

# EDUCATION UPDATE

EDUCATION NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER WORLD TOMORROW



Volume XI, No. 11 • New York City • JULY 2006  
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

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## OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR 2006



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## TESTIMONIALS FOR THE OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS 2006



OUTSTANDING  
EDUCATORS  
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2006

*Education Update* congratulates the honorees of the “Outstanding Educators of the Year Award” for the 2005-2006 school year. The award ceremony was held at the Harvard Club on June 22nd. The following politicians sent their congratulatory letters which follow below.

## From Mayor Michael Bloomberg

### Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure to welcome all those attending the Annual Awards Program of *Education Update*.

On behalf of the residents of New York City, I congratulate the teachers and administrators being honored this morning as “Outstanding Educators of the Year.” These individuals are exemplary leaders, going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that our public school children receive a high-quality education. I would also like to congratulate Laurie Tisch upon receiving the “Distinguished Leader in Education 2006” award for her tremendous work with the Center for the Arts Education. With such talented and dedicated educators working in the Big Apple, the future of public education in our City looks brighter than ever!

In addition, I commend Dr. Rosen and the team at *Education Update* for hosting this event. Their award-winning newspaper and website, has enlightened countless teachers, principals, college presidents and parents in today’s most important education issues. Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable program and continued success.

Sincerely,  
Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

## From Chancellor Joel I. Klein

### Dear Friends:

At this morning’s breakfast you are honoring *Education Update*’s twenty-one “Outstanding Educators of the Year” for their commitment to education, innovative teaching strategies, ability to motivate students and parent and community involvement.

I want to thank these Outstanding Educators for their hard work and dedication, both in and out of the classroom, motivating students to fulfill their potential. We have accomplished much in the Department of Education, but so many of those great strides are a result of the time and input of educators like you. As we work towards providing all students with the knowledge and tools they need to succeed, you are our greatest asset in

## From Senator Charles E. Schumer

### Dear Friends:

Please accept my warmest greetings as you gather for the *Education Update*’s Annual Awards program honoring “Outstanding Educators of the Year.” I am pleased to recognize the fine work of *Education Update* and tonight’s honoree, Laurie Tisch.

Over the years, *Education Update* has shown tremendous growth and a strong commitment to New York’s youth. I applaud the leadership of the organization for their dedication to serving those in need and to providing students with the knowledge and values necessary to be effective leaders within their communities. These young people are the future of our great city and they will make important contributions for years to come.

Further, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate tonight’s honoree. On behalf of all New Yorkers, I am honored to join in this show of support for Laurie Tisch for receiving the *Distinguished Leader in Education 2006* Award. *Education Update* is a success because of the work of dedicated individuals like you. I applaud you for devoting yourself to our youth and devotion to improving the quality of education for New Yorkers.

Again, congratulations, and thank you for your hard work and commitment on behalf of all New Yorkers. I know that *Education Update* will continue to serve New Yorkers for many years to come. Best wishes for a wonderful morning.

Sincerely,  
Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

challenging our students to achieve their goals.

I also want to thank all of you supporting our educators. Among you are college presidents, deans, foundation heads, directors of nonprofits, and trustees of universities. The support you provide to New York City Schools is critical to us continuing on a path of improvement towards educating all of our children.

Though I cannot be with you this morning, know that I am grateful for all of the outstanding work that you do. Together, we can improve the lives of children every day.

Sincerely,  
Joel I. Klein  
Chancellor  
New York City Department of Education

## From Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton

### Dear Friends:

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to send greetings to each of you attending *Education Update*’s 2006 Annual Awards Program honoring “Outstanding Educators of the Year” in New York City. I join my voice with yours in honoring the 14 Outstanding Teachers and 7 Outstanding Principals as well as the Distinguished Leader in Education 2006 recipient, Laurie Tisch, for this year’s award celebration.

From all five boroughs of New York City, these leaders dedicate themselves daily to ensuring that each individual student obtains every opportunity to fully realize his or her talents and gifts. From arts to the sciences, these leaders have embarked upon one of this nation’s most important pursuits—educating our children. This excellence in education affects not just those individual students, but also the entire community. I commend the honorees for their achievements and the effect they have had in improving our city’s community and educational system.

I send my congratulations to each of the Outstanding Educators and my best wishes to everyone for a wonderful event.

Sincerely yours,  
Hillary Rodham Clinton  
United States Senator

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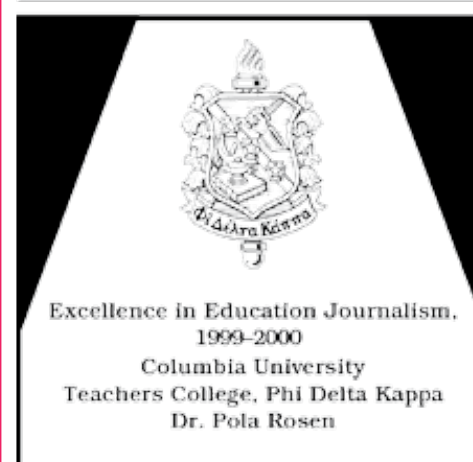
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**POSTMASTER:**  
Send address changes to:  
Education Update  
P.O. Box 1588  
NY, NY 10159  
Subscription: Annual \$30.  
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## THE DEAN'S COLUMN

### Getting into a Factorial Loop



By ALFRED S. POSAMENTIER, Ph.D.

This charming little process will show an unusual relationship for certain numbers. It will again show some of the beautiful relationships embedded in mathematics. Before beginning, review with your class the definition of  $n!$

$$n! = 1 \cdot 2 \cdot 3 \cdot 4 \cdot \dots \cdot (n-1) \cdot n.$$

Now that they have an understanding for the factorial concept, have them find the sum of the factorials of the digits of 145.

$$1! + 4! + 5! = 1 + 24 + 120 = 145.$$

Surprise! We're back to 145.

Only for certain numbers, will the sum of the factorials of the digits equal the number itself.

Have your students try this again with the number 40,585.

$$\text{That is, } 4! + 0! + 5! + 8! + 5! = 24 + 1 + 120 + 40320 + 120 = 40585.$$

At this point students will expect this to be true for just about any number. Well, just let them try another number. Chances are that it will not work.

Now have them try this scheme with the number 871.

They will get:  $8! + 7! + 1! = 40320 + 5040 + 1 = 45361$ , at which point they will feel that they have failed again. Not so fast. Have them try this procedure again with 45361.

This will give them:  $4! + 5! + 3! + 6! + 1! = 24 + 120 + 6 + 720 + 1 = 871$ . Isn't this the very number we started with? Again we formed a loop.

If they repeat this with the number 872, they will get  $8! + 7! + 2! = 40320 + 5040 + 2 = 45362$ . Then repeating the process will give them:  $4! + 5! + 3! + 6! + 2! = 24 + 120 + 6 + 720 + 2 = 872$ . Again we're in a loop.

Students are usually quick to form generalizations, so they might conclude that if the scheme of summing factorials of the digits of a number doesn't get you back to the original number then try it again and it ought to work. Of course you can "stack the deck" by giving them the number 169 to try. Two cycles do not seem to present a loop. So have them proceed through one more cycle. And sure enough, the third cycle leads them back to the original number.

Starting number	Sum of the factorials
169	$1! + 6! + 9! = 363,601$
363,601	$3! + 6! + 3! + 6! + 0! + 1! = 6 + 720 + 6 + 720 + 1 + 1 = 1,454$
1,454	$1! + 4! + 5! + 4! = 1 + 24 + 120 + 24 = 169$

Be careful about having students draw conclusions. These factorial oddities are not so pervasive that you should tell students to find others. There are "within reach" three groups of such loops. We can organize them according to the number of times you have to repeat the process to reach the original number. We will call these repetitions, "cycles."

Here is a summary of the way our numbers behave in this factorial loop.

1 cycle	1, 2, 145, 40585
2 cycle	871, 45361 and 872, 45362
3 cycle	169, 363601, 1454

The factorial loops shown in this charming little number oddity can be fun, but students must be cautioned that there are no other such number less than 2,000,000 for which this works. So let them not waste their time. Just appreciate some little beauties!

You may find other such examples in Math Wonders: To Inspire Teachers and Students, by Alfred S. Posamentier (ASCD, 2003) see: [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org). or Math Charmers: Tantalizing Tidbits for the Mind. By Alfred S. Posamentier (Prometheus Books, 2003) see: [www.prometheus-books.com/#](http://www.prometheus-books.com/#)

*Dr. Alfred S. Posamentier is Dean of the School of Education at City College of New York, and author of over 40 books on mathematics for students, teachers and the general readership.*

## NYC HS Entrepreneurs Strut Their Stuff: Ceremony & Cash Prizes Honor Winners

### Students Vie for Top Honors in Baruch College & Merrill Lynch IPO Challenge



Ruschell Boone, MC and host of the awards ceremony

The Baruch College & Merrill Lynch IPO Challenge for high school entrepreneurs recently had its grand climactic moment when the winners of the competition are announced. Teams of students from a dozen New York City public high schools, representing every borough, were on hand to hear the judges' verdict. New York 1 News reporter Ruschell Boone will host the event.

Over the course of five months, students developed concept plans for businesses ranging from Leftys Do It Right, an emporium and web site for the left-handed, to Picture Perfect Salon & Spa, an upscale full-service pampering parlor, to Modern Intergrade Inc., video entertainment and exercise game designed to fight obesity. With the help of mentors at Baruch's Field Center, students developed marketing strategies, operations and finance.

Continued on page 13

## DAILY NEWS

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## LEILA HADLEY LUCE: MOTHER & DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIPS

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.



Leila Hadley Luce

Although this award-winning memoir was published almost a decade ago, it bears revisiting, not least of all because its prolific and indefatigable author has at the age of 80 and in spite of emphysema just seen her recently published landscape journal book, *A Garden By the Sea* win a silver medal in a highly competitive category for its elegant text and striking photography. The pictures in *A Journey with Elsa Cloud*, however, are all in the mind's eye, which is as it should be, for Leila Hadley's *A Journey With Elsa Cloud* exemplifies an almost lost art—put the emphasis on the word “art”—not just telling a compelling story but writing about it with a fullness of detail and elegance of style that recall the best of 19th century travel literature. Not incidentally, Hadley invokes James Boswell, an ancestor and the author of the remarkable *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* with Dr. Johnson, for one of her two epigraphs. The other, from “Gift” by Rabindranath Tagore, about being surprised by joy, is, in retrospect, particularly apt, for *Elsa Cloud* is a present—from the author to her daughter and from the writer to her readers, particularly those who appreciate wit, punning, word lore and etymology, and distinctive style.

Memoirs have become the In genre, attracting those who would exclusively proffer confessional or corrective advertisements for themselves rather than also use their first-person lens to focus on themes of timeliness and significance. The psychological complexity and cultural richness behind the hard-won honesty in *Elsa Cloud* attract from the opening line: “My daughter has been lost to me in a world I do not understand.” Here will be a book about a journey on a road less traveled by—in more senses than one. It is the '70s and Leila Hadley has not seen her 25-year old hippie daughter, living in India and studying Tibetan and Sanskrit, in over two years, though they have corresponded. Unexpectedly, a call arrives inviting her to join Veronica on a journey through India and Tibet. “Mummy” is both excited and fearful—not of traveling to remote regions—she has been to India and indeed all over the world (the much admired *Give Me the World* chronicled her journey from Singapore to Naples with her four year old son, and books on traveling with children soon followed).

The nervousness has to do with her uncontrolled desire to be reunited with her first-born daughter, to be loved, to express her love and to comprehend what went wrong in their relationship. She sees clearly that had never seen

clearly what was happening—sexually, emotionally, pharmacologically, to her beautiful, golden-haired child, barely into her teens. With a sad but unsentimental awareness, starting with Jungian analysis in the city and then as a series of unbidden memories that press upon her heart during the journey, the author comes to see that understanding her own troubled life with a cold, arrogant aristocratic mother did not inoculate her against becoming estranged from her “darling Elsa Cloud.” The “homonymic endearment” comes from 16-year-old Veronica's wish to be like the sea, the jungle or “else a cloud.”

Though this incredibly detailed account, at once personal and philosophical, is long, it is constantly absorbing because of the author's incredible memory (how did she recall conversations with such precision?) and skill in observation. She notes the subtly changing relationship with her daughter in prose that is as lyrically original in its evocation of the senses as it is painfully intelligent. Though she comes to embrace the kind of peace that comes with Buddhist wisdom, she does shut her ears to the sounds, past and present, of her own universe. There's a lot to learn from *Elsa Cloud*—not only about strange customs but about the ambivalence of facing the strange and estranged part of ourselves.#

## Review of Medical Marvels: The 100 Greatest Advances In Medicine

By MERRI ROSENBERG

### **Medical Marvels: The 100 Greatest Advances In Medicine**

by Eugene W. Straus, M.D., and Alex Straus.  
Published by Prometheus Books, Amherst, New York (2006):  
425 pp.

Forget, for a minute, the somewhat gimmicky approach of coming up with “the 100 greatest” medical advances.

What works successfully in this comprehensive book that examines (no pun intended) significant medical breakthroughs in human history is precisely the authors' focus on achievements like understanding how the heart works, the invention of the microscope, or organ transplants, to name just a few, that moved health care forward.

Written by a father and son team—the father, Eugene W. Straus, is an emeritus professor of medicine at the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn, and the son, Alex Straus, is a journalist—the book provides more than a birds-eye view of the scientific achievements that enabled doctors to offer patients treatment and cure, as well as hope.

Although I come from a medical family (my late father and uncle were Brooklyn pediatricians /general practitioners, and my husband is a medical professor), much of the material covered in these pages had never been explained to me in such a lucid way before. There were the famous stories that I had grown up on, like Austrian Ignaz Semmelweis's frustrating campaign during the 19th century, long before Louis Pasteur, to reduce maternal mortality during childbirth by having doctors wash their hands between

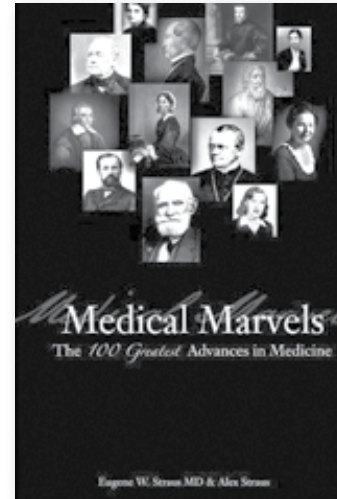
deliveries. Or Sir Alexander Fleming's somewhat serendipitous, discovery that petri dishes containing staphylococcus bacteria grew mold when he went on vacation, and that the mold killed the bacteria.

Particularly fascinating were the chapters about early medicine, as practiced by Hippocrates and Galen; early surgery, as developed in India, as well as the origins of medieval and modern hospitals. Modern medicine is accounted for, too, with chapters about AIDS, Viagra, the treatment of substance addiction, depression, in-vitro fertilization, and even stem-cell advances.

I wish that the authors had opted for an historical progression, rather than a list of their own devising. It's sometimes confusing to read about Pasteur's germ theory of disease, and then move into a chapter that discusses about Edward Jenner's work with the smallpox vaccination a century before.

Still, that quibble aside, I believe this work would

be of great interest to pre-med students, whose courses rarely have time to communicate very much about the history of medicine, as well as the general reader who would enjoy a one-stop resource about medicine's roots and its on-going progress.#



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## JOE KLEIN SPEAKS AT OXONIAN SOCIETY ON DEMOCRACY



Joe Klein

By GILLIAN GRANOFF

Recently, Joe Klein, the prolific writer of *Time Magazine* and acclaimed author of numerous works of political commentary, including, most notably, *Primary Colors*, addressed a packed audience at the Cornell Club. The event was sponsored by the Oxonian society, a not for profit organization founded after 9/11 by a group of liberal-minded politicians, with the expressed goal of “changing the political discourse and stimulating meaningful and crucial dialogue.” Each year the organization provides a unique platform for leaders in different fields to speak on something they are passionate about, and creates a new dialogue in the United States.

Founded after September 11, 2001 by her Royal Highness Princess Badiya of Jordan, Louise Bagshawe (famous best-selling author), and Joe Pascal, the Oxonian Society makes leaders accessible to the public.

Among the crowd who came to hear Klein speak was Shelia Flazman, an active democrat, former candidate for public advocate in New York City and speech pathologist with the Department of Education. In addition to regular Oxonians, the audience was a mix of teachers, young professionals, and Cornell alumni.

As he opened his talk, Klein, who has been covering politics for over 37 years, joked that the book took him just as long to write. He refers to the opening scene of *Politics Lost*, in which he describes the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and the moment when Robert F. Kennedy, delivered the news in Indianapolis. Discarding the prepared notes of a speechwriter, Kennedy disregarded warnings of police and advisors and announced King’s death. Consoling the crowd with his own tales of loss and a quote from Aeschylus, Klein recalls how the dramatic bitter cries of anguish and shrieks of the audience dissipated almost as quickly into dramatic and poignant silence. Klein goes on to describe how, in the weeks following the assassination, Indianapolis remained quiet as cities all around the country erupted in chaos and rioting.

Klein points to this as one of the last authentic moments before politics was hijacked by the television age. We live in an age, Klein argues, where the messages and policies of politicians are defined entirely by consultants, pollsters and

focus groups. Rather than spontaneous messages, today’s politicians deliver pre-packaged and pre-fabricated sound bites. The carefully crafted messages of leaders have been pre-screened by “quantifiable” tests to ensure that they will impact and reach the appropriate demographic. As a result politics today has become more concerned with style over substance. He attributes this trend to the moment when politicians figured out “that anything they said would be held against them.” As technology expanded the reach of communication, politicians began to use the media as a tool to weaken the campaign of one’s opponent. Politicians and presidents yielded their authority to the influence of advisors and consultants.

Historically, Klein traces this pattern back to Pat Caddell, Jimmy Carter’s 26-year-old pollster, who was the first to write a sophisticated memo advising Carter on how to govern. Caddell’s 10,000 word memo transformed the role of the presidency from a platform of leadership into a continuing political campaign.

Klein points to Karl Rove as the latest consultant in this trend, whose preoccupation with image and style over substance, has refocused the political agenda of the presidency on winning the news cycle, and formulating the “message of the week.” The consequences have been policies that concerned themselves less with long-term and substantive effects and more with style of delivery and the short-term impact these policies have on the polls.

He refers to President Bush’s statement “you may not agree with me but you will always know where I stand,” as an example of the most perfectly crafted focus group-driven political message. His deceptively simple language was reassuring to Americans and taught them that the clarity of the President’s message was more important than its substance.

Now Klein urges Americans to choose leaders who confront rather than comfort them; leaders who demand sacrifice and challenge and who are unafraid to give honest realistic policies. Klein states that the responsibility for recovering politics and restoring democracy is in the hands of every American citizen. In the words of John F. Kennedy “ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.”#

## First High School Graduation at “47,” American Sign Language & English School

By LIZA YOUNG

Graduation marks a milestone not just for students, but for the administration and history of the school—this was the theme at the recent first high school graduation at “47,” American Sign Language and English School.

Originally a Junior H.S. created at the start of the twentieth century, the school evolved with time, especially under the direction for the last ten years of Dr. Martin Florsheim, the first deaf principal of the school. Through his unique vision and persistence in plowing through challenges, the school was transformed from a school exclusively for the deaf, to one where deaf and hearing children learn side by side. A dual language program where students study English and American Sign Language—which was officially recognized by the board of regents as a language—was begun five years ago, with the high school opening a year later. The newly named “American Sign Language and English School” burgeoned from three teachers to a fully operational high school program.

At the recent first graduation, Florsheim helped launch students on their way to the “real world,” highlighting the importance of using knowledge to navigate life’s challenges. He introduced a special guest, Dr. Larry Taub, a graduate of J47 in 1968, and a long time friend of Florsheim as classmates at William Cullen Bryant High School in Queens. Using the *Wizard of Oz* as an allegory, Taub elaborated on the theme of overcoming obstacles using one’s gifts of brains, courage, spirit, and social support. Despite being deaf, he pursued his dreams, working at the *New*



Dr. Martin Florsheim

*York Times*, earning his doctorate from Teachers College, and today serving as Superintendent of the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf in Mackworth Island, Maine.

Graduating students of “47” are on the road to success; awards for excellence in math, science and social studies were presented to deserving seniors as well as the “Albert Einstein Award for the Best Scientific Mind.” The personal journeys of Florsheim and Taub are a model of triumph in the face of any challenges that cross one’s path.#

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# OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR 2006



Roberta Guaspari and her children from Opus 118 Harlem Center for Strings

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By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.



For four years *Education Update* has been honoring outstanding public school teachers at much-anticipated and well-attended award breakfasts at the Harvard Club. On June 22 the celebration continued, including for the first time recognition as well of the contributions of outstanding administrators. It was quite a morning, as an overflow crowd of teachers and supervisors from schools all over the city were joined by representatives from Metropolitan area colleges and Landmark College in Vermont and universities and from major TV and print media, leading cultural institutions, businesses and major publishing houses. They came to help sing the praises of those who, in the words of Dr. Pola Rosen, the organizer of the event, helped to "inspire and shape the lives of young people." Once again, Roberta Guaspari's Opus 118 Harlem Center for Strings (and one piano) – a group of 8 girls and 4 boys – put on a dazzling performance of what could easily be called Mad Hot Violinists, proving anew that elementary school children with no previous artistic training can become disciplined amateur musicians—and focused students. Their selections, beginning with "Danny

Boy" and moving on to tango, country, blues and classical, clearly showed that, in the words of their teacher / conductor "they don't get any better." When Ms. Guaspari concluded with a short plea for supporting arts education at the earliest possible stage, the room broke into spontaneous applause.

Outstanding Educators of the Year 2006 was hosted by *Education Update* (EU) whose publisher and editor-in-chief Dr. Pola Rosen noted in opening remarks that letters of congratulations sent by Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Schools Chancellor Joel Klein would appear in the July issue of the paper. Lou Young, senior reporter for CBS-TV, introduced Laurie Tisch, Chair of the Board of Directors for The Center of Arts Education who was this year's recipient of the Distinguished Leader in Education Award. A long-time ardent friend of education ("it's the family business"), she noted with pride that the Center, constantly growing over its ten-year history and now serving over 400 schools in the city, had "no plans to slow down." Dr. Augusta Kappner, President of Bank Street College of Education then introduced Keynote Matthew Goldstein, Chancellor of The City University of New York, who spoke largely extemporane-

ously—the matters being close to his heart.

This would be "the decade of the sciences," the Chancellor declared, pointing out that CUNY was already working with the public schools on math and science initiatives. Indeed, he stressed, such university-public school collaborations are essential in ensuring that the city and the country have sufficient "human capital" to compete in the global marketplace. Scientific literacy is the "*sine qua non* for a healthy nation," the Chancellor remarked, noting that math has already been transforming the financial services industry, where the best jobs are. Jestering that he was not Tom Friedman's agent, he nonetheless urged the audience to read Friedman's best-selling wake up call, *The World is Flat*. Chancellor Goldstein also noted that CUNY Trustee chair, Benno Schmidt would soon be leading a delegation to Nanjing Province where 100 new universities are being built. Did we hear that number? —100 in just one province!

Of course, teachers and administrators are crucial to such an effort to strengthen math and science, but they need to be joined by a wide number of "stakeholders" outside the classroom, where learning also goes on. The workplace now evidences a team approach and prefers professionals who can move easily

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Lou Young, WCBS, presents the Distinguished Leader in Education Award to Laurie Tisch



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Laurie Tisch, Carolyn Sussman & Lyman Casey, Teacher, The Heritage School



Mauro Bressi, AP, Brooklyn HS of the Arts & Dr. Bonnie Kaiser, Education Update Advisory Council member



Nicole Culella, Teacher, Bayard Rustin Educational Complex, Manhattan & Sponsor Shanequa Wright, Con Edison



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(l-r) Adam Sugerman, Dr. Pola Rosen, Dr. Rob Wertheimer & Dr. Herman Rosen, Editors, Education Update



ong several disciplines, and who appreciate different cultures work ethic traditions. Together, all must engage in conversation about how best to recruit even more educators of “intelligence and passion,” but also to face some hard truths about why so many students, particularly young African American males are still being left behind. “I believe this is a national priority problem,” the Chancellor said. The more youngsters who drop out of school and remain disengaged, undirected, uninterested, the more the city—and the country—puts itself at risk in maintaining a productive and competitive society. He did not mean to leave listeners on a negative note, he added, and indeed, he drew attention back to the reason why his audience had assembled that day: to celebrate good news by honoring those who had already made a difference.

Outstanding Educators of the Year 2006 go through a highly selective process starting with recommendations from school supervisors and culminating in a vote by EU’s Advisory Council, a prestigious group of school administrators, political leaders, business executives, university academics representing major disciplines, the press and of course supporting philanthropists.

## ADMINISTRATORS OF THE YEAR 2006

**John Quattrocchi**, Principal (Maureen D’onofrio, Superintendent) PS/MS 43Q; **Pauline Smith-Gayle**, Principal (Lybi Gittens, Local Instructional Superintendent), P.S. 202; **Alan D. Cohen**, Principal (Althea Serrant, Local Instructional Superintendent), PS 9; **Mauro Bressi**, Assistant Principal (Robert Finley, Principal, Brooklyn HS of the Arts) 345; **Phyllis Leinwand**, Principal (Dr. Kathleen Lavin, Superintendent) PS 66 Queens/Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School; **Carmen Iris Rivera**, Principal, Academy for New Americans, IS 235Q; **Robin Sundick**, Principal, PS 84. Special thanks to Jill Levy, President of the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators.

## TEACHERS OF THE YEAR 2006

**Eyal Wallenberg** (Elana Karopkin, Principal) Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice – who also won the Jet Blue raffle; **Andrew Higginbotham** (Kathleen Ponze, Principal) The Young Women’s Leadership School of East Harlem; **Maria Fisher** (Nicholas Mazzarella, Principal) Brooklyn College Academy; **Thomas Walsh** (Dr. Nancy Brogan, Principal), IS 62; **Jay Lyons** (David Getz, Principal), East Side Middle School); **Ostensia Dallas-Smith** (Yvette Beasley, Principal), IS 129; **Gerda Radske** (Kenneth A. Lombardi, Principal), PS 91Q; **Nichole Culella** (John Angelet, Principal), Bayard Rustin Educational Complex; **Marianthe Serelis** (Nicholas Politis, Principal), HS for Law and Public Service; **Allison Demas** (David Weiner, Principal), PS 314; **Erica Eichenstein** (Sana Nasser, Principal), Harry S. Truman HS; **Terry Yank** (Joan M. Indart, Principal), Career Education Center; **Lyman Casey** (Dr. Peter Dillon, Principal), The Heritage School; and **Sherlyne Gilles** (Margie Baker, Principal), Ebbets Field Middle School 352.

More extensive information on recipients can be found online at [www.EducationUpdate.com](http://www.EducationUpdate.com)  
Further information on the nominating process can be found on [www.EducationUpdate.com/awards](http://www.EducationUpdate.com/awards)



Michael Arena, Dir. of Comm., CUNY; Chancellor Matthew Goldstein; Dean Alfred Posamentier share a few words while Dr. Maritza MacDonald, AMNH reads Education Update



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Sponsor Laurie Tisch chooses the JetBlue winners with Pola Rosen



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Laurie Tisch with JetBlue winner, Kenneth Lombardo, Principal, PS 91 Queens



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Laurie Tisch with JetBlue winner, Eyal Wallenberg, Teacher, Urban Assembly School for Law & Justice, Brooklyn



CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein delivers the keynote speech

Notable guests included Presidents Jennifer Raab, Hunter College; Judson Shaver, Marymount Manhattan College; Jeremy Travis, John Jay College; Lynda Katz, Landmark College; Jill Levy, CSA and Dr. Lorraine Monroe; Dr. Joyce Coppin; Rhonda Novick, Manager, Daily News (NIE); Margaret Browne, The New York Times; Kelli Doss, New Leaders for New Schools; Bel Kaufman who personally autographed her book, *Up the Down Staircase* for each honoree; Mira Van Doren, documentary filmmaker; from Bank Street College of Education Dr. Alice Belgray, Enid Goldberg and Karen Arthur; from Landmark College in Vermont Dr. Brent Betit and Steven Muller; Dr. David Gomez, Kingsborough Community College; NYS Commissioner Sheila Evans-Tranum; Harris Healy; Muriel Siebert and Lou Young. *Dr. Pola Rosen gives special thanks for the loyal support, throughout the years, of CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, Dean Alfred Posamentier and Dr. Charlotte Frank.*

All Photos Courtesy of André Beckles, CUNY



## An Agenda for Excellence

By RANDI WEINGARTEN

As students celebrate the end of another school year and embark on well-deserved summer vacations, those of us who

teach in New York City's public schools like to reflect for a moment on where we've been and where we're going with respect to education.

We're proud of the many things we have accomplished this school year, but it has been both a difficult and rewarding one with a mixed bag of results and many challenges still ahead of us.

For example, with the backdrop of test scores rising, we negotiated a new contract agreement with the city last fall after nearly three years

of bitter struggle. It gave educators a 15% pay increase—a total of 33 percent since 2002. But, like many labor agreements, it included hard-fought compromises, including teachers devoting more instructional time to their students.

The United Federation of Teachers, which represents New York City's 100,000 public school educators, took particular pride in opening a charter school in Brooklyn; we will open a secondary charter school in September. It's not the fact that it is a charter that makes it different; it's that we listen to and support those closest to the kids: the parents and educators.

We continued to fight to reduce class size, but the city again opposed our efforts to let voters decide if funds from a settlement of the

Campaign for Fiscal Equity case—a 13-year legal battle to get the city its fair share of state education aid—can be used for that purpose. We have one more court battle left in the CFE case, and we'll continue to fight to give voters a voice in how that money is used.

Despite that setback, our push to reduce class size helped the mayor with the \$6.5 billion capital construction plan that will add 107 schools and 66,000 new classroom seats—meaning lack of space should no longer be an issue in the class size debate. We also believe the City Council and mayor's agreement to budget \$7 million for 2,000 new full-day pre-kindergarten slots will open the door to universal pre-k for all city kids.

Some big issues await us on the next school year's agenda. In addition to lowering class size, providing universal pre-k and renewing a push for more arts education, we will press school officials to take steps to improve student discipline and school safety. No school can focus on academic achievement if students and staff are distracted by having to worry about classroom disruption or other safety issues. We must create safe classroom environments so the overwhelming majority of children who want to learn can learn.

Improving teacher retention is a huge issue. We lose about half of our new teachers every five years as they take teaching jobs elsewhere or become frustrated and leave the profession. A

small step was a plan, devised jointly between the city and the UFT, to provide financial incentives to help new teachers with housing. More must be done to give new teachers professional development and tuition assistance as well as the mentoring, administrative support, lower class sizes and the safe environment all schools need.

And with mayoral control of our schools to sunset in 2009, Albany lawmakers should start looking at what works and what doesn't. Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa listened to complaints in New York and adopted a version of mayoral control that advocates for qualified teachers, small classes and safe environments. The lack of parent and teacher input has been a big complaint. Parents and educators need assurances there will be greater checks and balances and input. After all, it's about the kids—and those closest to the kids should be heard.

These are just a few of the issues on our agenda for the coming academic year. Managing them will not be easy; it never is. But we relish the challenge because fighting to improve education and make schools work for students, parents and teachers is our reason for being. Striving for excellence is what we're all about, and our commitment to helping all our students achieve their dreams will never change. #

*Randi Weingarten is the President of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City.*

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The College of Staten Island (CSI) launches a new Master's in Business Management program this fall.

Enrollment is still open for its first class. Students in this dynamic new program will benefit from its focus on strategic management skills in business and government organizations, according to Laura Nowak, chair of the business department at CSI.

Students will use advanced analytical methods and theory in the program's capstone course, Managerial Decision-Making and Applications. The course involves a comprehensive and integrative approach to managing an organization over time through computer simulation. There is also a significant quantitative aspect to the course which will be complemented by a qualitative analysis of business policy and strategy, according to Nowak.

Additionally, students at CSI enrolled in the administrative track of the master's degree program in Urban Health Sciences, which was co-developed by the college's biology and business departments, will have the option of taking select courses in the new business Master's curriculum.

The launch of this new Master's in Business Management program brings CSI into early compliance with New York State accountancy licensure standards to take effect in 2009. These new state standards require that students wishing to take the Certified Public Accounting (CPA) exam have 150 credits completed, raised from 120. These new standards are currently in effect for the state of New Jersey.

For more information about CSI's new master's program in business management, visit [www.csi.cuny.edu](http://www.csi.cuny.edu) or call (718) 982-2010.

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## DOES MY CHILD HAVE A LEARNING DISORDER (LD)?

By GLENN S. HIRSCH, M.D.

One of the major barriers to a child's achievement in school is the presence of a learning disorder. Early identification of a learning disorder is extremely important since it can lead to early intervention, which can make a crucial difference in a child's success.

Between 10-25 percent of children have some form of a learning disorder. A diagnosis is made if a child's level of achievement in reading, writing or math is significantly below what it should be based on age, intelligence and schooling. The most common learning difficulty children have is with reading. Some signs that may indicate that a child has or may develop a reading disability include:

Delays in learning to speak; Trouble learning the alphabet and making connections between written letters and the sounds they make; Makes frequent mistakes when reading, such as skipping words, reading words backwards or getting letters out of sequence; poor understanding of what is read.

Other areas of difficulty that are suggestive of a LD include: trouble learning numbers, colors or shapes; difficulty learning about time and directional concepts such as left/right; fine motor difficulties including manipulating a pencil.

One form of a LD called Nonverbal Learning Disorder (NVLD) can affect not only a youngster's academic performance, but also his ability to acquire social skills. Children with this disorder often misread social situations, are poor at picking up facial cues and expressions, have difficulty with judging their physical space and have difficulty with cause and effect relationships. Because of their often-marked social difficulties these children may be diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder.

Children are expected to reach certain milestones in their development. There is an average age for acquiring language, walking and develop-

ing socially, but a child who is developing at a later time schedule than his peers is not always cause for anxiety. Although most children are first formally diagnosed in the early grades, parents who note delays in a child's early development are encouraged to have an evaluation before that time. While some children may 'outgrow' their delays, many do not, and a 'wait and see' attitude is inadvisable.

The first step in assessing a youngster who may have a learning disorder is to obtain an evaluation with a learning specialist and neuropsychologist. A neuropsychological evaluation not only examines a youngster's potential and current achievement, but also evaluates memory, ability to learn, language, executive functioning, processing skills and attention. The neuropsychologist should not only explain a child's areas of weakness but also his areas of strength. A key component of any evaluation is practical information for parents and teachers that provide clear advice on how to teach such youngsters to insure school success.

This column provides educators, parents and families' important information on child and adolescent mental health issues. If you have a question or would like to suggest a topic for an upcoming article, contact Glenn S. Hirsch, M.D., Medical Director at the NYU Child Study Center at [glenn.hirsch@med.nyu.edu](mailto:glenn.hirsch@med.nyu.edu). The NYU Child Study Center is dedicated to advancing the field of mental health for children and their families through evidence-based practice, science and education. Our internationally renowned clinical faculty of board certified child and adolescent psychiatrists and psychologists have expertise in many areas including: ADHD, anxiety disorders, childhood and adolescent depression, Tourettes, PTSD and learning differences and treatments including pediatric psychopharmacology and cognitive behavioral therapy. For more information on the NYU Child Study Center, visit [#](http://www.AboutOurKids.org)

## No Child Left Behind: Says Who?

By LYNN K. ROBBINS, Ph.D.

What impact does the policy created by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) have on the achievement of students? What changes might be necessary to make it work? These questions have intrigued and troubled me since the inception of the act and the implementations of its sanctions. With its passage, sweeping changes in the way schools are run need to be addressed. It is no longer business as usual given the stringent sanctions that are applied to states, districts, schools, teachers, and students when they don't meet the federal accountability guidelines of the NCLB.

No reasonable person would argue against accountability that would guide communities to better prepare its youth to understand their role in the future of society. However, the NCLB does not permit accountability to be a shared responsibility of the school community but places it squarely on the shoulders of administrators, teachers and students. I am suggesting that although the NCLB requirements show an underinvestment in capacity building and an over reliance on standardized test scores for accountability purposes, individual school communities can become proactive in compliance by changing the way they participate in the educational process. Although the NCLB does make reference to the wider community when it discusses accountability, it defines their responsibility as simply "tracking the performance of every school in the nation...to ensure that no child—regardless of his or her background—is left behind." I suggest that the parameters surrounding the responsibility of the larger community needs to change, to take on a more responsive rather than judgmental role in the attainment or adaptation of the NCLB goals by exercising their rights to communicate with policy makers. Furman and Shields argue, "the concepts of social justice and democratic community are integrally interconnected and must not be considered apart from the concepts of student learning."

If the purpose of the NCLB is to promote

student learning in this country then I would suggest that those most closely affected by its policies should ask such questions as "Where is the social justice and equity in retaining 8 year olds or preventing students from graduating high school who have already been accepted to colleges or universities? How will our society profit by expecting children with diverse learning styles and handicapping conditions to attain the same score on a single standardized test or be retained? I would also ask where is the social justice in offering parents, on the guise of choice, to take money from the public school to pay for their child's entry into a charter or private school where there is no accountability for the quality and credentialing of teachers that is so much a part of the NCLB for public schools?"

It is reasonable to expect the true test of an educational accountability policy be in its capacity to measure educational success in terms of how it provides individual and societal growth. It is questionable that NCLB has adequately met this test. Any educational accountability policy that is not able to demonstrate how the diverse skills and interests of our youth forwards the ideals of our democratic society rather than "marking" them based on a simplistic singular test score that disproportionately damages the poor and creative amongst them, either to be redesigned, or if not, abolished. Children aren't widgets that fit into a singular mold; each is unique with identifiable strengths that go unidentified and tossed a result of the NCLB accountability system. In the final analysis, the NCLB fails miserably at its test of purpose.#

*Dr. Lynn K. Robbins has her doctorate from Florida Atlantic University in educational leadership and a Master's degree from Brooklyn College in sports psychology and one from City College of New York in Educational Administration. She is a member and past Vice President of Phi Delta Kappa at Columbia University in New York and has been an educator and an educational administrator for over 25 years.#*

## THE STERLING SCHOOL CLASS OF '06 PREPARES FOR GRADUATION

The Sterling School students are busy planning an end of the year celebration of learning and achievement. This party celebrates the hard work, growth and learning that our students have achieved along with the formal graduation of our 6th graders. Our students are excited and proud of their accomplishments. Our multi-sensory Orton-Gillingham curriculum strengthens the student's learning of basic skills and hands-on learning experience engages our students in the study of science and history. One-to-one instruction builds competence, fluency and self-esteem. The Sterling School graduates are ready to tackle middle school. The Sterling School is a school for children with Language Based Learning Disabilities or Dyslexia. We serve children in grades 2-6th. A few openings in grades 3 and 5/6 still exist for 2006/07. If your child is experiencing school failure or academic delays due to a learning disability please feel free to look us up on the Web at [www.sterlingschool.com](http://www.sterlingschool.com) or contact the Director Ruth Arberman at 718-625-3502.



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## President Donald Harrington of St. John's University Achieves a Coup

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

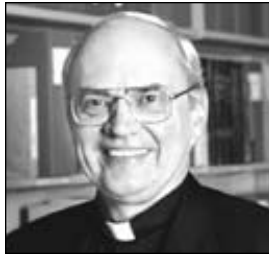
Asked to say something personal about how he spends time when he's not tending to his academic flock, The Rev. Donald J. Harrington, C.M. [Congregatio Missionis], President of St. John's University, laughed and said there was nothing to mention, "I'm a boring person." For sure, his sense of humor had not changed since *Education Update* first caught up with this quiet but dynamic leader two and a half years ago. Since then, however, there has been quite a lot of change at the university, due largely to an extraordinarily successful capital campaign, launched a few years ago. It met its expectations and then some, with "then some" extending \$21 million beyond the latest revised upward goal of \$250 million. Alumni and friends have been incredibly generous, the Rev. Father notes. Why? Because the university has been "faithful to its mission." As for his own continuing role as St. John's 15th president, a position he has held for 17 years, President Harrington says, "it's in God's hands." True enough, but it doesn't hurt to have someone of great faith, ability and focus help shape and stay the course.

The results made possible by the capital campaign include an impressive array of initiatives: recently constructed buildings, new and enhanced academic programs, including an expanded honors program and a newly founded writing institute, endowed chairs, student scholarships, improvements in the university libraries, technology updates (St. John's is now in the top ten of wireless campus networks in the country), support for more external research, new residence halls and off-campus apartments and "the jewel in the crown,"

so to speak, the St. Thomas More Church, the "first freestanding place of worship" in St. John's 136-year history. In the works are a new student center, more residential facilities and a new academic complex. Surely, such progress is not unrelated to the number of applications the university received for its September 2006 freshman class: 25,000 for only 3,100 seats!

The very day *Education Update* once again caught up with President Harrington, he was getting ready for a campus tour and for a reception and gala to celebrate the capital campaign. Loath to cite individual donors, the president does note that the number has noticeably increased, as has the amount of individual donations: 47 gifts made to the university were of \$1 million or more, and three alums gave over \$10 million each. If such largesse may strike some as at variance with the *raison d'être* of the university to carry out the eleemosynary philosophy of St. Vincent De Paul, who inspired the founding of the Vincentian order to help the poor, Fr. Harrington notes that in two significant ways that mission is alive—and well—at St. John's. The alums and friends who donate are giving back, out of love and thanks, and a good part of the campaign funds go directly to students who most need them the most.

The Rev. Father's sense of need, however,



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extends beyond finances and embraces a belief in a personal approach to learning. That means, for example, that where other institutions move aggressively to expand online learning, St. John's chooses to maintain a low student-faculty classroom ratio. Of course, distance learning, Fr. Harrington points out, is a great way to attract graduate and professional school students who live truly at a distance from the university—in other states, in other countries. Need also describes

renewed academic emphases, as determined by faculty, alums and administrators, such as placing more emphasis on writing, within subject disciplines, across curricula and at all levels (law school, graduate degree programs). For this purpose the new Institute for Writing Studies has hired 15 full-time specialists. Will all these initiatives work? "We don't create programs we can't assess," says Fr. Harrington with confidence and good cheer.#

## Despite Loss in PSAL Finals, Francis Lewis' Hill Is Tops

By RICHARD KAGAN

Recently, the Francis Lewis High School girls' basketball team played for the Public School Athletic League (PSAL) title for the fifth time.

In the last 6 years, the Patriots fell 81-66 to Murry Bergtraum High School at Madison Square Garden, which won the crown for the eighth straight year.

*Education Update* focused on Francis Lewis High School's Diatiema Hill, a senior, in the January 2006 issue ("A Senior Guard Helps Make Francis Lewis HS A Winner"). Francis Lewis had another highly successful basketball season making it all the way to the finals once again. And, *Education Update* wanted to find out how Hill was faring as she was putting a close on her great

high school career. This is what we found:

The Patriots of Fresh Meadows, Queens (23-5) had a late season surge and knocked off the No. 2 seed Grand Street Campus High School team, 69-61, to reach the PSAL finals. Francis Lewis had lost earlier to Grand Street in February and settled the score with the key victory. Hill had 20 points, 10 rebounds, and 8 assists and Vionca Murray scored 24 points to lead the Patriots. Coach Mike Eisenberg has seen Hill grow and emerge to be one of the best players in Francis Lewis history. Hill was ending her outstanding four year playing career first in assists, steals, and three-point field goals at the school. She also currently ranks second in all-time scoring. "She's a great player; she does everything well," said Eisenberg.

Not many players have a chance to end their season and career playing for a city championship at Madison Square Garden. But a few days before the game, Hill was looking forward to it. "Hopefully we could win so it won't be my last high school game," said Hill. The winner moves on to play for the State Federation Title in upstate New York. But the Patriots were facing a powerhouse in Murry Bergtraum, ranked as one of the top high school teams in the nation with star Epiphany Prince, the top scorer in PSAL girl's basketball. Prince scored 113 points against Brandeis High School earlier in the season, establishing a new record for most points scored in a game.

Francis Lewis was able to "hold" Prince to only 33 points, but other players had great games, and the Lady Blazers proved to be the better team in taking another PSAL title.

Hill scored 17 points in the loss. The Patriots were led by Sylvia Davis' 18 points.

"We played really hard," said Hill. Indeed, the Patriots closed to within 3 points, trailing 47-44, on a basket and made foul shot by the senior guard. But, Bergtraum then took off and scored 12 straight points on one of their patented runs, to take a 59-46 at the end of the third quarter. That put them in charge the rest of the way.

A day after the game, Hill was a bit philosophical about her high school career and playing her last game for the city title at the Garden. "I think that it's the best way to finish it," said Hill. "Even though we did lose, at least we made it back there."

Calling her "the perfect teammate" Eisenberg had nothing but praise for Hill. "She's been great on and off the court," said Eisenberg. "She's a top, top kid."#

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# THE BIRTH OF A NEW SCHOOL, BRONX, NY: KEN BAUM, PRINCIPAL EXTRAORDINAIRE

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Ken Baum, principal extraordinaire, started a new public school in September 2004, The Urban Assembly for Applied Math and Science. The school, with 155 uniformed students currently in grades 6 and 7, will be adding a grade a12th grade) is reached. Trained at the NYC Leadership Academy, Baum, learned about leadership, school schedules and school structure, and then shadowed a principal in the Bronx for one year. Support, provided by Urban Assembly, the umbrella organization that runs 16 other schools, includes shared practices, writing a budget, and staffing needs. Baum credits Richard Kahn, president of Urban Assembly for his vision and partnership in founding this school.

For a school whose central theme is math, Baum is the perfect administrator, having completed an MA in math and all of the doctoral work as well. Carefully chosen teachers such as Jennifer Applebaum, Barnard College '05, expertly deliver math and science skills to the 6th

graders. One of the best features of this school, she stated, was the small class size of 19-20 students as compared with the usual 28-33 elsewhere.

Other unique features of the Urban Assembly for Applied Math and Science: In mid-summer, the teachers visit the students. In music class, 20 students sit at individual keyboards all playing silently with earphones on. In an English class I visited, students were reading and annotating a poem and sharing their own compositions with great enthusiasm.

There is a structured advisory program three times per week beginning in 6th grade focusing on team building, issues that children face, how to have a friend. The 7th graders go on field trips to colleges; in 8th grade students go to colleges overnight, then come back and discuss their experiences with other students. Baum started the Bronx borough-wide math competition.

How do you teach the concept of a pulley? That's easy. Go to the principal's office and hammer it out with him and the math coach. The salient feature in this school is the teamwork and high spirits among the teachers (Derick Spaulding-math and science, Cheryl Tournoux-math and science, Ralsaan Romain-advisement, Marissa Biondi-school newspaper) all led by a principal who is knowledgeable and cares. His school boasts an attendance rate of 96.6 percent.

"My goal is to have a 95 percent college graduation rate. We want to make our students successful ahead of time so that they don't drop out," says Baum. Math Tournaments, math fairs, making

fostered in students, the skill of productive teamwork, and appreciation of the arts.

Ranjeet Kaur of IS 10Q stated that she "learned the importance of believing in ourselves...things that can't be learned in a regular classroom."

Staff members of IS 72 agreed that key ingredients for the success of the project were combining hard work and fun. Gershon gave a "great big bravo" to students for their first Broadway appearance, hopefully just the beginning of many rich experiences in arts education.#



Principal Ken Baum



## NYC HS Entrepreneurs

Continued from page 3

Participating high schools were: Automotive High School, Brooklyn; Flushing High School, Queens; Fort Hamilton High School, Brooklyn; Grace Dodge High School, Bronx; High School for Arts and Business, Queens; High School for International Business and Finance, Brooklyn; New Dorp High School, Staten Island; Norman Thomas High School, Manhattan; Paul Robeson High School, Brooklyn; Port Richmond High School, Staten Island; Queens Vocational High School, Queens; and Walton High School, Bronx. First prize winners received \$2000.

Kevin Albert, retired Merrill Lynch Managing Director and currently managing director of Elevation Partners, discussed the IPO initiative, its purpose and evolution over the past two years.#

## Freddie Gershon

continued from page 14

Junior" show kit which includes producer/director guidelines for casting, rehearsal and performance, in addition to curriculum guides connecting show themes to classroom instruction. Arts Connection provided year round production advisors to schools. Deeper than belting out melodies and fancy footwork is the sense of confidence

strong columns in architecture class, playing a Yamaha keyboard are all part of a wonderful environment for the fortunate children attending.

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"I will never be satisfied until a child that grows up on Gunhill Road [Bronx] has the same opportunity as a child who grows up in Scarsdale," stated Baum. If anyone can do it, it will be Baum. #

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## FIND YOUR VOICE FILM SCREENING



**Host: Frank Hentschker, Director of Programs, Martin E. Segal Theatre Center, The Graduate Center, CUNY**

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Recently the feature length documentary film, *Find Your Voice* was screened as part of the prestigious 'Theatre in Education' Series of the Martin E. Segal Theatre Center at CUNY's Graduate Center. An audience of over 100 educators, artists and former Find Your Voice students enthusiastically applauded the film, and then stayed to talk with the students and the Coach featured in the film, during a discussion moderated by Bank Street Professor Cathleen Wiggins—who is also an alumna of the training. She began the talk-back by saying: "For all of our best intentions, we are somehow shutting students down rather than opening them up—much can be learned from this approach."

Dr. Frank Hentschker curates the Series for CUNY, and introduced the evening by explaining that the audience was about to view the *director's cut*; a long version of the final film that will be further cut down before the color is corrected and sound fully balanced. The audience was then asked to fill out a post-viewing questionnaire, which would be helpful in making the final edits. It was also announced that PBS had picked up an hour of the footage for its acclaimed *In the Mix* series, which will run the week of July 22 and the week of September 17 (check local listings for "In the Mix"). The program is geared primarily to people who work with adolescents; after the broadcast they will be directed to a website that offers a Teaching Guide, follow up on the



**Moderator: Professor Cathleen Wiggins, Bank Street College**

students featured in the film, and other activities.

At the conclusion of the talk-back, Gail Noppe-Brandon acknowledged the generosity of the two underwriters of the film: The Petersmeyer Family Foundation, and the Bernice and Milton Stern Foundation. She also underscored the courage and generosity of the ten students who took the journey with her and allowed themselves to be filmed. Her hope is that after viewing this work, every teacher will be encouraged to become something of a 'communication coach', and every young person will then feel comfortable enough at school to share their thoughts and ideas on paper, and out loud.

**Audience Reviews:**

"All of the students left me speechless and crying...BRAVO!"

"I fell in love with all the kids. It was moving without being saccharine, sweet or manipulative—very authentic."

"This film should be distributed throughout the High Schools."

"A very balanced portrayal; and beautifully filmed."

Stay tuned for future opportunities to see the film at Festivals...or elsewhere!#

For more information, check out the March 2005 issue of Education Update which contains a book review of *Find Your Voice: A Methodology for Enhancing Literacy Through Re-Writing and Re-Acting*, Heinemann Press.

## MUSIC THEATER INTERNATIONAL & FREDDIE GERSHON: Students Across Five Boroughs Make Their Broadway Debut



**MTI Chairman Freddie Gershon and Diane Diaz, Principal of PS241 the Family Academy in Manhattan.**

By LIZA YOUNG

The Department of Education's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, Music Theatre International (MTI), under the leadership of Freddie Gershon, and the NYC Department of Education through the direction of Dr. Sharon Dunn, Senior Instructional Manager for Arts Education, have teamed up to create the Inaugural Arts Educational Program.

Recently, a powerful product of this collaboration was presented at the Broadway Imperial Theatre with students from all five boroughs in NYC middle and intermediate public schools making their Broadway debut. Participating schools were: IS 89 and PS 29 of the Bronx; IS 10 and IS 323, Queens; PS 241 from Manhattan; MS 88 and IS 68, Brooklyn; and IS 72, Staten Island.

Dunn described the program as a "carefully planned program with one goal: help students, parents, principals and assistant principals understand the value of arts education."



**Students from IS 72R Rocco Laurie School; PS 89x, Williamsbridge School, and PS 29x, Melrose School performing in the grand finale.**

With great enthusiasm and teamwork students performed the scenes "It's a Hard Knock Life" and "Together at Last," from *Annie Jr.* and "We Tell the Story," as well as "We Dance" from *Once on This Island Jr.* The shows are called "junior" because they are adaptations of the originals.

A generous grant of \$75,000 from the Schubert Foundation, was donated to the program in recognition of, as stated by Chairman Gerald Schoenfeld, the "vital role the arts can play in children's lives."

Work on the productions began in August of 2005 when teachers from the eight schools participated in a two-day training program in developing a show through MTI's Educational Branch. At the start of the school year in the fall, teachers chose a show from MTI's Education Division's collection of musicals adapted by authors for middle schools and received continual guidance from MTI Education through its "Broadway

*continued on page 13*

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## “ECHOES & REFLECTIONS” OF THE HOLOCAUST: A NEW CURRICULUM

By LIZA YOUNG

While the Department of Education currently requires that the Holocaust be taught as part of the social studies curriculum, neither the nature of the curriculum nor the amount of time to be spent on it are specified. The lessons to be learned from the horrific events of the Holocaust are invaluable to the preservation of humanity. But such a topic needs to be taught with care and sensitivity.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), Survivors of the Shoah Visual Foundation, and Yad Vashem have recently partnered to create a powerful, multimedia curriculum for teaching the holocaust, entitled, “Echoes and Reflections.” This triumvirate group has a legacy rooted in preserving Jewish rights, traditions, video-recordings and history and is therefore an effective team in teaching about the holocaust.

The program includes the use of primary source documents, including poems written by persecuted Jews, Nazi footage, extensive photographs, and testimonials of survivors. The program stands out from other Holocaust teachings in its inclusion of life before the Holocaust, after liberation, as well as providing connections with other genocide occurrences.

Throughout the curriculum, students are taken step by step towards understanding the history of the Holocaust, beginning in the definition of a ghetto and moving towards attaining an understanding of the perspectives of the victims, through analysis of primary sources such as poems and video testimonials. In response to viewing a survivor’s detailed description of Kristallnacht—the massive pogrom against Jews

across Germany and Austria—students are asked to indicate what they felt the subject was thinking as he was relating his experience.

The curriculum affords the opportunity to expand reading comprehension, geography, and listening comprehension skills, in addition to the invaluable lessons of empathy and understanding.

Recently teachers gathered from New York public and private schools and organizations from around the city, including Midwood High School, New Dorp High School and the Board of Jewish Education (BJE) of New York for a full-day symposium of learning about the curriculum. Attendees, 15 teachers—most of whom teach history—and two administrators, had the opportunity to explore concepts such as what the word “ghetto” really means, given that today the term has multiple meanings. Feedback was welcome and will be used to adapt the curriculum as necessary. The majority of respondents present provided immediate feedback on the high quality and value of the symposium based on questions about sample lessons, visual history testimony and brain storming sessions.

A representative from Murrow HS said that he “highly valued the opportunity to examine the curriculum. Feedback from colleagues spurred new ideas. I will use the handouts and materials to supplement my curriculum on the Holocaust.”

Using such materials will bolster not only the Holocaust curriculum, but the impact of historical events to prevent future atrocities.#

For more information visit [www.echoesandreflections.org/](http://www.echoesandreflections.org/)

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Mitchell Levine, Education Update

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