Taking Notice of the ‘American Dream Machine’

Robert Johnson manages to stand out from the crowd, in flattening ways, even when the crowd is composed of the toughest, most intelligent lawyers in New York State.

Johnson is the first African-American ever to serve as a District Attorney in the state. First elected in 1989, he is also the longest-serving Bronx D.A. in more than half a century.

And here’s the distinction he sometimes must prove to himself: Among the five District Attorneys in New York City, he’s the only CUNY college alumnus.

“I really believe City College is responsible for my success,” Johnson said in an interview at his office in the Bronx recently. “I say that because it accepted me even after I had some rocky years in high school.”

Johnson, who still has the line frame of the track star he was at City in the early ’70s, tries to stay in regular touch with the up-and-coming attorneys and other students now laboring toward their bachelor’s degrees at the College-on-the-Hill.

For instance, Johnson spoke of a notable junior in the home of CCNY President Gregory H. Williams. There the prosecutor met one of the top minds among students in the country — Lev Sviridov, the 2005 City College grad who went off to London to attend Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar.

“Lev was very interested in what I do, and so we spoke quite a bit,” Johnson recalled of Sviridov, a Russian immigrant who displayed strong interests in politics and law while he was at City.

Back at his office, Johnson, a father of four sons, said he was aware that public colleges need financial support from appreciative alumni “I give…to send a student to the alumni dinner or $500 here or $1,000 there, just to show that I believe in City College,” he said.

He added, “I think that the City University is the best buy in the whole country in terms of higher education.” He said the CUNY Honors College, which has strict admissions standards accepting only the cream of the high school crop, is raising CUNY’s profile and helping to make it a place where “people are clamoring to get in.”

Johnson’s workdays are filled with the guilt of thousands of Bronx tales of tragedy and abuse that sit on the dockets of the Bronx Criminal and Supreme Courts. He has a battalion of 400 lawyers who handle those cases. And while conceding that daily exposure to this side of life can cause great stress, Johnson has some news that lifts his spirits.

In his most recent statistical report, the D.A. said the Bronx has experienced huge drops in major crime.

“Homicides fell again, to a low of 12, a level not seen since 1966,” the report said. Johnson informed that in 1990 there had been 653 murders in the Bronx, the report said. Johnson informed that in 1990 there had been 653 murders in the Bronx.

The intensity and complexity of Johnson’s work require a certain compo- sure and intellectual confidence, which together allow him to do rhetorical battle with some of the feistiest legal minds in the state. Johnson says he acquired both assets to secure a seat among America’s top-tier institutions of higher learning.”

CUNY’s enrollment is at a record 30-year high, that better prepared students are attending the University, that CUNY students are winning major national awards, and that CUNY continues to offer educa- tional opportunities to immigrants and the children of immigrants. …

And in a letter praising the Chancellor’s commitment to scientific research, Ed Reinfurt, vice president of the Business Council of New York State, Inc., wrote: “The steps the CUNY system is taking and the progress you have made in reaching the goals set for the ‘Decade of Science’ at the University are most impressive.”

One of the declarations mentioning CUNY with admiration came from an unusual platform, across the sea. Speaking in Italy, First Lady Laura Bush cited CUNY as a school where students from different countries could learn more about each other. Addressing faculty and students at the University of Tarin during the Winter Olympics in February, Laura Bush said: “…when your students visit America, at schools such as the City University of New York…American students and citizens gain a better understanding of Italian life, lan- guage and culture.”

Very close to home, right here in the city, newspapers continued to offer editori- als urging Goldstein and the University to stay the course. The New York Post described the Compact as a means to bring CUNY “to the next level” by invest- ing in “programs, personnel and physical assets to secure a seat among America’s top-tier institutions of higher learning.”

The University found a number of faculty members who began teaching in the 1940s and are still teaching today. They have seen many changes, and they have been transformed.

A Bronx Tale (of Law and Order) That Began on a Hill

Bronx District Attorney Robert Johnson at the campus of his alma mater The City College of New York

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Our Graduate School of Journalism will open in Fall 2006: Our alumni are joining our efforts, as demonstrated most recently by Intel co-founder Andrew Grove's $26 million gift to his alma mater, City College. As David Vedel, the president of the American Council on Education, recently noted, "Those of us considering examples of successful management of enhanced academic quality in American higher education would certainly include CUNY among the top institutions on the list."

Without a very different funding approach, CUNY's ability to serve its students and achieve the initiatives outlined in its Master Plan will be threatened. That's why I have proposed a new way to finance CUNY: a shared compact among funding partners, including the State and City, the University, its alumni and friends, and its students.

This investment plan asks the State and the City to cover the University's manda-
tory costs (such as energy and labor con-
tracts) and 20 percent of the programmatic initiatives in the University's four-year Master Plan. The rest of the funding would come from the University, in the form of increased philanthropic revenues, internal reemployment, managed enrollment growth, and modest tuition increases, not to exceed the Higher Education Price Index over the life of the plan. Revenue from the increased tuition would go exclusively toward funding programmatic initiatives in the Master Plan, with recommendations from CUNY students and faculty.

CUNY's Board of Trustees unanimously adopted the budget investment plan, and CUNY's Business Leadership Council has endorsed the compact. As the Chair of the Business Leadership Council, Sy Sternberg, Chairman and CEO of New York Life Insurance Company, said, "I believe that the proposed plan will establish the foundation for the next level of success at CUNY."

The 2006-2007 State Executive Budget provides important recognition of the CUNY compact. I applaud Governor Pataki as "an innovative and fiscally responsible approach to financing operations by eliminating shared responsibility among partners and supporting opportunities to leverage funds." Right now, the University is working closely with the State and the City of New York to realize the plan's potential.

The 2006-2007 budget, working closely with the State and the City, the University, its alumni and partners, has successfully pursued another mission: providing the best education possible to "the whole people." Through an innovative partnership, we can continue to strengthen that critical mission.

W hat's the best way to kill a breast cancer cell? How does your liver know how to count? Taking his research in the direction of this problem, Professor Robert P. Dottin, the Center's director, said, "When I came to Hunter 19 years ago, there was one other minority faculty member and he was just leaving," said Robert P. Dottin, the Center's director. "We now have eight minority faculty members, and we have the best cancer center in the world of U.S. science are not considered minorities, and 16 women."

"With a total of 45 professors involved in research, Dottin said, "This is almost, a good balance."

In the lab, Dottin studies the role of phosphates in signal transduction. "How do cancer proteins locking into receptors on the outside of a cell can activate proteins inside the cell?" The Gene Center's facilities and faculty proved irresistible to young biologists Dr. Jill Bargenetta-Chavarría and Dr. Derrick Brailli, both of whom received the prestigious Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, which honors and encourages researchers who achieve excellence in their fields.

Bargenetta studies the p53 tumor-suppressor protein, which acts like a cellular-level stoplight. Cancerous cells block p53's normal protective, red-light action. She hypothesizes that estrogen or epidermal growth factor locks onto certain breast cancer receptors and prevents p53's protective action by turning p53's stoplight to green.

Working with culture cells, Bargenetta seeks ways to switch the stoplight back to red, so breast cells can resume killing cancerous cells. In April, the journal Cancer Research published a paper from her lab suggesting a new approach to cancer therapy — targeting the Mdm2 protein. One way cancer grows is through an increase in the amount of Mdm2, which inhibits p53's normal protective action by setting on the DNA.

Bargenetta has teamed with Gene Center colleagues like chemist Maria Tomasz (examining mitomycins, which are antibiotics that destroy cancer cells through DNA action) and biologist David Foster (studying how different substances presence (cancer) by blocking the p53 pathway).

Attacking cancer from another angle, Brussil studies how cells count the number of similar cells.

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of New Media, Armed With Traditional Skills and Values

The profession, said Shepard, will go from a "top-down one to...a new world, a two-way street and a conversation delivered where people want it, when they want it and how they want it.” Shepard cited the eyewitness accounts blogged from events such as Hurricane Katrina as an example of the contributions that — vetted by professional editors — can make journalism more thorough and involving.

With CUNY’s tuition set at a fraction of the cost of the state’s private graduate-level journalism programs, the new CUNY school itself will make journalism training more accessible to a more diverse, less moneyed student pool. More than 200 applications have been received for 50 first-year student slots; the master’s candidates will be selected through a two-tier process — after the first round of culling, finalists will take writing and current events tests and be interviewed. “We’ll let the students know if they’re accepted by the first week of April,” said Shepard. “They’ll respond by May and we’ll have our first class.”

Million Grant for Cell Research

Dictyostelium discoideum, a single-celled organism that sometimes joins with others to become a multicellular organism, is a process that has similarities to human fetal development.

Brazill said he believes that “[t]he really exciting thing about the Gene Center is that it’s interdisciplinary.” He added, “I’ve had contact with psychologists who work with addiction; some of the same types of feedback loops, of signaling, happen in cases of addiction.”

Psychophysicologist James Gordon, who with Brooklyn College colleague Israel Abramov recently discovered differences between how men and women perceive color, also finds the crosscurrents stimulating. “I’ve been at CUNY since 1970 and I barely knew anyone outside my discipline and what they did.” But thanks to the Gene Center, “We have joint seminars in different areas” including a presentation on how the brains of birds develop and function.

In December, Bargonetti chaired the center’s 19th annual conference, which focused on genetics, race and health inequities. She developed the theme with graduate and undergraduate students who looked at mitochondrial DNA inheritance and the notion of the African Eve.

“We are all descendants of homo sapiens from Africa. This is a controversial finding that still is not stressed, I think, because it is so hard for some people to accept,” she said. “The concept of race, which creates such division among all of us, was created prior to the science of DNA and has little to do with it. Race is a social construct, yet what does it mean when black people get more aggressive cancers and are dying at a greater rate?” Outside the Gene Center, Bargonetti said, “I’m often the only brown-skinned person in the meeting. I can raise my hand and I’m answered in a very simple manner. They don’t recognize my ancestry.” But Hunter provides “the most diverse environment of stellar researchers in the nation. At any other place I would have chosen, I would have been one in a sea of non-brown faces.”

Dottin also leads a national network of minority scientists (www.justgarciahill.org) that, among other things, played a key role in helping those whose labs and research projects were wrecked by Hurricane Katrina.

When it comes to recruiting minorities into science, he said of the Gene Center and the network, “There’s still a lot more work to be done, but we’re making a national impact.”

In CUNY’s 2006-2007 Budget Request, Chancellor Matthew Goldstein calls on the state and city to change the approach to funding higher education in New York. He wants officials to know how the University is saving millions of dollars in productivity initiatives, and raising hundreds of millions in donations from alumni and others. Hoping to keep tuition at reasonable levels, he is also calling on the state and city to fully fund "mandatory" costs, such as energy and labor contracts, and pay for a modest portion of the programs in the Master Plan. To help convey such a message — the Chancellor calls it the "Compact" — some institutions would have turned to an outside cutting-edge design house. But CUNY found talent in its students.

Under the guidance of Emesto Malave, Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance, three students from New York City College of Technology — Yue Chen, Tzvetan Kostov and Uura Minakachi — designed the covers of the 88-page report and everything in between.

“We...brainstormed and came up with the idea of a new perspective on the city, on CUNY” which we tried to capture in the cover photo,” recalled Chen, who, like the other students, was a communication design major in the Department of Advertising Design & Graphic Arts.

All the students have since completed their studies toward Bachelor of Technology degrees.

Their cover photo, shot from the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, shows a dynamic, vibrant skyline, a city on the move. Marrying design to words required the students to think quickly on their feet, funding solutions to design problems. They had to communicate their concepts to the CUNY “clients” and meet real deadlines. Along the way, the students consulted with University budget officials and graphic arts professors.

The Chancellor’s Compact, to which the former students were lending graphic enhancement, is being recognized nationally as a practical way of resolving the funding crisis confronting public higher education.

“This assignment fit in with the department’s philosophy of taking on real projects to serve the College and the greater community,” said Advertising Design & Graphic Arts Department chair Joel Mason. Mason said he was confident the recent graduates will have bright futures in their field. Referring to the great service rendered by Yue, Kostov and Minakachi — and to the singular opportunity given to them — Chancellor Goldstein asked elected officials to “join our effort to ensure that generations to come will future the study of talented students, and their predecessors, have found at the University.”

With Help From Students, Chancellor Calls for Funding ‘Compact’

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Professor Robert P. Dottin is the director of Hunter College’s Center for the Study of Gene Structure and Function.
H

urricane Katrina. CNN’s Jeff Koinange was there. The 2005 Iraq elections. Jeff Koinange was there. The war on terror, an attempted coup in the Ivory Coast, the civil war in Liberia. Koinange was there.

From 1987 to 1989, however, Jeff Koinange was there — getting his associate’s degree, and then his broadcasting degree. Kingsborough was his natural home. “I didn’t stand a chance,” he said. “I had a Ph.D. in music, but I wanted to be a journalist.”

Koinange began his news career in 1991 — as a desk assistant/off-air reporter for ABC News in New York, followed by two years as a reporter and producer for Medical News Network. He produced for NBC News in 1994, then for Reuters Television from 1995 to 2001, with expanding responsibilities for Africa coverage.

Then he joined CNN and has since covered major news throughout Africa and the Middle East, from the historic 2005 elections in Iraq to the commemoration of the 10-year anniversary of the Rwandan genocide that slaughtered up to 1 million people in 100 days. Previously CNN’s Lagos bureau chief, Koinange now leads CNN’s team of Africa correspondents.

The excitement of having the opportunity “to inform, entertain and educate the world about a continent I’m passionate about... to provide that insight, that little bit of news that will leave an audience member saying ‘Wow!’...” is never-ending for Koinange. With his wife of seven years “my greatest inspiration” — he said he hopes to someday raise a family in South Africa or in his hometown, Nairobi.

As for Koinange’s commencement in June, “I really look forward to speaking from the heart, just like I do with my stories on CNN,” Koinange said.

Kingsborough Spawned Intrepid CNN Correspondent, Jeff Koinange

Hostos Professor Believes That Teaching is a Joyful Symphony

There are things occurring at Hostos Community College that radiate far beyond the walls of the institution, wafting across land and sea like an airborne herald. Even from his perch in San Juan, Puerto Rico years ago, composer and scholar Raymond Torres-Santos had heard about Hostos.

I have known Hostos for many years, particularly when I was chancellor at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music. The early ’70s, he said.

“Hostos has been... well-known for their concerts and cultural activities.”

In an interview at the campus, where he is a tenured music professor, for the past year and a half, Torres-Santos spoke about the thrill of being in the Bronx and sharing his passion for music. A keyboardist who has a following in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Torres-Santos said Hostos wants to expand its offerings so that students can be exposed to the pleasures of creating and listening to music, even as they are motivated to pursue studies at a higher level. Examples, Lehman College, the four-year CUNY institution in the Bronx, has an especially strong music program that could be a destination for Hostos graduates, the professor said.

As an academic discipline, music sits on a high plain along with the study of English or foreign language, Torres-Santos said. It is special because it communicates the way that language is not equipped to do.

“Music is about a communication of feelings,” he said. “It is that dimension that so much, somehow, touches the spiritual fiber in you... It has been called the universal language because of that, because it transmits emotions.”

With the addition of Torres-Santos to the repertoire of professors in the Bronx, CUNY is developing a strong cadre of professional musicians in the borough.

Providing an artistic counterpart to Torres-Santos, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer John Corigliano teaches, for instance, at Lehman, where he recently established a scholarship in his name for music students.

Torres-Santos was born in Puerto Rico and studied at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music and the University of Puerto Rico, before going on to graduate studies at UCLA, where he earned his master’s and Ph.D. degrees, in music composition and music theory. He is equally at home with classical and popular music, having arranged for such well-known artists as Placido Domingo, Frank Sinatra and Julio Iglesias. Asked which of his compositions is most meaningful to him, Torres-Santos singled out “Millennium Symphony.” In that work, the maestro said, “I composed a symphony of four movements at the beginning of the new millennium.”

He added, “I wanted to really portray in this work was a summary of what has been the life of mankind... particularly the creation of the earth when God gave form to all this space.” The fourth movement offers aural glimpse of humankind as reflected in the exploration of “other planets.”

Notable about the composition is the use of a choir singing ancient texts of the Taínos Indians.

“Torres-Santos is not exactly new to CUNY. Back in 2000 — the new millennium — he was a visiting professor at Hunter College. ‘I had a wonderful time,’” he said. “Helped them to design some courses, particularly in film music, the business of music, and Latin American music that they did not have.”

At Hostos, he continues to grow as a musician and as a teacher, he said.

“I was one of those believing that because I had a Ph.D. in music that I was ready for teaching... but [teaching] an experience that changes day by day, and changes in terms of the groups and mentalities that you get every semester.”
Colin Powell Looks at CCNY and Sees Reflections of Himself 50 Years Ago

A s he winds down from his illustrious career in government — shaping foreign policy for two presidential administrations — Colin Powell wants to ensure that his beloved alma mater, The City College of New York, remains a center of public policy specialists.

The former U.S. Secretary of State said on ABC television recently he will “raise money for the Colin Powell Center, focusing not just on conferences — we’ll do that — but really focusing on the students themselves and preparing them for leadership roles in the future.”

The Center is designed to cultivate links between CCNY and the applied worlds of politics and policy-making, its programs provide unique resources to the college’s students, while also supporting faculty research and discussion of foreign policy issues.

In the ABC interview with George Stephanopoulos, Powell described a recent visit to City College, where he met with a dozen Powell Center Fellows. He said the students reminded him of himself there half a century ago. He graduated from CCNY in 1958 at the top of his ROTC class and later went on to duty in Vietnam, where he was wounded and received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star.

“During his visit to the campus, Powell said, “I saw myself 50 years earlier, an immigrant kid, or the son of immigrants.” He added, “[T]hat great public institution is still taking in the poor, those who can’t go to other institutions, and giving them a great education, that’s what I want to be a part of.”

Powell’s family emigrated from the Caribbean island of Jamaica. After his service in Vietnam, Powell became a White House Fellow and then was appointed to ever-increasing positions of responsibility having to do with international affairs. He served President George H. W. Bush as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and more recently was Secretary of State under President George W. Bush. Powell retired from government service last year.

It was announced recently that the Powell Center and Yale University’s United Nations History Project will jointly create a record of selected official papers of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The project will officially begin when the Secretary-General completes his second term, December 31, 2006.
They’ve Taught at Our Colleges Since the 1940s and They

The memories span more than a half-century: A psychology class with veterans picking up their lives after World War II; Whirl-piled drums’ voices pounding Student protests of the 1960s. That excitement and tragedy of Tiananmen Square. And while some of these longest-serving CUNY professors have put in their retirement papers and struggle with physical limitations, they remain connected to and energized by their colleges — teaching and researching and still engaged in the place that has been their home away from home, the academy.

From All-Women to Co-ed

Because Grace Horowitz is not overwhelmed when she reflects on her 60 years at Hunter College. “You take them a year at a time,” she said. “You don’t notice you’re getting older. From considering yourself a young member you eventually consider yourself middle-aged. And then you find you’re quite senior.”

She continued, “We just had party for me the other day. I just hit 80, not a thing I’m happy about.” But she is happy about her continuing relationship with the college where she started as a fellow in 1946.

Horowitz’s specialties are 17th century English literature, primarily Shakespeare and Jonson. She still teaches Introduction to Literature and, in the summer, a class focusing on British literary humorists such as Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde.

“I find teaching a lot of fun, or else I wouldn’t be doing it all the time,” she said.

There have been some changes at Hunter, of course. “When I tell students this was a women’s college, they find it very hard to believe,” Horowitz said. “The slightly prim ‘teacher’s college’ for ladies has now turned into CUNY, with a basketball team and everything.”

Because of her arthritis, Horowitz depends on Access-a-Ride to transport her from her home in Queens to the Manhattan campus and back. “I use a walker and the result is students are extraordinarily kind and solicitous of me,” she noted.

Years Brought Expansion

CUNY has also been congenial, comfortable and exciting for Russian-born, Beirat- and Paris-educated cellist Alexander Kouguell. Originally Kouguell had come here from Lebanon with plans to study comparative literature at Columbia. “I found out I was really more interested in music,” he recalled. “I’ve devoted my life to music, and especially the cello.”

He had been in this country only three years, and was some of his longest time in the New York Philharmonic Symphony, when in 1949 he was invited to substitute for another cellist in a performance at Queens College. That led to auditions for the Queens College Faculty String Quartet, and a job teaching “music appreciation and all the instruments for the education majors.”

“We played together many years,” he said of the string group. “We gave courses on the quartets of Beethoven. We would analyze the quartets, and give a history of the quartets.”

Recalling those days, he said, “The buildings were smaller. We had those army shacks. That’s where the Music Department was.” The passing of time has brought expansion and beauty, he said, noting that the music building today is “beautiful. I think it’s the finest building.”

Though he retired in 1990, Kouguell is now Adjunct Professor at Queens’ Aaron Copland School of Music, teaching chamber music. “I’m still able to carry the cello and perform.”

The rewards of his 56-year connection with Queens College have been great, the professor said, adding, “I’m very proud of the institution, and especially proud of the Music Department, which is a real jewel…. It has a wonderful reputation all over the country.”

Of his students, he confided, “I feel like a great-grandfather.”

Wistful About the Past

Queens College psychology professor Winma Winnick admitted to feeling wistful as she prepared to put in her retirement papers in February.

Yet Winnick, who taught her first class in Queens the summer of 1946 — “a wonderful class, World War II soldiers who had just come back and were picking up their GI credits” — isn’t quite giving it all up. “I will be teaching my first semester of retirement,” she declared. “It’s a compromise; teaching a single class rather than two or three.” And that’ll leave time for her weekly tennis matches.

At 82, Winnick specializes in the experimental psychology of learning and memory. She also served as Queens’ Psychology Department chair, from 1992 to 1995. “I taught straight through, except for two fellowships, and two maternity leaves,” she noted. The highlights of her professional life: “when (Queens) was the largest college, that was to last more than half a century. Appointed as a full-time faculty member, from her Yonkers residence and her home in County Wicklow, Ireland, Donleavy — a 1942 graduate of City College, Trefusse is in the midst of research on yet another tome, this one about the dispatches filed from abroad by American diplomats during wartime.

When the conversation turned to technology, Trefusse said, “I haven’t quite caught up with the twenty-first century yet. I have a special name for my computer I call it ‘insanity.’ … But if you publish today you have to do that, use a computer, because you have to send everything in a disk. You can’t write on typewriters anymore: They’re gone as the horse and buggy.”

The ’60s Were a High Point

“It’s quite a shock to realize how long I’ve been there,” said Mary Rita Donleavy, who joined Hunter College as a secretary in 1940 and landed a teaching job at Hunter’s then-Bronx campus on July 1, 1948 — it later became Lehman College — after earning her Hunter B.A. Her field was education. Her Ph.D. in educational administration came from Fordham in 1964.

Today, Donleavy, who officially retired from full-time teaching at Lehman in 1969, is still an adjunct there. This semester, she is teaching a research-oriented course for teachers.

And while she splits her time between her Yonkers residence and her home in County Wicklow, Ireland, Donleavy — who turns 83 in March — is still excited by her work. “I’ve been rooted in the City University,” she said. “We have a common history.”

The high point of her professional life, she said, was “the ’60s — when the students were in revolt and she was Lehman’s
CUNY Preserves the Past, Builds for the Future

By Neill S. Rosenfeld

Imagine the sadness of a gargoyle watching its building decay. Imagine the lamentations that 600 gargoyles and other grotesques could raise; surely their cries could melt stone.

Now, following years of restoration, these terra cotta figures at City College must be rejoicing. The last of the five original Gothic structures is nearing repair. Meanwhile, the first of several new buildings sure to sparkle with 21st century sophistication is rising nearby.

Historic preservation and architectural innovation on a hill in Harlem are but two shining examples of the $7.5 billion renaissance emerging at the campuses of the City University. Fueled by state, city and, increasingly, private philanthropic resources, the blueprints and renderings of a decade ago are yielding bold new interpretations of the “urban campus” ideal.

In some cases the University is caring for the architectural treasures of the past. In other instances, it is designing and erecting what may well be the architectural treasures of the future. Together, the mix of old stone and the new glass — dovetailing endeavors, tradition and innovation — are metaphors for the intellectual life and learning on the campuses they serve.

And just in time: these new facilities are arriving at a moment of great fold increase in the past decade. Higher academic standards have fueled a demand for better laboratories, more research facilities, new technology and smart classrooms. A range of new buildings — libraries, daycare centers, affordable performing arts centers and modern athletic facilities — are at their disposal. Academic functionality is at the core of these structures. But good buildings — and great campuses — are also good neighborhoods. Since 1993, more than 80 new or restored buildings (some completed, others in construction or design) are enhancing and reviving neighborhoods, helping to revivify cityscapes from Jamaica to Flatbush, from Ground Zero to the Upper East Side and across all five boroughs.

“Thomas Jefferson believed strongly that the architecture of a university, by its very nature, could teach,” says Richard P. Dobler of Dobler, Liddy, Craig and Associates, an internationally known campus and facility planning firm in Belmont, Mass. A Brooklyn College graduate who praised the historic preservation and restoration of that campus’s library as well as its future building plans, he adds, “The commitment of a public institution like City University to engage in this activity is an important part of education. Students leave with some regard for their heritage, and that may have some spill-over onto the lives they lead.”

A great deal of the credit for CUNY’s architectural renaissance belongs to architect Emma Macari, who signed on as vice chancellor for facilities, planning and construction management in 1993. Back then, the state had stalled construction funds for two years, Albany wanted more planning and a guiding vision. Now, Macari says, “We’re in the third year of a five-year, $2.5 billion capital program.” A lot of it is targeted toward cutting-edge science facilities, but $600 million is for primarily instructional buildings and community colleges.

Because it can take 10 or 12 years between conceiving of a building and opening its doors to students, CUNY phases in budget requests to reflect only work that can be done in a given time period. State-funded University capital projects are executed by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York.

Macari says that the responsibility for preservation and new construction “keeps me awake at night. When projects come out beautifully, it’s awesome. One of the dreams that any architect would have is to be in charge of such a vast collection of real estate that contains buildings that have been done with so much care and have made history for all of us.”

City College, Where It All Began

A rich commission and priceless prestige were at stake in 1903 as the College of the City of New York invited five leading architects to compete for the prize of designing the first building at its new uptown campus. Some had designed glorious buildings like Carnegie Hall and the Metropolitan Opera House; others the new NYU and Columbia campuses, leaving George Browne Post with a dilemma.

Should he go with the classic-revival/Beaux Arts style so praised in his pavilion at the 1893 Chicago Exposition? Or should he heed the rumor that competition jurors would like to evoke the great medieval universities at Cambridge and Oxford?

Post submitted two designs. One was a classic of continuous arches surmounted, in its seven middle bays, by a podium suitable for a Roman emperor to address his subjects. The other was a Gothic confection with towers, turrets, peaked roofs, gables, dormers, cornices and, of course, gargoyles where the hunchback of Notre Dame would have felt at home.

The jurors jumped for Gothic, and construction began in 1903. To save money, Post used the sparkling, dark gray stone excavated on site, known as Manhattan schist. For variety, he designed perhaps 75,000 decorations for the five buildings, from flowers to carvices to grotesque figures depicting the educational objectives of each building. Fashoined of white terra-cotta (glazed, kiln-fired clay), they were built into the wall and said interchangably with the stone.

Although an aesthetic triumph, the Gothic tower (now named Shepard Hall) and the other buildings were doomed to structural decay. Most of the façades were bearing walls, not stone veneers supported by steel frames, and terra-cotta was too brittle to resist the natural movement in the schist, especially in the central tower. Within 30 years, the freeze-thaw cycle had cracked the terra-cotta, allowing rainwater to further damage the structure.

Flash forward to 1986, when the tower was in danger of collapse. Enter Carl Stein of Stein White nellian Architects of Manhattan, who began a preservation project at Shepard Hall that is not yet finished. The first challenge was to see if there was a way to rebuild the tower, including replacing all of the terra-cotta, at least $13,000.
Architectural Janus

The sixteenth century columns of the Gould Memorial Library are made of “the most beautiful green marble in the world…” Stanford White 1894

Back to the Future at Bronx Community College

Rome has one Pantheon. Bronx Community College has two.

The Gould Memorial Library, designed by the 19th century’s premier architect, Stanford White, echoes the temple to all the gods that has graced Rome for 10 centuries. Outside it displays the same artful geometry. At its portal, as at the Pantheon, its stand great bronze doors; dedicated in 1921 by a green marble, they depict themes in 21st: Inside, Tiffany windows and a coffered dome supported by 16 columns of green marble from Connemara, Ireland, inspire hushed reverence. The City Landmarks Preservation Commission called the interior “one of the supreme examples of interior design in America.” White’s second pantheon — an architectural hymn to home-grown gods — is the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, Bronx Community College; entrance, former Children’s Courthouse; Baruch College Newman Real Estate Institute; detail, restored WPA mural, and interior, LaGuardia Library, Brooklyn College; original, 1894 Stanford White sketch and exterior execise and dome, Gould Memorial Library; bronze Community College; interior, former courtroom, Newman Institute, swimming pool, APEX, Lehman College.

Square to Bronx farmland. There, he said, students could “enjoy the country environment, yet be able to study close at hand the great city.”

NYU moved after merger talks with the city’s other private university, Columbia College, collapsed and Columbia had hired White’s partner, Charles Follen McKim, to design a new campus at 116th Street. There was a respectful working relationship, more so than competition, between White and McKim, as both were pushing the envelope of campus design simultaneously, says Manhattan preservation architect Lisa Eaton.

Still, it’s hard not to read competition into a letter that White wrote to MacCracken about the Connemara columns and McKim’s more grandiose Low Library. “This is the marble they endowed to use in Columbia, but which was firebombed in 1969 during a student protest against the Vietnam War; NYU made repairs. By then NYU faced financial disaster, partly due to the protests. In 1973 it sold the campus to CUNY for $61 million, providing a home for Bronx Community College.”

Although it had scant money for preservation, the University was able to restore Gould’s auditorium, its rotunda and the Hall of Fame of Great Americans, Bronx Community College; interior, former courtroom, Newman Institute, swimming pool, APEX, Lehman College.
CUNY's Top Architect Wins Top Honor

Because of her "notable contributions to the advancement of the profession of architecture," a jury of her peers at the American Institute of Architects has elected CUNY Vice Chancellor Emma Espino Macari to its College of Fellows, its most accomplished group of members.

In charge of facilities planning, construction and management since September 1993, Macari has selected an architect to complete his concept for a new library and computer center on the long north side, which now is a parking lot.

Robert A. M. Stern, dean of Yale's School of Architecture, has built projects as diverse as Disney hotel in Florida, Tokyo and Paris, the glistening Hobby Center for Performing Arts in Houston and the Brooklyn Law School tower.

Macari says Stern sees the BCC project "as the capstone of his life, to design in the context of White and Marcel Breuer," a modernist who designed several buildings for NYU between 1956 and 1961.

A challenge, indeed — trying to harmonize with both the lyrical White and the hyper-utilitarian Breuer, whose material of choice was concrete. His forbidding stone building ("He didn't do a good job there and everybody dislikes it," Macari says) dominates the quads' south side. Breuer is perhaps best known locally for his Whitney Museum of American Art and his eponymous chairs.

Referring to Stern's Darden Graduate School of Business at the University of Virginia, done in the 1990s and inspired by the 16th century Italian Andrea Palladio, Macari says, "Everybody loves it; it's very much in keeping with the form of the campus." He was recently hired to design an education building there.

Stern also has worked at Stanford University, designing the six-story Bill Gates Computer Science Building, whose overhanging red-tile roof and casement windows reflect the old quad's look.

"He will be contemporary, but very respectful of proportions and continuity of architecture," Macari says. "I can't wait to see what he will dream up for us."

FDR's Home Morphs into Hunter Institute

The stately neo-Greekian townhouse at 47-49 East 65th Street, Manhattan, has known joy, tragedy and triumph, and after an upcoming makeover, it is sure to gain prominence as Hunter College's new Public Policy Institute, which will seek solutions to vexing social problems.

Sara Roosevelt built these narrow-townhouse houses with a single façade and entrance in 1908. She lived at 47. Her son, Franklin, and daughter-in-law, Eleanor, occupied 49, moving in three years after their marriage. It became a city landmark in 1973 and joined the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

There Eleanor bore two of their six children, one of whom died in infancy. There, in 1921, FDR recuperated from polio, which left him unable to walk. There FDR, then governor of New York, celebrated the first of his four elections as president.

There Eleanor launched her own political work. This champion of the civil rights of black Americans would fight for human rights for all downtrodden people — a goal she made international as chair of the commission that wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the nascent United Nations adopted without dissent in 1948.

And there, historian Deborah S. Gardner, special advisor to Hunter's president and provost, writes in an unpublished study, Sara raised funds for black colleges "during an era when few Americans would have had African-American guests in their homes."

"Sara welcomed Mary McLeod Bethune, whose parents were slaves, but who would become a national leader for African-American rights. From then on, Bethune recalled, "our friendship became one of the

Continued on next page
It was the Great Depression. Brooklyn College, founded in 1930 with the merger of the Brookyn branch of Hunter College (for women) and City College (for men), was frozen into five rented buildings in the congested Borough Hall area. A student poet wrote: “Oh, Brooklyn College, thou art loveli-est seventh green springtime, when traffic lights are green.”

One day, without appointment or commis- sion, architect Randolph Evans knocked on President William Boylan’s door and spread out plans for a new campus.

In better times, Evans had designed single-family homes. Now he worked for the Wood-Harmon Corp., which owned a small golf course and football field in central Brooklyn. He sketched the plans because he had “little else to do,” the college Web site says. Could it have been that Wood-Harmon was desperate for more than the few, few cents it got by letting the Barnum and Bailey Circus use the tract as a staging area each year?

The floor plan Evans drew delighted Boylan to walk the land. They agreed that the Georgian style that Thomas Jefferson had used at Monticello, Virginia, would be- tter suit the then-run-of-the-mill Brooklyn College’s collegiate Gothic style.

In December 1934, the city, led by Mayor LaGuardia, bought the property for $1.6 million (the 2005 equivalent of $22.4 million — a nice profit for Evans’ employer). The federal Public Works Administration allocated $5 million for construction a month later.

With the campus approved, Franklin D. Roosevelt laid the cornerstone of the gymnasium (now Rosmarino Hall) a year later. After he had addressed an audience of 7,000. “Every time the Mayor of New York comes to Washington I tremble, because it means I do something, and he almost always gets it.” Then he turned serious. “This project is killing two birds with one stone. It is not only putting to work thousands of people who need work, but it is also improving educational facilities now and for generations to come.”

But by the early 1960s, the library was out of space and inappetible to students and the collection.

Chief librarian Barbra Buckner Higginbotham and her library colleagues worked with the college community to secure a new building as the top construction priority in the 1995 master plan.

Architect Alexander Howe, of Boston’s Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, had to first solve the problem of the “stack core,” a mass of brick and limestone built to bear the weight of a million books. Students never entered its narrow aisles, but staff did to retrieve requested volumes. “It was prohibitive expensive to remove,” Howe says, “but it was dead center in terms of access” from the 1956 addition, which had become the library’s empty throne. His solution lay in knitting together the two buildings and encircling Guild Hall, the old library’s main entry from the quadrangle. Howe gut- ted the annex, stripped off its façade and added 100,000 square feet of space, some of it between the two buildings. This includes two octagonal towers, one in front for a grand staircase, the other in the rear for double- height reading rooms.

The arrangement of space let him change traffic directions, now make a quarters- turn around the hidden stack core between the old building and the new on every floor. The college’s houses special collections, which only librarians can enter, other books are in open stacks.

His second challenge was “to develop an exterior expression that is sympathetic to the old library, but is not a reproduction.” That led to similar brick (hand-molded and of differ- ing colors), high windows and “an old roofscape, which is based on the adja- cent science building — big gable ends with two chimneys.”

Inside, the new library is a feast of light, seats and logic. Students can choose the upholstered reading room overlooking the original lilypad pond, study carrels, or soundproof group-study rooms. “The library is inspirational for students,” Higginbotham says. “We love our building and are happier than I can ever say.”

Before Harold Evans’ campus design could be reborn, Brooklyn College had to deal with its own version of the Berlin Wall that separated East from West — quadrangles, that is.

In the 1970s, the college put up the undes- tinguished Plaza Building along Bedford Avenue, as well as a gargantuan staircase and overpass. They Sundered the campus. Now they are gone and the mission in the West is to achieve Eastern balance. In the West Quad, landscaping will mel- or the East. And to provide a visual and functional counterpart to the library, construction is soon to start on architect Rafael Viñoly’s sleek one-stop-shop for stu- dent services and athletics. From “the Oats,” or glassed-double-height lobby, stu- dents will go up for the barangay, financial aid, counselors and physical educa- tion offices. And from the Oats spectators will watch competitions at the NCAA-qualifica- tion pool and basketball court below, or descend to use racquetball courts, a weight training room and other facilities.

This campus transformation is due to Brooklyn College’s award-winning 1995 master plan, devised by architects at Czurien Santmon and Klimt & Halbkam, both New York City firms.

Citing its “continued, thoughtfulness and clarity,” the Society for College and University Planning and the American Institute of Architects’ Committee for Architecture for Education jointly pre- sented the award in 2005. The judges praised the architects for “re-establishing and protecting the campus heritage,” adding that the master plan makes better use of open spaces and is a thoughtful way to increase density.
Witnessed the Evolution of a Vibrant Public University

In the 1940s, a Blind “Proffy” Opened Shirley Chisholm’s Eyes

Excerpted from the chapter titled “College Years” in Chisholm’s 1970 autobiography, Unbought and Unbossed, which was published by Houghton Mifflin.

One needed an 89 percent average to enter Brooklyn College then (the mid 1940s), so there were only about sixty black students in the day school. Brooklyn was the largest of the five city-run colleges, and its campus was supposed to be especially for bright lower-class, poorer students. Tuition was free, it was a “subway campus,” and one would have expected more black students. The trouble was, of course, that the grade and high schools they attended — then as now — did not do enough to overcome the handicaps of their background.

I had already decided to become a teacher. There was no other road open to a young black woman. Law, medicine, even nursing were too expensive, and few schools would admit black students. The trouble was, of course, that the grade and high schools they attended — then as now — did not do enough to overcome the handicaps of their background.

...A blind political science professor, Louis Warsoff, became interested in me, and we had a match he told me, “You ought to go into politics.” I was astonished at his naivete. “Proffy,” I said, “you forget two things. I’m black — and I’m a woman.”

...When I graduated in 1946, cum laude, I was nearly twenty-two but I looked sixteen or seventeen, I weighed about ninety pounds. It made job hunting hard. School after school turned me down, even as a teacher’s aide... So, to be as well prepared as possible, I enrolled in Columbia University to work evenings for a master’s degree in early childhood education. It was about then that I had my own early education in politics, in the toughest and most instruction school possible, New York City’s old-time nightclubs.

The legacy that Shirley Chisholm left us was American politics. In 1968 she became the first African-American woman in the U.S. Congress, and in 1972 she became the first woman to make a serious bid for the presidency.

She died last year.

On November 30, at Brooklyn College, Governor George Pataki signed a document making the day “Shirley Chisholm Day.”

After graduating from Brooklyn College in 1946, Shirley Chisholm went on to change American politics. In 1968 she became the first African-American woman in the U.S. Congress, and in 1972 she became the first woman to make a serious bid for the presidency.

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Assemblyman Nick Perry, Brooklyn College Class of ’79, was there, as was State Supreme Court Justice Emily Goodman, Class of ’91, among others.

“The legacy that Shirley Chisholm left us was the knowledge that a woman, and in particular an African American woman, can run for office and can win,” said Barbara Winslow, coordinator of the Women’s Studies Program at Brooklyn College.
Now Playing at Grad Center: ‘World’s Greatest Philosopher’

Saul Kripke, called by many the world’s greatest living philosopher, is almost as well known for what he doesn’t do as for what he does. When Kripke, a Distinguished Professor at the Graduate Center, gives lectures, he doesn’t use notes, like Socrates, everything he says comes right out of his head. “I think faster than I talk,” he explained. “I never liked to write things down, even when I was in school.”

Throughout the decades, students and academics have taped his lectures, passing them among themselves, all the while lamenting the fact that only a select few had access to the master’s brilliant ideas.

In late January, CUNY and the Grad Center’s philosophy program sponsored a two-day conference to celebrate Kripke’s 65th birthday. Chancellor Matthew Goldstein — a strong supporter of the Graduate Center’s successful efforts to recruit the Distinguished Professor and philosopher — welcomed the attendies, many of whom seemed to view Kripke with reverence otherwise reserved for thinkers of the ancient Greek variety. At the event, which was covered by The New York Times, The New York Sun and the CUNY newspapers, Kripke gave a talk on “The First Person,” offering heady metaphysical speculations on the nature of self.

Now, with the philosophy journal Mind getting set to publish one of Kripke’s works — an article celebrating the centenary of the publication of Russell’s famous article “On Denoting” — it is being proposed that CUNY set up a Kripke Center that would tran- scend the editorial boards of his tapes that exist and then publish them.

“We’ve had this idea ever since we received Saul in 2004,” said Michael Devitt, Distinguished Professor of philosophy at the Grad Center. “It’s a dream that is shared by others, including President Bill Kelly. We now feel the time is right and are working on a pro- posal at this moment.”

Kripke was a student of Kripke’s in the 1960s at Harvard, said that the center would attract scholars from around the world. “Graduate students would help do the transcription. Kripke has only published a couple of books — the famous Naming and Neceity of 1972 among them — and a small number of papers, including five on modal logic: when he was very young, and a few very influential philosoph- ical papers in the 1970s. We have 100 items in transcript, and that’s only about 10 percent of the amount on tape.”

Devitt says that the other works will join the ranks of Kripke’s Naming and Neceity and his seminal book-length interpretation of Wittgenstein. The back- log of untranscribed, unpublished mate- rial is so vast that not even Kripke’s computer-like brain knows exactly how extensive it is. “Some of the stuff that I did in my teens and 20s hasn’t been published yet, and there are some writ- ten-out things that also need to be pub- lished,” Kripke said. “People often send me tapes of my lectures in the mail, and it’s frustrating because they don’t label them or date them.”

Establishing the center would be a “real coup,” said John Greenwood, execu- tive officer of the P.E.I. program in phi- losophy at the Grad Center. “He is unlike any other academic. He just thinks and says it, and it’s crystal clear. It’s like theater with Kripke; he holds his class spellbound.”

Devitt was “bowed over” by the “rady- ically new ideas in philosophy of lan- guage, epistemology and metaphysics” that Kripke presented to him and 15 other Harvard undergraduates and graduates. “Naming and Neceity came from those 1967 lectures,” Devitt said. “He has the most extraordinary mind I’ve ever encountered... It is almost as if he had some privileged access to reality.”

The reality is that Kripke, a child prodigy, grew up equally interested in math and philosophy “I did major in math at Harvard, but from about age 12, I discovered philosophy. After a long career at Princeton, he became a full-time Dista- guished Professor at CUNY in 2003. The idea of getting involved in the writing and editing side, Kripke wel- comes the idea of a center because “I still have more ideas.”

Bronx D. A. Robert Johnson Says City College Made Him What He Is

Following graduation, Johnson went to New York University’s Law School and then to the Legal Aid Society in the Bronx, and then to the Bronx District Attorney’s office, where he was an assis- tant prosecutor in the homicide unit in 1961 and 1962. In short order, he was named a Criminal Court judge and then an Acting State Supreme Court Justice. The judgeships were the fulfillment of his life’s ambiti- on, inspired largely by the influence of his now retired father, who had been a uniformed-court officer.

But while he was a judge, opportunity, creeping up eerily and unexpectedly, knocked even louder for Johnson. In 1987, long-serving Bronx District Attorney Mario Mereola died of a heart attack, and Johnson threw in his hat to succeed him, and he won the election.

In the years since, there have been many cases that, individually, marked Johnson’s tenure as mayor. There was, for one, the 1990 Happy Land massacre, in which 36-year-old Julio Gonzalez set fire to a Bronx social club and burned 87 people.

Johnson said he will never shake loose the memory of walking through that gruesome scene of bodies in the club. “I actually stood there and watched the largest mass murder in the history of this country,” Johnson said. “It was then exceeded by Oklahoma City [in 1995] and September 11, 2001.”

He and his office have prosecuted many high visibility cases since the Happy Land, including that of the police officers who shot African immigrant Amadou Diallo in 1999. “It’s worth noting that Johnson’s top two officials, supporting him through the crises that rise with regularity, are gradu- ates of CCNY. They are: Barry Kluger (Class of ’70), Johnson’s Chief Assistant District Attorney, and Anthony Greco (Class of ’86), the Counsel to the D.A. Known as someone who is open of heart even as he remains press shy, Johnson does not grant many interviews with the press. One of the most interest- ing profiles of him was written by Jack Newfield in a 1999 column for The New York Post. The late Newfield called Johnson “a different kind of cat — a Zen prosecutor who has mastered the art of serenity in a storm.” He said that Johnson is the embodiment of justice as an act of balancing, opposing the death penalty, and it translates into practical tactics against violent criminals.

Newfield, a graduate of CUNY’s Hunter College, quoted Johnson as saying, “Part of it means feeling self-suf- ficient. My self-image is still of being a kid from the projects, that kid went to City College downtown and then climbed the ladder of an old and honored profession.”

FACULTY HONORS

Stein Teaching in Moscow

Judith Stein, professor of history at City College, was one of 31 prominent scholars selected as a Fulbright Distinguished Chair for 2005-06 by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, which administers the Fulbright Scholar Program.

Through July, she will hold the Nikolay S. Sprachev Distinguished Chair in History at Moscow State University, where she will teach U.S. history, starting with World War II, to undergraduates and graduate students and she will be a resource person for Russian students and scholars studying American history.

Cheng Writing Novel on China

Teresa Cheng has received a $200,000 Creative Writing fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. With the money he will travel to China and Japan for research on Little Flower, his upcoming book about China during the Japanese occupation in the 1930s.

“The Lehman College professor’s developing book is based on real events of recent history, including the Rape of Nanking and the Japanese army’s use of so-called ‘comfort women.’

The research will be a homecoming for Cheng, born in Taipei, Taiwan. “It was not until graduate school that I began to study Chinese history,” he said. Cheng hopes Little Flower will encourage others to pass down their personal histories so future generations will never forget.

Tully is Pres. of Ed Group

Katherine Tully, associate dean of Borough of Manhattan Community College’s Center for Continuing Education, was elected president of the Continuing Education Association of New York, which represents 83 CUNY and SUNY colleges.

Tom Cryan, dean of Continuing Education at Queens College, was elected vice president at the association’s annual conference last fall at West Point.

This marks the first time in the 42-year history of the Center for Continuing Education that it will have a CUNY official in its top two posts.

Chapdel Discovered in Turkey

It’s not every day that one discovers a lost monument of the Middle Ages, but that is precisely what history professor Eric Ivison (of the Graduate Center and College of Staten Island) and gradu- ate student Christopher Petit did. They were excavating recently at the Byzantine city of Amorium in central Turkey, near the ruins of a large basilica church that Professor Ivison uncovered between 1994 and 2004. Attached to the north side of this church they found a baptistery — a chapel-like building that was original- ly vaulted and domed. The construc- tion of this baptistery is so datable to the late fifth or early sixth centuries.

Few baptisteries have been discov- ered in this part of Turkey, and so the Amorium example is a major addition to our knowledge of Byzantine archi- tecture in the region.
By Gary Schmidgall

Browse through them and walk about 450 pages, spread over more than a thousand pages in three volumes, that leave one feeling racism runs through every pore of the ineradicable part of the human genome: The whole revolting historical panorama of Americans’ bad behavior toward their fellow sojourners on the planet with different racial genes is laid out in cogent brief essays on such topics as Archie Bunker, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, Black Bloc-booking, Draft Riots of 1863, Jim Crow Laws, Ku Klux Klan, Race Card in Political Campaign, Shanksville, Yellow Peril, and on and on...

Such is the new, first-of-its-kind Encyclopedia of Racism in the United States (Greenwood Press), single-handedly edited by Pyyry Gap Min, professor of sociology at Queens College and the Graduate Center. Min’s purpose was to create a comprehensive encyclopedia of racism, and provide a racial victimization for all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S., and the project — the “most difficult” of his career — absorbed three years and involved the work of a five-member advisory board and nearly three dozen contributing authors.

Min offers the classic definition of racism as “the belief that on the basis of the genetic difference some racial groups are innately superior to other racial groups in intelligence, temperament, and attitudes,” and he notes that racist ideology began to burgeon in the 15th century, when voyages of discovery brought white Europeans in contact with non-white Europeans and native peoples in America.

The encyclopedia homes in on the three main areas of prejudice, discrimination, and physical violence with entries that fall into several categories, including: social-science terms and theories; historical events; reactions of minority groups to racial discrimination; and major books either supporting or opposing racism. Twenty-five long essays explore general topics like Affirmative Action, White Supremacist Groups, and Racial Terror. Another 180 mid-size entries up to 1,500 words deal with significant subjects like Black-American Conflicts, Capital Punishment and Racial Inequality.

The remaining 250 entries of up to 500 words are devoted to more specific subjects, like Adolf Eichmann (a famous anti-Semite), Executive Order 9061 (Harry Truman’s 1941 call for an integrated military), the Howard Hughes aircraft that fell into several categories, including: social-science terms and theories; historical events; reactions of minority groups to racial discrimination; and major books either supporting or opposing racism. Twenty-five long essays explore general topics like Affirmative Action, White Supremacist Groups, and Racial Terror. Another 180 mid-size entries up to 1,500 words deal with significant subjects like Black-American Conflicts, Capital Punishment and Racial Inequality.

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The encyclopedia’s 13-page chronology includes the following:

- 1908 Gabriel Pressor leads slave uprising in Virginia.
- 1895 Ku Klux Klan is founded in Tennessee.
- 1917 Anti-Chinese race riot erupts in Los Angeles after a white man is accidentally killed while trying to stop a dispute between two Chinese men.
- 1915 U.S. troops massacre Lakota Sioux Indians at Wounded Knee, South Dakota.
- 1920 Bellingham Riots begin when a mob of white men, who fear the loss of their jobs to immigrants, attacks a Hindu community in Bellingham, Washington.
- 1938 A 10-year-old girl is convicted of murdering a girl in Georgia, is abducted from prison and lynched, despite the existence of evidence that casts doubt on his guilt.
- 1945 In Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, the U.S. Supreme Court declares racial segregation in schools unconstitutional.
- 1954 Congress passes the Immigration Act, phasing out national-origin quotas and emphasizing the reunification of families.
- 1969 Amadou Diallo, an immigrant working as a street vendor in New York, is shot by four undercover police officers, who mistake him for a rape suspect.
- 1954 U.S. Supreme Court renders decisions in two University of Michigan affirmative action (sic) action cases — Gruetter v. Bollinger and Gratz v. Bollinger — declaring that race can be considered in university admissions but cannot be a “deciding factor.”
- 1954 The Encyclopedia of Racism was published, edited by Pyyry Gap Min, professor of sociology at Queens College and the Graduate Center. Min’s purpose was to create a comprehensive encyclopedia of racism, and provide a racial victimization for all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S., and the project — the “most difficult” of his career — absorbed three years and involved the work of a five-member advisory board and nearly three dozen contributing authors.

Min offers the classic definition of racism as “the belief that on the basis of the genetic difference some racial groups are innately superior to other racial groups in intelligence, temperament, and attitudes,” and he notes that racist ideology began to burgeon in the 15th century, when voyages of discovery brought white Europeans in contact with non-white Europeans and native peoples in America.

The encyclopedia homes in on the three main areas of prejudice, discrimination, and physical violence with entries that fall into several categories, including: social-science terms and theories; historical events; reactions of minority groups to racial discrimination; and major books either supporting or opposing racism. Twenty-five long essays explore general topics like Affirmative Action, White Supremacist Groups, and Racial Terror. Another 180 mid-size entries up to 1,500 words deal with significant subjects like Black-American Conflicts, Capital Punishment and Racial Inequality.

The remaining 250 entries of up to 500 words are devoted to more specific subjects, like Adolf Eichmann (a famous anti-Semite), Executive Order 9061 (Harry Truman’s 1941 call for an integrated military), the Howard Hughes aircraft that fell into several categories, including: social-science terms and theories; historical events; reactions of minority groups to racial discrimination; and major books either supporting or opposing racism. Twenty-five long essays explore general topics like Affirmative Action, White Supremacist Groups, and Racial Terror. Another 180 mid-size entries up to 1,500 words deal with significant subjects like Black-American Conflicts, Capital Punishment and Racial Inequality.

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Gates Scholarship Helps Brooklyn Students, Who Want to Treat the Sick Here and Abroad

Biology major Mamunur Rahman got his first taste of the medical profession as a high school student when he volunteered to work in a hospital. For chemistry major Ayomide Bomide, the decision to become a doctor came in 10th grade when he attended a health-care workshop.

Besides their medical ambitions, Brooklyn College students Bomide and Rahman have something else significant in common: They are among the 39 CUNY students who since 1999 have been designated Gates Millennium Scholars, an honor that comes with accolades and full tuition support to complete their undergraduate degrees.

While under the rules of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which funds the minority scholarships, Bomide and Rahman could have attended any college in the country, they choose Brooklyn, and didn’t even apply anywhere else.

“My family is a big supporter of public education,” the 19-year-old Rahman said. “Brooklyn College is close to my house — it’s literally 13 steps from my front door — and it’s a family institution,” he said, adding that his three older siblings — Mafabor, a doctor; Albera Khanam, a high school teacher, and Aminur, a computer network administrator — are Brooklyn College grads.

“In high school, I did some research with a Brooklyn College professor, so I knew all about the school and the faculty, and I wanted to continue my project there,” Bomide’s decision was equally easy.

“The school has a great science program that alone is competitive with the Ivy Leagues. It’s well known that if you are successful at Brooklyn College, you will be successful wherever you go,” he said.

“The work, however, hasn’t always been so easy,” Rahman conceded.

“This really helped me get adjusted to college-level courses in science,” he said.

Rahman and Bomide say that the student-based emergency medical services program and the college’s close association with the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center, which they plan to attend, also were big factors in their decisions.

“Brooklyn College is one of the few colleges that has an EMRS,” Rahman said, referring to the emergency medical services program. “Being a member of the EMRS has been rewarding — I had worked in a hospital when I was in high school, but you really don’t get to do anything that is medical-related. I wanted that medical experience that comes with being in the EMRS. For Rahman and Bomide, being in the medical profession offers a way to help people and to give back. “I’m really concerned about the New York City community,” said Bomide, a native of Nigeria who wants to be a family physician.

“Many don’t have the quality health care they deserve. When I attended that workshop in high school, I saw the disparities in medicine, and it propelled me to the top.”

“We have to play your life,” says Ayomide Bomide. “Brooklyn College will not fail me. The experiences I have here will help propel me to the top.”

Memories of City Tech Kept Him Strong During

Two years ago, Jude Poku was happily ensconced in his studies at New York City College of Technology, where he had developed a special interest in chemistry and hoped someday to be a physician.

Then Poku, in the army reserves at the time, received word that his unit was being called up for duty in Iraq. Duty called and he answered. But five months after landing in Iraq, Poku’s heart was turned, and he sustained chest, shoulder and knee injuries that cut short his tour of active duty.

“Regrettably, I needed to leave the active duty program. I spent time Fort Dix in New Jersey last year before being formally discharged from the military on January 11. “I feel lucky to have gotten out with all my limbs intact. Many didn’t,” he said recently.

And this spring semester, Poku, 26 and a resident of the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, is resuming his studies at City Tech, where science continues to inspire him. “In a sense, it was his love of chemistry that helped sustain Poku emotionally when he was in Iraq. He kept thinking about his past, knowing in his heart that it would take him to a future he wanted, a future of studying science and becoming a physician."

He received letters from the chemistry professor with whom he worked at City Tech, Pamela Brown, and the correspondence with Brown, now Acting Dean of Arts and Sciences, kept Poku’s spirits up. “While I was in Iraq, Dr. Brown wrote to me and sent me biology and MACHT (entrance boards for med school) study guides,” he said.

“When I would return to the base after
for Dennis P. Sullivan, The Graduate Center professor who just received the 2004 National Medal of Science, mathematics is a lot more than numbers.

"Higher math is like symphonic music," noted Sullivan, an Albert Einstein Chair in the Sciences at The Graduate Center, where he also is a distinguished professor of mathematics.

"It's inspiring and unusual. It never ceases to amaze me, and you can really understand it; it's not like a painting that you like but that you can't understand. It's like when you put a puzzle together because you're trying to figure things out. I worked on one problem for eight years, and it was very satisfying. You don't want to waste your IQ on a crossword puzzle when you can do math."

Last month, Sullivan had cause to reflect upon his nearly half-century career when he was invited to the White House to meet President George W. Bush and receive the nation's highest scientific honor for his work developing new fields of mathematics and finding ways to connect seemingly unrelated disciplines.

"I've gotten a lot of awards, but this one I feel I've earned it," he said, adding that it was extra special because the presentation ceremony was on Feb. 12, his 65th birthday.

"There is only one national medal given for science, and it includes the fields of physical, biological, mathematical, social, behavioral and engineering sciences. There were only eight recipients this year."

"Winning awards and gaining recognition in his field is nothing new for Sullivan, who has been at the top of the numbers game since the age of 26 when he solved the Hauptvermutung, the main conjecture that any two triangulations of a polyhedron are combinatorially equivalent.

"As Sullivan might say, "Go figure.""

The professor's National Medal of Science joins a host of other prestigious prizes and distinctions, including the 1971 Oswald Veblen Prize in Geometry from the American Mathematical Society, the 1981 Elie Cartan Prix en Geometrie from the French Academy of Sciences, the 1990 King Faisal International Prize in Science and the 1997 New York City Mayor's Award for Excellence in Science and Technology.

The internationally renowned theoretical mathematician specializes in topology, which studies those properties of curved spaces that do not depend on sizes, lengths, areas or volumes, but rather on qualitative features like dimension or connectiveness.

In addition to his work for CUNY, he is also on the mathematics faculty at SUNY Stony Brook. He has a bachelor's degree from Rice University and a doctorate from Princeton.

"I've had to work very hard," Sullivan said. "You have to have a passion for math, a taste for it, you have to be thisty."

In his college days, Sullivan was thisty, but it sure wasn't for math. "I was your typical teen who thought only about cars, music and girls. I made a D in Math 101 in my first semester," he said.

"It wasn't only that it was a rigorous class; it was that he had been banned from campus for six weeks—for drinking and running away from the cops. "I also didn't understand how to study," he confessed.

"But I did make an A in the second semester. Before college, math had always been formulas and problems."

It was when it became a philosophical problem that it caught his attention and persuaded him to go into teaching. He loves working with grad students because it helps him think and rethink problems. And he regrets that school-age children are not good at his favorite subject.

"Almost every kid I meet who is 5 to 6 thinks only about cars, music and girls. I thought about it, even the ones who are supposed to know."

When he's not up to his elbows in numbers, Sullivan, who lives in Stony Brook with his wife, Mona Chiu, who teaches the math department's computer science course at SUNY Stony Brook, he's playing dad to his three youngest children—3-year-old Clara, 10-year-old Ricardo and 17-year-old Thomas. He has three other children ages 33, 39, and 41.

Ricardo, he said, was particularly thrilled by the White House visit.

Describing a typical day, Sullivan said, "I get up when the children do and get them off to school, and I usually try to work after everyone is asleep. I'm not as efficient as I used to be, but I'm 65 and I'm still kind of doing it."

Saying he's had a nice job with CUNY since 1981, Sullivan also informed me that he has no intention of retiring anytime soon.

"I can't even tell people that I'm going to work because they know I'm going to have fun," he said, laughing."

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MATH NOTES
FROM THE CUNY GRADUATE CENTER:

The Grad Center's Ph.D. Program in Mathematics is a crossroads for the many research mathematicians working in the City University of New York. The majority of the faculty have dual appointments at the Center and at one of the CUNY four-year colleges.

Research areas include algebraic geometry; algorithms; combinatorics; complex analysis and Teichmüller theory; dynamics; graph theory; Lie theory; logic; number theory; probability; Riemannian geometry and analysis; and topology.

The Mathematics Program provides students of high ability and strong preparation with an opportunity to begin study for the doctoral degree, either immediately upon graduation from college or after completion of some graduate work in CUNY colleges or other accredited institutions.

The program is designed to give students the background they will need to pursue careers as pure or applied mathematicians.

His Tour of Duty in Iraq, and Now He's Back at the Books

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CUNY Will Train New Generation of Demographers

In 2004, Andrew Beveridge, sociology professor at Queens College, discovered an enclave of Afghans living in Flushing, only a few blocks from his office on campus.

He found these new New Yorkers by studying, with a demographer’s intensity, some brand-new numbers from the latest census.

Beveridge’s insight into the demographics of the Afghan enclave was included in an enlightening feature article in the New York Times, telling about young Afghan women struggling to balance ethnic traditions with the vicissitudes of daily life in New York.

As demographers predict huge increases in the number of Asian and other New Yorkers settling in Flushing and other neighborhoods, such skills are taking on a special urgency.

And Beveridge wants others to be able to do the kind of work he does. In furtherance of that desire, he and a handful of other seasoned demographers from around the university helped create a new CUNY Institute for Demographic Research.

The new Institute is expected soon to begin hiring numbers-crunching scholars, with University administrators hoping the Institute will be fully staffed in about four years with ten senior scholars.

Selma Botman, Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, boasted that CUNY has some of the best-known demographers in the country. And now the University’s envied reputation in this area will deepen and expand.

“The demographers at CUNY are sought out and quoted by journalists at all the major newspapers,” Botman said.

“Armed with data on immigration, voting patterns, marriage and mortality and so much else, these scholars also are respected and trusted for their ability to fairly interpret the data that they uncover. With our current demographers as our foundation, CUNY’s reputation in this growing field of demography will be multiplied several times over.”

There are a number of veteran demographers at CUNY who regularly appear as sources of hard-to-obtain data, in newspapers and magazines, as well as on television and radio and on the Internet.

“Call them the Deans of Demography. Among the veterans are: Beveridge; Neil G. Bennett, renowned for researching marriage patterns of American women, and mortality rates of developing nations, teaches at the Baruch School of Public Affairs and at The Graduate Center; Ted Joyce, economist who teaches at the School of Business at Baruch.

Others are extremely skilled at using databases, but are better known as practitioners of the discipline in which they teach. John Mollenkopf, for example, is consulted widely for information about voting patterns but is considered primarily a political scientist, as opposed to a demographer. “You could call me a political demographer, I guess,” Mollenkopf said in an e-mail.

At Queens College, Dean Savage, chair of the sociology department, is another skilled cruncher of numbers. Like the others mentioned above, he was very instrumental in establishing the new Institute for Demographic Research.

Bennett said CUNY’s new Institute is filling a big void. “There’s been an absence of places at which you can train for demography in New York City for decades,” he said.

Initially, administrators will hire three demographers this year, and those scholars will be based at Baruch College’s School of Public Affairs. The Graduate Center and Queens College, where strong work in demographics is already being done. Officials then plan to hire seven more demographers for the new CUNY-wide Institute over the next four years. The project is expected to cost over $1 million to operate.

But CUNY demographers say the Institute could bring in millions of dollars more annually, in grants and contracts from government agencies and foundations that study, for example, health and mortality in the developing world or in the United States.

Bennett, who has had formal training in demography from the Office of Population Research at Princeton University as well as a doctorate in sociology, was one of the prime movers behind the new institute. He is also the founding director of the New York Census Research Data Center, another important resource for demographic study that is expected to open soon at Baruch. A second location of the center at Cornell University is already open.

The center, one of nine in the nation and the only one in New York City, will allow researchers to study the most detailed census data, which is normally kept confidential to protect respondents’ privacy. Korenman of Baruch is the current executive director of the census center.

But it is the CUNY Institute for Demographic Research that is creating great expectations for the training of a large new crop of specialists. “I expect that we’ll create an environment of great intellectual vitality in the field of demographics at the Institute,” Bennett said.