

EDUCATION UPDATE

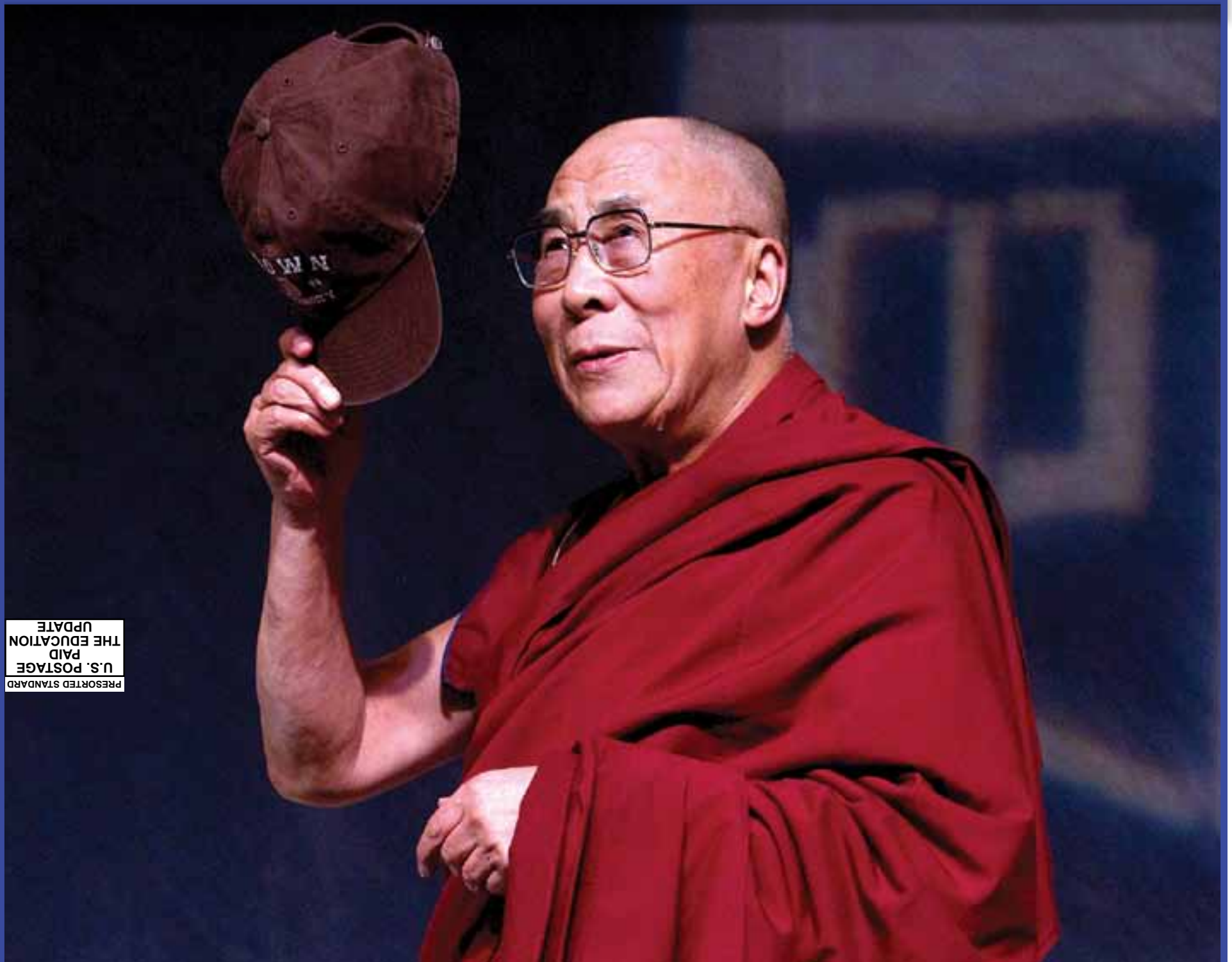
EDUCATION NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER WORLD TOMORROW



Volume XVIII, No. 2 • New York City • NOV/DEC 2012
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UPDATE

GUEST EDITORIAL

Achieving Student Success in Community Colleges

By JAY HERSHENSON

In today's highly competitive global economy, community college students must earn valued degrees as quickly and assuredly as possible. Through academic advisement and financial aid support, block class and summer bridge programs, and greater emphasis on study skills, we can better assist incoming freshmen to achieve course and degree completion.

I know something about this, because I started my own higher education at Queensborough Community College, going to school at night. During the day I operated a conveyor belt in the receiving department at a now-defunct department store called Alexander's. I had no plans to make that particular job my lifetime work.

My community college experience can be summed up in one word — solitary. I went to my classes alone. I studied alone. I rode the bus alone. I didn't know many other students. There was no orientation program. There was little advisement at night. The only one who said anything when I missed a couple of nights in a row was the Q27 bus driver.

Whenever challenges arose, I had to figure out how to deal with them alone. The quality of my Queensborough Community College education was superb particularly because of the high quality of the faculty.

I transferred to Queens College and earned two degrees as an undergraduate and graduate student. But the lessons I learned about the minuses of a solitary sense of experience remained with me.

That is why I am so excited, and very impressed by two CUNY programs inextricably linked: Accelerated Study in Associate



Programs (ASAP) and the New Community College at CUNY.

We all know how few urban community college students earn a degree within three years — in some parts of the country 16 percent, other parts less than 25 percent.

That clearly isn't acceptable.

In 2007, Chancellor Goldstein took on this challenge and asked Mayor Bloomberg to support a new initiative to significantly raise graduation rates. The Chancellor established a goal of graduating half of ASAP's students within three years. CUNY was determined to remove barriers to full-time study, build student resiliency and do everything we could to support degree completion. We offered financial incentives for full-time study. If there was a gap between the financial aid and the cost of tuition and fees, we waived it.

Students received free monthly MetroCards for subway and bus fare, along with free books.

By requiring students to take 12 credits a semester, they were eligible for full financial aid and positioned for graduation within three years.

ASAP grouped students in cohorts based on a limited number of majors — at most six at any campus. They took most classes in consolidated blocks, allowing them to balance school, work and domestic responsibilities.

Some classes were conducted with only other ASAP students, others were with the general college population, but none had more than

25 students.

Students in the first cohort were required to overcome any developmental needs in the summer before admission, and about a third did so. So when they were ready to start credit-bearing courses, they were all up to speed.

There was regular contact with faculty and advisors. Students who needed jobs, job skills and career planning were helped. There were arts and cultural programs, student leadership training and internships.

All of the students at all six participating colleges had access to "SingleStopUSA" on campus to help them obtain benefits, financial counseling, legal services, tax refunds, and so on. If you want SingleStopUSA on your campus, check out their website. Our community college students overall have accessed over \$60 million in aid with the help of SingleStop.

Here's the bottom line: Three years later, fully 55 percent of the 1,100 initial ASAP students had earned an associate degree. That's more than twice the 24.7 percent who graduated in a comparison group. We had exceeded the chancellor's ambitious goal!

Not content with that, CUNY considered whether ASAP would work for students with developmental problems during the program, as opposed to the summer before. In 2009, CUNY recruited a second cohort comprised primarily of low-income students who needed some remedial coursework in reading, writing and math.

Their three-year graduation rate projected through August 2012 is the same — 55 percent — compared to 22.3 percent in a comparison group. So ASAP worked for students, regardless of academic proficiency at time of entry.

Overall, 63 percent of ASAP students graduate, transfer to a baccalaureate program or both within three years, compared to 44 percent of a comparison group.

CUNY sought an independent examination from noted researcher Henry Levin, a professor of economics and education at Columbia

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Marymount Students on the Cutting Edge of STEM

To the Editor:

Wow!!! It is up to us as educators to place our children in positions to cultivate their minds. We know from all the research out there that science and math are areas that our children need to continue to improve in. Thank you for what you are doing and I want to be on board with offering opportunities to our students here at Greater Atlanta Adventist Academy. Thank you.

Johnny Holliday, Principal

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Leaders of The Windward School

To the Editor:

I am thoroughly impressed by the knowledge, the commitment, the comprehensiveness, the sensitivity and warmth that these two display concerning the whole learning disabled child and training of teachers. As a mom and teacher of special ed children, I am delighted to see something this thoughtful and kindly discussed.

I was not happy to hear again that although so many LD children are trained to be self-advocating, in the public school with even the best intentioned teachers, they are misunderstood. There is a clear need for all educators to be more aware of language-based learning disorders, no matter how smart their students may be. Thank you for sharing this with us!

Susan Titone, MSED

NAIROBI, KENYA

Young Ambassador Student Exchange Program

To the Editor:

This is a well anticipated work and its very inspirational. I live in Kenya and I am a fourth year student in high school. I would love to be a member of this organization so that I can inspire many young achievers in Africa. I want to explore my talent of writing inspirational stories and motivating young people in Africa, especially the vulnerable ones from distant rural areas.

Halima Mbarak

EDUCATION UPDATE

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Education Update; 695 Park Avenue, Ste. E1509;
New York, NY 10065-5024. Subscription: Annual
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November CUNY Month!

A great university renders public service to its city and state. Members of the CUNY community—students, faculty, staff and alumni—can access Hurricane relief efforts, including counseling and other assistance at www.cuny.edu.
— Chancellor Matthew Goldstein



Open Houses, admissions and financial-aid workshops, lectures, museum exhibits, sports tournaments, book talks, performances, and panel discussions with world-class faculty, high-achieving students and honored guests: visit cuny.edu/cunymonth

NOV. 7
BOOK TALK
"The Italians of New York"
By Maurizio Molinari
Calandra Institute
6 p.m.
Free

NOV. 8
KRISTALLNACHT COMMEMORATION:
Returning, Remembering, Forgiving
City Tech
Atrium
12:45-2 p.m.
Free

NOV. 12
ALEXANDER STRING QUARTET PERFORMS SCHUBERT
Baruch College
7:30 p.m.
\$25, free with ID for Baruch students and faculty



NOV. 12
WATER POLLUTION CRISIS
York College
1 p.m.
Free

NOV. 13 - JAN. 25
"THE END OF POVERTY"
John Jay College
President's Art Gallery
8:45 a.m.-4 p.m.

NOV. 14
TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS:
Symposium on Transitional Justice in Sudan
Bronx Community College
2 p.m.
Free

NOV. 16
THE DOO WOP PROJECT
Featuring cast members of Broadway's "Jersey Boys"
Kingsborough Community College
8 p.m.
\$30

NOV. 17
IVANOV BY ANTON CHEKHOV
Borough of Manhattan Community College
7:30 p.m. \$35-\$75

NOV. 20
BROOKLYN COLLEGE PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
"Mostly Marimba"
Brooklyn College
7 p.m. \$5

NOV. 27
YIP HARBURG: Legendary Lyricist
Graduate Center
6:30 p.m.
Free

NOV. 27
JOYCE CAROL OATES
Hunter College
7 p.m.
Free but must reserve

NOV. 29
SHIRLEY CHISHOLM DAY
Brooklyn College
11 a.m.
Free

NOV. 1 - JUNE 27, 2013
YEAR OF INDIA:
"Art From the Land of the Peacock"
Queens College
9 a.m.-8 p.m.
Free



THROUGH DECEMBER 19
HARLEM & THE CITY:
Over 100 Years of Special Moments
City College
Free

THROUGH APRIL 5, 2013
"A LINE AROUND AN AREA"
City College
School of Architecture
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Free

THROUGH DEC. 5
PUERTO RICO IN ITS LABYRINTH,
by Sculptor José Buscaglia
Hostos Community College
Time varies
Free



THROUGH JAN. 9, 2013
SPACE INVADERS —
18 artists who use unique spaces
Lehman College
Tues.-Sat.
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Free

CUNY CITIZENSHIP NOW APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

NOV. 9
College of Staten Island
2p.m.-5p.m.

NOV. 16
Baruch College
1 p.m.-5 p.m.

NOV.19
Queensborough Community College
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

NOV. 26
Borough of Manhattan Community College
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

NOV. 30
Bronx Community College
11 a.m.-2 p.m.



Award-Winners Mentor Award-Winners at CUNY

For a complete listing of Open Houses at all CUNY colleges and details on hundreds of other events during CUNY Month visit www.cuny.edu/cunymonth



Nobel Laureates & Activists Mobilize to End Rape Around the World

By MOHAMMAD IBRAR

The Women's Media Center (WMC) and Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) recently hosted a conference at the International Campaign to Stop Rape and Gender Violence in Conflict. Panelists hailing from Africa, Iran, and South America addressed the dire need of political leadership in preventing violence against women in conflict — and to prosecute those responsible.

Robin Morgan, a feminist leader and co-founder of WMC, discussed the global inequality confronting women as well as the great advances they have made over the years.

"Women coming to voice ... and fighting up against an intolerable situation is part and parcel of saving the planet," said Morgan, stressing that this initiative is a great step forward for an organized effort toward change.

Susannah Sirkin, deputy director of PHR, and Jody Williams, a Nobel Peace laureate, both said that now was the time to build collective pressure on international officials and political leaders. After successfully banning antipersonnel landmines through the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), they are leveraging their momentum to push forward the campaign to end gender violence and rape.

"The silent crime is now visible," Sirkin said. She explained how violence and rape against women go unpunished and as a result, continue to escalate in conflict zones. She also narrated an account of her visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where rape is consistently used as a means of terrorizing communities. She observed a trial where 29 women faced their offenders and demanded justice for the crimes that were committed against them.

The women told Sirkin that they want their story to be disseminated so that others would be moved to assist women in need. Sirkin said that despite the dangers, stigma and isolation women face through their public cry for justice, they continue to come forward, and it is at this

moment that they need support. She implored the international community and advocacy organizations to join forces and bring perpetrators to the International Criminal Court to be punished for their crimes.

Dr. Dennis Mukwege, founder of The Panzi Hospital in the Congo, and Shirin Ebadi, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, said the impunity that national governments and the international community grant criminals is one of the driving forces of why rape and gender violence pervades on a global scale. Dr. Mukwege leveraged his experience working in Africa and said that rape is no longer only a weapon of war, but has evolved into a strategy of war that is planned and methodically carried out. Factions rape and humiliate women to terrorize and display power, as well as to send a message to the enemy by objectifying women as tools to win battles.

He went even further by equating rape with weapons of mass destruction: both affect umerous generations, induce massive demographic displacement and demolish countless communities. After treating over 40,000 rape victims, he is advocating for a greater change — to send a message to the international community that would prevent thousands of rape incidents that occur every year.

Patricia Guerrero, the director of the League of Displaced Women, addressed the struggle for justice of displaced women in Colombia who have suffered from violence. She called them "escondidas" because of the secretive lives they lead. These women are a marginalized demographic, as there is no public policy that gives voice to their issues. Williams emphasized the initiative's mission, addressing the need for the audience's participation in kindling a social media wildfire to support the campaign and to put a screeching halt to gender violence. #

Mohammad Ibrar is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of The City College of New York and a reporter at Education Update.

Jay Hershenson

continued from page 2

University who heads the Teachers College Center for Benefit-Cost Studies of Education.

Dr. Levin concluded that ASAP is far more effective and costs less per graduate than the traditional path to an associate degree: "ASAP can increase considerably the number of CUNY community college graduates while actually reducing costs."

Chancellor Goldstein envisioned creating a new college that would raise graduation rates for CUNY's general population. It took four years of planning by an incredible team from CUNY headquarters with the result of CUNY's first new community college in 40 years. This fall we opened the doors to what — with great cre-

ativity — we call the New Community College.

The New Community College boasts an innovative, issue-based and skill-intensive program that weaves remedial assistance into courses and counseling.

What's different? As at all CUNY colleges, the New Community College accepts anyone with a high school diploma or the equivalent. Applicants were obliged to attend an information session, followed by a half-hour one-on-one meeting with faculty or staff. Students have to attend full time the first year, since that alone boosts graduation rates. Students also take classes in either a morning or an afternoon block, and attend a summer orientation and a 12-day academic-preparation program in August that we call the Summer Bridge.

The Summer Bridge introduces students to college reading, writing and mathematics. They

LAW & EDUCATION

CHEATING IN SCHOOL SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED

By ARTHUR KATZ, ESQ.



Recently, The New York Times printed a front-page article entitled "Stuyvesant Students Describe the How and the Why of Cheating." Although it appears that large-scale cheating on important tests, such as Regents exams, are rare, the students interviewed for the article commented that lower-level cheating "occurs every day."

Obviously, not every student cheats, but cheating (even if low level) is so widespread that at Stuyvesant it apparently has become notorious. Moreover, if an environment of cheating exists at Stuyvesant, one of New York City's elite schools, it is probable that cheating occurs at other schools where the standards are less rigorous.

Why is this occurring?

According to a September 7, 2012 article in The New York Times, "Experts say the reasons are relatively simple. Cheating has become easier and more widely tolerated, and both schools and parents have failed to give students strong, repetitive messages about what is allowed and what is prohibited." As pointed out "since the 1960s, parenting has shifted away from emphasizing obedience, honor and respect for authority to promoting children's happiness while stoking their ambitions for material success."

We all want to succeed. Success in high school is measured, in large part, by the college at which a high school student is accepted.

do a mini-project to practice working with peers. They create an electronic portfolio for their college work. They begin field experiences, making New York City an extended classroom. Beyond that, the Summer Bridge encourages self-exploration and community building. We want students to form the peer support networks that we know can help them make it through trying times — the support I wish I'd had. Although it's not a requirement, the college's financial aid director vowed that by graduation, every student would have a checking account and know how to manage their money.

The New Community College divided each semester into 12-week and 6-week sessions. Students who mastered the coursework in the 12-week session can take on new work in the second. Those who need more time to master the work can do so in the 6-week session. That's one way we build in remedial help. (Some of our other community colleges use this model, too.)

The New Community College attracted 855 prospective students. Ultimately, 322 enrolled in our first class. They show the same diversity as our other colleges — 35 percent Latino, 27 percent African-American, 21 percent white,

And, acceptance is based, primarily, on school grades and standardized test scores.

As a practical matter, grading incentivizes cheating, especially in an environment in which cheating is tolerated. Moreover, in such an environment, success is measured by test scores and not by the amount of knowledge obtained or how one learns to use such knowledge.

The determination whether to cheat should not be based on the probability of being caught and the severity of the resulting consequences. We have a responsibility to teach our students the difference between right and wrong, and that it is just plain wrong to cheat. Cheating should not be tolerated on any level.

Moral codes should be taught, in the first instance, at home. However, if not taught at home, then it should be the responsibility of the education system to take up the slack. If the Stuyvesant students who were cheating had learned, before they went to high school, that it was wrong to cheat, then the cheating at Stuyvesant may not have occurred, and if it did, then fewer students would have been involved.

By tolerating cheating in school, what will happen when our students become our leaders in science, industry, education and politics? #

Arthur Katz, a corporate attorney, is a member of the New York City law firm Otterbourg, Steindler, Houston & Rosen, P.C.

11 percent Asian, with the remaining 6 percent declining to identify ethnicity. They're almost evenly split among men and women, and come from across the city.

We recruited an enthusiastic faculty and staff from both inside and outside CUNY. CUNY recruited President Scott Evenbeck, a psychologist who was founding dean of University College at the public Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

At the convocation that inaugurated the New Community College, Chancellor Goldstein presented Mayor Bloomberg with the rarely awarded Chancellor's Medal for his years of support for this project. Speaking at the event, held at the New York Public Library, across from the college, the mayor said, "I think this school has the potential to be a game-changing model for community colleges across the country."

The names of the two lions outside the New York Public Library in Manhattan are Fortitude and Patience. We will need both at our side as the reform of community college education moves forward in the years ahead. #

Jay Hershenson is the senior vice chancellor for university relations and secretary of the board of trustees at the City University of New York.



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Award-Winning Teachers Share Insights: The Technology Project

By STARR SACKSTEIN

[Starr Sackstein was one of the Outstanding Educators of the Year honored at Education Update's 10th Annual Harvard Club event in June 2012. The following is one of her many successful lessons. ED]

Producing a student-run publication is the perfect juggling act of direct, individualized instruction, leadership mentoring and technology usage. Students learn to become media and technology savvy, consuming what they create and sharing the knowledge they develop in a way other students can hear.

In any one of my newspaper classrooms, a visitor would recognize the absence of the typical. Students are in charge in this classroom, offering feedback to their peers in a variety of ways. Using a Mac lab is the most ideal way to carry out a successful publication class, but laptops work just as effectively.

Every student is engaged in his/her own learning all the time, going at a pace appropriate for him/her. In any given class, reporters can be gathering research online, deciphering between reliable, useable sources and those that can't be cited. They can be writing, revising or conferencing about drafts they have created for a particular audience. Some may be gathering primary sources, using their interviewing skills to gather expert information to be crafted for other

student consumption.

Other students use class time to design the pages using InDesign or Photoshop to clean and crop photos for greater reader engagement, more points of entry for our readers. Editors are using Google docs to give real-time feedback on drafts provided by reporters to ensure clarity, completeness and our journalistic style. While the students are working together cooperatively, the harmony is maintained by the managing editor keeping data about student production and updating our issue spreadsheet which is at the heart of each issue. A simple, shared Google spreadsheet allows students to track their process for the rest of the team to see. Editors update what they have seen so that layout knows when they can get started.

At first, many teachers would feel like they would need to be more involved. At first, I was more involved; I needed to have my hand in all of it. However, the more competent the students became because of my one on one time with each of them and the building of positive interactions, the less I had to be involved. Sitting on the sideline, I now conference with newer reporters and editors about how to respond to different situations, act as a barometer for ethical choices and teach students through specific issues that come up, most of the time unexpectedly.

Teaching how to put together a newspaper is not for the faint of heart. Trusting the students' knowl-

McGann-Mercy HS Student Fights Bigotry & Hatred

The Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County recognized a McGann-Mercy North High School student who has used his leadership position to encourage other students to treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Kevin Butterfield has been a student leader in a number of areas, but regardless of the context, Butterfield's actions perfectly embody his school's motto — "Live Mercy" — according to his guidance counselor, Mr. Lombardi. Butterfield has been named "Upstander of the Month" for always challenging bigoted comments, recognizing the value of all cultures, peaceful resolution to conflict and an attitude of inclusion.

He encourages others to join him in his efforts to create a welcoming school through the Ambassador Club and the East End Youth Leadership Conference. Butterfield's commitment is perhaps exemplified by his long-term friendship with a young man from a different reli-

edge of technology and reporting and allowing them to take risks can produce some of the most rewarding classroom experiences. #



gious background. Together they wrote a poem, which has received a poetry award.

"We are proud to recognize Kevin and wish him continued success during his senior year," says Dr. Sarah Cushman, director of youth education at the Center.

Each month the Center accepts nominations from teachers, civic leaders, family and friends of a Long Island youth that has implemented the Center's mission by advocating respect for all people. The student's action as an

Upstander could be one of intervention or prevention. The Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau County is the pre-eminent Holocaust and Tolerance resource on Long Island, with a contemporary museum and is one of the largest and most comprehensive education program providers in the region. #

To nominate a student for "Upstander of the Month" or learn more, email Dr. Cushman at sarahcushman@holocaust-nassau.org or call 516-571-8040 ext. 106.

Starr Sackstein is an English and journalism teacher at World Journalism Preparatory School in Flushing, N.Y.

I AM
MERCY
EDUCATION.



I am *AJ Mullen* '02.

Anthony J. Mullen '02
National Teacher
of The Year

JOIN US.
You will be in good company.



Education Leaders Joe and Carol Reich Honored by Sy Fliegel and CEI-PEA

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

The occasion was a book party luncheon for philanthropists Joe and Carol Reich, the authors of the just-released "Getting to Bartlett Street: Our 25-year Quest to Level the Playing Field in Education" (February Books), but the recent event at The Harvard Club turned out to be a wider and enthusiastic re-dedication by approximately 120 guests of The Center for Educational Innovation-Public Education Association (CEI-PEA) to the underprivileged children of New York City served by charter schools.

No one spoke from notes — there was no need: the mission was known, the passion heartfelt, the commitment unflagging, the cause as compelling as ever, arguably even more so, given uncertainty over the new administration next year — not to mention uncertainty in the economy. That concern for what remains to be done in independent public school reform, along with a celebration of what has already been accomplished, thanks to Carol and Joe Reich, played out as consideration by both speakers and the audience of whether the glass is half empty or half full. Carol Reich saw it as half-empty.

Joe Reich said he was "more of a half-full kind of guy," but both spoke with quiet determination of the need for the "quest" they began in 1992 in New York City to continue. Two years earlier they had founded and funded the Beginning with Children Foundation in Williamsburg, the first charter-like school in the country. This was six years before the state passed its first charter law.

Festivities began with James Merriman, CEO of the New York City Charter School Center, who introduced Seymour Fliegel, President of CEI-PEA and Gilder Senior Fellow, whose focused and witty remarks paid tribute to the Reiches for "raising expectations" about what children of poverty can do in a school when their teachers have the necessary resources and the kids get sustaining support — goals that go far beyond the charter school movement.

He quoted the book's epigraph from Soren Kierkegaard, that "Life is lived forward but understood backward if you are still around to comprehend it." The luncheon celebrated just that, as Fliegel quoted from the last paragraph of Joel Klein's foreword: "Against all odds, and in the face of persistent, unyielding naysayers, these two people led a revolution in education in the largest school district in the country." Klein's last line, as they say, brought down the house: "In the words of my favorite song from the Broadway show *A Little Night Music*, 'Isn't it Reich?'" (Joe and Carol pronounce their name "Rich.")

Carol Reich then spoke, modestly not referencing her CUNY Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology or her extensive work in early childhood education or her service on numerous boards, though she drew on her record as co-sponsor with Joe of the "I Have a Dream Foundation"



(L-R) Joe & Carol Reich & Sy Fliegel

class of 62 Brooklyn children. She stressed continuing needs — especially space issues, the growing waiting lists of children, and she noted the importance of sharing district best practices and having a sturdier "three-legged stool" so that schools of education and boards of education and publishers could wage not only a philosophical battle but a cognitive one.

She also wondered why there were too few special-ed kids in charter schools. Her somber remarks were especially noteworthy for their directness: teachers are being demonized, little kids "who don't have a voice" come to school hungry, those who are served need to be followed in the higher grades. Her husband extended these remarks, pointing out that "parents, not just children, need mentoring."

Joe Reich, who, with his wife founded the New York Charter School Center and

was its chair through December 2007, has an impressive background in investment management, but he said Sy Fliegel changed his life. Both Reiches are well aware of the perils of bureaucracy — tensions between charter organizations and individual charter schools, and partisan politics.

But Joe Reich, keeping with his theme of half full, pointed out the dramatic growth in the charter-school movement, and noted that 20 percent of New York City's 3 percent of charter schools are located in poor sections of The Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan. He looks to increasing the 3 percent to 6 percent and to institute procedures that will follow children at risk and support their high hopes of going to college. We need a "posse," Carol Reich chimed in, "alumni programs" to ensure that kids don't drop out, that they stay committed in later grades.

In a lively Q & A, the Reiches and Fliegel were asked about rewarding outstanding teachers and involving parents more. Their answers: parents, get involved, get organized, visit your children's schools, they're using our tax money. Become principal for a day, said Edith Everett of The Everett Foundation. We should all be advocates, they said, and they urged attendees to access DonorsChoose.org, a citizens' philanthropic initiative that invites individuals to fund specific project requests from teachers (materials, equipment, field trips, etc.), 100 percent of which goes directly to the classroom. #

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HEAF TURNS UNDERSERVED NYC STUDENTS INTO COLLEGE GRADS WITH DR. FERN KHAN AT HELM

The Harlem Educational Activities Fund (HEAF), a supplemental education nonprofit that provides afterschool, summer and weekend programs to empower underserved New York City students to pursue and obtain a college education, recently hosted its 2012 Annual Benefit Dinner to raise funds to support programming for its middle, high school and college students.

HEAF students and Dr. Fareed Zakaria, author and host of CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS, engaged the audience through an interactive panel that examined recent presidential election cycles and the major foreign policies of each respective administration.

"We are so grateful for the support of our sponsors and are excited to welcome them, and both old and new friends to HEAF's 2012 Annual Benefit Dinner," said Calvin Sims, chairman of the HEAF Board of Directors. "In the midst of a historic election, we are reminded that education is one of the most pressing issues facing our nation. I'm proud of both the commitment our supporters have made to HEAF and their recognition that education is key to improving the lives of the next generation. Daniel Rose, founder of the organization, was in attendance.

The support of HEAF partners and sponsors



Dr. Fern Khan

will allow the organization to continue and enhance its extensive and rigorous academic programs. "The education system is facing mounting challenges and pressures, and many students who have a lot of potential are falling through the cracks," said HEAF interim president and chief executive officer Fern Khan. "HEAF offers an alternative for these students. We have an impressive track record of success — ensuring our students go to college, graduate and become successful professionals."



Fareed Zakaria with Students

All of the students graduate high school and go on to higher education, and 35 percent obtain advanced degrees. It is through HEAF's innovative and rigorous programming that it is able to achieve such impressive results. The HEAF Annual Benefit Dinner plays a critical role in ensuring these programs are able to continue and the organization is able to carry its mission forward.

The evening, which was hosted by the HEAF Board of Directors, honored Michael D. Colacino, president of Studley and

Richard H. Neiman, vice president of Global Financial Services Regulatory Practices at PricewaterhouseCoopers, for their accomplishments and contributions to the community.

HEAF is a high-impact supplemental education and youth leadership nonprofit that turns high-potential but underserved New York City public school students into high-achieving college graduates. HEAF enrolls qualifying students in middle school and supports them until they are successfully admitted to — and graduate from four-year colleges. #



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Ann Tisch & YWLN Celebrate 6th Anniversary



Ann Tisch and Honoree Ann Shoket



Honorees Kevin Roberts and Susan Lyne



Honoree Tina Brown and TYWLS students

In 1996, Ann and Andrew Tisch partnered with the New York City Board of Education to open The Young Women's Leadership School (YWLS) of East Harlem — the first public all-girls school to open in the United States in 30 years. Their vision was to provide economically disadvantaged girls with a high-quality college preparatory education modeled upon the finest private schools. Based upon the success of its flagship school, the model has been replicated to include five network schools in New York City and nine affiliate schools.

The Young Women's Leadership Schools are a high-performing network of all-girls public secondary schools (6th-12th grades) that provide a single-sex, college preparatory choice to underserved families. The schools are open to girls of all academic abilities who aspire to a post-secondary education. The TYWLS "whole girl" model of education includes research-based best practices (collaborative learning, connections to the world, comprehensive college and career preparation), coupled with social-emotional support that enables girls to achieve their fullest potential.

In 2012-2013, the TYWLS network will serve approximately 1,900 students in five NYC schools.

YWLN facilitates in-school, after-school and summer

programming at TYWLS to expand students' learning beyond the classroom. YWLN provides comprehensive supports to TYWLS students, their families, administrators and teachers. In addition, TYWLS has inspired the creation of more than 100 single-sex public schools nationwide, including nine affiliate schools in Illinois, Maryland, New York and Texas.

Young Women's Leadership Network supports two life-changing programs that empower low-income youth to break the cycle of poverty through education: The Young Women's Leadership Schools, a high performing network of all-girls public secondary schools, and CollegeBound Initiative, a comprehensive college guidance program for young women and men in high-need public schools.

Since 2001, the two programs have sent more than 4,500 students to college and have generated nearly \$69 million in financial aid and scholarships to enable them to persist there.

The honorees this year were: Tina Brown, Editor-in-Chief of Newsweek/The Daily Beast; Susan Lyne, Chairman of Gilt Groupe; Ann Shoket, Editor-in-Chief of Seventeen and Kevin Roberts, Worldwide CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi. #



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"Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in. That everyone may receive at least a moderate education appears to be an objective of vital importance."

— Abraham Lincoln



Bringing Music to Those with Disabilities

By KAREN KRASKOW

“Are you guys ready to rock?” the announcer crooned. “Yeah,” shouted the audience, filled with family members, individuals with disabilities and supportive friends. This was the Annual Music Celebration of Daniel’s Music Foundation, an organization devoted to bringing music programs and opportunities, including a Member Leadership Program, to individuals with developmental and physical disabilities.

The curtain opened to a stage whose background was draped with shimmering blue strips composing a curtain. “Down on the Corner” was sung first, followed by nursery rhymes medleyed into a rock ‘n’ roll flow. The crew of children and teens was asked what

rock ‘n’ roll songs they knew, to which they answered “What’s rock ‘n’ roll?” The music teacher capitulated and asked, “What songs do you know?” to which they answered, “We know nursery rhymes.” Thus was born “rock ‘n’ roll nursery rhymes.” The performances renewed belief in the universality of rock ‘n’ roll and the love of it through the generations.

The performance at the Dalton School was the hard work of some of the 250 members who took one or more of 35 onsite classes and 12 off-site classes — all free — in keyboard, voice and music theory at Daniel’s Music Foundation.

The Trush Family, Ken and Daniel, father and son, their mom Nancy and brother Mike, founded DMF after Daniel suffered a brain

injury that derailed his musical ambitions. Thanks to modern musical technology and despite spasticity in his left arm, his burst aneurysm did not stop him from producing music and helping others with disabilities to enjoy music, perform and be part of the leadership of the organization. In the announcer’s words, program participants grow in self-esteem, improve their singing confidence and learn to collaborate with a group.

It was Ken Trush, Daniel’s father, who observed that people with disabilities didn’t only want to be served, they wanted to serve as well, and so the Member Leadership Program was born. Their motto is: “You don’t know what you can do until you try,” and that is what the participants have learned, as they

now coach others. The foundation has several tracks to which new members are directed once their talents and interests are assessed. They take classes that are structured as well as ones that encourage expression. And express they do.

Look for next year’s concerts and this amazing display of talent and courage at danielmusic.org — all of which supports Ken Trush’s call to look beyond the “limits of what we think a person can do.”

Karen Kraskow, M.A., M.S.W. is an Educational Therapist in private practice. She teaches reading, writing and math to students who struggle in those areas, and has a special interest in individuals who face disability in society today.

BOOK REVIEW

WONDER, A SPECIAL ED STORY

REVIEWED By DR. ROSE REISSMAN

Wonder, A Special Ed Story

By R. J. Palacio

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012



Suitable for Grades 5 and beyond, this groundbreaking young adult novel told through multiple teen and preteen perspectives infuses information about mandibulofacial dysostosis, recessive mutation, Thorton Wilder, precepts of great thinkers, and a mixture of emails, letters, and texts into an emotionally riveting story of a 5th grader with facial deformity confronting a “normal” middle school population. The story incorporates genetics, relationships, bullying, divorce, sibling issues, and rites of passage into a page turning narrative. The book can support teachers in addressing the Common Core Standards of information/literary texts and building content knowledge, and is excellent for ELA, Guidance, CTT and special needs.

August Pullman is referenced as a “wonder” by his loving family circle including dog Daisy, but his face is one that evokes shrieks, ostracism, and retreat even from some uninitiated adults. Homeschooled until he was 10 due to multiple surgeries, bright August is thrust into Beecher Prep School. He must deal foremost with making a name and friends in a middle school environment where his physical appearance causes many students to refuse to touch him, sit with him and treat him as a human being. As the year progresses, he suffers both the ordinary self consciousness, preadolescent growing pains and betrayals, plus the intense emotional trauma of making his way as a bright, funny and vulnerable being in a world where his face will always be anathema to many. The book wisely filters the story of August’s tumultuous entry into middle school

through not only his first person 10 year old narrative, but through that of his peer pals, his fifteen year sister, and her boyfriend. These varied first person chapters complete with referential quotes from literature or song lyrics, nicely expand the audience of the work from middle through high school and beyond. The teen perspectives also highlight the difference these crucial years make in maturity and capacity to deal with deformity.

While the adults in the book are mostly positive and supportive influences in August’s challenging fifth grade year, they are properly pushed into the background with the inspirational focus for student readers being August. While of course, August’s struggle is unique in that he has very real physical appearance issues which will never be addressed, the issues he does confront resonate to some degree with all adolescents. They include: determining the trustworthiness of friends, ostracism, cliques, lunch/locker room behaviors, bullying, defining oneself, dealing with intellectual and emotional challenging, sibling rivalries, self assertion in light of parent priorities, facing the public, and self consciousness about physicality. The extremity of August’s situation allows the student readers to feel fairly safe and blessed in comparison, while also able to derive strategies from August’s behavior to support their own challenges.

How this book can be used by educators: ELA teachers, deans, guidance, special needs, and coaches can use gripping sections of the book such as August’s “Ordinary” opening to set the discussion and environment for nurturing or remediating classroom support of all students including those who are targeted for derision by others.

In terms of 5 Pillar Common Core ELA Literacy, Wonder is chock full of various text complexity elements. These include: precepts that can serve as the sources for high quality

text dependent questions, tasks using text based evidence that the English teacher gives August, and chapters initiated by a range of lyric, philosophical and poetry quotes. The work also has a range and quality of texts including one chapter solely comprised of letters, email and Face book texts. August and his teen sister Olivia continually reference –Genetics 101- which is a focus on genetic vocabulary and domain specific language relating to his facial deformity.

This book is on the NY Times best seller lists and continually missing from bookstore shelves, because Palacio has managed to create a character who is a singular wonder that ironically can voice the torments and traumas of everyone’s middle school and beyond rites of passage.

Dr. Rose Reissman is a Literacy Specialist at Ditmas IS 62 and is director of the Writing Institute.

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Child Mind Institute Honors Nobel Laureate Dr. Eric Kandel

Recently, the Child Mind Institute (Childmind.org) presented On The Shoulders of Giants, a scientific symposium honoring the recipient of the 2012 Child Mind Institute Distinguished Scientist Award, Eric Kandel, MD, for his extraordinary contributions to neuroscience. The event celebrated his legacy within the field as well as his accomplishments as an author and mentor. Dr. Eric Kandel is the recipient of the 2000 Nobel Prize in Medicine for his research on the physiological basis of memory storage in neurons in marine snails. Dr. Kandel referred to this research as his “biggest risk” during the afternoon’s interview with Nightline’s Cynthia McFadden.

“Dr. Kandel has consistently been drawn to the challenge of understanding the human mind in biological terms and integrating that with the insights of psychology and psychoanalysis,” said Harold Koplewicz, MD, president of the Child Mind Institute. “That such a nuanced understanding as his comes in part from such basic science is a testament to his stature, but also to how scientific inquiry can shape us and the world around us.”

The symposium also provided an in-depth look at Dr. Kandel as a giant in his field, through his own exploration and the continued work of his three protégés. Chris Willcox, Priya Rajasethupathy, PhD, and Sonia Epstein have explored different ways that art and science intersect. Each gave a presentation in his or her field of concentration.

Willcox, a television producer for Charlie Rose: The Brain Series and visual artist spoke about the similarities between art and science, in experimentation and methodical approaches to problem solving. Dr. Rajasethupathy’s talk explained her work on the cellular and even sub-cellular mechanics of memory. Epstein focused on her work with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation helping create media that broadens the reach of scientific ideas, making science more accessible and easily understood in our society, and helping to shape popular culture in a new way.

At the end of Dr. Kandel’s presentation, he saluted his protégés, referring to a PowerPoint slide of Newton’s quote: “If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.” “We no longer work like that,” Kandel

added, “So if I’ve seen further it’s by standing on the shoulders of my students. The giants are the next generation.”

The day culminated in an exclusive interview with ABC Nightline anchor Cynthia McFadden. The conversation provided the audience with an intimate look at Kandel’s personal and professional journey and an opportunity for Kandel to share advice for future generations. McFadden posed the question, “What would you say to young people as they start their careers?”

Kandel responded, “In my time one really tried to do things that one enjoyed; one didn’t go into medicine in those days in order to make money. I think you should choose something that you really like, play to your strengths and do it! Do



(L-R) Dr. Harold Koplewicz, Cynthia McFadden, Dr. Eric Kandel, Sonia Epstein, Chris Willcox & Dr. Priya Rajasethupathy

something that is different, original, interesting, satisfying — something that occupies every free moment of your life.”

Keeping in the theme of mentorship and innovation in education, The Child Mind Institute presented its inaugural Rising Scientist Awards to ten outstanding 11th and 12th grade students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement

in science in the New York metropolitan area from schools with a high quality, rigorous science curriculum.

The awardees included: Jake Drobner, Dwight-Englewood School; Sophia Edelstein, The Dalton School; Mariel Emrich, Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School; Daniel

Fischer, The Abraham Joshua Heschel School; Jane Jeffery, The Chapin School; Ian Kaplan, The Bronx High School of Science; Jillian Katz, Rye Country Day School; Henry Magun, Riverdale Country School; Maxine McGredy, Hunter College High School; Anna Mendelson, The Hewitt School. #

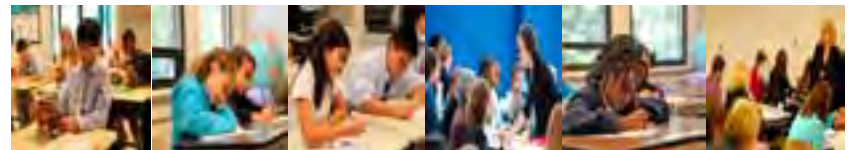
The Child Mind Institute is dedicated to transforming mental health care for children everywhere. Founded by Dr. Harold S. Koplewicz and Brooke Garber Neidich, the organization is committed to finding more effective treatments for childhood psychiatric and learning disorders, building the science of healthy brain development, and empowering children and their families with help, hope and answers.

“If I’ve seen further it’s by standing on the shoulders of my students. The giants are the next generation.”

*-Dr. Eric Kandel,
Nobel Laureate*

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Windward Teacher Training Institute is a division of The Windward School, an independent school for students with language-based learning disabilities, located in White Plains, NY.



Exclusive Interview: Canadian Member of Parliament Mike Lake & Son Jaden Talk About Autism with Dr. Pola Rosen



(L-R) Mike and Jaden Lake

Transcribed By ERICA ANDERSON

Dr. Pola Rosen (PR): Mike, you are not only a member of Canadian Parliament, but you're the parent of an autistic child. Jaden is 16 years old now. What are some of the things that you've learned about autism? I know that you've had about 36 hours per week of special tutoring and behavior modeling for Jaden, so if you could tell us a little bit about that.

Mike Lake (ML): Jaden was diagnosed at 2 ½. We live in Alberta province in Canada, probably one of the best jurisdictions in the country to live if you have a child with autism for getting treatment. Back then, they were funding all 36 hours a week. What that looked like was aides, usually university students, taking 3, 6, or 9 hours a week in a team of five that rotated. At the beginning, Jaden couldn't pay attention to anything. So literally it was putting a spoon on the table and saying "Jaden, give me the spoon," and he would look around anywhere in the room except at the spoon or the person talking to him. And then the aide would grab his hand, put it on top of the spoon and then put it in their hand, and make him hand it over. Then they would give him a treat to reinforce that that was a good thing. That was how it started.

PR: What are some of the behaviors that you've had to overcome?

ML: There's a whole bunch. First thing was to try to get him connected. I think when you look back at those early days in terms of ther-

apy and treatment—Jaden, do you remember that? Working with all of the different people who would come over and work with you one-on-one and they would make you hand them things and they would practice different things with you? And they would give you rewards sometimes smarties [cookies] and things like that? That connection, the fact that he looks at me and is able to connect and is understanding what I'm saying, to a large degree - he understands the people and the concrete things. Those are things he had no connection with when he was younger. and so it's kind of a foundation for him in terms of our ability to relate to one another and his ability to connect. A lot of people comment that it's a little bit unusual for people with autism to connect like he can. He may have a lot of challenges in other areas but one of the real strengths he has is that connectedness. His pediatrician, about six years ago, after about 7 ½ years of therapy and then school, commented that he was a completely different kid because of it.

PR: I think one of the unusual things that I've noticed about Jaden is that he's so affectionate and so kind. How did he go from a non-reactive child to the loving and kissing

Watch the online video interview at:

EDUCATIONUPDATE.com

Autism Speaks Convenes Fifth Annual 'World Focus on Autism'



(L-R) Marta Linares de Martinelli, first lady of Panama; Ricardo Martinelli, president of Panama; Suzanne Wright, co-founder of Autism Speaks; Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, spouse of the UN Secretary-General; Mr. Bob Wright, co-founder of Autism Speaks; Jennifer Raab, president of Hunter College.

At a growing annual gathering of the world leaders, first spouses, scientists, and the disability community held in the wings of the United Nations General Assembly meetings, a new U.N. initiative spearheaded by the global advocacy group Autism Speaks gained momentum with the backing of many in the developing world who want autism considered a major threat to global health. At the Fifth Annual "World Focus on Autism" event Bob and Suzanne Wright, co-founders of Autism Speaks, encouraged collaboration among nations to improve service provision for people with autism. They urged support for the new resolution introduced by prime minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina to tackle the public health crisis of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and developmental disabilities, which knows no geographic, racial or economic boundaries. "Bangladesh and India are literally re-writing public health and education policies to improve the lives of individuals with autism," said Hasina. "Together, we are setting an example for the rest of the world."

The event assembled one of the broadest coalitions in the organization's history, with heads of state and dignitaries from Benin, Cyprus, Ireland, Nigeria, Senegal, Serbia,

South Korea, Turkey and Ukraine.

First lady of Panama Marta Linares de Martinelli spoke about her country's increasing commitment to improving services for individuals with autism throughout Latin America. Canadian Member of Parliament Mike Lake was a special guest along with his son Jaden, who is 16 years old and has autism. (See the video interview on www.education-update.com.)

It was held at and co-sponsored by the Roosevelt House at Hunter College and the Hunter Autism Research, Practice, & Policy (HARPP) Center. The HARPP Center was founded by Hunter College to respond to the growing needs of NYC children with ASD. Its programs support the families and practitioners who work with these children, drawing upon Hunter's strengths in teacher training, research, community outreach, and public policy.

Autism describes a group of complex developmental brain disorders – autism spectrum disorders – caused by a combination of genes and environmental influences. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by communication difficulties, social and behavioral challenges and repetitive behaviors. #

teenager that I see now?

ML: That's an interesting question because his not kissing was probably similar to the not talking, in the sense that it's probably more of a muscle thing. He actually was still as affectionate he just didn't know how to kiss like this – he'll give me a smooch on the cheek but up until he was eleven he couldn't make the smacking sound so it was more like an infant kissing, just a touch on the cheek as opposed to a smacking kind of thing. It was a little bit

before that that he wound up building that sort of connection with us. Part of that is the intervention, and a lot of it has to do with my wife Debbie and the way we are as a family, we wouldn't let him get away with not connecting. We made him hug and we made sure that he wasn't allowed to just get in his own space all the time. We had to get in his space. #

Please visit www.educationupdate.com to read the entire interview and see the live interview with Jaden.



Leaders of The Windward School: Teaching Students with Language-Based Learning Disabilities



(L-R) Devon Fredericks & Dr. John Russell

Watch the online video
interview at:

EDUCATIONUPDATE.com

The Windward School in White Plains, N.Y., is an independent, co-ed day school focused exclusively on helping students in grades 1-9 with language-based learning disabilities. Dr. Pola Rosen, Publisher of Education Update, interviewed Head of School Dr. John Russell and Chair of the Board of Trustees, Devon Fredericks.

TRANSCRIBED By ERICA ANDERSON

Dr. Pola Rosen (PR): Devon, how did you become involved with the Windward School?

Devon Fredericks (DF): I am very learning disabled myself, and when I saw my children struggling in school, I realized they were having the same problems I had had. I had them tested and I looked around for a school that could address their language-based learning disabilities. My son Oliver commuted from New York to Windward for six years because there was not an appropriate school for him in New York. He was very successfully remediated; he's a college student today. I don't think any of that would have been possible without Windward's work.

PR: Jay, can you tell us something about the special programs that are available, and what distinguishes this school?

Dr. John J. Russell (JR): Because we're a school for children with language-based learning disabilities, our focus is on language: on reading, writing, listening and speaking. ... After three to five years on average, students leave us and return to mainstream schools. What we really focus on is the use of direct, explicit instruction in all of our classes.

PR: Can you define "explicit instruction?"

JR: Every lesson has certain components, and every lesson has to be prepared by our teachers. The school is different because we group students homogeneously for reading and for math at skill level with about 10 children in a group. That allows our teachers to pinpoint a lesson to the skills that the students are still trying to master, as opposed to having a heterogeneous group where the skill level is all over the place. Every lesson has a name, every lesson has a motivation, and every lesson has direct explicit instruction from the teacher based on whatever that skill is.

PR: What was the rationale behind having a whole new building put up for the Teacher Training Institute?

DF: The board in doing their strategic planning five years ago felt a strong mandate to make the program available to more children.

WINDWARD SCHOOL DEDICATES NEW BUILDING TO DR. JUDITH C. HOCHMAN

The Windward School, an independent school for students with language-based learning disabilities, honored its former head of school, Dr. Judith C. Hochman, by dedicating a new building that will house the nationally recognized Windward Teacher Training Institute (WTTI).

Dr. Hochman, the founder and senior faculty member of WTTI, is a leading expert in professional development. She is the author of "Teaching Basic Writing Skills: Strategies for Effective Expository Writing Instruction," which is used in hundreds of public and independent school classrooms to teach children to write effectively. Dr. Hochman is also the former superintendent of the Greenburgh Graham Union Free School District in Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., and holds prominent positions on the advisory boards of both the New York branch of the International Dyslexia Association and the Connecticut Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, which honored her with its 2010 Shining Star award.

Dr. Hochman served as head of The Windward School from 1988 – 1999, and founded WTTI in 1989. She lectures extensively at colleges, universities and public and independent schools nationwide on the best methods for teaching writing.

"The ability to write effectively is rarely learned without explicit instruction. Consistent principles should be used to teach writing across the curriculum and through the grades," Dr. Hochman said. "Evidence-based strategies need to be taught to all students in order to teach them how to express themselves with coherence, unity and structure. Good written language instruction will enhance thinking, organization skills, as well as reading comprehension."

The new 17,000 square foot building named in Dr. Hochman's honor will allow Windward to build upon her work. Each year, more than 1,500 teachers from the greater New York metropolitan area partake in WTTI courses and workshops. The Hochman Building will provide the facilities to train additional teachers in the School's proven methods of instruction.

"I am very pleased that The Windward School was able to recognize the contributions that Dr. Judith C. Hochman has made to The Windward School and to the professional development of teachers," said Dr. John J. Russell, the Head of School. "Her dedication to the school and its mission of remediating language-based learning disabilities is extraordinary, and I cannot think of a more fitting way to honor her commitment than in naming Windward Teacher Training Institute's new facilities for her." #

We did a lot of research and we identified training more teachers as the crucial element in expanding the program and that our own Teacher Training Institute was ideally suited to do that. The decision was made, and we had the pleasure last week of dedicating the Judith C. Hochman building of the Windward Teacher Training Institute, a very gratifying experience. ... We have 557 students in Westchester right now, and they must receive the program at the very highest level of excellence every day. Preserving the sacred is really intended to make sure that the program continues perfectly every day before we think about expanding. With the Teacher Training Institute, we can continue to deliver an excellent program in Westchester, and think about expanding to New York City.

PR: How many more students do you think you'll be able to reach with the expansion?

JR: We're fairly confident by September 2015 we'll be opening a facility that will allow us to educate 350 additional students. I don't think I underscored the fact that everything we do is based on research, and that really is what distinguishes us. Work that comes out of the National Reading Panel and the IDEA has a huge body of research that guides everything we do in the classroom.

PR: Is there any particular poignant anecdote that stands out in your mind?

JR: When I was being interviewed to be head of school, it was very intense, they covered every aspect of your knowledge of pedagogy, programs, research, interactions with people. You met with trustees, parents and teachers. Then I met with middle school-age students. I said to the children, "Is there anything you want me to know about your school that we haven't covered?" Jeffrey, a 12-year-old boy, raised his hand immediately. He said, "I want you to know, this school saved my life." There must have been 16 kids in the room and every single one of them as nodding their heads in agreement with Jeffrey.

Another is one of my trustees recommended that we put up a board with the colleges and universities that Windward students attended. I said "We're an elementary and middle school, we don't want to over-emphasize college." He said, "Jay, you don't understand. When parents get to the front door of Windward, some of them have been so demoralized. They've struggled so mightily trying to get something for their children. If you do that, it'll immediately give them another sense of hope." We put it up, and I can't tell you how many prospective parents make a comment to me that it gave them a different perspective, and hope again. #

Read the unabridged interview online and see the video at www.educationupdate.com.

McGraw Prize Honors Education ‘Game Changers’



(L-R) Sal Kahn, Terry McGraw III, John Merrow, Ariela Rozman & Timothy Daly



(L-R) Dr. James Comer, Dr. Charlotte Frank & Terry McGraw III

Harold (Terry) McGraw III, chairman, president and chief executive officer of The McGraw-Hill Companies announced the winners of the 2012 Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education. This year, the 25th anniversary of the Prize, honors education “Game Changers” John Merrow, broadcast journalist and leading education commentator, Sal Khan, former financial analyst turned virtual school creator, and Ariela Rozman and Timothy Daly whose work with TNTP, formerly The New Teacher Project, is transforming the teaching profession. These winners were selected for their cutting-edge innovations and far-reaching impact on

student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

Each winner was presented with a \$50,000 prize during the recent gala awards ceremony.

As president of Learning Matters, which he founded in 1995, John Merrow has drawn attention to the state of education in the U.S., highlighting programs, schools and teachers who are having significant impact on student achievement.

Sal Khan’s creation of Khan Academy has transformed education by creating a free, open-source, world-class virtual school where anyone can learn anything, anytime. For this, he is honored as a rising star in education. A former

financial analyst, he began this work in 2004 by tutoring his young cousin in math. Demand for his online videos grew, and in 2009 he committed himself fully to Khan Academy. Its scope is huge: its more than 3,300 instructional videos covering everything from basic math to college level science have been viewed more than 180 million times. Khan Academy’s technology also means students, parents and teachers can track progress as students master new knowledge and skills.

Two leaders of TNTP, CEO Ariela Rozman and President Timothy Daly, were honored together as education pioneers. TNTP, a non-

profit founded by teachers in 1997, is pushing the boundaries of what’s possible in public education. Working in more than 25 cities, TNTP partners with educators in schools, districts and states to find, develop and keep great teachers. TNTP has recruited or trained some 49,000 teachers — benefiting an estimated 8 million students.

The McGraw Prize in Education annually recognizes outstanding individuals who have dedicated themselves to education innovation. It was established in 1988 to honor the late Harold W. McGraw Jr.’s lifelong commitment to education and to mark the corporation’s 100th anniversary. #

EXPERT ADVISES ON COLLEGES

By JAYME STEWART

The goal of college advising high school students is to work with them in gaining acceptance to a good college where they can succeed. This might sound basic, but it is not the same as working to get them accepted to a very difficult (and famously named) college where they will not succeed. Clearly we are all aware of the value of name colleges, and no responsible college guidance officer would lower the bar of colleges to apply to merely ensure that acceptance was inevitable. At the same time, reality requires that getting in may not be the same as staying in and succeeding, and the latter, in the end, is more important.

So the first question is when to begin? General statements need to be made at the beginning of high school. That is when, traditionally, the high school transcript starts as far as colleges are concerned. There are exceptions when freshman classes are taken in earlier grades (such as Algebra 1), but certainly a talk about the value of each grade in high school needs to be made. That

sort of statement should be renewed at the beginning of 10th grade. It is never too late to improve one’s grades.

Some schools talk in detail about specific colleges at the 9th and 10th grade level, and, frankly, I think that is early. Students certainly need to be encouraged to do their best, but to put pressure to get into a Harvard-type school in these first two years of high school seems to misrepresent the goals of those years, which is to learn how to learn in a college-oriented way, and to fully absorb the information that will be needed in a scaffolding process as the work increases in intensity. To focus on a particular group of colleges, with the possibility that these colleges are “unreachable,” seems to carry the seeds of later disappointment.

There is one more piece of advice we give freshmen, and that is to keep a file or box with all their accomplishments to date and going forward into high school. When it comes to looking at colleges in detail in the 11th grade, they bring in these boxes and we go through them to see the type of person they are outside the school and if

they have pursued a passion that will work for them. We encourage passion.

So, true advising begins in the 11th grade when the student is now known for their strengths as a high school student. They should also be known for their special talents and their abilities on the standardized tests that college applicants take. This is the time for regular classes in college guidance.

Starting in January of their 11th grade, we, at York Prep, see them regularly in a class of about 15 or 16, and individually to define the “long list.” Very often, that class is covered both by my co-director, Janet Rooney, and myself, since the work is very detailed. Each student is on a computer either looking up schools, working on their Common Application and the Supplements for the colleges they are interested in, or working on their general essays for application. We also ask them to draft a headmaster’s letter on their behalf, which we can use to gather information to write the final letter that accompanies their applications. Everything, needless to say, must be “saved.”

By the end of the 11th grade, students should have completed their applications. We should have everything that we can have from them, and

we should know their rank in class, their standardized tests, their outside interests, their “pull” if they have any (a touchy subject), and, most importantly, where they want to apply. That list needs to have some reach colleges, some probable colleges and some safety colleges. At this point the number is not so relevant, since it can be pared down later. Summers should be used to visit colleges. If the student is really determined to apply to one particular college, they should be encouraged to take courses in summer school at that college, not only because it will help them gain admission, but also because it will help them make the decision as to whether they should apply there early decision.

I will only say this about the senior year: if the proper work has been done in the junior year, then the pressure on the student is far less. The chances of success are far greater, early admission is more likely (and shows the colleges how enthusiastic the students are to go to them), and the year is more enjoyable for the student who will, hopefully, have completed their applications by November 15th. #

Jayme Stewart is the Director of College Admissions for York Prep School.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Do You Know About The New Standards in NYS? Annual Professional Performance Review: Improving Education



By **DR. CAROLE G. HANKIN**
WITH EMILY WOOD

As students continue to settle into their normal school routines and activities, one key change may have been noticed in the beginning of the year — the presence of pre-assessments. These tests are part of New York State's new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) standards that take full effect this year. The most imperative aspect to remember when examining APPR is that it is in place to rate education, not students.

Every school district in the state is now required to submit a detailed APPR plan, outlining how teachers and administrators will be evaluated in compliance with state education laws and regulations, as part of the federal Race-to-the-Top grant received by New York State.

The pre-assessments given to students in the beginning of each school year are used as a tool by educators to gauge a student's level of learning and targeted growth percentages. Assessments include ELA and math in kindergarten through eighth grade, in addition to social studies and science in sixth to eighth grade. High school Regents courses are also utilized as a benchmark.

It is important to again emphasize that the new APPR is in place to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers and administrators. Students

will be able to use the assessments as a tool to gauge their growth and education from beginning to end of year, but the APPR is not in effect to judge or rate any students.

The rating of teachers and administrators is based on two parts: 60 percent of the score is from thorough classroom observations and 40 percent from student achievement, as measured through state assessments. Teachers are being graded on their effectiveness weighed against NYS Teaching Standards.

Another buzzword in education that many have been discussing lately is the shift to common core standards, which come hand-in-hand with the APPR initiative. These changes are solely curriculum based, requiring students to focus more heavily on abstract thinking, critical reading and analytical skills. The work students do under the new standards is more complex and intricate, preparing them for college and future careers in a competitive global environment. The new common core standards, which unify educational standards throughout the state and country, span from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in English Language Arts and mathematics. They were phased in during the previous school year and all districts are now fully aligned with the standards.

Pre-assessments are used to gather baseline data in the beginning of the year and students are then re-tested at the end of the year to

Christopher Columbus Awards for Middle School: Call for Entries

Now in its 17th year, the Christopher Columbus Awards, a free program that challenges middle school students to explore opportunities for positive change in their communities, announces the Call for Entries for the 2012-2013 school year.

Today's middle school students are the Innovation Generation — everyday kids with untapped potential who are creative problem solvers. Unlocking that potential is the mission of the Christopher Columbus Awards program, a cutting edge national competition that combines science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) with community problem solving in a real-world setting.

Teams of up to four students and a coach identify a community issue and use the scientific process to solve it. Finalist teams win an all-expense-paid trip to Walt Disney World where they attend the Christopher Columbus Academy and compete for gold medals, cash prizes and the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant.

In its 16 years, the program has attracted over 20,000 "everyday" students from all across the U.S., and appeals to educators who are increasingly looking to develop critical STEM skills in students while meeting State and Federal standards. The program teaches the scientific method while solving everyday problems, meets the National Science Education Standards, introduces hands-on discovery learning, improves critical-thinking skills and team problem solving, addresses the service learning aspect of many current curricula and encourages community service.

The Christopher Columbus Awards program

show growth and what skills they have attained throughout that year. These benchmark tests will serve as a landmark to indicate where students are at currently and how much they improved over a time period.

Everyone, from parents to teachers and principals, has a vested interest in the success and growth of all students. This will translate into a more rigorous educational course for each stu-

dent and a better comprehensive understanding of important subjects — a benefit that will prepare students well for the globally competitive workforce of the future. #

Coaches may be teachers, parents, community leaders or mentors. Teams do not need to be affiliated with a school to enter. The deadline for receipt of 2012-2013 Entries is Monday, February 4, 2013.

A winning team from Iowa felt there was an environmental hazard caused by used oil filters being disposed of in household trash. They developed an awareness campaign to educate the public about the dangers of placing used oil filters in landfills, and worked with their State legislature to pass an oil filter recycling law. A team from San Diego secured a provisional patent for a specialized seat cushion design that uses sensory feedback to train people to maintain a healthy posture while sitting at a computer. A team from Illinois developed a multi-faceted recycling awareness campaign that increased recycling in their community by 60 percent in just four months.

One finalist team will win the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant to take back to their community to implement their idea.

The program attracts many students who may not typically enter a science competition. More than half of the entrants are girls, and more than a fourth are from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, statistics that are higher than those of most science competitions. #

The program is endorsed by the Association for Middle Level Education. For more information, contact Stephanie Hallman at shallman@mmseducation.com or 800-291-6020 x 3154.



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THE DALAI LAMA BRINGS MESSAGE OF PEACE, COMPASSION TO BROWN UNIVERSITY



(L-R) Peg Ogden, Dalai Lama & President Christina Paxson

By JENNIFER MACGREGOR
& VALENTINA CORDERO



At the Stephen A. Ogden Jr. Memorial Lecture on International Affairs, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama spoke to an enraptured crowd at Brown University recently about compassion and peace, declaring the 21st century the century of compassion.

Brown University President Christina Paxson introduced the Dalai Lama. "Today we have with us a world leader who commands neither an army nor a navy, who works to resolve, not exploit, the ideological, cultural, religious and political differences that keep people and nations apart. He has described himself as a simple Buddhist man, yet his message of peace is a part of a profound and continuous work," she said.

He spoke movingly for almost two hours, covering topics including environmentalism, a generational shift in a changing world, and ultimately, about peace.

He first discussed suffering and the desire everyone, even animals have, to minimize suffering and have happiness in their lives.

He said that everyone has a right to achieve happiness in life by overcoming problems or disturbances that they encounter.

"We do not want suffering," he said. "So, violence always brings fear. Fear increases tension, stress and frustration. Then that creates violence. So, violence often creates more violence. Happiness is very much lived with peace."

He then went on to say that, at 77 years old, he has lived through much violence in the world. Most of the 20th century was filled with violence, he said.

"Almost my whole life, I have observed a violent world." He said the majority of his life — and the 20th century — has been defined by bloodshed.

"We have to think more seriously as to how to build a more peaceful world. This 21st century should be a peaceful century." This doesn't mean there will no longer be any problems in the world, because they are unavoidable, he said.

The world's problems start from people having too many expectations and too much ambition, combined with "extreme self-cen-

tered blindness," he said. "So long as we are human beings, with different interests, different concepts, different views, the source of problems remain."

His solution to this dilemma was pragmatic: consider others. "Once we accept the fact that their problem is my problem, their happiness is my happiness, I will get the maximum benefit. We have to look to the interests of others. That is the basis of the development of a proper, meaningful dialogue. One should respect other's views, other's rights, other's interests."

He said this task falls squarely on the shoulders of the younger generation to make sure the 21st century becomes a century of dialogue.

What's happened in the past is now only a memory, he said. We can learn from it, but cannot change it. The future is what's really important, and it's in the hands of a new generation that he urges to think seriously about the troubles of the world and find a new way to solve them.

"You should not concentrate only on your own family, your own community, your own city, or even your own nation," he said to the

under-30 crowd in attendance. "You must look beyond. You must look at the entire world."

He said that environmental concerns should be taken seriously, since we are dependent on the well-being of this planet for survival.

As a people, he believes that we are becoming more mature and declared that we can develop this century into a century of compassion.

"Compassion and love: sometimes people consider these as religious practices, but we must make a distinction. For all the religions, the main practice is love, compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, discipline and contentment, irrespective of philosophical differences," he said.

The 86th Stephen A. Ogden Jr. Memorial Lecture on International Affairs was established to promote the advancement of international peace and understanding.

Ogden was an international relations major at Brown and had hoped to advance international peace and understanding. His sister, Peg Ogden, has attended every lecture and received a standing ovation from the 5,400 attendees at the convention center in Providence, R.I. #

PRESIDENT JENNIFER RAAB AWARDS DALAI LAMA HONORARY HUNTER DEGREE



As president of Hunter College, it is my privilege to welcome His Holiness, the Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, and to present him with an honorary Hunter degree. Your Holiness, this is your second visit in two years to Hunter College, and we are honored to have you join us once again. Like people everywhere, we are uplifted by your presence.

You are a man of hope, and everywhere you go, you impart that spirit to others. Your teachings on ethics, nonviolence, religious harmony and peace have made you one of the most revered figures in the world today. You have been honored many times by many organizations, most notably with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. These honors are richly deserved, for the range of your teachings is unparalleled.

You have urged us to protect the environment

and fight injustice; to practice tolerance and show compassion; to exercise self-discipline and maintain peace and to extend the benefits of economic development universally.

What you teach is near and dear to us at Hunter College, because our motto is *mihī cura futuri* – the care of the future is mine.

The insights you give the world are very much about the care of the future. You have said, for example: “Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.”

You teach us that “It is vital that when educating our children’s brains that we do not neglect to educate their hearts.”

You give us this great insight: “the true hero is one who conquers his own anger and hatred.”

Then there is perhaps your simplest yet most profound lesson about caring for the future:

“When I wake in the morning, I make a wish to be useful to others.”

You have taken your mission of peace and harmony and your advocacy for the rights of the Tibetan people to audiences around the world. Everywhere you have gone, the warmth of your smile has gladdened peoples’ hearts, and your words have inspired them. Your message resonates deeply here at Hunter College, where we have one of the most diverse student bodies in the United States and, therefore, in the world. Men and women from some 150 nations are enrolled here, and they speak more than 100 languages.

Since its founding in 1870 as a school to train young women as teachers, Hunter has embraced the values of tolerance and equal opportunity for everyone, regardless of race, religion or national origin.

Our college has long been a haven for immigrants seeking the freedom to build a better life.

And like you, your Holiness, we at Hunter are deeply committed to advancing human rights. We take great pride in the program we have launched in human rights that is already training the next generation of workers and scholars.

Because of this mutual commitment to caring for the future, it is natural that we at Hunter College welcome you and your vision. We feel, in all humility, that we are one with you – and you are one of us.

It is indeed an honor, your Holiness, to welcome you into the Hunter College family. And so in accordance with the authority vested in me by law and the actions of the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York, I now confer upon you the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*. #



GAY TALESE SPEAKS AT HUNTER COLLEGE



Gay Talese & Elizabeth Strong-Cuevas

By DR. POLA ROSEN

Lewis Frumkes, director of The Writing Center at Hunter College, welcomed the huge crowd that packed the Faculty Dining Room for the first Elizabeth Strong-Cuevas lecture at Hunter College. "This enormous post-hurricane crowd is either a result of the hardiness and grit of culture-loving New Yorkers or a testimony to Gay's fan base," he said.

Gay Talese, the speaker to whom he was referring, is the elegant and iconic writer, journalist and author of 11 books including "The Power And The Glory," "Honor Thy Father," and "Thy Neighbor's Wife." Tom Wolfe credited him with having coined the term "The New Journalism." Frumkes then went on to say a few words about Elizabeth Strong-Cuevas, the evening's generous benefactor, whom he called

one of America's greatest sculptors.

Talese credited his immaculate sartorial appearance to the fact that his father was an immigrant tailor from Italy who always took great pride in good clothes and craftsmanship. Talese himself applies this pride in craftsmanship not only to his appearance but also to the words he writes and syntax he uses. He is a meticulous researcher and reviser of sentences, he said. He keeps a record of everything he thinks can be useful, including interviews, observations and articles. He is known to create storyboard outlines for books across the basement of his entire town house on the East side, where he lives with his wife of 50 years, the eminent publisher Nan Talese.

Talese went on to explain that it is the creativity behind his observations and interviewing

Touro College Offers Master's Degree Program In Industrial/ Organizational Psychology

Touro College's Graduate School of Psychology announced it is offering a Master of Science degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology (I/O), a field predicted to hold promise for job seekers in the next decade.

"We are very excited to be welcoming this program into the Graduate School of Psychology," said Dr. Dominick Fortugno, director of the School Psychology Program, who is overseeing the master's program in I/O Psychology.

"Companies are restructuring and looking to I/O psychologists for help with workplace assessment, as well as talent selection and management."

Citing statistics from the Department of Labor, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), the premier membership organization for those practicing and teaching I/O psychology, has called I/O a "hot job" with employment opportunities increasing through 2018.

"Our students will be prepared for these future opportunities," Dr. Fortugno said. "Touro's program will teach students to assess organizational effectiveness, devise and implement strategies for improvement and measure outcomes using a broad range of psychological and behavioral approaches."

He added that the program is appropriate for individuals from a wide range of professional

backgrounds, including organizational consultants, human resource professionals, psychologists, educators, school administrators and others who want to enhance their professional capabilities and career options.

The field of I/O is a varied one that dates back at least 100 years. During World War I, prediction of work performance was needed as new troops were assigned to duty. After the war, the field grew along with the nation's industrial base. Today, I/O encompasses the scientific study of employees, workplaces and organizations, and I/O psychologists contribute to the success of organizations by improving employee performance, satisfaction and well-being. I/O psychologists work as professors, researchers and consultants, among other roles.

Students are required to complete 12 courses exploring issues of psychology in the workplace, including assessment, consulting, motivation and organizational design, as well as a capstone field experience. The new program complements existing Master of Science programs in the graduate school, including school psychology, mental health counseling and school counseling.

Courses will be offered both at the Graduate School of Psychology at Touro's midtown Manhattan campus on West 23rd Street, as well as the Graduate School of Business, located downtown at 65 Broadway. #

techniques that is responsible for the powerful results. Today's young people are too addicted to their smart phones and the superficial facts from Google to dig for the real stories behind what they see, he said.

The crowd applauded wildly after the talk

and free wine and food were supplied by The Writing Center.

Visit *The Writing Center* online at facebook.com/TWCCEatHunter, twitter.com/TWCCEatHunter and hunter.cuny.edu/thewritingcenter-ce.

Pres. Snyder, Ivy Tech CC, Discusses Value of Community College Degrees

By VALENTINA CORDERO

"The Community College Career Track: How to Achieve the American Dream without a Mountain of Debt," a new book written by Thomas Snyder, the president of Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana, tries to answer the question of how to get a college degree that leads to a well-paying job. Snyder spoke recently at the Metropolitan Club in New York.

This book is a must for children and parents who are looking towards getting a college degree because it explains how to apply for students loans with an index of sites for Stafford and Pell Grants



as well as scholarship options for students.

"High school doesn't mean anything anymore. The cost for college can be compared to leasing a car because you don't know how much the lease is. Families don't really understand that," Snyder said. In addition to that, a year ago Snyder went to Washington to meet President Barack Obama to discuss the serious gap between higher education attainment in the United States, Korea

and Canada.

In his book, Snyder provides advice on family obligations while attending a community college. He suggested that recent high school graduates should first take courses at a less expensive community college before applying to a four-year institution. He emphasized that it is no longer whether one goes to college, but rather what course of study is pursued.

Not only that: community colleges, said Snyder, are a very good opportunity. Many of them confer certificates in areas such as court reporting, culinary arts and healthcare that can lead directly to a well-paying job. At Ivy Tech Community College there are more than 50 certificate programs providing training in growing fields such as medical billing and solar installation. #

The Cuomo Family Celebrates 'A World Without Cancer'



Dr. Margaret Cuomo & Gov. Andrew Cuomo



Dr. Margaret Cuomo



Gov. Mario Cuomo, Dr. Margaret Cuomo & Matilda Cuomo



Andrew Zaro, Lois Robbins, Dr. Margaret Cuomo & Howard Maier

By DR. POLA ROSEN

Lois Robbins and Andrew Zaro were the gracious hosts of a book party in honor of Dr. Margaret Cuomo's seminal work on cancer culled from her lifelong work as a radiologist. Friends and family filled the spacious upper east side apartment listening to Governor Andrew Cuomo and former Governor Mario

Cuomo, brother and father respectively of the author, expand on her talents as author and physician, sister and daughter. What a spectacular evening filled with the hope that cancer can perhaps finally be eradicated. For those who would like to see Dr. Cuomo in person reading and signing her book, check the East 86 Street Barnes & Noble calendar. #



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A UNIQUE MENTORING PROGRAM AT BARNARD COLLEGE



By **RACHEL TANNENBAUM**

As a career services professional working at a highly selective institution, I often rely on the knowledge and expertise of the college's alumnae in my work with students. Our alumnae's contributions run the gamut: they are dynamic keynote speakers and panelists for our programs, they are diligent recruiters for various internships and jobs who understand our students' particular strengths and interests. Additionally, alumnae are extremely forthcoming with professional advice and insight. For these reasons, along with countless others, our office decided to pilot a career-based mentoring program between current students and alumnae in the New York City area.

After conducting extensive research on existing mentoring programs, I found that most programs serve high school students or young professionals. There are far less documented programs for college students, specifically focusing on career. In a time where unemployment is high, and recent graduates are commonly jumping from job to job, there is even a greater need for college students to be certain about their career paths and have professional networks in place. For our Alumnae-to-Student Mentoring program, we saw a tremendous opportunity to provide support to our students as they explore various career paths and work towards specific goals.

Now that the program is in its 4th year, and happily light years away from the pilot stage,

I have seen the numerous ways in which students benefit from the experience, insight and guidance from their mentors. Students report having greater knowledge about their preferred industries, and a more accurate understanding of what the day-to-day aspects of particular jobs are. Some even learn that their perceptions about certain industries are false, and their mentors have helped them find careers that align better with their interests, strengths and values. Students have also indicated that they have learned to network more productively, and feel a greater sense of confidence in developing and nurturing professional relationships with those in the work world.

Much more specifically, I am pleased with the meetings and interactions between mentors and mentees. Students are visiting the workplaces of their mentors and getting introduced to additional contacts. Pairs are meeting for coffee, lunches and dinners and are attending professional conferences and meetings together. Students have also interned for their mentors, or even gone on to work for them upon graduation. Pairs also do fun things together like take yoga, attend plays and museum openings, and connect in ways that surpass career. I hope to add to the existing literature regarding mentoring programs for college students and watch the program continue to grow. #

Rachel Tannenbaum is the associate director of Barnard Career Development

KENYON COLLEGE

ELIE WIESEL: NEVER FORGET, FIGHT INDIFFERENCE



(L-R) *Matthew Winkler, Kenyon Review Trustee, Elie Wiesel & Lisa Winkler*

By **LISA K. WINKLER**

Like most children, Elie Wiesel grew up loving stories, especially horror stories that he found funny. He never imagined his writing wouldn't include those kinds of tales, that instead, his writing would portray real horror.

Expressing his gratitude for receiving the 2012 Kenyon Review Award for Literary Achievement, Wiesel, 84, described how he still feels "thirsty" for words to relay the horrors of the Holocaust.

Despite the countless volumes of literature, despite the six million copy worldwide distribution of his autobiographical first book, "Night," which recounts his experience as a prisoner in Nazi concentration camps, Wiesel worries that "what needs to be said can't be written," rendering the enemy victorious.

The Holocaust survivor, Nobel Peace Prize winner, prolific author, political activist and college professor wonders if he succeeded. "The truth is I am not sure I can consider myself a true witness. I don't have the words for my testimony," he said.

The Kenyon Review, a literary magazine founded at Kenyon College in 1939 by poet and critic John Crowe Ransom, presented the award, in its 12th year honoring writers. The proceeds from the gala dinner benefit the summer Young Writers programs.

Though I've met Holocaust survivors, have seen tattooed numbers on forearms, heard stories, and taught the Holocaust to middle school students, often using "Night" as text, meeting and listening to Wiesel brought me, and many

others in the room, to tears. I reread "Night" the day before; its impact equally as chilling as when I first read it years ago.

Born in Sighet, Romania, (then Transylvania), Wiesel and his family were removed from their home in 1944 and transported first to the Auschwitz concentration camp and then to Buchenwald. Night chronicles his experience. He was separated from his mother and sister who perished, and struggled to remain with his father, who he witnessed being beaten to death shortly before Wiesel's liberation by the U.S. Army in April 1945. Wiesel, 16, was relocated to Paris, where he studied and became a journalist.

Publishers initially rejected Wiesel's book, written in Yiddish and titled "And the World Remained Silent," saying people didn't want to read about such horrors, he said. Subsequently translated into French and English and renamed, the book's initial 3,000 copy print run took five years to sell. Wiesel concluded reaffirming his belief in literature, in how art reflects truth, even if that truth is filled with horror. He spends much of his time fighting intolerance and indifference around the world.

In his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, December 10, 1986, Wiesel said: "I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim... Whenever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must become the center of the universe." #

QUEENS COLLEGE

PRES. JAMES MUYSKENS,
QUEENS COLLEGE SPEAKS

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

It's been ten years since Dr. James L. Muyskens became the ninth president of Queens College, but the "enduring mission" that he always felt CUNY exemplified has only deepened over the years he has been at the helm of QC, and that is to provide a "first-class education for families of relatively modest means," which was the goal of the college when it was started in 1937 and the goal he pursued when he started his academic career at Hunter as a professor of philosophy, then as chair of the department and finally as acting provost. In between Hunter and Queens, Dr. Muyskens served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the state system of the University of Georgia. His two graduate degrees — a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Michigan — seem fitting because faith and a sense of ethics inform his views.

The president can certainly point to remarkable achievements that have taken place on his watch. In particular he cites the building of The Summit, the college's first residence hall, which made it possible for 500 students to live on campus 24/7 and to mingle with commuter students. The residence hall went a long way to address what the president felt was "a lack of a robust student life program." After the hall went up, attitudes changed — there was more sense of community, especially because of the completely wired environment, WIFI in lounges and study areas. With the aid of private funding, including philanthropy from successful alums, the president also saw to it that the library was refurbished, fewer stacks and more technology. Private funding also ensured that the Kupferberg Center for the performing arts got a total makeover to accommodate growing programs in theatre, dance, art history and music, including the QC Choral Society, in which the president has sung bass. The center now attracts a substantial portion of the borough's 2.5 million residents. Recently, Jerry Seinfeld (class of '76) drew big crowds, and the president is confident that a memorial tribute to Marvin Hamlisch (class of '67) that had to be cancelled because of Hurricane Sandy, will be also be a big draw. The college's evening reading programs continue to be highly popular cultural offerings, especially the series on best sellers.

Without talking partisan politics, President Muyskens makes it clear that a second Obama administration augurs well for higher education, especially in the way of stronger support of federal programs such as NSF and NIH. He also takes heart, he says, from The Department of Education's commitment to community colleges. More students are entering Queens as transfers at a time the college has raised its



President James Muyskens

admissions standards. Like other colleges in the CUNY system, Queens is working hard for "smoother transition" between community and senior colleges by way of *Pathways*, an initiative focused on having students move more efficiently and faster toward graduation by way of strengthened general education requirements. Articulation is a tough issue, the president concedes, especially as retention continues to be a matter of concern. The college needs to ensure that beginning courses are "exciting," particularly in the sciences.

Yes, money is a concern, and the college is moving to increase scholarships so that students don't drop out to work. But President Muyskens prefers to concentrate on academic reasons for dropping out, namely challenges that face underprepared transfer students. New leadership in The English Department, however, has already resulted in a rigorous Princeton-based writing program for freshmen and a reinvented Writing Intensive (the president has taught one of these — "oh the papers").

Of course, for most students, education is jobs, jobs, jobs. In this regard, the president says that Queens is well positioned. The number one major remains accounting, followed by computer science, but both programs have been enhanced. The Accounting Department recognizes that graduates should be bilingual. Corporations, the president points out, want people "who can bridge cultures." And the Computer Science Department has hired a number of young "NSF stars," Early Career Award faculty who specialize in graphic design, programming, translation and related areas. Sociology has also emerged as a hot discipline in the form of mathematics-based courses in demographics. Another popular major is neuroscience, in particular neuropsychology. Here again the president has proved himself to be actively engaged in practicing what he preaches — he's given guest lectures in this cutting edge field. Neuroscience along with bioinformatics ("a branch of biological science which deals with the study of methods for storing, retrieving and analyzing biological data") are, he says, the curricular wave of the future. The idea is not just to see that QC graduates get jobs but that they get jobs for life. #

THE ETHICS COLUMN

The Doctor Will Silence You Now

By JACOB M. APPEL, MD, JD

The Internet offers patients — both the pleased and disgruntled varieties — opportunities to evaluate physicians anonymously on Web sites like yelp.com and rate-mydoctors.com. Some doctors are less than pleased with the results. A smaller number of providers are striking back. In 2008, a patient reportedly unsatisfied with his bill wrote an on-line critique of San Francisco chiropractor Steven Biegel; Dr. Biegel responded with a libel suit. More recently, the Minnesota Supreme Court agreed to hear the case of *McKee v. Laurion*, in which Dr. McKee, a neurosurgeon, is suing the son of a former patient who posted online his opinion of the physician's bedside manner. Although the use of the Internet to offer criticism is novel, the remedy sought by these providers — lawsuits for defamation—is not new. In contrast, the pursuit of so-called "reputation management" has led some clinicians to adopt more pernicious means to silence unhappy customers: "gag contracts."

On its surface, the "gag contract" is straightforward: the patient agrees, as part of his initial understanding with the provider, that he will not comment on the physician's performance in online media. The concept appears to have been pioneered by a furniture company, Full House Appliances, which threatened contract violators with the antiquated charge of "criminal libel." Since libel is often difficult to prove, even in civil court, a company called Medical Justice has adopted a different approach to physician criticism. The firm's "Mutual Agreement to Maintain Privacy" allegedly asks — as part of their physician-patient agreement — signatories to assign the copyright on any online evaluation directly to the physician whom they are evaluating. The physician can then sue the Web site that hosts the material for publishing copyrighted material without the owner's permission — unless the site agrees to



remove the offending content. This approach is ingenious. It is also highly unethical.

The fiduciary relationship between physicians and their patients is not analogous to the commercial arrangement between furniture suppliers and their

customers. Most patients lack the bargaining power to negotiate over contract terms, a situation often exacerbated by the stress of illness and the time-constraints of medical demands. A patient needing surgery cannot reasonably be expected to "doctor shop" in search of terms that do not forbid post-operative criticism. Such contracts may well prove illegal as contrary to public policy, although the matter has yet to be addressed by any New York court. They also likely violate American Medical Association guidelines regarding the duty of physicians, barring certain extraordinary circumstances, to place patients' interests ahead of their own.

Nobody believes critics should be able to post blatantly false information about physicians on-line. Fortunately, the law already provides a remedy to remove such falsehoods — the civil litigation approach used by Dr. Biegel and Dr. McKee. In contrast, muzzling patients a priori keeps valuable information from medical consumers. The reality, according to a study published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* in 2010, is that the majority of online reviews of physicians are positive — yet more evidence that we should not allow a few thin-skinned physicians to trample on the free expression of patients. #

Jacob Appel is a resident in psychiatry and an attorney specializing in medical ethics. He has taught medical ethics at Brown University, holds a law degree from Harvard, a BA from Brown and a medical degree from Columbia University.

YALE'S NEW PRESIDENT

Yale Corporation has unanimously elected Peter Salovey to be the next president of Yale University, effective June 30, 2013.

Salovey came to Yale as a Psychology graduate student in 1981, and over the last three decades has served as chair of his academic department, as dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, as dean of Yale College, and as provost.

He is highly regarded in his field of social psychology for research on emotional intelligence and studies of effective health communications. He was awarded the DeVane Medal for Distinguished Scholarship and Teaching in Yale College in 2000.

The Fellows of the Corporation were also

impressed by his success in recruiting faculty and his ability to facilitate important academic initiatives, such as the overhaul of Yale's long-standing tenure policies.

Through his various positions, Salovey has gained experience in academic planning and strategy, faculty development, budgets, human resources, and stewardship of Yale's collections. Salovey has expressed a passion for student life, given insights into the possibilities for using technology to extend the reach of teaching and demonstrated a commitment to enhancing the quality of instruction and mentoring as well as addressing weaknesses and making improvements where necessary. #



Ann Freedman: The Gift of Art

By ERICA ANDERSON

“From the moment I stepped out of Washington University [in St. Louis] and into the art world, I gifted works of art,” said Ann Freedman, president, director and founder of FreedmanArt Gallery. “I gave to Washington University even when I had no collection,” she continued, as she sat with Education Update on the second floor of her gallery, surrounded by vibrant, colorful, abstract steel wall sculptures by famed artist Frank Stella, whom she represents.

Years later, her gifts have grown proportionally and demonstrate her strong commitment to arts education. Freedman donated \$30,000 to The Museum of Modern Art Learning Program for child and adult education. “It’s a remarkable institution that is in the heart of the Museum of Modern Art, and so they use that resource to do a lot of good in educating the public,” she said.

Wendy Woon, deputy director for education at MoMA, expressed the importance of Freedman’s gift to help restore the department’s original archives. According to Woon, “MoMA developed a wide range of innovative educational programs and resources that not only served generations of New Yorkers, but also was a model of progressive art education nationally and internationally.”

MoMA offers programs to diverse groups including children, teachers, individuals with disabilities and Alzheimer’s patients, and also makes their library and resources available to art students and scholars. Freedman’s donation celebrated her 30th year at Knoedler & Company. She chose The MoMA Learning Program because “they are dedicated to using the Museum of Modern Art’s collection almost like a laboratory for learning and for teaching,” she said.

Freedman has donated works from her personal collection to institutions including Yale University, Vassar College, The Morgan Library and Museum, The National Gallery of Art, The Jewish Museum and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

She carefully selects each piece she gives. “It’s a fit, it’s a marriage,” she explained. Create the right match, as Freedman has done so many times, and letters of gratitude from museum directors and university presidents arrive to express how meaningful the piece is to them. “That’s a thrill, when you see that your work of art makes a difference to the institution, to the leadership there.”

Freedman’s own art education as a painting major at Washington University in St. Louis led to a front-desk position immediately after college at André Emmerich Gallery in New York, and a promotion to sales a few years later. After only six years on the New York gallery scene, she became the first director of contemporary art at Knoedler & Company,



one of the nation’s oldest and most prestigious galleries. Freedman served as its president and director from 1994 to 2009.

She founded her own gallery, FreedmanArt Inc., in 2010 and represents Lee Bontecou, Frank Stella and the estate of Jules Olitski. Olitski’s work is currently on display in the gallery as part of the exhibit “Caro and Olitski: Masters of Abstraction Draw the Figure,” along with some of Anthony Caro’s life drawings.

After decades in the business, she explained why she continues to love what she does, a job she describes as difficult, complex and important. “You are educating, you’re inspiring, you are opening up people’s vision in the world of culture,” she said.

But young people hoping to have a career in the business of art should not expect to represent the big names right away; in fact, they should be prepared to start at the bottom. “I started as a receptionist,” she said. “The best thing you can do is start from the ground up.”

Yet they need not fear that the value of collecting will be extinguished before they’ve risen from the ground level. Freedman calls collecting a primary urge, second only to the human need to create: “We’re hunters, we’re gatherers, so we’re collectors,” she said. “You can’t take home the symphony or the opera or the theater or the ballet, but you can take home a work of art.”

Freedman is passionate about her work and about enabling others to learn and benefit from art. She expressed her thoughts on both the business of selling art and her personal acquisition and placing of art in other institutions: “We feel we are caregivers or caretakers of our collection — art is long and life is short. You’re not going to be around forever. The art presumably, will go on for generations.” #

MOVIE REVIEWS

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS DELIGHTS THE EYES

By JAN AARON

One of the prettiest Indian festivals is Diwali, (“Festival of Lights”) which is celebrated sometime in November. The holiday beckons Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity, who must be shown the way by little lights (traditionally candles) on houses grand and small, palaces and other buildings, and fireworks streak the skies.

This celebration opens “Festival of Lights,” written and directed by Shundell Prasad, here celebrated by a Hindu family in Guyana. As Diwali fireworks explode, Reshma, a little girl in a pink dress runs to her adoring father, Vishnu, (Jimi Mistry) who lifts her and hugs her tight. Idyllic rural vistas with palm trees and a colorful market further set a peaceful scene. However seeing violence in their neighborhood, and seeking more economic opportunities, Reshma and her mother, Meena, (Ritu Singh Panda), immigrate to join relatives in Queens. Her father is detained and jailed in Guyana for mysterious reasons.

Years later, Reshma, (Melinda Shankar) a sulen, rebellious teen, lives in suburban comfort with her now glamorous mother and Adem (Aidan Quinn), her stepfather. Reshma becomes

a troubled girl with a wild streak that results in an unwanted pregnancy, miscarriage, and a broken relationship with her mother. The script would benefit from better writing, but is right on about how today’s teens express themselves, sans the profanity.

With support and encouragement from a family friend, Ravin (Stephen Hadeed Jr.), Reshma changes her lifestyle, her look and outlook and ends up being accepted to NYU. Scenes show her touring the downtown campus with Ravin, now her fiancé. Still life is a struggle to find peace and discover what happened to her father. With her life savings, Reshma flies to Guyana and tries to reconcile with her father in jail. Her eyes well up when she sees him but he rebuffs her and she returns home.

Now a bride in a gold embroidered red sari, elaborately hennaed hands and feet, and jeweled nose ring, she sits next to her fiancé about to be married, but rises abruptly. With a turn of her head, she’s seen her father in the rear of the room. Shortly, thereafter, the couple is united by a Hindu priest. Songs and happiness pervade the premises and bright deities look benevolently at the gathering. #

New Wuthering Heights Film Astonishingly Beautiful

By JAN AARON

Like a drop in temperature on a torrid day, director Andrea Arnold’s vision of Emily Bronte’s 1847 novel “Wuthering Heights” revitalizes a film classic to enhance the story read in classrooms.

As with the most famous 1939 film version starring Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon, this new iteration deals only with the first section of the book, concentrating on the all-consuming relationship between Heathcliff and Cathy. But similarities end there.

The film’s originality includes casting virtual unknowns in the leading roles and a screenplay Arnold co-wrote with Olivia Hetreed that sounds a bit too up-to-date when its angry Heathcliff spews contemporary four-letter epithets. The story is told mainly from the perspective of the book’s brooding anti-hero, Heathcliff. Here, a black child, with slave branding on his back instead of Bronte’s “dark-skinned gypsy in aspect,” he’s played as a teen by Solomon Glave and as a young man in his twenties by James Howson.

The story begins with Heathcliff’s arrival at a typical Yorkshire farmhouse where, rescued from the Liverpool streets by Wuthering Heights owner, Mr. Earnshaw, (Paul Hilton) he’s taken home and treated like a brother to Cathy (Shannon Beer young Cathy; older played by Kaya Scodelario) and Hindley (Lee Shaw).



Solomon Glave and Shannon Beer

Heathcliff and Cathy grow close, chasing each other across the moors, tumbling in the mud, stuffing food into each other’s mouths. Here the hand-held camera captures the haunting minutiae of the rural landscape with such details as golden moths, a lone grasshopper on a long leaf with a single drop of water, and bright beetles in wild windswept surroundings.

When Earnshaw dies, Hindley orders Heathcliff to sleep with the animals and treats him like a despised servant. Cathy is married off to the well meaning but meek Edgar Linton (James Northcote) and Heathcliff flees, returning six months later, having made his fortune. Still obsessed with Cathy, he finds her at Thrushcross Grange. When they meet, to show their still-strong bond, cinematographer Robbie Ryan, bathes them in glowing light. #

Reform for NYC Special Education: The Thirteenth Labor of Hercules

By MARK ALTER & JAY GOTTLIEB

Calls for reform of the special education system in New York City public schools are not new. Despite the vast amount of money spent and the many educational and administrative reforms that have been implemented, special education in New York City is still underperforming. The clearest evidence for this is that a new reform has just been implemented, and although the number of students with disabilities who participate in state assessments has increased markedly, by about 25%, the percentage of students achieving state standard has only increased from about 5.7 percent to 7.2 percent between school year 2005-06 and school year 2010-2011 on the 8th grade ELA assessment. This percentage of students achieving state standard is not very different from the percentage of special education students who read at grade level in the early 1990s, before the era of high standards and accountability, when about 4 percent read on grade level.

The question that needed to be addressed before implementing the current reform is why the New York City educational system, despite several reforms during the past 25 years, continues to produce limited results for students with disabilities. There has been general agreement in prior critical reports about what should be done to reform special education, and the Department of Education has adopted many of those recommendations, including major ones such as unifying general and special education and educating more students with disabilities in the general education classroom. But the DOE has introduced many of these reforms in incomplete ways.

The reasons this reform may not produce the anticipated results is because: 1) they were implemented with inadequate planning without involving critical players, 2) there was inconsistent and poorly conceived professional development opportunities for supervisors, teachers, related service providers and parents before and after implementation, 3) DOE implemented reforms hastily and without evidence to guide it, and 4) the reform was conducted on an unrealistically large scale without any plan to provide independent formative evaluation of implementation practices or summative (outcome) evaluations of the effects. Simply put, the ideas and passion to provide all students with a sound basic education were evident in the reforms, but sound implementation practices were not.

We illustrate some of the implementation shortcomings with recommendations from three nuclear areas in special education: instruction, supervision, and parent involvement. These three areas are universally recognized as critical foundations for any educational reform effort.

Recommendation No. 1: Require all teachers to demonstrate standards-based proficiency at completion of professional development

programs. Continuous, ongoing professional development and intensive mentoring should be provided to all teachers as a matter of course.

Recommendation No. 2: Professional development for new and existing principals must be upgraded. Attention should be directed toward the nexus of instructional, behavior management and clinical practices that have been empirically demonstrated to impact instruction and achievement.

Recommendation No. 3: Encourage effective and accountable parent/family and school collaborations to enhance students' academic and social performance.

Recommendation No. 4: DOE should establish small research units in each Network/Region/Borough to conduct proactive investigations into best school-based practices.

The field of special education needs substantial improvement in the way it currently operates, not only in New York City, but also nationally. Research, evaluation and demonstration projects are urgently needed to inform all aspects of special education practice. Fifty years ago, the New York City Board of Education was a national leader in conducting educational research to inform its practice. Today, educational research has been severely downsized, reduced to having staff scour literature for scraps of information that conceivably might be applicable for urgently needed reforms. Systematic data collection is currently confined to federal and state compliance mandates, not to best practices. A multi-billion dollar business is being operated without R&D about its core product, effective special educational practice.

Reform and additional resources alone will not solve the problems in special education that have festered for so many years. Real solutions must be multi-faceted and address a broad spectrum of issues, including political, governance, school finance, state aid and public relations. Our experience with educational issues has led us to conclude that sufficient time, planning, parent involvement, and continuity in leadership and professional development are important resources for upgrading special education.

School professionals work long and hard to provide a sound education for all students, and the need for carefully crafted, ongoing R&D is the last thing a school district wants to hear, or believe, will help. We, on the other hand, believe there is no alternative. Patchwork and piecemeal efforts have been used for the past 40 years, and the same issues persist. The challenge is to establish a meaningful and workable research agenda, tailored to local schools and targeted to a few key variables. The mechanics of creating the agenda and the resources to support it should be relatively simple. The politics of establishing this agenda will undoubtedly be far more formidable. #

Mark Alter and Jay Gottlieb are Professors of Educational Psychology at NYU.

THE DEAN'S COLUMN: MERCY COLLEGE

BE AWARE OF DECEPTIVE TRANSACTIONS



By ALFRED POSAMENTIER, Ph.D.

There are times when our intuition plays "games" with us. Where we feel that everything is right and, in fact, it is not. Let's consider some of these instances — not to frustrate you but just to make you more aware of the importance of looking at a situation with a modicum of mathematical sophistication.

Suppose you had a job where you received a 10 percent raise. Because business was falling off, the boss was soon forced to give you a 10 percent cut in salary. Will you be back to your starting salary? The answer is a resounding (and very surprising) NO!

This little story is quite disconcerting, since one would expect that with the same percent increase and decrease your should be where you started from. This is intuitive thinking, but wrong. Convince yourself of this by choosing a specific amount of money and trying to follow the instructions.

Begin with \$100. Calculate a 10 percent increase on the \$100 to get \$110. Now take a 10 percent decrease of this \$110 to get \$99 - \$1 less than the beginning amount.

You may wonder if the result would have been different if we first calculated the 10 percent decrease and then the 10 percent increase. Using the same \$100 basis, we first calculate a 10 percent decrease to get \$90. Then the 10 percent increase yields \$99, the same as before. So order makes no difference.

A similar situation can be faced by a gambler, that is, one that is deceptively misleading. Consider the following situation. You may want to even simulate it with a friend to see if your intuition bears out.

You are offered a chance to play a game.

The rules are simple. There are 100 cards, face down: 55 of the cards say "win" and 45 of the cards say "lose." You begin with a bankroll of \$10,000. You must bet one half of your money on each card turned over, and you either win or lose that amount based on what the card says. At the end of the game, all cards have been turned over. How much money do you have at the end of the game?

The same principle as above applies here. It is obvious that you will win ten times more than you will lose, so it appears that you will end with more than \$10,000. What is obvious is often wrong and this is a good example. Let's say that you win on the first card and you now have \$15,000. Now you lose on the second card, you now have \$7,500. If you had first lost and then won, you would still have \$7,500. So every time you win one and lose one, you lose one fourth of your money. So you end up with $10,000 \times (3/4)^{45} \times (3/2)^{10}$.

This is \$1.38 when rounded off. Surprised? (N.B. The result can also be calculated in the following way: $10,000 \times (1/2)^{55} \times (1/2)^{45}$)

Before you are left too frustrated, consider the following: You enter a bookshop and buy a book for \$10. You give the clerk a \$10 bill and he hands you the book. You reenter the store displeased with your selection of the book, so you return the book to the clerk and in turn select a \$20 book and walk out of the store, without any further payment. Is that correct? After all, the clerk has your original \$10 and has the \$10 book back, while in turn you have the \$20 book. Is this a mistake? Surely you can sort this out! Good luck! #

Alfred Posamentier, Ph.D. is the Dean of Education at Mercy College and the author of numerous books and articles on mathematics.

YOUNG WRITERS

Book Review: The Book Thief**Joshua Rabinowitz****REVIEWED By JOSHUA RABINOWITZ**

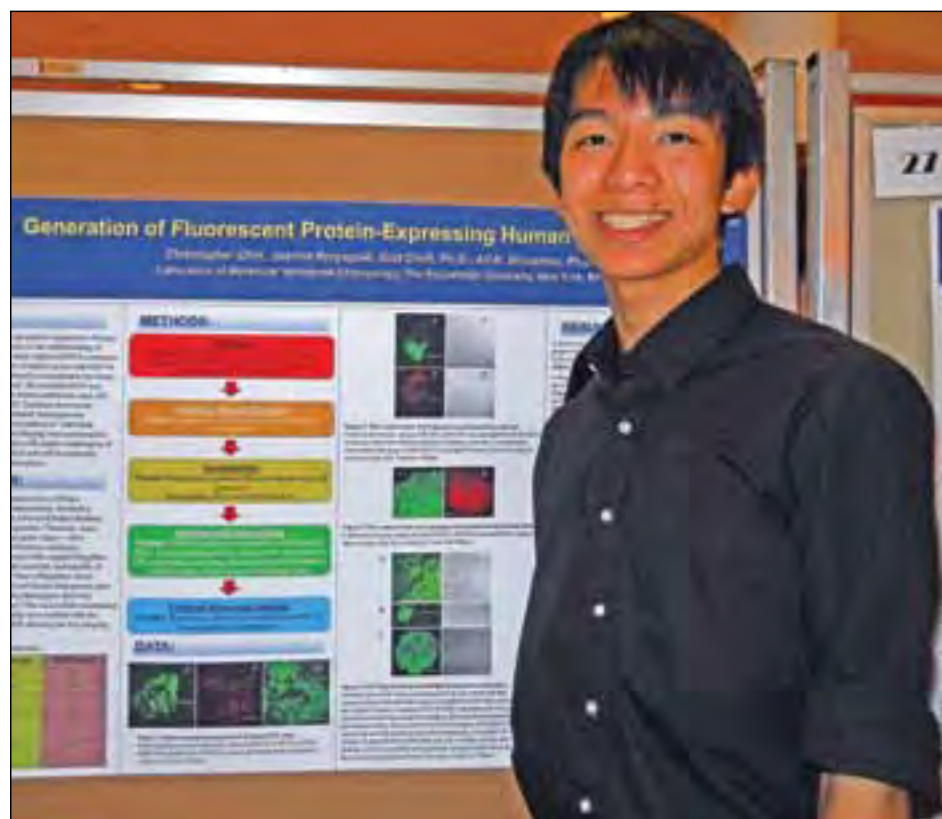
Of the books I read this summer *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak was my favorite. It took place in Nazi Germany and it's about a girl named Liesel who travels to Molching to live with her new foster parents. During the train ride to Molching they had stopped to bury her brother who had died on the train. After he was buried Liesel steals her first book: *The Grave Digger's Handbook*. She starts stealing books and learning how to read and write with lessons from her foster dad, who himself doesn't know how to read and write that well. One day a Jew named Max, whose father had saved Liesel's foster dad in World War I, asks for Liesel's family to hide him in a time when it was dangerous to hide Jews. Eventually, he is taken away to a concentration camp, and Liesel's foster dad is forced to serve in the military for hiding a Jew. At the end of the book Molching is bombed by the Allies and Liesel is the sole survivor.

Liesel was a very interesting character because in most of the book her life is sad, her brother died, she never saw her mother again after she was given to her foster parents, and her foster parents die in the bombing of Molching by the Allies, but she made the best of life and carried on. What's also interesting about Liesel is she taught herself to read and write with minimum resources and help.

My favorite part of the book was at the end after the Allies had bombed Molching. That was my favorite part because it was very emotional and I felt sympathy for Liesel. Also, you get to see Liesel's feelings for Rudy, her best friend who had been asking Liesel to kiss him all the time and she said no, but now that he's dead she kisses him and you get to see she loved him.

It was a really good book. This is because it was well written and it was balanced in action and drama. Also, it was a page-turner and all you wanted to do was continue to read it. Lastly, what makes this book extraordinary was it was narrated by Death in a fascinating and interesting way because it gave you a view of Death as tired and sick of his job. I would recommend this book to young adults because it's very interesting and a good read. #

Joshua Rabinowitz is eleven years old and lives in Potomac, Maryland. He is currently a sixth grade student at Robert Frost Middle School in Rockville, Maryland. The Principal of Frost MS tells his students "you are some of the best students on the planet" and encourages them to "experience excellence," which is the school's motto. Josh is an avid reader. He particularly enjoys reading about all periods of History and historical based novels such as The Book Thief.

High School Senior Tackles Research, College Applications**Christopher Chin****By CHRISTOPHER CHIN**

It was truly a privilege and honor for me to be a participant in the Rockefeller University Science Outreach Program this summer of 2012. This program offers high school students, like me, the opportunity to step into the shoes of a researcher for seven weeks. As the expectations were high and the mentors we worked with were at the forefront of pioneering discoveries in science, the prerequisite for any participant in the program was a drive to succeed, to learn, to discover.

With previous experience at Weill Cornell working with hematopoietic stem cells, I was placed into Dr. Brivanlou's human embryonic stem cell lab at Rockefeller University. I am proud to have generated two, new fluorescent protein-expressing human stem cell lines that will eventually be used, for example, in xenotransplantation assays. In these assays, stem cells are differentiated, transplanted into a live animal host, and tracked via the fluorescent proteins they express.

As a scientific researcher, I am faced with problems that are investigated over an extended time frame. As a senior in high school, however, I am faced with a college process that must be completed within the next few months. Despite the stress of writing draft after draft of common application and supplemental essays, "college" is a positive word significant of the opportunity to realize my

aspirations for scientific pursuits. I hope to employ my knowledge and experience with stem cells at the university level, making use of the plethora of resources this setting has to offer.

Due to my interest in research programs in this niche, I have become especially interested in applying to colleges that have research laboratories and principal investigators of exceptional caliber. For me, it has been helpful speaking and corresponding with alumni at the universities I am interested in, as their perception allows me to envision myself as a member of their respective institutions.

My nearly weekly meetings with my counselor also help to alleviate a lot of the stress inherent in the application process. His receptivity to learn about who I am and readiness to address all those relevant matters as they come up are always much appreciated.

Throughout the college process, talking to my counselor, writing my essays and learning more about my prospective colleges have also given me valuable insight into who I am as a person. I am a strong advocate of hard work, meticulous organization, and planning ahead. Pursuing my college dreams while remaining a good student in school is important to me, and I hope to carry the values that kept me on track into college and adulthood. #

Christopher Chin is a senior at Hunter College High School in Manhattan.



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Uganda: Teaching the Arts Through Puppetry

By CAROL STERLING

Sweaty workmen in cement-covered shoes and pants, young men hawking goods and women selling fruit from baskets on their heads, sad-eyed children and desperate women carrying babies begging on the dusty streets.... and suddenly, a flock of spirited schoolchildren in proper school uniforms giggling. This last image coupled with the joy of working with my new undergraduate and graduate students makes my heart swell with hope for these warm, friendly, soft-spoken and most gracious Ugandan people. The images keep coming each time I recall memories of the past two weeks.

I am struck by the chasm between the haves and have-nots; by the decrepit condition of campus buildings, no materials or supplies for students, dusty roads with potholes that look like craters and classrooms that accommodate 100 at a shot. The salaries most people earn in even professional jobs is horrendous. For example, the salary the PhD colleague I am working with (and she has it from T.C. at Columbia University) is a whopping \$2,400.00 for the year. Yes, you read that correctly; it's not a typo. Plus, she and her lovely husband, George, have four kids, plus responsibility for supporting the "old folks," (probably my age!) and some nieces and nephews whose parents died because of HIV/AIDS. Although the cost of living is cheaper here, it's not that much cheaper. You get it now. Add to that the most outrageous and dangerous traffic (no one pays any attention to traffic rules; scooters (primary transport for people) ride on the sidewalks and it took me ten minutes to cross the street the other day). And, theft, yikes. One does not wear any jewelry and I wear a fanny pack with necessities. This is one poor country. And the newspapers attest to corruption that is beyond belief. I attended a meeting with a colleague at the US Embassy on Friday and while there, we were summoned by the Ambassador advising everyone to go home immediately because there was talk of an anti-American protest (related to the offensive film made by an American, that you all know about by now.) Since I was teaching that afternoon on campus, I did not think I was in jeopardy. And yet....

I like to believe that I see a brighter future for these wonderful people when I observe the students on campus walking to and from classes, holding each others arms in affection, and speaking animatedly in their native language (Luganda). The interaction with my students is different than in the US (mostly they have had a formal British education where the teacher lectures and "talks at them" and never asks the students to respond to a question publicly). So, you can just imagine the curious looks I have received from my students when I pose questions and expect answers to the entire group. As I swing into the



Carol Sterling

PUPPETS IN UGANDA

The College of Education and External Studies in Uganda celebrated the 50th anniversary of Uganda's Independence with a parade of two giant puppets that depict historical personalities: Sir Edward Mutesa II, the first President of Uganda, and Dr. Milton Obote, the first Prime Minister.

The puppets were designed and created by School of Education students Ruth Okello Augum, Pamela Agony, Robert Odongo, and Asumpter Tibanagwa in a special class in the Department of Foundations and Curriculum Studies taught by visiting Fulbright Program Specialist, Carol Sterling from New York City. Sterling, a professional educational puppeteer, is in residence at Makerere University for approximately two months.

The aim of the educational puppetry project is to motivate students to become more intellectually and artistically engaged as learners. By focusing on the history of the two leaders in Uganda, the students researched information about each man's contributions to his country by reading books and articles. They employed critical thinking and problem solving skills while working as a cohesive team. Their perseverance and unstinting commitment to the project with its tight time lines simulated personal and professional qualities needed in the workplace where punctuality, accountability, high standards as well as respect and cooperation with others are essential skills for the 21st-century workforce.#

third week of teaching, I hope that the curiosity about this (ahem) "mature" American lady with the happy troupe of puppets will result in increased interaction over the duration my residency as a Fulbright Program Specialist. Certainly when I do the puppet building and then play acting activities, they giggle and chirp with enthusiasm like every other group I have taught over the years.

My schedule is intense; I am working my little tail off and the Internet is not always as accessible as it might be, so the combination of the two means you may not hear from

me as often as I would like to be in contact with each of you. (Evidently they ration the electricity by neighborhood and that explains the Internet conundrum.) I am fortunate to be staying at the Makerere University Guest House with fascinating people from the U.K., Scandinavian countries, Canada, Australia and beyond. Each person is doing different research and/or projects and many relate to the sciences, e.g., study of tropical diseases and health related conditions--- child mortality, TB, HIV/AIDS, malaria, etc. Some are involved with partnerships with Makerere

University and their home institutions, related to engineering, geophysics, oil, etc.

I met a Barnard alumna who is doing post-doctoral research in chemistry as related to immunology. She is a student at UC, Berkeley. Being at the university guest house is a perfect place to be housed since everyone is here for a short stint and eager to make friends, even though it may only be for a few days.

Since my teaching schedule is full, I have not had a chance to do much sightseeing. Once I settle into a predictable routine, I hope to do more. But I did take two side trips: I hired a driver to take me to see villages and towns that are typical of the communities my students are from or would likely get jobs in after they graduate. The people in these places probably live off of the land. You see people walking along the dusty roads (usually there is no electricity), carrying water buckets and other food or supplies on their heads, or strapping them to their bicycles. And, typically, many of the children doing the carrying are barefoot.

I also went to a Chimpanzee Orphanage and Rescue Wildlife Center (I think Jane Goodall is affiliated with it) in Entebbe to see 40+ chimpanzees in a protected environment. Getting there was via motor boat on Lake Victoria, the second largest fresh water lake on the planet. Learned a lot about chimps and how smart they are. You could tell they were because as soon as they were fed they took off for a siesta in the woods so they wouldn't have we tourists staring at them like they were "monkeys in a cage."

Carol Sterling, a graduate of Barnard College, has served in leadership positions as an arts educator and advocate for arts in the public schools for fifty years plus. Selected former positions include: Founding Director of the Arts Partners Program for the NYC Department of Education; Director of Education for American Council for the Arts; Director of Arts in Education for Brooklyn Arts Council; etc. She has taught elementary through high school art as well as served as an adjunct faculty member at NYC metropolitan area colleges and universities. She has served as President of UNIMA-USA (International organization of American Puppeteers), and traveled extensively as an arts educator and educational puppeteer and taught in U.K., Japan, Germany, Israel and Uganda.

Carol is currently serving as a Fulbright Program Specialist at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. She is working with undergraduate and graduate students in the department of education and sharing educational puppetry techniques to strengthen student learning in pre-school, elementary and secondary levels. While in Uganda, she will also conduct workshops in schools, and do field visits to train teachers in selected towns and villages.



Teachers College Press Authors Offer Hope for Transforming Education

BY MERRI ROSENBERG

Beleaguered teachers, principals, and educational administrators found balm for their professional souls in a panel discussion on “Professional Capital: A Conversation About ‘Transforming Teaching in Every School’” at Teachers College (TC) recently. Organized by Carole Saltz, Director of Teachers College Press, in conjunction with the offices of Development and External Affairs at Teachers College, and moderated by Teachers College President Susan Fuhrman, the evening featured the authors of the Teachers College Press book, *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*, Andy Hargreaves, Thomas More Brennan Chair of the Lynch School of Education, Boston College, and Michael Fullan, Professor Emeritus at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. They spoke on a panel that included Mary Arevalo, an AFT/UFT teacher leader; Lucy Calkins, Robinson Professor in Children’s Literature at TC, and Warren Simmons, executive director of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Brown University.

Hargreaves and Fullan didn’t pull any punches in their powerful presentation, based on the research from their recently published book.

“There’s the business capital view of teaching and education,” said Andy Hargreaves, “where the primary purpose is to yield short-term returns and immediate profits; that’s charter schools, charter school networks, moving from the public sector to the private sector. It’s using schools as markets for technology, for moving products, where we’re mortgaging the long-term future, our children.”

In sharp contrast to the business capital of teaching, which is “driven by certain assumptions—that teaching is technically simple, that you can train for it short term, that it can be driven by data and numbers, and teachers are seen as increasingly replaceable by technology,” said Hargreaves, the reality is that “teaching isn’t easy. It’s hard. It requires long periods of training, perfected over many years, involves wise judgment as well as hard evidence, and is collective, not individual accomplishment.”

For Michael Fullan, the discussion about human and social capital needs to consider teaching within the context of an overall system, one that values teachers as professionals and provides the means for teachers to connect with one another. As he explained, “The core of teaching is to improve numeracy and literacy, to improve high school graduation rates. It’s about continuously improving; it’s not an autonomous profession.”

This means, Fullan urged, that successful human capital for teachers involves “trust, collaboration, collective responsibility, mutual assistance, and a professional network.” He pointed out that those countries that are success-



President Susan Fuhrman



(L-R) Michael Fullan, Carole Saltz & Andy Hargreaves

ful in their education systems, like Singapore and Finland, value teachers as professionals in ways that the United States doesn’t.

The discussion was a resounding rebuke to the prevailing narrative, as panelist Warren Simmons suggested that “There are bad teachers, bad schools, and existing professional capital is inadequate to the task.” He added, “people in local communities need to construct a new narrative quickly.”

Lucy Calkins said that she “bought 250 copies of the book and gave it to all the principals I meet with. It’s one of the most important books I could give to leaders and superinten-

dents.” She also gave it to her students, most of whom are teachers in their 3rd to 5th year in the profession.

As Calkins noted, “These teachers would love to have the chance to lead other teachers, but don’t know how. It’s not easy for teachers to come out of their classrooms.”

Moderator Fuhrman challenged the authors by asking, “The system is geared in a totally different way. Where do you start [to change]?” As Fullan explained, “This gives coherent ammunition to those people who want to fight against the wrong agenda. We want to fight business capital with strong evidence.”

IN A CONVERSATION FOLLOWING THE PANEL DISCUSSION, EDUCATION UPDATE’S PUBLISHER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, DR. POLA ROSEN, CONTINUED AN EXPLORATION OF THE ARGUMENTS RAISED:

Pola Rosen: My question is who will write the narrative; who will verbalize the new narrative?

Michael Fullan: We want policymakers: The policymakers that I’m interacting with could write the narrative I’m talking about. We need educational people [professionals] like ourselves providing some articulation, we need teacher-leaders who, like those around this room, are doing this work; they can tell the story, but we really need people who are in a position—like secretaries of education, or presidents for that matter, or governors, or state commissioners who are really going to take up this way of approaching it.

I’ve reduced my expectation from federal government. We’re working in different states, and it’s at the state leadership [level] that we’re going to make a difference.

Pola Rosen: And who will implement those new narratives?

Michael Fullan: If we can get leaders, state commissioners—this is where the power is now, at the state level, not the federal level.

Pola Rosen to Andy Hargreaves: It just takes a few good people to change the world, according to Margaret Mead. Ibsen, in *An Enemy of the People*, shows the undermining of positive scientific data by politics and economics. Who will write the narrative and how will you implement it?

Andy Hargreaves: The narrative has to be written by people who understand the people who do the work, by the public who give their children the work. If you build a critical mass of people who understand the profession of teaching and also where it needs to move, then it is the public who vote. In the end, it is the public who shift the agenda. So this means, things can and do change, and Margaret Mead is right, and it affects everyone. And it means that we as a profession have to be outward and not inward in engaging the public, not just parents, but all the public, in the work that we do by how we communicate, how we involve volunteers in the school, how we create jobs for people in the school as well as the jobs of teachers. #

The authors are firmly on the side of standing up for teachers. “If we don’t have the narrative ourselves, how on earth can we counter ungenerous narratives?” said Hargreaves. “Teachers should be dynamos of educational change.”

For Professor Warren Simmons, a key issue was restoring the local voice. “I would say we need to organize ourselves locally,” said Simmons. “Many of the urban communities aren’t even aware of the underlying values that are being used to inform the systems that serve their children.” Fullan also urged the audience to consider this approach.

“I want to go back to one of our guidelines throughout the book, which is: If you want to change the group, use the group to change the group,” he said. “One of the power bases, not the only one, is at the level of teachers, of building up their relationship. Even with parents in the community, we have found that when you build up the teaching profession, they’re more likely to see the community as partners than as the source of problems, because they’re more professional. They have a greater sense of connection made, and they start to reach out more and go out to the communities. So, I do think that the essence of the teaching profession is at stake here.”

Fullan continued: “Just a footnote on technology: it’s quite easy for technology to end up replacing teachers, and we will lose a very important piece of this. We have to figure out with new technology that this is a new opportunity among teachers and among students to change the nature of learning. That is a new opportunity that could go either way.”

Underlying the entire conversation was a sense that teachers needed to reclaim their professionalism. “What we do is tap into the motivation and energy of those who came into the profession,” said Fullan. “It’s a political struggle, not an evidence struggle. There’s a lot of appetite for the line of thinking of teachers working together. We want to influence the next generation of leaders.” #

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

AIFL's YASE Program Promotes Bi-Cultural Education, Understanding

By MAXINE DOVERE

The Youth Ambassadors' Student Exchange program (YASE) is a cultural exchange program sponsored by the America-Israel Friendship League (AIFL). The program exemplifies the parent organization's focus on binational cooperation, education and cultural understanding.

Dr. Charlotte Frank is chair of the executive committee of the AIFL. Thirty-five years ago, during her tenure with the New York City public school system, she helped implement the binational exchange program that was the predecessor of the YASE curriculum. Working closely with Dr. Frank J. Macchiarola, who was New York City School Chancellor at the time, she developed the curriculum so that Americans could see the real Israel and recognize the positives of life in the Jewish state.

"The original curriculum was created to tell the New York community what Israel is all about and make the Israelis more aware of who Americans really are," said Dr. Frank. YASE is modeled on that binational curriculum and is now the only public secondary school exchange between Israel and the United States that works in partnership with the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the Israel Youth Exchange Council.

AIFL initiated the YASE program in 1977. To date, more than 5,000 American and Israeli students have met one another, lived in each other's homes, attended each other's classes and traveled together in the United States and Israel during the month-long program.

As the program expanded beyond the city



YASE alumni Stephanie with Dr. Charlotte Frank

boundaries, it became clear that educational decision makers needed to know more about the realities of Israel. In response, the AIFL developed a program for school superintendents and school board presidents to help them really know Israel and meet with their Israeli



peers. "They have to see Israel," said Frank.

The educational professionals learned that Israel is not only safe but historically significant. They were then able to pass that information on to parents who might have been wary about letting their children take part in the program.

The

2012 American delegations come from New York City, Virginia and Oklahoma. The Israeli students are from Rishon LeZion, the Haifa area, Modiin and HaKfar HaYarok. One of the Israeli delegations arrived in New York just before Hurricane Sandy. Sigal Greenfeld Middelman, of Rishon LeZion, Israel, is the chaperone for that group of 17 and 18 year old students. Their hosts were in Staten Island and Brooklyn.

Then, Hurricane Sandy began to blow. For the YASE kids - and everyone else in New York — the storm became

the dictator. The Israeli and American kids had an experience neither they — nor anyone else in the New York area — will soon forget. Sigal recalls the panic of some of the Israeli parents. "The kids needed to stay calm, and I needed to assure their parents they were safe. "Thankfully," said Greenfeld Middelman, "we had Elaine, our Yiddish mama. We needed the hug she gave us so much. She is amazing."

Elaine Goldberg initially traveled to Israel when she was 16, which led to her close participation with all subsequent delegations of the AIFL. She is a former superintendent of the New York City school system and later was a member of an AIFL Superintendents' Delegation. She works closely with Dr. Frank on the Executive Committee of the AIFL.

Students from around the country met in Washington, D.C. From the Halls of Congress to the Smithsonian Museums to the Holocaust Memorial Museum to the quiet solitude of America's war memorials, interspersed with intense study and meetings with experts, the kids bonded together.

Kenneth Bialkin, Chairman of the America Israel Friendship League, greeted the delegates at their gala luncheon. He spoke to the young people about the special responsibilities and shared dreams of democracy and of the communal interests of the United States and Israel.

"We've gotten to know people we would ordinarily never meet," said a West Virginia teenager. Another student said that the lessons she learned about teamwork, friendship and getting along will stay in her heart forever. #

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Hunter College and Yo-Yo Ma: Making Beautiful Music Together



(L-R): Damian Woetzel, Pres. Jennifer Raab, Sonny Malick, Yo-Yo Ma, Shaheen Malick

By DR. POLA ROSEN

The cello and Yo-Yo Ma are interchangeable words: each evokes an image of the other. Many believe that an artist connects to society. There is no better exemplar of the citizen artist than Yo-Yo Ma. He believes you can turn the worst schools around through the arts and has linked up with schools on his Silk Road Connection Program meshing with 6th grade academic curriculum. Music enhances all curriculum studies he believes. "The purpose of learning" he continued "is to make it memorable." Take PS 161 and teacher Carla Espana. They had the children write "What Makes Me Unique" and Yo-Yo Ma played music to the

poem. The last line of the poem was: "We are unique, We imagine, Do you?"

According to the cellist, "wonder" is the beginning of inquiry. Before playing Bach's Saraband, he said he just discovered that Bedouin women danced to this piece in the Middle Ages.

Welcomed to Hunter College by President Jennifer Raab, Yo-Yo Ma performed in the Danny Kaye Playhouse and played Gershwin's Prelude #1. The incredible intense absorption of his face and entire body, eyes closed, were clearly an extension of his instrument and music. The heavenly music truly evoked an image of the music of the spheres. #

SPORTS

QUEENS COLLEGE WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM IN PLAYOFFS

By RICHARD KAGAN

With one regular season game remaining for the women's soccer team, the Knights of Queens College know they are in the East Coast Conference Soccer playoffs. Led by Allison Breakey, 21, senior captain and starting goalie, The Knights seek to capture the elusive tournament crown and advance to the Nationals in Division II women's soccer.

Queens College sports a 9-3-4 (4-1-2) record, and if the team wins the last game against New York Institute of Technology, the team will have some momentum as it prepares for the conference playoffs and have a solid seed in the upcoming East Coast Conference tournament.

Head coach Carl Christian, who also coaches the men's soccer squad, has been able to coach a team with nine new players out of 22 in a competitive conference. Breakey, one of five seniors on the Knights, is one of the top goalies in the league. The Knights recently battled C.W. Post to a 1-1 tie in double overtime.

The Knights scored the first goal by Janine

Guerra, but Post came back to even up the game and Breakey did a fine job in holding off one of the best teams in the conference. "We all played together as a team," Breakey said. The Knights may face C.W. Post again in the playoffs. "It's my last shot at it," Breakey said.

Breakey, who is majoring in nutrition and exercise science, is planning on going to graduate school to earn her Ph.D. in physical therapy. But for now, her goals are to end the season with a great finish.

The Knights have played well this season, with only one conference loss. Post is currently undefeated. Two years ago, Queens College played them in the conference finals but lost in overtime. Breakey remembers that game and said she'd like to end her senior year with a win over them.

Senior Lorena Russi is also a scoring threat. Erika Riera, a Francis Lewis High School graduate, has made a strong effort this season, Christian said.

Christian seems to love the game and is

MOVIE REVIEW

'DON'T BACK DOWN'

By GILLIAN GRANOFF

The recently released film "Don't Back Down" gives a window into current issues in education amidst the fictional story of two mothers' passionate fight to change the policies in one underperforming Philadelphia public school.

Maggie Gyllenhaal plays a determined, idealistic and boisterous single mother who struggles to balance her job responsibilities with her need to protect her daughter, who has dyslexia, from the bullying and neglect she faces at school.

After their children are excluded by lottery from their choice school, Jamie Fitzpatrick (Gyllenhaal) and Nona Alberts (Viola Davis) embark on a passionate crusade to fight the inadequate conditions their children encounter and get them the education they deserve.

Faced with no support from the school principal, administrators and school board, Fitzpatrick stages a full campaign to rally the support of other parents and teachers. She hears about the fail-safe law, which gives parents and teachers the opportunity to start a new school if their proposal is approved by the district. They set out to design a new paradigm for schools that would involve more staff participation in the classroom and to change the culture of the school.

Throughout this public struggle, both mothers try to help their children overcome their disabilities and force the schools to provide greater resources and raise performance expectations for all students.

Alberts's actions start to stir up resentment amongst her fellow teachers who see her efforts

to change school policies as a direct risk to their jobs. They earn a hearing with the school board but Alberts's crusade causes the school principal to terminate her position. Even as she is threatened with arrest, Alberts continues to recruit more teachers to join her mission.

At the hearing, their proposal is at first denied, but ultimately the mothers triumph.

Within the fictional landscape, the film provides an inspiring picture of the heroic impact that idealism can have when individuals are willing to fight for the needs of students and bravely challenge the status quo.

The film's story, though heartwarming, also touches on many controversial and relevant issues in education reform, including the role of unions in protecting the rights of their workers and tenured teachers and their opposition to placing new teachers in schools.

The most compelling idea raised by the film is how the current school climate has forced voters, parents and administrators to choose between the needs and rights of teachers versus those of the students. Tenured teachers with little desire to teach may pass students without merit and ultimately fail to provide students with an appropriate education. At the same time, a lack of job security for those who are devoted to teaching discourages the risk-taking that is sometimes necessary to improve the system.

By pitting the needs of students against the needs of teachers to retain their jobs, the film highlights a crucial conflict in education. Teaching today is inured in a climate of competition and adversarial relationships between students and teachers. #



Allison Breakey, Captain

encouraging to his players. "Carl is a great coach on field and off the field," Breakey said. "He wants to help us in life."

Christian pointed out that the team was given a student-athlete academic team award in 2011 from the National Soccer Coaches Association of America for having an average of at least 3.0

GPA. He says the team should receive another award for having a 3.322 GPA.

Christian said that the Knights have some regular starters, but everyone on the team is liable to see some play. Team chemistry is a key reason for some of the success this year, he said. #

High School Students Make Old Computers New

By RICH MONETTI

A few months ago, I was alerted to a workshop run by several Mahopac, N.Y. high school students that were taking old, slow-running computers and refitting them. My PC similarly delayed, I made my way to the Mahopac Library for an upgrade.

The elixir turned out to be a fully functional operating system called Puppy Linux. "It's small and easy to use — not even taking up a gig," said team member Glenda Clarizio.

I made no attempt to understand and surrendered my USB port and CPU to these whiz kids. Fiona Chin, who initiated the project, did the honors — and for free.

Of course, I knew the unlikely miracle promised meant enduring many difficulties. That said, Chin handled all setbacks like a pro.

She attempted to incorporate the new operating system onto my hard drive but my temperamental PC would not comply, proving that one should never believe in miracles.

But I should have put more faith in Chin's calm. Overriding my Gateway's gremlins, she

superimposed Linux on my USB and I was only a boot-up away from a faster PC.

Curious, I inquired on the endeavor's origin. Money saved for the computer needy certainly, but it was outrage over the dumping of e-waste on developing countries that sparked the students to take action. Referring to a Frontline report, Chin learned of an entire Chinese community designated solely to storing the dangerous refuse with children collecting the valuable material for money. So the less waste discarded via refitted computers, the better for everyone.

That doesn't mean these three were above having some fun. "She's a pretty nice boss," said Kyle Napolitano coyly, but he was quickly reminded of his place.

"Sometimes, I have to crack down," joked Chin.

Of course, a good laugh doesn't translate for me — especially when it's my computer that always has the last laugh. I expected the worst.

At home, I booted up and miraculously the Linux screen appeared. Hallelujah, my new operating system had me back in the 21st century. #

INFORMAL SCIENCE EDUCATION AT THE WATER'S EDGE

By MERRYL KAFKA, Ed.D.

"Get out there and explore!" as Miss Frizzle from the Magic School Bus says, and what better way than to investigate the mighty Hudson River — its denizens and the ecology of this 315 mile-long river that originates in the Adirondacks and runs down to the Battery of New York City. It also "runs up," which is why the Native Americans referred to it as Muhheakan, meaning river that flows two ways. Visit the River Project and find out about this and other fun facts of the New York Harbor.

The River Project, a not-for-profit organization, is a marine science field station dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Hudson River ecosystem through scientific research and hands-on environmental education for all ages and grade levels.

Some examples of their research include:

- Fish Ecology: Committed to improving the ecological environment for fishes, The River Project has been conducting the fish monitoring for 23 years. After moving to Pier 40, 23 fish traps have been established along the north side of Pier 40 on historic steamship "Lilac" to monitor the fish composition and relative abundance in the river and keep the fish data updated on a regular basis.

- Fish Aggregating Device: Installed at Pier 42 pile field at Morton Street, the FAD aims to establish a more interactive relationship between the underwater animals and city dwellers, and enhance the experience living in Hudson River Park community.

- Water Quality Testing: We are going to launch the Citizen's Water Quality Monitoring Program. This program will provide a timely report to keep our community well informed about sewage levels in the Hudson River, which indicates if the water is safe for boating or swimming.

- Oyster gardening and monitoring, in collaboration with NY/NJ Baykeeper and the New York Harbor School, seeks to increase stewardship among residents of the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary by working with volunteers from schools and community organizations in New York City.

Programs at The River Project introduce schoolchildren, teachers, families and the community to the biodiversity of the Hudson River



The River Project hosted an open house to celebrate its 25th year of operation

Estuary through a guided tour of the estuary, ongoing wildlife monitoring activities, lectures and a visit to its aquarium tanks.

The theme is local ecology of the region: past, present and future. See and touch estuarine animals and investigate plant and animal survival strategies for the Hudson River communities. For a full immersion into science, animal husbandry and aquarium mechanics, internships for high school and college students are available during the summer and fall, with limited opportunities in the winter and spring.

Marine biology interns will learn about animal identification, water chemistry and the ecology of an estuary. Interns will assist educators on field trips and occasionally have an opportunity to run a topic station on his/her own. School program fees vary and are adjusted on a sliding scale. With a strong commitment to community education and partnerships, no group has ever been turned down due to inability to pay. Please call for specific information.

The River Project has open hours during the week where anyone can come in for a free tour. #

The River Project is located at Pier 40 on West Street and Houston Street in Manhattan. Please visit the events calendar on their Web site http://www.riverprojectnyc.org/events_calendar.php or call 212-233-3030 for more information.



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CAMP IS FOR EVERY CHILD

By PEG L. SMITH

Watching my son after he returned from summer camp was the first hint that remarkable growth was underway. He was engaged, giving and confident. Viewing the camp experience as a respite from the real world is somehow to miss the point — it is the real world — simply getting dirty, trying to pull harder so your team wins, finding the friend you always wished for, being yourself.

As a parent, I constantly ask where children have their mental, personal, emotional, and physical needs nurtured. Where will they learn to get along with others, to take safe risks, to deal with conflict in a constructive way that encourages them to be creative, to explore and discover, to learn by actively doing, to fail and try again? In the camp community, I find what I intuitively know as a parent. To be a positive, productive adult one needs the opportunity to truly experience childhood — that is how one grows.

Camps enjoy the opportunity of working their magic with all of our children: the gifted athlete, the budding musician, the curious naturalist, the first-time camper and the child with a disability. The idea that camp is for every child isn't just a pipe dream — it's a reality. And one that parents and children celebrate and the American Camp Association supports by promoting safe, fun, and developmentally appropriate experiences in the camp setting.

The entire experience began with a single camp — The Gunnery Camp in 1861. As I write, I am buoyed by the recognition of just how dynamically this idea has taken flight. Over 11 million children and adults will participate in camp this year. Overall, the numbers continue to grow, and this popular movement testifies so loudly to the extraordinary benefits that camp provides to our young people: responsibility, exploration, engagement, not to mention the spiritual dimension of the camp experience.

Is camp quantifiable? Maybe not — but as a parent, I can only react with extreme pleasure as my son displayed those acts of kindness and generosity of spirit that follow so naturally from his time at camp. His chance to develop and grow was marked by constant changes. Our camps meet those challenges every day of every session and that's why doing what we do becomes so vital.

Camp is about firsts: a first campfire outdoors, leading a pony, catching a frog, enjoying the evening stories, and being chosen to be part of a community that values each child and his or her special gifts. It's about making memories and honoring the traditions of those who have come before.

The American Camp Association has grown through its commitment to research and education in the field of child development. We communicate these best practices for each

VETERAN'S DAY PARADE BY DR. POLA ROSEN



camp member: from waterfront safety to the healthy diets and enriching activities carefully tailored to children's inherent curiosity and sense of discovery. From camper-to-counselor ratios to medical care, we understand what makes a camp community safe and fun, and our member camps make the extraordinary commitment to meet and surpass those standards.

Throwing the doors wide open to allow

generations of children and families to enjoy the value of experiential learning and growth, a path to self-esteem and independence is what camp is all about. From urban and rural settings to international camp opportunities, we revel in watching children discover their place in the world — making a difference is truly what makes the difference. #

Peg L. Smith is the chief executive officer of the American Camp Association.

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The Board of Elections Needs Reform

By MOHAMMAD IBRAR

On November 6, Election Day, at 6 a.m., a majority of the poll sites across the nation opened promptly. As a poll worker at a local public school in Brooklyn, New York, I witnessed the lines stretching from along the school sidewalk to inside the school cafeteria. With over 200 voters on line, it was an unexpected turnout. Yet, it was not the high turnout rate that caused the lines, frustrated voters and the disorganization that ensued; rather, it was the poorly trained poll workers and inadequately managed poll sites.

Poll worker training and examinations provide the basic knowledge needed for an individual to conduct his/her duty in a satisfactory manner on Election Day. The requirements,



training and examination standards are set low, which leads to individuals with minimal English comprehension and ineffectual executive function working the polls.

For instance, my training session was delivered by someone who distributed a poll worker booklet and read the booklet aloud to the class. I completed the multiple-choice exam (open booklet) in

less than three minutes. Frankly, the exam fails to assess an individual's competency and ability to conduct the duties they will be hired to perform on Election Day.

There were a number of problems that plagued my poll site: For instance, a third of the

workers were elderly citizens who were incapable of working at a speed that accommodated the high volume of voters. Site coordinators were difficult to locate among the commotion and crowds of voters.

Poll workers became rowdy as they argued with the site coordinator and other voters due to the lack of information and miscommunication. A door clerk consistently left the accessibility entrance unattended, making it impossible for disabled persons to enter the poll site.

Other workers left as soon as the polls closed, leaving others with the duty to count ballots and close the site. During the closing of the site, many of the workers did not know their duties and could not close the site.

Poll sites are crucial locations where citizens come to exercise their rights, uphold their civic duty and choose future leaders on a state and federal level. The manner in which poll sites are operated and maintained should be of great

concern, as it is a reflection on the importance the government places on the voice of the people.

The BOE needs to reform its poll worker selection process, training and assessment procedures to address poll worker and poll site management deficiencies. Furthermore, the BOE must raise the bar for poll worker candidacy, which would only allow more skilled, productive, and experienced workers to help administer the poll sites.

Additionally, an official from the BOE should be present at the each poll site to monitor all operations and to ensure that proper protocol is implemented. These fundamental modifications would have an outstanding impact on the voting system, making it a more efficient and pleasurable experience for all. #

Mohammad Ibrar is a reporter at Education Update and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of City College.

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