

EDUCATION UPDATE

EDUCATION NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER WORLD TOMORROW



Volume X, No. 11 • New York City • JULY 2005
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

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HOMESCHOOLING IN NEW YORK



TEACHERS OF THE YEAR
pages 12-13

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EDUCATION UPDATE

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POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to:
Education Update
P.O. Box 1588
NY, NY 10159
Subscription: Annual \$10.
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**EDUCATION
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EDITORIAL

I Touch the Future; I Teach

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

The words in the title are those of Christa McAuliffe, the imaginative and daring teacher who went up in a space shuttle that plunged to earth in a ball of flame. Those words inspired me to think of a way to honor outstanding teachers in New York City who are influencing the next generation of students.

When we talk about standards, about producing readers and leaders, we must talk about the teachers providing the motivation, the academic excellence and mentoring that is so vital to education. Three years ago, I requested that principals and assistant principals nominate outstanding teachers in their schools and fill out a form online with certain criteria. I then assembled an Advisory Board with Laurie Tisch, Dr. Charlotte Frank, Dr. Alfred Posamentier, Dr. Augusta Souza Kappner and Adam Sugerman to judge the entries each month. In June of 2002, we had our first awards breakfast honoring teachers from all parts of the city who had appeared in *Education Update* each month.

Many corporations, foundations and philanthropists renewed their support for the third year.

Our keynote speakers this year were Schools Chancellor Joel Klein and CUNY Vice-Chancellor Jay Hershenson. Among our honored guests were Dr. Selma Botman, CUNY Executive Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Alice Belgray, Chairperson, Children's Book Committee at Bank Street College, Dr. Maritza Macdonald, Director of Education at the American Museum of Natural History, Dr. Merryl Kafka, Curator of Education, New York Aquarium and Natalie Anersen, VP for Education, the New York Botanical Garden.

We were also honored to have President Carolyn Williams, Bronx Community College and President Delores Fernandez, Hostos Community College as well as Superintendent Susan Erber, District 75, Special Education.

Amidst a group of 150 attendees, each teacher was called to have a gold medal bestowed upon him/her by Hershenson and Botman as well as the sponsors. Many principals came with their teachers.

Recently, I was honored to be a judge at the New York Academy of Science for the Nobel Laureate Essay Contest. The three winning high school students will be sent by the Swedish Consulate to the Nobel ceremonies in Stockholm next year. In speaking to the students, I noted a common thread: the inspiration, guidance and support they were receiving from their teachers. In each case, their teachers arranged for them to do advanced research in a hospital or university lab, while providing continuous mentoring along the way.

This year, 2005, marks the 100th anniversary of Albert Einstein's publication of *The Theory of Relativity*. Imagination, Einstein felt, was more important than knowledge. The Outstanding Teachers of New York City excel in stimulating students' imaginations, in helping them see the poetry of life, in inviting them into the realms of the unknown to discover their own ultimate truths.

It is about time we recognized these unheralded teachers in New York City. #

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LETTERS

Wallace Foundation Funds New Report on After-School Programs

To the Editor:

Reading your article brought me much hope that I will be able to finally start my own after school program for children. I have taught young lower income children and have performed physical therapy for 13 years. I feel moved to make a difference in the lives of all children.

Susan D. Snodgrass
Reidsville, NC

Interview with Nobel Laureate Dr. Paul Nurse, President, Rockefeller University

To the Editor:

I met Sir Paul Nurse yesterday at University of Pennsylvania. He affirmed that he was still interested in science and society issues. I got the sense that he wanted to understand the American culture a little better before diving into this 'potential political bag of worms.'

I am starting a radio talk show and will be featuring him and his discoveries in my initial programs.

Jane Steranko
Pittsburgh, PA

An Interview with Jake Kheel

To the Editor:

Sounds as though the Kheels have a truly good thing going here. Can you give your readers follow-up, listing other local needs met? NNYN's local focus in Punta Cana alleviates worries about paternalism.

J. Middlebrook
San Francisco, CA

A Glimpse into the Imprisonment of Jean Harris

To the Editor:

I have read all the books written about Jean Harris. I read *Marking Time*. I followed her trial. I never believed she meant to murder Dr. Tarnower. He did, however, deserve some sort of punishment

for the shabby way he treated her. I applaud Ms. Harris for trying to help educate the children of the inmates of Bedford Hills. Too bad Martha Stewart isn't doing something to help some of those women she was incarcerated with. The pity and compassion she felt for them when she was locked up with them must have melted away when she got back to her money. Bless you, Ms. Harris. I truly hope the rest of your days are peaceful and happy.

Alice
St. Augustine, FL

The Tennis Balls that Helped Deaf Children

To the Editor:

What a wonderful concept! I had no idea covering the foot a of chair could make such a difference for the hearing impaired.

This clearly highlights the fact that there are little details that are not expensive but have great impact when we are serving students with special needs. Every exceptional child (aren't they all?) should be blessed with an involved and attentive mother like this!

Laura
Decatur, AL

Dr. Rebecca H. Cort, Deputy Commissioner, NYS VESID

To the Editor:

I've found this article on Dr. Cort very interesting. I'm interested in learning more about vocational education in the culinary arts. I'm having a difficult time in finding the requirements to fulfill this certification. Would you be able to help?

Laverne Marri-Perez
West Babylon, NY

Olympics of the Mind: Engaging Young Black Youth

To the Editor:

Good article. Good job.
Claire Theobalds
Queens NY

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CORPORATE LEADERS IN EDUCATION

AN INTERVIEW WITH ADAM BRONFMAN

By SYBIL MAIMIN

He is a new kind of philanthropist. Born into wealth (the Seagram liquor empire), he is casual, unpretentious, youthful in demeanor and outlook, devoted to his wife and four children, and an avid skier. These qualities have helped Adam Bronfman, managing director of The Samuel Bronfman Foundation and vice chair of the Hillel Board of Directors, understand and connect with the young people his organizations seek to reach. Inspired by his father, the legendary businessman and philanthropist, Edgar Bronfman—"He is my hero in terms of making a difference, making the world a better place"—the son, nevertheless, is doing it his own way. Through its four major programs – the Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel (BYFI), Hillel: the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, My Jewish Learning.com, and The Curriculum Initiative (TCI), the Bronfman Foundation focuses on strengthening Jewish identity among young Jews from a wide range of religious and cultural perspectives. Adam Bronfman did not have a strong connection to his faith until the birth of his first child "inspired him to think about raising his family Jewishly." Married to a non-Jewish woman, he determinedly supports pluralism within the faith and an atmosphere that is comfortable and welcoming for all. Citing its history and moral and ethical dimensions, he explains, "Judaism is something that contains religion but also a lot more."

Bronfman is particularly proud of the Youth Fellowship program, started in 1987, which sends 26 outstanding Jewish high school juniors

from widely different backgrounds to Israel each summer to study Judaism and the Jewish world. They interact with government, military, and cultural figures, Arabs, Israeli teen-agers, and a distinguished faculty. The goal is creation of future community leaders who are open-minded and able to speak a common language despite differences. They commit to remaining close to the program as alumnae and Bronfman reports, with the help of follow-up seminars, reunions, a listserv and e-mail network, the Fellows have maintained strong bonds and serve the Jewish community in myriad and creative ways. Dara Horn, a 1994 Fellow and now a prize-winning novelist (2002 National Jewish Book Award), describes "an astounding experience...The caliber of participants is extraordinarily high...lots of extremely bright, creative, articulate people with lots of interests." She appreciated "being challenged to rethink the ways she thought about Judaism, Israel, and herself." Sam Rascoff, a 1990 Fellow and now a lawyer, explains the program has no agenda, although "Its defining commitment is to Jewish pluralism and unity of the Jewish people...Denominations and categorizations are very limiting when approaching issues of common interest." He recalls a "first-rate faculty, a rigorous learning experience, and a highly sophisticated appreciation of what it means to be a Jew in North America."

At Hillel, the largest Jewish college campus organization in the world, Bronfman is focused on international expansion. There are currently 110 Hillel Foundations in the United States,

Canada, Israel, Latin America, Australia, and states of the former Soviet Union. They are linked in a system of "interdependent self-sufficiency" with each having "its own flavor and board." Hillel "opens a door" and allows students to discover and experience Jewish values and practices on their own terms, a mission very much in keeping with Bronfman's own philosophy. The young philanthropist explains that another Bronfman Foundation initiative, MyJewishLearning.com (MJL), started in 2002, is another pluralistic venue, offering a comprehensive collection of information, commentaries, history, and more – all from diverse points of view. It even offers recipes for traditional Jewish dishes and is used by non-Jews as well as Jews. Another program, the Curriculum Initiative (TCI), is a many-faceted opportunity for secular secondary schools to incorporate Jewish ideas and learning into their curricula. Designed to ensure that no one religious group dominates a school culture, the program offers high-quality seminars on Jewish topics to teachers and provides support to Jewish students wishing to express their faith.

Bronfman is excited by new challenges, whether reaching out to Russian-Jewish immigrant students in Brooklyn or creating a Hillel for Spanish-speaking Jewish students in Miami. He is a doer who thinks outside the box as evidenced by his efforts in his hometown of Park City, Utah. There, he helped expand the Reform synagogue, Temple Har Shalom, by introducing artistic and cultural events such as a Schmoozdance Film Festival (to echo the nearby Sundance Film Festival) and a "Ski Shul," a cabin on a mountain that has a ski-in, ski-out Shabbat service. There will be more challenges ahead and this young man with a vision of making Judaism exciting and comfortable for all seems ready to take them on. #



THEATER

Folksbiene Carnegie Hall Gala Honors Eli Wallach & Anne Jackson & Stars Mandy Patinkin



Pictured (from left to right) Cynthia and (Folksbiene Board Member) Jeffrey Wiesenfeld present lifetime achievement honor to Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson at Carnegie Hall

The venerable Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre celebrated its historic 90th consecutive season at a star-studded Carnegie Hall gala concert headlined by Mandy Patinkin on Thursday, June 16, 2005. The highly anticipated event, titled "Mandy Patinkin Sings Mamaloshen, A Benefit for the Future of the Yiddish Theatre in America," paid tribute to the actors Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council chairman Fred Zeidman, and prominent attorney Barry Slotnick. It also featured, among others, the all-star female klezmer band Mikveh; world-renowned klezmer clarinetist David Krakauer; the New Yiddish Chorale (under the direction of Zalmen Mlotek), and a 200-voice grand children's chorus consisting of youngsters from across the tri-State area. The concert, produced by Moishe Rosenfeld, drew over 2,500 and raised valuable operating funds for Folksbiene, America's sole-surviving professional Yiddish theatre, the world-recognized company at the forefront of the remarkable resurgence of interest in Yiddish language and culture sweeping the Jewish world.

After the event, an elegant dessert party for about 100 was held at the home of John and Mira Van Doren.#



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LOWCOUNTRY SUMMER WRITING PROGRAM IN HIGH GEAR AT THE CITADEL



By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

The Citadel, Charleston's prestigious 163-year-old military college, might seem like an unlikely place to house the South Carolina Lowcountry Writing Project (LWP), one of 187 professional development programs affiliated with the Berkeley-based National Writing Project (NWP), and Associate Professor of English Tom Thompson, a cool jeans-and-sandals kind of guy, an unusual choice for director. So what's the fit between The Citadel and LWP? "There is none," laughs Dr. Thompson, who spent 13 years in the high schools (my "credibility" factor) and now teaches graduate writing courses at The Citadel in the evening—"I'm the ed guy in the English [literature] Department." The Citadel posts clear rules against eating in class, but "we have food"; the typical Citadel classroom has rows and columns, but we sit in circles or at tables," and, he adds, he tries to avoid words like "classroom." Indeed, LWP's invitational Summer Institute room in one of The Citadel's main buildings,

looks like a camp rec hall: chips, cookies, soft drinks near the door, papers and books piled high and wide that barely allow a guess at table color, walls and drapes crowded with showcase posters of recent presentations. In the hall outside, a uniformed cadet passes silently by and nods; inside, the group is in full discussion mode, wrapping up morning activities, pack-

ing in more crackers and brie. An afternoon of response to Best Practice demos is on the agenda— why not the lawn, Thompson calls out, or the Beach House, The Citadel's coastal retreat on the Isle of Palms where recent photos of LWP 2005 reading and writing testify to the pleasures of laid back learning.

LWP's four-week for credit Summer Institute (100 hours, 45 hours in winter) is the main piece of a broad national initiative that for over 30 years has been at the forefront of "improving the ways teachers teach writing and use writing as a tool for learning." Guiding principles turn on the belief that student writing can best be addressed by teachers who are themselves writers, readers and critical evaluators of research on the teaching of writing, and who invite and enjoy the company of colleagues from all disciplines. Although LWP includes a Young Writer's Camp for students, grades 4-8, the focus of the program is on teachers, training them to be leaders in their schools and communities and

providing them, at The Citadel, with opportunity to explore new and creative teaching techniques and to engage in writing that will be critiqued. The NWP lays out basic guidelines for course and workshop

content, but local project sites such as LWP are free to innovate. This summer, Tom says, with almost mischievous and glee, his 15-member group is wandering around downtown Charleston on a writing marathon, observing, leaning against storefronts, scribbling in notebooks. Later they will come together to review their work, adhering to his protocol of PQP: praise, question, polish, constructive criticism he also refers to as an "applause, only" approach. LWP 2005 participants, ages 22-60, are mostly women, mostly—but not all—white, have already proved themselves in their schools (public and private, K-12, with an occasional teacher from a community or four-year college), and thus their selection in a Best Practices essay competition that takes one out of two applicants, guarantees a high starting point. Significantly, they represent all grades and subjects, and presentations must

be interactive and capable of modification for other grade levels and disciplines.

Ideally, LWP never ends. Participants become teachers-leaders and writing coaches in their schools, inspiring others to apply while keeping alive their own enthusiasm by way of LWP reunions. Some graduates do guest lectures, some get published (Tom stresses the importance of writing in all genres), but all sign on as advocates of a school culture that respects writing across the disciplines and writing that can be fun. Tom himself has been influenced in the nine years he has directed The Citadel program: much of what he does with LWP he now applies in his formal classes in Composition & Rhetoric. As Chaucer said 625 years ago, "Gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche."#

For further information email LWP@citadel.edu.

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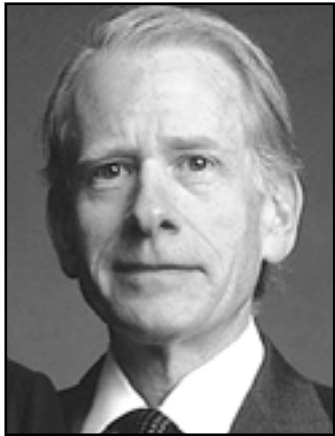
PROFILES IN EDUCATION

President & CEO Dr. Allan E. Goodman, The Institute of International Education

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

He can hardly believe it, but myths persist: many young people abroad still think that The United States has only three universities: Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. Other myths also need dispelling. Many Americans imagine that most international studies students (IS) come here on scholarship. Not true, only 25 percent receive financial assistance, which means that international study is good for the nation's economy. In New York City alone, as recent figures demonstrate, 57,000 international students brought in \$900 million to local coffers and overall IS students delivered \$13 billion to the U.S. economy in general last year by way of tuition fees and living expenses. Still another myth, the soft-spoken 6th president of IIE points out, is that information is hard to come by. In fact, the organization's web site (www.iie.org) clearly lays out ways for prospective applicants to search for appropriate schools, especially those with specialized programs, and to learn about fast-changing federal regulations, sometimes every week. America has over 4,000 colleges and universities—only nine countries have more than 300 each, Dr. Goodman adds.

Another myth that comes up in discussion with the personable former Georgetown professor has to do with the assumption that IS students try to stay in this country once their commitment is up (undergraduate work plus one year of practical training), in spite of the



fact that the program requires them to return. In fact, Dr. Goodman emphasizes, Chinese students in particular are eager to return to their home provinces thanks to new opportunities created by globalization. As for India, which sends the largest number of IS students to the U.S. to study mainly physics, chemistry, biology, business and engineering, here too, he says, IS students want to go back to participate in a new climate that rewards them with American-level salaries, which go even further in India than in the U.S.

The 86-year-old IIE dates to an era of progressive social and intellectual foreign policy in the years following WWI, a period that also saw the creation of International House (122nd St. & Riverside Dr.), The Council on Foreign Relations and other institutions devoted to public diplomacy. All shared the hope that international educational and professional exchange would lead to greater understanding and help keep the peace. Brought to a virtual halt in 1925, because of isolationist policies [during the era of Calvin Coolidge], IS initiatives are enjoying renewed interest today, despite occasional and cyclical drops in some IIE categories. The quality of applicants, Dr. Goodman emphasizes, is at an all-time high, and if there is one overarching issue it is "money," needed to help defray expenses for all the worthy applicants who want to come to the U.S. to study. Unlike other countries that compete for IS students—particularly the U.K., Australian

and New Zealand—the U.S. relies on foundations, not government, to support such efforts and to expand participation. As of now, Dr. Goodman has written, "50 percent of all international student enrollments in the U.S. are in just 80...colleges and universities."

Prospective IS students are advised to study the IIE website and perhaps take a look at some of Dr. Goodman's essays posted there, especially "Franklin in Paris," a witty account that pays tribute to our first ambassador in France and articulate promoter of international exchange, and "What I Wish I Had Taught" in which Dr. Goodman surveys his career, including getting a Ph. D. in Government from Harvard (on scholarship) and working with and

for Samuel P. Huntington, Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright, Bush 1 and Bill Clinton, to name just a few—a life rich in public service and administration that began, he smiles, when he was a student needing a part time job and luckily fell into the right office. One suspects there was more to it than happy accident, but, regardless, the president of the leading not-for-profit in the field of international exchange and development training that administers the Fulbright and hundreds of other corporate, government and privately sponsored programs, himself a master diplomat, seems the right person at the right time to enhance the work of this stellar organization. #

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GATEWAY SCHOOL: GATEWAY TO SUCCESS



By NAZNEEN MALIK

The Gateway School stands apart from the other buildings that line Second Avenue. Its white façade glistens in the afternoon rain as I pause for a moment before being buzzed in to meet Robert Cunningham, its newest Executive Director.

The hallways are warm and inviting as Cunningham guides me on a tour of the school and we stop frequently for mini conversations with students who are walking from one room to another or up and down stairs, engrossed in their work. Although Cunningham has only been at Gateway for a year, he already knows all their names and they speak with one another like friends. School projects line the windowsills outside classrooms, and drawings hang on the walls like expensive murals. I am intrigued by an open column of space that connects each floor to the one above it, preserving a sense of community among students and staff.

Founded in 1965 by Claire Faun and Elizabeth Freidus as a pilot school addressing the needs of children with learning disabilities, Gateway has since expanded in both size and scope. It provides academic instruction as well as occupational, speech and language therapies. In addition to its Lower School for ages of five to nine, Gateway recently introduced a Transition Program for children ages nine and a half to 12 which prepares them for the fast paced environment of mainstream classrooms.

Currently, 62 students attend Gateway with 42 in the Lower School and 20 in the Transition Program. The admissions process, however, remains very involved as there are only a limited number of available spots. Last year, of the 400 applicants, only seven were accepted. Through a series of evaluations and interviews, a child is accepted into the program if his or her needs can be adequately met and if the child fits in with the existing group of children. Unfortunately, many students who could benefit from the program are turned away due to insufficient resources; however, Gateway works with those families and suggests alternative programs.

Since the school accepts state funding, it groups students within a two year age range as specified by law. "Within that age range we put all the kids in a class together and create the best group according to their individual needs as well as the collective needs of the group," says Cunningham. Since not all children have the same strengths and weaknesses, he explains, we try to put children in with other

students who will help them develop the skills they need. Generally we end up with groups of 8 children in the Lower School and groups of 10 in the Transition Program. Students are further grouped into clusters of three and four for math and reading instruction based on ability, so for example, a child who is proficient in math but not in reading will not be held back in math.

Each classroom is equipped with computers and is taught by a head teacher and a co-teacher or assistant teacher. Teachers must be working towards a Masters degree in Special Education as well as certification, but many already have their Masters.

Student performance is evaluated on a day to day performance and teachers hold conferences with parents three times a year. Students with learning disabilities are very inconsistent in their performance on standardized evaluations and although students participate in state testing, we don't find them to be particularly helpful, says Cunningham.

Unlike mainstream schools whose students move up one grade upon successfully completing the school year, students at Gateway do not move in such a progression. Instead, they are re-grouped with students of similar skill.

Since there have only been 329 graduates in the history of the school, Gateway is able to keep track of them. By the time students enter high school, tracking data shows that about 90 percent of them are in a mainstream setting. Of the students who work their way through the Transition Program, 65 percent go on to a mainstream setting while 35 percent continue in a special education setting.

One unique feature of the program at Gateway is Grandstand, a daily assembly that teaches students how to interact in large group settings. "We use Grandstand as a large group experience where we can work on social skills, sharing, and activities involving teamwork and perceptual skills because sometimes students have trouble generalizing to different contexts," explains Cunningham, "students will often get up and share something that's important to them and then they will entertain questions and comments. That kind of public speaking is something that they start with from their very first experience here."

Students are involved in other activities as well. They compete in ThinkQuest NY against over 200 schools in the elementary division to design websites related to conservation issues. Last year students in the Transition Program took first place and this year they won fourth. In addition, all students participate in a performance which marks the culmination of the art, music, and movement programs. This year it was Peter Pan. "Some of these kids did not look at you when they were young and later when you see them as leads in these plays, it's fantastic," exclaims Cunningham.

Cunningham, who is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Education at Teachers College, reveals that one of the most rewarding aspects of his work at Gateway is witnessing the progress students make. "They learn how to use their intelligence and creativity to overcome difficulties because the program here allows them to experience great success in the areas they are good at," he says.

We firmly believe that no single discipline has figured out how to best work with every kid with every disability, says Cunningham, and the real interplay among those different paradigms is a strong part of the program here.#

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KENNEDY CHILD STUDY CENTER



By NAZNEEN MALIK

Founded in 1958 by Cardinal Feldman of the Archdiocese of New York with a grant from the Kennedy family in honor of their son, Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., the Kennedy Child Study Center (KCSC) prides itself on providing quality educational and medical services to children with a range of mental and developmental disabilities.

Operating in two locations, Bronx and Manhattan, with ongoing plans to open a third site, KCSC currently offers two programs—Preschool for ages three to five and Early Intervention for ages one and a half to three. In total, approximately 315 and 140 children participate in the Preschool and Early Intervention programs, respectively. The programs are year round, and accept students at any time until all spaces are filled, in order to maintain a sense of continuity for children, which enables them to maintain their acquired skills.

Although 95 percent of children with disabilities already receive New York City sponsored home-based early education, the programs at KCSC enable children with serious medical conditions to interact with their peers and communities. A private bus picks and drops off students at their homes and pediatricians, nurses, and speech, occupational, and physical therapists work with them to enable them to get to a point where they can thrive. Field trips to zoos, museums, and libraries broaden their understanding of the world and of what is available to them; and indoor and outdoor play areas give them the flexibility and freedom of movement in a safe and friendly environment.

But KCSC also ensures that children are placed in a structured setting, and that in addition to involving them in recreational activities, they ensure that children receive the necessary skills to function in life. The Manhattan location offers ten classes with at least two teachers per

class. All teachers must be appropriately certified by New York State in Special Education. Children are placed in groups of eight or twelve in Preschool and in groups of ten in the Early Intervention program. During lunchtime, children are taught adaptive living and social skills, place settings, and how to put things away in their proper place. Depending on their needs as determined by the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) when they first enter KCSC, teachers work with children on reading, math, and daily living skills. Therapists work with them as well, often in small group activities for 30 minutes a day.

Principally funded by the Board of Education, KCSC also receives assistance from the New York City Department of Health for their Early Intervention program while remaining under the umbrella of Catholic Charities. As a result, parents are not required to pay for services.

Many staff members are bilingual, says Peter Gorham, Executive Director of KCSC. Because 65 percent of children attending KCSC are Latino. In fact, in one classroom we visited, students sang songs in English and then in Spanish so that everyone could participate. Gorham, an administrator by function and social worker by training, has been involved in the field of mental health for the past 35 years. Prior to joining KCSC ten months ago, he worked for the ARC of Essex County, managed non-profit organizations, and set up community clinics. "An agency like this is really a small business, and you've got to manage it as a small business in terms of resource allocation," says Gorham. "That's where an MBA is valuable."

Gorham also works closely with Larry Perry, the Assistant Executive Director at KCSC's Manhattan location. "I've been here about 26 years in different capacities," says Perry, "and it is very gratifying to see the children growing."

"We have been able to open up the community to people with disabilities," explains Gorham. "Before they were isolated and segregated but now we are creating pathways in which they can make full use of the community. We're also reaching them at a much younger age where intervention can make a difference."

KCSC works extensively with parents as well in helping them to adapt their expectations. Workshops are organized throughout the year to give parents the services and tools necessary to advocate for their children. You have to put things in perspective, explains Perry, and set realistic goals so children can meet them in small increments. The hallmark of good special education teachers and programs, adds Gorham, is that they see progress in small doses.#

The Gillen-Brewer School

By GILLIAN GRANOFF

When entering the Gillen-Brewer School, it becomes immediately clear that the school is anything but traditional. The size of the building, located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, mandates that the type of learning that goes on occurs in an intimate setting. The walls are papered with pictures of smiling faces. The school, which operates on a twelve-month schedule, places a high priority on inclusiveness and cultivating independence in its students. There are 55 staff members and 84 kids. This small student-teacher ratio ensures that each child gets the attention he or she needs. Although the children are grouped developmentally, they are by no means segregated.

Sensory learning is a major component of the type of learning that occurs. Each child is identified by a color and shape. The shapes provide a medium through which the children can communicate with one another in a non-threatening way. The school helps to instill confidence and empower the children's autonomy through a sense of routine. Each student upon entering, places their belongings and backpacks in a cubbyhole, which corresponds to their shape and color.

Continuity gives children with special needs a means of building confidence. When beginning the day, children put their belongings in a cubbyhole identified with their picture.

The emphasis on physical activity throughout the day is part of giving the students a "well rounded sensory diet." Regular occupational therapy classes are held in a sensory gym located in the courtyard of the school.

Donna Kennedy, former teacher and now school director, says that the school's size is an advantage. It allows her to know each of the students and the families personally. Kennedy, who has been at the school for over twelve years, knows first hand the challenges these teachers face.

Her goal as director has been to build "a community of understanding," defined by diversity. At Gillen-Brewer there is an emphasis on the whole family and the school maintains communication with them in several ways such as regularly scheduled field trips and parent meetings. In addition, parents receive comprehensive reports three times a year with their child. These reports include neuropsychological assessments, progress reports on the child's speech, motor skills, occupational therapy, and outline strategies to help the parent build on these foundations.

Ms. Kennedy believes diversity is the key ingredient to successfully building a community of understanding. The absence of a rigid set of criteria for selecting students underscores the school's commitment to inclusiveness.

Acceptance to Gillen-Brewer is based on whether or not the school can successfully meet student needs, not by whether the student will fit in with the community. According to Ms. Kennedy, the diverse nature of the community enriches the type of learning that occurs. The inclusive element of the school ensures that students can learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses, and helps to build mutual trust. Kennedy believes that this interaction is invaluable to the student's growth.

This sense of diversity extends to the school's staff as well. Although every full time teacher

holds at least a Masters in Special Education, she does not believe that credentials alone define a successful special education teacher. We have some teachers who have been here for 12 years that have more expertise and experience than anyone coming out of a masters program. "We value people who work well with children and are very interested in building relationships. I try and get a staff with a lot of different perspectives, so that we can come to a situation and discuss it from very different points of view. I want people on my staff that have kids with special needs and have kids of divorced parents. All of that adds to building a community of understanding."

As an administrator, Donna Kennedy believes in leading by example and she is certainly someone who walks the walk.

As a former teacher, she implicitly understands the challenges teachers face. Growing up in Nebraska, as one of seven children, she learned early on that "you don't learn things unless you enjoy them."

After earning her Bachelors of Arts in Dance from University of Nebraska, she followed her dream to be a dancer in New York City.

She began teaching dance to students while temping in a Special Education school and became enraptured by the stories of the children. She explored her new-found passion in a Masters program in Special Education from Hunter College and taught for two years in the Parkside School. Soon after, she began teaching at Gillen Brewer.

After teaching for 12 years at the school, she assumed the position of director two years ago, after completing a Masters in Administration and Educational Leadership Management from Bank Street College.

Although she is candid that her transition from teacher to director has been challenging, she has clearly met the challenge head on.

"I love to be with kids and to be in this field you have to understand child development." In the two years since assuming the position she has earned credibility as well as the trust of the school board, teachers, parents, and community, thereby enabling her to raise the funds necessary to move the school into a larger space.

"It's been rewarding to see the growth of the student and the parents. The success in building the school and witnessing the incredible dedication of the board members to the new structure has given her an incredible feeling of satisfaction. To see the community come together and the staff come behind the school is testament to the success of the school."

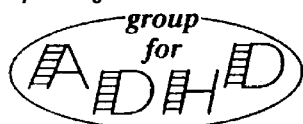
Gillen Brewer's low rate of teacher turnover is proof of her success in building a "community of understanding." Ms. Kennedy believes that small schools provide successful learning environments and she aims to make sure that this intimacy is preserved when the school transitions to the a larger facility in the fall. She is committed to ensuring that Gillen Brewer's philosophy of mutual understanding is not lost in the change. She believes that children learn differently and that schools need to change their approach. We need to learn to pool our resources, says Ms. Kennedy, and remains hopeful that a culture of understanding can eventually be cultivated in the larger special education community and reduce the competition between the schools.#



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CEO of Educational Testing Service Explores Public School Financing

By NAZNEEN MALIK

Recently, Public Education Needs Civic Involvement in Learning (PENCIL), an organization that works to catalyze partnerships between the business community and New York City Schools in conjunction with the Committee for Economic Development (CED), an independent, nonprofit, organization that marshals business support for educational reform hosted a panel on public school finance. Panelists included Michael A. Rebell, Executive Director of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE), Diana Fortuna, President of Citizens Budget Commission (CBC), and Matthew W. Gardner, Policy Analyst for Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP). Kurt M. Landgraf, President and CEO, Educational Testing Service delivered the keynote address.

In a report published by the CED entitled Investing in Learning: School Funding Policies to Foster High Performance, researchers found that in order to reform educational financing, resources need to be more effectively allocated within districts and schools, teacher compensation needs to be aligned with labor market realities, greater incentives must be given for improved performance, and funding needs to be linked to the cost of meeting educational standards.

However, according to Landgraf, the current financing and delivery system for education is broken. Its ineptitude is reflected in the decreasing level of academic competence as exhibited by declining high school completion rates. From 1990 to 2000, the completion rate in high school declined in all but seven states and in 10 states it fell by 8 percentage points or more. The United States now ranks 17th among developed nations in the percentage of youth graduating from high school, cites Landgraf and he goes on to relate an even more disturbing statistic, that out of every 500 ninth graders, only 90 will ever go to college and graduate. In addition, the rate at which students are dropping out have now shifted from 11th and 12th grade a year ago to 9th and 10th grade today.

"If you do not have an appropriate funding level, you will never get great schools," states Landgraf. "I think the greatest injustice that we have done to our children is financing our public schools with local real estate taxes, and until we step up as a society and stop funding local schools with local real estate taxes, we will continue to have a bimodal educational system," he adds.

It is a well known fact that race and socio-economic conditions are important indicators for why students do poorly. Schools in districts with low real estate tax bases simply do not have adequate funding and therefore cannot compete with schools in wealthier districts.

"We have got to find a way to govern education differently," says Landgraf, "We have to find a way to have consistent certification and entry level standards for teachers and we have to reward teachers who will teach in inner cities. We have to pay them more to attract and keep them in the inner city because frankly that is where we need them the most."

It is perhaps for this reason, that Landgraf is an ardent supporter of the No Child Left Behind Act, mainly because it focuses accountability on education. And although it initially focused on grades K through 8, that focus has now broadened to include high schools as well.



Kurt M. Landgraf, President and CEO, Educational Testing Service

"No Child Left Behind is a change paradigm initiative," explains Landgraf, "it is a step in the right direction, to shine an accountability light on our public school system so people who are disenfranchised have someone else look over their shoulder to ensure they get some sense of equal opportunity."

In fact, the right to an appropriate education strikes at the very heart of the CFE, a movement spearheaded by Michael Rebell. In a lawsuit filed against the State of New York, the courts ruled in favor of the CFE, and Justice DeGrasse ordered the state to pay \$5.6 billion to New York City or \$8.4 billion for the entire state; but how could they raise that amount?

According to Fortuna, the state should cover the entire amount since it lags behind most states in how much money it provides for education and there is a greater tax burden on the local level than on the state level. In addition, Fortuna proposes a more efficient use of teacher time which could save about \$1.2 billion a year by having teachers work more during the day, consolidating smaller school districts outside of New York City, and by eliminating some aid to wealthier districts. Furthermore a combination of higher sales taxes, new taxes and increased personal income tax could reach the target.

Since ITEP, a nonprofit concerned with tax policy issues at the state and local level, emphasizes tax fairness and adequacy, Gardner approaches the issue from a slightly different angle. "A fundamental and recurring problem with the New York tax system is regressivity," says Gardner. It imposes the highest tax burdens on low-income tax payers.

One way to address these burdens would be to broaden the tax base since it improves tax fairness by evenly treating all economic transactions. Although, rate hikes will ultimately be necessary, broadening is the place to start, he says.

Fortuna and Gardner agree that the state should be responsible for the entire amount as stipulated by the court; however, Landgraf disagrees in terms of its practicality and political viability. He states, "the federal government has a moral responsibility to provide an educational system that is accountable and responsible to the society."

One thing, however, remains clear. The problems concerning school finance are complex and "not amenable to simple solutions." Nevertheless, "if the business community can come forth with a specific proposal," says Rebell, "it will have a dynamic political impact and will make a real difference." #

One thing, however, remains clear. The problems concerning school finance are complex and "not amenable to simple solutions." Nevertheless, "if the business community can come forth with a specific proposal," says Rebell, "it will have a dynamic political impact and will make a real difference." #

HONG KONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HONORED AS GLOBAL CITIZENS



Ka Lim (Kelly) Chan & Hau Yee (Jacqueline) Wong

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

In the spectacular 12th floor Kaufmann Conference Center designed by award-winning Finnish architect Alvar Aalto at the Institute for International Education, across from the United Nations, a spectacular ceremony unrolled recently, as thirty outstanding students from Hong Kong Universities filed across the airy, angular, blond-wood room to receive tributes for their academic achievement and success as global citizens. Dressed in black but beaming with excitement and good cheer—for most, this was the first time they were in the U.S.—they milled about before the ceremony, introducing themselves to one and all and talking about their delight at being honored by The Institute and the five-year old Dragon Foundation. The thirty were selected as student delegates from the Global Citizen Programme of Hong Kong, and the celebration/reception was the second year the IIE and Dragon were honoring the spirit of the Foundation to promote the aspirations of young people to be strong, energetic leaders in the development of society. "We are all descendents of the dragon," said Ka Lim (Kelly) Chan from Hong Kong Baptist University and Hau Yee (Jacqueline) Wong, from Hong Kong University, no matter where Chinese people come from and are now.

"We're delighted to have the second group of global citizens here in New York City," said Chandlee Backsdale, Director of Global Learning Initiatives at IIE. "It will be a memorable educational experience, giving them an opportunity to visit in Westport, CT (as guests of host families) and organizations in the City and in Washington, D.C. Indeed, both Kelly and Jacqueline were breathless trying to remember all the places they were about to go—theatres, restaurants, museums — educational for sure but also a schedule for "fun." Incidentally, both young women spoke perfect English, a requirement in Hong Kong schools starting at an early age. Kelly is studying journalism and Jacqueline is pursuing medicine, but, in truth, to talk to these representative

honorees is to glean multidisciplinary talents and interests. Award winners all—for student service, sports, as well as for distinction in specific disciplines and overall academic study, they are keeping their options open. A few moments later Wong Man Yee introduces herself, from the University of Hong Kong: it's her first year of Medicine, her second time in New York. She has a Masters of Journalism with Distinction and worked for the A.P. in the Hong Kong Bureau, but Cardiology now has her heart. Her quotation from Winston Churchill seems right on the mark: "We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give."

Global Citizenship 2005 could not have been a more star-studded event. Peggy Blumenthal, VP of Educational Services for IIE was Mistress of Ceremonies, introducing with humor and pride, the major speakers. These included Dr. Rosanna Wong Yick-ming, the elegant and articulate Director of the Dragon Foundation and Executive Director of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups ("the visionary behind the programme"); Dr. Allan Goodman, President and CEO of IIE; special Guest of Honor, The Hon. Wang Guangya, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations; keynote speaker, The Hon. Olara A. Otunnu, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Other notables included Ms. Shelley Lee Lai Juen, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, People's Republic of China, and the Director of the Dragon Foundation. This second year, Dragon Foundation Chairman of the Board The Hon. Sir Ti-liang Yang noted, is memorable for having expanded the scope of study for young people, including international institutions such as The World Bank, the IMF and major U.S. corporations, in addition to universities and government organizations. On to Global Citizenship 2006! #



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Looking for some stimulating summer reading? Read the following two books, both by the same author, Lauren F. Winner. *Girl Meets God: A Memoir*, her first published book, is a must for women on a spiritual journey from mixed cultural backgrounds. Winner relates dealing with growing up Jewish initially in a secular way, but then becoming a fervent Orthodox Jew, before leaving her father's faith, Judaism, for her mother's, Christianity, and becoming an evangelical Christian while shuttling back and forth between England and New York City. Winner as diarist of her life experience conveys the humor and pathos of her daily existence as she copes with the spiritual changes in her life. What Candace Bushnell did for single women on the move in New York City, in *Sex And The City*, Winner does for contemporary women on a spiritual journey.

Real Sex: The Naked Truth About Chastity, also by Lauren F. Winner, although on the surface a helpful aid for Christians dealing with sexual issues, really is a thoughtful book about what the role of sex should be in relationships and society. Is sex merely appetizer, or is it main course and/or dessert? Winner's perspectives as outlined in this book are a valuable addition to present society's discourse on sexuality.

During the summer through Labor Day Weekend, Logos will be open Mondays-Fridays 9 a.m.—9 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.—8 p.m. and closed Sundays. Children's Story Time will be

at 3 p.m. There will be a special Harry Potter Party for *Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince* late Friday night, July 15 through early Saturday morning, July 16, 2005. Come on up and shop, and enjoy the Logos outdoor patio in good weather.

Upcoming Events At Logos Bookstore
Wednesday, July 6, 2005 at 7 p.m., KYTV Reading Group will discuss *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides.

Monday, July 11, 2005 at 7 p.m., The Sacred Texts Group led by Richard Curtis of the Richard Curtis Agency will discuss Saul and David with reference to the book of Samuel.

Friday, July 15—Saturday, July 16, 2005, late night party for *Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince*, 10ish p.m.—1 a.m.

Wednesday, August 3, 2005 at 7 p.m., KYTV Reading Group will discuss *Housekeeping* by Marilynne Robinson.#

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

Girl Meets God: A Memoir by Lauren F. Winner (Random House, \$13.95); *Real Sex: The Naked Truth About Chastity* by Lauren F. Winner (Brazos Press, \$17.99)

Logos Bookstore is located at 1575 York Avenue (Between 83rd and 84th Sts.)

The Little Bookstore That Could

by TANYA HENDERSON

Beyond cafés, cappuccinos and deep discounts, lives a little bookstore that could, did, and continues to survive and thrive despite the modern-day Goliaths, better known as megachains, that have successfully muscled their way across corporate America.

This is the Bank Street Bookstore, a specialty children's store on the corner of 112th Street and Broadway. It is basking in the accomplishment of its thirty-five years in existence this year.

Owned by the Bank Street College of Education, the store was first housed in the College's lobby, starting in 1970 when the school moved from Bank Street in downtown Manhattan to 610 West 112th St. The shop has been at its current location for 15 years.

The Bank Street store is one of two specialty children's stores, in New York City—the other is Books of Wonder in Chelsea—that are still standing after all these years.

Among the children's bookstores that haven't been so fortunate are Eeyore's, Cousin Arthur's, and Tootsie's, all of which have folded since the early nineties. Given stiff competition and recent bookbuying trends, this comes as no surprise.

According to Oren Teicher, chief operating officer of the American Bookseller's Association, a trade organization representing independent and small-chain booksellers nationwide, membership has fallen more than half in the last ten years to about 2,000. Some 300 of those are children's stores.

Recent trends show that mass merchandisers, department stores, and price clubs are also taking home a piece of the pie in the retail bookselling business, not to mention online competitors. According to Teicher, more than half of the books sold at retail in the United States are not sold in either independent or chain bookstores. "We represent about 18 percent [of the market share] and the chains, about 29 percent," he says. "Think of kids' books being sold at Toys-R-Us, computer books being sold at Comp USA, and cookbooks being sold at Williams Sonoma."

With the odds clearly stacked against the Bank Street Bookstore, what puts the magic in its wand? According to Beth Puffer, the store manager, the bookstore has built up a reputation that keeps customers returning. "In addition to common books, we look for the unusual," she says. "So many people say to us, 'If you don't have it, I'm not going to find it anywhere.'" Being the place people find things they normally couldn't get elsewhere is one role the store relishes, she adds. That includes procuring books that promote diversity and help children relate to events around the world as well as those written in foreign languages as remote as Chinese, Punjabi, and Bengali, besides those in French and Spanish.

Melissa Sann, an early-childhood teacher and customer of ten years, shops at the Bank Street Bookstore for its intimate feel. "I became familiar with the bookstore and fell in love with just how cozy and warm it is as opposed to when you go into a big superstore like a Barnes & Noble or a

Borders," says Sann. "Their children's department is just slightly overwhelming, hard to navigate, crowded, noisy, and chaotic."

Susan Fox, a 50-year-old mother of two, with a Ph.D. in English literature, who has frequented the shop for twenty-five years, praises the bookstore for other reasons. She credits it for her 13-year-old daughter Sophia's passion for reading and writing. "I think it's made her a better writer in school," she says. "When you read all these books, you automatically develop a style, fluency, and content that affect you on some level, which gets translated into your writing. She's a great writer."

Then again, Alicia Conklin, a regular customer of fifteen years and mother of a 5-year-old, likes the store's knowledge-at-the-ready. "If you say, 'This is what I'm interested in for a kid at a certain age,' they know it cold," she explains.

Be it service, book selection or a friendly staff with an overall knowledge and passion for books—shouldn't more stores follow suit? In fact, the independents that survive tend to do that. According to the ABA, the key is to reinvent thyself every day to remain competitive, which is no easy feat.

Years of experience have taught the people who run the Bank Street Bookstore to expand their title base, now 60,000 strong, to include not just books for children but also about them for parents, teachers, and students. There's also a healthy amount of non-book items, such as toys for tots, word puzzles, and visual encyclopedias, which now grace the shelves and supplement their basic service. "We're also trying to be a full-service bookstore," says Puffer. "The business is one in which people struggle. Toys and games bring in a little more and help the bottom line."

So what's all the hype about superstore discounts? Are customers really getting more bang for their buck? Not according to Puffer. "There's a public perception that the chain stores have everything and that it's cheaper and that's not necessarily the case, but they've built that public perception so people will think they can go there and there's a wide selection, but it's nothing near what we have in specialty," she states. "We're a specialty store that can compete and that's what we try to do."

You may get a better deal somewhere else, but are people truly going to be happier saving an extra five cents here and there? Not loyal Bank Street Bookstore customers like Dana Vermiyale, of twelve years, who thrives on a sense of community. "It's not only a community of knowledge within the staff, it's like a home away from home," says Vermiyale. "I love the bookstore, it's like our neighbor."#

[Editor's note: The Bookstore is undergoing a facelift this summer, which will result in a new entrance, new counter space, and better lighting and floor space. The Bookstore will be closed for this renovation from July 30 until August 14. Watch for the Bookstore's 35th Anniversary Grand Reopening in the fall!]

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When you let your students discover the wonder and joy of *Disney on Broadway*, we'll make the experience unforgettable! This school year give your students a day to remember by taking advantage of Disney's educational program, which provides schools with special rates for groups of 15 or more for *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Lion King*.

In addition, because we know you want to provide the necessary adult supervision, Disney gives educators one free ticket for every 15 purchased at both shows. Flexible policies allow teachers to pay in full 2-3 months before the performance. Disney invites schools to dedicate an entire day to the theater and to enhance the group's experience by taking a historical tour of the New Amsterdam Theater the morning prior to the performance. Built in 1903, the New Amsterdam has long been the crown jewel of Broadway's theaters. After a two-year restoration process that led to the theater's re-opening in 1997, the theater now hosts Disney's Tony Award winning musical, *The Lion King*. The New Amsterdam Theater is the perfect venue for events ranging from 15 to 1,800 people. The theater and its two historic rooms, the Ziegfeld Room and the New Amsterdam Room, can accommodate everything from a full production to an intimate candlelight dinner. For more information please call Amy Andrews at 212-282-2907.

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 info or to book call 212-703-1040 or 1-800-439-9000, fax 212-703-1085 or email BVTCgroup@disney.com. Or visit www.disneyonbroadway.com.



FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S SEAT

BRIDGING THE GENERATION GAP ON VACATION



Dr. CAROLE G. HANKIN
WITH
RANDI T. SACHS

It's summertime and the living is easy. Right? Well, it's a little easier with school out and with any luck you've scheduled some time for very deliberate relaxing, perhaps a family vacation. We're actually of the opinion that the two words "family" and "vacation" when put together form an oxymoron. Family vacation for whom? Certainly not for the parents, who will have no break from tending their much-loved offspring. A more accurate term would be "family change of scenery" but for the sake of tradition, let's call it a vacation.

If your family is fortunate enough to have three generations in good health and relatively good humor, you may decide to create lifetime memories by taking the whole clan on vacation together, that's you, your parents and/or in-laws, and your children. Unless your in-laws and your parents get along amazingly well, we suggest you try this with one side of the family at a time. Keep in mind though, that grandparents sometimes keep score on how much "grandchildren time" their counterparts are getting. So, be prepared to deal with requests for equal time.

We offer the following suggestions for successful multi-generational travel.

First of all, communicate. If you can, sit down together and discuss what you would like to do, how long a vacation you will take, and what the financial arrangements will be. The decisions will be different for each family. Listen to everyone's concerns before making any reservations.

All family travel plans have to first consider what is best tolerated by the children. Think about what they like to do, what they will or won't eat, and how they adapt to change. Next, consider the

older generation. Are there any mobility issues or are they able to do a lot of walking? Can they tolerate the heat? Do they have any dietary restraints? How is their noise-level tolerance?

We strongly suggest that as a first multi-generational trip you choose a destination that will provide you with entertainment, recreational, and leisure opportunities all at once. This can be a moderate hotel with attractions close by or an all-inclusive resort with everything on site. The key to success is finding a place where each generation can enjoy themselves. Remember, if your children are very young they'll be happy most anywhere in the summer with cool water to splash in and an outdoor playground. Older children require more planning for activities that will hold their interest.

Because one of the goals of a vacation is usually to do a little relaxing, you may be counting on the grandparents to take over the burden of your childcare. Don't. Accept their offers of help during the day but don't expect them to take full charge of your young children. Leaving them to watch the kids while you take a swim is one thing; leaving them behind while you go on a five-hour outlet shopping spree is just not fair. Babysitting in the evening is a reasonable request once the kids are fed and calmed, but the grandparents may want some time of their own to enjoy the nightlife as well.

Many vacation places offer babysitting services and/or child's activities. If your children are comfortable, utilize these services without guilt and take your parents or in-laws for a nice, relaxed adult meal or recreational activity without the kids. This may surprise you the most. As much as the grandparents love your kids, they will undoubtedly appreciate a little quiet adult time too. Good luck. #

Toy Industry Association Encourages Families to Play Safe This Summer

Summer is the time when hitting the books is with "fun in the sun." Toy Industry Association (TIA) encourages kids to get out and play this summer, but to keep safety top-of-mind. By taking a few important precautions, kids and parents alike can determine whether summer is full of toys, fun and games or scrapes, bumps and bruises. "Parents play a vital role in teaching children how to play safely," says TIA spokesperson Julie Livingston. "Without parental supervision and guidance, children are left to their own devices, thus increasing the risk of injury to themselves and others."

Though summer is the perfect opportunity for kids to ride bikes, cool off with the latest water toys, or beat the heat by playing indoors with friends, Livingston advises that precautions

should be taken.

"Parents should review important summer safety tips, such as instructions on where to play (away from bodies of water, traffic, or in parking lots); what to wear to protect against serious injury (sunscreen, helmets, reflective clothing, kneepads, elbow pads, and a horn or bell on bicycles and other ride-ons); and how to play safely. Posting a copy of TIA's kid-friendly Summer Safety Tip Sheet on the fridge can also help enforce a few simple but effective rules during this special time of the year."

Parents can download a free Summer Play Safety Tip Sheet (www.toy-tia.org—click on "Summer Play Safety") and obtain other important information on how to protect their children from summer injuries. #

Doodle Contest For Kids Has \$5000 Prize

Here is your chance to turn those daily doodles into a Doodle Dream Day! Pillsbury® Toaster Strudel™ Pastries is launching a nationwide contest to inspire children to be creative and express themselves, while they have fun drawing and doodling online. Kids ages 8 through 12 can visit www.strudeldoodle.com to create and submit their own unique doodles for the chance to win the "Doodle Dream Day" grand prize. This dream day in New York City includes the opportunity to meet Brett Helquist, the illustrator of *A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket. Helquist will share doodling and drawing tips and tools with the winner. In addition to the trip to New York for the child and a parent, the grand-prize winner will also win \$5,000.

One first-place winner will receive \$3,000, and twenty-five Distinguished Doodlers will receive a 'Daydreams and Doodles' journal and a doodling tool art kit.

"When I was a kid, I loved to daydream about being a pirate and doodle maps and drawings on anything I could," said Helquist, who has also created other kid-friendly artwork. "I think that doodling is a great way to be creative and let your mind wander freely."

Kids visiting the website can also create practice doodles and submit them for posting to an online gallery, which will feature celebrity doodles as well. The Doodle Dream Day contest runs through October 31, 2005. #

SEEDS 2 Program Gets Teachers and Kids Excited About Plants

By RICHARD KAGAN

Plants are cool. That is the assessment from Jean Staudt's third grade class at P.S. 178 in the Bronx, after going through a 12 lesson pilot course on Plant Adaptation developed by the New York Botanical Garden. The SEEDS (Science Exploration and Education Discovery Series) program has developed two supplemental learning tools for children from K-3rd grade—SEEDS 1 & 2. SEEDS 3 on Plant and Animal Ecosystems is now currently being developed for 4th and 5th graders and is scheduled to be ready next year.

Botanical Garden administrators were concerned that children were not noticing the importance of plants in our environment. According to Dr. Don Fulton, Director of Children's Education at the New York Botanical Gardens, children didn't seem to think that plants were alive. The Botanical Gardens developed SEEDS 1, comprised of 17 hands-on lessons with fun activities for children in kindergarten and first grade. SEEDS 1 now supplements school curriculum in 75 schools and 275 classrooms in New York City and the surrounding metropolitan area.

SEEDS 2 was pilot-tested last fall in P.S. 178 in the Bronx, with very positive feedback from students and teachers. SEEDS 2 will be available this fall. The program consists of hands-on lessons with activities designed to engage the student in learning about plants and how they adapt to their surroundings. Classes get two field-trips to the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, a 12.5 acre site at the Botanical Garden, created especially for teaching children about the nature of plants in a safe environment.

"Plants are usually not the focus of most lessons about adaptation, partially because plant science is perceived as boring," reports Dr. Christina Colon, Curator of Curriculum Development and Evaluation at the New York Botanical Garden and creator of the SEEDS curricula. "Kids are learning about adaptation—but kids are learning about it in animals," said Dr. Colon. "It's almost like there is this major missing piece."

The SEEDS program was created to teach children about nature, about plants, and to become critical thinkers in the process. The program was designed to get children to "see plants as dynamic, adaptive, responding, responsive organisms in their own right, not as a backdrop, but front and center," said Dr. Colon.

SEEDS 2 consists of 12 hands-on lessons with fun activities, including growing kidney beans,

seeing how a plant responds to light, using hand lenses to inspect plants in the classroom and at the Botanical Gardens, and fun learning exercises. Teachers and students are entitled to two field-trips to the Botanical Gardens, and each teacher gets a pre-visit pass to the Gardens for preparation for the first field-trip. The cost for the SEEDS 2 curriculum is \$125—but will go up to \$150 in September—and can be ordered through Fastrack, the NYC Dept. of Education web-based ordering service or through www.nybg.org. A ten percent discount will be given for ordering two units.

Staudt's class went to the Botanical Gardens on their two field trips during the recent school year. "They had a great time," said Staudt. The class was particularly impressed with the rebirth of the plants and trees last spring, which they saw in the fall as winter approached. "It was so cool," said Staudt. Her class learned how plants adapt to light. A plant was placed in a box with a hole in it, and the plant grew toward the sunlight. "I felt like we were doing magic," said Staudt.

Richard Bollinger, who wrote much of the lessons with feedback from participating teachers, emphasizes that children are learning about local flora and how they adapt in their local environment. Bollinger, who now works as a consultant to the Botanical Gardens after a 32 year career with the NYC Public School system, notes that the rose has thorns as a protective device to ward off potential predators. Bollinger also pointed out that conifer trees are shaped in a pyramid and drop their branches and allow water and snow to roll toward the ground. Their branches are flexible. Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the fall in advance of a harsh winter.

Children learn about leaves that are round and those that have a point at the bottom, called a drip-tip. This tip allows moisture to drip off the leaf. Children use materials from the SEEDS 2 kit in class to demonstrate this fact of nature.

The SEEDS program is also a learning tool for teachers. They participate with their students, and share in discovering the workings of plant life. "We believe SEEDS is an extraordinary learning tool for teachers," said Natalie Andersen, Vice President for Education at the Botanical Garden. "The New York Botanical Garden is addressing the urgent need to help teachers become knowledgeable about plant science and thereby more comfortable teaching it." #

To find out more about the SEEDS 2 program call 718-817-8175.

Child Health Postage Stamp To Be Issued

The U.S. Postal Service will issue the 37-cent "Child Health" Commemorative Stamp nationwide on September 7, 2005. One "kick-off" first-day-of-issue ceremony will be held at Philadelphia Children's Hospital, the oldest U.S. hospital dedicated exclusively to pediatric care. The hospital was founded in 1855 and will mark its 150th anniversary as a national leader in the field this year.

As an organization that touches every community, everyday, the Postal Service can play an important role in helping educate the public regarding important issues and significant historical events through commemorative stamps and community outreach programs. Awareness efforts are aligned with the agency's mandated mission of "binding the nation together through the personal, educational, literary, and business correspondence of the people." These efforts also play a role in reputation management, helping to strengthen the agency's public image among consumers and key stakeholders and thus add value to the Postal Service brand.

As one of the nation's largest employers, with a diverse mix of some 700,000 employees, there exists a great deal of support within the Postal Service for promoting awareness of

social issues. When called upon, postal employees have historically helped to support both local and national social awareness issues and community endeavors.

Texts appearing on the stamp's selvage are: "Health care for every child," "Car seats each time," "Regular medical checkups" and "Balanced diet and exercise." #

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Test Scores Going Up: Something We Can All Be Proud Of

By MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

Three years ago, the Governor and State Legislature enacted the historic legislation that opened a new era of hope for our City's public schools. They granted the City control of its school system. With that authority came accountability. We accepted the challenge. We launched a comprehensive reform of the schools, and set for ourselves the goal of "ensuring that every student acquires the skills in reading, writing, and math that are the foundations of all learning."

Our reforms are working. Earlier this spring, more than 275,000 students in the 3rd, 5th, 6th, and 7th grades took standardized, independently graded tests in math, and more than 300,000 were tested in the "English Language Arts" skills of reading comprehension and writing. Last week, we got the results. Our students achieved the highest scores ever. They posted the biggest one-year gains in both math and ELA since the City started administering these tests in 1999. And for the first time, at least half of the students met or exceeded their grade-level standards on both tests.

There were big gains in every grade. The results from the 5th grade were especially impressive. Remember that at the beginning of this school year, we said that we would end the "social promotion" of 5th graders, just as we had abolished social promotion for 3rd graders last year. We also took aggressive steps to identify and help 5th grade students who were at risk of being held back. The result: There was a jump of nearly 20 percent

age points in 5th graders meeting or exceeding standards on the ELA test, and a better than 15-percent-point increase on the math test.

For too many years, there have also been persistently wide gulfs in test scores among students of different racial and ethnic groups. This has been one of the most shameful features of public education in our city—and our Administration has been determined to close this "achievement gap." So I am very pleased to say that this year, Black and Hispanic students also recorded their greatest year-to-year gains ever on both the ELA and math tests.

Students should feel proud of what they've accomplished—and so should their parents. Our teachers also deserve a lot of praise. They have put in the long hours—in their classrooms during the day, and often enough, in their homes, grading homework and preparing lesson plans at night and on the weekends. They have given the extra effort to help our students realize their full potential—and their hard work is paying off.

These test scores show that our Administration's investments in classroom education, and our policy of holding students, teachers, parents, and ourselves accountable for results, are making a difference. We've still got a long way to go, but we're on the right track. We've made more headway in improving student classroom performance than at any time in the city's recent history. If we stay the course, then we can look forward to a future bright with promise for our youngsters, and for our city. #



Regents Smartly Extend Waivers For HS Using Portfolio Assessments

By ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN SANDERS

This week, the NYS Board of Regents will take a small but very important step towards sustaining necessary options and opportunity for high school students to pursue courses of study for which they are evaluated based on college-type portfolios, rather than on high-stakes exams.

Alternative high schools are now a key part of the educational landscape. They were originally sanctioned by Education Commissioner Thomas Sobol in the 1990s. Their mission is to provide an academic environment that more closely resembles a university setting by de-emphasizing typical evaluation regimens of standardized written exams. Instead, they encourage a rigorous and comprehensive exploration of issues and their assessment tool is a performance-based evaluation of a portfolio of students' work, involving a teacher's scrupulous measurement of each student's overall body of work and mastery of subject matter. Portfolio-based assessments have been used in many parts of the country and have been scientifically studied; they are an important alternative to do-or-die, high-stakes tests.

Many of these schools have higher rates of attendance, graduation and acceptance to four-year colleges than the conventional public high schools.

Thanks to the leadership of Regent Jim Tallon, Chancellor Bob Bennett and many of their colleagues on the Board of Regents, I helped to work out a plan so that these schools will be able to continue to provide an important academic setting for thousands of high school students across the state who find the format to be most

conducive to their academic success. Indeed, without the availability of these schools, many of their graduates—who are on a trajectory to richer and more enriched lives—tragically, would have probably dropped out.

It is important to note that these schools will continue to be required to administer Regents exams, and all students, in order to graduate, will need to pass the English Regents and, eventually, a second and then a third Regents exam. Nevertheless, these schools will be able to thrive utilizing instructional techniques, curriculum modalities and a rigorous but alternative educational approach that is portfolio-based, with students having to demonstrate true mastery of subject matter.

I believe that in a state this large and diverse, with nearly 3 million public school students, we need and should provide a reasonable array of educational choices, be they charter schools, alternative high schools, career tech schools or magnet schools. The key is to ensure that there is quality teaching and accurate assessment of the students in all schools. Moreover, when exciting and stimulating educational environments are provided, students are more likely to stay in school and graduate—prepared for the challenges of higher education or the workplace. Isn't that what public education is really about? #

Assemblyman Sanders is chairman of the Education Committee. E-mail him at sanders@assembly.state.ny.us or phone 212.979.9696. His mailing address is 201 East 16th Street, New York, NY 10003.



The Lesson I Learned from Dr. Kenneth Clark

By CSA PRESIDENT
JILL LEVY

Dr. Kenneth Clark, noted psychologist, educator and member of the NYS Board of Regents in the 1970s passed away last month. When I saw the notice about his passing, it was the day after I spoke about my only personal encounter with him.

During one of those rare and enjoyable afternoons with friends, this time with Bernie and Nancy Zemsky formerly of UFT fame, the conversation turned to the politics of education. In spite of the unspoken intention not to EVER talk about NYC's educational plight, it took us from gazpacho to dessert to gingerly broach the topic. (Okay, so it wasn't "gingerly!") Questions about special education, the direction of the reorganization, new contracts were on the table. I was reminded of my encounter with Dr. Clark.

It was in the late 70s when NYS was on a tear to return students from out-of-state schools serving children with special needs. One school in Pennsylvania became a target of the NYS Regents and its Deputy Commissioner Louis Grumet. NYS parents whose children were thriving in the school were invited to attend a special meeting of the Regents and to present their case.

One parent, an attorney, was the designated spokesperson and presented a cogent and intelligent argument for the services, culture and credibility of the school. Dr. Clark looked up and said, "Now that we have heard from an attorney, I believe we should hear from a parent."

Looking from one to another, the parents who were not prepared to speak before this august body, leveled their gaze on me. Before I knew what was happening, I was standing before the

Regents and the Deputy Commissioner trying to control my shaking knees and quivering voice. Remembering that the only good story is one the storyteller knows intimately, I began speaking about my child and our relationship with the school, its unique culture and environment, and the future without such an opportunity for our children. When I finished, there was question after question, comment after comment, "curiouser and curiouser" as Alice would say and I thought that all was not lost.

After the applause, we were asked to leave the chamber and it was then that Dr. Clark taught me the best and most breathtaking lesson about education and politics.

While I was glowing in the aftermath of an adrenaline high and being heartily congratulated by parents and Regents, Dr. Clark stepped into the group, whisked me aside and said, "Mrs. Levy, in spite of your singular presentation, this decision will be a political decision. Nothing else will ultimately matter. Do you understand what I am saying to you?" I simply nodded as the adrenaline left my body and my mind absorbed the impending reality. We shook hands and I thanked him for honesty and concern for the human element. He was after all, a renowned sociologist.

Later, in the coffee shop, the parents wanted to know what Dr. Clark said to me. "He told me we will lose the fight," I said. I did not explain except to tell them that we were heard, our arguments were respected, and Dr. Clark thanked us for our efforts. The lesson: In the end, it's not the merit of the argument, but the politics that will always rule. #

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

Getting Testy Over Test Results

By ANNE BUCKLEY

Students in NYC public elementary and middle schools showed marked improvement on 2005 English and math tests, compared to last year's students, says the Department of Education's Division of Assessment and Accountability. Results from the City's English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics tests for grades 3, 5, 6 and 7 were presented, at the meeting of the Panel for Educational Policy of The NYC Department of Education.

Ms. Lori Mei, Senior Instructional Manager, Division of Assessment and Accountability, stated that the number of students meeting or exceeding standards rose by 14.4 percentage points in ELA and 7.5 percentage points in math from last year's scores. "For the first time, at least 50 percent of all the City's students in these grades tested at or above standards in ELA (54.8 percent) and math (50 percent)," she said.

Ms. Mei commented on State tests as well. "As with the increases among the city's schoolchildren on the State 4th-Grade ELA test scores, improvement by Black and Hispanic students was notable." Hispanic students recorded a gain of 15.1 percentage points (to 47.5 percent) in ELA; the performance of Black students increased by 14.4 percentage points (to 45.9 percent).

"On the State math test, the percentage of Black and Hispanic students meeting or exceeding standards increased by more than 7 percentage points (7.3 and 7.4 percentage points respectively) to 38.9 percent for Black students and 42.3 percent for Hispanic students," she said.

According to Ms. Martine Guerrier, Brooklyn

Representative to the Panel for Educational Policy, "The increase in student achievement by Black and Hispanic students is quite remarkable, though there is still quite a bit of work to be done."

Chancellor Joel Klein attributed this year's test results to the new promotion policy, early intervention strategies, and the Saturday Preparatory Academy, all now in place.

Ms. Mei remarked on the effectiveness of the Saturday Preparatory Academy, designed to improve the skills of 5th graders in danger of not earning promotion. "More than 90 percent of students who attended between 11 and 20 sessions at the Academy met ELA promotion criteria, and nearly 73 percent met the criteria in math. Of those who attended 21 or more sessions, almost 94 percent met the ELA criteria, and close to 79 percent met the math criteria," she said.

After Ms. Mei's presentation, Chancellor Klein said, "the parents, teachers, principals, and students are to be commended for their hard work this year—a year in which students posted the largest one-year gains and highest overall scores since testing began in 1999," adding "although the increases were significant, we have a long way to go."

Some parents attending did not concur. One parent spoke against what she felt was the self-congratulatory tones of the panelists and Chancellor Klein's remarks. Another said that previous years' test results were appallingly low and the current results represented a "deplorable" improvement. She urged greater parent participation in educational policy making. #

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, AS THE BOARD of Education is now known, is over 100 years old. During that time, the pendulum has swung from centralization to decentralization and back, from teaching reading via phonics to the whole language approach and now back to phonics again, from bilingual education to immersion and back. Reform movements have abounded, thrived and died. Underlying all the rhetoric, the steadfast image of the teacher has remained undiminished. And the preparation of fine, solid educators has been the cornerstone of our children's success. Yet, no one has ever celebrated or honored outstanding teachers until *Education Update* decided to do so. Recommended by principals, superintendents and colleagues, 46 teachers appeared throughout the year in the pages of the award-winning monthly culminating in a ceremony at the Cornell Club on June 28th, the last day of school.

Teachers were proudly accompanied by their supervisors and

family members. All five boroughs were represented across all grade levels. Dr. Pola Rosen, founder and publisher of *Education Update*, and a teacher, supervisor and college professor for many years, shared the fulfillment of her dream to honor these "wonderful teachers who serve as inspirations and guides to knowledge, remembered forever by the young people whose lives they've touched." Vice Chancellor of The City University of New York, Jay Hershenson, placed a ribboned gold medal over the heads of the teachers as they were called up to receive their certificates by the sponsors of the event.

Education Update is grateful to the following sponsors who made the event possible: Barnes & Noble; Con Edison, Marie Cutrone Smith, Director of Strategic Giving; Council of Supervisors and Administrators, Jill Levy, President; The Everett Foundation, Edith Everett, President, Carolyn Everett, VP; Lindamood-Bell, New York Learning Center, Liz Craynon, Clinic

Director; McGraw-Hill, Dr. Charlotte K. Frank, Sr. VP; Scholastic Education, Francie Alexander, Sr. VP & Chief Academic Officer; Laurie Tisch Sussman, Founder, Center for the Arts & Children's Museum of Manhattan; Regent, Dr. Merryl Tisch, NYS Board of Regents; Stephen Wertheimer, M.D.

In addition, honorees received gifts and passes from the American Museum of Natural History, Learning Matters, New York Aquarium, New York Botanical Garden, and gift certificates for school libraries from Barnes & Noble.

Vice-Chancellor Hershenson gave welcoming remarks. "More than 60 percent of CUNY's first-time freshmen come from New York City's public schools. So CUNY's successes are really an indication of success in the K-12 sector. And for that, we have Chancellor Joel Klein and the dedicated teachers of our City to thank.

A key to that partnership is our work to prepare students for college. Through a program run through CUNY and the Department



Schools Chancellor Joel Klein & Honoree Ben Sherman



CUNY Vice-Chancellor Jay Hershenson



David Bauer, Hunter HS, Intel winner & Michael Vishnevsky, Midwood HS, Nobel essay winner



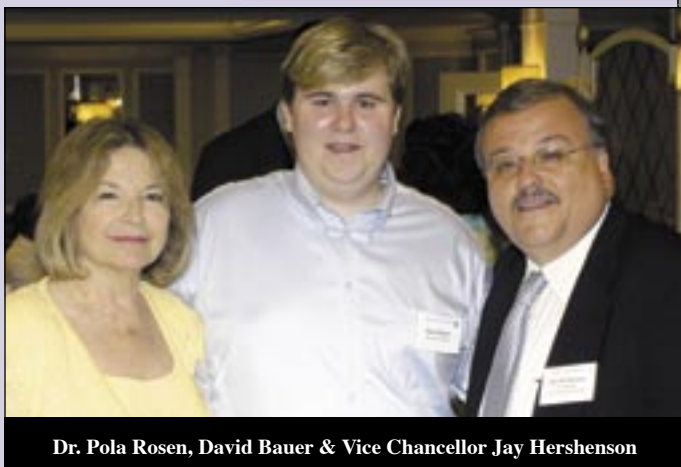
Honoree Mark Finkle, Dairon Amaya, Zenymarie Colazzo, Alba Cuevas with Principal Elba Lopez from PS 33 Bronx



Dr. Manuel Zevallos & Dr. Sandra Ruiz



Dr. Maritza Macdonald & Carolyn Everett, Everett Foundation



Dr. Pola Rosen, David Bauer & Vice Chancellor Jay Hershenson



Dr. Selma Botman, Vice Chancellor Jay Hershenson, Honoree Durojaye Akindutire, Dean Alfred Posamentier



THE CITY OF
OFFICE OF
NEW YORK,

Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure to welcome everyone to the ceremony of *Education Update*.

On behalf of the residents of New York City, I commend you, teachers upon being recognized by *Education Update*. I am proud to acknowledge your dedication to the lives of our City's students. In addition, I recognize your presence here today. This school year, you demonstrated your commitment, and as the future of our City, I hope you will continue to inspire.

In addition, I commend Dr. Pola Rosen for paying tribute to these outstanding teachers and their supporters for our City's schools. Your dedication and support for our City's schools is commendable and greatly appreciated. It is a privilege to work with organizations that share my commitment to improving our City's schools.

Please accept my best wishes for an exciting future and for the honorees continued success in their endeavors.

STANDING TEACHERS IN NEW YORK CITY

JULY 2005 | EDUCATION UPDATE

Education, called College Now, students can take college-level courses and develop their academic skills while still in high school. College Now has grown dramatically in the last few years, and today more than 37,000 students are enrolled in more than 200 high schools around the city." The keynote address was delivered by Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein.

One of the high points of the program was a series of musical performances from three students of PS 33, Dairon Maya, Alba Cuevas, and Zenymarie Colazzo, under the direction of honoree Mark Finkle. The young, talented singers were met with standing ovations as they sang heartfelt renditions of popular songs and musicals including Mariah Carey's *Hero* and *The Lion King*.

Rosen recalled the words of teacher Christa McAuliffe who died on the doomed space shuttle Challenger, "I touch the future; you teach."

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR 2005

Durojaye Akindutire, Marcia Arcentales, Maria Barry, Laura Bertolotti, Myrtha Borges, Deborah Brandt-Blanc, Judith Caputo, Yolanda Cartegena, Cynthia Cashman, Shantay Danzy, Marlene DaSilva-Hinds, Sharon Davis, Linda Dominguez, Mark Finkle, Evelyn Fortis, Della Furiano, Beverly Gammon Hill, Elizabeth Geli, Serena Goldberg, Dawn Haskin, Teresa Kutza, Cheryl Lee, Christine Linton, Malcolm McDowell, Robert McDuffie, Melissa Meehan, Evangeline Mercado, Frances E. Meyers, Maureen Murphy, Iris Nazario, Frances Nosal, Robinson Ortiz, Richard Parker, Thomas Porton, Marisol Rivera, Olga Rosa, Rebecca Rufo, Rebecca Saladis, Ben Sherman, Michele Smyth, Claudia Teti, Gloria Torres, Ken Tudor, Angelita Unalan, Pat Wallace, Michael Wotypka ❖



NEW YORK
THE MAYOR
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June 27, 2005

everyone to the third annual awards breakfast

New York City, I congratulate these exemplary *Education Update*. This is a wonderful achievement and a commitment to making a difference in the lives of our students. I recognize the outstanding students being honored today. They demonstrated a strong commitment to your studies and to continue to give it everything you have.

I am proud to be here with you and the entire staff at *Education Update*. Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to assisting teachers, principals, administrators, and students with a high-quality education in New York City. It is always gratifying to join with organizations that are committed to improving the quality of life for City students.

This was a very enjoyable event, and I wish this morning's success to all of you.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor



Dean Alfred Posamentier, Dr. Selma Botman, Rebecca Saladis, Vice-Chancellor Hershenson & Senior VP Scholastic Education Francie Alexander



Dr. Rob Wertheimer, Adam Sugerman, Dr. Pola Rosen & Dr. Herman Rosen



Dr. Selma Botman, Vice-Chancellor Hershenson, Angelita Untalan, Dean Alfred Posamentier



Natalie Andersen & President Carolyn Williams



Dr. Selma Botman, Vice-Chancellor Hershenson, Deborah Brandt-Blanc, Principal Joan Washington



Dr. Selma Botman, Vice-Chancellor Hershenson, Thomas Porton, and Adam Sugerman



Dr. Selma Botman, Vice-Chancellor Hershenson, Laura Bertolotti, & Dr. Merryl Kafka



PS33 students with Schools Chancellor Joel Klein



Silver Hill Goes For The Gold in Offering Psychiatric Care

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Tucked away, hidden actually, on 45 glorious acres in the New Canaan, Connecticut countryside, though well known in the medical community, 74-year-old Silver Hill Hospital, a comprehensive diagnostic and treatment facility for psychiatric and addictive disorders, has been undergoing slow but focused change under the thoughtful direction of Sigurd H. Ackerman, MD, who joined Silver Hill two years ago as President and Medical Director. Already boasting transitional-living houses, a dual-disorder program that addresses patients suffering from substance abuse and psychiatric problems, and an adolescent division where patients have various combinations of psychiatric disorders, eating disorders and substance abuse, Silver Hill has embarked on an initiative to make its presence and reputation better known to the surrounding community. Dr. Ackerman, an articulate and highly experienced administrator, researcher and psychiatrist, whose last position before joining Silver Hill was as CEO and President of St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in Manhattan, is excited by the challenges and opportunities at Silver Hill, not to mention the beauty of the place.

In a relatively brief period of time, Dr. Ackerman has managed to put his mark on this venerable institution, hiring six new doctors, including himself (of 11) and top-level administrative personnel, instituting new programs, and reviewing strategic objectives, including a stronger tie between the 52-bed transitional, residential facility and the 61-bed unit for acute care. Most psychiatric hospitals, he points out, can only treat patients for a few days in acute care units, then release them to their doctors or outpatient facilities. In integrating short term acute care with transitional living, which may extend from several weeks to three months or more, Silver Hill made front and center comprehensive treatment and became one of only a half dozen such facilities in the country. The residential program is voluntary and so far only those 18 or over qualify. Dr. Ackerman says he's thinking about accommodating adolescents, of particular concern to him since so many youngsters, particularly girls, succumb to drugs, alcohol and eating disorders. Before joining St. Luke's-Roosevelt Dr. Ackerman held, among other titles, that of Associate Director for Clinical Affairs and Research at the Eating Disorders Institute of New York Hospital, Cornell University Medical Center, Westchester Division.

Of course, Dr. Ackerman knows that the most effective comprehensive care includes prevention, such as wellness programs and post-treatment resources. But for the moment his attention is concentrated on the transitional residence



Sigurd H. Ackerman, MD

and on developing comprehensive treatment tracks for specific disorders. Among these is the track for dual disorders, "by far the most common presentation of illness in any psychiatric hospital." This means that approximately 60-70 percent of patients who enter the hospital with a psychiatric illness have histories of substance abuse and those with serious substance abuse disorders also have histories of psychiatric disturbance. Where to begin? "Where the wheel squeaks the loudest." With drug abuse, for instance, that would mean moving the patient into detox immediately.

How successful are the programs at Silver Hill? The question is impossible to answer because it turns on a complexity of issues, but a new feature at Silver Hill seems to be worth noting: an "alumni association" recently brought together 150 people to talk about how much Silver Hill had helped them in just one month.

Working with relatives is also important, and Silver Hill has a well-established Family Forum series where doctors and counselors address current issues. The Family Forum is part of a larger outreach effort. Silver Hill primarily serves communities from Fairfield County, Westchester and Manhattan. Years ago, Dr. Ackerman points out, mental hospitals were located in places like the hills of New Canaan because of fear and embarrassment. Out of sight meant out of mind. Today, different attitudes prevail but up to a point. Dr. Ackerman believes it is important for Silver Hill to reach out to its neighbors and for the neighbors to feel easy about reaching out to Silver Hill. To this end, he has been working with the Bank of New Canaan on making joint presentations to the business and civic community, talking about mood and eating disorders, chemical dependency and Silver Hill's unique treatment programs. They've even started a theatre night, though one wonders if they'd recommend *Hamlet*. #

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY HOSTS STEM CELL PANEL

By NAZNEEN MALIK

Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs recently held a panel to discuss the moral issue of embryonic stem cell research and its implications.

Moderated by Harold T. Shaprio, President Emeritus, Professor of Economics and Public Affairs, the panel included William B. Hurlbut, MD, Consulting Professor, Program in Human Biology, Stanford University, and Lee Silver, Professor of Molecular Biology and Public Affairs.

The fundamental discord with regard to the moral permissibility and ethical considerations relating to embryonic stem cell research can be attributed to how one defines a human being. According to Silver, the problem arises because we lack a concurrent definition of a human being.

In 1948, the UN unanimously declared that human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, but these rights need not be granted to an embryo if one does not consider it a human being.

Silver's main assertion is that the potential of individual human cells to produce a whole being is along a continuum, since embryonic stem cells have the capacity to become any tissue in the body. Humanity is something that we give to others, it is not intrinsic, says Silver.

Hurlbut, however, holds a different opinion. New evidence in developmental biology suggests that there is an unbroken continuity of development from fertilization to natural death that undercuts the claims that early embryos are simply inchoate clumps of cells available for experimental use with little or no moral concerns. Therefore, embryonic stem cell research can be viewed as the destruction of human life.

"From conception the embryonic stages develop differently than any other cells or tissues in

the body. They continue within themselves the organizing principle of the full human organism. This is not an abstract or hypothetical potential, it's an active potential, an activated dynamic. For these reasons, they differ fundamentally from an unfertilized egg, a sperm cell or later somatic cells. This entity contains within itself an inherent organismal unity and potency that these other cells lack," states Hurlbut.

"In biology the whole as the unified organismal principle of growth precedes and produces the parts. It is this implicit whole with its inherent potency that endows the embryo with its human character and its therefore inherent moral status and to interfere in its development is to transgress life in process," he explains.

But, if continuity of life is the basis of moral argument, posits Hurlbut, then there might be a way around it. Alternate Nuclear Transfer (ANT) allows scientists to create an altered or disabled embryo that lacks a developmental gene similar to those that generally develop into a cancerous tumor—an entity that most scientists and ethicists consider never to have been an embryo. "A small alteration to a gene can mean a completely different state of biological existence," says Hurlbut. ANT would allow creation of specific genetic types as opposed to the limited lines available through in vitro fertilization and unburden embryonic stem cell research from ethical issues.

It is widely believed amongst the scientific community that cloning for biomedical research, therapeutic cloning or nuclear transfer, is the preferred way to get embryonic stem cells because "in vitro fertilization, or left over embryos, represent a limited set of genetic types and the cloning procedure of nuclear transfer would allow a lot more flexibility." #

Gene Implicated In Chronic Kidney Disease

EDITED By HERMAN ROSEN, M.D.

Duke University Medical Center researchers have discovered a gene responsible for one form of chronic kidney disease. The disease, called familial focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS), can lead to complete kidney failure and affects 20 percent of patients on dialysis. The finding could lead to more effective treatments, according to the researchers.

By examining the genetic makeup of one large, multi-generational family with a dominant form of FSGS, the researchers linked a mutant form of the gene called Transient Receptor Potential Cation Channel 6 (TRPC6) to the disease. What's more, because the gene differs in function from those earlier implicated in FSGS, the finding represents a novel mechanism of kidney damage, said Michelle Winn, M.D., a kidney specialist and geneticist at the Duke Center for Human Genetics and lead author of the study.

Drugs that target the ion channel might offer an effective treatment to slow or prevent scarring of the kidney, the primary manifestation of the disease seen in patients, the researchers said. Such channels are pore-like proteins in the membranes of cells thought to control the flow of calcium.

"This gene represents the first ion channel to be associated with FSGS," Winn said. "It's a new mechanism for kidney disease, which may allow us to advance on new treatments as ion channels are known to be amenable to drug therapy."

In the United States, the prevalence of FSGS is increasing yearly, with a particularly high incidence

among African-Americans, Winn said. The disease attacks tiny filtering units within the kidney called glomeruli—leading to scarring, or hardening, of this filter. Symptoms of the disease include high blood pressure, an excess of protein in the urine, and insufficient elimination of wastes by the kidneys.

Drug therapies for FSGS are limited and non-specific, Winn added. Therefore, the kidney damage forces many patients to rely on hemodialysis, a procedure in which a patient's blood is fed through a machine. A filter in the dialysis machine removes wastes and extra fluids and returns purified blood to the body. Most dialysis patients undergo the procedure at a clinic three times a week for several hours.

While the causes of FSGS remain unclear, earlier evidence had linked three other genes to FSGS or FSGS-like diseases. The previously identified genes serve in the formation of structural proteins that support the cell membrane. In 1999, the Duke team identified a region of the genome linked to FSGS in a large New Zealand family.

In the current study, the researchers narrowed that span to the single gene, TRPC6, by screening 106 members of the seven-generation, 600-member family, including individuals with and without the disease. In this family, all members with FSGS carry a mutation in the TRPC6 gene, the team reported. Further study of the gene variant in kidney cell cultures found that the mutation enhances the activity of the channels in response

continued on page 19



The Berlin Philharmonic Back in Salzburg for Annual Festival

Masterful Music Making

By IRVING SPITZ

The Berlin Philharmonic made its annual appearance in Salzburg with an exciting program comprising three concerts and one opera. The emphasis this year was on the British composer, Benjamin Britten. His opera, *Peter Grimes*, is a gloomy saga about the proud, self-willed fisherman. It is his uncompromising independence and unwillingness to accept any help, that brings Peter Grimes to disaster and suicide. Director Sir Trevor Nunn and designer John Gunter filled the stage of the Grosses Festspielhaus with Bruggellian bleak true-to life sets depicting most realistically the fishing village and its simple yet hostile and aggressive inhabitants. The Grosses Festspielhaus is ideal for concerts but is a nightmare for an operatic production team. In this powerful production, Nunn succeeded in bringing out the tragedy and pathos of the figure of Peter Grimes and made the bloodthirsty villagers who failed to understand Peter Grimes the true villains of this great epic.

At an early age, Britten expressed the desire to study with Alban Berg but in fact never did so. For the most part, Britten rejected the 12-tone mode and instead used melodic harmonies. First performed in 1945, *Peter Grimes* is arguably the greatest opera by a British composer since Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Sir Simon Rattle with the magnificent Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra brilliantly portrayed the subtle nuances of this overpowering and complex score contrasting the agitation and pathos of Peter Grimes and the frenzy of the mob. Particularly effective was the brilliant juxtaposition between the offstage sacred Church music in Act 2 Scene 1 and the profane, represented by the argument between Peter Grimes and Ellen Orford. Intertwined in this wonderful kaleidoscope of sound, were the sea interludes, amongst the most sensual music composed in the last century. It was the Berlin



Robert Gambill (*Peter Grimes*), John Tomlinson (*Balstrode*), Amanda Roocroft (*Ellen Orford*).

© Bernd Uhlig / Osterfestspiele Salzburg 2005

Philharmonic Orchestra under Rattle that made the biggest impact.

American tenor Robert Gambill took on the challenging role of Peter Grimes. The notes were there but he lacked the stage presence of Jon Vickers or Peter Pears, Britten's long-standing life companion who originally created the role. Gambill's voice portrayed the required pathos, anger, sorrow and misunderstanding. He was best in his monologues when reminiscing about the death of his first apprentice and musing about his hopes and aspirations for life. This was not a villain but a tragic misunderstood figure. Veteran British bass-baritone, John Tomlinson was the old retired sea captain Balstrode. With

his commanding presence, he used his sonorous arresting baritone with authority. Soprano Amanda Roocroft took on the sympathetic role of Ellen Orford. She was particularly effective in the soft passages. Ellen in particular, but also Balstrode initially tried to humanize Grimes and make him socially acceptable. They were, however, unsuccessful and then persuaded Grimes to take his boat out to sea and not to return. The rest of the large cast was also exemplary, in particular Jane Henschel as Auntie, the landlady

of the inn and Kathryn Harries as Mrs. Sedley who lead comic relief to this grim tale. The excellent chorus was formed from the London-based European Voices and students from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. With justification, this performance was enthusiastically acclaimed by the full house and did Salzburg proud. The Berlin Philharmonic has been making this annual pilgrimage to Salzburg since 1967. Next year features Debussy's *Pelleas and Melisande*.#

CITY HOSTS INTERNATIONAL ART FAIR FOR VIDEO, DIGITAL, & NEW MEDIA

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Although some of the spectators on the scene at DiVA looked as though they themselves were works of modern art, attention at this three-day international avant garde art fair dedicated exclusively to the showing of art and technology was clearly on the artists selected to participate in this prestigious, high-end event. For the first time DiVA was holding its fair in The United States, and the choice of the futuristic-looking, 14-story glass, atrium-centered Embassy Suites Hotel in Lower Manhattan as venue would appear to have been inspired. Sponsored by the French not-for-profit Frère Independent, DiVA invites galleries and art dealers to exhibit artwork by new media artists who in their opinion represent significant multi-disciplinary trends. The importance of the fair can be gauged by its attraction for museum directors, curators, academic film and video department heads, and writers—many of whom were on hand—not to mention dealers, educators, and collectors who have been following DiVA fairs on the continent. Approximately 35 galleries participated in DiVA 2005, eleven from New York. Certainly, anyone interested in new directions in art and technology, including influences on printmaking, sculpture, painting, architecture and performance art, should know about this organization (www.divafair.com).

This year DiVA dedicated the fair to Bruce Nauman, whose legacy of innovative film, videotape, dance, theatre, music, and self-reference was everywhere apparent, as was a camaraderie among the exhibitors, an important part of DiVA's mission, since many of the exhibited artists have not yet made themselves widely visible in the established art market. For sure DiVA seems strategically positioned to make a difference with its striking celebration of art as irony, ambiguity, and paradox. Although some galleries exhibited installations that struck a viewer as more gimmicky and in-your-face than art to live with and learn from,

others stood out for featuring particularly creative work by artists whose imaginations were impressively served by technical expertise—among them Gary Beeber at Damien Montalieu Fine Art, Ellen Harvey at Galeria Sicart, Michael Rees at Bitforms, and Hans Op de Beeck at Ronmandos.

In "Blue," part of Damien Montalieu's three-person show "Passage in Colors," Gary Beeber, a photographic artist who presciently went digital in 1987, and is known for impressionistic, textured, up-close geometric planes, surfaces and shadows, shows once again his fine eye for composition, emphasized even more now in this new subtle blue hue series. A loop of filmed shots taken at what looks like an industrial site (in Las Vegas) becomes fluid-motion views of architectural sections (walls, bridges, water towers) seen in the distance, then close up, each flowing into one another, evolving moments paused for a second, each then displaying distinct, perfectly composed linear and spatial arrangements in blue, various in tone, different in mood. In "Seeing is Believing," a 30-minute video projected into a frame to look like a painting on a wall, Ellen Harvey cleverly plays with ideas of old and new, illusion and reality that constantly call for viewer reassessment. New media sculptor Michael Rees, whose work can be seen at the Whitney, surprises in the way he freeze frames choreographed animated forms, headless and sexless, in a two-minute video that can generate prints out and, by way of special 3-D modeling programs, turn these into supple sculptures! Belgian born Hans Op de Beeck whose absolutely beautiful drawings indicate a classically trained pro, shows in "Gardening 2" the elegance not just expertise of multimedia, as video, photography, and drawing come together, with dramatic sound, to create a lyrical sense of loss. Recently the artist photographed children at a Brooklyn public school, asking them to close their eyes and imagine a lovely garden. The effects, like the gardening series, give deep pleasure as well as generate great admiration. #

Calendar of Events

July 2005

Camp Fair

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The database is also the foundation for all of RCSN's printed directories, among them The Comprehensive Directory, Schools and Services for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Transition Matters, After School and More, 2nd Ed., and Camps 2005. Special funding is making it possible for RCSN to place at least one set of these five directories in each public library, each public and charter school, each municipal and voluntary hospital, and 120 child-serving clinics in the city.

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MARYMOUNT WRITERS CONFERENCE HOSTS LITERARY LUMINARIES

By SYBIL MAIMIN

Published and aspiring writers were treated to a feast of information, inspiration, insider tips, networking opportunities, and a chance to hear and meet icons of the profession at the Annual Writer's Conference at Marymount Manhattan College. Panels covered getting and nonfiction writing, the process of getting published, and the realities of publicity and distribution. Two keynote speakers, Sir Harold Evans, author and former head of Random House, and Ron Chernow, best-selling biographer and winner of the National Book Award, charmed and informed participants with wisdom gained during very successful careers. Lewis Burke Frumkes, director of Marymount's Writing Center and proud host of the event, encouraged attendees to speak with industry notables, noting that the conference was "small and intimate."

In his keynote, Evans advised writers to "approach editors with a certain degree of respect and humility" and to welcome "even wounding criticism," observing, "The more mediocre the writer, the more resistant to change." He decried "the tyranny of numbers," where quantity of books sold "overwhelms discussion of moral content and values." He suggested, "Set out to write a good book. Don't try to write a best seller," adding, "This is the vessel that brings our imagination and thoughts to others. It is our lifeline."

In his keynote, Chernow promised to "come clean about writing." He described his career as "a series of accidents," confessing that, although known for business-related biographies, he took no history courses and only one economics course as an undergraduate at Yale. At first, what he lacked in expertise, he made up in "freshness and enthusiasm" as he "discovered a writing talent" and "the adrenaline got running." Although "we all dream of early success," he did not publish his first book until age 41, concluding at the



Dr. Pola Rosen and Journalism Panel

time that establishing an identity and maintaining continuity with lateral moves in succeeding books would help keep readership. To become a self-supporting writer, he advised, seek commercial appeal with a subject with name recognition but some unknown quality, include contradictory or baffling characters to grab reader attention, have a powerful theme (keep an overarching question in mind), and "take the phone off the hook" when working.

Twelve panels ranged from children's books, short stories, mysteries, nonfiction, and biographies, to how to work with literary agents and book doctors. The Journalism Panel included *Education Update* editor and publisher Dr. Pola Rosen who explained that, nine years ago, as a teacher and college professor with no experience in journalism or business, she had "an epiphany" and determined to create a means "to tap into the opportunities and good things that are happening in education." The paper started small, grew, received awards, took on regular columnists such as the mayor and the head of the State Assembly education committee, and is now a respected and influential journal. "It's definitely doable," commented Rosen, referring to her dream. Ellie Tatum, editor of *The Amsterdam News*, which speaks to a black readership, advised would-be journalists "a great place to start" is with ethnic or community newspapers. Know your



(l-r) Marjorie Kogan, Lewis Frumkes, President Judson Shaver, and Ron Chernow

neighborhood and "slant the story to be a good fit." Another good entry point is the Web where freelancers are used regularly. Assemble clips and build a portfolio, attendees were told. When pitching a story, emphasize why it is new, why it is important, the story behind the story, and how it fits into the intended publication.

For book authors, the importance of having an agent was stated repeatedly, with the caveat that this is not necessarily a good development for the industry. From the Literary Agents panel came the warning, "the market is incredibly difficult" and it is essential that publisher, author, and agent work together. It should not be an adversarial relationship. Attendees were reminded, "You want to be read, not just published." Reading contemporary writers, noting best-seller lists, watching TV, and going to the movies all contribute to an awareness of what people want. There is nothing wrong with contriving what you write, explained the agents. The Book Doctor panel addressed the increasingly common practice of engaging an independent editor to diagnose a manuscript and suggest improvements. Richard Marek, former head of E. P. Dutton, now a book doctor, explained, the goal is to "help the author, not write the author's book. The writer's voice is sacred. The editor's job is to get the writer's voice." Manuscripts are generally sent to book



Tama Janowitz, Author

doctors by literary agents because, increasingly, in-house editors focus more on acquiring books than on editing them.

Conference attendees reported the day was useful in many ways. They had a chance to learn from such literary luminaries as Malachy McCourt, Tama Janowitz, Rona Jaffe, Bel Kaufman, Carol Higgins Clark, Daphne Merkin, and Tony Hendra. Amy Reiss, a practicing matrimonial lawyer who wants to write a book about the personal side of prenuptial agreements picked up tips about the publishing process. Lisa Ben-Haim, wants to turn from the "fluff" she writes in her public relations career to "more serious creative" work and received a needed push from Patricia Volk. Wayne Pollard, who writes for the Asbury Park Press but wants to move to fiction, liked the suggestion from the Short Story panel that he look to his own columns for ideas. Brittany Muffet, who came to the conference from Ohio, started writing fiction at age 12 and now at 17 is sending out a finished manuscript. She "learned that the industry is much bigger than she thought. Seeing so many people going through what you are going through is eye-opening but also makes you realize you have lots of competition." Conference organizer Lewis Burke Frumkes said, "Each conference has its own personality, but it gets better every year." The day was supported by Marjorie Kogan and the Brand Foundation. #

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photo by Ann Cardinal



BANK STREET COLLEGE SELECTS JOHN BORDEN AS VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Bank Street College of Education has announced the appointment of John Borden as Vice President for Institutional Advancement. As head of the College's Division of Institutional Advancement, he is responsible for furthering Bank Street's mission through fundraising and internal and external communications, including public relations. Also reporting to Mr. Borden is the Publications and Media Group (P&MG), which partners with publishers, new media companies, and television producers to create educational materials for children, teachers, and parents.

An experienced advancement professional,

John Borden has directed development, alumni relations, and communications programs during a career spanning nearly three decades. He has planned and managed major development campaigns at Columbia and Yale Universities; established development and external relations departments at Columbia Teachers College and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion; and reshaped advanced programs at St. Luke's-Roosevelt



Hospital Center, and, most recently, at Adelphi University.

"John is an exceptional professional who brings a wealth of experience and talent to Bank Street. I look forward to working with him to build and strengthen support for the important work of this unique institution," says Augusta Kappner, President of Bank Street College.

His background includes responsibility for all aspects of university and healthcare devel-

opment, including individual annual and major gifts, corporate and foundation relations, planned giving, capital campaigns, and advancement operations. He has worked extensively with volunteer leaders, and has helped to strengthen the fundraising capabilities of boards. He has also managed alumni programs, and public affairs and government relations efforts.

The mission of Bank Street College is to improve the education of children and their teachers by applying to the educational process all available knowledge about learning and growth, and by connecting teaching and learning meaningfully to the outside world. #

THEATER REVIEW

Buzzing on Broadway: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

By JAN AARON

Nerds are in the spotlight in "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," William Finn's charming musical about brainiacs in public school. It also graduated with honors from off Broadway's Second Stage to Broadway's Circle in the Square, which has been transformed into an American small town middle school. Beowulf Boritt's set seems a gymnasium, identified with a banner as a "Bully Free Zone." It also makes the show's audience seem like parents; relatives or friends of the contestants on stage, anxiously watching them face off in the bee's regional final. Often the show's action spills into the aisles as in the spirited "Pandemonium," when the pent up contestants run amok.

The show's misfits, played by talented adults, bring out the best in their nerdish characters through funny, poignant stories. Finn's music and lyrics, James Lapine's direction and Rachel Sheinkin's book make them touching as well as

comic creations.

Logianne (Sarah Saltzberg) wants to please her two demanding gay fathers; Leaf (Jesse Tyler Ferguson) desires to stand up to her smarter siblings; Marcy (Deborah S. Craig) yearns to be less than superhuman; Chip (Jose Llana) wants to understand his overactive libido; Olive (Celia Keenan-Bolger) seeks release from solitude and her preoccupied parents, and William (Dan Fogler), pompous and pudgy wants to be well liked. William claims he has a magic foot he employs for correct spellings, which here is turned into a goofy soft-shoe dance number.

The entire cast held over from the Second Stage plays well together, and the bee's adult supervisors, Lisa Howard and Jay Reiss manage to stay involved with the contestants and as well as the show's audience participants. To sum up: This spelling bee casts a powerful spell. # (50th St. between Broadway and Eighth Ave. \$95, 212-239-6200; Groups, 212-302-7000). #

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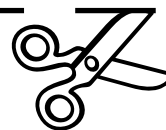
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JULY 2005



TOURO COLLEGE GRADS GET DEGREES AND WORDS OF WISDOM

BY RICHARD KAGAN

Thirty-five years ago Touro College had one building and 35 students. In 2005, Touro College has graduated over 5200 students with a college-wide 21,000 student enrollment and campuses in New York City, Long Island, California, Nevada and abroad. Touro College has come a long way.

On June 5th and 7th about 1500 students graduated from the College's **School of Career and Applied Studies, (NY SCAS)**. The first one was held at the Manhattan Center in New York City and the second one in Brooklyn, at the Millennium Theatre where over 700 graduates received their Associates and Bachelors degrees in a variety of majors: Business Management and Administration, Human Services, Computer Science, Education, Health Science, and Desktop Publishing.

Over 50 students received their certificates in Medical Coding and Billing and the newest Digital Media Arts Program which offers real-world, hands-on skills, and in-depth technical knowledge in audio arts and audio engineering.

Proud parents, friends and relatives gathered to see their loved ones pick up their diplomas, the symbol of years of hard work and sacrifice. During the ceremony, students with broad smiles looked for their parents and friends who applauded their achievements.

Dean Eva Spinelli, Vice-President and Executive Administrative Dean was the Grand Marshal and led the Academic Procession. Dr. Stanley Boylan, Vice-President and Dean of Faculties, presided over the Commencement Exercises, the College's 31st since the school's inception. Dr. Boylan, who has been associated with Touro College for over 30 years, commended the graduates on their initiative of having jobs and raising families while pursuing their education. He also noted how diverse the College student body was. Students from all religions, cultural and ethnic backgrounds came to Touro to achieve their academic goals.

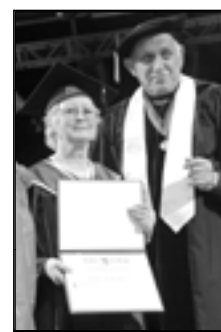
William C. Thompson, Jr., The Comptroller for New York City, gave a warmly received



Salutatorian-
Marrion Fludd



Special Award for Excellence in Accounting
- Svetlana Vysotskaya



Mira Wolf Service Award
- Galina Zaslavskaya



Commencement Address. Thompson, who four years earlier, as President of the NYC Board of Education had also addressed the Touro graduates. He told the graduates that they had a lot to be proud of. "Each and every one of you are winners," he said. He also stressed that down the road when life may offer some bumps and bruises, "don't forget tonight."

Adding that students needed to be flexible and adapt to the needs of the workplace, Thompson underscored Graduation Day as a kind of benchmark "when a person can take stock of where they are today." New York City needs you, he emphasized as he urged graduates to live and work in the city. Thompson also encouraged

the graduates to make a difference in society. "You don't have to be elected to be effective," he said.

Valedictorian Bracha Markowitz graduated from the School of Career and Applied Sciences with a bachelor's degree in Psychology with a 3.92 Grade Point Average. She completed her degree program in only two years while holding down a job. Markowitz spoke of the campus life of Touro where students of all walks of life come together in the common bond of learning. She saluted her academic advisor Anna Veretlnaya, who gave her advice, support and encouragement and Saranto Pikoulos, site administrator, whose friendly attitude helped ease the stress of being a full-time student. Markowitz quoted Thomas

Edison: "The only difference between the difficult and the impossible is that the impossible takes a little longer." She also acknowledged her parents for their love and support.

Marrion Fludd, the Salutatorian, earned her Associates Degree, while at the same time raising her two young children. Fludd plans to go into teaching and eventually work as a child psychologist.

Dr. Jacob Lieberman presided over the Academic Awards for Excellence. Dean Robert Goldschmidt passed out the Student Leadership and Service Awards.

Galina Zaslavskaya earned the Mira Wolf Service Award for her work in the community. She is a board member of the Jewish community at Starrett City and has kept a journal of former and current students at the Starrett City site as well as members of the Jewish community. Zaslavskaya assists senior citizens and visits the sick in home and hospitals and also works with NYANA, an agency which helps new Americans acclimate to this country.

Two Touro College Professors were voted by students as Teacher of the Year: Edna Davis, an English Instructor and Dr. Martin V. Gallatin, Professor of Sociology in the Human Services Department and is the author of *AlwaysWin*, a self-help book.

Numerous students received awards for academic excellence. Of note, Yevgeniya Ilna received the Robert Bielsky Special Recognition Award for Personal Achievement. She was the primary caregiver to her mother who died from cancer and six months later lost her grandfather. But Ilna persevered and continued her studies.

Although there are 6,000 students in the School of Career and Applied Studies, each one is treated as an individual. "All our offices are very accessible for the student," said Germina Khoruzhaya, Director of Student Development, "We are as proud of their accomplishments as they are proud to be students here."

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Student-Run Record Label Founded At Stevens Institute Of Technology

A group of six students at the Stevens Institute of Technology have created an innovative, student-run record label called Castle Point(tm) Records. Intended as a way for students to get directly and intimately involved in the music industry, the staff of Castle Point Records has assembled for its first release a compilation album featuring popular local cutting-edge rock bands.

For its first project, the label is recording and producing original music at HarariVille Studios. Carlos Alomar, long-time David Bowie guitarist (who also worked with Duran Duran, Iggy Pop, Luther Vandros and John Lennon) who is the president of the New York chapter of the National Association of Recording Arts & Science, (NARAS), (<http://naras.org/newyork.aspx>), has produced two songs for the release and assisted on a third.

Unlike most academic record labels, Castle Point Records will reach out beyond the limits of its school's own musical groups. Distributing exceptional quality music that is relevant to today's college student is of the utmost importance to the organization. Located in the center of the popular Hoboken music scene and minutes from Manhattan, Castle Point Records is poised to take advantage of its access to two music communities in a way that most other collegiate labels can't

claim while teaching lessons that can't be learned in the classroom.

"The whole experience has been unbelievable," says label president Ian Wolf, "It's a new approach to the traditional college record label. We've all learned so much and produced an album that rock fans will actually like."

Under the guidance of Stevens' Music and Technology director, David Musial, the students started with no more than an idea. Meeting often late into the night, they managed virtually everything including procuring funding, artist scouting and recruitment and the creation of the overall business plan document. Mr. Musial, himself the owner and founder of One World Artists Group, says, "College students often predict the future of pop music, and our students are not just on the cutting edge; they are making it happen!"

Sponsored by the school, Castle Point Records will function as a student organization at Stevens. The label will be releasing its first album in the fall of 2005. Plans for future releases are already in the works. #

Stevens Institute of Technology was established in 1870, Stevens offers baccalaureate, masters and doctoral degrees. The university has a current enrollment of 2,250 online-learning students worldwide.

Kidney Disease

continued from page 14

to angiotensin II, a protein known to promote high blood pressure and kidney injury.

While TRPC6 mutations have yet to be reported in other families with hereditary FSGS, the findings raise a number of questions about the role

of the channels in kidney function. The channels may also offer a new target for kidney disease treatment, according to the researchers. "Because channels tend to be amenable to pharmacological manipulation, our study raises the possibility that TRPC6 may be a useful therapeutic target in chronic kidney disease," Winn said.#

Dr. Herman Rosen is Clinical Professor of Medicine at Weill Medical College of Cornell University.



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Campaign for Educational Equity: Teachers College Names Michael Rebell Executive Director

By NAZNEEN MALIK

Teachers College, Columbia University one of the nation's foremost graduate schools of education recently announced executive director and lead counsel in the campaign for fiscal equity (CFE), Michael A. Rebell, as the leader of its newest educational initiative—the Campaign for Educational Equity (CEE).

Current federal policy stipulates that all students must have access to a sound basic education. Therefore, there is no better time to launch such an ambitious, national campaign that seeks to bridge the educational gap between varying socioeconomic communities.

All children are being asked to meet the same standards and they need the resources to meet those expectations, says Arthur Levine, President of Teachers College. Our goal is to improve the conditions of our most disadvantaged populations.

Citing the economic, social, and political dangers of educational inequity, Levine set forth the CEE's plan to address the problem, by providing research and disseminating relevant findings to the media, government, school boards, and other "actors" in the educational arena. An annual symposium will bring together national experts to discuss issues, and a Report Card will measure progress towards equity on both the national and state levels. In this manner, the CEE can work to implement change.

Our target is to raise \$12 million in the first year and put together a board of policy makers, business leaders, and educators, says Laurie Tisch, Chair of CEE.

The new Campaign for Educational Equity will answer the question of how to distribute the money and resources entitled to New York State schools from the CFE lawsuit, says Rebell.

Since 1989 the US has been engaged in the "most profound, far-reaching, radical education reform process in the nation's entire history," states Rebell. The movement began when a number of reports and statistics in the mid 1980s indicated that the US was in trouble in terms of economic competitiveness, he explains. The root cause was the educational system.

By the year 2050, over 50 percent of graduating students will be minorities, cites Rebell. From a national interest point of view, if those students are not well educated, the US is never going to make it, states Rebell.

The growing recognition of this problem is



Michael Rebell

reflected in judicial rulings across the nation where courts have sided with the plaintiffs, movements similar to the CFE, 77 percent of the time.

Nevertheless, there are some obstacles that remain difficult to overcome. Polls shows that tax payers would be willing to financially support educational programs if they believed that the money would actually bring about improvements and provide real opportunities. Rebell calls this phenomenon the credibility gap.

"People have to believe this is possible, and this crusade at TC can really make a dent in the credibility gap. TC is really so well geared to do this. I'm so excited to become so much more a part of this institution," says Rebell.

"The model here is very much an interactive one," says Darlyne Bailey, Vice President of Teachers College and Dean of Academic Affairs. We intend to forge partnerships with other educational institutions and colleges as part of CEE, connect our areas of knowledge and skills with those of our partners, and help to develop model programs for schools around the country. #



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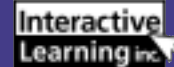
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HOMESCHOOLED NOTABLES

Compiled BY NAZNEEN MALIK

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), best known for her novel, *Little Women*, was primarily educated at home by her father.

Agatha Christie (1890-1976), noted author of mystery novels including *Murder on the Orient Express* and *And Then There Were None*, was privately educated at home. Her work is translated into more languages than Shakespeare and her success as a best-selling author has been further enhanced by many film and television adaptations.

Erik Demaine, Assistant Professor of Computer Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is the leading theoretician in the emerging field of origami mathematics. Settling somewhere new every six to twelve months, he was home-schooled

by his father and began college courses at age 12, and received his doctorate at age 20 to become the youngest professor in the history of MIT.

Thomas Edison (1847-1931), famous inventor, attended school sporadically due to hearing difficulties and was taught at home by his mother. At age 10 he set up a laboratory in his basement and began printing a weekly newspaper at age 12.

Yehudi Menuhin (1916-1999), talented violinist, went to school for precisely one day at age six.

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) famous architect, was educated at Second Ward School, Madison from 1879 to 1883. He entered the University of Wisconsin at 15 as a special student, studying engineering because the school had no course in architecture.

Minnesota Homeschooler Wins 2005 National Geographic Bee

Homeschooler Nathan Cornelius is more than a geography whiz—he's the top one in the nation. On May 25, 2005, the 13-year-old beat nine other National Geographic Bee finalists by correctly answering the question, "Lake Gatun, an artificial lake that constitutes part of the Panama Canal system, was created by damming which river?"

Cornelius' answer, "the Chagres River," earned him first place in the bee and a \$25,000 college scholarship.

Cornelius hails from Cottonwood, Minnesota, where he pursues a variety of interests, including photography, piano, and classical guitar. However, he said, "I think geography is my favorite subject." Cornelius has been participat-

ing in the National Geographic Bee for several years; he represented Minnesota in both the 2003 and 2004 national competitions.

Homeschooled primarily by his mother, Michele, Cornelius said that preparing for the bee was a group effort: "Both my parents helped quiz me for the bee." Cornelius also spent several hours a day studying atlases and other geography books, such as the *National Geographic Desk Reference* and a book by last year's geography bee champion, Andrew Wojtanik.

Each year's National Geographic Bee finalists are culled from five million 4th-8th graders, who participate in preliminary rounds across the United States. Qualifying students go on to com-

PRODUCT REVIEW: DISCOVER! ASTRONOMY

By MITCHELL LEVINE

As any home education family in New York is probably aware, there is a critical lack of great science enrichment available for homeschoolers. While much curricula and supplementary material can be easily purchased for subjects like history, writing, math, and language arts, the complexity of the scientific field and the need for hands-on learning seems to have thinned out the herd in that marketplace.

EOA Scientific's Discover! Astronomy thus fills a critical void. As teachers realized long ago, the science of the cosmos is a unique branch of the sciences for students. By its very nature, it fascinates children and adults alike, and can be used as a basis for the study of a bewildering number of subjects. By creating an interactive environment for the investigation of astronomy and space science, this software presents an opportunity to exploit those built-in advantages in a fun and convenient manner for homeschooling parents and children.

Using the model of a 3D virtual laboratory, each of the CDs in the volume offers a different chapter in the basics of astronomy: Kepler and Newton's laws; the Big Bang; stars, planets and galaxies; the fundamentals of the scientific method, and much more. Each one begins with a 30 minute digital video, and a large number of supplementary multimedia tutorials (200 in all) as an exposition of the core knowledge. The

real heart of the program, however, is in the labs, which allow the user to act as a scientist, and take samples, perform tests, and analyze and evaluate data for controlled experiments related to the topics. The experiments can be performed in many different settings, and parameter tweaks, for example, often permit the student to move the whole project to another planet!

Particularly helpful for home-based learning is the fact that all of the text in the series can be accessed at two different grade levels, 6-7 and 9-11, doubling the range of age-appropriate target groups. A sophisticated series of tests and quizzes are included, which are about as comprehensive as those bundled with any tutorial academic software I've seen, and provide full performance feedback to teachers. Best of all, the material has been directly correlated to the New York State standards, a rare luxury for NYS homeschoolers.

Although I wasn't able to trial them, EOA Scientific makes a number of other science packages available, like Discover! Geology, Discover! Weather, and Discover! Oceans. Based on what I have seen, though, I would be hard-pressed to believe that they were any less carefully planned, thoroughly researched, and masterfully presented to meet the needs of homeschoolers as this product so clearly is.

For more information, consult the manufacturer's site at [#](http://www.scienceschoolhouse.com)

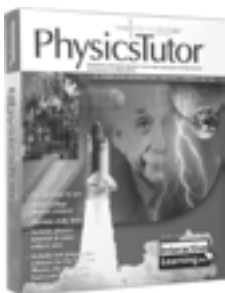
pete at the state level, whose winners represent their states in the two-day national competition in Washington, D.C.

On June 2, 2005, another young homeschooler,

11-year-old Samir Patel of Colleyville, Texas, tied for second place in the 78th annual Scripps National Spelling Bee. Thirty-four homeschoolers participated in the Washington, D.C., competition.#

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Recommended Books to Read by College Board

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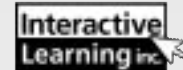
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HOMESCHOOLING KIDS PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

While some states already require schools to allow home-schooled children to participate in local schools, others leave the decision to local

school boards. This year, bills requiring school districts to extend extracurricular activities and some classes to these children were introduced in at least 14 state legislatures.

Increasing number of parents, nation-wide, are pushing more public schools to make their clubs, music groups and other extracurricular activities available to the one million children who are educated at home. This new push for access marks a new stage in the home-schooling movement, which for many years has held an unfavorable view of public education.

But many districts strongly resist the idea citing inadequate resources as well as liability and administrative issues. There is concern that if home-schooled children are allowed to participate, they may feel displaced and disconnected from their peers. In addition, it remains unclear whether those students should be held to the same academic and attendance standards.

Nevertheless, as the movement for integrating home-schooled children into the mainstream environment of school is gaining both size and diversity, with parents advocating for inclusion into activities as varied as chess, Advanced Placement courses, and sports.

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by Ruth C. Elliott

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PRODUCT REVIEW: INTERACTIVE LEARNING'S PHYSICS TUTOR EXCALIBUR EDITION

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Open up any general feature news publication these days, and you're likely to find an article discussing the erosion of standards in American education. More specifically, you'll probably be told that the prototypical deficit today's students suffer from is a lack of understanding of critical science skills and concepts.

If you teach in a public school, of course, many resources are available to you: standardized software, field-tested texts, extensive lab equipment, and much more. Not only will you have access to those assets now, you'll have a (comparatively) large budget to acquire ever more of them whether needed or not.

Homeschooling families, however, have to rely on far less to get to the same place. Fortunately, a new generation of tutorial software has developed, an excellent example of which would be the subject of this review, Interactive Learning's PhysicsTutor interactive tutorial package.

Based on a syllabus including not only all of high school physics but two semesters of a college-level curriculum, the program breaks down the subject into twenty content areas covered by a series of tutorials. Each of the tutorials are oriented around a specific question which reflects the particular material to be studied, and if the student is able to answer it, they move forward to the next tutorial. If not, an explanation function offers necessary instruction. Following the completion of all (or any) study material, the student generates practice exams, potentially drawing on all content areas. Through this interactive process, a homeschool parent can expect their child to develop mastery at a rate far superior to traditional study methods.

I was a physics student myself, and was very pleasantly surprised at the wide range and depth of the topics presented; ranging from basic kinetics and dynamics, to thermodynamics and wave motion, and even (at an elementary level) quantum and particle physics. The tutorial questions were, while not particularly imaginative, very well-suited to the task of demonstrating understanding of key principles, at a level typical of a public school midterm, I'd say.

Best of all, the interactive format provides an excellent balance between conceptual exposition and hands-on problem solving – a very difficult instructional goal to achieve for material at this depth. PhysicsTutor is actually the first entry in a trio of Excalibur products, with ChemTutor and the soon-to-be-released BioTutor rounding out the series.

While this survey is perhaps best suited to bright students, just about any home educating family in New York City can probably make excellent use of it. For more information, log on to www.highergrades.com.

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