

# CUNY Matters

cuny.edu/news

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK • FOUNDED 1847 AS THE FREE ACADEMY

LEGISLATIVE  
SPECIAL EDITION

“Open the doors to all—let the children of the rich and the poor take their seats together and know of no distinction save that of industry, good conduct, and intellect.”  
— Townsend Harris, founder

SPRING 2007

## Look Who's Teaching at CUNY!

Coming on the heels of a two-year-long program to showcase Rhodes, Truman and Goldwater scholars and other outstanding student stars, Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has announced the next phase of The City University of New York's outreach efforts—a comprehensive program to spotlight CUNY's faculty.

The new campaign, “Look Who's Teaching at CUNY!” features faculty who are winners of the most prestigious prizes in academia and the arts: the National Medal of Science, the American Physical Society Buckley Prize, the Pulitzer Prize, the Academy Award, the National Arts Medal and the Bancroft Prize, among others.

They are among the more than 1,000 new faculty who have come to teach at CUNY in the last seven years.

“When you start digging deep and looking at the faculties that we have across this University, you are absolutely stunned by the depth of talent,” said Chancellor Goldstein.

“We want to get that talent to be better known in the marketplace. This is going to be a multifaceted approach at multiple levels of teaching and scholarship at this University.”

The Chancellor noted that the faculty program is designed to build upon the success of earlier efforts. “We spend time, rightly so, talking about our very successful students,” he said. “We talked about Truman Scholars and Goldwater Scholars and Rhodes Scholars and some of our students going on to the most coveted Ph.D. programs and the best medical schools and law schools and business schools and the great jobs that they are getting and we will continue to do that as more and more CUNY students win highly competitive awards.

“Now, what we really want to do is to celebrate the extraordinary work of a very dedicated faculty,” he said.

Detailed information and sample television and newspaper announcements about CUNY's outstanding faculty is available at [www.cuny.edu/lookwhoisteaching](http://www.cuny.edu/lookwhoisteaching).

“While CUNY is rich in scholar talent in many fields,” the Chancellor noted, “of particular interest are the first-class scientists, mathematicians, and engineering faculty that now are teaching at CUNY during what we have called ‘The Decade of

reputation, linked inextricably to New York City's attractiveness as a place of employment and cultural cornucopia, has played an important role in rebuilding the ranks of our full-time faculty—an ongoing priority in our work with state and city officials.”

Among the distinguished faculty who are teaching at CUNY are:

**Dennis P. Sullivan**, Distinguished Professor of Mathematics and Albert Einstein Chair in Science at the CUNY Graduate Center, received the National Medal of Science; Professor of Chemistry **Paris Svoronos** of Queensborough Community College was named Carnegie/CASE Outstanding Community College Professor of the Year; **Maribel Vazquez**, Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering at CCNY, is studying brain cancer infiltration under NIH and NSF grants; Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering **Sheldon Weinbaum** of CCNY has been elected to the National Academy of Engineering, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies.

Distinguished Professor of Physics **Godfrey Gumbs** of Hunter is a recipient of the American Physical Society's 2005 Edward A. Bouchet Award; **Michio Kaku**, the Henry Semat Professor of Physics at CCNY, is a co-founder of String Field Theory; **Charles Liu**, Assistant Professor of Astrophysics, College of Staten Island, is Associate in Astrophysics at the Hayden Planetarium; Assistant Professor of Astronomy **Timothy Paglione** of York College is Co-Director of the NASA Science, Engineering, Mathematics & Aerospace Academy; Distinguished Professor of Physics **Myriam P. Sarachik** of CCNY is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and past President of the American Physical Society.

Professor of Physical Sciences **Gregory Aizin** of Kingsborough Community College is conducting research to develop miniature electro-magnetic radiation detec-

tors; **Daniel Akins**, Distinguished Service Professor of Physical Chemistry and Professor of Chemical Engineering at CCNY and the CUNY Graduate Center, heads the Center for Analysis of Structures and Interfaces; Hunter's **Jill Bargonetti**, Professor of Biological Sciences, and

**Derrick Brazill**, Associate Professor of Biology, both won the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers.

**Carmen Boulosa**, Distinguished Lecturer in Foreign Languages and Literatures at CCNY, was honored for the best novel in Mexico in 2005, for *Reforma*; Distinguished Professor of Music **John Corigliano** of

Lehman College and the Graduate Center won the Pulitzer Prize for his *Second Symphony*, and an Academy Award for Best Score for *The Red Violin*; **Roy DeCarava**, Distinguished Professor of Art at Hunter, and **Gregory Rabassa**, Distinguished Professor of Hispanic Languages and Literatures at Queens and the Graduate Center, both received the 2006 National Medal of Arts; Distinguished Professor of Humanities **Isaac Goldemberg** of Hostos Community College is Director of the Latin American Writers Institute and an internationally renowned Latino poet, playwright and fiction writer; **Michael Wallace**, Distinguished Professor of History at John Jay College and the Graduate Center, was co-winner of the Pulitzer Prize for *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*.

**David Nasaw**, Distinguished Professor of History and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Chair in American History at the CUNY Graduate Center, is author of the acclaimed new biography, *Andrew Carnegie*; novelist **Elizabeth Nunez**, Distinguished Professor of English at Medgar Evers, won the American Book Award for *Bruised Hibiscus*; **June O'Neill**, the Wollman Distinguished Professor of Economics at Baruch's Zicklin School of Business and the Graduate Center, is former Director of the Congressional Budget Office; **David S. Reynolds**, Distinguished Professor of English and American Studies at Baruch and the Graduate Center, won the Bancroft Prize for *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography*.

*‘When you start... looking at the faculties that we have across this University, you are absolutely stunned by the depth of talent,’ says Chancellor Matthew Goldstein.*

## Inside

### PAGE 2 The New Knowledge Economy

CUNY is training the key players in a global economy that demands increasing numbers of degree holders.



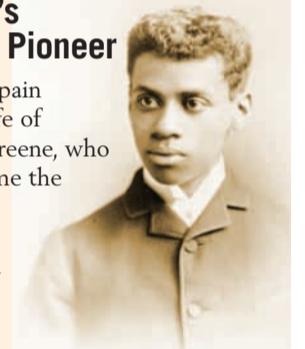
### PAGE 4 Young Entrepreneur



Hunter College's Music Man, Anthony Volodkin, has created a music blog that draws many thousands of visits daily and is a source of income also.

### PAGE 6 CUNY's Black Pioneer

Triumph and pain marked the life of William H. Greene, who in 1884 became the first African-American to graduate from City College.



### PAGE 7 Decade of Science



Chancellor Matthew Goldstein's initiative to strengthen science education and research is in full swing, with professors carrying out projects that could save lives.

### PAGE 12 City Tech's Top Chef

Top chefs at the White House in Washington and at Gracie Mansion here in New York are products of City Tech's culinary arts program.



### PAGE 14 Grad Center's Dissertation Room

So many theses reflecting years of study and passion sit in this scholarly place, with stories about animals, artists, historical personalities, and much, much more.



## Look Who's TEACHING at CUNY!



Professors John Corigliano, Ruth Stark, Jill Bargonetti and Daniel Akins

## THE CHANCELLOR'S DESK

# Putting Faces on the Decade of Science

Last month I traveled to Albany to testify on the State Executive Budget at a joint hearing of the New York State Assembly Ways and Means and Senate Finance committees.

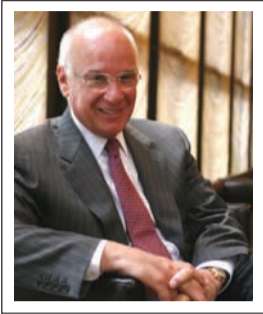
There I spoke about many CUNY initiatives and programs currently underway, and emphasized how much we rely on the State's continued investment in order to recruit additional full-time faculty and provide the student services required to maximize their effectiveness.

Part of my testimony (available in its entirety at [www.cuny.edu/statetestimony07](http://www.cuny.edu/statetestimony07)) focused on our "Decade of Science" at CUNY. It's no secret that our country's strength, security, and advancement depend on scientific literacy. An acknowledged decline in student participation and proficiency in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields imperils our competitive advantage in science and technology. The need for our multi-faceted Decade of Science initiative, launched in 2005 and profiled previously in CUNY Matters, could hardly be more pressing.

I spoke at length about this work in Albany. But words only go so far. The vitality of our Decade of Science effort was driven home for the Albany legislators by the presence of 15 faculty scientists drawn from the extraordinary talent we are privileged to have recruited to CUNY:

- **Professor Daniel Akins**, Director of the CUNY Center for Analysis of Structures and Interfaces, studies the synthesis of semiconductor and magnetic oxide nanoparticles, as well as the fabrication of carbon nanotubes within various matrices. He is a professor at City College and received his Ph.D. from UC Berkeley.
- **Professor Hiroshi Matsui**, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Hunter College, was recently elected as a Frontier Member of the National Academy of Engineering and is recognized for his work on non-lithographic fabrications of devices such as sensors, by fabricating peptide-based nanotubes (antibody) and functionalizing them with various recognition components (antigen).
- **Distinguished Professor Ruth Stark**, Director of the CUNY Institute for Macromolecular Assemblies at the College of Staten Island, uses NMR techniques to study the molecular structure and organization of fatty acid binding proteins as well as plant biopolymers.
- **Professor Derrick Brazill** received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2005 for his work on cell sensing and control of cell growth during development. He is Associate Professor of Biology at Hunter College and received his Ph.D. from UC Berkeley.
- **Professor Lynn Francesconi**, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Hunter College,

studies the chemistry of elements such as technetium, with a goal of developing the chemistry as it relates to the medicinal uses of their radioisotopes.



- **Professor Steve Greenbaum**, Professor of Physics at Hunter College, performs spectroscopic investigations of solids by magnetic resonance and synchrotron x-ray absorption, applied mostly to materials for electrochemical energy storage and conversion. Professor Greenbaum received a 2002 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering

Mentoring.

- **Professor Christine Li** is a developmental neurobiologist studying how communication is established between cells in the nervous system. She is Professor of Biology at City College and earned her Ph.D. from Harvard University.
- **Professor Elli Wurtzel**, a researcher on provitamin A carotenoid biosynthesis in cereal crops, was elected as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2006. She is Professor of Biology at Lehman College.
- **Professor Alex Couzis** is the Herbert G. Kayser Professor of Chemical Engineering at City College. His research on the adsorption of organic material from solution onto solid surfaces impacts critical areas such as food science and packaging, microelectronics, optics and delayed drug release.
- **Professor Cathy Savage-Dunn** studies the roles and mechanisms of cell signaling during animal development. Dr. Savage-Dunn is Associate Professor of Biology at Queens College and received her Ph.D. from Columbia University.
- **Professor Harry Gafney** has recently assumed the Directorship of the CUNY Center for Advanced Technology (CAT) in Photonic Applications. Professor Gafney works closely with New York-based companies such as Corning Inc., and is also a guest scientist at Brookhaven National Laboratory. He is Professor of Chemistry at Queens College.
- **Professor Richard Magliozzo** has consistently received funding from the National Institutes of Health for research studying the structure and function of a bacterial heme enzyme responsible for activation of an antibiotic used to treat tuberculosis, and another bacterial enzyme that catalyzes radical reactions. He is Professor of Chemistry at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center.

These scientists represent a small sampling of the individuals at CUNY—faculty, staff, students, and alumni—who are dedicated to making our Decade of Science as productive as possible. I thank you all for your support.

*Matthew Goldstein*

# In New Knowledge Economy, New York

How's this for a reality series? Contestants compete for jobs and income based on their education, and their home towns survive or die based on how much brain power they can generate.

That's the Darwinian game that's being played out now across the United States. Back in 1970, the number of people with at least bachelor's degrees was small—eleven percent—and spread fairly evenly around the country. But today, cities have more than twice as many college graduates, and educated people are continuing to gravitate to intellectual centers like New York, Seattle, San Francisco and Raleigh.

Much has been written about the migration to these intellectual and creative hubs. Less well known, perhaps, is the extent to which the economic and intellectual lives of these great centers like New York City are so intertwined and so dependent on their respective institutions of higher learning.

And in this respect, CUNY stands out. It is the largest public urban university in the nation, and its campuses are like streams spawning the life that keeps the city great.

Selma Botman, the University Provost, noted that CUNY enrollment has been rising in recent years as New Yorkers, including the newest of New Yorkers—its immigrants—realize that the surest way up the ladder of the Knowledge Economy is to obtain a degree. "The fortunes of this city are linked to the richness of this University," Botman said. "And both residents and out-of-towners are seeing that CUNY degrees are the best educational bargains in the country, without question."

Frances Horowitz, formerly president of the Graduate Center, said, "City University is the social engine of New York. It's ubiquitous and at every level. There are very few cities that are as saturated with educational opportunities as New York City is."

## Soaring Percentages of Degree Holders

A third of the city's residents age 25 and over have bachelor's or advanced degrees, and their number surged by an eye-popping 20 percent between 2000 and 2005, growing by 280,000 to 1.72 million, the Census Bureau says. More astonishing, almost two-thirds of Manhattanites in that age bracket are college grads.

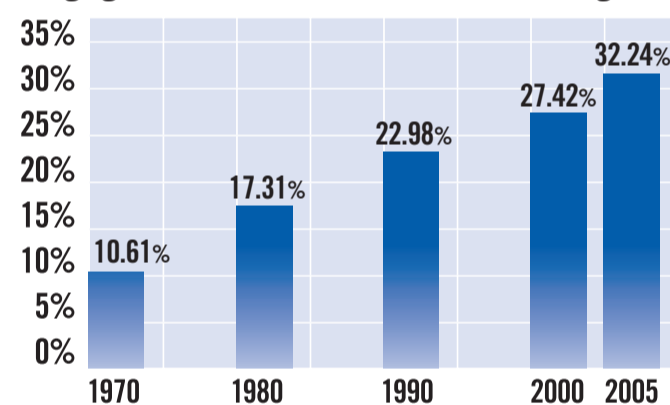
Other cities had higher percentages in 2005, but of course no one matches New York in absolute numbers. In San



Francisco, half of the residents age 25 and over had college degrees, some 281,000 people. In Seattle, the nation's best-educated city, some 210,000 people—just over half in that age group—had at least a bachelor's degree.

With enrollment at 223,000—the highest in 31 years—CUNY has grown to meet demand and has been competing successfully with some of the most aggressive private universities in the country. Now on 23 campuses, it has a new Graduate School of Journalism, a new Teacher Academy and expanding business pro-

Huge growth in number of New Yorkers with degrees



Source: Queens College Professor Andy Beveridge's Social Explorer data on New Yorkers over age 25, who are college graduates

grams that are increasingly international in their focus.

## The Down Side

It must be said also that the burgeoning knowledge economy is leaving in its tracks a class of men and women marginalized for their lack of skills and education. This slide down the economic ladder has harmed whole regions of the country, as well as communities within otherwise booming cities.

In February the Community Service Society, an advocacy agency, reported that the strongest job market in decades has left the city's youngest minority workers behind. Just 4.9 percent of all workers were unemployed last year, but unemployment remained high among blacks and Hispanics, especially men.

"The shift is toward jobs that require more education, more literacy, more math, more ability to interact with customers and coworkers," Mark Levitan, a senior policy analyst with the Community Service Society, told *The New York Times*.

The youthful unemployed include the 20,000 teens who drop out of high school here each year, although the city says that the dropout rate is steadily declining and that the Class of 2005 had the highest graduation rate on record at 58.2 percent.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
The City University of New York

**Benno C. Schmidt, Jr.**  
Chairman

**Valerie L. Beal**  
**Philip Berry**  
**John S. Bonnici**  
**Wellington Z. Chen**  
**Rita DiMartino**  
**Freida Foster-Tolbert**  
**Joseph J. Lhota**

**Randy M. Mastro**  
**Hugo M. Morales**  
**Kathleen M. Pesile**  
**Carol Robles-Román**  
**Marc V. Shaw**  
**Solomon A. Sutton**  
**Jeffrey Wiesenfeld**

**Robert Ramos, Jr.**  
Chairperson,  
Student Senate

**Manfred Philipp**  
Chairperson,  
Faculty Senate

**CUNY Matters**

**Matthew Goldstein**  
Chancellor

**Jay Hershenson**  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees and  
Senior Vice Chancellor for University Relations

**Michael Arena**  
University Director for Communications and Marketing

**Ron Howell**  
Editor

**Gary Schmidgall, Rita Rodin**  
Writers

**André Beckles**  
Photographer

**Gotham Design**  
Graphic Design

Articles in this and previous issues are available at [cuny.edu/news](http://cuny.edu/news). Letters or suggestions for future stories may be sent to the Editor by email to [MediaRelations@mail.cuny.edu](mailto:MediaRelations@mail.cuny.edu). Changes of address should be made through your campus personnel office.

Prepared by  
**The City University of New York**  
Office of University Relations  
535 East 80th Street  
New York, NY 10021  
(212) 794-5317

Published by  
**The Legislative Gazette**  
PO Box 7329  
Albany, NY 12225  
518-473-9739  
[www.legislativegazette.com](http://www.legislativegazette.com)

# New Yorkers are the Key Players, and CUNY is the Big Training Ground



Helen Marshall, Borough President of Queens and alumna of Queens College, sponsored CUNY on Wheels, an Internet-equipped bus that will travel through the impoverished Rockaway Peninsula, encouraging residents to seek degrees at LaGuardia Community College and other CUNY institutions.

• Taking another approach, LaGuardia Community College will soon hit the road with CUNY on Wheels—a specially built, Internet-equipped bus. Financed with \$250,000 secured by Queens Borough President Helen Marshall (who earned her bachelor's degree from Queens College), CUNY on Wheels aims at spreading the word about CUNY's array of educational and job-training programs. The target is the impoverished and isolated Rockaway Peninsula, said LaGuardia President Gail O. Mellow.

## Changing Labor Force

The evolution of an increasingly educated labor force has profound implications for New York City. It's an old story that manufacturing jobs are vanishing, having plummeted by 40 percent between 1990 and 2005, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Less visible are changes in white-collar jobs that require education—the nine percent shrinkage in the FIRE sector (for finance, insurance and real estate) and the 17 percent surge in the ICE sector (for intellectual, cultural and educational fields).

Terrence Martell, director of the Baruch College's Weissman Center for International Business, said the loss of FIRE jobs reflects consolidation among financial institutions and outsourcing of back-office operations. "Look across the Hudson. There are 15 or 20 buildings filled to a large degree with financial services people who historically would have been in Manhattan." As for ICE, Martell cites new jobs in areas like biomedicine, as well as routine expansion as New York "has become a more desirable place to be."

## Why Such Brain Power in NYC?

But why do college-educated people concentrate in certain cities? Theories abound, but one of the most sensible comes from Thurston Domina, who received his doctorate in sociology from the CUNY Graduate Center last year, is now doing research at Princeton and next fall will teach at the University of

California at Irvine.

"When you put smart people together, they bounce ideas off one another. They get better at doing whatever they do," Domina said.

In short, smart people want to be with smart people and that breeds creativity.

Educated people earn more than those around them do, too, he said, thanks to "a multiplier effect. High school graduates who live in places with a lot of college graduates earn more than those who live in areas without a lot of college graduates." College grads spend more on services that employ those less well educated, and "the work that is available tends to be better work. And when you concentrate human capital, schools get better because there are more people to become teachers and people are more willing to spend on education."

In contrast, students who grow up in places with few college graduates are more likely to get stuck educationally. "Educational segregation is a zero-sum game. For every booming human capital hub, there are dozens of brain drain communities, and for these communities educational segregation can be disastrous," Domina said.

## Future Generations

Graduate Center sociologists Paul Attewell and David Lavin have found that when college education is easily available, as it is at CUNY, it pays off in the lives of underprivileged students—and their children. In April the Russell Sage Foundation is publishing their latest research, "Passing the Torch: Does Higher Education for the Disadvantaged Pay Off Across the Generations?" Two former doctoral students share authorship, Domina and Tania Levey, who is now an assistant professor at York College.

For thirty years Lavin followed the first three classes of CUNY's "open admissions" freshmen, who started between 1970 and 1972. In the year 2000, the researchers interviewed 2,000 women drawn from

## Top Jobs for Degree Holders in N.Y.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE HOLDERS	NUMBER IN JOB	MEDIAN INCOME
<b>Total</b>	<b>805,143</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>
Accountants and Auditors	46,878	\$41,000
Elementary and Middle School Teachers	39,554	\$28,700
Financial Services Agents	23,904	\$60,000
Marketing and Sales Managers	23,182	\$45,000
Managers, All Other	20,465	\$45,000
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	18,282	\$26,000
Designers	17,919	\$35,000
Registered Nurses	17,299	\$46,000
Computer Programmers	15,713	\$50,000
Financial Managers	15,021	\$50,000
Computer Scientists and Systems Analysts	14,703	\$50,000

MASTER'S DEGREE HOLDERS	NUMBER IN JOB	MEDIAN INCOME
<b>Total</b>	<b>218,768</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>
Elementary and Middle School Teachers	28,283	\$38,000
Accountants and Auditors	9,417	\$55,000
Computer Software Engineers	7,131	\$64,000
Postsecondary Teachers	6,463	\$16,000
Social Workers	6,347	\$33,300
Secondary School Teachers	6,318	\$40,000
Managers, All Other	6,170	\$60,000
Marketing and Sales Managers	6,118	\$64,000
Financial Services Agents	6,034	\$100,000
Computer Programmers	5,859	\$60,000
Financial Managers	5,163	\$78,000

SOURCE: John Mollenkopf, Political Science Professor and Director of the Center for Urban Research, at the CUNY Graduate Center. Data is for persons age 18 to 34 in the N.Y. metropolitan area and is from the U.S. Census.

those 100,000 students.

"Although there was a lot of controversy about the terrible, low graduate rates of these open admission students, who were not thought of as college material, in fact their graduation rates were as high as they were nationally"—if you follow them for more than eight years, Lavin said.

The women graduates were more likely to raise their children in stable two-parent households and to earn more, which are both factors in increasing their children's educational success. Moreover, college graduation "changed the way they behaved as parents," Lavin said. They tended to spend more time on "literacy, reading to kids, taking them to cultural events in the city. They were better able to be advocates for their children, feeling comfortable going into school to deal with issues that may have come up." Their children did better in high school and had higher rates of college enrollment.

And that, he says, also helps explain why New York City is getting smarter.

(Another 27 percent of that class remained in high school for a fifth year, the city says.)

In furtherance of CUNY's mission to bring educational opportunity to marginal groups, Baruch College hosted an educational summit about the dropout epidemic on Feb. 23. Baruch President Kathleen Waldron told participants that New York State has the nation's highest dropout rate for black and Hispanic students, that only one in ten graduates on time with a high school diploma.

"The result is intense unemployment, crime and illiteracy for these young people, their families and their communities," Waldron said.

With high school graduates earning, on average, \$9,245 more per year, "each year's class of dropouts will cost the country over \$200 billion during their lifetimes in lost earnings and unrealized tax revenue," while illiteracy costs another \$224 billion a year, she noted. Meanwhile, dropouts are twice as likely to become parents by their senior year of high school, and they die on average at younger ages than those with at least a year of college.

"All these grim statistics point to a waste of human talent and potential," Waldron said. "Apart from the economic and social costs to society, we will never know the contributions that potential doctors, artists, scientists, bankers, and business people could have made."

## Rescuing Those Left Behind

To help tackle the problem, in recent years CUNY has launched a range of programs designed to bring new members into the fold of those who can fend for themselves in the new knowledge economy.

- It has put in place a University-wide Black Male Initiative, which aims at recruiting, retaining and graduating black, Latino and other at-risk groups of males into college.
- A new ASAP program—enthusiastically backed to the tune of almost \$20 million by Mayor Michael Bloomberg—is recognizing the importance of community colleges in delivering job-related skills to those who lack them, providing enhanced counseling and other assistance to groups of men and women most in need.
- The John Jay College of Criminal Justice is reaching out to ex-convicts, who have a particularly hard time finding employment.
- CUNY Preparatory High School, launched in the fall of 2003, has been giving teenage dropouts a second shot at success, as scores of them annually complete high school or earn a GED, and then go on to college.

## A President Who Knows What It's Like to Struggle for a Degree

When LaGuardia Community College President Gail O. Mellow says that she knows what her students go through, she speaks from experience.

The first person on either side of her family to go to college, she was midway through her first year at the University of Michigan on a scholarship when her father went bankrupt. He was an independent claims adjuster, and New York had just switched to no-fault auto insurance, so there simply wasn't enough work. (His fortunes later revived because even no-fault requires adjusters.)

"We lost our house," Mellow recalled. "I had enough money from working in the summer to get by, but I had to go home and help my father earn money to take care of rest of the kids."

Home was Jamestown, south of Buffalo. She worked full-time selling advertising for local newspapers while attending Jamestown Community College nights and weekends, and she kept her books in the car to study between appointments.

"If it had not been for that community college, I could never have continued. That incredible faculty saved my intellectual life."

Mellow finished her associate's degree in two years—the only CUNY president to have earned one—and then faced a common roadblock.

"SUNY Albany wouldn't take nine credits, three of my classes," she recalled. "I was so angry, I took classes that I had already passed." But Mellow graduated Phi Beta Kappa in a year and two summers, and then went on to earn her doctorate in social psychology at George Washington U. She remained deeply grateful

for the community college experience that had rescued her years before, and outfitted with her fresh Ph.D. she began teaching at community colleges in Maryland, Connecticut, New Jersey and upstate New York. She later served as president of community colleges in Connecticut and New Jersey.

Mellow relishes the variety of her experiences at LaGuardia. She's a big booster for CUNY on Wheels, an Internet-equipped bus that this spring will begin expanding CUNY's contact with the neglected Rockaway Peninsula, and she's proud of the LaGuardia-supported business "incubator" that has helped local small entrepreneurs.

"Queens is the most ethnically diverse county in the U.S., if not the world," the President said. About 10,000 people a year take English as a Second Language (ESL) at LaGuardia. Some have advanced degrees from other countries; and others—like the Afghan who works in Mellow's office as her first Presidential Honors Fellow—are studying English as their third language (he also speaks Pashtun and Farsi).

"Their lives are so inspiring. You see the power of education to make a better life and a better city. When I look at these students I realize I haven't gone through anything," Mellow said.



Gail Mellow, President of LaGuardia Community College

## STUDENT HONORS

### First Romona Moore Award

**K**elle Jacob, a Hunter College media studies major, was awarded the first Romona Moore Scholarship at last month's annual scholarship banquet of the New York Association of Black Journalists at Columbia University.

The scholarship was established by the Hunter College Foundation in honor of Moore, a black Hunter student brutally murdered in 2003. Her murder came with accusations that it was treated lightly by police, because she was black.

### BC Mom goes to China

**A**t 18, Pangeline Edwards became a mother. Today, with her children grown, the Brooklyn College student is living the dream of many students—studying abroad—as a recent winner of the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship.

Enrolled at Yangtze International University, Edwards is studying China's new market economy—and the social costs of the nation's rapid development. "It is so important to study abroad to understand diversity and globalization," said Edwards, who majors in business management, with a minor in religious studies. Edwards first witnessed the extraordinary changes taking place in China after taking a course there last summer through Brooklyn College's Study Abroad program.

### Five Students Win Kaplans

**F**ive community college students at CUNY have been awarded a Kaplan Educational Foundation scholarship—the highly competitive and unusual award that provides students with financial support, as well as academic support, such as individual and group tutoring.

This year's scholarship winners are Kwesi Blackman of Kingsborough Community College; Aaron Hudson of LaGuardia Community College; Veronica Nunez of Queensborough Community College; Sharrise Simmons of Borough of Manhattan Community College; and Levald Thomas of Kingsborough Community College.

Hudson, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in information management systems or business information. Nunez, a liberal arts major who also works full-time as a legal assistant, came to Queens from the Dominican Republic two years ago after graduating from high school. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in childhood psychology.

### Biomed Students Honored

**F**our Hunter College seniors were honored for outstanding research at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) in Anaheim, Calif. Competing with more than 1,100 undergraduates, the students—Mazin Babiker, Luz Sanchez, Leslie Ann Alexis and Silvia Caballero—each won \$250 awards for presentations in various disciplines of the biomedical and behavioral sciences.

The Conference is the largest one for biomedical students, with more than 2,500 students and faculty attending last fall from universities nationwide.

## Loving What You Do, and Making Money from It, Too

**W**hen Anthony Volodkin was in his early teens, he would often listen to music on college radio stations. Music moved him, in ways that felt good.

"They used to have cool stuff in the mornings, mostly metal, and interesting specialty shows, all kinds of genres in the evenings," said Volodkin.

More recently, after his family got a high-speed Internet connection, Volodkin began looking for his favorite pieces on the Web, so he could download them. And he soon began taking note of a new way of connecting to music, and to other music lovers.

He discovered music bloggers popping up across the Web, with sites like Music for Robots, Fluxblog and Stereogum. He was fascinated by them.

"These were people who aren't doing it for the money," said Volodkin, now 21 and a senior at Hunter College.

"They only wrote about these songs because they liked them."

Through such blogs, Volodkin discovered jazz greats like Nina Simone, folk rockers like Arthur Lee, and an eclectic array of contemporary groups, including Metronomy, Kid Loco, RJD2 and Cat Power. This explosion was so intense, Volodkin said, that "I realized I had to share my experience with others."

So in the spring of 2005, he launched The Hype Machine, a Website (<http://hypem.com>) that now aggregates more than 1,000 music blogs—those personalized, Web-based pages on which creators share interests with others far and wide—attracting about 50,000 visits a day.

"I love it. I use it all the time," said Fred Wilson, a partner of Union Square Ventures, a Manhattan-based venture capital firm that invests in young information technology companies.

"It's one of the best music discovery sites on the Web," said Wilson, one of several venture capitalists tracking Volodkin's work. "I think what he's done is fantastic."

Many students try to find an outside activity that generates income even as it pleases them and satisfies social needs. But an undertaking like The Hype Machine is "highly unusual," said Virginia Teller, chairwoman of Hunter's Computer Science Department, even among smart, risk-taking students like those at Hunter.

So far, The Hype Machine, which cost about \$5,000 to run last year, remains roughly a break-even venture, Volodkin says. But it has begun to generate income. Through links to iTunes and Amazon.com, the site allows users to buy tracks they like—and Volodkin gets a 5 percent commission on the sales. The Hype Machine also carries a modest amount of advertising. "Overall, I could be making a ton more with ads at the expense of the user experience," Volodkin said.

But "that's not the goal." A National Science Foundation Scholarship recipient, Volodkin is no newcomer to computers and the Internet. His father, Iouri, is a computer programmer for Friendship Dairies, the well-known cottage cheese manufacturer. "His work inspired me,

although I went in a different direction," said Volodkin, who emigrated from Moscow to Brooklyn with his parents when he was 12.

"I'm interested in computer technology, but how it can be useful to the ordinary person."

Since he was 14, Volodkin has worked as an intern at Brainlink International, Inc., a Queens-based company that provides a wide range of computer systems consulting services.

"Anthony has done an amazing amount of stuff for me," said Raj Goel, Brainlink's chief technology officer. Volodkin has worked on "several large-scale projects, everything from network administration to disaster-recovery scenarios," Goel said.

When Volodkin walks into a meeting with people "twice his age," Goel added, "he knows how to speak appropriately and intelligently. Within an hour, age is no longer a factor. He's their peer."

A few months ago, Volodkin presented The Hype Machine at a "Mashup Camp" in Boston, attended by about 250 software developers, programmers, technology providers and venture capitalists. ("Mashups" are applications that combine

software or content from several sources in creative and useful ways.)

The camp was designed as an "un-conference,"

an informal program of discussions and events focusing on the topic at hand. There, Volodkin's entrepreneurial talents were recognized.

Attendees had a chance to briefly pitch their work to small groups of others, and competitors who pleased their audiences received a wooden nickel as a sign of approval, and the one with the most nickels won. That was The Hype Machine, chosen the "Best of Camp."

About 75 percent of the site's traffic—including "lots of visitors" from universities—comes from the United States, the rest from Western Europe, Volodkin says.

Though he has received copious praise, Volodkin acknowledges that not all of the early blogging about his blog was laudatory.

Some complained that the design of Volodkin's site was marginalizing their writing—enabling users to easily download songs from their sites without bothering to

read what they had to say about the music.

But others jumped in to defend—and applaud—Volodkin's creation.

"I see it as free hype, and I appreciate it," wrote blogger nuclearbeef.com.

Another said all music bloggers should be happy because "HM [The Hype Machine] is bringing them traffic to read (their) articles." The only person not happy, according to that blogger, is his wife, for his "spending all this money on records."

The Hype Machine has created a kind of online mall in which music lovers shop, chat and buy. And it's the kind of mall that expands without zoning approval from local authorities. So Volodkin knows there a good future in it.

Looking to that future, Volodkin says he plans to continue running The Hype Machine part-time while attending graduate school. (He's applied to MIT's Media Lab and New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program.) But he has plans to make it bigger.

"I'm looking to build a team to grow it, to help me bootstrap it," Volodkin said. "I'm constantly re-evaluating whether I should actively pursue raising capital. Right now, while I'm in school, it doesn't seem worthwhile, but as things move on, this can change, of course."

Volodkin also recognizes that despite his efforts to facilitate buying, rather than "stealing" copyrighted music, The Hype Machine still operates in a legal gray area. It's difficult to monitor materials offered on the MP3 blogs listed on his own site, he concedes. And whether record companies will eventually choose to make an issue of illegal downloading of tracks from such sites remains unclear.

"I hope people recognize it for what it is—a really great music discovery site... a great way for bands to be discovered," said venture capitalist Wilson.

As for Volodkin, it's about music more than money.

Recently, he spent a few hours in the cold, trying to get into sold-out performances by The Arcade Fire, the indie rock band, at Judson Memorial Church in Manhattan's Greenwich Village.

"I was successful, and the shows blew my mind," he said.

For their last song on a Thursday night, the band "got off the stage with their gear and played right in the center of the crowd on the floor. Whoa!"

Now that was worth a million bucks.



Hunter College student Anthony Volodkin, who's become a blogging star of sorts with his Hype Machine, a compilation of blogs that also directs visitors to official music downloading sites.

**REACHING  
FOR THE STARS**  
AN OCCASIONAL SERIES

NOTED & QUOTED

### Hostos Library: Top of the Shelf

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has selected the library at Hostos Community College to receive its Excellence in Academic Libraries Award.

How impressive is that? Well, said Hostos' chief librarian, Dr. Lucinda Zoe, "In the library world, this high honor is the equivalent of winning an Oscar or the World Series."

The organization singled out Hostos for putting the "community" into community college, for its commitment to preserving unique collections about Eugenio Maria de Hostos, and for creating and preserving records about the founding of the college.

Frances Maloy, chair of the 2007 Excellence in Academic Libraries Selection Committee and Division Leader of Access Services at Emory University, said: "The Hostos Library staff demonstrate[s] exemplary partnership and leadership with faculty in developing new curricular design and revitalization through the development of new courses designed to teach information literacy, critical thinking, computer literacy, and also by creating bilingual online learning environments.

"The library staff has absorbed the meaning of the life of the person for whom the institution is named through their bilingual, multilevel, and curriculum integrated information literacy program. Their efforts to produce the bilingual student literary and art magazine, *Escriba!/Write!*, and to create an inviting and bilingual student-focused environment in the library are also noteworthy," Maloy said.

Each year ACRL presents these awards to outstanding libraries at a community college, a senior college, and a university, thereby honoring the accomplishments of librarians and library staff as members of a team that supports the mission of their institution. The award, sponsored by Blackwell's Book Services, consists of \$3,000 and a plaque, to be presented at a ceremony on campus. The library also will receive special recognition at the ACRL President's Program during the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference in June.



Dr. Juliana Maantay

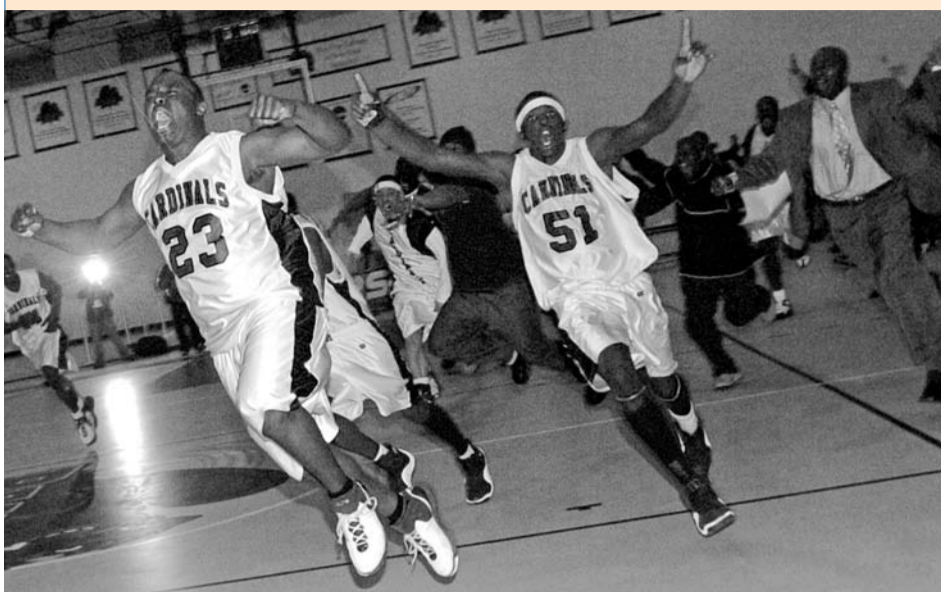
### Lehman Finds Asthma and Dirty Air Links in NYC

The Bronx has one of the highest hospitalization rates for asthma in the United States and contains many of New York City's major air pollution sources, including truck routes, highways and seven facilities that use, store and emit toxic materials.

Now, researchers in Lehman College's Geographic Information Sciences program, led by Dr. Juliana Maantay, have used computerized mapping and spatial analysis to show a definite link between asthma hospitalizations and air pollution in the Bronx.

Bronx children with asthma are hospitalized at a rate 70 percent higher than in the city as a whole and 700 percent higher than the rest of the state (excluding the city), the city Health Department said. The asthma death rate in the Bronx (6 per

### At Buzzer, York Snares Men's Hoops Title, Upsetting College of Staten Island



York College Cardinals celebrate in top photo, after senior guard Teron Simpson (number 23, above and at bottom left) made an exciting three-pointer at the buzzer. Staten Island player Sean Weismuller (bottom right) shows the agony of defeat.



York College senior guard Teron Simpson etched his name into the annals of CUNY Athletic Conference history as his long three-pointer at the final buzzer gave the top-seeded Cardinals a dramatic 56-54 victory in the title game of the 2007 CUNY-AC/Con Edison Men's Basketball Championship.

The Cardinals had taken a 49-48 lead with 2:56 to go after a free throw by senior forward Dennis Echols, but the Staten Island Dolphins tied it up, 49-49, when senior guard Mike Jones hit a free throw with 1:01 on the clock. York regained the advantage, 50-49, nine seconds later when senior forward Jeffrey Boone swished a free throw. Then Staten Island freshman guard Kyle Yocum split the defense for a layup, free throw, and 52-50 advantage with 31 seconds remaining.

Boone nailed one free throw to cut York's deficit to one point, 52-51, with 15 seconds left, but the Dolphins inched further ahead as sophomore center Sean Weismuller put down two free throws for a 54-51 lead a second later. Echols pulled the Cardinals to 54-53 with a putback off the glass as the clock hit six seconds. Staten Island junior guard Robert Mesjasz missed two free throw opportunities, then came Simpson's shining moment.

"We gave the game back to CSI at the 30-second mark," said York bench boss Ronald St. John, who in his 19th season was named CUNYAC Coach of the Year. "But like every battle with Tony Petosa's Staten Island teams, it came down to the last second." This year York made its fifth NCAA Tournament appearance.

Simpson earned CUNYAC Tournament MVP honors thanks to his game-winning shot. Echols led all players with 21 points and 11 rebounds to join Simpson on the CUNYAC All-Tournament Team, along with Weismuller, Mesjasz and two players from semifinalist teams, Phil Schatz and Taleek Norman of Baruch and City Colleges. Boone was named CUNYAC Player of the Year for his outstanding performance throughout the season.

York President Marcia V. Keizs said, "We're very proud of our Athletic Department and the positive examples of competitiveness they exhibit to all our students."

100,000) is double that of the city.

Based on analyses of asthma hospitalizations in the Bronx between 1995 and 1999, Lehman's team found that people living in close proximity to a major pollution source were 25 percent more likely, overall, to be hospitalized for asthma than those living elsewhere. For those living near two or more major pollution sources, the increased risk of hospitalization jumped from 25 to 34 percent. The affected area varied with the source of the pollution and the likely distance the pollutants would travel.

"Regardless of whether the high asthma hospitalization rates are primarily due to environmental causes or also result from the effects of poverty and other socio-demographic factors," Maantay said, "the findings point to a health and environmental justice crisis."

### CUNY Tackling Diabetes

Confronting a rising epidemic, CUNY has launched "The Campaign to Stop Diabetes," a disease that afflicts 500,000 New Yorkers, 300,000 more who don't know they have it and another million who are at risk. Diabetes and the related problem of obesity can cause heart disease and blindness, and lead to amputation, particularly of feet and legs.

"As the largest urban public university in America, we hope to work against these scourges," said Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, who recently announced plans for a CUNY School of Public Health whose doctoral program will dramatically expand the University's impact in the urban public health field.

Dr. Shadi Chamany, director of the City Health Department's Diabetes Prevention

### City Tech Prof Says: Hygienists Save Lives

We might not think of dentists and dental hygienists as saving lives, but Dr. Gwen Cohen-Brown would beg to differ.

An assistant professor of dental hygiene at New York City College of Technology (City Tech), she is on a mission to educate her students and health providers about the need to conduct periodontal evaluations and screenings for oral cancer and diseases.

"The mouth is the portal to the body and a reflection of general health," she said.

"We as health providers need to be able to recognize things like a yeast infection that doesn't go away or specific tumors and be able to bring up such subjects with our patients."

Since joining the City Tech faculty in 2004, Dr. Cohen-Brown has been teaching the College's dental hygiene students to handle tricky situations.

"We've had cases where we picked up on medical or dental problems that other places didn't," she explained.

She said students have uncovered situations that merited biopsies or high blood pressure medication, and oral cancers and other tumors. Hygienists can't make diagnoses, but they need to know how diagnoses are arrived at for their licensing, she added. And since City Tech students routinely pass their licensing exams, their patients are getting the best care., she said.

According to the American Dental Association, only about seven percent of dentists offer the mouth and neck exams they should. Dr. Cohen-Brown says this must change.

Dr. Cohen-Brown's advanced studies in oral and maxillofacial pathology led her from dental practice into teaching. She works with the AIDS Institute, the New York State Department of Health and the Department of Corrections, lecturing on mandated cleanliness standards and other topics.

On April 19, Dr. Cohen-Brown and student members of the Student American Dental Hygiene Association and the City Tech Student Veterans Club will collect donations, sending toothbrushes and other items to soldiers in Iraq, especially those with ties to the City Tech community.



Dr. Gwen Cohen-Brown, City Tech Assistant Professor of Dental Hygiene.

and Control Program, praised CUNY's diabetes campaign. "CUNY's enormous presence and positive impact in New York City is a big plus for us," she said.

As part of CUNY's campaign, student volunteers with special training will form a Diabetes Awareness Corps, which will reach out to other students and community members. CUNY will help develop community-based patient support and self-management programs.

CUNY will also use technology to spread the word about the dangers, risk factors, and treatment of diabetes—e-mail blasts to students, faculty and staff; a special Web site: [www.cuny.edu/stopdiabetes](http://www.cuny.edu/stopdiabetes); and an upcoming television program that will be webcast on the site, shown on cable at CUNY-TV/75, and shared with all CUNY campuses.

# William H. Greene was the First Black CUNY Graduate and

## I KNEW HIS EYES WERE TELLING A STORY.

**W**HEN I BECAME SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES back in the summer of 2004, I found a number of photographs buried in a closet here at CUNY's Central Office, including one of a young man, William H. Greene, who was believed by officials of The City College of New York (including their archivist, Professor Sydney Van Nort) to be the first black graduate of City College, in 1884.

The look in his eyes was sad and somewhat haunting. I had the sense that there was a hidden story of struggle and strength behind them.

We dusted off the photo and it now graces the wall of our Trustee Lounge, along with photos of Jonas Salk, A. Philip Randolph, and other alumni luminaries.

In the months after the discovery of the photo, I began asking various people about Greene and learned that he had applied to the elite United States Signal Corps but had been rejected solely based on his race. Eventually he became the first African-American to enter the Signal Corps, an extraordinary achievement. As I learned more about his struggle to overcome discrimination, my curiosity grew even stronger and I asked Ron Howell, editor of *CUNY Matters*, to see what he could learn about this person from our past who so enchanted me.

What you will read on these two pages is the result of that effort. We are honoring the memory of a "sturdy son" of City College in trying so diligently and with such persistence to uncover and tell his story.

— Jay Hershenson, *Secretary of the Board of Trustees and Senior Vice Chancellor for University Relations*

*This article was written by Ron Howell, editor of CUNY Matters. He benefited from advice and assistance given by Hunter College African-American History Professor Joanne Edey-Rhodes, a genealogy expert. Some research also was done by Charles DeCicco, editor of The Alumnus, City College's alumni magazine. At the City College Archives, Professor Sydney Van Nort made available relevant archival materials from the 19th-century.*

**F**or decades now, William Hallett Greene has existed as a distant figure in CUNY's history, with that quality of distance pertaining not only to the passing of time, but to the inscrutability of the eyes gracing his comely image in photos taken for his graduation more than a century ago.

They were eyes that suggested a certain tenacity, even as they conveyed a sadness that was perhaps appropriate for a man lost in the dustbin of time.

Greene received his bachelor of science degree along with other members of his graduating class, on the evening of June 26, 1884, at the Academy of Music, not far from their beloved City College, then located at Lexington Avenue and 23rd Street.

An article in the following day's *New York Times* noted the presence of Greene, remarking that he was "the first colored boy who has ever graduated from the college" and that he'd "made a good record" while a student.

"The audience applauded him liberally last night," the *Times* wrote.

It was a day of triumph for Greene, as it was for other members of his class, who like him were men of great promise, schooled in a strict, classical way of study that left them with feelings of camaraderie and high ambitions.

Known affectionately as "Greeny," Greene was popular and highly respected. He had been voted recording secretary of his class and he was a cabinet member of the literary society known as Phrenocosmia.

But many months of research—including searches of records in the National Archives, old city directories, ancestry.com and old newspaper articles—have led to a conclusion that Greene was, at the moment of his graduation, like a flashing star approaching its apex.

By all accounts uncovered so far, Greene soon fell victim to the racism that was so prevalent in his day, even as he, perhaps, also fell to inner demons that often grip young men, then, as now.

His story could even be called a 19th-century foreshadowing of what today has

been termed the Plight of the Black Male.

### Breaking Barriers

Greene, slight of build, standing five-foot-seven and weighing only 132 pounds, according to a June 1884 issue of *The College Mercury* campus newspaper, had long wanted to be in the U.S. Signal Corps. In *The Mercury*, he listed his favorite person as "Uncle Sam" and his favorite course of study as astronomy.

And so two months before his graduation, Greene, just 19 years old, applied to become the first black member of the U.S. Signal Corps, the highly competitive U.S. Army unit that tracked weather patterns and was the precursor to the National Weather Service.

The Signal Corps required that applicants pass written examinations, and in

Webb, a former army general who had been a hero at the Battle of Gettysburg, responded right away. He dashed off a letter to Secretary of War Robert Todd Lincoln (son of assassinated President Abraham Lincoln), writing: "This young man is the first colored student who has ever passed beyond the sophomore class of this college. He is the first colored graduate and is, by election, the secretary of his class, composed of some of the finest young men of this city."

Webb said he believed Hazen was erring in his interpretation of the Army Reorganization Act.

Lincoln not only agreed but in harsh terms ordered Hazen to accept Greene or any other black person who met the qualifications for the position.

Thus Greene effectively wrote his name on a bit of military history. He went on to attend the Signal Corps training camp at Fort Myers in Virginia, where newcomers were instructed in the specialized skills of the Corps, which in those days had to do with telegraph communications and the tracking of cloud and wind patterns. Greene must have felt well prepared for the tasks at hand, given his background at City College.

Sure enough, he received the second highest grade in his class of eight trainees (two of whom were dropped for poor performance), and he was soon sent to head up the Signal Corps station in Pensacola, Florida.

In his 1974 book *Blacks and the Military in American History*, (published by Praeger),

historian Jack D. Foner wrote that Greene "opened the way for the acceptance of a handful of black enlisted men into other technical branches, such as the Hospital Corps, the Ordnance Corps, and the Quartermaster and Commissary departments."

But Greene's story did not end with that happy achievement.

Perhaps he might have sensed a hint of



*Photo of William H. Greene, taken for his graduation from City College in 1884, when he was nineteen years old.*

lingering ill feelings right there on his enlistment papers, where it said, near the section "Scars and Marks found upon the person," the notation: "A colored man, Enlisted for the Signal Corps, U.S. Army by order of the Secretary of War."

The papers were signed by 2nd Lt. B.M. Pursell, a recruiting officer who had strongly disapproved of Greene's enlistment.

Sure enough, soon after his posting in Pensacola, there came a series of demotions and transfers that ended two years later, in June of 1887, when he was dishonorably dismissed from the Signal Corps and the army. His superiors charged that Greene gambled, falsified reports and was in debt.

### A Target

But a close reading of scores of documents at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. suggests that a number of white Corpsemen had targeted Greene, and did so with impunity following a key transitional event in the nation.

In March of 1885, the Republican administration of Chester Arthur turned over the presidency to Democrat Grover Cleveland. Gone now were two men—ex-President Arthur and ex-Secretary of War Lincoln—who were among the nation's strongest supporters of civil rights for blacks. Not only had Lincoln proven himself a believer, like his father before him, in extending rights to people of color, but Chester Arthur had a record on that issue surpassing any president before him, perhaps excluding Lincoln.

It was Arthur who in 1854 represented a Manhattan black school teacher, Elizabeth Jennings, after she was forcibly ejected from a "whites only" omnibus (horse drawn public coach) near the current police headquarters building. The case, which Jennings and Arthur won, was considered by many to be the first one overturning "Jim Crow" transportation practices.

And so, a number of African Americans expected changes for the worse in March of 1885, as the Republican Party of Lincoln handed over the reins of government to the Democrats, who in the minds

*continued on page 11* ▶

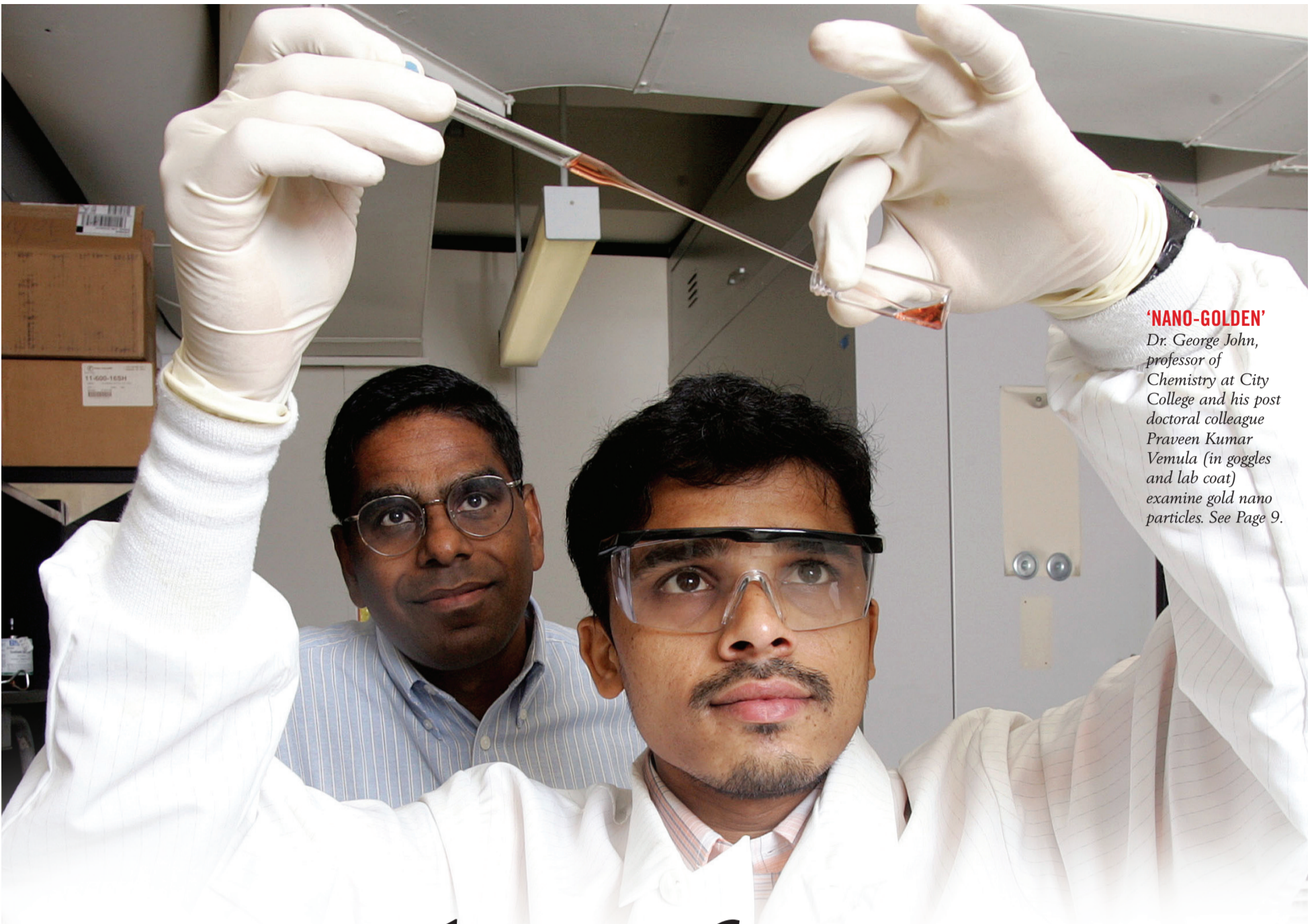


*Photo of City College as it was in 1884 when William H. Greene and others graduated. The college was located at Lexington Avenue and 23rd Street.*

May Greene scored highly on it.

But he was rejected, bluntly told by the Signal Corps Commander, Gen. William Hazen, that, according to Hazen's interpretation of the 1866 Army Reorganization Act, blacks were restricted to four regiments set aside for them, in the infantry and cavalry.

Young Greene turned to his college president, Alexander Webb, for help. And



**'NANO-GOLDEN'**  
Dr. George John, professor of Chemistry at City College and his post doctoral colleague Praveen Kumar Vemula (in goggles and lab coat) examine gold nano particles. See Page 9.

# Decade of Science

SO IMPORTANT IS SCIENCE and academic research to the society in which we live that we have declared 2005-2015 the "Decade of Science" at CUNY. We have affirmed our commitment to opening the pathways for serious advancement in the areas of science, mathematics, technology, and engineering—training students to teach in these areas, and encouraging young people, particularly women and people of color, to study these disciplines.

Our country's strength, security, and advancement depend on scientific literacy. The decline in student participation and proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields imperils this country's competitive advantage in science and technology. Our Decade of Science initiative could not come at a better time:

The Business Roundtable recently led a call to double the number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates by 2015. The National Academies convened a panel of experts that recently made an urgent plea to increase this country's scientific competitiveness.

The New York State Business Council has called for an increase in students receiving postsecondary education in science, math, and engineering, as well as the education of new, highly qualified teachers of math and science.

Governor Spitzer has emphasized the importance of investing in the high-tech, high-wage, strategic industries that will create the jobs and businesses of tomorrow in order to revitalize New York State's economy. In focusing on the need for a concentration on math and science, Governor Spitzer has stressed that from grammar school to

our universities, we must all do a better job a preparing our young people for the 21st Century economy and workforce.

Over the next decade, the University will invest in science in the several ways. We will expend about \$1 billion across the University on the construction and modernization of science facilities, most notably the CUNY-wide Advanced Science Research Center—which will concentrate on emerging disciplines such as nanotechnology, biosensing and remote sensing, structural biology and macromolecular assemblies, and neuroscience—and science facilities at Brooklyn, City, Hunter, Lehman, and Queens colleges.

We will revitalize our Ph.D. programs

**Research Foundation award activity to CUNY principal investigators exceeded \$360 million, in 2006, a record.**

in the laboratory sciences, leading to new investments in graduate student support for highly competitive students, Ph.D. degree-granting authority for selected campuses, and an expansion of master's programs.

We will encourage enrollment in CUNY's math, science, and engineering degree programs, which over the last five years, has increased by 26 percent (compared to total enrollment growth of 12 percent) and included more than 11,000 undergraduate and graduate students in Fall 2005.

We will continue to run summer science programs and expand summer programs in mathematics through CUNY's extensive College Now program, which



**OFER TCHERNICHOVSKI, CITY COLLEGE**

The best way to understand the research of City College Associate Prof. Ofer Tchernichovski is to listen to the birds. By tracking different areas of their brains as they learn to sing, he says, scientists stand to gain a fuller understanding of how humans learn to talk. That's why every twit and tweet is music to his ears.

prepares students in the public schools for college enrollment. As part of the College Now program, the University is also introducing a new "Science Now" program for middle and high school students. CUNY will work with the New York Academy of Sciences and New York City's Department of Education to foster interest in the sciences through after-school and summer courses and workshops; an annual science competition that extends existing competition models to students who have not traditionally participated in such contests; and an interactive television program featuring science activities and innovations.

As this special section of CUNY Matters, "The Decade of Science" demonstrates, science is not made in a laboratory; it is made when a young person gets that initial spark of inspiration, that flash of exhilaration. Through the University's Decade of Science, we hope to encourage and sustain that sense of excitement and curiosity, whether in budding scientists or seasoned researchers.

## Tracking Mosquitoes And Preventing Epidemics

**E**VEN AS the mosquito flies, it's a long way from CUNY to Chittagong. Yet this Bangladeshi commercial and manufacturing center was the subject of malaria-mapping research at City College, supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Cooperative Remote Sensing Science and Technology Center. Chittagong, which borders the infamous

SPECIAL SECTION



**SAVING LIVES**  
*Combating malaria and other airborne diseases in South Asia is the work of scientists at City College who seek to predict when epidemics will erupt.*

fewer cases of malaria. We also could measure the temperature from the reflection."

Thanks to Rahman, they also had malaria statistics collected from the Directorate General of Health of the Bangladesh Ministry. "I'm an engineer, and I know the son of the director because we were in the same professional organization," Rahman says. "It was he who helped us get this data. It would have been difficult if not impossible for us to do this study without the help of the government."

This ground data, says Felix Kogan, a physical scientist at the U.S. agency, who is collaborating with Roytman and Rahman, was crucial to the study's success. "The satellite data is remote—not direct—and has to be verified from the ground. With the data Rahman collected, we found correlations and developed a methodology. Without the ground data, we could not say anything about the malaria."

Abdur Rahman Khan, chief of Bangladesh's health department, calls the study "a valuable contribution," adding that it "will be helpful in monitoring malaria epidemics" and in prevention and control.

Because Bangladesh experienced an increase in malaria cases in the 1990s, the researchers looked at the data and then targeted certain years in that time frame. "We chose the years 1997 and 1998 because they represented extremes," Rahman says. "The smallest percentage of cases—18 percent—occurred in 1997 and the largest percentage—24 percent—occurred the year after."

Roytman and Rahman correlated epidemiological and environmental data of Bangladeshi malaria cases with the satel-

opium-producing area called the

Golden Triangle, is known for its mosques and minarets. It's also known for its mosquitoes and a high incidence of malaria. As for the oceanic administration, part of the federal Department of Commerce, it is known for the vast amounts of climate data collected by its polar-orbiting satellites.

The sum of what they learned gave City College Prof. Leonid Roytman and graduate student Atiqur Rahman of Dhaka, Bangladesh, the idea to use the satellite data, collected via remote sensing, to try to predict where and when outbreaks of malaria were likely to occur so the cash-strapped subtropical country could make best use of its limited resources to attack the outbreaks effectively.

"It's hard to predict how widespread the epidemics will be," says Roytman, adding that he was looking for new ways to use the agency's data. "It's like predicting the stock market. By the time the market crashes, it's too late. Because of our study, we are able to predict three months ahead when, where and whether there will be an epidemic."

This is crucial, he says, because the so-called vector-borne diseases—malaria, dengue, dog heartworm and yellow



**KARYL SWARTZ,  
LEHMAN COLLEGE**

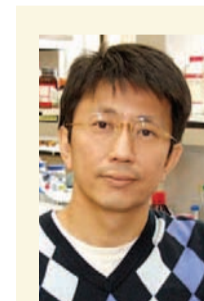
International primate behavior expert Karyl Swartz is taking the old "monkey see, monkey do" approach to get new insights into reaching and teaching people who cannot speak. The Lehman College psychology professor records the thinking processes and behavior of rhesus monkeys as they respond to cognitive tasks.

fever—increasingly have become global public-health concerns. "We studied malaria, the most widely spread, which is coming back in a lot of poor countries," Rahman says. "But our technique may be used on the others."

Roytman and Rahman focused on the western third of Chittagong, where the population is most dense, because 60 to 80 percent of Bangladesh's malaria cases occur there. "The people who live there are indigenous, tribal peoples," Rahman says. "They are in rural areas, where they are most susceptible to mosquitoes, and they are not very educated."

Through the federal agency, Roytman and Rahman had access to two decades' worth of remote data measured by its earth orbiting satellite. The satellite reports information in grids of 4 kilometers by 4 kilometers, about the size of a Bangladeshi village, and highlights areas of lush vegetation by detecting chlorophyll in leaves and reflecting their images. "We also had people on the ground reporting on the quality of vegetation so we could come up with a model," Roytman says.

Since mosquitoes feed on vegetation, "In the areas where there is less vegetation, there are fewer mosquitoes and



**HIROSHI MATSUI,  
HUNTER COLLEGE**

For Hunter College Associate Prof. Hiroshi Matsui, the biggest ideas are the ones on the smallest scale. He hopes that his work, which involves using the body's biological building blocks to fabricate electronic circuits that are thousands of times tinier than microcircuits, may lead to the design and engineering of devices in electronics, communications, solar cells, photonics, drug delivery, tissue engineering and medical imaging.





lite-based vegetation health indices—vegetation condition index, temperature condition index and vegetation health index—to make reasonable forecasts.

“I wanted to do this research because I wanted to try to save people’s lives,” Rahman says, adding that the data can be used to help other countries with other problems. “In addition to malaria, we could predict floods and droughts and air pollution,” he says. Already, Roytman says, they have applied for grants to conduct a more extensive malaria study on Bangladesh and the World Bank has contacted the ocean and atmospheric agency to possibly do a similar study for the South American nation of Colombia.

The ultimate goal for Rahman, who is a research associate for the agency and an engineering consultant for a private U.S. company, is to set up a CUNY/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrative office in Bangladesh as a joint operation with the University of Dhaka.

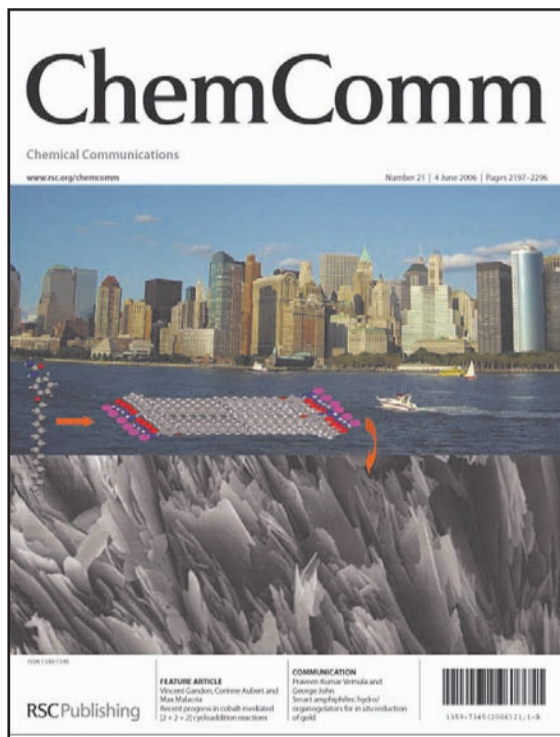
“The center would be a great advantage for CUNY,” Roytman says. “Because the global economies are so interwoven, it is important for us as a university to give our students exposure and skills to deal with an international market. A center like this would be invaluable. It would be a win-win situation for us.”

## Practical Applications Of Nanoparticles

CITY COLLEGE Associate Professor George John struck gold this summer: His recent research, synthesizing gold nanoparticles in a urea-based gel, not only made the cover of the May 24, 2006, edition of the prestigious Royal Society of Chemistry journal, *ChemComm*, but its accompanying iconic cover art also saluted the City of New York.

Under an electron microscope, the gel that John synthesized was stacked in vertical sheets reminiscent of an aerial view of the city’s skyscrapers. The magazine superimposed the two images to create a piece of cover art that was every bit as arresting as the research itself.

The study, titled “Smart Amphiphiles: Hydro/organogelators for In Situ Reduction in Gold,” was one of the magazine’s most accessed articles online.



Prof. John’s recent research, synthesizing gold nanoparticles in a urea-based gel, made the cover of the May 24 edition of the Royal Society of Chemistry Journal *ChemComm*.



Chemists have long been interested in developing ways to create nanoscale solid or semi-solid gels from liquids so that they can be used as templates for drug delivery, cosmetics, separations and biometrics, but there have been few studies on functional use.

John and postdoctoral fellow Praveen Kumar Vemula wanted to know how the gold nanoparticles would arrange themselves in the gel and how stable they would be.

“We wanted to answer these questions: Are they distributed all over the gel? Or are they aligned in a particular orientation along with the gel microstructures? This is

especially interesting in building aligned arrays of gold nanoparticles for possible application in optical devices,” John says.

From June to December 2005, he synthesized various mono-substituted urea derivatives, and the study showed that the amphiphiles—so-called because they have both a hydrophilic and hydrophobic nature—were efficient gelators for water and various organic solvents and carry a free terminal amine group that may reduce the gold to form the nanoparticles.

As is often the case, the details of the scientific research that he carried out might cause a certain numbness in the eyes and mind of a casual reader, but John says that there are very practical and, he would dare say, hoped-for results from this tinkering with amphiphiles and creating of nanoparticles.

“The most important thing,” John says, “is that after the nanoparticles are reduced, they retain their gelatin proper-

## NANOPARTICLES

Dr. George John, professor of Chemistry at City College, seen here with a rotary evaporator, hopes to use byproducts like industrial waste as an alternate feed stock for organic synthesis.



JEFFREY M. HALPERIN, QUEENS COLLEGE

In his latest study on childhood attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, Queens College psychology Prof. Jeffrey M. Halperin is following more than 200 preschoolers, one-third of whom show no signs of AD/HD, for five years. The findings from neuropsychological and academic tests will provide a long-range body of objective data that will help parents, teachers and doctors make informed decisions about appropriate treatment.

## VIRTUAL ‘SHEPARD’

Hunter College Associate Professor Ioannis Stamos, left, and City College Professor George Wolberg with their 3D Leica HDS 2500 camera that scanned Shepard Hall (in background).

ties and trap the gold nanoparticles in the supramolecular assemblies. These gels should help us develop nanostructured-advanced materials from the gels and metal nanoparticles, which may be used in the promising field of supramolecular devices.”

Ultimately, John hopes to use byproducts like industrial waste as an alternate feedstock for organic synthesis.

“My basic interest is the design and synthesis of amphiphilic molecules from bio-based materials,” he says. “That way, we can make the amphiphiles and assemble them so we can make what we need in a bottom-up fashion.”

But this, he says, “is still only a dream.”

## Walking, Virtually, Through Shepard Hall

LET’S SAY you’re going to a Yankees game. But you want to see the seat and the view it will provide before you buy the ticket. What do you do? If City College Professor George Wolberg and Hunter College Associate Professor Ioannis Stamos have anything to say about it, you will simply enter the Stadium’s website and click on the seat to obtain a virtual 360-degree 3-D view of where you’ll be rooting for the home team while eating your peanuts and Cracker Jacks.

Using multiview geometry, coupled with digital photos and data from laser range scanners, Wolberg, in a joint effort with Stamos, is working on an automatic system that will create photorealistic 3-D models of buildings like the Stadium.

“You can do this manually now, but it’s very labor intensive,” Wolberg says. “And even when it is done, you sacrifice details. Right now, this work would take a week; with this system, it would be a matter of minutes.”

As Wolberg and Stamos envision it, the automatic modeling system—which would be a boon to architects, urban and military planners, designers of 3-D car-navigation systems, video-game makers and even Hollywood movie-makers—would be much more efficient than previous methods.

To illustrate the process, Wolberg and Stamos chose Shepard Hall, the 1907 neo-Gothic historic landmark that has become City College’s hallmark. They and their team spent a day taking 24 3-D laser range scans of its rich architecture, which includes pairs of iconic gargoyles, and then spent a few minutes shooting 24 2-D digital photos of the building. “The laser scanner, which weighs about 80 pounds, is on a tripod,” Wolberg says. “With the current technology, it takes 10 to 15 minutes to get each scan.”

The 2-D images or textures were automatically mapped or registered with the 3-D scans and projected onto a pair of models, a process Wolberg likens to draping wallpaper. “We generate a pair of 3-D models of the scene,” he says. The result is a Shepard Hall visible in all its glory, right down to the detailed marking of every stone and the eye of each looming gargoyle. His complete explanation of the complex process is available by going to Google video and typing, “City College Shepard Hall.”

“There will come a time when there will be 3-D digital cameras,” Wolberg says. “And laser range scanners will get even faster, and someday soon we will be able to get the dense 3-D images in the time it takes to walk around the building.”

Or the time it takes to select the best seat in Yankee Stadium.



### Global Warming: A City Under Water?

LONG BEFORE Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" made global warming such a hot topic, CUNY researchers were taking the temperature of the New York metro area to try to forecast the phenomenon's effect on the climate.

Hunter College Professor Bill Solecki, interim director of the CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities, is using the city as a lab for his work, and Queens College Assistant Prof. Stephen Pekar is studying historical salinity changes in the Hudson River due to runoff or discharge from precipitation to throw light on the dynamics of Antarctica ice sheets.

According to Solecki, the city is a perfect lab for understanding how urban environments can respond to and mitigate climate change. "CUNY, as an urban university, is doing some important work, and its role will grow. There are few examples of large, extended metro areas, and New York is one."

Global warming, both researchers say, ultimately may be linked to a variety of changes, including stronger storms, flooding, intense heat waves, increased air pollution and even an influx of asthma attacks.

"There have been significant changes in climate throughout history," says Solecki. "But the rate of change in terms of speed and the extent of the current change over a short period of time are unparalleled in earth history."

In and of themselves the changes that occur during global warming may not seem catastrophic, Pekar says, but their effects can be wide ranging. "Sea surface temperatures increase, and the magic number for hurricanes is 80 degrees. By August 7, 2006, for example, there had been three Category 5 hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and the temperature in the water in New York City that same day was high—78 degrees."

Likewise, in the next century, the global sea level is likely to rise three feet. "This means the shoreline will retreat significantly," Pekar says. "And it means the coastal communities will be more susceptible to flooding."

According to Pekar's local research, which looks at climate data in New York City for the last 6,000 years, warmer may also mean drier. "My studies suggest that the last time it was warmer, which was 5,000 years ago, the salinity was much higher than today, which means that there was less discharge and less precipitation and my thoughts are that there were drier summers."

Pekar's research on the Antarctica ice sheets offers further suggestions regarding New York City's future. "The ice sheets are much more susceptible to climate change than we thought," he says. "If the east and west sections melt, sea level will rise 210 feet, and if the ice sheets in Greenland melt, it will raise sea level 230. At 210

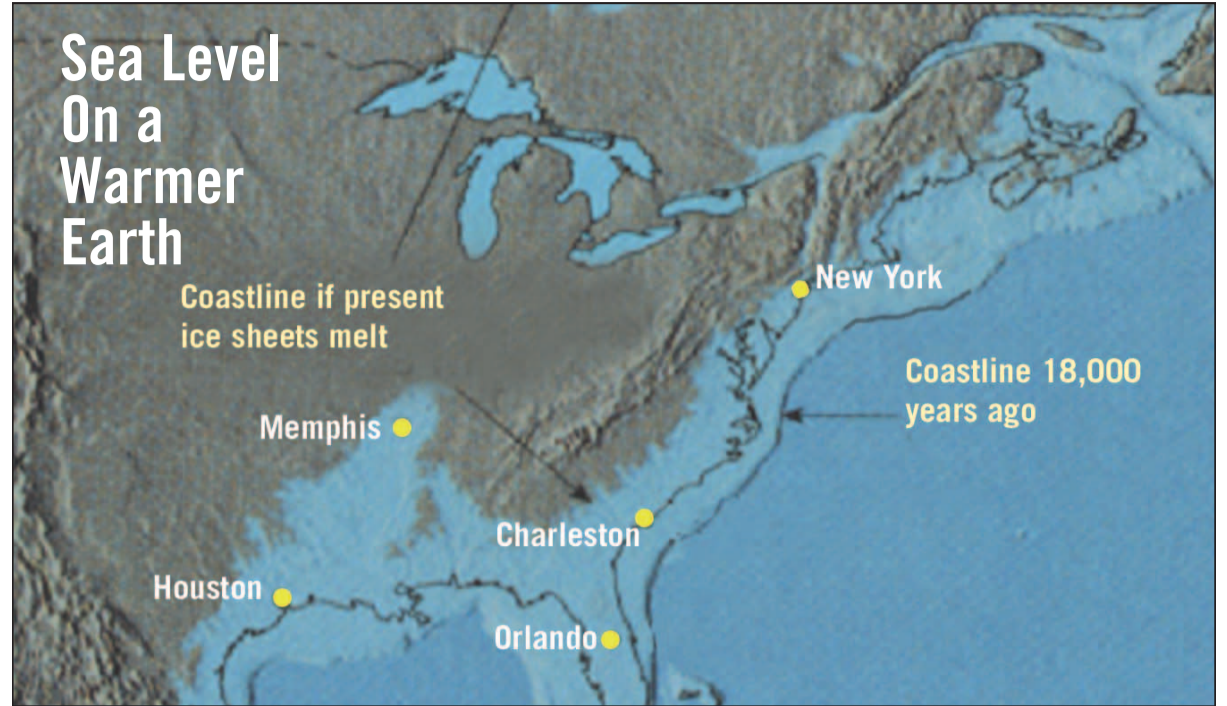


SEAN AHEARN, HUNTER COLLEGE

What do dead crows, Bengal tigers and the Big Apple have in common? They all have been "mapped" by Hunter College Geography Prof. Sean Ahearn.

Unlike conventional road maps, which are static, Ahearn says his maps, which are extensions of the field of geographic information science, allow him to model the world "as a dynamic, spatially correlated phenomenon that is influenced by processes across space, time and over different scales."

And they have taken him all over the map, including Nepal and Thailand, where he has tracked Bengal tigers and ridden elephants with his laptop, seen below. The health departments in the City of Chicago and the State of California are using his models to predict the risk of infection from West Nile virus that is signaled by dying crows, and in New York, he is helping build a digital base-map of the city's infrastructure.

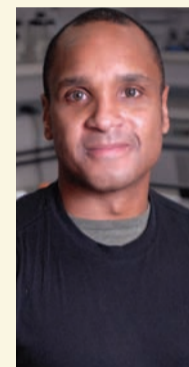


feet, you would have beachfront property in Pennsylvania and every coastal city in the world would be under water. And at 230 feet, the Statue of Liberty would be under water almost up to her shoulders. Even 40 feet destroys every coastal city, and Queens and Brooklyn would be under water and Manhattan would be tiny islands."

The changes that global warming will bring should be viewed as challenges and opportunities, Solecki says, adding that there will be tradeoffs. "There will be less ice to shovel off the sidewalk," he says. "The energy demand in the winter will decrease, but it will be offset by the increase in electricity demand in the summer. The use of more fossil fuels will send up more pollutants and will increase summer asthma attacks. Some parts of the world, like Canada, will benefit agriculturally because of longer growing seasons."

The bottom line, Pekar and Solecki say, is that global warming is a part of the future. "We will be forced to re-evaluate societal structure," Solecki says.

"We need to adapt to these new realities, and what we do will make society more resilient."



DERRICK BRAZILL, HUNTER COLLEGE

The simple social amoeba, *Dictyostelium discoideum*, may be the key to advances in wound healing and organ regeneration and to understanding and halting cancer progression in mammals, according to Hunter College Associate Prof. Derrick Brazill, whose lab is studying how the density of the amoeba's cells changes with the amount of the protein called conditioned medium factor.

### Hurricanes, The Bernoulli Effect, and Other Killers

WHILE KATRINA has focused the eyes of forecasters on the future, Queens College Geology Professor Nicholas K. Coch has put himself in the eye of the hurricane by peering into the past.

The self-described forensic hurricaneologist is studying historic hurricanes, and he says that if history repeats itself, New York City, which was hit in 1821, 1893 and 1938, will really find itself struggling when the next one hits. "No major hurricane has hit a major coastal city except for New York in 1938," he says. "When a hurricane hits a city, it's a whole other ballgame because the subterranean infrastructure, including the subway system, will be affected."

Northern hurricanes are "uniquely dangerous," he says, "because they are infrequent and move two times as fast as Southern ones and the wind field enlarges."

He points to the hurricane of 1893, which made a direct hit on New York City.

"This was the first record of a hurricane's hitting skyscrapers," he says. "When the wind goes between two skyscrapers, it will suck the windows out, and when it gets to the end of the corridor they form, the Bernoulli Effect occurs, and the wind speeds up and the windows will be knocked inward."

The city's unique geographical position makes it particularly vulnerable to damage. "There are only three coasts that have right angles in the United States," Coch says. "The Florida Panhandle, Mississippi, and the area of New York and New Jersey. A right angle is a killer situation for a hurricane, and the right angle formed by New York and New Jersey is the most dangerous in the country. No matter where the hurricane hits, New York City gets flooded because we're the right angle."

By studying hurricanes of the past, Coch says, it's possible to predict the course of future storms. Coch, for instance, recently was able to chart a deadly colonial hurricane of 1635, supplying extensive data so a computer model could be made.

"None of this is hypothesis; all of this is record," he says, adding that he hopes his research saves lives.



**HURRICANE HISTORY** Prof. Nicholas K. Coch studies past hurricanes such as a 1938 hurricane shown here thrashing along a seawall on the New England coast, which killed 10 people in New York City and caused millions of dollars in damage.

# First Black Member of U.S. Signal Corps, a Victor and a Victim

► continued from page 6

of many were still associated with race segregation and oppression of blacks.

Signal Corps records show that later in 1885, there commenced a series of punitive actions against Greene that lasted until he finally agreed to being discharged from the service.

In October of 1885, officials of the Signal Corps issued an order demoting Greene from his position in Pensacola, Fla., where he was in charge, and placing him under a white corpsman who, like Greene, was a First Class Private.

A newspaper article from those days noted that whites in Pensacola had been very unhappy with Greene's being placed there.

Soon after the October demotion, on Nov. 14, 1885, there came a special order telling Greene to proceed to Rochester, New York, to report for duty as an assistant to Sgt. Edward W. McGann, who was in charge of that station.

## A Strange Accusation

Greene's most difficult period would come in the ensuing months, through 1886 and 1887, as he worked there in Rochester.

One claim against Greene seems especially unlikely, given that he had excelled in the militaristic environment of City College, where there was a strict code of conduct and punctuality in those years. With rules that were later deemed excessive, the college gave out demerits for bad conduct or lateness, and would dismiss students who accumulated a hundred demerits in a semester, according a 1907 book *The City College: Memories of Sixty Years*, by Philip J. Mosenthal (Class of '83) and Charles F. Horne (Class of '89).

Given that background, the accusation of August 22, 1886 would seem out of character for Greene.

On that day, Second Lieutenant F.M.M. Beall, a Signal Corps inspector, charged that Greene had filed a false report of his weather observations. Beall was effectively accusing Greene of lying by several minutes about the time on the report.

Beall says that at 2:59 p.m. he went to the office where Greene was supposed to be completing his three o'clock report, but that Greene was not in the office. Beall maintained that Greene had therefore lied about filing a three o'clock report and put this in a letter of reprimand to higher-ups.

In his written defense, obtained also from the National Archives, Greene maintained that he had heard a three o'clock bell as he was leaving the office to file the report and believed that was in fact the time; he also maintained that he had completed the report no earlier than 2:56 p.m.

Given the tone of Beall's threatening letter, Greene apparently felt compelled to add a plea that "I may be given a chance to prove myself, by the strictest obedience to orders and faithful performance of duty in the future, worthy to remain in the service."

In the coming months, the sergeant who was Greene's immediate supervisor, Sgt. McGann, would go on to compile a list of people to whom Greene owed

money, passing that information on to higher-ups.

(Curiously, that accusation seems to be contradicted by an August 23, 1886 "Inspector's Confidential Report" in which Beall explicitly stated that Greene was "not in debt.")

Nonetheless, a coup de grace came nine months later, as Sgt. McGann asserted that on the morning of May 19, 1887, Rochester authorities had arrested Greene "in a low colored gambling resort...bringing disgrace on this office and the service..."

Signal Corps authorities said at the time that Greene admitted the offenses and agreed that he was not fit to remain in the service.

## Racial Code Words

The final official document in the matter was written May 21, 1887 by the new Signal Corps Commander, Gen. Adolphus W. Greely.

The letter, addressed to the Adjutant General, is extraordinary in that it states its case against Greene even while opening the door to a belief that Green's race may have been a factor.

Greely wrote that his predecessor (Gen. Hazen, who had died the previous January) had been afraid to take action against Greene because, having opposed Greene's enlistment in the first place, Hazen feared he would be accused of race bias.

"The present Chief Signal Officer has no such fears," he wrote, referring to himself in the third person and adding that he "believes that his four years service as an officer of colored troops renders it certain that any recommendation which he makes in this case cannot be considered as emanating from an officer prejudiced against the colored race."

It's worthy of mention that Hazen himself, three years earlier, had said virtually the same thing—that his own experience

dismissal in 1887, the new Signal Corps Commander, Gen. Greely, went on to explain that he "does not recommend a court-martial, on the ground of the expense to the United States and because of the experience the Army has once had in trying a colored cadet, when a degree of public excitement entirely disproportionate to the case was engendered."

The last reference was apparently to the case of Lt. Henry O. Flipper, who in 1877 became the first African-American to graduate from West Point. In 1880 Flipper, serving as quartermaster at Fort Davis in Texas, was charged with embezzlement and court-martialed. Though acquitted on some charges, he was found guilty of "conduct unbecoming an officer" and given a dishonorable discharge.

For the rest of his life Flipper tried to convince the country he was falsely accused. In 1999, more than half a century after his death, President Bill Clinton pardoned him.

Of course, it was a particular blow to full disclosure that Gen. Greely chose not to court-martial Greene. That decision had the effect of preventing the public—and history—from judging more fairly the actions taken against Greene. A full military trial would have required both sides to put their cases on the public table.

Little was published about the Greene affair in 1887, other than reports in the *Army and Navy Journal* and *The New York Times* citing official statements against Greene, who was only 22 years old as he left the service that he had once so deeply and patriotically wanted to represent.

## Why So Patriotic?

Reviewing the Greene case, a question comes naturally to mind. Why did a young man so talented and with stellar credentials choose to enter the U.S. Army as a private, with relatively scant pay, scarcely more than a dollar a day?

Other members of the Class of '84 had aspirations more conventional for the best and brightest of New York. One class member, Julius Mayer, would go on to become the State Attorney General. Another, Alfred Stieglitz, did not complete studies leading to his degree, but achieved great renown as a photographer and art collector.

One answer to the question why Greene was obsessed with joining the army lies in the nature of mid-19th century City College. It was then a virtual "child of West Point" with "West Point traditions of strict discipline and the importance of higher mathematics, of drawing, and of thorough training in English," says the book, *The City College: Memories of Sixty Years*. Also, the first two CCNY presidents—Horace Webster and Webb—were West Point alumni.

Add to the above another fact—that large numbers of City grads not only served during the Civil War, but were among the soldiers who put down the 1863 Manhattan Draft Riots, in which mobs of Irish immigrants beat and lynched local blacks—and one can see why service in the U.S. army would have had a singular appeal for a native black New Yorker like Greene.



After his discharge in June of 1887, Greene returned to live with his father Hallet, his mother Susan, and his sisters Cornelia and Lucia back on W. 31st Street. Then sometime after 1900 he married an immigrant from Guyana named Lillian, with whom he raised at least one child, a daughter named Louise, according to Census records.

Greene took jobs where he could find them, but it seems he did not secure anything remotely commensurate with the promise he once showed as a student at City College decades earlier.

Nineteenth-century Manhattan was an especially rough place for African-

Americans. And in the decades after the Civil War, whites increasingly came to feel that it "was time...to come to an understanding with the Best Men of the South, end misguided reform efforts, and unite in defense of property," says the 1999 Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*, written by Brooklyn College History Professor Edwin G. Burrows and Graduate Center and John Jay History Professor Michael Wallace.

Unhappy in New York, most of the Greene family moved to Fairfield, Conn. and William went first to Brooklyn and then to New Britain, Conn. In the early 1920s in New Britain he worked at the R and E Manufacturing company. A 1928 town directory lists his job as janitor. By 1931 he and his wife no longer showed up in the address listings, and the year and circumstances of their deaths are unknown so far.

But in Fairfield, a distant relative (by marriage) is still living in the house that William Hallett Greene's parents occupied in the early 1900's. Her name is Edith Gibson Rodgers. She does missionary work with the First Baptist Church of Stratford, Conn., and in her younger years had been a psychiatric nurse.

Fascinated when told Greene's story, Rodgers allowed *CUNY Matters* to spend hours in the dusty and extremely cluttered attic, where a search turned up a number of old documents and old correspondences, some of which bore William Hallett Greene's name but said virtually nothing beyond mentioning him.

Among the items at the house was a 19th-century catechism of the Westminster Assembly, bearing William H. Greene's signature. The book began with the theological question "What is the chief and highest end of man?" followed by the answer: "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him for ever."

Rodgers said she believes the actions taken by Army superiors against Greene were "atrocities" and that Greene should be considered a hero for what he went through, whether he gambled or not.

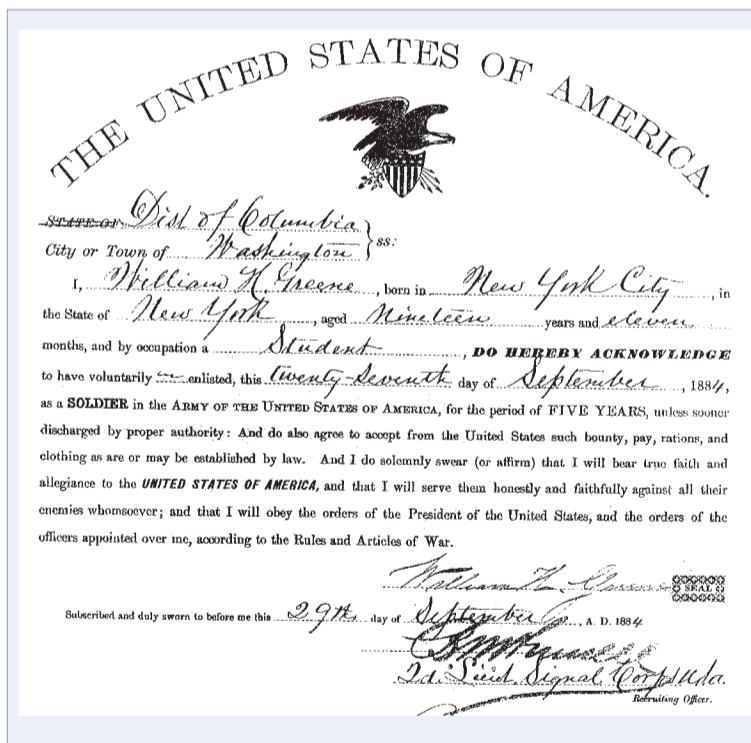
"The burdens on his shoulders were ten times greater than anything black soldiers faced" during World War II, she said.

"The whip might not have been lashing at his back but it was lashing his mind," Rodgers added. "He had all this education and they tried to break him. But they couldn't break him."

Greene must have felt somewhat broken, but how much so is a question that his haunting 19-year-old eyes cannot answer.



CCNY President Alexander Webb interceded to get Greene into the Signal Corps.



Enlistment papers signed by William H. Greene. A 'Scars and Marks' section (not shown) said: 'a colored man: Enlisted for the Signal Corps, U.S. Army by order of the Secretary of War.'

commanding "colored" troops precluded any accusation of racism.

Explaining his position back then against Greene's enlistment, Hazen had written: "I have never had prejudice on account of color...and was one of the first officers in the regular army commissioned to command regular colored troops." (That letter of July 23, 1884 to then Secretary of War Lincoln is in a compilation put together by Scholarly Resources of Wilmington, Delaware, titled *Blacks in the Military: Essential Documents*.)

In successfully recommending Greene's

## FACULTY HONORS

### Pardlo Wins Book Prize

Medgar Evers College Professor Gregory Pardlo has won the 2007 American Poetry Review/Honickman First Book Prize, becoming the first writer of color to win the prestigious award.



Pardlo, an Assistant Professor of English and creative writing, received the prize for his manuscript of poems, *Totem*, which will be published this fall by Copper Canyon Press.

*Totem* was selected from a pool of 850 submissions. In addition to publication of the manuscript, the American Poetry Review/Honickman Prize offers a \$3,000 award.

### SEEK Director Honored

Professor Frank S. Franklin, director of the Queens College SEEK Program for academically disadvantaged students, was recently honored by the United Negro College Fund, along with former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

At the organization's 63rd anniversary dinner, Franklin received the United Negro College Fund/Greater New York Inter-Alumni Council's Distinguished Alumni Award for his fund-raising service and active participation. (The former presidents were honored for their fundraising efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.)

### Fellowships to Professors

Five Brooklyn College junior humanities faculty members have received Whiting Foundation fellowships.

The Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation awards are for non-tenured faculty deemed to be among "the very best teachers." The winners are released from teaching duties so they can pursue scholarly interests.

Receiving a full-year Whiting Fellowship is Assistant Professor Celina Su, of the Political Science Department.

Receiving one-semester Fellowships were: Assistant Professor Jillian Cavanaugh, of the Anthropology and Archaeology Department; Assistant Professor Jennifer L. Ball, of the Art Department; Assistant Professor Rachel Kousser, also of the Art Department; and Assistant Professor Saam Trivedi, of the Philosophy Department.

### ESL 'Teacher of the Year'

An instructor who for 20 years has taught English to speakers of other languages has been named ESOL (English as a Second Language) Teacher of the Year by *The New York Times*.

Ellen Quish, an instructor and program developer at LaGuardia Community College's Adult Learning Center, was the winner of the city-wide competition.

"*The New York Times* is delighted to recognize Ellen Quish...in our first-ever ESOL Teachers of the Year program," said Diane McNulty, executive director of community affairs and media relations at the *Times*.

The winning teachers were recognized on February 22 at a special ceremony where Quish received \$2,500 and a commemorative plaque.

## White House, Gracie Mansion Chefs Praise City Tech Program

In its six-decade history, the hospitality management department of New York City College of Technology has earned a reputation for producing chefs for some of the world's greatest restaurants, but 2007 will go down in the review books as a five-star year.

That's because a pair of chefs with City Tech credentials—one an alumnus, one still a student—are working in two of the most famous kitchens in the country—at the White House and at Gracie Mansion.

Bill Yosses, who graduated in 1982 with an associate's degree, got the sweet job in January when Laura Bush asked him to step in as the presidential pastry chef. The news hit the national wires, serving up scoops of culinary-culled headlines like "Pastry Chef Joining the Upper Crust."

That same month Feliberto Estevez—who has four more classes to complete before earning his associate's degree—also found himself in the spotlight. Mayor Michael Bloomberg appeared at City Tech for his annual State of the City Address, and His Honor right away let it be known that City Tech was close to his heart; that is to say, his stomach.

Bloomberg told the gathering that student Estevez was top chef at Gracie Mansion, and he furthermore remarked that City Tech "has one of the finest hospitality management programs in the nation."

The Mayor said, "One of City Tech's current students happens to be the most important man at Gracie Mansion, the executive chef, Feliberto Estevez." Then Bloomberg quipped, "I think I get to eat his final exam, so I hope he does well."

Estevez has been cooking for mayoral events ever since Bloomberg was elected in 2002.

The recipe for the successes of Yosses and Estevez? Each gives copious credit to an essential ingredient: City Tech.

### Changing Careers, Sweetly

For Yosses, City Tech offered a chance to change careers in mid-life and, along the way, land a cream—that is, dream—job.

The 53-year-old Yosses was born in Toledo, Ohio, and growing up there, "dinnertime was sacred," Yosses said. "My mother loved to cook and bake recipes from magazines."

There was something about baking that touched him pleasantly in his spirit, Yosses said. But in his twenties and early thirties, he found himself working full-time in the sales department of Air France.

Then, when those inner connections to the activity he really loved—baking—grew too strong to ignore, a ready-bell within him went off and Yosses decided to enroll at City Tech.

He came to love the place.

Yosses said that, like him, many other students were career changers. "There were people out of high school, and there were people older than I, people who were lawyers and accountants," he said, still in awe at the diversity of the study body, in ethnic and economic background.

He still remembers his instructors. "These people inspire you for life," he remarked in a telephone interview.

Pretty much right after graduation, Yosses got what he wanted, a chance to practice his newly acquired skills in interesting places. "I was lucky enough to get a placement in Europe, thanks to Professor Thomas Ahrens, who was a great friend and mentor to many of us," he recalled.

His career path took him to several noted restaurants, including Josephs by



While visiting City Tech recently, Mayor Michael Bloomberg proudly let it be known that his top chef at Gracie Mansion, Feliberto Estevez, was a City Tech student.

Citarella, Bouley and Tavern on the Green.

And then earlier this year—in mid-life—he reached a career pinnacle of sorts, as he was appointed chef at the White House.

Yosses says the presidential palate runs toward healthy fruit and fruit-based desserts, although "the Bushes both love chocolate. Mrs. Bush loves food and loves talking about menus. She has lots of ideas and is always looking for things that are original, healthy and tasty."

What Yosses especially enjoys about his work is the act of creating. "I enjoy making pastries because it is precise and it has an architectural aspect," he said.

### To the (Gracie) Mansion Born

Estevez, who is from the Dominican Republic, got his first culinary crash courses in his early teens as he helped his mother make family meals. "She was a school-teacher, and she came home every day during the siesta period, from noon to 2, to put the finishing touches on the beans and rice,



City Tech graduate Bill Yosses is the chief pastry chef at the White House, where he prepares desserts for the President, First Lady and guests.

and I would chop things and add garlic and spices to the dishes," he recalled fondly.

He eventually immigrated to the United States, settling in New York. Along the way he began working at jobs that very much suited his tastes. Estevez was promoted from cook to banquet chef at the Four Seasons in only eight years, and was the executive chef for Manhattan's Chez Louis before he went to Gracie

Mansion.

But school always seemed forbidding to him. "I never was a good student," said the 42-year-old Estevez.

Eventually, he concluded that if he wanted to continue climbing the culinary ladder, a degree would give him a helpful boost. Besides, he's recently harbored thoughts of teaching the culinary arts someday.

And so he enrolled at City Tech, where his long-held fears were put to rest, and his dreams were encouraged.

The courses there, Estevez says, are a combination of practical training and liberal arts instruction, a blend that he finds pleasing. "I'm taking math, English and accounting along with the food and wine classes," he said.

The City Tech classes have helped him deal more efficiently with his current duties, which include planning, purchasing and preparing, Estevez says. At Gracie Mansion, where the mayor often hosts ethnic-themed events, Estevez and his staff

of four cooks are called upon to create a variety of melting-pot dishes that celebrate the diversity of the Big Apple's culinary culture.

"It's a unique opportunity to work with so many different cuisines," he said, adding that "we reach out to community chefs, and they help us. Every week is different. I've done Irish breakfasts, Italian foods, and during the summertime, we have barbecues. Every week is different."

### Now Hoping to Teach

Yosses and Estevez are looking forward to many more dinners in their respective, famous kitchens. "This is something I have wanted all my life," Yosses said.

"I've reached my goal, and I'm happy to stay as long as they want me."

Estevez can't wait to get his degree, which he's hoping to earn in a year.

"I wish I could take a full load of classes in each semester, but it's not possible. I'm too busy in the kitchen," he said. "One day, I would love to teach cooking, and for that you need credibility. That's why I want to finish the degree. I want to be prepared for the future."

# Back to the Future: Milton Regained

By Gary Schmidgall

As Joseph Wittreich, distinguished professor of English at the Graduate Center and Hunter College, approaches the fresh woods and pastures new of retirement, he has chosen to answer a simple but large question about the most complex, radical, and political (also politicized) figure in the English literary pantheon: John Milton.

Consisting of just three long, densely end-noted chapters, *Why Milton Matters: A New Preface to His Writings* (Palgrave) has a passionate, valedictory "this I believe" quality, capping a long career dedicated to the poet. If one begins the book dubious of Wittreich's view that "most of us agree" Milton (1608-1674) really matters in 2007, by the end one is certainly convinced he should matter.

Wittreich also mounts a vigorous case for the surprising assertion that Milton is "an 'emphatically American' poet." His quoted phrase is from the pioneer 19th-century feminist Margaret Fuller, and her praise of Milton is key to Wittreich's own view of the poet: "He understood the nature of liberty, of justice," she wrote. "He is one of the Fathers of the Age, of that new Idea which agitates the sleep of Europe" (a reference to the libertarian revolutions of 1848).

Arguing that "it is high time to say that Milton is back in season," Wittreich notes that Hell's Angels have ridden their heat with text from *Paradise Lost* in their pockets, that Malcolm X was ushered into his discovery of the Muslim religion by reading the epic poem while in prison, and that novels like Ralph Ellison's *Juneteenth* and Toni Morrison's *Paradise* resonate a potent Miltonic context.

And then there was the sudden celebrity after 9/11 of Milton's valedictory poem, *Samson Agonistes*. Wittreich notes there were in 2003-4 no fewer than six New York City public readings of the 1,800-line "dramatic poem" based on the Bible's Book of Judges. Why? Wittreich suggests the root reason is that *Samson* perfectly epitomizes Milton's supreme gift as a poet and polemicist: the ability to tempt readers into mutually contradictory interpretations of the characters he creates, most famously his Adam, Eve, Satan, and Samson.

For a world now clueless in Gaza (and the whole fractured Middle East), Milton's Samson, "eyeless in Gaza," presents two huge either-or questions. Does his destruction of the Philistine temple represent the noble "victory of patience and self-repression—the Divine overcoming of evil with good" (as one critic argues)? Or does Samson, by turning himself into a human WMD, figure all those people in history who "ruthlessly override ethical objections" and take upon themselves the office of scourge of God (as another critic argues)? Or scourge of Allah (Sunni or Shiite Allah?—take your pick). No wonder that, after 9/11, the Boston Globe ran an op-ed titled "Was Samson a Terrorist?"

For Wittreich, such profoundly contradictory but arguable ways to read *Samson Agonistes* are precisely why Milton should matter: he forces the reader to think. Wittreich values Milton, finally, as a subversive questioner: "Milton's project," he

writes, "is to interrogate, often with the intention of disposing of, the cherished commonplaces of his culture." Thought-provoking contradictions are "at the heart of the poetic vision." Wittreich even consciously echoes Whitman's famous line—"I contradict myself,/(I am large, I contain multitudes)"—when

he writes, "Some contradictions may achieve resolution in *Paradise Lost*, but not all do, as befits a poetic universe that is large, that contains multitudes."

The frustrating contradictions and ambiguities of Milton's three great final poems, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*,

champions moral and political freedom." Milton was a rebel with a cause—not the Good Old Cause of Cromwell's republic, but the cause of the individual's reasoned pursuit of truth. This is surely why

Wittreich often refers to Milton as "a sect of one" and describes him as an author always inviting us to "read rebelliously."

Wittreich does not draw the connection explicitly, but clearly he believes that attentive reading of Milton would strengthen our desire (and ability) to resist the threats to liberty and justice that have arisen during the current presidency. If you care about Abu Ghraib, rendition, justice Guantánamo-style or about government propaganda, surveillance, secrecy, and censorship, Milton's interrogatory and resisting habits of mind should matter.

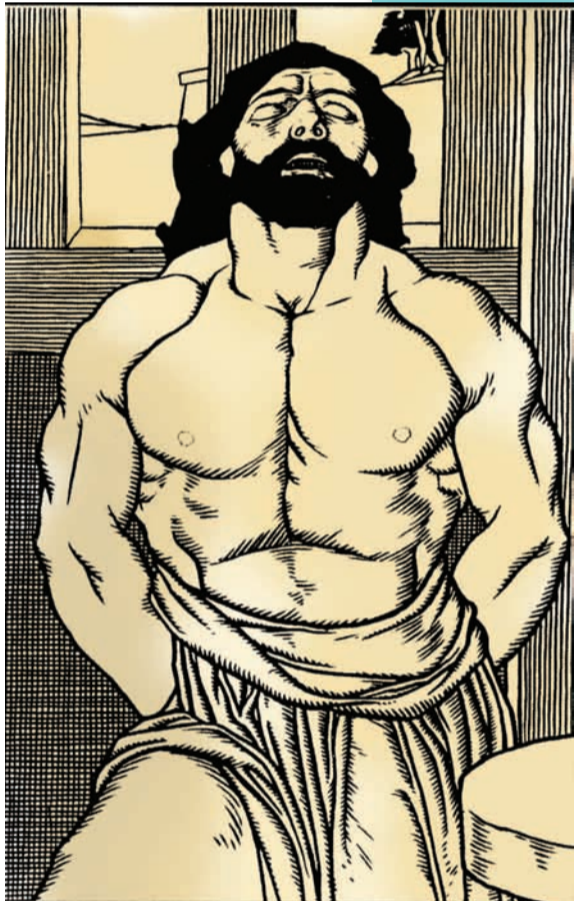
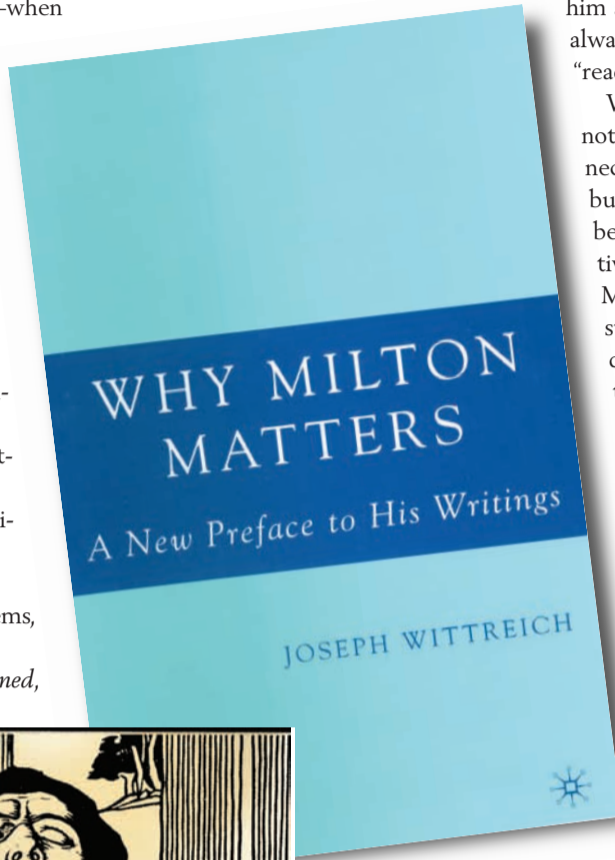
This is to imagine an ideal world, which, in fact, was Milton's ultimate goal. Finding "the earthly foundations for a new Jerusalem of the spirit," Wittreich asserts, is "the very heart of Milton's last poems." They remain decidedly au courant, Wittreich says several times, because they

were written "in the future tense."

Back in the real America, I worry. What really matters here is whether the latest round went to Rosie or Donald agonistes, Paris Hilton's global positioning, which basketball teams will make the Final Four, who will be left standing in "Survivor: Fiji." I Googled "reality tv" and got more than four million links! What matters is stuff that doesn't matter one tiny bit.

*Why Milton Matters* is unlikely to make it into Oprah's book club. The author's deep immersion in Milton's works and 250 years of critical hue and cry will most delight his fellow Miltonists—and doubtless provoke them to debate.

Still...we clearly need a wake-up call from our deep REM sleep of reason, of which reality TV is but one glaring symptom. Who better to produce that wake-up call than Milton, whose "usual haunt," Wittreich believes, is "the mind, awakening to more and more reality," and whose "larger project" is always to show "a world awakening to new possibilities." As Wordsworth famously wrote more than 200 years ago, "Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour." The world still hath need of thee.



Sketch of Samson

and *Samson*, are for Wittreich "a goad to truth" and "testify to the enduring value of discussion, debate, dispute, dissent." They also remind us that easy binaries—Roundhead or Royalist? Democrat or Republican? Arab or Israeli? Hamas or Fatah?—offer a perfect excuse for avoiding serious reasoning: "The temptation is always to choose sides when the wiser recourse may be to choose not to choose."

How, then, to read *Samson Agonistes*? Applying the poem to the war in Iraq, Wittreich chides the U.S. for its eagerness "to practice the politics of retaliation. ... America has yet to learn from Milton's tragedy that redemption comes not through repetition of the Samson story but resistance to it." The real lesson of *Samson* for Wittreich is that "blood spilled in violence begets more violence"—a lesson now writ in 64-point font in Baghdad.

A corollary point repeatedly emphasized in *Why Milton Matters* is Milton's dedication to individual liberty, the "master-theme" of his prose works and, especially, of *Paradise Lost*, which "everywhere

*The real lesson of Samson for Wittreich is that 'blood spilled in violence begets more violence.'*

## Poetry, From Rome to NY

*Low Italian: Poems*, a debut collection by George Guida of the New York City College of Technology, conveys the comic and tragic aspects of ethnic consciousness.



Guida is the English professor who co-founded the Intercollegiate Poetry Slam (contest) at the Bowery Poetry Club in Greenwich Village. One reviewer of his new book called Guida a "comic genius."

Another admirer, Michael Palma, who is a translator of Dante's *Inferno* and poetry editor of *Italian Americana*, said of *Low Italian*, "Those who never were Italian will be given a rare insight into what it feels like."

The new book of poems was published by Bordighera Press, which specializes in projects dealing with Italians in the United States.

## Latino Catholics

David Badillo of Lehman College believes that to fully understand the Latino experience, one must comprehend the community's relationship with the Catholic Church.

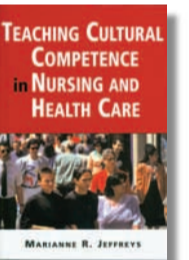
In his book, *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church*, Badillo does precisely that, examining the history of Latino Catholicism in New York City, Miami, San Antonio and Chicago.

Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press, Badillo's book integrates the experiences of various Latino groups, including Puerto Ricans (who are Americans by birth) and immigrant Mexicans, Cubans and Dominicans.

Dr. Badillo is Associate Director for Research at Lehman College's Bronx Institute, which is dedicated to discussing and analyzing issues in the borough.

## Cultural Diversity in Nursing

Marianne R. Jeffreys, Professor of Nursing at the College of Staten Island, has written a book showing how the teaching of nursing must change in a new multicultural world.



*Teaching Cultural Competence in Nursing and Health Care*, published by the Springer Publishing Company of New York, is a 209-page guide providing nursing educators with the "resources and tools" necessary to begin "teaching cultural competence."

Knowledge about various cultures can "make the great difference in promoting wellness, preventing illness...and enhancing the quality of life for all individuals, families and communities," Jeffreys says in the preface.

## Drugs, Democracy in Brazil

In his book, *Drugs and Democracy in Rio De Janeiro*, John Jay College of Criminal Justice Professor Enrique Desmond Arias takes an ethnographic approach to understanding urban violence.



Arias, Assistant Professor of Government, looks at the ongoing problems of crime and political corruption that have led to widespread misery and human rights violations, not only in Brazil but in many new democracies in Latin America.

Arias says the challenge is to build new social networks committed to controlling violence. *Drugs and Democracy* was published by The University of North Carolina Press.



# A Room With Purviews

## Blasting, Billowing, Bursting Forth with Knowledge, Quietly

**I**N THE SILENT sound-proofed room, knowledge speaks softly. It is in this room that you may see a spark of a new theory on the origins of life, feel the rhythms of a jazz composition, imagine the swoosh of an exotic fish or perhaps shed a tear for the measured cry of a reformer seeking justice in post-apartheid South Africa. The volumes that line the walls of the Dissertation Reading Room, a library-within-a-library tucked inside CUNY's Graduate Center, are where the expanse of human experience lies: biology to music, languages to zoology—hundreds of pages for each dissertation, more than 1.3 million pages in all.

Fundamentally, the dissertation reading room honors scholarship.

"By locating it on the first floor, in an elegant room, we pay tribute to the life of the mind," said President William P. Kelly. "This room reminds current doctoral students of their primary responsibility, to produce new knowledge."

A professorial space, the dissertation room is unlike so much of the outside world that has become democratized beyond recognition in an emerging digital age. "The tradition we extend has its origins in the monastic creation of manuscripts," President Kelly said. "Like those scholars, we are intimately involved in the preservation and generation of knowledge. A room such as this speaks to that genesis, to the title professor—someone who shares his knowledge with others. It's the determining activity of the doctoral enterprise."

This storehouse of doctoral enterprises also has practical value; it is the first space, Kelly says, to which he takes potential supporters of the Graduate Center. "It is an

objective correlative of what we do so well here," he said.

It is also the embodiment of the University's most advanced learning, the pursuit of the doctorate, a somewhat recent phenomenon in the history of public higher education in New York City. The University awarded its first Ph.D.s in 1965, four years after the Graduate Center was created by an act of the State Legislature and more than a century after The Free Academy, the forerunner of today's University, was chartered.

The dissertation room's contents represent the growth of the Graduate Center itself. More than 648 linear feet of blond wood enshrine the most recent of more than 6,600 dissertations—those written since 1989. The balance is in the regular stacks, snaking through the library's second floor. All but three of 31 disciplines are

represented in the dissertation room. Business dissertations are at Baruch College, engineering work is at City College, and criminal justice projects are at John Jay College.

In the last four years alone, the increase in the number of doctoral students, and the number of completed dissertations, has risen dramatically. Two hundred and four dissertations were deposited in the library during the 2002-2003 academic year. By 2004-2005, the number jumped to 285. And in 2005-2006, the library received 334, according to chief librarian Julie Cunningham.

The dissertations, organized by year of completion and then alphabetized by author, create a candy box of reds (math and political science) greens (anthropology, chemistry, earth and environmental sciences), blues (music, classics, comparative

literature, urban education), browns (history and speech), blacks (art history and engineering) and oranges (economics). Each colored spine represents an academic discipline. Blue binders deposited last year mark the first dissertations in urban education, and the newest of the Graduate Centers offerings.


Dissertations line two tiers of walls in the reading room: a set on the ground floor adorns shelves wrapped around conventional library study tables, and a set above fills shelves on a walk-around mezzanine reached by a vintage Victorian staircase saved from the century-old site, formerly the B. Altman Department Store building.

The works are the product of years, perhaps lifetimes, of study and reflection by doctoral candidates. They have inquired into mice and humans, water and earth, and uncovered some new facet of learning for the world to consider. Read their pages, study their compositions, peruse their photographs, and be reminded that these are also testimonials of late-night toiling, from the young composers and authors to the up-from-the-outer-borough master's students seeking greater understanding into the social fabric of New York City.


In 1998, Adam Habib, a South African political scientist who had withstood imprisonment for his opposition to apartheid, wrote of the rigors of the dissertation process in his preface to *Structural Constraints, Resources and Decision-Making: A Study of South Africa's Transition to Democracy*. "Had it not been for the late night duties he imposed on me in the first 14 months of his life," he wrote in acknowledging the "assistance" of his newborn son, Irfan, "this dissertation definitely would not have been completed as quickly as it was."

While many of the topics on the

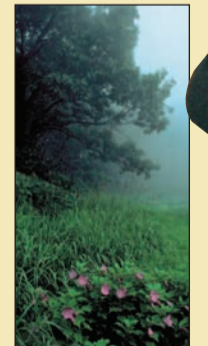
**SOME DOCTORAL THEMES**




**VINCENT HENRY**, a former New York City Police Department sergeant, studied the psychological impact of exposure to death in contemporary urban policing. He completed his dissertation shortly before the 9/11 attack.



**FRIDA KAHLO'S LIFE** has been explored in Hayden Herrera's 1981 dissertation which led to the best-selling biography and feature film.



**ROBERT CANDIDO'S DISSERTATION** documented how more than 100 species of flora native to the woodlands and wetlands of a Bronx park have disappeared in the last 60 years.



**THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY** in post-apartheid South Africa under Nelson Mandela was examined by Adam Habib in 1998.

shelves seem at least broad enough to be recognizable as the evident work of an historian or a student of literature, stumbers on what seem extremely narrow subjects are to be found, as well. Consider, for instance: *The Functional Morphology of the Postcranium of Ptilocercus and Tupaiines (Scandentia, Tupaiidae): Implications for the Relationships of Primates and other Archontan Mammals*. Eric Sargis gave good years of research and writing to this project, which got the stamp of approval in August, 2000. It is 317 pages that can grip the attention even of a generalist, who simply enjoys learning about living things.

On page 32, Sargis talks about the grasping capabilities of tree shrews, the talents of which, we learn, have been in question since 1927. Then, on page 39, he offers for our enjoyment pictures of the Tupaia minor—many readers might know this mouse-like mammal by its more common name, the lesser tree shrew—as it clutches crickets with one hand and reverses its hind feet. On the next page, see tupaia minor with right foot in plantigrade posture—the shrew walking on the soles of its feet—and its “divergent left pollex” or innermost digit of the forelimb or thumb grasping a dowel. Readers learn how versatile is this diurnal, albeit nervous, creature, found only in the wilds of India or Southeast Asia.

Some of the work here has made its way into popular culture. Hayden Herrera’s 1981 dissertation, *Frida Kahlo: Her Life, Her Art* became *Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo* upon which the 2002 film *Frida*, starring Salma Hayek, was based. Art History Executive Officer Kevin Murphy said Herrera’s was the “first scholarly and definitive biography” of the Mexican artist.

Herrera, for her part, described the labors of writing a dissertation as a life-altering experience. She had planned on a life at work in a museum upon completing her studies at the Graduate Center.

Instead, she has become a biographer and has published books on Arshile Gorky, Henri Matisse, Mary Frank and Joan Snyder, as well as another book on Frida Kahlo featuring her paintings specifically.

“It was unimaginable to me that I could write a book, she said. “Writing it gave me a great deal of confidence and a sense of independence.” Currently, Herrera is at work on a biography about the sculptor Isamu Noguchi.

Occasionally, a dissertation takes on an unexpected, and poignant, timeliness. Vincent Henry, formerly a member of the New York City Police Department and now Associate Professor and Director of the Homeland Security Management Institute at Long Island University, deposited his criminal justice dissertation in June 2001. His topic: *The Police Officer as Survivor: The Psychological Impact of Exposure to Death in Contemporary Urban Policing*.

Henry focused on how exposure to death in the line of duty affects the lives of police officers. He studied the subject for 10 years. Fourteen weeks later, he saw his theories played out during 9/11. His dissertation drew on interviews with scores of rookie officers, sergeants, crime-scene investigators and homicide detectives. They told tales of murders and suicides and accidental deaths; of killings, of

solving killings and even of seeing fellow officers slain. And they provided rich accounts of the smells, sights and sounds that accompanied the deaths they witnessed.

His work now has a catchy lay title. *Death Work: Police, Trauma, and the Psychology of Survival* (Oxford University Press, 2004). Henry also was the first American police officer to be awarded a Fulbright Fellowship. He jokes that he is probably the first published author-Fulbright Fellow-Ph.D. to direct New York City traffic.

Many dissertations have won awards in their fields. For example, Soledad Cabeza de Vaca wrote her 1993 dissertation, *Internal Clock and Memory Processes in Animal Timing*, for the Learning Processes and Behavior Analysis program in psychology. It won a James McKeen Cattell Award from the New York Academy of Sciences. According to psychology Executive Officer Bruce Brown, Cabeza de Vaca’s research with pigeons “led to a new interpretation of the effect of the interruption of timed stimulus ... and suggested that memory for accumulated time decays during the gap.” Confused? Don’t be.

Cabeza de Vaca says her work with pigeons was meant to understand behaviors as simple as why humans get antsy at traffic lights and seem to have a built-in clock to anticipate when the light will change. “We do not know much about how this remarkable ability to anticipate events and act accordingly works,” she said in a recent interview. Cabeza de Vaca selected pigeons for her research, she said, because they’re hearty, live long lives, and are easy to train. Also, human behavior and a pigeon’s performance are based on the same basic principles, she said. “Many animals, including humans, use time as a cue for behaving,” she explained. “So, we studied what happens when the timing cue is disturbed or interrupted.”

Cabeza de Vaca, 56, from Madrid, Spain, is now an assistant professor studying the neurobiology of drug abuse in the Department of Psychiatry at New York University School of Medicine. She says she hasn’t been up to the dissertation room to see her work bound there.

“But I will. It’s something I’ve wanted to do, to bring back my own memories,” she said.

Another author contemplated the big band halls of New York City.

Consider *Composition and Performance in Contemporary New York City: Big Bands, 1989-1999*. Ph.D. author Alexander Stewart, who told his story in 480 pages, went inside the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, observing and asking questions about the trumpet section, trombone section, saxophone and rhythm sections of the band known for its presence at the Village Vanguard every Monday night for the past 40 years. He interviewed 38 jazz musicians from 1998 to 1999 and presented his dissertation in April 2000.

More than a few doctoral candidates take on their Ph.D. work as a second career. Some are past mid-life. Consider the story of Esther Gitman, 66, who launched her Ph.D. in history in 1999 and



MATERNAL GUIDING LIGHT

# The Dissertation Assistant Who Eases the Pain

You’ve completed your coursework, chosen a dissertation topic and gotten it approved. You’ve researched it, written it and defended it before a faculty committee. But, whether you’re a chemist, a classicist or scholar in any of 30 or so other disciplines, you’ve got one more hurdle on the road to your Ph.D. You must deposit your dissertation with Judy Waldman at the Graduate Center’s Mina Rees Library.

Doctoral candidates receive 13 pages of instructions on how to prepare their dissertations. Included are specifications for margins, fonts, layout, pagination, graphics and more. As CUNY’s dissertation assistant, it’s Waldman’s job to make sure those specifications are met. In fact, Waldman is far more than an enforcer; she also considers herself a sort of maternal guiding light to students at the culmination of their Ph.D. programs.

The ease with which computers help to make corrections to formatting errors is one reason that producing a dissertation is less of a nightmare than it used to be, some recent Ph.D.’s say. “By the time you get to that point [of depositing your dissertation], you’re so euphoric that you’ve finally finished that it’s not really a big deal,” to follow the rules, said Edward (Ted) Merwin, a 2002 Ph.D. in Theatre who wrote *In Their Own Image: New York Jews in Jazz Age American Popular Culture*.

“I’d heard horror stories about margins,” said Thurston Domina, who earned a Ph.D. in sociology in 2006 with *Brain Drain and Brain Gain: Educational Segregation in the United States*.

“I met with [Waldman] for maybe 15 minutes

to go over the format,” he said.

“She asked me to change some color graphics to black and white, I believe. It was painless, and it all came together very quickly.”

But Judy Waldman’s demeanor is another matter. She takes a personal interest in the students that rivals that of an old-fashioned doctor in a rural town.

“I like working with people. I love to hear their stories,” said Waldman, whose office is tucked away in a corner of the library’s second floor.



Judith Waldman

“They tell me about their families, their jobs, their children. It’s a really mixed group of people.”

In her 19 years as dissertation assistant, she’s met an engineer who decided to go to law school; a musician and singer who returned to college at age 51, earned a Ph.D. in biology and is now an adjunct college instructor; a Holocaust survivor “who worked in a shop downtown and many years ago decided that getting a Ph.D. was what he really wanted to do”; and a U.S. Army colonel stationed in Tooele, Utah, who earned a doctorate in

business and hopes to teach at her alma mater, West Point.

“I’ve seen students ranging from their 30s to retirees over 70 who decided to go back to school for a Ph.D.,” Waldman said, the age spread being the notable difference between the graduate and undergraduate experiences, she said.

“You go to an undergraduate graduation and students bring their parents and grandparents. But at the graduate level, it’s the reverse. They bring their children and grandchildren.”

wrote her dissertation, *Rescue and Survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia, 1941-1945* just following the peak of her career as a successful jewelry entrepreneur. Her multi-million dollar company, IEG Sales Company Inc., sold products to retail stores nationwide: Macy’s, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Lord & Taylor. Born in Sarajevo, Bosnia, Gitman fled to the Italian military zone on the Dalmatian coast of former Yugoslavia; she and her mother escaped to Italy in 1943, after Italy capitulated to the Allied Forces.

She then returned to Yugoslavia in 1945 and settled in Israel in 1949. In 1958 she entered the Israeli army, serving in one of its most prestigious combat units, and later supported her family while her husband, whom she married in 1961, pursued a Ph.D. in Engineering. Gitman eventually earned a B.A. in History and Sociology in 1972 at Carleton University in Ottawa. She was 32. She then settled in Long Island and earned her M.A. in criminal justice at C.W. Post College of Long Island University. She moved to New York City in 1978.

Prompted 10 years ago by questions from her daughter about her family’s experience during the Holocaust, Gitman decided to pursue another of many dreams: earning her Ph.D. She enrolled first in The Graduate Center’s Liberal Studies Program and then in its Ph.D. program in history; in 2002-2003, she was awarded a Fulbright to Zagreb, Croatia. During that year, she spent every working

day poring over original source documents. With special permission from the Ministry of Science and Technology, she says she copied anything that had to do with the rescue or escape of Jews during the Holocaust. She uncovered a story of the relentless, human desire of ordinary people to help the Jews survive. She brought back copies of thousands of documents and created a database of the names of Jews who were rescued from Croatia.

“Most people write about the atrocity. I wrote about the rescue,” Gitman, who lives on the Upper West Side, said in a phone interview. “My mission was to show that, even in the darkest hours of human history, there is the light of human generosity—in this case, the thousands of people who put themselves in harm’s way to help the Jews. Without them, I wouldn’t be here today. My Ph.D. is only the beginning of my efforts to tell this story of the desire of ordinary people to rescue and save others.”

In fact, Gitman one year ago received a six-month, student-in-residence, post-doctoral fellowship from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. to continue her research.



The future of the dissertation room? Kelly says the digital age is not apt to make the room obsolete. “As the palpable expression of our work and our aspirations, it’s not likely to be replaced by digital files or rolls of microfiche.”

# APRIL 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> Queensborough CC Intergenerational Holocaust Freedom Seder \$5 Also: Sleeping Beauty The Moscow Festival Ballet 3-5 PM \$42, \$39	<b>2</b> Passover 1st night of 8 days Baruch College E-mail Marketing Seminars (also given on 4/9) 12:30 - 2:15 PM Free	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b> The University (College Welcome Center) Teacher Academy Info Session 11 AM and 3 PM Free	<b>5</b> 	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> Easter Sunday 	<b>9</b> Hunter College Shakespeare Birthday Marathon 7 PM	<b>10</b> Kingsborough CC Best-selling author series Lawrence Block, crime novelist 7 PM Free	<b>11</b> BMCC Buy or Rent? Summer getaway, rental unit? 2 - 3 PM Free Also: York College Observatory public open night Free (also May 9)	<b>12</b> 	<b>13</b> Queensborough CC Bagels, Books, and Talk Films, speakers, music, books and opportunities to get together and talk. 10 - 11:30 AM Free	<b>14</b> Lehman College Robert Klein and Joan Rivers 8 PM \$50, \$45, \$35, \$25 Also: Kingsborough CC Children's Theater The Last Dragon 2 PM \$10
<b>15</b> Brooklyn College Lost In Yonkers 3 PM \$25, \$21 Also: Kingsborough CC Free Sundays Haitian-Creole Jazz 3 PM Free	<b>16</b> York College Jazz Forum Series: Saxophonist Alex Foster 5 - 7 PM Free	<b>17</b> John Jay College Who are you? Who am I? 6:30 - 8:30 PM \$35 Also: Hostos CC Symposium: Jewish Diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean 9 AM to 8:30 PM	<b>18</b> Kingsborough CC Eco Festival: Celebrate Earth Week 4/17 through 4/19 10 AM Free	<b>19</b> City College Turning Points Documentary drama about the plight of Black men in America by student Miriam Tabb. 7 - 9 PM Free	<b>20</b> College of Staten Island Jollyship the Whiz- Bang Pirate puppet rock operas 8 PM \$15 Also: York College Opera at York 8 - 9:30 PM	<b>21</b> BMCC Jabali African Acrobats Direct from Mombassa, Kenya 1:30 PM \$25, \$15
<b>22</b> Lehman College Johnny Mathis celebrates his 50th Anniversary as a recording artist. 7 PM \$85, \$75, \$65, \$45	<b>23</b> NYC College of Technology Communicating Across Differences Colloquium about students' oral proficiency. 2 - 9 PM Free	<b>24</b> Queens College Evening Readings Jamaica Kincaid 7 PM Free with student ID or \$15	<b>25</b> BMCC Is there a small business in your future? 2 - 3:30 PM Free	<b>26</b>  Lehman College By-stander CPR training The NYC Fire Dept. will provide training 12 - 4 PM Free	<b>27</b> John Jay College Terrorism Financing 3 - 5 PM Free Also: Baruch College Alexander String Quartet (also on 4/23) \$25	<b>28</b> Lehman College Bernadette Peters 7 PM \$100, \$75, \$65, \$45 Also: Brooklyn College Dionne Warwick 8 PM \$40, \$35, \$20
<b>29</b> Queensborough CC Frankie Avalon 3 PM \$45 Also: CSI Charlotte's Web 3 PM \$15, \$12, \$10	<b>30</b> 	<b>31</b> 				



Johnny Mathis 4/22

# All of CUNY is a Stage

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK may be the biggest stage in the country, if not the world, with musical performances, dramatic performances, lectures and conferences being offered year-round on its 23 campuses.

Topics at the conferences can be of the lighthearted variety, but often they explore topics more typically associated with academic journals. As an example of the latter, take the symposium scheduled for April 17 at Hostos Community College in the Bronx.

The college's Division of Academic Affairs and its Latin American Writers Institute are co-sponsoring the "Jewish Diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean."

Scholars, artists and writers from across the United States and Latin America will present and debate the topic in round-table discussions and plenary sessions.

In the past, Hostos has stood out among U.S. colleges for its explorations of the African presence in Latin America, particularly in the Dominican Republic.

Serious pursuits, yes. But those of you who want your hearts unburdened should be of good cheer.

On April 23 and 27, at 7 p.m., the Alexander String Quartet is showing off its talent at the Baruch Performing Arts Center, with admission at \$25 for the general public, and discounts available for those with CUNY ID's.

On May 6, at 3 p.m., Queensborough Community College is presenting the musical revue "Five Guys Named Moe," with ticket prices beginning at \$35. And on May 7, at 7 p.m., vibraphonist Bill Jacobs is performing at York College. Admission is free.

But back to the serious happenings. Those interested in topics ranging from terrorism to racial profiling can consider lectures and conferences being organized by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

On May 18, for example, the college's Prisoner Reentry Institute will have an expert discussing "Perceived Criminality, Criminal Background Checks and the Racial Hiring Practices of Employers."

There's much more to hear and see at CUNY's colleges in all five boroughs, much of it free of charge.

Activities and performances can be found by going to CUNY's home page, [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu) and then clicking the "events" link.

FOR MORE, visit [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu) and click 'events.'

# MAY 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> Lehman College Annual Wellness Festival 11 AM - 2 PM \$50, \$45, \$35, \$25 Also: Blood Drive 12 - 5:30 PM	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b> Baruch College 30th Annual Student Spring Fling Street Fair 12 - 4 PM Free Also: City College Anything Goes 7 - 8:45 PM Free	<b>5</b> Queensborough CC Short Works Festival - Woody Allen meet Ian Grody! Through May 12 \$8	<b>6</b> College of Staten Island The Four Lads, The Four Aces & The Inkspots 3 Bands from the '50s 1 PM \$45, \$42, \$39	
<b>6</b> Queensborough CC Five Guys Named Moe Musical revue featuring Louis Jordan's hits. 3 - 5 PM \$42, \$39, \$35	<b>7</b> York College Jazz Forum Series Vibraphonist Bill Jacobs 7 PM	<b>8</b> 	<b>9</b> BMCC Why do I need a will? I don't have any money, why do I need a will? 2 - 3:30 PM Free	<b>10</b> City College Annual One-Act Play Festival Short works from the Advanced Directing Class 7 - 9 PM Free	<b>11</b> BMCC 15 tips to be financially comfortable 2 - 3:30 PM Free Also: Pianist Frank Owens 7 - 10 PM \$25, \$15	<b>12</b> College of Staten Island Alex Torres y Su Orquestra Dynamic sound of a Puerto Rican street festival 1 PM \$35
<b>13</b> Queensborough CC Ghetto Shanghai Jewish European refugees in 1943 in Japan 1 - 3 PM \$5	<b>14</b> 	<b>15</b> LaGuardia CC 2nd Annual New Media Technology Day 8:30 - 3:30 PM Free	<b>16</b> Hunter College BFA Degree Show Recent work by graduating art students Through June 16 12 - 4 PM Free	<b>17</b> John Jay College Perceived Criminality, Criminal Background Checks and the Racial Hiring Practices of Employers 8:30 - 10 AM Free	<b>18</b> College of Staten Island Laughter Arts Festival with Dom Irrera & Bobby Collins 1 PM \$45, \$42, \$39	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> Brooklyn College Klezmerized! 2 PM \$25, \$21 Also: Lehman College The Flying Karamazov Brothers 3 PM \$35, \$30, \$25, \$20	<b>21</b> Hunter College Folksbiene Performances: Gimpl the Fool National Yiddish Theater 7 PM Free	<b>22</b> 	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Street Fair, 5/3	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 	<b>28</b> Hunter College Regarding Intimacy Photography of contemporary artists, through May 12 5 - 7 PM Free	<b>29</b> 	<b>30</b> John Jay College An evening at the New York City Police Museum 212-237-8663 6:30 - 8:30 PM \$25	<b>31</b> 		

## CUNY Matters

The City University of New York  
Office of University Relations  
535 East 80th St.  
New York, NY 10021

Presorted  
Standard Mail  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
New Haven, CT  
Permit # 1411