Trustees Designate Presidents at BMCC, Hunter, Queens, and Dean of Law School

Four CUNY campuses will begin the 1995-96 academic year with stellar new leaders at their helm.
The CUNY Board of Trustees approved all of the appointments at the conclusion of extensive national searches.

"The quality of these four outstanding leaders confirms the attractiveness of CUNY to first-rate and nationally prominent educators," said James P. Marpey, Chair of the CUNY Board of Trustees.

At Hunter, a distinguished political scientist, David A. Caputo, will become the twelfth President of CUNY's largest college. Queens, the second largest campus, will welcome Dr. Allen Lee Sessions, an internationally recognized physicist and diplomat, as the institution's President.

At Borough of Manhattan Community College, Dr. Antonio Perez, a highly experienced community college president, will lead CUNY's third largest institution.

Kris G. Brown, Associate Justice of the New York State Supreme Court-Appellate Term and a prominent legal educator for two decades, becomes the Dean of CUNY's Law School at Queens College.

These appointments followed national searches and were made upon the recommendation of Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds.

Dr. Caputo begins his duties on July 17. Dr. Sessions on Aug. 1. Dr. Perez and Judge Glenn on Sept. 1.

Dr. Caputo holds a doctorate in political science and two masters degrees from Yale University. Since 1987 he has served as Dean of the School of Liberal Arts at Purdue University, where he began teaching in 1967 and chaired the Political Science department from 1978 to 1987. As an author of six books and numerous monographs on diverse subjects, his interests range from Italian culture to the financing of American political campaigns.

Dr. Caputo has held the Bologna Chair at the University of Bologna in Italy. He has been a visiting scholar at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School and the Harvard University Center for Population Studies, and a senior Fulbright Lecturer.

Currently Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University of Massachusetts system, Dr. Sessions received his Ph.D. in physics from Yale University and taught physics at Harvard University from 1975 to 1981. He began his career with research on proton-proton diffractive scattering and quarks at the European Organization of Nuclear Research and did post-doctoral work at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Dr. Sessions held several increasingly responsible positions in the U.S. State Department between 1980 and 1993, dealing with nuclear technology, safeguards issues, and political affairs. These include the directorship of the Office of Nuclear Technology & Safeguards and the Bureau of Oceans & International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. From 1993 to 1993 he served as the largest U.S. diplomat mission, the Embassy in Mexico City, eventually becoming its Deputy Chief of Mission.

Dr. Perez, whose career spans nearly three decades as an administrator and teacher in higher education, comes to CUNY from the presidency of Gateway Community Technical College, the fastest growing campus in the Connecticut system of 12 colleges. As President of the institution since 1986, he has nearly doubled enrollment, to 6,000, and is lauded for his leadership in the recent merger of the colleges in New Haven and North Haven that now comprise Gateway.

Previously, Dr. Perez served the Community College of Rhode Island System as Vice President for Student Affairs. From 1979 to 1986, he also held teaching and administrative positions at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, SUNY/Old Westbury and SUNY/Albany. He began his own college career at Bronx Community College, graduating from SUNY/Special Education and moving on to SUNY/Albany for his M.S. and Ed.D. in Counseling and Personnel Administration.

Judge Glenn will lead the 10-year-old CUNY Law School, where nearly 60% of students are women. She is a graduate of Stanford University and Columbia University Law School and has served as a trial judge for 13 years, most recently as an Associate Justice on New York's highest bench, where she hears appeals from Civil, Criminal, and Housing Courts. Before assuming judicial robes, she was involved largely in federal litigation for 12 years.

Judge Glenn also brings 20 years of experience teaching law, first at Hofstra University and New York University and, since 1980, as Adjunct Professor at New York Law School. She is a member of local and national legal advisory committees on the elderly, on complex scientific evidence, on law and medicine, and on anti-bias initiatives. The incoming dean also assisted in drafting and enactment of a new Mental Hygiene Law for providing guardians to incapacitated adults, which took effect in 1995.
Discipline Councils

By Robert A. Picken
Senior Faculty Fellow, Office of Academic Affairs, former Chair, University Faculty Senate

Two discipline-based councils—long advocated by the Faculty Senate—have emerged during the past year as bodies with a key role to play in strengthening the University’s academic programs and in facilitating the transfer of students between CUNY colleges. While faculty on separate campuses who share common interests have often convened on an ad hoc basis, these discipline councils were given formal status by the Board of Trustees’ Resolution on Academic Program Planning of June 29, 1989. It urged “the faculties of the University to work together within discipline-based collaboration, and professional groupings to identify ways in which each field can be strengthened across the University in areas such as curriculum, program development, faculty hiring and mentoring, and faculty development.”

The discipline-based councils, jointly sponsored by the Faculty Senate Chair and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for consideration were: the alignment of introductory curricula with expectations for skills and competencies formulated by joint CUNY/Board of Education faculty committees for the College Preparatory Initiative (CPI), articulation between two- and four-year programs: cooperation among departments across campuses in both pedagogical and research activities; initiatives to strengthen and diversify program offerings; and faculty recruitment and development.

In spring 1984, the chairs of all CUNY English and mathematics departments were invited to form councils. Last fall, the CUNY Council on Foreign Language Study, an existing University-wide body, was designated the discipline council for foreign language departments.

During the past year, these three councils have taken up a wide variety of matters. The English council has explored questions of optimal class size, the teaching of composition, and the replacement of adjuncts. The mathematics council has considered the selection of instructional software for teaching calculus and for completing site licenses. The foreign languages council has examined modes of assessment and placement; it also sponsored a highly successful conference on language pedagogy attended by a third of CUNY’s foreign language faculty.

Articulation and assessment remain high on the agenda of the councils, which I believe provide the best possible forum for their discussion. In coming months, University-wide study and consideration of various funding formulas arising from the Report of the Council of Presidents’ Committee on Base-Level Equity will be taking place. The councils’ views on staffing levels could thus be particularly important, as the University considers changes in the current Instructional Staff Model.

The Office of Academic Affairs provides coordination and staff support for discipline-based councils in consultation with the University Faculty Senate. Although at present only the three councils are at work on a regular basis, chairs of departments in a number of other disciplines are exploring the advantages of similar plenary activities.

Discipline councils should not be confused with University-wide task forces, of which there have been a number in recent years. Although at times these two types of bodies may address similar issues, they differ in a number of significant ways. Task forces normally have very specific predetermined charges and deadlines for completion. Their members are nominated by college presidents and the University Faculty Senate: task forces include representation from both faculty and administration and typically have non-CUNY participants.

Departments or individual faculty interested in forming councils in particular disciplines or groups of disciplines should contact: Dr. Sanford Cooper, the Office of Academic Affairs, or Dr. Robert A. Picken in the Office of Academic Affairs.
Lifting the Curse on Opera
An Interview with John Corigliano

John Corigliano, Distinguished Professor of Music at Lehman College, was commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera to compose the opera "Ghosts of Versailles" for its centennial in 1983. However, the premiere did not occur until 1993. It was the first new opera in the house in nearly a quarter century. This spring, the opera, which is libretto by William M. Hoffman, was revived at the Met and will be performed this fall by the Chicago Lyric Opera.

Corigliano received his B.A. from Columbia University and is a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. His first critical acclaim was for his "Sonata for Violin and Piano," which won the chamber music prize at the Spoleto Festival in 1964. His Symphony No. 1, "Corigliano's response to the AIDS crisis," was written for the Chicago Symphony, where he was Composer in Residence. This work won him the Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Composition of 1994" and "Best Orchestral Performance of the Year" as well as the 1993 Pulitzer Award for Distinguished Composition by an American Composer.

His compositions have been widely commissioned by numerous musicians and organizations, including the New York Philharmonic, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New York Council on the Arts, Walt Disney World and the Boston Symphony. He has also applied his talents to film and received an Academy Award nomination for his score of the film "Alfred E. Smith Green." He met his wife in Paris and they currently reside in Caracas.

MM: Your father was concert master at the New York Philharmonic. Did he include you in his musical life? JC: My parents were separated. I lived mainly with my mother in Brooklyn and went to high school there. My father lived in New York—a block away from Carnegie Hall—and I would visit him on weekends or when he played concerts at Carnegie Hall. When he went to rehearsals and concerts I was there and he made sure I knew the piece very well. I would listen and talk to him afterward. But he didn't want me to go into music and, in fact, actively discouraged me for a variety of reasons, some of them practical.

When I was interested in 20th century music, he said, "Why do you want to hear about the 'obscure'-which aren't any more?" However, this was the late '50s; I graduated from Columbia in '59. The idea of contemporary music then was that it was all one language, the serial or 12-tone style. If you didn't write that, you didn't get your music played. This was true of academia, of Columbia, of the outside world. But audiences loathed it. If they knew a new piece was on, they wouldn't come. So my father was saying, "No one's going to pay you! no one's going to pay your piece; no one's going to listen to it; tell me why you're doing this. I don't think you should do it." Well, that's all I had to hear, of course. So I became a composer.

MM: Did you want to be a performer like your father? JC: I didn't have the confidence [at]. Seeing my father on the big stage and played, I really was overwhelmed. I still do, when friends perform or a piece of mine is being done. The idea of being on a stage and performing is absolutely inconceivable to me. I still recall being back in the green room listening to speakers when he played his concertos and shuddering before the hard passages and being relieved when he got through them. That's what performing is to me; a roller-coaster from one difficulty to another.

MM: Still, your father recorded a piece of yours in 1969.

JC: Yes, but that was the end of a long journey. I wrote that piece in 1963, a violin and piano concerto dedicated to my parents, and gave it to my father. He said, "I see too much new music all the time and too much music." So he put it under some clothes in a dresser and didn't speak about it. What he ended up doing, my mother told me years later, was to take it around to various musicians, hoping they would say it wasn't good and he could report back to me to give up composing. They evidently all said, "Leave him alone, he knows what he's doing." So my father never mentioned it to me.

MM: Were you crushed?

JC: Oh, absolutely. I worked a year on that piece. But then I won the Spoleto Festival Chamber Music Competition and was prize winner in 1964. I won, my mother went. My father didn't say a word to me. Not a word. Not until it was performed by the composer of the London Symphony. Still, not a word. Not then. It was performed by the violist Roman Totenberg in Boston. As you can see, it was getting closer to New York. My mother told me then it took it out. But I continued practicing. The next thing I knew, he scheduled it for a Carnegie Recital Hall concert, gave it its New York premiere, and recorded it. From then on he was supportive, but it took that to get there.

MM: An odyssey!

JC: Yes, and finally he loved the piece.

He played it the rest of his life. It was rough at first. I can't deny it. Because I wanted him when I brought it in. I didn't want to start playing. I was still full of all those fantasies, and yet nothing happened. But life is like that! Things don't happen when you think they're going to happen.

MM: You had contact with Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland.

JC: I worked with Bernstein for 12 years on the Young People's Concerts. They were wonderful. I knew Copland...I knew everybody because of my father. I even knew "legend" Fritz Kreisler and Pierre Monteux.

MM: Were they just lowering figures or did they become more personal?

JC: No, just lowering figures. Bernstein became more personal because he played his music; he gave the world premiere of my clarinet concerto in 1977, but of course that was after I had become a composer. Before then, my father take me around, introduced me, and they shocked my head.

MM: You were "the son."

JC: I was the son. I remember we'd go to lunch at La Scala Restaurant with Dimitri Mitropoulos, and he would talk to my father and say what a nice little boy I was and pat my head and continue eating his favas beans and steak tartare.

MM: What were you looking for?

JC: I don't know. I just wanted to be a part of something that I wanted. I didn't know I was going to be a composer or go into classical music. I originally thought of being a cartoonist. That's what I loved.

Disney was my hero when I was eight. I thought—I still do—that animation is one of the most creative arts this century has produced.

MM: Quite a different kind of composition.

JC: Yes, it is, and it's very creative.

Disney was the genius. They had to carry me out of his feature films, I was sobbing so much. I saw "Dumbo" again about five years ago on television, and there I am with Dumbo's mother in jail sobbing uncontrollably—a grown man! And if they showed "Bambi" I would not be able to go near it; I would be a wreck. Those were the emotionally wrenching moments of my youth (he laughs)...watching the forest fire and Bambi's mother dead.

MM: We don't often get to hear about you as a teacher. You started out at Lehman 24 years ago as an adjunct. What's teaching been like?

JC: Well, I love it. The kids are great...and it's not all kids either. We have a combination of regular college students and people coming back to get degrees who are in the ABD Program.

MM: The ABD Program?

JC: Local ABD's are the musicians union, so we have many professional musicians who never got degrees and want them now. They range from commercial players to great jazz performers to classical musicians. Right now, in my orchestra class, I have a trombone player from the New York City Opera Orchestra and a bass player from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. For the younger people they're good perspective-givers. It's very motivating to see how devoted they are, how much they want to learn.

MM: What do you teach?

JC: I teach at this point—and I hope it stays this way, given all these budget changes you never know—two semesters of composition and two semesters of orchestration and some private lessons or independent studies. The composition classes are fun, I take them from the early part of the century to what's happening right now, and [students] compose music in the various worlds we talk about. Then class members play it. We change, criticize, and build pieces.

MM: It's a combination of a music survey and actual composing in class.

JC: Exactly. We start out with impressionism, the turn-of-the-century, Ravel and Debussy, and the idea of modes, new scales, and new ways of thinking of chords, new ways of thinking of harmony and rhythm. In the second semester, we start with the 12-tone method and Schoenberg in Germany, then we get into the more recent things like micro-tones and...
MM: What effect does your being an an actress/director have on your teaching?
JC: I share the kind of backstage problems a composer’s going to have with a piece being played. I share my knowledge of how it really is in the business. These kids know that I’m up there at rehearsals at The Met, and I say, ‘Well, this happens right, and this wasn’t going well, and they glimpse problems they’ll face themselves.

MM: Any drawbacks to being an artist/teacher? Ron Carter, your fellow Distinguished Professor of Music at City College, suggested to me that sometimes it gets tiring. For example, when students only wanted to hear about playing with Miles Davis.
JC: Oh, well, there’s a little difference between Miles Davis and André Watts! They’re actually much more curious about my film composing (“Altered States,” for instance) than they are about the concert world. A lot of them are interested in going into film composing, which is now at the high end of commercial music. They would love to be film composers, but I’m not sure that most of them would necessarily like to write a symphony.

MM: Do you have any prospective classical composers? JC: Yes. In fact, I had a student (Michael Bacon) at Lehman two years ago who won an Emmy for a series he did for PBS on the Roosevelt family. And I have several other students who are writing serious contemporary classical music because they fell in love with it. I teach at Juilliard, and there’s a very different mind-set there. Here at Lehman, it’s very much practical, and we talk about that. If you want to write a symphony; okay, but it’s going to be rough, and (beginning to sound a bit like the Cortlandt) you’re not going to earn money. If you want, fine, but you have to make a living while you’re doing it. So all of these young people go out and do arranging. They have a jazz band or an ensemble; they have club date seminars. When they finish, they can go out into the world survival-fit. A large number of our students go on into real career lives.

MM: How does teaching influence your composing?
JC: I think it’s very important, especially for classical composers, always to have to explain what you write in the simplest possible terms. When you’re always getting new students, you have to do that. The biggest problem in being a composer today is having your language understood in the first place. The closer to reality we are, the healthier we are, and Lehman is a very reality-conscious institution. Explaining what new music is and how you survive always clarifies things for me.

JC: Composing music while composing classical music is the emotional fatigue that sets in when you’re battling. When you’ve got the critics and the publishers and the audiences and the deadlines, you tend to forget sometimes why you started. But when you teach, the enthusiasm comes back. You see the students in love with Stravinsky, say, and it rekindles all the nice things that started you going. It’s life-affirming.

I have had the strangest, most untypical people fall in love with, for example, the 12-tone technique. I had a Rastafarian student who took to it and wrote the most gorgeous stuff. A light went on in his eyes once this technique was described, and he started writing it. And he wrote terrific music!

MM: If you could do anything to improve music education at Lehman, what would that be?
JC: I probably would try to get the young music majors at Lehman to write and perform music more for the general student body. I’d like to get them to see that young people, peers living in their part of town, are in love with classical music. The biggest problem we have is alienation...the charge that classical music is elitist; it’s ‘white people’s music’. Then you go down into the lunchroom, and they’re playing rap and pop and all those other things. I’d like to have my students, when they fall in love with a piece, be able to demonstrate this to students who might become couch potatoes.

MM: Just spectacles of life...
JC: Yes. The participatory, rather than passive, way of listening to music is important. Listening to music is a very active process. When my kids want to orchestrate, I say, “Now look, you get a score and you get a tape, and first let’s listen and see what the windmills are doing; now let’s listen and hear the brass; now the strings; now let’s listen and see how chords are made; now let’s listen and see how accompaniment figures are made and who’s playing the melody.” Each time they listen, they’re focusing their intelligence on a different part of the piece and following the score. Well, the truth is you can listen to the same piece a hundred times if it’s a good piece and find so many things. You can do that on the subway instead of reading the ads. You get your little Walkman and a score and have a terrific time with your mind and your soul. And my students do. I really haven’t found them resistant in any way.


MM: I think that’s a misconception about CUNY students. Once you’re in a classroom, you find they really want to engage.
JC: I think they love the real-life aspect of music at Lehman...that we are dealing with music in a way that’s not fantasy.

MM: What are some of the "real-life" lessons you teach them?
JC: When I tell them about orchestrating a score, I say, “Look, you can write a messa score, but at least three times in my life I’ve seen a composer write a messa score, get his parts out on the music stands, and then after five minutes have the conductor say, ‘This is unreadable, cancel this piece; we’ll play something else.’” The same goes for composition: I say, “Look, the first person who gets a piece in is the one to get the most attention. That’s life! If you want to get some attention. Write your piece now, get to front of everybody.”

MM: As a composer, you seem so dexterous. You’ve composed for orchestra, chamber music, theater music, movies, opera, pop opera, rock opera. You’ve produced a range of compositions.
JC: The only trouble is the word "dexterous." I always try new things because I like to do something I haven’t done. In fact, Bill Hoffman [librettist on "Ghost of Versailles"] and I am going to write a musical next. I can tell you I am the slowest and most agonized composer I know of alive. Bernstein was very slow and agonized, but I’m worse. In fact, I’m so miserable right now because I’m stuck and can’t finish a string quartet I’ve been commissioned to write. I’m sitting here totally depressed because it takes me years to write a piece. Nothing comes easily, absolutely nothing.

MM: So you’re not one of those people who gets up, does four hours of composing straight, then goes on to other things...
JC: I’m so jealous of those people!...

MM: You seem drawn to putting music to words, and you speak like a person who loves words, loves expression. You have set Baudelaire and Dylan Thomas to music, for example. What’s the attraction?
JC: First of all, it’s a lot easier. When you set words, you are given so much. You’re given architecture; you’re given emotional points to go to and come from. You’re given the poetry of cadence. Words help you melodically and with recapturings, structure, theatrical motivation, everything. Words are so atmospheric and so real. When I read something beautiful, to be able to visualize what it could be when set to music is a dimension but it also is a springboard.

MM: Was it like that when you composed "Ghosts"?
JC: With Bill it was very different because we were creating a new architecture together. It was much more time-consuming because there were no "givens." Bill is a poet and a playwright. He wrote the play "As Is," and he’s written wonderful poetry, and he’s very theatrical. I’ve known him for 35 years, and we trust each other. He uses words musically. I cannot set most poetry even though I like it because I find the words don’t make music. Dylan Thomas always made music to me.

Stephen Spender is another of whom this is true.

MM: What will the musical be about? Any idea of plot?
JC: It’s based on a play Bill wrote a long time ago with Anthony Holand. We’re still trying to understand its framework. The big problem with opera and musicals is that the framework has to make sense. For me, very often operatic dictation and pronunciation and projection, for example, do not go with a contemporary framework. So I had to evolve something in "Ghosts" which was "timeless"—existing in a world of smoke. If it were 1985 in Toledo or New York City, I wouldn’t have wanted to set it operatically.

MM: Are you free to move into the words and he into the music as you work together?
JC: Oh, we do. I couldn’t possibly just take a libretto and just start working. The libretto was actually made the way it was to give me the chance to do what I had to do technically in terms of the worlds I wanted to create. The whole world of "Ghosts" was developed by Bill because I said I wanted to work with smoke, a world not locked into the dreams and ghosts were the two solutions he had for that problem. We picked ghosts.
Best Job Fair Yet

Patricia G. Reilly
Director of Corporate Relations, Office of Admissions Services

Since 1989 the annual CUNY Big Apple Job Fair has proved to be an outstanding resource for major private- and public-sector organizations recruiting new degree holders. This year's Fair, on March 29, attracted a record number of participants. Ninety organizations registered to recruit at the Fair; of those, 20 have participated for five consecutive years or more. Nearly 4,600 graduating students and recent alumni (also a record) came to the Marriott Marquis Hotel prepared with resumes to show recruiters.

Before Fair doors opened at 11 a.m., more than 200 recruiters attended a breakfast reception to meet with all CUNY college Placement Directors. A highlight of this year's reception was the keynote speech by the Speaker of the City Council, Peter V. Tavone. The Big Apple Job Fair was spawned seven years ago by the University's Office of Student Services and Career Counseling and Placement Association to achieve three main objectives: to facilitate the entry of CUNY graduates into the labor market, to promote the University's value as a major source of qualified job applicants, and to help students learn how to position themselves most advantageously in the current job market.

This last goal involved sharpening students' resume-writing and job-search skills and collecting information on prospective employers and changes in the job market.

As the Fair's reputation has grown, a wider variety of organizations has chosen to participate. These include publishing houses, retail companies, hospitals, telecommunications and engineering firms, and financial institutions. Among major employers recruiting this year were AT&T, Automatic Data Processing, Chemical Bank, the CIT Group, the Ford Foundation, Grey Advertising, MCI, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, NatWest Bank, Simon & Schuster, and Smith Barney.

The Fair gives recruiters the opportunity to meet graduating students and recent alumni holding undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degrees in all the major disciplines offered at CUNY's senior and community colleges, the Technical College, Graduate School, and Law School.

By the 6 p.m. closing, it was clear that the long, exhausting afternoon had been rewarding. One student remarked, "I took advantage of the opportunity of meeting that I would not have considered presenting to me here. I hope to hear of the next CUNY Job Fair." Employer feedback has been tabulated, and every organization reported fulfilling one or more of its recruitment objectives.

Chairman V. Tavone: "Kudos!" summed up one employer. "We were very pleased with the execution and results of the Fair and are optimistic that we will be hiring candidates we meet at the Fair now and in the future.

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Continued from page 4 because we got Marie Antoinette and Bremenmeisters to redo the famous Figo story. It's a wild story (laughs), and the production is beautiful.

MC: I want to talk to you about the critics—not the "critics," but criticism.

JC: I don't read critics, and I don't read reviews—because I'm powerless.

There's nothing to be done. Since they're not accountable, they can say anything and do anything. It could be wrong, or it could be right.

MC: It's a terrible, terrible thing. They have no technical abilities. They're not musicians. They're the same as a public school teacher who has no technical ability or understanding of what the critic is doing, that takes the critic's power away.

You want to be able to say, 'You think you understood it, but it's terrible.' or 'You didn't like it?' Well, you don't know how good it is.

Take another example: Why don't performers do new music? Not because it's bad, but because attention will basically be on the creation, not the interpretation. Why do they want to do old music? Because it's going to be Beethoven and Bartok, and that's the only thing that's going to survive. If you talk about modern music, the performer gives up that top billing—it's the Corigliano Opera before it is the diva's or the conductor's. Although once in a while, like in "Ghost," it's okay, I don't think that superstars are that anxious to give up top billing.

And I don't think critics are willing to give up the top billing to the fact that the audience doesn't need them or goes directly to the piece and says, "We embrace this."

MC: In literature, too. Accessible art is often thought second-rate.

JC: This is a 19th-century German Romantic view of art—that if it reaches people, it's not high art. That real art is out of the reach of the common person, and the only expert can tell you if it's "real." Bernard Holland, one of the music critics of The New York Times, came to my house and interviewed me in 1982 for an article in the Magazine section. The first thing he did, sitting right where you are, was to say, "I read a word in all your reviews and the word disturbs me. The word is 'communicates.'" And so we had a very rocky first interview.

Luckily, we had several interviews, so the second time I said, "Mr. Holland, I really cannot relax with you because you said something in the first interview that so disturbed me. Why is it that my music communicates?" And he said, "Well, I was taught—that—that if a composer today is reaching his audiences and they're cheering and grooving to that composer, then he's a success. I'm not saying that.

So I said, "Well, if you accept that then I guess you have contempt for the greatest panader in musical history. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart." He wrote letters about how he would change movements when he went to towns because he would get more applause. So I asked Holland, "Why is it okay for Mozart to be concerned with reaching his audience, but not me?"

We had it out! During these interviews, his basic views emerged: artists should be misunderstood and creative artists who reach people are panaders.

You know when you say, "critics" what you really mean is the New York Times, because the critics of "Ghost" were great. We had world-wide reviews, and yet this monolith, this monarchy is the only one that people listen to.

MC: But it hasn't kept people away.

JC: Not at all. Bill says he spends spending all his time talking about two people, Holland and Edward Rothstein (chief music critic of The Times). It is really sad that that happens. Rothstein does not know very much about music... he has misunderstood, for example, the difference between the concepts of vioine and roboto, which is elementary. What really has to happen is a return to the days when composers like Berlioz were reviewing too and when critics and performers and artists were writing articles denouncing each other's words and there was a kind of equality in the press. That's much more interesting than this one-sided boxing match we have today.

Take the example of "Harvey Milk," which was recently premiered at New York City Opera. Now I have to have heard a tape with a score of the opera from the Houston Opera. It was a very good piece. I went to the premiere, it was a very bad piece. The performance was not good. This was due to an unfortunate set of circumstances. Well, it is the critic's job to separate the fact of bad execution from the quality of the piece itself. That is what they should be paid to do, to know when it is "performance" and when it is "piece."

A sports critic could never be as unbiased as some of our music critics. The sports audience would have them out so fast their heads would be spinning. We've had sports critics become music critics, but never a music critic who has become a sports critic!

MC: Is it fun for you when your family and friends go to "Ghost?"

JC: Recently I went to dinner with some family, came home and rested, then returned to take a train because it makes me nervous to watch it. In the house I go through nasty colony agony. I grew up that way, that whole business with my father of having to sit and if anything isn't right, my heart just stops.

MC: Before the WQXR simulcast of "Ghost" last week, they broadcast an interview in which you described opera as "the hope diamond, complete with curse."

JC: It was that when I did it. I said, "This is a curse: this has killed everybody who likes it, and New York City is a killer town." But to write for the Met, your first opera for the Met, what are you going to do? Say no to this opportunity to deal with these forces and these talents?

MC: And it was a success, a tremendous success.

JC: Yup (laughs) it is... it really is. I did not expect that. I didn't think it was possible... I really didn't.
A CUNY Campus
For The Birds
(And Proud Of It)

Gary Schmidgall, an editor of CUNY Matters, visited Queens College's Center for Environmental Teaching and Research in early spring and provided this report.

Pause from your business for a moment and allow these car-chattering names to roll off your tongue: Raulis-sidow Towhee, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-tailed Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Red-eyed Vireo. Or, if alliteration is your pleasure, then recite to yourself Tufted Titmouse, Piping Plover, Lapland Longspur, Orchard Oriole, and Semipalmated Sandpiper. If satire is your style, you might consider some of these avian handles, which could make perfect nicknames for certain annoying, non-feathered campus denizens: Bufflehead, Oldsquaw, Common Loon, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Laughing Gull, Long-eared Owl, American Coot.

You are now, I hope, in the mood to learn about Coamett State Park and Queens College's Center for Environmental Teaching and Research, which has made its home there since 1979. For this 1,600-acre preserve on the north shore of Long Island, with its terrain of woods, meadows, salt marsh, freshwater pond, shore scrub, and sandy beaches, is a bird's-and birders'-paradise. The Birds of Coamett, now in its third edition, records sightings of every one of the above-mentioned species—and more than 200 others. Walt Whitman must have been talking about just such a place when he wrote of Panamok (the Indian name for Long Island) and its "horizon boundless, the air too strong for invalids, the bas a wonderful resort for aquatic bird."

Among the earliest arrivals at Coamett each spring are the flycatchers. On the 20-minute ride between the Center and the LIRR's Huntington station, Center Director Peter Schmidt recalled seeing a batch of them a few days earlier, each one perched on a low-lying branch and looking very disgruntled: "It was chilly and not a fly was moving."

Having chosen a gloomy, rainy Saturday in late April for my Coamett debut, I sympathized with them. Only when I saw a huge and now unnecessary NO SLEIGHING sign on the magnificent down-sloping front lawn of the Coamett mansion did my spirits rise.

But it takes more than a drizzling gray sky to dampen the spirits of Schmidt, his staff of naturalists/educators, or the visitors the center welcomes on a typical term-time weekend.

On this occasion, Education School Professor Arthur Salz is here for an overnight stay with his Queens College Big Buddy Program, now in its sixth year. The Program teams 40 children who reside in homeless shelters with Queens College students who have committed themselves to mentoring them every Saturday for an entire school year. Their Coamett safari is a much-anticipated special event and includes several carefully designed forays on nature awareness, wilderness survival, and the distinct ecologies of seashore, pond, and forest.

The Center also takes groups for a walk after dark to learn about night vision and nocturnal animal behavior. "The kids are a little worried by the prospect at first," says Salz, "but they end up having a good time." His main wish is that they walk: "Don't go out with teachers afraid of the dark. I remember once seeing a group of students surrounding their teacher, who had hyperventilated, and they were all trying to assure her she was safe with them."

Orientering the chie new term for map- and compass-reading, is soon to become an Olympic sport and is also a featured activity at the Center. "Every night and then we have to send a van out for errant parties," says Salz, an old Coamett hand who has brought student groups to the Center every year since its founding.

When dinner turned to rain in mid-afternoon, Schmidt explained that the usual alternative was to move into the baronial splendor of the Coamett mansion. "We have a marvelous museum room with display cases and drawers of birds' eggs, preserved animals, and skeletons. We can also gather students in the new ballroom and bring up some of our live animals from our own menagerie in the basement or retrieve our birds of prey from cages out toward the carriage house."

Mansion? The new Students in the Queens College Big Buddy Program, their mentors, and a naturalist from the Center for Environmental Teaching and Research learned about seashore ecology at Coamett State Park. Photo, Arthur Salz. Photo above courtesy Queens College Archives.

ballroom? Carriage house? A little history of Coamett is obviously in order. When the fabulously wealthy scion Marshall Field III returned to America from a childhood among English aristocrats and at Oxford University, he was obviously bred, if not born, to the minor, and he wanted one of his own. In 1919 he chose as his country seat the central third of a peninsula called Lloyd Neck. A shades-of-Schmidt thinks: "Coamett has the second-best views on all of Long Island." (He bows only to Montauk.)

It was also a venerable site: The original gatehouse, still standing, was built in 1711. The first published African American poet, Jupiter Hammon, was born and raised in it. By 1924 Field had erected, on a magnificent prospect overlooking the Sound, a 110-room Beaux Arts extravaganza, designed by John Russell Pope, and set about living life in the grand style.

How grand? One of the guest cottages has 32 rooms. And the grounds are carpeted with daffodils in early spring. One of Field's three wives, it seems, adored daffodils; the gardener, eager to please, planted 250,000 bulbs. One of Schmidt's favorite hideaways in the mansion, the wine cellar, perhaps best captures the essence of Fields' affluence.

Then there were the vast greenhouses (still standing), string of polo ponies, pheasant shoots complete with beaters, and fox hunts (to this day, a red fox colony thrives there).

In an era when most other Gold Coast estates boasted full-time staffs of a dozen, Field kept more than 80. Even retreatment was done in grand style. When Field and his third wife decided to reduce the domicile, they simply lopped off two wings of the mansion and left themselves a mere 64 rooms.

Shortly after Field's death in 1959, his heirs sold the property to New York state and it became a state park, now used by City University scholars for field research. In 1979, the Center for Environmental Teaching and Research was established, with Queens Professor of Science Education Philip White serving as director until 1989 when Schmidt, a Long Island native, took charge.

The mansion's halls and common rooms remain grandly spacious, but the rich brocades, Persian rugs, and antique furniture have long since been replaced by sport, rugged schoolroom furniture impervious to youthful mayhem. The effect can be disconcerting: nostalgic pictures of double cream tea service and hurried butlers gazing down on a rancid, muddy band of young pond ecologists tripping through the massive front door for snacks.

Field might well be delighted by the Queens College presence at Coamett, for, despite his upper crust credentials, he was deeply committed to that founding principle of the University: access to education for all citizens. In addition to being a player on Wall Street, Field was a publisher. His company produced the Worldbook Encyclopedia and made it available to the far-from-wealthy classes: 25 cents down, 25 cents a month was the deal Fields political views were also distinctly more liberal than those in his wealthy cohort. He considered it something of a social responsibility, for example, to provide cities in which the right-leaning William Randolph Hearst had set up shop with a countering newspaper voice from the left.

Field was clearly a devoted lover of nature, and though he died before the environmental movement began to flourish, the work of the Center would certainly gratify him. While it sometimes hosts educational or religious retreats, conferences, funding-raising events, and even classes of landscape painters from Queens and Brooklyn Colleges, the heart of the Center's mission is environmental studies in all the major fields—botany, entomology, geology, ornithology. Even archaeology...
makes an occasional appearance: The name Cautnsett is derived from the Mattatuck Natrive American word for "place by the sharp rock," and shoreline field trips still turn up failed attempts to create arrowheads from local outcroppings of quartz.

The secret for naturalist studies, as in real estate, is location-times-three, and Cautnsett's location is absolutely choice. Its two square miles embrace every kind of ecospace but Alpine meadow. The thriving salt marsh, Schmidt says, is the closest one to Manhattan in such pristine condition and makes a perfect site for work on wetland ecology, tidal studies, and waterfowl migration. Research on various birds, mammals, and forest management is conducted in the coniferous and deciduous woodland that covers two-thirds of the island.

Limnologists utilize the freshwater pond, and upland meadows sustain studies of interaction between plant communities and soil types. While the rugged coast, tidal flats, and high cliffs provide a laboratory for specialists in geology, shoreline dynamics, and fish ecology. At Inspiration Point, Schmidt points out a recent cliff slide: "This will help us to show our students that erosion is nature's way, since currents will eventually erode this site and westward to protect the salt marsh."

As well, nearly 500 species of flowering plants and trees can be found on Cautnsett's grounds. "This is the northernmost habitat for plants that grow as far south as North Carolina," Schmidt explains. "And the southernmost habitat for plants found in Canada."

Professor Andrew Greller, a Queens College botanist, has frequently tramped through the meadows, jotted down notes, and co-authored with Cautnsett and documented these plant species. He and his team of students are pursuing medicinal applications in native Long Island plants. Graduate student Vincent Luisi is especially interested in plant-derived medicines (about 80 species at Cautnsett are medicinal). Their work in the explosive field of biopharmaceutical research is based mainly upon local and Native American plant lore, current pharmacological knowledge, and recent major breakthroughs in chemical analysis.

Today the main thrust of the Center's work is with much younger students of the biosphere. While about 2,000 college students visit Cautnsett each year, Schmidt and his staff of naturalists (most with degrees in Environmental Education or Science) greet more than 7,000 public school students, from day-tripping kindergartners and second-graders to older elementary and high school students, who can stay overnight. Four-fifths of them come from the five boroughs.

Center vans also make 150 annual trips to schools and with field trip budgets to conduct special programs on Endangered Species, Adaptation and Birds of Prey, and Reptiles. Schmidt estimates that about 20,000 students are served by the intense animal troupers from the Center's base line manager.

On a short basement visit, I meet an eight-foot-long Burmese Python named Monty, Delta the Python, and Gooshee, a flat, wide Savannah Monitor Lizard also known as Roadkill. Also ready to make schoolhouse calls are Iggy the Green Iguana and Gertrude the Box Turtle, who was apprehended several years ago attempting to say-crawl Queens Boulevard. Schmidt also introduces me to a thriving colony of hissing Madagascar Gekkochees.

In addition, or are a Great Horned Owl, a Harris Hawk, a few Red-tailed Hawks, and a boxy, soft-fenned Barred Owl named Barber on account of her obesity. But the real treat is to stand eye-to-eye-piercing-eye with the Center's two Bald Eagles. Henrietta is amiable enough to travel to schools. The other, a male called Dolly, is named after the Dolly Varden species of trout to which he was addicted when he arrived at the Center. Both eagles were injured in Alaska and unable to survive in the wild, but are thriving under the care of the Center's curator of birds, Peter Capainolo.

Capainolo, who also teaches biology at Kingsborough Community College and is associated with the Museum of Natural History, was one of the youngest and first to become licensed in New York state as a master falconer (there are about 200 licensed falconers in New York, he says, and perhaps 3,000 in the nation). Capainolo's life changed one day in the early 1960s at his Patchogue home, he recalls, when a Cooper's Hawk chose to lunch on one of his Homing Pigeons.

Though raptors are his first love (his current doctoral work is on hybrid falcons), Capainolo also studies bird migration. Thanks to him, the Center is now home to Mike, a Bronx native and a Double-crested Cormorant who thinks he's a person. Mike was found by Capainolo on Huckleberry Island off the Bronx, a day-old orphan of a major storm. While being fed 30 times a day, he imprinted on his rescuer, and to this day Mike loyally follows Capainolo around if allowed out of his cage.

Children love Mike and all the birds, in fact, Capainolo has received thousands of letters from children, often poignant and sophisticated (see sidebar) thanking him for the pleasure of their company.

Welcoming younger students was originally a small part of the Center's operation. But now that's changed, Schmidt says. This delights him, for to him there is no educational substitute-not even the tempting new possibilities of teaching nature through CD-ROM-for actual physical presence in the habitat. And he doesn't tire of observing the sense of discovery in visitors whose experience of the natural world has been almost nil, Schmidt says with pride that when graduates of one junior high school (apologies named after Rachel Carson) were asked to write essays on their most memorable experience, 90% chose to write about their excursion to Cautnsett.

Schmidt sometimes worries that "we Americans have lost our evangelical zeal for moving into the out-of-doors, both to protect it and learn about it." He thinks this may be partly due to complacency stemming from green-movement "good news" stories, like the removal of the Bald Eagle from the endangered-species list or the recently observed return of the bluebird to Long Island. But it is clear that Schmidt believes a preserve like Cautnsett-and an institution like the Center-makes an ideal leciter from which to reiterate the lessons of Carson's The Silent Spring.

Cautnsett is one of the most affordable environmental centers in the Northeast. The charge per student is $44 for two days of supervised activity, overnight lodging in the manor (which can accommodate 50 students, plus teachers and aides), and meals. Schmidt notes that tuition for 96% of the children who visit is paid through special fund-raising efforts like bake sales, PTA scholarships, and other philanthropic sources.

Next fall, the Center will offer schools a new set of activities through a program called "Equipped for Life." Funded by a Times-Mirror grant, the program will make soil and water chemistry kits, fishing and orienteering equipment, and bisocilars available to student groups. These activities will introduce students to outdoor pursuits that they can continue on their own and choose, says Schmidt, because they lead to a lifetime of learning and interaction with the natural environment.

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**An Invitation**

Director Peter Schmidt and his staff extend an open invitation to faculty and staff to arrange class trips to Cautnsett. The Center's facilities, which are ideal for field studies, conferences, residential seminars, or retreats, are open to all CUNY campuses. The mansion can host 20 to 50 people overnight and 100 people for one-day conferences. The Center's kitchen can accommodate kosher and vegetarian needs. A full weekend, Friday through Sunday, includes rooms, six meals, and seminars, and costs less than $100 per person. For information and to arrange visits, call 718-520-7240 or 516-421-3526.
CUNY Supports Alternative Book Publishing

By Jessica Blatt and Anja Grothe

April 1995 marked three years of book publishing by The New Press, an independent not-for-profit "publisher in the public interest," housed in Hunter College's MFA building on West 41st Street. The mission of The New Press, called "America's foremost progressive publishing house" by Chicago's City magazine, is to offer an alternative to the large houses that increasingly dominate the U.S. book-publishing scene, providing a venue for serious titles that might otherwise be overlooked.

The New Press first began to take shape in 1989 when André Schiffrin, longtime head of Random House's venerable Pantheon Books imprint, led in protest against demands that he cut its list and staff dramatically and move in a more commercial direction. Many of Pantheon's editors left with him, among them Diane Wachtell, who joined Schiffrin to found The New Press.

The idea was to establish a structure for publishing that would support the kind of idealism and commitment to quality usually associated with small presses but that would not sacrifice the marketing resources of a larger company. Schiffrin suggests an analogy between The New Press and the Public Broadcasting System in its original conception: "As the networks were increasingly giving up on the public-interest aspect of television, Bill Moyers came along with a plan to provide another structure for it. Armed with this metaphor, as well as his own considerable reputation and the backing of many former Pantheon staffers and authors (including, notably, Stanislaw Lem and Margarette Duras), Schiffrin was able to secure funding from 13 major foundations to cover start-up and operating costs. These donors included the MacArthur Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Mellon Foundation, the Nathan Cummings Foundation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the Visual Arts.

At the invitation of CUNY's then-Chancellor Joseph Murphy, the press moved into rent-free office space at Hunter College. W.W. Norton agreed to act as distributor.

The faith of these benefactors has been well rewarded. In only three years, The New Press has published over 100 books and grown to a full-time staff of 14 (launched by Publishers Weekly as the most diverse in gender and ethnic background in the industry). It runs an internship program that has graduated more than 50 young people—including many CUNY students—40% of whom have gone on to jobs in the publishing industry. The New Press has also collaborated extensively with other non-profit and social-interest/advocacy groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Social History Project, the Contemporary (a Baltimore museum), the American Council of Learned Societies, and Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR).

The Press has also received a string of awards: Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery and Freedom (winner of the prestigious Abraham Lincoln Award), Production Manager Kim Wagner was voted 1993 Production Director of the Year by the Literary Marketplace Awards Committee; and Associate Director Wachtell won the 1994 Tony Goldwater Award, presented to an outstanding editor each year.

"I think it says a lot that we haven't revised our mission statement all in three years," observes Wachtell. "We have become more convinced than ever that there is a real need for something like The New Press. If anything, they see the New Press "found more gaps than we expected in terms of what is being served by the big commercial houses and who isn't."

Schiffrin sees these "gaps" as symptomatic of the restructuring of American publishing: "If you look at publishing over the last five or six decades, you'll see that it has traditionally not been a place where huge amounts of money were made. American publishers never made more than 4% profit a year, and most of the major European literary houses rarely made more than 1% or 2%". Now, they are being taken over by large conglomerates, whose executives expect profits similar to those they're making in television and film.

Schiffrin also sees a political dimension to many of the publishing decisions of the big companies, pointing out that "Rupert Murdoch is happy to give Gingrich $54 million, even if that's twice what he's going to earn from the book."

The experience of The New Press tests the conventional wisdom of publishing in terms of what will sell, what won't, who reads, and who doesn't. In some ways, the conventional wisdom would seem to stand. For example, the 1994 book, Asia/ America: Identity in Contemporary Asian American Art, The New Press's response to the dearth of serious titles on art by Asian Americans, was not expected to turn a profit. Nonetheless, the book materialized, and what it did bring, according to Wachtell, was "incredibly appreciative letters from readers, like: "There is no book out there like this. It's great that you're publishing this." We've gotten a similar response to our Gay and Lesbian series, people appreciate that we publish serious books in these areas."

On the other hand, there have been surprises. Peter Irons and Stephanie Gutin's educational package, May It Please the Court, which combines audio cassette tapes and printed transcripts of oral arguments before the Supreme Court, enjoyed unexpected commercial success. An initial printing of 5,000 quickly vanished, and 60,000 copies of the set were eventually sold, including more than 10,000 through the History Book Club.

"Part of the fun of publishing the way we do is that we don't really know which books are going to do well," says Wachtell. "If you play it safe, you're never going to publish a book like that. There are whole areas of the law that no one was publishing for. The big textbook publishers wouldn't even touch that sort of project. They want tens of thousands of copies that they can sell for sure before they invest their money." Recognizing the potential for success, Gutin and Irons have followed up with May It Please the Court: Arguments on Abortion, which presents the oral arguments in eight landmark cases on reproductive rights.

The relative success of such ventures partly stems from The New Press's relationships with advisory committees in the fields of law and American studies, as well as the arts, education, and African American studies. The boards—made up of educators from CUNY (including Frances Fox Piven, Frank Bonilla, Haywood Burns, John Garvey and Pedro Pedraza, among others) and other leading universities as well as museum directors, foundation heads, and non-profit workers—provide editorial guidance and book ideas. In the case of several other legal text titles published as part of its "Law in Context" series on evolving areas of the law, Wachtell comments that the law committee "practically handed us the material and told us who to commission."

While the conglomeration of the commercial houses continues to transform publishing into an ever more profit-hungry business, the hope is that other small presses will be encouraged to pursue ambitious, if financially daunting, projects. Wachtell stresses that subsidies are absolutely crucial to such ventures, and she worries that without the ongoing support of organizations hitherto so very active, such as the Mellon Foundation and the Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest Foundation, alternative publishing could find itself in serious jeopardy in the future.

For now, at least, The New Press continues to forge ahead. In the works are a number of large-scale undertakings: a new book by Studs Terkel called Coming of Age: The Story of Our Century by Those Who've Lived It, which weaves together the voices of 74 very different people between the ages of 70 and 99; a book on the University and the Cold War, which will include pieces by such luminaries as Noam Chomsky, Stanley Jay Gould, and Jean France; a multi-volume history of post-war French thought, to be launched in 1996 with histories: French Constructions of the Past, edited by Jacques Revel and Lynn Hunt; a posthumous edition of Michel Foucault's previously unrelased writings; and an extensively annotated bibliography of multicultural educational resources for kindergartens through eighth-grade levels.

In a world increasingly dominated by big-media best-sellers and supersellers, The New Press remains dedicated to raising the level and expanding the field of debate on a wide range of cultural, political, and social issues. Indeed, in the same spirit of the capitalism that has taken its toll on the publishing industry of late, The New Press would welcome competition on this very important but vulnerable turf.
Baruch Vaults into Polling

By Douglas Muzzio
Director, Baruch Harris Survey Unit

County Officials Challenge Pataki and Tax Cut Plan," read the front-page headline in the March 28 New York Times. The story, however, reported that the State Association of County Executives, 13 of whose 16 members were Republicans and staunch Pataki supporters, had urged the Governor to slow down on his plans to cut the state income tax. John Zagame, the Association's executive director, was quoted as saying that income tax cuts shift costs to local governments, causing them to raise local property taxes.

The Times story also noted that the Association had conducted a poll showing that New Yorkers are more concerned about property taxes than state income taxes.

Indeed, a month earlier, after the Governor announced his tax cut plans, Mr. Zagame had asked the Baruch-Harris Survey Unit at Baruch College's new School of Public Affairs to conduct a detailed statewide survey of New Yorkers' knowledge, opinion, and attitudes on a broad range of taxing and spending issues. The Unit interviewed a cross-section of 901 adults by telephone from March 1 through 5.

The survey results were made public in "The State of Taxes: New Yorkers on Tax Policy and Priorities," a report released on March 14. Widely cited, the survey had an immediate and tangible effect on the taxing and spending debates in Albany. The day before, members of the Baruch-Harris Survey Unit, along with executive directors of the Association of Counties and the New York Farm Bureau, presented their findings in extensive briefings with State Comptroller Carl McCall, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Governor Pataki.

Our survey found that New Yorkers hold quite sophisticated views of state and local tax issues, often separating their concerns from the needs of the state as a whole. Taxes are, indeed, a top concern: State and local taxes are the second most often mentioned problem facing New York residents (crime came first with 41% taxes second with 29%).

When asked what should be the "top priority of New York state government," the poll response was strikingly different (see graph). We also discovered that an overwhelming number of New Yorkers believed that state government gives them the least value for their tax dollars (as compared to local and county government).

The clearest finding was New Yorkers' intense dislike of the local property tax. Empire State residents find the local property tax the most burdensome and least fair of all New York taxes. If given the choice, 12% would first cut the local property tax, while 17% singled out the state income tax. The survey found that New Yorkers' dislike of taxes resulted from their (correct) perception that they pay more in state and local taxes than residents of other states and their (incorrect) belief that their taxes have increased substantially over the last few years.

New Yorkers are not widely enthusiastic about cutting state taxes, particularly the income tax. Before cutting state spending, a substantial majority sees little or no personal financial benefit from the cuts proposed by Governor Pataki.

Their view is part of a belief that state income tax cuts will lead to higher local property taxes.

"The State of Taxes" was the second survey conducted by the Baruch-Harris Survey Unit. The first, conducted for the Hispanic Federation of New York City in May 1994, utilized a 95% item questionnaire in interviews with 1,011 adult Hispanics, who were asked to share their political, economic, social, and cultural views. Survey findings were reported extensively in the Spanish-language press and other New York City papers, as well as on several radio and television channels. The survey was conducted from May 1 through 5.

Also in May 1994, Baruch and Louis Harris and Associates announced the launch of a survey and polling operation designed to provide government, civic, nonprofit, and business policymakers with regular, detailed, nuanced opinion research as well as technical analysis and advice on a range of economic, quality-of-life, and public policy issues.

This joint venture grew out of the planning process that led to the creation of the School of Public Affairs. A "Baruch Poll" was proposed by the faculty task force charged with developing the mission, program, and structure of the School. The idea of creating a first-rate, New York City-based academic polling operation had been considered at a number of local institutions over several years, until Baruch finally took the initiative.

The Unit brings together a premier international survey firm and distinguished faculty from Baruch and, ultimately, other CUNY campuses. Humphrey Taylor, Harris chief executive officer, has high hopes for the consortium: "The survey research that has little or no impact on public decisions has tended to mislead both the public and the media. We believe that this is an opportunity to provide real, substantive, and effective public service." The Unit brings together a premier international survey firm and distinguished faculty from Baruch and, ultimately, other CUNY campuses. Humphrey Taylor, Harris chief executive officer, has high hopes for the consortium: "The survey research that has little or no impact on public decisions has tended to mislead both the public and the media. We believe that this is an opportunity to provide real, substantive, and effective public service."
Eight Graduates Head for Med School with Jonas E. Salk Scholarships

Eight outstanding graduates will start medical school this fall with Jonas E. Salk Scholarships, which carry an annual stipend of $1,000 for tuition. The awards are named for the illustrious City College alumnus, who died on June 23 at the age of 80.

Dr. Salk, who discovered the polio vaccine, was offered a congratulatory ticket to tape parade by New York City in 1955. He refused, asking instead that the money go for scholarships. Since that time, the awards have gone to CUNY premed students.

This year's winners, joined by another eight graduates who were named honorary scholarship winners, received their awards at a June 23 ceremony at the Graduate School and University Center from Edith B. Everett, Vice Chair of the CUNY Board of Trustees and Richard Freeland, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Dr. Max Gomez, Health and Science Correspondent for WABC-TV, addressed the graduates.

Following are the 1995 Salk Scholars and the medical schools they will attend:

- Samuel Amundson, City College, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.
- Steve Jaszczuk, City College, Albert Einstein School of Medicine.
- Angela Desi, Queens College, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine.
- Mario F. Panas, City College, SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn.
- Karen J. Bagalon, Hunter College, SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn.
- Joseph E. Maglione, College of Staten Island, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine.
- Joao de Mello, City College, SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn.
- Anthony Francis Giordano, Lehman College, Albert Einstein College of Medicine.
- Elliot Melendez, Lehman College, Harvard Medical School.
- Merrill T. Sprouls, Hunter College, University of Maryland School of Medicine.
- Sam A. Usman, City College, SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn.
- Andrew J. Kotowski, Queens College, Temple University of Medicine.
- Michael Barnett, Hunter College, New York Medical College.
- Jomali O. Figueira, Hunter College, Medical College of Wisconsin.
- Elizabeth E. Evans, Queens College, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.
- Anthony Francis Giordano, Lehman College, Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Salk Scholarship winners and honorary, joined by Vice Chancellor Richard Freeland (far left) and Dr. Max Gomez (center), are: left to right: Samuel Amundson, Andrew Koitowski, Michael Barnett, Anthony Giordano, Elliot Melendez, Angela Desi, Joseph Maglione, Elizabeth Evans, Joseph Panas, Steve Jaszczuk, Saumir Usman, Joao de Mello, Mario F. Panas.

A Tale of Two Cities: CUNY Initiates Video Contact with Vienna

Alfred S. Posamentier, Associate Dean, City College School of Education

Over the past three years, an extensive academic exchange program has evolved between education programs in New York City and Vienna. One might ask why these two very distant cities would embark on such a venture. First, the two are similar in population size. Both are seats for the United Nations. They are cultural centers for their regions, and most significantly for this collaboration, their educational programs tend to complement each other. But most significantly, both cities have in recent years received numerous immigrants and refugees.

A visit to Vienna by Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds in the spring of 1994 culminated in a three-way Memorandum of Agreement signed by her, New York City Schools Chancellor Karin Cortines, and Austria's Minister of Education and the Arts, Dr. Rudolf Schotten. At the same time, high school superintendents, principals, and teachers from the boroughs made several visits to Austria, and some of their counterparts visited our city. Through these exchanges and informal discussions, they came to see the educational issues of mutual concern and began to understand each other, including bilingual and vocational education, administration/supervision, and the teaching of mathematics and science.

During my discussions with Dr. Anton Dohb, a Section Chief in the Austrian Ministry of Education, it became clear that more frequent in vivo interaction was desirable. We began to seek a way to increase cooperative discussions without the expense of time and money involved in travel. As a result, regularly scheduled video conferences are now taking place among New York City Board of Education officials, City College faculty, and their Austrian counterparts.

These live and total interactive televideo conferences between two or more sites consist of a large-screen television monitor and a small video camera which can be aimed and zoomed from the local or the remote site, thus allowing virtually the same visual contact conferences would enjoy sitting across a table. This technology is improving steadily, allowing more and more sophisticated long-distance interactions.

An initial planning conference, convened last November by me in New York and by Stuart Simpson in Vienna, was attended in New York by five borough high school superintendents, City College faculty members, and various Austrian counterparts. Dean Michael Riabo provided crucial technical support at our site, the CUNY Computer and Information Service (CIS) on West 75th Street, where participants were familiarized with camera articulation and modes for using graphics and video tapes.

Protocol and cultural considerations were also taken into account. For example, it was curious to observe how the typically aggressive New York style of expression contrasted with the more polite tone of the Austrians. We also learned how to balance "reporting" with give-and-take discussion.

This first video conference was successful and highly motivating. Dr. Dohb observed that this initiative struck him as an excellent example of educational needs met by appropriate technological advancements, rather than what too often happens: technological glitz in search of educational application.

The following month a second video conference was held on the topic of bilingual education. Vienna has been inundated recently with refugees from several non-German speaking countries, such as Bosnia, and is grappling with the need to teach ESL. In New York we have considerable experience in bilingual education, and the Austrians were eager to explore this subject. Discussion elicited unanticipated questions and was so enthusiastic that the conference was extended beyond the planned duration.

Our experience thus far suggests that a video conference can be most successful if an appropriate exchange of background materials is made through print or other media well in advance. As well, a carefully prepared time schedule for the conference should be agreed upon beforehand and adhered to rather closely. Our EOSL session exposed interesting differences between the two systems. Some Americans were impressed with the early second-language instruction in Viennese bilingual schools. The Austrians seemed quite keen to know more about how immigrants and refugees who are older students acclimate to immersion in a new language.

The third video conference, in January, concerned vocational education, with the Austrians now in the position of providing a program model for us since Austria is renowned for excellence in vocational pedagogy. This became clear to some for the first time when President Clinton's transition team invited Dr. Schotten, Austria's Minister of Education and the Arts, to Little Rock before his inauguration in order to gain fresh insight into Austrian vocational education. When New York City high school superintendents visited Austria, they, too, were impressed.

Other applications for this technology have become apparent. Dean Riabo and I are next planning to conduct in-service courses within New York City for in-service teachers. This new form of distance learning is clearly the wave of the future as several remote sites will be able to interact live with each other and a central site, making maximum use of instructional personnel. This collaborative effort between Board of Education personnel, CUNY faculty, and international counterparts will be soon replicated at other foreign sites.

Thus videoconferencing exemplifies a defined need responsive to technology; it offers new opportunities for exchanges between educators both nationwide and around the world.
Perfect Lincoln Center Site For Chorus of Prominent CUNY Alums

On March 30 several dozen of CUNY’s most distinguished alumni gathered at a press event at Lincoln Center to urge support and protection for the City University during these difficult fiscal times. The vital contributions CUNY makes to the business and cultural life of New York City were eloquently emphasized by the presence of Stanley H. Kaplan (left), a 1939 City College graduate, and Charles Ehrlich (right), a 1961 City College graduate, who were reunited at the event. For they were embracing in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, whose donor is the Kaplan Educational Center; the Penthouse was built by A.J. Contracting Company, whose Chairman is Mr. Ehrlich. “I am part of the American dream,” said Ehrlich. “Made possible by my CUNY education.” Among other stellar CUNY graduates present were President Nathan Leventhal of Lincoln Center, President Alfonso O’Dell of Manum-Byron architects, opera star Regina Resnik, Executive Director Miguel Puentes of Bronx-Lebanon Hospital, Investment executive Peter Ohm, restaurateur Michael Romano, and Vice President John Barrett of U.S. Trust Company of New York.

CPI: Auspicious Initial Data

By Stephen Brier

CUNY’s College Preparatory Initiative, adopted in 1992 by the Board of Trustees, continues to demonstrate a significant impact on the academic preparation of newly entering CUNY students. CPI resulted from an intensive, ongoing collaboration of dozens of CUNY faculty and administrators with New York City public school teachers and Board of Education staff, who formed joint committees in 1991. This unique group worked together for 18 months in a series of meetings and retreats to hammer out a consensus on a set of academic requirements in six disciplines—English, Sequential Mathematics, Laboratory Science, Non-Language Arts, Social Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts—that entering CUNY students were expected to meet. The Trustees then approved a phased implementation of CPI to culminate in the year 2001 when entering students will be required to have completed 16 units of courses distributed across six academic disciplines.

Now in its second year of implementation, CPI continues to prove an effective means of improving the academic preparation of our first-year students who recently graduated from city public high schools, with Social Studies (77.5%) and Sequential Math (76%) showing the largest gains (more than 5% each) in CPI units completed compared to the previous year.

Figures also look good further down the educational pipeline: This year, more than two of every three (67.3%) ninth graders in city public schools are taking academic math, compared with just one in two (53.1%) the year before. The study of sequential math is one of the best predictors we have of successful performance of first-time CUNY students on the CUNY entrance exam in mathematics. Completion of Sequential Math I in high school nearly triples the pass rate for entering CUNY students on our math test (from 14% to 59%). And if entering CUNY students have completed Sequential Math III (which will be the CPI requirement when the Initiative is fully implemented), more than 94% pass our math test.

Not only math performance has been improved by CPI. The English-skills show similar improvement when entering students have met the CPI requirements. More than four of five (82.4%) first-time CUNY students pass the PSAT reading test if they have completed four or more CPI English units in high school, which is the current CPI distribution requirement in English.

Finally, the implementation of CPI in 1992 has not adversely or significantly changed the racial/ethnic profile of entering CUNY students who are graduates of New York City’s public high schools, with the percentage of Hispanic students increasing slightly—from 26.7% in 1991 to 29.5% in 1994—while the percentage of white non-Hispanic students has dropped slightly from 25.5% in 1991 to 23.1% in 1994 and the percentage of black non-Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders in the CUNY student body has essentially remained unchanged. This initial data, I believe, suggests that the full implementation of CPI in the years to come will enhance the academic preparation of CUNY’s entering students and encourages us to move forward in our ongoing collaboration with our Board of Education colleagues on this initiative.

Highlights from Spring Grants Fest

CUNY faculty members received more than $271 million in sponsored research grants last year, including $85 million for CUNY’s affiliate, the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. Nearly half of these grants were for work in mathematics and science.

Each spring CUNY’s researchers are honored at a reception hosted by Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds. This year’s event took place at Baruch College. Among the dozens of research projects recognized were two pioneering initiatives, one in education and the other in biomedical engineering.

Professor of Computer Science Michael E. Kress from the College of Staten Island received a grant from the National Science Foundation to develop a multisensory calculus program for students with visual impairments. His work began in 1980 with a colleague, Professor Albert Blank of Carnegie-Mellon University, on an audio tactile tablet, a device that synthesized the voice through a computer.

The challenge was to make graphs that could be perceived by visually impaired students. Karen Gouges, Director of Baruch College’s Computer Center for Visually Impaired People (and herself not sighted), was working on similar challenges and joined the project. The result: graphs made of embossed plastic, with text and labels in braille, which are placed on two-foot-long audio tablets. These are in turn attached to a computer and programmed to explain in a synthesized voice what the student is touching on the graph.

"The students can work on their own," says Prof. Kress, "and this may have applications for the learning disabled as well." About 2000 imbedded illustrations—equaling about half a semester’s material for introductory calculus—have already been tested, and Prof. Kress expects to offer several lessons to students before the end of the year.

Though New York City trains about 1.5% of the nation’s doctors, it has never had a strongly diversified training program in biomedical engineering. This promises to change with the Whitaker Foundation’s "Special Opportunity Award" that has come to City College’s Distinguished Professor Sheldon Weinstein, for the purpose of establishing a Center for Biomedical Engineering.

The Center will be part of a consortium that includes the nation’s two largest orthopaedic specialty institutions, Cornell University’s Hospital for Special Surgery and NYU’s Hospital for Joint Diseases. Another City College Distinguished Professor, Stephen Cowin, has also won a National Science Foundation grant to create an interdisciplinary graduate curriculum in cell and tissue development to be used by the Center.

"Japan in Focus" Grant for City College

The U.S.-Japan Foundation recently announced that it will fund a new program at City College entitled "Japan in Focus," intended to upgrade teaching about Japan in New York City’s public schools. The grant—one of the largest ever received at CUNY for international studies—is expected to total $500,000 over the initial three-year phase of the program.

The initiative will include intensive seminars and workshops offered in the College’s School of Education, which will deal with Japanese history, life, culture, and education. Also, 20 social studies teachers will tour Japan for 17 days next spring, visiting cultural sites and schools, meeting with Japanese scholars, students, and community leaders, and carrying out research projects. A follow-up workshop with curriculum specialists will help them develop a new instructional unit about Japan. Participating teachers, selected by local principals and superintendents, will be able to earn six graduate credits for the project.

Program inquiries should be addressed to one of its three directors at City College: Professors James J. Shields and Norma Shapiro are 30-year veterans of teacher education, and Professor Shelia Osher is also co-director of CUNY’s Global Education Telecommunications Network, an international e-mail initiative.

"Many, many things have been written
When th’ad better still have sitten."

Peter Woodhouse, The Flea (1605)
High Spirits in Highbridge: BCC's School-to-Work Program

By Reid Strickby
Professor of Social Sciences, Bronx Community College

The Bronx Community College School-to-Work program (STW)—funded for five years at $650,000 a year through the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor—focuses on increasing school and work opportunities for elementary, middle, and high school students in the South Bronx neighborhood of Highbridge, which is part of the 16th Congressional District, the poorest in the nation.

Among the residents of Community Board 4 in Highbridge, 35% have an annual family income below $10,000. Over 40% of all households receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and 45% are single mothers with children under 18. The adult unemployment rate in 1989 was 18.6%, and the teen unemployment rate was 27.4%.

The schools of Highbridge are also a perfect target for the STW program. Its School District, the 9th, has the lowest reading scores of the six Bronx districts and ranks next-to-last of the City's 52 districts. When elementary and intermediate schools (grades K-6) are combined, 67.5% of all students are reading below grade level.

Serving as a model for the STW is BCC's successful Tech Prep program, which created new 11th and 12th-grade curricula in math, science, and computer skills designed to facilitate entry into health care and business careers. Students from Jane Addams, Grace Dodge, and DeWitt Clinton High Schools have been participating in this two-year program.

The STW program itself is divided into three components under the guidance of the Program Coordinator, Melvin Roy. A variety of work-based learning components include workplace mentoring, instruction in workplace competencies (such as work attitudes), and broad instruction in all aspects of a given industry. Enrollment is open to students with paid and unpaid work experiences, job shadowing, and on-the-job training for academic credit. For example, students enrolled in both health and human service career programs benefit from summer employment at Bronx Municipal Medical Center; the Montefiore Medical Center; and the Isabella Geriatric Center.

School-based activities include career exploration and counseling, an initial selection of a career major; a sequential program of mathematics, science, and English (each containing enhanced academic standards); a curriculum that integrates academic and vocational training; and on-going assessment of student progress.

On-going activities are designed to assure that the school-based and work-based components of STW intersect with maximum benefit. These activities include coordination of work-based learning opportunities between students and employers, educational linkages among students, parents, teachers, and employers, and technical assistance for members of the community who are participating in this initiative. This technical support includes advanced computer workshops, development of data banks, and on-line networks between participating schools.

STW will involve the deployment of workplace mentors, school site mentors, and counselors. Eventually we hope to introduce and monitor data on post-program outcomes and the links between youth development activities and new business strategies for upgrading skills in the workforce.

The major goals of the program are thus clear: helping Highbridge students to understand the connection between school work and the career opportunities open to them; integrating school-based and work-based learning; making their post-secondary education as efficient as possible; and facilitating their direct movement into successful and fulfilling employment. These goals will be accomplished only if all those involved in STW—teachers, school officials, parents, and employers—learn to work together as a problem-solving group.

This challenge is being addressed by participating schools over the next five years. To assist in this endeavor, the Program is utilizing the services of Communications Resources, Inc., and the direction of Robert DeLena, this training corporation will help the schools build core teams to aggressively implement plans to benefit the students of Highbridge. A former BCC student, DeLena returned to his alma mater to help write the STW grant.

Communication Resources has already conducted a training session that included principals, teachers, community members, and parents from Walton High School, Taft High School, CES 11, CES 126, and CES 166. Said Dr. Daniel Portefeld, principal of CES 126, "This training was successful because the participants learned valuable skills and, more important, they became committed to the project."

Program Coordinator Roy, a native New Yorker, graduated from Evanston Township High School in the Bronx, received a B.A. from Pace University, and joined Chase Manhattan Bank, where he worked for 17 years in computer processing and human resources and rose to Vice President. He was later Director of Employee Relations for Garnett Suburban Newspapers and has taught management, economics, and computer science at several local institutions.

The STW program also includes a component for youth who are no longer in school, based at the Mosaic Center in CES 11. Its coordinator is Leander Hardaway, an experienced youth worker and attorney who is also a fourth-grade basketball coach. He has designed a series of recreational programs that incorporate career counseling and educational skill-building. The seven full-time members of STW, including a work-site coordinator, job developer, and a school-site counselor, represent a broad range of experience in psychology, business, computer science, educational and market research, labor analysis, and the law.

Criminal Justice Education: Fall Conference at John Jay

John Jay College of Criminal Justice is sponsoring a one-day conference on Oct. 20 that will deal with a range of issues concerning criminal justice education (CJE). Among topics to be addressed are the forensic sciences and CJE; the humanities and CJE; teaching criminal justice ethics and developing academic standards; the intersection of education and training; and alumni retrospectives on CJE.

The fee for non-CUNY participants is $45, which includes lunch (CUNY participants pay only for the lunch, $15). For more information, contact: Professor Eli Silverman at John Jay (phone 212-237-8375; fax 212-237-8370; e-mail EBSJ@CUNYVM.CUNY.EDU).

CCNY+UTRC+DOT = $3 MILLION

City College's University Transportation Research Center (UTRC) has been chosen as one of 10 U.S. Institutions of higher education to share a $30 million grant for studies of congestion, the high costs of maintaining roads and transit systems, and ways to contain increases in the cost of moving both people and freight. Ninety institutions submitted proposals for this year's competition. The challenge is being addressed by participating schools over the next five years. To assist in this endeavor, the Program is utilizing the services of Communications Resources, Inc., and the direction of Robert DeLena. The training corporation will help the schools build core teams to aggressively implement plans to benefit the students of Highbridge. A former BCC student, DeLena returned to his alma mater to help write the STW grant.

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Letters or suggestions for future articles on topics of general interest to the CUNY community should be addressed to CUNY Matters, 535 East 80th Street, Room 704, New York, NY 10021.