do this by advocating with government agencies and Congress. In some cases we go to court—as we did recently to ensure access to school for homeless kids.

**EU:** What future legislation would you hope to see regarding the education of the homeless?

**MF:** Ultimately, what we want is legislation that promotes residential stability for poor families—this would promote stability of school placement and hopefully improve academic and social outcomes for homeless children. A further “big picture” goal is improving the quality of education that homeless and other poor children receive. Right now we are focused simply on access to education; in the future we need to ensure access to quality education, to really give these kids a chance and an equal opportunity to be successful adults.

On a more specific level, we’d like a greater role for the U.S. Department of Education in enforcing the right of education rights of homeless children, while preserving the right of families to sue in federal court. We’d also like to see protections to ensure that unaccompanied youth have safe shelter and a means of accessing an education without having to worry about being returned to the custody of abusive parents or guardians. We also want to ensure that homeless pre-schoolers have access to Head Start.

More technical but important practical goals are reforming the McKinney-Vento Act to require transportation for homeless preschoolers; a provision that specifies whether the school of origin or school of current location must provide transportation (current law allows the two districts to decide between themselves which sometimes leads to transportation delays as districts try to strike a deal), and a clearer expression of the right to immediate enrollment even if the child has yet to complete immunizations.

**EU:** If budget was not a factor, name two optimal services that you would recommend to extricate families from the desperate situation of homelessness?

**MF:** Safe, decent, affordable housing is essential. Next is a range of comprehensive support services that are easy to access such as job assistance (training, search, and child care), health services, and help in applying for and receiving benefits for which the family may be eligible, such as Food Stamps, Medicaid, WIC. Help should be centralized and easy to get—unlike the current fragmented systems that often require families to travel all over to different agencies and fill out multiple forms. Make it simple and efficient—it’s in everyone’s interest.

**EU:** How important, in your opinion, is improving the educational access of homeless children to your overall goal of “abolishing” homelessness?

**MF:** It’s extremely important. Education—especially good quality education—is the true key to breaking the cycle of homelessness and poverty. It’s a major homelessness prevention strategy—it can prevent homeless children from becoming homeless adults. In the immediate term, access to school and pre-school can often also mean access to school services like meals, health and other services that can help stabilize the whole family, and help them out of homelessness. #

## EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS: HOPE FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

By PATRICIA A. POPP, Ph.D.

Education is a powerful key in breaking the cycle of homelessness experienced by youth in the United States. Since 1999, the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) has recognized successful high school students wishing to pursue higher education. These LeTendre Scholars frequently remind us that the work we do in schools changes the lives of children. They tell us that education will lead to a future of promise and hope.

The term “homeless” conjures images of adults living on the street, under bridges, or abandoned buildings; however, a growing subpopulation of homelessness is families with children and older youth. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act defines which students should be considered homeless and includes youth “who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” and may be living doubled up with friends or relatives, living in shelters, cars, abandoned buildings, or other substandard housing. Recent estimates suggest over two million individuals will experience homelessness in the U.S. each year. Approximately half will be youths. The most recent U.S. Department of Education Report to Congress for fiscal year 2000 stated more than 866,000 youths were identified as homeless during the 1999-2000 school year; 87 percent of the reported school age children were enrolled in school and 67 percent attended regularly; the rate of enrollment for preschoolers was 15 percent.

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures these students have access to an appropriate education. Every school district must assign a local homeless education liaison who is responsible for identifying homelessness, providing training to school personnel, and coordinating with other service providers to assist families and youth in accessing both school and community resources.

Because these youths move frequently and may not have access to all their school records, they must be immediately enrolled in school, even if



normally-required documentation is missing. To alleviate the impact of multiple moves, homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin. To provide this school stability, districts must provide transportation to school. Anecdotally, liaisons note that children who stay in one school all year outperform those attending three or four different schools.

Homelessness is being addressed in other federal legislation, as well. The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will require state level coordination between homeless and special education programs and local efforts to lessen the impact of moves on providing special education services. Head Start legislation and the Higher Education Act have proposed changes to improve access to educational services for homelessness. Head Start proposal would ensure immediate enrollment to Head Start programs. Finally, housing legislation, such as the proposed Bring America Home Act would align definitions of homelessness across agencies.

In addition to the services education can provide, increasing the pool of affordable housing and strengthening the coordination of support agencies to form a stronger safety net for homeless and precariously housed families and youth are critical to reducing the incidence of homelessness now faced by too many of our students. #

*Patricia Popp is the President of the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and the State Coordinator for Project HOPE, VA.*



## USING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN?

By RICHARD SINATRA, Ph.D.

New York City Assemblyman Scott Stringer, in a recent article, painted a black picture for the education of children living in New York City Shelters. In his 22 page report, he noted that coordinating bus transportation for a highly mobile student population and absenteeism were the major factors contributing to a poor education for homeless children. With increased absenteeism, homeless children often repeat grades more often than their stable-resided peers and are more often to be placed in low performing schools because of their poor school track records.

Rather than just a catch-up procedure of plugging in homeless children into diverse programs at diverse schools, what if out-of-school-time programs could offer a sound educational supplement in a sustained way to support the mission and long-term goals of the schools? What if the Department of Homeless Services could bus their facility children to after-school programs during the critical hours of 3:00 to 6:00 PM, during weekends, and during the summer? Better yet, what if program providers could bring their programs to facility centers during out-of-school time?

A strong program coupled with motivation to succeed and attend have been the hallmarks of the CampUs program offered by the After-School All-Stars (ASAS) of N.Y.C. Inc., a chapter of the Arnold Schwarzenegger Youth Foundation, and St. John’s University.

During the past three summers, the Campus Program has served children in shelters living

in five to six Department of Homeless Services (DHS) facilities of the Bronx and Manhattan. The program features academics including a reading, writing, and graphic design project in a college computer lab; and swimming. All readings, writings, and computer projects are thematically based in small groups and in the computer lab.

One might think that a half-day of intensive reading, writing, and focused computer work would be a “turn off” for the children during the tradition vacation-time of summer. Not so! Each year, DHS children made significant writing gains as measured by the New York State English Language Arts scoring rubrics.

Other indicators told us, as well, that DHS children were motivated to succeed. In 2004 use of a Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPC, as designed by William Henk and Stephen Melnick) revealed that children’s perceptions of themselves as competent readers improved significantly. The Recreation Coordinator of the Jackson Avenue Family Residence, Bronx, acknowledged the children’s desire when she wrote, “Our young people are not always easy to please but they were ecstatic about getting up early to get to camp.” In addition, 45 children responded that their writing got better and 41 children responded that their reading got better.

CampUs shows that the right program ingredients offered in a sustained, coordinated way can influence this highly mobile but eager population to succeed. #

*Richard Sinatra is the Chair of the Department of Human Services at St. John’s School of Education.*

## HOME AND SCHOOLS: THE TOP PRIORITIES OF HOMELESS KIDS

By EVA MOSKOWITZ

During the last school year, homelessness hit an all-time high in New York City. Since 1998, the shelter population increased by 73 percent to the highest number in city history: more than 36,400 homeless, 15,300 of them children. Some 77 percent of those living in the shelters are families with children.

I have supported Coalition for the Homeless in their efforts to enhance the lives and the education of homeless children by funding a summer camp. At a national summit of homeless youth convened by Coalition for the Homeless in New York City this summer, children identified their top concerns as: 1) housing and 2) education.

The City must do more to address the pressing housing issue. A suit brought by Coalition for the Homeless and Legal Aid Society on behalf of a homeless mother made its way through the courts for more than two decades until the parties reached a settlement late last year. A court-ordered panel then urged the City this year to improve the dilapidated Emergency Assistance Unit (EAU) in the Bronx, the first stop for families when they lose the roof over their heads.

While the Bloomberg Administration’s plans to revamp the EAU will help, more affordable housing is also needed. The number of homeless families declined after the Koch Administration spurred the construction of 150,000 new units of affordable housing, 10 percent of them for homeless families, two decades ago. We now have twice as many homeless people, but Mayor

Bloomberg is proposing only 65,000 units, with a much smaller share for homeless families.

The City must also work harder to keep uprooted families connected to their children’s schools. The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires the Department of Education to place liaisons in shelters to help homeless children get to school. However, these liaisons do not exist at shelters for families escaping domestic violence, which means the Department of Education is missing roughly a third of the homeless students, according to Advocates for Children, a non-profit group that helps homeless families.

Advocates for Children also reports that the Department of Education denies transportation to many homeless students, and that the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance tells homeless parents that they are ineligible for transportation vouchers to take their small children to school. These actions violate the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act that guarantee homeless children transportation to the school they attended before they became homeless.

When children lose their home, they should not lose their teachers as well. Now that the mayor directly controls the school system, it should be easier for the Department of Education to coordinate with the Department of Homeless Services and other government agencies to make sure that homeless students are identified and helped. #

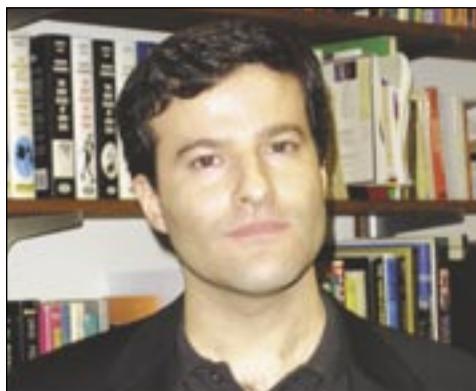
*Eva Moskowitz is the Chair of the New York City Council Education Committee*

## AN INTERVIEW WITH COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY THEATER CHAIR, STEVEN CHAIKELSON

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

So what's a nice Theatre Arts Division chair in an Ivy League MFA program doing talking up law school? Steven Chaikelson, Columbia College graduate and L.L.B., knows exactly why he's talking about law: career opportunity, solid general education, and an additional reason for students to consider coming to Columbia. Unlike Yale, its main competitor for students, which has strong connections in regional and nonprofit theatre, Columbia University has no drama school. Its Theatre Arts division is part of Columbia's School of Arts, which grants an MFA degree. Approximately 100 students are enrolled in the three-year program, and they are drawn to Columbia, Chaikelson notes, because they are interested in commercial theatre—Broadway and Off Broadway—and thus it makes sense for them to take courses in law, particularly in intellectual property, a hot area and one almost certainly leading to a job. His own career path ironically illustrates the advantages of combining the disciplines.

Drawn to acting as an undergraduate, but finding no way to major or minor in drama (undergraduates wanting to concentrate in theatre attend Barnard), Chaikelson wound up with two minors—psychology and English. Though blessed with supportive parents, he also felt their real-world concerns. His father, a lawyer, and his mother, a dean at Concordia University in Montreal (Chaikelson was born in Canada), were delighted when he enrolled at Columbia Law School. So was he, for he found mentors in its new joint degree program in Law and Theatre Management (he was, in fact, its first graduate). But right before the bar exam, he was offered a job at *Les Misérables* where he had interned.



Steven Chaikelson

He took it, thus reversing the old saw—he was now a lawyer but had theatre to fall back on! Subsequent years earned him an extensive and enviable record in management production in New York and across the country, and he took up an adjunct position in Columbia's Law School, leading a seminar in law and theatre.

Before assuming the chair of Theatre Arts a year and a half ago, Chaikelson served as head of Theatre Management, a relatively new addition to Theatre Arts, and though he now serves as chair of the division itself, he maintains professional connections by way of Snug Harbor Productions, a Theatrical General Management and Producing Company in mid-Manhattan, and he continues to do research. This past June, Carolina Academic Press published *Theater Law*, a 526-page casebook he co-authored, "the first comprehensive overview" of its kind on laws governing the theater industry. It includes such subjects as the creative rights of authors, the practice of theater law, the financial rights of producers and investors,

the employment rights of directors, performers, and crew members and the attendance rights of audiences—not to mention 104 casebook battles involving some of the most famous theatrical performances of all time. He's since "lightened up the course a bit," bringing in mock negotiations and contracts—all essential to theatre managers and producers.

Though he professes no adherence to any particular school of acting, Prof. Chaikelson does concede a special regard for Meisner-based training and for musical comedy. Well, add Shakespeare and the Greeks, please. And contemporary British and American playwrights. Of course, his time is largely taken up by administration these days. Plans include "enhancing collaboration among the separate theatre concentrations," bringing together acting students with those in producing, directing, and stage management, thereby simulating the kind of interchange that actually goes on in the theatre world. He'd also like to develop more new playwright voices and give students an opportunity to have actual showcase productions, not just one reading in their last year. In addition, he'd like to spend more time coaching students for auditions, a demanding and unique skill. He notes that students say they enroll at Columbia because of its extensive (two-day) audition interview, which is led by the Acting faculty and includes call backs—in any event, providing applicants with free Master classes. Of course, he wouldn't mind more notice of Columbia Stages, MFA Acting Class productions which are open to the public, and give third-year students "a solid transition to the real world." Readers interested in learning about the 2005 season should call (212) 854-3408 or visit <http://arts.Columbia.edu/theatre/#>

### CAREERS

### FILMMAKER



Sam Wainwright Douglas

By SARAH ANN MOCKBEE

When Sam Wainwright Douglas graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in the spring of 1998 with a major in film and television, he was ready to make his mark in the industry with creative, ambitious and visionary films. Douglas knew that to make it big, he would need a body of work that not only showcased his talent and skill but also appealed to investors, producers and, most importantly, movie-goers.

Douglas began working on the sets of independent films to gain experience and exposure but found the projects to be lackluster and dull. In an effort to tap into the more artistic side of film, Douglas then moved into post-production positions where he edited several television series, but he still felt that something was missing. Several of his former classmates felt the same way.

Douglas formed a working relationship with Paul Lovelace, Tim Hatch and Jesse Fisher—all of NYU's Tisch School—and together they set out to make an independent documentary. Douglas explains, "We decided that if we wanted to jumpstart our careers as filmmakers, we had to make a film on our own and hope that the right people would notice it." Now, after almost five years of shooting footage, sifting through archival material and editing, their film is ready for the festival circuit, which begins this January.

The film, *Bound to Lose*, follows the 40-year career of the folk-rock group the Holy Modal Rounders, who emerged out of the Greenwich Village music scene in the early 1960's. The Rounders recorded several landmark albums and played with an eclectic roster of musicians including Ike and Tina Turner, Pink Floyd and the Velvet Underground. They also landed a song on *Easy Rider's* generation-defining soundtrack. Although wildly talented, this dysfunctional family of musicians missed several opportunities to capitalize on their unique sound. The filmmakers fondly refer to them as the "bad boys of folk."

Douglas and his colleagues financed the film entirely through their own means, often working tiring editing jobs that lasted 8 to 12 weeks and then taking time off to contribute to *Bound to Lose*. Although this venture has forced Douglas to live hand to mouth for the past 5 years, it's been more than worth it. Douglas counts the opportunity to interview Sam Shepard, Dennis Hopper, Ed Sanders, Tuli Kupferberg, and photographer John Cohen as clear incentive for working on the film. More importantly, he's learned what it takes to make a feature documentary and this experience will give him leverage when pitching his next idea to investors.

Douglas hopes the film will premier at the South By Southwest Film Festival in Austin, TX and has also submitted it into several other film festivals around the country. Ultimately, Douglas would like to see the film distributed in art-house theaters and on cable television, but for now it's just a waiting game. Douglas is confident that he and his friends were right to go out on their own—but after putting in countless amounts of time and energy into this project, he's still nervous about its future. He quickly adds, "I just hope the title of our film doesn't end up describing our career."#

## WHAT IN THE WORLD IS A GRIP & GAFFER?



Shane Shauer

By LIZA YOUNG

The final product of movie making is based on an intricate process usually involving the collaboration of scores of people. Of course it is common knowledge what the role of actor, director and producer are, but we could not see their work without the involvement of grips, gaffers and photography directors.

Shane Shauer, currently a key grip, has had an interesting career path in the film industry. He has had experience doing work as a gaffer as well as director of photography (DP). Talking to him, he was able to illustrate the roles of the grip, gaffer and DP and the interplay between them.

As described by Shane, the DP is in "charge of

creating the look of the film by controlling light." The key grip and gaffer assist him in making this possible. The gaffer is in charge of lighting while the key grip is in charge of shading. The support staff of the gaffer are electricians who run power cables and control lighting. Grips work under the direction of the key grip, and they are involved with setting up stands, building and support rigs and carrying sand bags.

With respect to how one can get involved in the business, Shane shared his insights. He was fortunate to have graduated from a great program for film, that is, Florida State University (FSU) Film School. Shane describes the school as providing an excellent overview and examination of the film production process, from pre-production to post-production. While there were some courses focusing on the technical aspects of gripping, but mostly the school provides the encouragement and resources to support and enrich one's talents and goals in the field of filmmaking.

During his time at the university, Shane had the opportunity to work with excellent equipment and he became adept at working with it, to the point of even knowing how to repair it. After graduating from FSU, Shane segued directly into the role of Key Grip. Since then, he has also worked as gaffer and occasionally as DP.

Shane finds all aspects of filmmaking enjoyable. There are interesting challenges involved. He recalled how on the last film he worked he was able to creatively deal with a lighting dif-

ficulty. The challenge was to recreate lighting that had been filmed earlier that day. Light kept showing up on camera, but Shane came up with the idea of removing the ceiling tile, hiding the lights above, and covering the hole with diffusion paper, thus recreating the appropriate lighting. According to Shane, "the biggest part of filmmaking is taking whatever resources you have and making them work. Things might seem impossible, but I always tell myself there has to be a way to make it work so just find it out."

Additional advice Shane has for those wishing to enter the world of filmmaking, working behind the camera, is that there is a lot of competition in the field, and that initially the hours are long with relatively low salary, but good work is recognized in the field and with persistence and dedication, one can work at tasks which are more personally enjoyable. The important thing is to start working on film sets in any capacity, read the set technician handbooks, build a network of friends, and of course, never give up.

Shane has moved his way up the path of filmmaking, only recently having graduated from FSU, and having already accomplished such tasks as serving as the DP for several commercials as well as movies including *Hunger* and *Slingshot*. His dream is to become a recognized cinematographer, with acceptance in the American Society of Cinematography. According to Shane this will involve lots of work and dedication, but "you don't get there by giving up."#

### COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY THEATER EVENTS

Art & Technology Lecture Series:  
Jon Ippolito  
Thursday, Dec 2, 2004  
Hamilton Hall, Room/Floor: 702  
1130 Amsterdam Avenue.  
New York, NY 10027

Art & Technology Lecture Series:  
Cory Arcangel  
Thursday, Dec 16, 2004  
LeRoy Neiman Gallery, Room/Floor: 310  
2960 Broadway, Dodge Hall  
New York, NY 10027  
Phone: 212-854-4065 Fax: 212-854-7708

Freespeak Playreadings  
Tuesday, Jan 25, 2005 - Thursday, Jan 27  
DR2 (Daryl Roth Theatre)  
103 E. 15th Street, east of Union Square  
New York, NY 10003  
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## PRODUCT REVIEW

## R-QUEST'S TCR-4000 DUPLICATOR

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Mathematics teachers perennially complain that students lack statistics literacy. Here's some scary ones: an estimated 1 in 500 data centers will experience a critical hardware failure serious enough to cause a severe "data disaster." And of that unfortunate .002 percent of commercial enterprises whom will experience such a catastrophe, 29 percent will never reopen. Schools must, of course, reopen, which changes the economics of data loss, but the impact may even be greater. How can a price be put on that information which represents the basics of education? Grades, discipline, vital health information—what would happen if a severe system crash erased all of this key data?

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and software corruption, it can even allow your system to continue operating during a complete hard drive failure. That type of catastrophic failure is rare in a typical education technology environment, but, given the severe slashing of IT budgets in the current fiscal crisis, how could any administrator responsibly deny the efficacy of stopping a problem before it even began?

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## PRODUCT REVIEW

## READING HORIZONS

By MITCHELL LEVINE

If you ever take the time to pore through adult literacy statistics, you'll find a number of highly disquieting items of interest: according to the Department of Labor, about 50 percent of unemployed individuals in the United States are functionally illiterate. In New York City specifically, according to the National Center for Literacy, the mean level of literacy assessment is .246, which means almost 30 percent of adults here do not have sufficient reading ability to master a college curriculum.

Even worse, a parent's literacy is the single most effective predictor variable to determine a child's likelihood of growing up in poverty. In fact, the National Assessment of Education Progress tells us, a child with functionally illiterate parents is twice as likely to be illiterate themselves than their peers. Historically, particularly in this technological age, civilizations with high rates of literacy even win wars more often than their less literate peers; it's a key factor in a civilization's success overall.

As imperative as the fight to create read-

ing competency would appear to be, it's not a battle easily won. Sadly, the odds of successfully improving an adult's written decoding skills using conventional instructional methods aren't good: studies cited by the Literacy Volunteers of America indicate that 35 to 40 hours of tutoring are required to raise a typical adult's reading level one grade.

Fortunately, there's a new tool available for the adult literacy student, Reading Horizon's Discover Phonics for Yourself program. Through direct instruction, which can be supplemented

with a computer component, logical sequencing and multi-sensory techniques, it accomplishes the primary goal of phonics instruction: learning to recognize words rapidly and automatically. By the end of the course, adult functional illiterates are reading 85 percent of commonly used English words. Simultaneously, they also learn spelling, vocabulary, grammar, handwriting, listening and thinking skills.

The new online software provides not only extensive tutorials, but an easy to administer

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*continued on page 20*

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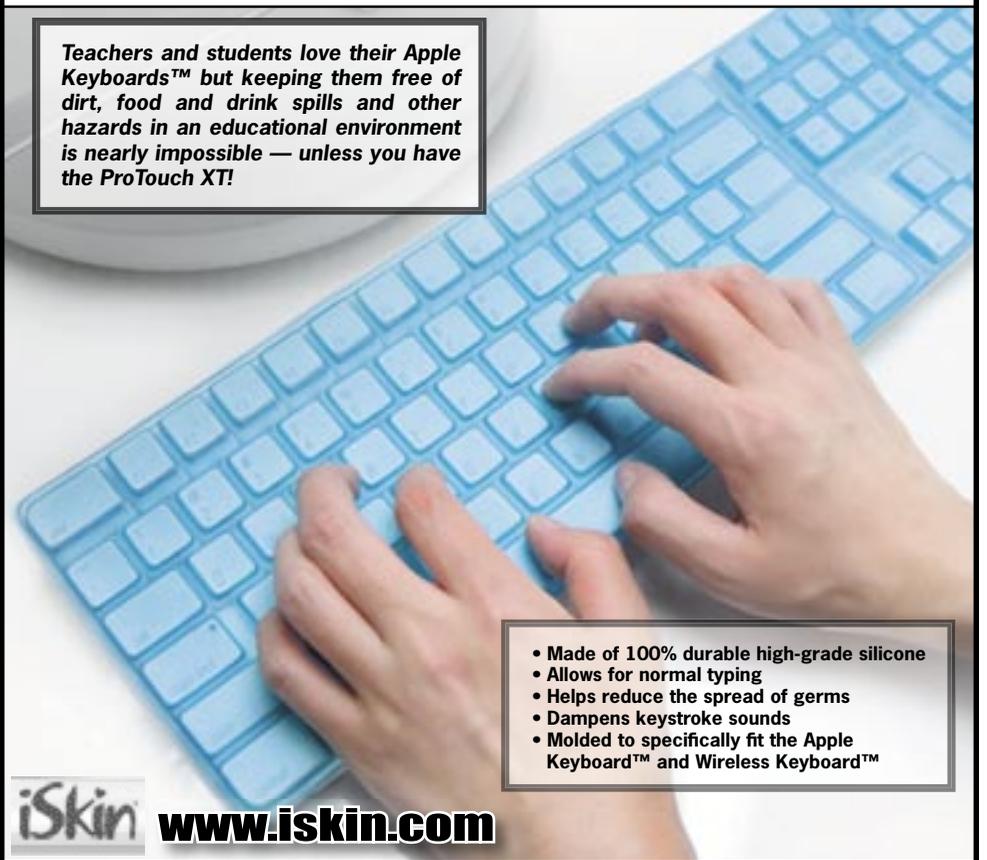
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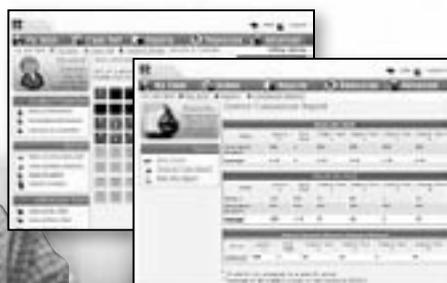
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## The Delicious Revolution: Transforming Education through School Lunch Curriculum



Alice Waters

By ALICE WATERS

For me life is given meaning and beauty by the daily ritual of the table—a ritual that can express tradition, character, sustainability, and diversity. These are some of the values I learned, almost unconsciously, at my family table as a child. But what beliefs and values do today's

children learn at the table? And at whose table do they dine?

The family meal has undergone a steady devaluation. Today, children's meals are likely to have been cooked by strangers, consist of highly processed foods, and are likely to be taken greedily, in haste, and, all too often, alone.

Public education must help restore the daily ritual of the table in children's lives and desperately needs a curriculum offering alternatives to fast-food messages saturating contemporary culture—messages telling us, among other things, that food is cheap and speed is a virtue. Fast food values are pervasive (especially in poor communities). Our public school cafeterias often serve fast food.

What we need is a systematic overhaul of education inspired by the International Slow Food movement. This eco-gastronomic movement, founded by Carlo Petrini, celebrates diversity, tradition, and character. "Slow Schools" promotes community and gives children values that testing cannot measure like concentration, judgment and a chance to flourish.

How do we begin to turn public schools into slow schools? The Edible Schoolyard at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, in Berkeley, California, provides a hopeful model. A decade ago, this public school was surrounded by a large, blacktop schoolyard. The school's cafeteria had been closed, unable to accommodate students. Microwaved, packaged food was sold from a shack at the end of the parking lot. Noticing the blacktop was large enough for a garden, community members began speaking with other parents and teachers about initiating an edible landscape. Students could plant and care for a garden and even learn to cook, serve, and sit down and eat together in a renovated cafeteria and lunchroom.

These ideas would have been nothing more than well intentioned fantasies had King School's principal not been enlightened. He understood that a garden and a renovated cafeteria and lunchroom meant more than just beautifying school grounds they were central elements of a revolution in the school's lunch program and curriculum.

Presently, the Edible Schoolyard consists of a one-acre organic garden and a kitchen-classroom. In the garden, students are involved in all aspects of planting and cultivation; in the kitchen-classroom, they prepare, serve, and eat food, some of which they have grown themselves. These activities are woven into the curriculum as part of the school day. A new ecologically designed cafeteria is being built and when completed, lunch will be an everyday, hands-on experience and an essential part of school life.

A slow school education is an opportunity that should be universally available since kids aren't eating at home with their families anymore. In fact, in the U.S., many children never eat with their families (an observation confirmed by our King School experience). Our most democratic institution, the public school system, now has an obligation to feed our children in a civilized way around a table. Today, twenty percent of the U.S. population is in school. If every school had a lunch program serving only sustainably farmed, local products to students, our domestic food culture would change as people once again would grow up learning how to cook wholesome, delicious food.

What we are calling for is a revolution in public education, a real Delicious Revolution. When hearts and minds of our children are captured by a school lunch curriculum, enriched with experience in the garden, sustainability will become the lens through which they see the world. #

*Alice Waters, a world-renowned chef in Berkeley, has had a lifelong interest in education. She has authored many cookbooks and created the Chez Panisse Foundation to underwrite educational programs about growing, cooking and sharing food, including the Edible Schoolyard Program. She is vice president of Slow Food International and received the James Beard Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004. Chez Panisse was voted best restaurant in the U.S. by Gourmet magazine in 2001. Excerpted for Education Update from a speech delivered at Slow Food International Conference, Italy 2003.*

## SECOND GRADERS COOK AT PS 98

By DOROTHY DAVIS

Lisa Lloyd's Second Grade class at PS 98 in upper Manhattan reinforced counting, reading and teamwork skills while enthusiastically preparing tasty treats. Teacher Lloyd's project, "Cooking Across the Curriculum," incorporates math, literature, writing and social studies into cooking classes. Principal Carmela Marolda was excited to learn that her school is one of 10 winners of the Kaplan All Star Project Awards, part of a \$100,000 pledge from Kaplan, Inc. to DonorsChoose, a non-profit organization that matches teachers seeking funding for education-related projects. Because of Teacher Lloyd's grant she was able to buy a nifty cooking cart complete with all accessories, to be shared with other classes in her school.

Children in Grades 2 to 5 at PS 98, which serves a recent immigrant population, were arranged in three teams, one at each table. On the cooking cart, each item was labeled so children could learn words like microwave and refrigerator, gallon and quart, blender and mixer.



One of the Teams Cooking

On the board were written the utensils needed, the ingredients and then the recipe. Ms. Lloyd clearly read the instructions, then demonstrated and asked questions to ensure understanding.

## SESAME STREET LAUNCHES HEALTH HABITS CAMPAIGN

By SARAH ANN MOCKBEE

In an effort to address the growing epidemic of childhood obesity, Sesame Workshop, the non-profit organization behind *Sesame Street*, has developed a comprehensive program that will educate children, parents and caregivers about the importance of cultivating a healthy lifestyle at an early age. By capitalizing on the popularity of the *Sesame Street* characters, "Healthy Habits for Life: A Great Start to a Lifetime of Good Health" will target preschoolers by focusing on preventative strategies rather than intervention techniques, which have been statistically less successful. Rosemary Truglio, a psychologist employed by Sesame Workshop, suggests

that a child introduced to certain habits at a young age is more likely to maintain learned behaviors than a child who is introduced to the same information later in life. Truglio is also quick to point out that "Healthy Habits" centers on a healthy lifestyle from all perspectives, including nutrition, personal hygiene, physical exercise and rest and relaxation. This approach echoes *Sesame Street's* mantra of embracing the child's complete self, which demands attention to social, physical, emotional and cognitive needs.

Studies show that 10 percent of American children are diagnosed as clinically obese and 30 percent are overweight. These trends point to an increased likelihood of Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease and/or a shortened lifespan. Sesame Workshop recognized the unique ability it had to help influence young children in a different direction. When asked to pick between broccoli and chocolate, 93 percent of children chose chocolate. But when Elmo, the popular *Sesame Street* character, was paired with broccoli and a generic red puppet was paired with chocolate, 70 percent of children chose the broccoli. Armed with an audience that clearly looks to its characters for guidance, Sesame Workshop created "Healthy Habits" with a board of advisors consisting of leading health, nutrition, fitness and education experts who will help ensure all content is age appropriate and, most importantly, effective. The research-based educational information that is garnered from studies will then be turned into the scripts that air on *Sesame Street*. Themes such as nutrition, physical activity, healthy cooking and



EU Assistant Editor Sarah Ann Mockbee with Sesame Street stars Elmo and Grover

body image will dominate the show in its 36<sup>th</sup> season, which will begin in April 2005. One such segment will feature Elmo and Zoe as contestants in "The Healthy Foods Name Game," in which Elmo and Zoe must find four healthy foods of various colors.

The "Healthy Habits" campaign will reach far beyond Sesame Street. Home videos, books, interactive media and a traveling museum exhibition that will reach 15 cities over the next five years will also help contribute to the initiative. Sesame Workshop is also pairing with Hain-Celestial Group to create a line of co-branded natural food products, which will feature *Sesame Street* characters on the labeling. Truglio maintains that Sesame Workshop's goal is to elevate the message of maintaining a healthy lifestyle as critical to the development of a child as reading and writing are considered today. #

## Reading Horizons

continued from page 18

online reading assessment to measure success via a number of important variables. According to pilot programs conducted in both the Peel Adult Learning Center in Ontario, Canada, and the California Board of Corrections, adults were quickly able to master not only the basics, but as the director of the Peel Center explained: "The Reading Horizons program filled in the gaps that adult learners often have, in a controlled sequential manner (including)...marked improvement in reading comprehension...word attack skills and fluency automatically."

Any adult with either functional illiteracy or struggles with ESL should immediately log on to the company's site at [www.readinghorizons.com](http://www.readinghorizons.com), where more information for programs for both primary students in grades K-6 or adult learners and secondary students can be found. #



Dyanira Castillo

Rosemary Blanco was celebrating her birthday on the day we visited, turning eight years. Dyanira Castillo was a very capable third grader helping the teacher.

Some comments from the kids while cooking: "I like it when you work together with someone else. It really feels good when you're sitting next to each other helping out."

"My favorite part is when we eat it!"

"I like when we mix it and we pour it!"  
My favorite part is when we say 'Bon Appetit, it's time to eat!'"

"I like the tasting part!" #  
[A note from the Editor: Visiting schools is always one of the best parts of my job. This visit however was memorable in transporting me to the school of my childhood days in the Bronx. The small staircases with iron grills on the sides, the window shades that rolled from the top as well as the bottom, the fluorescent lighting in the room, the color of the floors and walls, and the beautifully decorated classroom with children's jobs, daily plan on an experience chart, the library corner and evidence of the children's work everywhere was nostalgic. More important, sitting in the class with primarily Spanish-speaking children was a powerful reminder of the "places you can go" with a strong education foundation.]



## Reflections on Campaign for Fiscal Equity

By MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG

Ensuring that every public school student has the opportunity to get a high-quality and meaningful education has been one of our administration's top priorities, which makes the opinion of the Special Referee Panel especially gratifying. It reaffirms the importance of education, recognizes the long-standing need for improvement in our City's schools and finds that our schools additionally need \$5.6 billion annually, plus \$9.2 billion in capital funds. The decision also acknowledges that improvement in the schools cannot be solved by money alone but also requires the right plans and the right leadership.

The decision finds that the changes Chancellor Klein and I have begun to implement, including our proposed plan on how to spend the additional monies called for by the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) decision, are leading the schools toward the goal of providing each student with the opportunity for a sound basic education. As the Panel noted, our reforms and CFE plan were developed with significant input from teachers, principals, parents and community leaders. It includes four major initiatives: the establishment of better training, recruitment, and retention of staff, including incentive and merit pay; early childhood education (universal pre-K) and early grade intervention programs; secondary school reform, including creating smaller schools; and providing additional support for special education students and English Language Learners.

I am very pleased that the Referees found that the City's accountability standards are adequate. The Referees properly recognized that the imposition of additional layers of bureaucracy are simply unnecessary, and would impair the ability of the Chancellor to use additional funds in the most

efficient way to rapidly improve the education of our children. Simply put, additional regulations would be a step backwards, towards the days where everyone was in charge but no one was accountable. Our children paid a terrible price for that dysfunction. The Mayoral control that the State Legislature put in place at my urging is more than sufficient to assure the public that the additional funds will be well spent.

The Special Referees reached the same conclusion that virtually every distinguished analysis has: that the City's schools have been drastically shortchanged by Albany for decades by a system that disregards the needs of its school children when it calculates the amount of State assistance the City receives. The grievous wrong imposed on the City's school children resulted from the State's failures; it must be remedied by all the State's taxpayers.

As the Panel recognized by quoting from the conclusion of the Citizens Budget Commission report, the City already suffers from a "high local tax burden" and that mandated additional education expenditures would "force cuts for necessary services other than education or force tax increases that harm the City's economic viability."

We already have a projected \$3 billion deficit for the next Fiscal Year as a result of uncontrollable, mandated expenses such as Medicaid, health care and pension costs. For the City to fund even a portion of this \$5.63 billion would require us to cut after-school programs, close libraries and make severe cuts to essential City services, even in the area of public safety. Such actions would harm the very children this lawsuit is designed to help.

I look forward to working with Governor Pataki, Speaker Silver, Senator Bruno and all the members of the Legislature to ensure that our schools get the funds they deserve. #



## Lessons from the Galapagos

By JILL LEVY

They were all over the place everywhere I looked. And when I wasn't looking, they were under my feet, moving silently in a fore-ordained direction. Lizards, hundreds of them gathered together communicating in a silent language known only to them. On occasion and without warning, they issued an admonition in the form of a slimy oral projectile. Small and large, dressed in their colorful finery, the cold-blooded ones huddled closely for warmth and to give homage to their deity. Others, a smaller and less aggressive species, scurried from place to place seeking nourishment while trying to stay out of harm's way. Some are able to hold their own amidst the rise and fall of the tides while others never venture from secure ground.

Elsewhere, the boobies abounded. Underfoot, they simply sat on the ground and stared, daring me to get in their way. In my face and without shame, they carried out the orders that nature intended. From above, they compelled me to respect their point of view or suffer the indignity of their punishment. Their finery was continually on display. In comparison, I felt diminished and unkempt. Shod in shoes of red and blue, they were all over the place. The younger ones fought aggressively for their positions. Usually not seen by the public, they took no prisoners and were oblivious to the stealthy reptiles that laid in wait

for their feast.

Amidst the trappings of benevolent control, the "beach master" moved across his domain on the constant alert for intruders. Not willing to allow for diversity, fearful of outsiders and protective of his sphere of influence, his barking voice reached the ears of all who were present and those who were hidden from view. Peace reigned in the kingdom and no outsider dared to make a challenge—not at that time, anyway!

I apologize. Did you think I was at Tweed or "110" or 65 Court Street? Oh, no! I was simply describing my extraordinary visit to the Galapagos Islands.

It is true that we sometimes see ourselves in the behavior of animals. In the Galapagos, one can see the physical and behavioral adaptations and truly understand the enormous power of natural forces. Protected from us, the animals of the islands live out their destiny in indescribable beauty.

It was the cigarette butt lying alongside of the trail that startled me. I was reminded about how we tamper with natural forces—even in our chosen profession. How we impose, inflict and indoctrinate modifies the natural order of things. And who is to know how it will all turn out over the long haul. That lone cigarette butt was a signal that we cannot afford to be careless about anything we do personally or professionally. #

Jill Levy is President, Council of School Supervisors and Administrators.



## GED Exams End in January Without New Funding

By STEVEN SANDERS

Due to a federal ruling disallowing the use by New York State of certain federal funds for administering the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) exams and deep cuts made by Governor Pataki to the State Education Department's budget—GED exams may be canceled after January. This is a consequence that absolutely must be prevented.

Approximately 55,000 young adults take the GED exam each year, but over half of the funds used to administer these tests are no longer available.

Federal education officials informed the state nearly four months ago that they were disallowing the use of \$2.1 million in Workforce Investment Act funds that had been used by the state to help underwrite the cost of administering the GED exams, which cost the state approximately \$4 million a year.

If the State Education Department (SED) and the governor's Division of the Budget do not come to some agreement on how to fill this gap, there will likely be no GED exams—none—after January. That would be disastrous for thousands of young men and women, because not having a high school diploma bars individuals from most private sector jobs, from civil service employment and from serving in the military.

The crisis precipitated by disallowing the use of the federal dollars for the exams is much more difficult to resolve because of Governor Pataki's regular assault on the State Education Department's budget, this year to the tune of \$7 million. When the legislature voted a partial restoration, Pataki vetoed the measure. This has

been his pattern, year after year. The governor has historically cut funding for the State Education Department to the bone, to such a degree that the department barely has sufficient resources to even minimally fulfill all of its responsibilities. SED was going to use these federal dollars to help pay for the exams because it has, thanks to Pataki, such insufficient resources.

Now the governor must come forward and replace the federal dollars, but not by raiding funding earmarked for other essential adult education programs.

If the issue is not resolved by the end of the year, there will be thousands of people who, because they have neither graduated with a diploma from high school nor earned a GED, will lose job opportunities and be unable to go on to junior or senior colleges.

Finally, it is very troubling and really inexcusable that the State Education Department kept silent about the denial of the federal money for months. They had the information before the state budget was passed, and their silence makes a resolution of this all that much tougher.

Still, action has to be taken—and fast—by the Governor to secure this program and to rescue thousands of young adults who will otherwise find themselves academically stranded. The prospect of GED exams ending is horrendous, almost beyond belief. It cannot be allowed to happen. What, for God's sake, will these thousands of students do? #

Steven Sanders is chairman of the New York State Assembly's Education Committee. E-mail him at [sanders@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:sanders@assembly.state.ny.us) or phone 212.979.9696.



## "Happy Holidays!"

By MATILDA RAFFA CUOMO

Established nearly ten years ago, Mentoring USA (MUSA) is the largest school and site-based, one-to-one mentoring program in New York City. We look forward to expanding our program to include almost 1,000 children in 2005.

The holidays are a special time of the year and MUSA works hard to provide resources to children in our program, their mentors, and their families so they can celebrate their faiths in meaningful and enjoyable ways. Although children look forward to receiving presents, our goal is to expose them to the diversity of celebrated faiths, and to share in the many ways people celebrate the holiday season.

We are fortunate to kick off the season by inviting over 600 of our mentors, mentees, and their families to see the world-renowned Rockettes perform in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular. Through the generosity of Cablevision and Radio City Music Hall, hundreds of children in our program will enjoy a show that demonstrates different elements of the holiday season: ice skating, a Christmas tree, toy soldiers, Santa Claus with his helpers, and especially the birth of Jesus; bright memories that will last a lifetime.

While the traditional story of "One Solitary Life" is meaningful to Christians, it is also important that we recognize other celebrations of the season. Every year, MUSA's holiday party exposes children from our program to Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas. We invite someone from each faith to share his or her beliefs, and children attending the party consider this the most important part of the evening.

Many people also contribute to our party. Recently, one of my neighbors started a toy drive in the building where I live. She arranged to collect age-appropriate presents for our children, and when a neighboring building found out, it started its own toy drive! Hundreds of toys were collected and then wrapped by volunteers. We are grateful to Belinda Markel and Dr. and Mrs. Roy Roistacher for their dedication in supervising the toy drives, and also to the many volunteers who spent hours at the Mentoring USA office helping to wrap gifts; these individuals inspire our youth to appreciate the importance of giving.

We spend a great deal of time addressing cultural diversity with our mentors in our BRAVE (Bias-Related Anti-Violence Education) Juliana training, and events like the holiday party expose children to the many different cultural traditions around us. When children hear someone talk about their own religion or read a story about a different faith, they remember that these important histories and traditions go far beyond holiday materialism.

Book donation requests from MUSA have also received overwhelming responses from publishers. We look forward to providing our mentees with an age-appropriate book for them to read with their families. Books are vital for every child's development and our youth enjoy picking out their own books more than receiving a toy. Giving each child a book is a wonderful ending to our annual holiday traditions.

In addition to these important MUSA events, we have partnered with other organizations in the community; New York University, located near our parent organization HELP USA's Genesis Apartments on 13th Street, invites children from

*continued on page 31*



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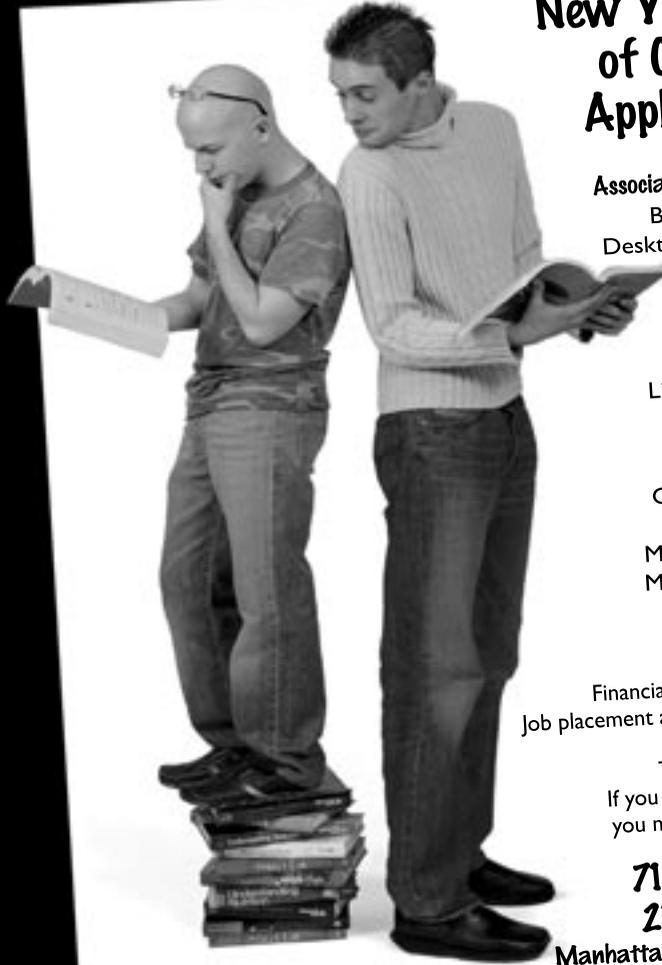
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## 50 YEARS OF DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM

### CHANCELLOR ISMAR SCHORSCH JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Though in some ways unique, the joint or dual-degree arrangement between Jewish Theology Seminary (JTS) and Columbia University's School of General Studies (SGS) is cited by JTS Chancellor Dr. Ismar Schorsch as a "model" for collaboration between religious and secular institutions. Now celebrating a half century of existence, this distinctive program could not be more timely, suggests Dr. Schorsch. While certainly reflective of the conservative culture of the seminary, the dual program demonstrates that religious belief and skepticism need not be antagonistic and indeed can be mutually beneficial. "It shows that you don't have to be a fanatic or fundamentalist to be religious, and it confirms that secular culture is not inhospitable to people of faith."

Building on dramatic changes in higher education that began after World War II, a time of "explosion" for Jewish Studies on American campuses, with endowed chairs, new courses, and students newly aware of the intellectual and career advantages of area studies, JTS, until then a graduate institution, moved in 1953 to create an undergraduate program that would attract students interested in "a first-rate secular as well as Jewish education" who would pursue Jewish leadership and liberal arts—and students who would appreciate the program's unusual course offerings, such as Judeo-Arabic, a Yiddish-based language spoken by Jews on the Iberian Peninsula who produced some remarkable manuscripts and books, Dr. Schorsch points out.

In SGS, JTS found its spiritual and cultural partner, Dr. Schorsch says, a school that had been "designed for special students," those over 21, many of whom skip college but who possess the motivation and ability to succeed. Now 50 years later, with approximately 200 students, almost all American Jews (the number is restricted by available housing in one of the three residence halls provided for undergraduates), the dual-degree program boasts an ever-rigorous commitment to its mission. Students must complete 150 credits (where most colleges require 120) with a double major (a field in Jewish Studies, history, Talmud, for example, and a field in liberal arts) and usually take four to five years to be graduated,

depending on summer school. For Dr. Schorsch, a rabbi since 1962, with masters degrees from JTS and Columbia, as well as an internationally recognized scholar with a Ph.D. in history from Columbia (his mentors were Gershon Cohen and Fritz Stern) the collaboration is particularly resonant. His first mentor, however, was his father, who had been a rabbi in Breslau, the head of the first modern rabbinical seminary in Europe. So he kept "the business in the family," he chuckles, with the only difference being that his father pursued philosophy while Dr. Schorsch gravitated to



(L-R) Dr. Ismar Schorsch, Chancellor of JTS; Dr. Shuly Schwartz, Dean, List College; Peter Awn, Dean, School of General Studies, Columbia University; Dr. Lee Bollinger, President, Columbia University.

history. His dissertation, on Jewish reactions to German anti-Semitism, 1870-1914, a "negative" subject, turned him to explore further "what Jews did about it," and the result was a prize-winning book published by Columbia University Press.

The strength of the JTS / Columbia program Dr. Schorsch says is the contribution it makes not only to JTS but to higher education in general by advancing the conversation between faith and secularism. JTS students have "a significant presence" at Columbia, while Columbia gets a widened base from which to draw undergraduates who want to be involved in campus activities, such as student government or the newspaper. "Outreach" is also very much a part of JTS's mission to pursue ways in which faith and reason, "religious study and critical scholarship," can coexist. To this end, Dr. Schorsch has recently initiated a rabbinical leadership internship program with Hillel at Brooklyn College because of the borough's extraordinary concentration of Russian Jews, and JTS continues its participation in various consortium arrangements with Yale, Princeton and NYU.#

### PRESIDENT LEE BOLLINGER COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Articulating Columbia University's reasons for having initiated a dual degree program through its School of General Studies with Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), and his hope for further and extended collaboration, Columbia University president, Lee C. Bollinger speaks eloquently about the arrangement's providing "deep intellectual and religious experiences" for Columbia and JTS students and being a model for higher education in general at a time of apparent "increasing secularization on American campus-

religion," he points out, though for sure tension can mark public debate; all the more reason for bringing such conversations into the classroom and to promote the Columbia / JTS dual-degree program. Indeed, the reason for the institution of the program in 1953 was to be a "bridge" between two worlds often considered inconsistent. Now, more than ever, this mission needs to be understood and supported, it's not just an "abstract" idea.

The program has been "spectacularly successful," he says, as measured by increasing interest and by the reports of the current students and alumni who spoke at the program's recent fifty-year celebration and cited not only "intellectual stimulation" but social bonding. "Why wouldn't students want to be exposed to experiences that would enrich their lives outside the classroom?" the President asks. As for attracting more students and perhaps involving other institutions and other faiths in a similar program, he's thinking about it, constrained, of course, by the eternal problems plaguing all institutions of higher education today: money, housing, space (tuition is higher for the Columbia-JTS program than for other interdisciplinary arrangements). Lee Bollinger is also still relatively new, having assumed the presidency of Columbia only two years ago (the University's 19<sup>th</sup> leader). But he is also on the faculty of the Law School and is interested in considering ways in which courses in law, for example, might be added to the program. Most undergraduates, he ventures, are largely unfamiliar with legal issues common to, and potentially divisive in, religious and secular education. There's "extensive, untapped knowledge in legal institutions" that would be attractive to students in the dual degree program. The president draws an important distinction, however, between the kind of dual degree program established by Columbia and JTS, which involves more credits, and interdisciplinary studies. In general, he's a strong believer in discipline-oriented curricula, giving students a solid basis in building knowledge in research, analysis and evaluation—which is why the program requires more time to complete, including usually at least a summer session. That challenge, however, enhances the program and ensures that liberal arts and religious studies each receive full concentration.#

es, both public and private." Sensitive to concerns expressed in some quarters about faith-based initiatives, President Bollinger acknowledges that some voices in higher education today are uneasy about too close an accommodation between religion and the public sphere, but no one could be more alert to this issue than President Bollinger, whose numerous scholarly publications include the highly regarded *Eternally Vigilant: Free Speech in the Modern Era* (University of Chicago Press, 2001), *Images of a Free Press*, also published by the University of Chicago in 1991, *The Tolerant Society: Freedom of Speech*, and *Extremist Speech in America* published by Oxford University Press in 1986.

The President also teaches a first amendment undergraduate course each fall on Freedom of Speech and Press (enrollment 150 and growing) and notes that "students are hungry for this." He feels that those who worry about possible conflicts between religious and secular instruction need not ignore faith. "Most people manage to live with a combination of intellectual commitment to Western discourse and deep belief about God and

## "New York's Nicest": Over 2,000 Learning Leaders Break Bagels Together

By DOROTHY DAVIS

"There are very few events where you see this many nice people put together in one place. Look in the mirror tonight and you're going to see a very nice person," Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg told the Learning Leaders, the volunteers of New York City's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to serving public school children, at their opening meeting recently in Manhattan. *Education Update* agrees with Mayor Mike, and we'll go one step further. All of the dedicated, concerned volunteers, who daily help our most needy public school children, are "New York's Nicest!"

And, luckily for our struggling schools, their numbers are growing. Digna Sanchez, President/Executive Director of Learning Leaders, reported that in the school year 2003-4 "a record number of 14,340 caring New Yorkers: parents, community members, corporate employees, seniors and others have volunteered so our students can succeed." This number, while still not high enough, is up substantially from the 11,500 who volunteered in 2002-3.

Mayor Mike was introduced by the dignified and clear-voiced Sheik Khan, a 2nd grader at P.S. 50 in Queens, while his big brother, a 5th grader, cheered him on from the sidelines. Their mother, Bianca Khan, a Parent Volunteer at P.S. 50, spoke movingly about being a school volunteer, concluding, "There is no better experience to have than to come into the school and all these children



Digna Sanchez

run up and simply say 'Hi' or give hugs!"

The Mayor said that the parents of New York City's school children speak 170 different languages. "At the summer Olympics in Athens, 202 countries participated. We have school children from 199 of those countries. It's too easy for parents to say, let the teachers do that. But parents have responsibilities themselves. In some cases, you who volunteer are the children's parents, but some children don't have parents or come from unstable homes." He concluded his remarks, which touched on ongoing improvements he is making in the schools, such as the ending of social promotion in the 3rd and 5th grades and



Carmen Farina

bringing the number of uncertified teachers down to zero, by enthusiastically telling the assembled volunteers, "Thank you for all you do!"

Digna Sanchez thanked the Mayor for all he has done, "especially for hiring 1,200 parent coordinators." Carmen Farina, Deputy Chancellor for Instruction, NYC Department of Education, poignantly underscored the contributions of the volunteers. "You are the people who help children, one at a time. Sometimes the only kind word a child gets all day is from a volunteer who knows them. Many Learning Leader relationships start early and last throughout a child's life." She spoke of new courses that will be offered to

teach parents ways they can help their children. "Nothing is more effective than parents studying and learning along with their children." She also said that the Department of Education will be looking for volunteers "to adopt two children with high potential, starting in the 9th grade. We'll be training these volunteers to take their two students through the whole college application process: filling out applications for financial aid, college applications and visiting campuses. Many children," she said, "don't apply because they don't know how to do it."

Others who contributed to the meeting included Dana Tyler, Anchor CBS 2 News, who interviewed volunteers Sheryl Beach and Jennifer Senitt-Escobar, both winners of the Carol Kellermann Scholarship; Jeremy B. Koch, Chairman of the Learning Leaders Board of Trustees; Eddy Bayardelle, a former teacher, who is now First Vice President, Global Philanthropy of Merrill Lynch and Co., Inc.; Donna Wilson, CEAD President, Northeast Region of Washington Mutual.

Randi Weingarten, President of the United Federation of Teachers told the volunteers, "On behalf of teachers I want to say, Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! It does take a village to educate children. We need you desperately! Kids, teachers and parents need you!"#

If you would like to help fill this need (or just find out more about Learning Leaders) please go to [www.learningleaders.org](http://www.learningleaders.org), or call 212/213-3370.



## BARNARD GIVES CREDIT FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

By DOROTHY DAVIS

People who engage in public service deserve all the credit they can get. And that's what Barnard College is giving them. Affiliated with Columbia University, this leader among independent colleges for women has long been known for encouraging activism by its students. Now in one of the components of its new Civic Engagement Program (NYCCEP) it is awarding college credits to students who take a course, "Theorizing Civic Engagement," in Barnard's Women's Studies Department, while interning at not-for-profit agencies. The goal of NYCCEP is to integrate classroom analysis with internship experience.

The course is taught by Maxine Weisgrau, Associate Professor in Anthropology and Women's Studies and NYCCEP Director. In a recent interview, Professor Weisgrau said, "This course is part of the education of women in engaging in social and political issues, particu-

larly in the community of New York City, which is a global center. It also gives them ways to think about the work they are doing and its link with the role of activism in our society."

Said Will Simpkins, Associate Director of Civic Engagement in the Office of Career Development, "We approach community service from an academic perspective. We don't have to convince our students to become active members of our community. They already are. We are offering them multiple arenas in which they can reflect on what they are doing."

There are three components to Barnard's NYCCEP: Development, Outreach and Models of Civic Engagement Series. Future programs in this series include "The Day After: A Political Analysis of Campaign '04", "Women in Politics: Personal Testimonies," and a lecture with human rights activist Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, founder of the RFK Center for Human Rights.#

## Barnard's Dean Dorothy Denburg Talks About the Civic Engagement Program

By DOROTHY DAVIS

**EU: What was the genesis of the Civic Engagement Program (NYCCEP) program at Barnard?**

**Dean Denburg:** The idea was something I was interested in from the first minute I became Dean, 11 years ago. Director of Career Development, Jane Celwyn, had been talking for years about more effectively linking internships with the curriculum. We had only one course at the time that provided a theoretical link to an internship, "Mass Media and American Democracy."

A few years ago I attended a three-day meeting at Mt. Holyoke College with Kathryn Jay, who at the time was an American History/American Studies professor at Barnard. The Mellon Foundation sponsored the meeting, which dealt with how liberal arts colleges produce more effective citizens. We both learned a lot and came back more committed than ever to the idea. She developed the first course for the program.

**EU: Why do you think the program is a good idea?**

**Dean Denburg:** Too often our students do wonderful critical thinking in their classes, in

their writing and in their discussions, and then they go off-campus and engage in important internships in different settings in which they may be following their passions, their political agenda. These can be fragmented experiences for them. Now they can be purposeful in integrating their experiences.

**EU: What are your goals for the program?**

**Dean Denburg:** I would like to see more theorizing courses linked with internship options, and more out of classroom learning opportunities in other areas of the curriculum. My goal is to see the program spread among departments so more students can take advantage of it, enabling them to have

a broader range of theorizing and actualization experiences.

**EU: Are programs like Barnard's Civic Engagement Program a trend on college campuses?**

**Dean Denburg:** Absolutely. Many schools participated in the Mt. Holyoke conference. Many schools are talking about how they can integrate what students are learning and what they are doing in community service and activism.#



Dorothy Denburg

Diane Bondeiref

## Queens College Sponsors Discussion on Educational Reform

By NAZNEEN MALIK

Recently, the Queens College Department of Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education hosted a panel discussion on "Authentic Educational Reform—What Does It Look Like and How Do We Bring It About?" The panel consisted of seven speakers: City Council Members Eva Moskowitz and John Liu; Dr. Bill Ayers from the University of Illinois; Ms. Susan Ohanian, author and New York City teacher; Robin Brown, President of United Parents Association; Professor Richard Meyer from the University of New Mexico; and Molly Hunter Council for The Campaign for Fiscal Equity.

Eva Moskowitz, Chair of the New York City Council Education Committee, spoke at length on non-authentic versus authentic reform and challenges facing teachers today. Moskowitz defines non-authentic reform as "tweaking the system," or incremental, transparent reform that fails to address the "resource question" or any underlying issue like teachers' compensation or improving working conditions and school environments. Authentic reform, Moskowitz believes, is "fundamental change." It is introducing science into curriculums that concentrate heavily on promoting literacy before anything else. Fundamental change understands that to compete with schools that are "considered high performance, like Scarsdale, which spends significantly more per pupil than we do here," there is a need for more resources. The last type of authentic reform, according to Moskowitz, "is changing the way we do business here." She encourages teachers to read their union contracts as she has and invites them to come to City Council hearings. "We do hearings every other week, We cover as many topics as is humanly possible, both on the instructional side

and on the operational side," Moskowitz explains, "We have done everything from holding hearings on science instruction to toilet paper, paper towels, and soap."

A hearing on toilet paper may sound absurd, however, at a Teacher's Speak-Out Moskowitz recently held, the lack of toilet paper, paper towels and soap was the single largest complaint. "If you look on websites like Craig's List, one of the items that teachers ask for the most are vacuum cleaners to clean the rugs in the new rug policy where the teachers are supposed to be [sitting] on the rocking chair and surrounded by the rug...there are much more profound issues that teacher's can be engaged with, but the state of affairs is such that they are asking for vacuum cleaners," states a frustrated Moskowitz.

In fact, almost all of the speakers seemed to agree that there was some degree of transparency in educational "reforms" that are being made. The fundamental problems remain, and not only do schools have low budgets, they are in need of basic resources as well. Other concerns were about the No Child Left Behind Act. According to Ms. Ohanian, teachers are not being allowed the flexibility to generate their own lesson plans, and this could have an enormous impact on their effectiveness as teachers.

There was a general consensus that only an involved community can achieve authentic reform of the New York City public education system. Parents and teachers need to participate in city council hearings and make their voices and objections heard. Reforming the public education system is a long and arduous process and it seems as though there needs to be a collaboration among government policy-makers, teachers, and parents to move it forward.#

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# PRESIDENTS AND MEDIA DISCUSS FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



**President Michael Crow,**  
Arizona State U.



**President Kermit Hall,**  
Utah State U.



DIANNE BONDAREFF

**President Judith Shapiro,**  
Barnard College

By SARAH ANN MOCKBEE

Twelve presidents from top universities and colleges around the country, along with a distinguished panel of news media, recently gathered at the Penn Club to discuss the major issues that are affecting their schools as well as the impact these challenges are having on our economy and society as a whole. One of the first topics discussed was how a second Bush term would affect the way higher education addressed issues like foreign student enrollment (which has decreased over the past year), freedom of speech, and research programs like the one the University of California is undertaking concerning stem cell research. Many agreed that the government should be filling that role and footing the costly bill that accompanies it.

University of Texas president, Larry Faulkner, brought non-partisan issues to the forefront, saying that regardless of who holds the presidency, access to education and affordability will always be of paramount concern. The fact that a greater number of high school graduates are trying to matriculate to higher education schools poses a difficult scenario for colleges and universities who don't have enough space to accommodate increased enrollment. Consequently, colleges and universities will become more selective, leaving out capable students who simply don't make the cut. This affects diversity in the classroom,

another major issue that the group discussed. Many agreed that the gap between white and minority students is still too large, which is a constant challenge for colleges and universities who want to move toward a more representative student body.

Another hot topic of the night—one that is on the minds of both students and administrators—is the high cost of quality education. Arizona State University President Michael Crow revealed that his institution has raised tuition 60 percent over the last two years and that the trend will likely continue. Surprisingly, his students seem to support this increase because it will mean more money for financial aid, expansion of faculty, wireless access and a library open 24 hours a day. Kermit Hall, president of Utah State University, and Faulkner, agreed saying that their students also supported tuition hikes if it meant that their education would be enhanced.

After two hours of forthright discussion, the group felt confident that they had covered a lot of ground and they encouraged each other to take the issues back to their students, where the future of higher education will ultimately lie. Philip Glotzbach, president of Skidmore College, rounded out the evening saying, "It's important to get people in a room and talk things through. We have to ask the tough, uncomfortable questions. That's when you make progress."#

# CUNY Announces \$2.6 Billion Campaign



**Chancellor Matthew Goldstein**

Chancellor Matthew Goldstein recently announced an "Invest in CUNY/Invest in New York" Campaign to dramatically increase public and private support for the University's colleges. The campaign includes \$1.2 billion in private fundraising and \$1.4 billion in capital construction money recently approved by the city and state that will allow for additional donor recognition and matching campaigns. Total public-private investment will be \$2.6 billion over the next eight years.

"To do greater things, CUNY must have money it doesn't have now," said Chancellor Goldstein. "It needs to generate the kind of investment that it must have to attract and retain the most able faculty and scholars. This is a campaign for an endowment that will support academic programs and brick and mortar to supplement the work and support that we get from state and local government."

The "quiet phase" of the \$1.2 billion private fundraising campaign has raised \$460 million during the last four years. The \$1.4 billion city and state approved capital construction budget will provide additional opportunities for private matching gifts. Chancellor Goldstein stated, "This is the boldest, most ambitious endeavor by a public, urban university in the nation."

The campaign will consist of a comprehensive effort encompassing 19 separate campaigns keyed to the needs of the individual CUNY colleges. The University is encouraging the colleges to expand their fund-raising efforts and will offer resources and marketing assistance. Raising private support in this unique collaborative effort will promote investment in each CUNY College while also strengthening and enhancing the University as a whole, Chancellor Goldstein said.

Governor Pataki praised the University's efforts "to encourage private investment in public higher education." He further noted that the Campaign for the Colleges of The City University will "uphold the high standards of its distinguished alumni and enhance its ability to provide the highest quality education to its students."

Mayor Bloomberg said, "This month New York City honors CUNY, which has raised academic

standards while making sure the halls of learning remain wide open to accommodate all New Yorkers." Benno Schmidt, Chairman of the CUNY Board of Trustees and former president at Yale University, has full confidence that the campaign will be a success. "CUNY has two great foundations: great students and a great faculty." One of those students was present at the kickoff event. André Harding, a student in the new honors college, was also one of the keynote speakers. He credits his stellar education to CUNY's specialized programs, like the honors college. "In high school I had a business focus; in college I majored in chemistry and then switched to history. My goal is to be a college professor. All of this would not have been possible without an honors college. The guidance that I received was one of the most important ingredients."

The Chancellor noted that this ambitious fundraising goal is made possible because of the academic renewal that has taken place at CUNY under the leadership of the Board of Trustees. "Admission standards have been re-established, graduation requirements have been strengthened, remediation has been ended at the senior colleges and a renewed emphasis has been placed on producing alumni who are ready for graduate school or the workplace," he said.

The results have been dramatic. Retention rates have improved, graduation rates have increased, first-term GPA's for freshmen have increased, and average SAT scores of admitted and enrolled students have increased. At the same time, more Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White freshmen were enrolled in baccalaureate programs in the fall 2003 than the previous fall, while overall enrollment is at its highest level since 1975. CUNY's student body is about 31 percent African-American, 29 percent White, 26 percent Hispanic and 14 percent Asian, while 43 percent were born abroad. Forty-seven percent of all college students in NYC attend a CUNY school, and CUNY has awarded one million degrees.#

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## ACTING GOVERNOR CODEY CREATES MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Acting New Jersey Governor Richard J. Codey recently signed an executive order creating a task force that will recommend ways to better help the mentally ill lead normal lives. "Nowhere is the need for help more prevalent than in the area of mental health," said Codey. "If there is anything that my administration will stand for, it is compassion and standing up for those who may not be able to stand up for themselves."

Prior to signing the executive order, Codey met with mental health advocates from across New Jersey, who joined him for the signing ceremony in the Governor's Outer Office. The executive order establishes an 11-member Mental Health Task Force that will examine issues ranging from housing to jobs to access to care for the mentally ill.

Under the order, the task force is required to convene a statewide Mental Health Summit, hold at least three public hearings and form advisory committees that may include non-members

of the Task Force. The Task Force is charged with, among other things, the responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the current effectiveness of the mental health system in New Jersey; the availability, accessibility and gaps in the mental health services; mental health housing needs; employment, training and education needs; community support services; and ways to redirect more services to the community and to divert hospitalizations. The Task Force will also develop specific recommendations concerning increasing bed capacity at the State psychiatric facilities; a strategy that addresses housing and services for people with mental illness; increasing the community capacity for behavioral health services; and outpatient services and outreach to the criminal justice system. The task force will submit a final report to the Acting Governor and the Legislature by March 31, 2005.#

## RUTGERS HAS NEW CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL PRACTICES

Registration is underway for new courses designed to help teachers master the latest in instructional technologies and effective teaching practices. The Academy for Teaching and Learning, part of Rutgers' Center for Effective School Practices, offers more than 60 continuous education courses for teachers in pre-K through 12th grades. Comprehensive programs are divided into two broad categories: content/practice and technology. The content/practice workshop offerings include programs in mathematics, literacy, language arts, classroom management and assessment. Technology seminars will examine

how to use technology to improve test scores, teacher productivity and multimedia. Other programs include technology issues that cut across the curriculum and the best ways to use Internet resources. Professional development credits will be awarded for all workshops, which range from one to five days in length. All can be customized and produced on-site. For more information or to register, visit [cesp.rutgers.edu](http://cesp.rutgers.edu) or call (732) 564-9100. The Center for Effective School Practices, located in Somerset, is an off-campus unit of the Division of Continuous Education and Outreach at Rutgers University.#

## CHILDREN'S CORNER



### Psychiatrist Develops New Board Game to Help Children Prepare for Game of Life

The world can be a confusing and difficult place for young people. Everyday children face many complicated emotional and interpersonal issues. Recognizing the challenges that families and children face, psychiatrist (and father) Dr. Michael Rayel has created the Oikos Game (pronounced eeh-kos). It's a fun, new board game that assists young children, ages 5 to 8, in developing important skills that will help them handle issues such as bullying, dealing with strangers, peer and sibling interaction, and much more. The Oikos Game can be found in retail stores and outlets throughout North America and retails for \$44.95.

"I see the world with two perspectives, one as a psychiatrist and one as a father. This game was developed with both of those perspectives in mind," said Dr. Rayel. "Our objective was to create a game that would provide children with an opportunity to learn and grow, and to make it fun. Learning is much more effective when there is laughter and pleasure attached to it. The Oikos Game achieves that. Kids love playing it."

Through active play with the Oikos Game, children move their playing icons around the board and use their emotional bank to add up their positive points. Depending on where they land on the board, players may draw a yellow or red situation card, which spotlight moments that could happen in real life; the cards highlight good or bad reactions to the situations. With lively directions such as hopping on one foot and saying

that you won't accept gifts from strangers, the life lessons that are the foundation of the game are wrapped in fun, and are better absorbed by the children this way.

Through playing the game, young people learn and better understand empathy, assertiveness, persistence, self-esteem, self-discipline, setting limits, good manners, effective communication strategies, helping others, and dealing with strangers. The Oikos Game concept is as unique as its name, which means sphere of influence, signifying the game's objective of helping families throughout the world to communicate a positive influence to their children.

As a company, Oikos Global ([www.oikosglobal.com](http://www.oikosglobal.com)) is committed to encouraging personal and emotional skill development in this generation's children by creating quality educational products, toys and games. Through their annual Oikos Global Award, the company will also recognize the improvements youth make to the emotional lives of their peers. The award honors those who have developed positive ways to deal with bullies, helped prevent the use of street drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol, improved communication among peers, established a support network, and reduced violence in their school and community.#

For more information on Oikos Game, the company Oikos Global, their award, or to speak with Dr. Rayel, please contact Ruth Atherley of AHA Creative Strategies at 604-303-1052 or at [ruth@ahacreative.com](mailto:ruth@ahacreative.com).

### Gingerbread Adventures in the Everett Children's Garden

The scent of gingerbread fills the air at the Everett Children's Adventure Garden as five fanciful gingerbread houses arrived for a Winter Wonderland of Gingerbread Houses in the Bendheim Global Greenhouse. The Wonderland is new this year at the Garden's annual Gingerbread Adventures holiday event for kids. Star pastry chefs from Balthazar Bakery and Soutine Bakery made the gingerbread buildings, which include a Post Office, Bakery, School, Fire House, and City Hall. Some of the houses even light up and glow like gingerbread jewel boxes.

Enjoy a magical holiday adventure at Gingerbread Adventures and the Holiday Train Show until January 9, 2005. Gingerbread Adventures, in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, invites children to use their senses to smell, touch, and taste the spices and other plant parts that make up a classic gingerbread recipe. Discover that cinnamon comes from the bark of a tree, ginger root from an underground stem, and cloves from the flower bud of a tree. Holiday activities include grinding spices, making spicy sachets and ornaments, and decorating gingersnap cookies.

Children experience hands-on fun grinding pieces of different plant parts: raw sugar, cloves, wheat seeds, and bits of ginger. Using their sens-

es, children are encouraged to learn by exploring questions such as, "Do the plant parts smell differently after grinding?" Children make field notebooks, spicy herbal sachets, and decorative ornaments to take home.

The Garden's Holiday Train Show features more than 100 replicas of historic New York buildings, all made from plant parts and other natural materials. Botanical materials such as leaves, twigs, berries, and pinecones are transformed into dazzling reproductions of landmarks like the Statue of Liberty, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Garden's own Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. This year's show also features a new model of the Jewish Museum on Fifth Avenue and replicas of historic Bronx firehouses. Railway trains and trolleys add another magical touch as they wind their way through this miniature world.

For more information on Gingerbread Adventures call 718.817.8700 or visit us on the web at [www.nybg.org/family#](http://www.nybg.org/family#)

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## North American Native Arts Lure at AMNH

By JAN AARON

Can 500 beautiful objects of Native North American jewelry and art capture the minds of NY kids? You bet. The American Museum of Natural History's (AMNH) new exhibit "Totems to Turquoise" is proving a crowd-pleaser for eight and nine year olds and giving older visitors something to think about. The stunning exhibition at the AMNH until July 10, 2005 features a dazzling array of historic and contemporary jewelry and artifacts that celebrate the beauty, power and symbolism of Native North American arts.

"To prepare for our visit here, we asked youngsters to bring something of their own to class and research its history," said Eve Steele, a student teacher at PS 29 in Brooklyn.

"To organize this exhibition, we drew from AMNH holdings as well as other museums and private collections," said Peter M. Whiteley, curator of North American ethnology at the museum. "Paving the way was the jewelry exchange program which, for the first time, allowed Northwest and Southwest artists to visit and view each other's work and share techniques and histories," added Lois Sherr Dubin, an independent curator.

The "Introductory Gallery" presents key themes via arresting jewelry and artifacts. Here are explanations of cultural traditions and other facts about the Northwest and Southwest via

diverse objects. For example, a Katsina design bracelet by Southwest Hopi artist Charles Loloma, using a composition of straight lines and right angles, contrasts with a bracelet by Northwest master Haida artist Bill Reid made of hammered gold depicting figures with characteristic U-shapes, fluid curving lines. The show's artists also appear on several video monitors in their studios talking about their work. Dominating the show are forty vitrines, each with a "Look Closely" circle instructing the viewer to seek one of the objects in each array.

Among the outstanding Southwestern examples on display is Jesse Monongya's modern necklace made of stones from the world over. "It links all of us together," said Monongya, an award winning Navajo artist and advisor to the show. Jim Hart, another show advisor and Hereditary Chief of the Haida Nation, remembered a great aunt telling him as a child how valuable Haida art was. "Then, I took it for granted," he said. Now the artist views it as Haida language. Hart's jewelry is vivid. He also carved the totem pole for the show. Dempsey Bob, a Tlingit from Southeast Alaska, features his necklace of 30 tiny gold frogs with a moonstone clasp. The piece drew oohs and ahs from small fry. "It was worth about \$150,000 when I made it, but much more now that gold has gone up," explained the artist to a youngster who replied an astonished "Wow!"#

## Justices Ruth Bader Ginsberg & Arthur Chaskalson Discuss *Brown v. Board of Education*

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Citing "education" as key in continuing the drive for racial equality that was advanced in one of the 20th century's most significant Supreme Court case, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg and South African Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson spoke eloquently about the heritage of *Brown*, one of the court's most controversial cases. Its legacy is ironic, they pointed out—a unanimous decision that many legal scholars have judged wrong on the law though right on morality. The justices appeared at the Columbia Law School Green Auditorium in the final lecture of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary series on *Brown* that has been running all year at the university. Their particular perspective was to view both the evolution and the effect of *Brown* in the international community. For Justice Chaskalson, who was appointed to head South Africa's highest tribunal by Nelson Mandela, the occasion also marked an opportunity to celebrate the ten-year anniversary of the end of apartheid.

The speakers were introduced by the famous NAACP attorney, later dean of Columbia College, Jack Greenberg, whose pioneering work on behalf of civil rights was acknowledged in 2001 when he was awarded a Presidential Citizens Medal, and whose continuing reputation was confirmed when he made the list of Columbia's 250 most distinguished graduates. Noting that he came in at number 18, in a roster that includes the likes of Hamilton, he joked, "at least I'm alive." No doubt most of the SRO crowd that night knew that Professor Greenberg was one of those who had argued *Brown*. What they may not have known was that he had also been active in assisting Justice Chaskalson in writing South Africa's post-apartheid constitution, which established the Constitutional Court.

Both justices commented on the fact that *Brown* not only influenced other countries to strengthen civil and human rights laws but in some cases was surpassed in those countries by more sweeping and rigorous constitutional guarantees against discrimination. Justice Chaskalson noted that the Canadian Supreme Court has a "more flexible approach" to anti-discrimination cases, and

that South Africa includes in its equality clause impairment of "dignity": has discrimination been "hurtful and harmful" to an individual or a group? In South Africa equality delayed is considered equality denied. In impassioned tones, Justice Chaskalson observed that the South African constitution has the "most extensive bill of rights in the world," binding on all public and some private institutions. Unlike jurisprudence in the U.S., South Africa takes a "remedial or restitutionary" view of equality, according to which protection of a vulnerable group takes precedence over punishment of those practicing discrimination.

Justice Ginsberg, a Columbia Law School alum (class of '59) was surprisingly feisty and subtly humorous in the Q & A session that followed their formal remarks. She reminded her audience of America's racial divide during the war years but also suggested that disgust with the racist policies of Nazi Germany actually "propelled human rights protections." No surprise, of course, that *Brown*, set in the context of the McCarthy cold war period, was not universally applauded: communist countries downplayed the decision, while some who heralded its principles expressed skepticism about its implementation. No one, however, could deny *Brown*'s impact. The "watershed" case became a rallying cry for those who supported and those who opposed the power of courts to change social policy through decision-making. Today, as Justice Ginsberg noted, *Brown* is cited by the European Court of Human Rights as it reviews the "special" (racial segregation) policies of central European countries that track Romany children into schools for the mentally retarded and socially maladjusted.

The evening came to a sobering close, with both justices noting that *Brown* has lost its symbolic influence internationally, with other countries having incorporated more explicit protections against discrimination, and as many of the expectations of *Brown* having yet to be realized in this country. The Supreme Court does not have agendas, Justice Ginsberg concluded, but lawyers should, and it is their responsibility to educate judges by taking up cases they want heard. As Justice Chaskalson remarked earlier, if change could come to segregationist South Africa, it can come anywhere.#

## Native American Music: A Must for Every Classroom

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

His pleasing, confident *a cappella* tenor almost gives the lie to Dr. Louis Wayne Ballard's claim that Native American music, basically percussive, is without Western signifiers such as harmony, counterpoint, and improvisation. The fact is that many of the 23 class lessons figured here—legends, lullabies, love songs, social dances, rounds, stomps, and rabbit, bird, and buffalo songs, among others, are distinctively lyrical and so captivating that even a hungry 19 month old baby, waiting for dinner, has his mouth open trying to imitate the sounds that Dr. Ballard is making. What seems especially appealing is Dr. Ballard's soft and soothing voice: he pronounces syllables, takes phrases in small sound bites, recites, sings in rhythm, invites listeners to join in, then repeats the essentials. The variety of offerings is surprising. As Dr. Ballard has written, "There is no one kind of Native American Indian music, but many kinds," music that represents "at least 200 tribes in continental America alone."

Dr. Louis Ballard, a Quapaw Indian of Cherokee and French/Scottish ancestry, is an internationally regarded composer, music educator, writer and lecturer on Indian music and curriculum development, whose work has been featured at Carnegie Hall [see *Education Update*, November issue]. On the CD's he shows himself to be a patient and quietly impassioned advocate. Here, after all, is American music, though it has not yet enjoyed the renown it should have, given the imperatives of American history. The last census reveals over two million Native American Indians residing in this country, many not on reservations. "What is needed in America, as it has always been needed," Dr. Ballard has written many times, "is an awakening and reorienting of our total spiritual and cultural perspective to embrace, understand and learn from the aboriginal American what it is that motivates his musical and artistic impulses."

Although *Native American Indian Songs* is intended for use at levels beginning with the early grades, the focus of the instruction is such that anyone, at any age, could easily be moved to imitate and learn. Of course, the most significant applications will be by music teachers who follow Dr. Ballard's analyses of how Indian music differs from familiar ethnic folk songs. For them, the book will resonate as professional guidance with its reliance on technical terminology references to "linear modality," "monophonic structure," "chordal foundation," "mesa tones" but simpler and general applications could be developed because of the Guide's basic peda-

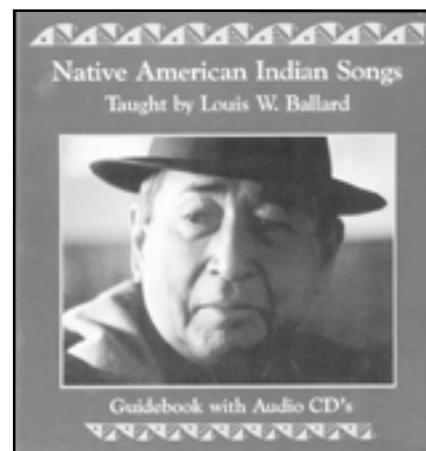


Dr. Louis Ballard

gogical structure. Each song is introduced with more brief notes about form, key, starting tone, meter, Native American language, percussive instrument, and grade level, not to mention wonderful accompanying "Study Photos." Where applicable, dance notation is also provided. For the "Navaho Corn Grinding Song," for example, suggested for grade levels 4-12 (the particular lessons here grew out of classroom situations with fourth graders at Kenilworth School in Phoenix), teachers are informed that "rattles" should be used. The actual music scores for each song include lines for both voice and percussion, but even before the music notation appears, teachers are given Learning Concepts, Cultural Notes and Map identification for each tribe. The Navahos constitute the largest Native American tribe in the country, both in numbers and in reservation area, with most Navahos living in parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. An illustration shows corn being grinded, and readers are reminded, which goes back 3,000 years, is found only in the Americas, North and South. Thus music instruction becomes a lesson in cultural history. Meanwhile, the beat goes on and the 19-month old is still listening as his dinner grows slightly cold.

*Native American Indian Songs* Taught by Louis W. Ballard. Guidebook with Two Audio CD's. New Southwest Music Publications, bibliog., cultural notes, photos, compositions, resources. 110 pp. P.O. Box 4552, Santa Fe, NM 87502-4552. The book and CD's are a "new and improved upgrade." Southwest, "an Indian-owned and operated music publishing company," was founded in 1970 by Louis and Ruth Ballard "to meet the special needs of music educators and aficionados of Native American music." [#](http://www.nswmp.com)

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### D is for Democracy: A Citizen's Alphabet

by Elissa Grodin  
illustrated by Victor  
Juhasz  
(\$16.95, Sleeping Bear Press)

As the presidential election has come to a close, it is a good time to educate young children about democracy, and *D is for Democracy: A Citizen's Alphabet* does just that with expressive color drawings by Victor Juhasz, that accompany text by Elissa Grodin, wife of actor Charles Grodin. The book includes whimsical sayings for introducing each letter of the alphabet as well as comprehensive entries on such topics as: the Supreme Court, Martin Luther King, the Founding Fathers and the U.S. Constitution, Democracy, Elections and George Washington among others. Juhasz, a published illustrator, who can be found in publications such as *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Time* and *Newsweek*, does a cartoon worthy of Thomas Nast, the political cartoonist, with George Washington crossing the Delaware River in a boat with Presidents Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton. In the back of the book is a section telling children how they can get involved with democracy.

Also from Sleeping Bear Press is *M is for Majestic: A National Parks Alphabet* by David Domeniconi, illustrated by Pam Carroll. Large page illustrations represent a scene from the National Park listed after the letter of the alphabet and there are smaller painted postcard scenes of other National Parks that share the same letter. Between the text and the pictures this book will get the whole family excited about visiting all the National Parks.

Alphabet books for the states are also informative, well illustrated and contain sections in the back offering quizzes and the answers about those states. *M is for Mayflower: A Massachusetts Alphabet*, written by Margot Theis Raven, illustrated by

### M is for Majestic: A National Parks Alphabet

by David Domeniconi  
illustrated by Pam  
Carroll  
(\$17.95, Sleeping Bear Press)

### M is for Mayflower: Massachusetts Alphabet

by Margot Theis Raven  
illustrated by  
Jeannie Brett  
(\$17.95, Sleeping Bear Press)

Jeannie Brett, has wonderful illustrations from scenes in Massachusetts' history. *E is for Empire: A New York State Alphabet* by Ann Burg, illustrated by Maureen K. Brookfield, is a nice introduction of New York State to New York City children by telling them about events and places outside the city but within the city as well.

*K is for Keystone: A Pennsylvania Alphabet*, written by Kristen Kane, illustrated by Laurie Knorr is a wonderful visual introduction to the state of Pennsylvania.

All these books are available at Logos, which is also the place to do your holiday shopping for books, cards, music, puzzles and many other gift items. So remember Logos at Hanukkah, Christmas and any other holidays approach.

#### Upcoming Events At Logos:

Tuesday, December 7, 2004 at 7 P.M., Stephanie Woo, card maker extraordinaire, will host holiday card writing as well as present her cards. Participants will receive 10 percent off greeting card purchases made that evening.

Check Logos for Holiday Singing Date in December.

Wednesday, January 5, 2005 at 7 P.M., KYTV will discuss *The Ginger Man* by J.P. Donleavy.

Saturday, January 8, 2005 at 1 P.M., Ebon Adelona will discuss her book, *Save Yourself: A Practical Guide for Understanding Energy, Emotions and Health*. Book signing will follow.

Monday, January 10, 2005 at 7 P.M., the Sacred Texts Group led by Richard Curtis of the Richard Curtis Literary Agency will continue its discussion of the *Book of Exodus*.

Children's Story Time with Dvorah is every Monday at 3 P.M. (20 percent off all purchases for participants in KYTV, The Sacred Text Group and Children's Story Time at the time of the meetings.

Transit: Lexington Avenue Subway #4, #5, #6 to 86th St., M86 Bus (86th St.), M79 Bus (79th St.), M31 Bus (York Ave.), M15 Bus (1st & 2nd Ave).

### E is for Empire: A New York State Alphabet

by Ann E. Burg  
illustrated by Maureen  
K. Brookfield  
(\$16.95, Sleeping Bear Press)

### K is for Keystone: A Pennsylvania Alphabet

by Kristine Kane  
illustrated by  
Laura Knorr  
(\$17.95, Sleeping Bear Press)

## Seven Days of Possibilities: One Teacher, 24 Kids, and the Music That Changed Their Lives Forever: A book by Anemona Hartocollis

Reviewd BY JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

A compelling book, despite its extravagant subtitle and ambiguous point of view, *Seven Days of Possibilities* tells the uplifting story of Johanna Grussner, a music teacher at P.S. 86 (The Kingsbridge Heights School) in the Northeast Bronx, who drifted into teaching as a way of paying her way to be a jazz singer, shortly after she arrived in this country from Aland Island in Finland, population 25,000, "an archipelago of 6,500 rocks and islets," situated between Finland and Sweden. Not just another tale about Making a Difference with an underprivileged youngster from mostly dysfunctional families, the book moves creatively and persistently against an education bureaucracy with art and heart. It also provides a sobering history of the political intrigue that defined New York City's public schools in the '80s and '90s.

Blond-haired, blue-eyed, Johanna, the middle child of a close upper-middle class family in Aland, left her rural home to find adventure, musical opportunity, and herself. Fresh from graduate study at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, she lands a part-time job at a minority school run by feared, admired and shrewd principal, Shelly Benardo, "a [45-year old] creature of a certain era in the history of New York City schools." It was a critical time for the schools under Guiliani, as he was pressing for higher standardized test scores and not a time for the arts. Against the odds and driven by an inner incentive, Johanna forms a school chorus, rouses intractable kids (90 percent met the poverty standard for free lunch) written off by their teachers, families, and society, and transforms some of them, at least for a short while. Excited by her success Johanna organizes a week's trip for the chorus to her hometown

to perform gospel songs. For most Alanders the Bronx was only Fort Apache.

Interspersed with Johanna's story are vignettes of her family, friends, colleagues, students and other secondary players whose stories go on too long, and therein lies part of the problem of *Seven Days*. Despite its accessible style and laudatory goal to be inspirational and "destructive for public education in general," there is also a problem of the author's reconstruction of inner thoughts and conversations. Without the benefit of quotation marks, a novelistic device that becomes dubious in sections that would explain why Eve is finally expelled from Paradise. Anemona Hartocollis, who for years has been a reporter and columnist for *The New York Times* seems to straddle a line between sympathy and dispassion. She visited Johanna and her family in Aland more than once and acknowledges their generosity, but she stops short at exploring fully the demons that affected Johanna, especially the young teacher's acknowledgment of the increasing evidence of muscular dystrophy which she and her two sisters inherited through recessive genes, a horror that somehow must have accounted for the odd interview (critical by any standard) she gave after the successful trip and that caused the permanent rift in her relationship with her former principal.

Blessed with praise from, among others, Jonathan Kozol, Randi Weingarten, James Gleick, and Samuel Freedman, and filled with memorable portraits of some of the youngsters, *Seven Days of Possibilities*, for all its moving, inspirational drama, seems at times to be a reworking of education articles grafted onto a story of personal courage, or the other way around. Still, the book is worth reading.#

### Pulitzer Nominee Dr. Charles Martin Receives Translation Award

The Academy of American Poets has announced that Dr. Charles F. Martin, a Professor in the Basic Skills Department of Queensborough Community College of the City University of

New York, is co-winner of the Academy's 2004 Harold Morton Landon Translation Award for his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, published by W.W. Norton.

## Warm Up These Wintry Days of December With Books!

### PICTURE BOOKS: AGES 5 THRU 8

*Guji Guji* by Chih-Yuan Chen. (Kane/Miller, 32pp., \$15.95), is a charming spin on the ugly duckling theme. An enormous egg rolls into Mother Duck's nest. Her hatchlings eventually include spotted and striped ducklings and a rather unusual crocodile-shaped youngster named after his first words. Illustrations are rich in colors and dramatic down to the silhouette end papers.

### FICTION: AGES 8 THRU 12

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, (Sterling, 176 pp., \$12.95), illustrated by Michael Foreman, is based on photographs taken by Carroll of the "real Alice Liddell." This popular illustrator of classic stories packs his depictions with whimsical humor and shimmering colors.

*The Reluctant Dragon* by Kenneth Grahame. (Candlewick, unpagged, \$17.99), illustrated by Inga Moore. Colored pencil and ink illustrations

capture the atmosphere of this classic dragon tale involving the loyalty of a child friend. A lovely picture book rendering that pars down Graham's clever dialog but nevertheless makes this story accessible to the youngest readers.

### POETRY: AGES 8 THRU 12

*Nonsense!* by Edward Lear (Atheneum, 32 pp., \$16.95), illustrated by Valori Fisher has 15 limericks accompanied by remarkable visuals that mirror their surprise. Photographic artwork made from an assemblage of old toys, print cut-outs, patterned paper—simulating a look of veritable depth. Elegant Victorianism and modern goofiness set these poems apart as a treat.#

*Selene S. Vasquez* is a media specialist at Orange Brook Elementary School in Hollywood, Florida. She is formerly a children's librarian for the New York Public Library.#

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# NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO FIND & HELP SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

The Center for the Improvement of Child Caring (CICC) has launched a national campaign to help parents, professionals, agencies, caregivers and others better identify and assist young children with special needs. CICC Executive Director and founder, Kerby T. Alvy, Ph.D. said, "It is estimated that approximately 75 percent of the three million children under five who have disabilities and other 'special needs' are NOT being identified and treated by professionals before entering school. As a result, these vulnerable children usually do poorly at school, suffer insults and hardships, often become anti-social, and require remedial and legal services costing taxpayers billions of dollars."

Dr. Alvy, author of several books on parenting, points out: "The sooner children with special

needs can be identified, the faster they, their parents and their families can get the services they require and deserve."

As part of the campaign, CICC has developed and put on the Internet, the CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System. Consisting of a series of age-specific questions, it helps parents and others quickly identify a variety of learning, communication, motor skill and behavioral problems that may not have been recognized or simply overlooked. It also connects them immediately to important community services and agencies throughout the United States that can help.

The CICC Discovery Tool and Referral System has been used successfully throughout the nation by thousands of parents of young children, care-

givers, agencies and professionals in the early childhood education field. It is unique in that it provides—simultaneously—the following three types of services on-line: educating parents and staff about normative child development during their child's first five years of life; assisting in identifying whether a young child may have special needs that require professional attention; and connecting users of the Tool to a wide range of professionals, community resources and educational materials.

The results of the Tool are in the form of a Developmental Profile that can be printed out and shared with others. Dr. Alvy and CICC hopes to bring the Tool and its benefits to the attention of thousands of parents and others through a series of speaking

engagements around the country and through a network of partnerships which are now being formed.

Parents, grandparents, other family members, child advocates, child care workers, civic, professional and religious groups, community agencies, government departments and private companies can learn more about how to become partners with CICC in this national campaign by going to the Partnering page on the CICC Web site, [www.ciccparenting.org](http://www.ciccparenting.org), by contacting CICC by e-mail at [cicc@flash.net](mailto:cicc@flash.net), or calling toll-free 1(800) 325-CICC (2422).#

*Established in 1974, The Center for the Improvement of Child Caring (CICC) is a private, nonprofit community service, training and research corporation.*

## RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Deborah J. Green is a licensed social worker and certified psychoanalyst in private practice. I have been practicing full time since 1986. I treat individuals, couples and families in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. My approach to good treatment is to begin where the patient is. I don't have an agenda. I believe it is very important to tailor the course of therapy to the needs of the individuals seeking help not in a particular theory. I guess the best way to talk about how I actually deal with problems is problem solving itself. I believe in autonomy so I do not readily tell patients what to do but I guide them and help them to think for themselves.

I am confronted with a broad range of issues including relationship problems, school and work related issues, bereavement, loss and elderly concerns, divorce, anxiety and depression. I might also add loss of a pet. For many, pets are seen and experienced as family members so when their pet dies it is very painful, almost tragic. Their attachment is very strong. Some have told me that losing their cat or dog was even more devastating than losing a human relative or friend.

Some of the problems people initially report deal with anxiety or depression regarding relationships at home or at work. For many, just talking "things" out unburdens them. Too many do not feel free to talk to their loved ones or friends. Children's schooling and just managing the day can be difficult. Feelings of isolation, low self esteem, and emptiness regarding one's sense of self are just a few issues that arise across all age groups. Money, sex and compatibility issues are common among the many couples I see whether they be heterosexual or homosexual.

I believe that most difficulties people experience stem from poor communication. Therefore, establishing dialogue is crucial to an individual's well-being. In addition to my private practice, I also teach candidates training to be analysts. I find it very rewarding when a student presents a problem that he or she initially felt uncomfortable discussing, only to find that half the class was struggling with the same issue but did not want to disclose for fear of criticism. The result is very positive for the presenting student, and for rest of the group as well. Many years ago a man came to therapy because he was ambivalent about how he felt in a relationship with a certain woman. He was also unsure how she felt about him. After a few individual sessions his girlfriend came in with him as he had requested. In this session he was able to tell her that something difficult for him to say in the past—he loved her. At that moment she revealed how she had loved him for many years. I have to laugh to myself now about how, in that session I was told not to say anything because he had something very important to tell her—"Will you Marry Me?"

Another issue that I am often confronted with is adult children caring for their aging parents. It is not uncommon for people to feel very much like they did when they were young with their parents and issues that come up around this are guilt, frustration, resentment and finally love. My focus is to help people have a better quality of life for the rest of their life. Call Deborah Green at 212-772-6197

## APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS WORKS WITH SPECIAL ED KIDS

By Joanne Scillia

Autism is listed as one of the five pervasive developmental disorders that are most commonly referred to as autism spectrum disorders. The prevalence of the autism has been dramatically increasing to about 2-6 per 1,000 children and creates a major disruption within the families that are affected by this disorder. It is also more prevalent in boys than girls by three or four to one. The five disorders are characterized by varying degrees of impairments in communication skills, social interactions, and restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, with the most severe being autism disorder and the mildest being Asperger syndrome.

It is typical that the parents are the first to identify unusual behaviors in their child. In some cases, parents have always noticed a difference, and in other cases parents notice a sudden change in behavior and development. It is most reliably detected by the age of 3 years; however, some cases can be identified as early as 18 months. Studies suggest that eventually children may be identified correctly by 1 or even younger. There are some possible indicators of Autism Spectrum Disorders which include lack of babbling, pointing, or making meaningful gestures by 1 year of age, does not speak one word by 16 months, does not respond to name, and loss of language or social skill. Other indicators are poor eye contact, doesn't seem to know how to play with toys, excessively lines up toys or other objects, is attached to one particular toy or object, doesn't smile and appears to be hearing impaired.

The symptoms of autism are separated into three areas where some symptoms may be more obvious than others and will present very differently with each individual. One area is communication. There may be a significant delay in or lack of total speech. An individual with autism may have difficulty initiating or sustaining conversations with others. They may be preoccupied on one topic or use language in a repetitive manner. Another area is social interaction where a person with autism may not develop relationships with others appropriate to their developmental level and present with a lack of emotional reciprocity. They may appear aloof or "in their own world." The third area involves their behaviors and interests. Many children with autism demonstrate repetitive motor or verbal actions or engage in self stimulatory behaviors such as finger flicking, rocking, or spinning. Children with autism may have a lack of make-believe or social imitative play. They may also have nonfunctional rituals or routines and find it difficult when there is a disruption in these schedules or transitioning from one activity to another.

Although there is no cure for autism early intervention is important and can significantly reduce symptoms and increase a child's ability learn new skills. It is important that parents research as much information about all the potential interventions for children with autism in order to make an informed decision based on the needs of their child. Although there is no single best treatment for all children with autism, these individuals respond very well to programs that are highly structured. Applied behavior analysis (ABA) has become widely accepted as an effective treatment for children with autism. ABA uses the principles of behavior to increase appropriate behaviors while decreasing disruptive behaviors. ABA consists of breaking skills into smaller units, teaching them one step at a time and reward correct responses. The child's curriculum should be individually based on his or her needs and should include skills that facilitate development to help achieve the greatest degree of independence. Data are collected to measure accuracy and success. Clinicians analyze and evaluate the data on a constant basis to ensure acquisition and generalization of novel skills and maintenance of already acquired skills. Call Lisa Martine, ABA Supervisor Theracare, 212-564-2350 x2154

## Resource & Reference Guide

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### COLLEGES

**DECEMBER EVENTS**  
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**from other institutions with a current ID**

The Cygnus Ensemble, a group of six chamber musicians in residence at the college, features Tara Helen O'Connor, flute; Robert Ingliss, oboe; Calvin Wiersma, violin; Susannah Chapman, cello; William Anderson, guitar/mandolin/banjo; and Oren Fader, guitar, electric guitar. The evening's program will feature: Richard Festinger's Hidden Springs, and new music by SLC students and faculty. Richard Festinger is the only American composer in the Cygnus circle who performed at Woodstock, playing guitar for Janice Joplin. For more information, please call (914) 395-2411.

**CONCERT**  
**Sarah Lawrence College Chorus**  
**and Chamber Choir**  
**Sunday, December 12**  
**Reisinger Concert Hall**  
**4 p.m. Free**

Sarah Lawrence Chorus and Chamber Choir, conducted by Patrick Romano. For more information, please call (914) 395-2411.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

**JASA: Jewish Association**  
**For Services For The Aged,**  
**132 West 31st Street, 15th Floor, NYC; (212) 273-**  
**5304**

Sundays at JASA, Continuing Education for Adults 60 and Over at Council Senior Center. Call 212-273-5304 for catalog and information about courses.

### DANCE PROGRAMS

**New Dance Group Arts Center**  
**254 West 47th St., NYC, NY 10036,**  
**(212) 719-2733; www.ndg.org**

Musical Theater Program for kids/young adults. Dance classes in all disciplines. Teaching/rehearsal space available. Located between Broadway and 8th Avenue.

### PASSES TO HEALTH CLUBS & YOGA STUDIOS

**American Health and Fitness Alliance**  
**(212) 808-0765/www.health-fitness.org**

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## Resource & Reference Guide

### MED & HEALTH SERVICES

**NYU Child Study Center**  
**550 First Avenue, NYC; (212) 263-6622.**

The NYU Child Study Center, a comprehensive treatment and research center for children's psychological health at NYU Medical Center, now offers specialized services for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, anxiety-related problems, consul-tations for learning disabilities and giftedness, and seminars on parenting and child development. Call for more information.

**Advanced Degrees in Medicine, Science,**  
**and the Health Professions at New York Medical**  
**College Valhalla, New York;**  
**(914) 594-4000; www.nymc.edu**

### SCHOOLS

**The Harlem School of the Arts,**  
**645 St. Nicholas Ave., NYC;**  
**(212) 926-4100 ext. 304**

Learning continues after school at The Harlem School of the Arts, an after school conservatory where the arts educate, stimulate and motivate your child. Music, dance, theater, visual arts and much, much, much more!!

### SCHOOL RECRUITMENT

**www.SchoolProfessionals.com,**  
**info@schoolprofessionals.com,**  
**212-916-0825**

Finally, a one-stop service whose sole focus is recruiting, interviewing and providing qualified substitutes for elementary, middle and high schools. One quick call to us means not having to interview and hire on your own, eliminating the worry and work of finding last minute replacements, "doubling-up," or even canceling classes. Our proprietary roster of pre screened candidates enables us to quickly find a professional precisely matched to your school's requirements, saving you the time and expense of scrambling to meet last-minute needs. And, with 24/7 coverage, you can request staff at any time - even at night or on weekends. Schools can get started today by calling 212-916-0825 or e-mailing info@schoolprofessionals.com to register for our services.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

**The Smith School, (212) 879-6354**

The Smith School, is a fully accredited Regents registered independent day school for special needs students (grades 7 through 12) located on the Upper East Side. Our staff is experienced in teaching students with such problems as Attention Disorders, Dyslexia, Phobias and emotional issues. If your child needs an academic setting, extra attention, close monitoring and extremely small classes call The Smith School at 879-6354 because better grades begin here.

**The Sterling School, (718) 625-3502**

Brooklyn's private elementary school for Dyslexic children offers a rigorous curriculum, Orton - Gillingham methodology and hands-on multi-sensory learning. One-to-one remediation is also provided. If your bright Language Learning Disabled child could benefit from our program please do not hesitate to contact Director: Ruth Aberman at 718-625-3502.

### TUTORS

**Math Tutoring**

High School and Junior High. Two Sample Hours, No Charge. Arithmetic to Advanced Calculus. (212) 228-1642 / (917) 297-2389

### TEST PREPARATION

**Test Prep & Admissions Counseling**  
**The Princeton Review**  
**594 Broadway, Suite 501, NYC 10012**  
**800-2-REVIEW www.PrincetonReview.com**

The Princeton Review is a pioneer in the world of education. Founded in 1981 and headquartered in New York City, the Company offers classroom and online test preparation, as well as private tutoring, to help students improve their scores in college and graduate school admissions tests. The Princeton Review helps over half of university-bound students research, apply to, prepare for, and learn how to pay for their higher education, and helps hundreds of colleges and universities streamline their admissions and recruiting activities, via their website. The Company also authors more than 190 print and software titles on test preparation, college and graduate school selection and admissions, and related topics.

## POLY PREP SENIORS RECEIVE NATIONAL HONORS NATIONAL MERIT HONOREES AND NCTE WINNER ANNOUNCED

This year, twenty-three Poly Prep Country Day School seniors were recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation and the National Achievement Scholarship Program for outstanding achievement on the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Six Poly seniors were named Semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Competition: Kyle Bailey, Nicholas Feitel, Laura Mumm, Gabrielle Olya, Kelly Powers, and Monique Wilson. Across the country, less than one percent of high school seniors are named Semifinalists each year. These students are outstanding scholars," said Poly's headmaster David Harman, "but they are also debaters, dancers, peer tutors, athletes, actors, musicians, volunteers...the list of their accomplishments goes on. We're proud that they have been recognized in this way, and most proud of the contributions they've made to the Poly community." These six seniors now move on to compete in the finalist round.

Another eight Poly seniors were named Commended Students in the National Merit Program: Peter Ajayi, Mena Cammett, Jerome Giovinazzo, Nicholas Goldberg, Anne Herbert, Aditi Jain, Matthew Ladner, and Fred Munk.

Five Poly seniors were named Semifinalists in the National Achievement Scholarship Program, which recognizes outstanding achievement among black American high school students: Peter Ajayi, Jabari Brisport, Mena Cammett, Olujimi Thom, and Monique Wilson. Only 1600 seniors are named Semifinalists each year. Another four Poly seniors were Commended Students in this program: Jasen Bell, Amaany Clarke, Gregory Morgan, and Adrienne Rolle.

In addition to her National Merit and National Achievement honors, Poly's Mena Cammett was awarded a certificate of merit for superior writing by the National Council of Teachers of English. Ms. Cammett is one of only 689 seniors across the country selected for this honor. In selecting the winners, judges look for writing that "demonstrates effective and imaginative use of language to inform and move an audience." Kevin Roth, the head of Poly's English Department, described Ms. Cammett as "a student who, in everything that she writes, displays her personality, her intellect, her originality, and her relentlessly incisive mind."

Celebrating its 150th year in 2004-2005, Poly Prep is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory school educating students at two campuses in Brooklyn. At the Lower School in Park Slope, children in Nursery through Grade 4 grow in knowledge of themselves and the world in a safe, nurturing environment. Students from across the city come to the country day school campus in Dyker Heights for Middle and Upper School. There, they participate in a rich, challenging program of academics, athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities. Poly is a vital, diverse community of committed faculty, talented students, engaged parents, and loyal alumni.

## RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, INC.

Finding the most suitable school, program or service for a child with special needs can be an intimidating process. That is why—for countless families with special needs children, from birth to 21—Resources for Children with Special Needs, Inc. (RCSN) is a blessing.

Founded in 1981 by parents of children with disabilities and special needs for children with disabilities and special needs, RCSN has become, for many New York City metropolitan area parents and professionals, a one-stop information, referral, advocacy, training and support center.

Resources for Children with Special Needs is designated by the U.S. Department of Education as one of a national network of more than 100 Parent Training and Information Centers, and provides a full range of services, including individual advocacy and parent support, publications, special events, as well as case management for children's special education entitlements and due process rights in New York.

Through their *Center Without Walls* program, RCSN takes their information and expertise into the most underserved areas in New York City, such as homeless and abused women's shelters and churches.

Maintaining the largest, most single comprehensive database of agencies, organizations, programs and services for children with special needs in New York City, Resources publishes this information in extensive, easy-to-use resource directories, which will soon be made available online.

RCSN firmly adheres to the principle that information is power, and power expands possibilities. The independent, not-for-profit powerhouse continues to connect children, parents, professionals, students, advocates and policymakers to schools, daycare, respite, independent living, summer camps, health care, therapies, legal assistance and more—in short, to the universe of available resources.

For more information or to order resource directories, contact RCSN at (212) 677-4650 and [info@resourcesnyc.org](mailto:info@resourcesnyc.org), or log onto [www.resourcesnyc.org](http://www.resourcesnyc.org).

## Cuomo

*continued from page 21*

the building to attend a holiday party on campus. Thanks to the generosity of NYU, a family of five was recently able to attend the Big Apple Circus. We are also delighted that one of Mentoring USA's program sites, Stanley Isaacs, is having their own holiday party for mentors and mentees. Partnerships like these are a vital part of our program because they expose youth to exciting activities, new experiences, and the loving attention of wonderful volunteer mentors.

Our hope for the holidays is that our children learn to understand the diversity around them as they share this special time with loved ones. Although Mentoring USA works to facilitate these goals, parents/guardians, local leaders, school, and agency staff also need to expose young people to the stimulating and exciting traditions of others. This exposure is vital to a child's development and will ultimately enable them to help build their own loving, generous communities where they can live in harmony and peace.

Happy Holidays!#

Matilda Cuomo is the Founder and Chairperson of Mentoring USA and Janet Polli is the Director of MUSA.

## Viteritti

*continued from page 9*

immediate implementation, he notes, but in any case with vouchers money would go to a child, not a school.

It will take time, Dr. Viteritti knows, to change long-held positions, particularly in New York City, but he points to a growing acceptance of charter schools, despite, admittedly, the failure of some, and he strongly believes that a continuing nuanced framing of the issues can go a long way to moving toward different public policy. No Child Left Behind is already affecting standards and accountability, he points out. At Hunter he would hope that "no holds barred" discussions—so often relegated to graduate or professional schools—would involve undergraduates. After all, education is not just training for a career but preparation for citizenship. And therein lies the necessity for, not to mention the attraction of, a critical exploration of the interface of education and public policy.#

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## MOVIES

# Journey Through Life: The Motorcycle Diaries

By JAN AARON

Director Walter Salles's *The Motorcycle Diaries* tells how two middle class Argentinean buddies, the 23-year-old asthmatic med student Ernesto Guevara de la Serna (Gael Garcia Bernal) and the biochemist Alberto Granado (Rodrigo de la Serna), set out on a rundown motorbike to explore the South America they had only known

through books. The realities they found on their 8-month journey in 1952 radically changed both their lives, most especially Ernesto's, who would emerge some years later as the charismatic revolutionary known as "Che."

Beautifully acted and elegantly shot by Eric Gautier, the film charts their journey through the snowy Andes, the intimidating Atacama Desert, and the lush Amazon basin, ending up in Peru. While serious in tone, marvelous comic moments contrast the two friend's personalities. Alberto is a carouser; Ernesto lacks tact.

For classroom discussion, there's Che, the top counterculture campus icon of the seventies. Who remembers him today? Students might keep their own diaries to witness their worlds and perceptions. They might examine film's central theme, which maintains that great change starts with empathy for others. Are there

other motives?

When their old bike breaks down and their tent blows away, the two travelers must con their way into meals and places to spend the night, and ultimately hitchhike to their destinations. In Venezuela, they run into a hungry itinerant couple who was kicked off their land; in Peru, they see downtrodden descendent of once-great

Inca civilization. Here, they take off to the San Pablo leper colony where patients are isolated on an island.

This is life-changing for Ernesto: He forms a bond with the patients, working without gloves, never displaying disgust or fear, and drawing himself into their world. The dramatic climax, symbolizing Ernesto's emergence as a champion of the people shows him leaving a birthday/farewell party to dangerously swim at night heaving

with asthma to join the patients on the island. (R; 128 minutes; in Spanish with English subtitles.)#

Another October must is *Shark Tale*, a colorful, clever kid and adult friendly animated film, featuring a fast jive-talking fish (Will Smith) and a sensitive vegetarian shark (Jack Black), and many similarly amusing others. (PG; 90 minutes)



## HOP ABOARD THE POLAR EXPRESS

By JAN AARON

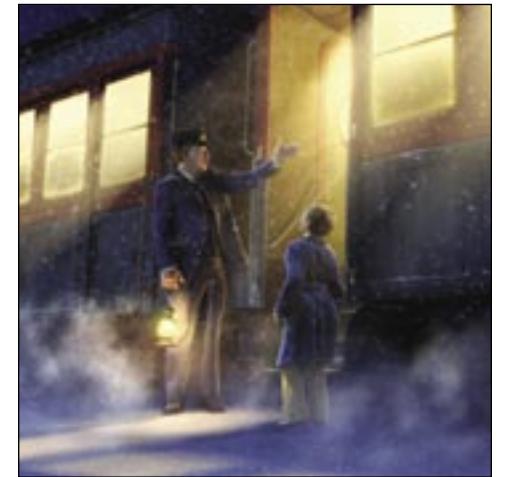
Bearing an uncanny resemblance to Chris Van Allsburg's original storybook, "The Polar Express," also generates a new liveliness and magic that kids will love and enchant parents, too.

The computer-animated film, which reunites Tom Hanks with director Robert Zemeckis ("Forrest Gump"), is a technical landmark. It is the first feature shot in cutting-edge performance capture technology. The technique, which attaches sensors to actors' faces and bodies and records their movements, which are then animated, has its shortcomings. The eyes in the characters' faces are not especially convincing. It's a quibble. The digital animation allows for beautiful vistas and stunning action sequences that could never be done with live actors. The technology permits Hanks to play five of the major roles, including Hero Boy.

Despite its state-of-the-art technology, the story itself is simple. A small boy has doubts about Santa Claus' existence and he noses around the house, feeling his parents are trying to make him believe in the chubby guy. At midnight of Christmas Day, the boy is stirred from his sleep by the roar of a train coming to halt in front of his house and conductor asks if he is coming aboard. Destination? The North Pole.

The boy hops aboard in his PJs and slippers. He meets other children, Hero Girl (Nona Gaye), Know-it-All Boy (Eddie Deezen) and Lonely Boy (Peter Scolar). They enjoy hot chocolate served by tap dancing waiters. When Hero Boy train-surfs to retrieve Hero Girl's lost ticket, he also meets a hobo (Hanks) on the top of the train. Once at the Pole, he sees Santa give out his first gift.

The lost ticket sequence is one of the most poetic and memorable sequences in the movie, involving golden ticket swirling in the wind, chased by wolves and swept aloft by an eagle. There's an exciting moment when the train skids across an icy expanse and turns into a



roller coaster. The kids' shared experiences on board and the mysterious kind conductor, who punches messages in their tickets, plus their experiences at the North Pole with Santa are an engaging story. (100 minutes, G, animated.)#

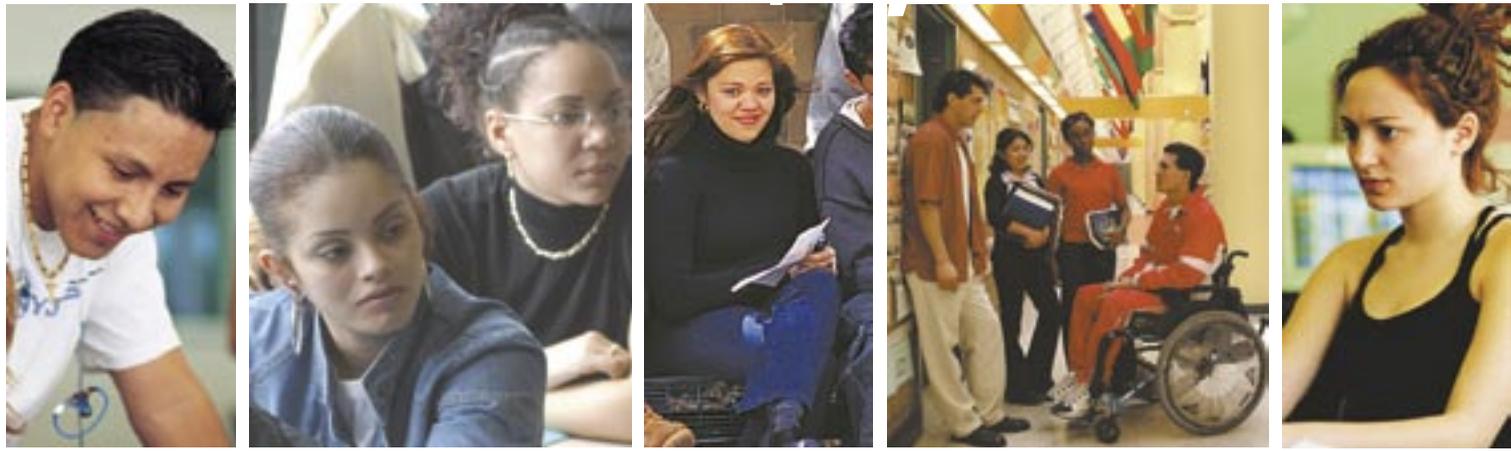


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