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- Chancellor Matthew Goldstein

The City University of New York

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Office of University Relations
Wednesday, March 7, 2007

The City University of New York
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Access to College Means Access To Economic Mobility for America's Underserved

By Dr. Kathleen Waldron
Mar 8, 2007, 08:00

Access to College Means Access To Economic Mobility for America's Underserved

At Baruch College, we use the phrase "the American Dream" a great deal. Indeed, as one of the most diverse institutions of higher education in the country — 70 percent of the student body was born outside of the United States — it is easy to see why "the American Dream" is alive and well here. But what exactly is the American Dream today? How does it work, and what does it mean?

At the heart of the American Dream is economic mobility. It is the belief that the children of poverty and of privilege can end up in the same place; that as long as there is equality of opportunity, one's starting point in life does not have to be a permanent barrier.

But recent studies indicate that economic mobility may be declining, and the ability of individuals from underserved backgrounds to rise economically is at serious risk. In fact, the discussion within academia is evolving from racial and gender diversity to socioeconomic diversity, with data showing that economic success in this nation is becoming heavily reliant on one's ability to afford a college education.

It is no surprise that those with college degrees are more likely to have higher incomes than those who do not. According to the 2002 U.S. Census, "students with a bachelor's degree can, on average, expect to earn $2.1 million in their lifetimes — at least $900,000 more than those who did not attend college."

Higher education professionals would be seriously remiss if we believed there is nothing we can do to change this situation. And actions are being taken. I applaud the efforts of Princeton, Emory, Harvard and other private universities to improve access for financially needy students, but the reality is that the vast majority of students completing undergraduate degrees attend public universities. For those of us at institutions that represent the majority, the focus must be on tuition costs, the quality of the educational experience and graduation rates.

First off, tuition needs to be kept affordable at public universities because tuition equals access even in the "affordable" public sector. Over the past decade, tuition rose 47 percent at public, four-year colleges and 42 percent at their private counterparts, according to the College Board. Adding to the burden is the substantial decline of state appropriations for higher education. Forced to take more loans and work longer hours to make ends meet, the children of the working class are finding that a college education is becoming more a test of their endurance than their intelligence.

Once these persistent and deserving students arrive on our campuses, we need to ensure that they find the academic experience and services that meet their particular needs. At Baruch, we are seeing strong evidence of how specific actions have positively impacted the success of our student body.

With students often having to hold jobs, it's important that weekend, evening, summer and winter intersession classes are available so they can earn the credits they need. Also, academic difficulty needs to be addressed immediately. Shared learning communities of small groups of students with intensive faculty involvement help improve student satisfaction and achievement, retention, and, ultimately, graduation rates.

Many students who are the first in their families to pursue a college degree lack contact with professionals and may not have the necessary understanding of the world they aspire to enter. Students need to be well informed about the array of career and internships available to them. Career seminars, effective career counseling and personalized professional networks are critical, as are high-value internships and exposure to individuals in their fields of interest. Baruch, for example, has developed a series of co-curricular programs through its Career Development Center to meet those goals. The programs counsel and explicitly groom students for graduate school, law school, and management training programs in government and at some of the top companies in the country.

In addition to an excellent academic education, universities cannot neglect the social skills that impact success. Programs to help students hone presentation skills, become confident speakers and understand the "unwritten rules" of the workplace should become more of a priority so that traditionally underserved students can compete more favorably for the best jobs.

In the United States of the 21st century, individuals without a college degree will experience diminished economic opportunity, and the country will pay the price for their undeveloped potential. As educators, we must make every effort to ensure equitable access to higher education as well as access to other tangible, such as quality internships and career development preparation. We need to consistently remind policy makers that the most important thing this country can do in the next 20 years is help as many qualified people attend and graduate from college as possible.

— Dr. Kathleen Waldron is president of Baruch College, part of the City University of New York system.
Scholar & center research roots of borough’s Irish

BY JESS WISLOSKI

ONCE THE DESTINATION of large waves of Emerald Isle immigrants coming to America’s shores, the Bronx is still a home to many Irish.

Just ask Prof. Thomas Óhde of Lehman College, who runs the City University’s Institute for Irish-American Studies there.

“You go to a bodega in some of the Hispanic neighborhoods, and you see the Irish Voice, and you see the Echo newspapers,” said Óhde. “That’s kind of a giveaway that there’s an Irish presence there.”

Since 2000, the center has developed programs that celebrate and preserve the Irish history carried to this country by the boatload over the last two centuries. Elaine Ní Bhraonáin is the center’s program coordinator.

Óhde, whose grandparents came from Ireland at the end of the 19th century, said that as with many long-standing immigrant groups, there has been an exodus—both to suburbs such as Yonkers, and New Jersey, and also back to Ireland in the face of recent economic boom times.

Four smaller centers comprise the institutes:

- The Center for Irish-American Music focuses on traditional tunes from the Emerald Isle.

- “It’s a place where people can just sit in and appreciate an archive with CDs, LPs and so on,” as well as a room for learning and practicing instruments, said Óhde.

- The Center for Irish Language Acquisitions helps educate CUNY students and adults in the historical and nearly extinct Gaelic language.

- With evening classes for adults, weekend classes in the Bronx and Yonkers for grade-schoolers, and courses online and distance learning programs, Óhde says the interest only seems to grow. Over half the adult students in language classes are not of Irish descent.

- The Center for Preservation of Irish American Publications, preserves Irish books dating from 1820 to 1922. By scanning the content in searchable form, readers can access the texts online, at www.IrishAmericanBooks.com.

- The Center for the Great Irish Famines and Irish Immigration Studies not only incorporates classes taught throughout the CUNY system, but also educates teachers and administrators on how to conduct discussion about the Irish immigration movement.

- “Most of the work is to support the New York state curriculum for high school teachers,” Óhde said, with course material available online.

In addition, the organization has found sponsors to take children and teachers’ groups to visit Ireland and visit famine ruins, fever hospitals, and other important sites in the country.

jwisloski@nystatenews.com
Robert Engler, 84; Writer Assailed Oil Industry on Accountability

By Adam Bernstein
Washington Post Staff Writer
Tuesday, March 6, 2007: B07

Robert Engler, 84, a political scientist whose fascination with the control of institutional power led to authoritative books and essays criticizing the modern oil industry, died Feb. 23 at his home in Manhattan, N.Y. He had a heart ailment.

Dr. Engler wrote from a progressive political bent, one skeptical of the "bottom-line" profit motive of petroleum giants. He wished to substitute a business approach that was "economically just, ecologically sane and politically accountable," an attractive idea to some after the 1973 Arab oil embargo and the crisis that followed.

His greatest admirers tended to be liberal economists, including Robert Lekachman, who called Dr. Engler's 1977 book, "The Brotherhood of Oil," "the best single account of the organization and politics of this industry that I have come across."

Consumer advocate Ralph Nader said Dr. Engler was an "early bell-ringer" in outlining the oil lobby's influence in Washington after World War II and showing how the largest companies divided up world markets.

Dr. Engler, a professor emeritus of political science at the City University of New York, first made his name with "The Politics of Oil" (1961). The book arose from articles he wrote for the New Republic about the oil industry and politics, which won the Sidney Hillman Foundation prize honoring writers on social justice and public policy issues.

Combing through government and company records, his work illuminated the special tax, pricing and political requests of oil companies and their effect on national and foreign policy. He was sometimes asked to testify before congressional committees.

Dr. Engler assailed what he called the lack of public accountability among the petroleum giants, which he likened to a "private government." He said that even ranking government officials -- from state attorneys general to the CIA director -- had a hard time getting companies to divulge information on oil shipments and reserves at vital times.

Mr. Engler was born July 12, 1922, in the Bronx, N.Y., to Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. He was a 1942 social science graduate of what is now City College of the City University of New York. On the GI Bill after World War II, he received a doctorate in government from the University of Wisconsin in 1947.

He spent the war in the Army in Europe and helped liberate the Dachau concentration camp. His
wartime experiences shaped his interest in political power.

He was an assistant to James G. Patton, longtime president of the National Farmers Union, before entering academia. He spent 18 years as a political science professor at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, N.Y., before joining the CUNY faculty in 1969. He retired in 1991.

He contributed to "The Dissenting Academy" (1968), edited by counterculture authority Theodore Roszak. Dr. Engler edited "America's Energy" (1980), a collection of articles from the Nation magazine.

In 1985, the Nation devoted a special issue to his essay "Many Bhopals -- Technology Out of Control," which was deeply critical of American industrialization and its environmental impact. The article followed the 1984 leak of toxic gas at a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, which killed thousands of people.

His marriage to Rosalind Elowitz Engler ended in divorce.

Survivors include his wife of 38 years, Inea Bushnaq Engler of Manhattan; two children from his first marriage, Richard Engler of Moorestown, N.J., and Elise Engler of Manhattan; a daughter from his second marriage, Nadya Engler Overton of Chicago and Manhattan; and two grandsons.
Come Back, Schlesinger

Seth Gitell

March 6, 2007

ILL but lost in the tribute to Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., who died last week at the age of 89 is a clear and simple fact: he was a prominent public intellectual who helped save liberalism from the ravages of the extreme left.

Schlesinger was right on the central struggle of his time, the clash with communism, at a time when it really mattered in America. To be fair, it's not that the coverage of his death failed to give passing mention to his status as a "Cold War liberal" or his authorship of "The Vital Center," which rallied liberals against communism. Rather, reflecting the almost 60 years that have passed since the fights that defined the Truman administration and much of the 1950s, the significance of those actions was missed.

Schlesinger's long and active life came with shifts and ideological turns - he later broke with much of his past during Vietnam. A contemporary of Schlesinger's, Norman Podhoretz, briefly allied to his heroic history on a post on Commentary magazine's Web site: "he betrayed the liberalism that he himself, in "The Vital Center," had earlier espoused and whose banishment from the Democratic party has been, and will continue to be, a calamity for this country."

But the oversight may have been about both more than his life arc and generational distinctions. A full recognition of Schlesinger's role in the fight of America's greatest enemy during his era would have raised a troubling question with great relevance today that is, where are the Schlesingers of the modern American left?

One can scarcely conjure moderate and centrist voices - let alone liberals - who have the courage to challenge the prevailing currents on the left today. To find progressives who applaud Al Gore for his crusade against global warming, one needs only to turn on the television. Ferreting out those who will publicly proclaim the dangers of Jihadism is a much more difficult matter.

A look at Schlesinger's pre-Vietnam resume highlights today's stark scene of liberals who support the war on terror. He helped found Americans for Democratic Action, a mainstream group of anti-Communist liberals. "The Vital Center" provided the intellectual firepower to sustain his movement. His words helped define the political hero of the far left, Henry Wallace, who was the 1948 presidential candidate whom Schlesinger dubbed a "doubleface" whose "doubts... are better than facts."

In 1950, he traveled to Berlin along with Sidney Hook, Tennessee Williams, and a handful of other intellectuals, to participate in the opening conference of the Congress of Cultural Freedom, the premier gathering of Western anti-Soviet intellectuals. When a Democrat ran the presidency campaign as a liberal hawk, John F. Kennedy, he signed on to join the administration.

Unlike the 1960 campaign where Kennedy ran to the right of Richard Nixon on foreign policy, arguing that Eisenhower had placed too much emphasis on "brinkmanship" and not enough on communist insurgencies spreading around the globe, 2008 is looking like a campaign of Democratic retreat. At the winter meeting of the Democratic National Committee last month, much was heard about the ignominy of President Bush, but not much about the danger of terrorism. Barack Obama, at least, called to "refocus our strengths on the wider struggle against terror" - something that Senators Clinton, Edwards, Biden, and Dodd failed to do.

The anti-war wind is blowing most strong right now, so much so that, it can be argued, it justifies anger over the Iraq war at the expense of the fight against terror. But that's not so, says one of the leading heirs to Schlesinger's school of Cold War liberalism, William Marshall, president of the Progressive Policy Institute. "We face a fanatical ideology that needs to be confronted and delegitimized," Mr. Marshall said. "You can't wish that away just because you're mad at George Bush over Iraq."

In December, Mr. Marshall, who calls Schlesinger "an inspiration," hosted a gathering of like-minded journalists and intellectuals at the Washington, D.C., offices of the institute. Mr. Marshall brought together Wellesley College professor Thomas Cushman, William Galston of the Brookings Institution, and writer Peter Beinart. Leon Wieseltier of the New Republic, author Fred Siegel, Michael Allen of the National Endowment for Democracy along with Gary Kent, a labor politician from Britain, among others, to find a way to concentrate liberals against terror.

Today's Web-oriented culture has made it difficult for these ideological warriors to gain traction. The force of anti-war blogs, such as the Daily Kos, which targets liberals like Christopher Hitchens, who take the fight against Jihadism seriously, is pervasive. Mr. Marshall has hope that the excesses of a presidential primary campaign will give way to the reasoned decisions of a general election. "In the general election, the discussion will have to turn to the Jihadist threat because it's not going away," Mr. Marshall says. "Elected officials have to represent real voters not the wrathful minions of cyberspace."

For the sake of our country, it's important that what Mr. Marshall says will turn out to be true. Just think what America would be like if Schlesinger and his comrades never rose to stand against communism. That's assuming that an America would still exist.

Mr. Gitell (gitell.com) is a contributing editor of The New York Sun.
New Brooklyn School To Offer Middle East Studies

By SARAH GARLAND
Staff Reporter of The Sun

A new public secondary school that is to include Middle Eastern studies in its curriculum will focus on culture, not the region's political conflicts, Department of Education officials said yesterday.

"The school will not be a vehicle for political ideology," a Department of Education spokesman, David Cantor, said of the Khalil Gibran International Academy, due to open this September in Brooklyn.

As for the sorts of topics the school will cover, the CEO of the Office of New Schools, Garth Harris, gave as an example a math lesson plan that would mention that an Arabic mathematician invented the concept of zero.

"It's going to follow Department of Education regulations," the director of the Arab-American Family Support Center, Lena Alhussein, who helped design the school, said. "It's going to be exactly like all the schools in the city, the same curriculum."

The school's focus on the Middle East has some critics, including a New York City education historian, Diane Ravitch, worried about the political bent of the school.

"It is not the job of the public schools to teach each ethnic group about its history," she said. "Certainly the large high schools should teach Arabic along with other languages, and they should teach the history of the Middle East as they teach global history. But it is an abdication of the basic principle behind public education to set up separate schools to teach uncritically one history and one culture."

The vice chairman of Brooklyn's Republican Party, John Ali-Habib, a member of the school's planning committee, defended the school.

"There's an Asian school opening in Flushing. It's the same thing," he said. "We don't need to get politics involved in everything."

Khalil Gibran (1883-1931) was a Lebanese poet born to Maronite Christians who is famous for "The Prophet," a book about love and the meaning of life that was banned in Egypt until 1999.

The school will teach about political conflicts but in a relatively abstract way — through programming on conflict resolution and diversity run by the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding. Tanenbaum's executive vice president, Joyce Dubensky, gave an example of a curriculum based around the story of a pastor and an imam in Nigeria who set out to kill one another over religious differences, but change their minds after studying their respective faiths.

"I don't think that the school is a political school, and so we're not dealing with that," Ms. Dubensky said.

The committee that designed the school included the principal, Debbie Almontaser, a former teacher, and several nonprofit groups, including the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Salam Club of New York, and the Arab American Family Support Center, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit that will act as the main support organization. The organization's top funders include the U.S. government, the American Jewish World Service, and the Christian Children's Fund.

The group's coordinator for Khalil Gibran, Candice Goodall, described the establishment of the school as "a way to bridge both East and West."

The new school lacks a home, although department officials said they would identify a location in Brooklyn within two weeks. Even without a building, many Arab New Yorkers are saying the plan to open Khalil Gibran is making them feel more at home in the city.

"It's not uncommon for Arab students to feel isolated — I think it's seen as a foothold," a Brooklyn College professor, Mouna Bayoumi, author of a forthcoming book about Arab youth in post-September 11 Brooklyn called "How Does It Feel To Be A Problem?," said. While Khalil Gibran's organizers say the school's main focus is academic, they also say the school could help to integrate Arab families into New York society by providing the school community with health services, counseling, youth leadership development, and English as a second language classes for parents.

At the same time, the school's designers say they are planning to recruit a diverse student body, with a goal that half be Arab native speakers.

Ms. Almontaser, who emigrated from Yemen at age 8, declined to speak about the school before its location is announced. But in a first-person article published in the Gotham Gazette, in which she discussed the difficulties of wearing her hijab in the city after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, and her fears for her son, who joined the American military and served at ground zero, she wrote: "We need to come together as a community to be educated and educate others as you would children. There are people who do bad things, but there are many people who do good things. We must get to know each other by speaking to one another. We need to make sure that everyone's voice is heard, rather than silenced, in order to overcome our fears."
In Hot Pursuit Of Leashless Dogs

THE Juniper Park Civic Association, a 69-year-old community group that represents the Queens neighborhoods of Maspeth and Middle Village, has never been shy about speaking out on local issues. In the last two decades, the group has made its voice heard on drag racing, collectors of recyclable cans, poor drainage on local ball fields, Wal-Mart, 7-Eleven, inaccurate local ZIP codes and a proposed truck tunnel to New Jersey, not to mention drive-by robberies, illegal basement apartments, and hours at the local library.

Yet, few battles have preoccupied the group more than its nine-year campaign against leashless dogs in city parks. The Juniper Park Civic Association has been more vocal than any other group in the city in opposing the Parks Department's "courtesy hours," allowing dogs off the leash in city parks from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. Following a public hearing on the matter two weeks ago, the department is poised to make the policy official this month.

Although the civic group lost a lawsuit involving the policy late last year, it has in no way lost its taste for battle.

"We did our job — we warned the city," said Robert Holden, a professor of graphic design at the New York City College of Technology, who serves as the group's president. "We will be proven right. Unfortunately, it'll take a tragedy like somebody getting mauled."

The association first took notice of the issue in 1998, when one of its members, Frank Catapano, was "harassed," Mr. Holden said, by several off-leash dogs in the park early one morning. The incident prompted a letter-writing campaign to the parks commissioner as well as articles in the group's quarterly magazine, The Juniper Berry.

Six years later, after multiple letters and protests, and at least one recorded case of a woman's being attacked by a dog in the park, the civic group sued the Parks Department, saying the leash policy was illegal because the city's Health Code requires that dogs in public places be restrained. Though the organization lost in court last November, the fight has, if anything, grown more raucous.

"There have been a lot of nasty words on both sides," said Bob Marino, president of the New York Council of Dog Owner Groups, the Juniper group's main opponent on the issue. A few weeks ago, Mr. Marino's organization accused the Juniper group of fabricating signatures on an online petition. The group vehemently denied the accusation.

Mr. Marino nevertheless says he admires their conviction. "The fact that people are willing to step forward and volunteer and participate is something to be respected," he said.

The Juniper group is continuing to document incidents involving dogs in city parks. As for the 55-acre expanse of Juniper Valley Park itself, on a sunny morning last week, strollers were outnumbered by seagulls, and of the few dogs visible, all were on leashes.

JEFF VANDAM
Charles Ehret, 83, Helped Solve Jet Lag

Charles F. Ehret, whose research into circadian rhythms led to a diet to combat the effects of jet lag, died February 24 at his home in Grayslake, Ill. He was 83.

In 1983, he co-authored "Overcoming Jet Lag," which outlined a diet that rescheduled meal times and directed the amounts and types of food to be eaten. It also specified alternate days of feasting and fasting, abbreviated by the diet's devotees as "feast/fast, feast/fast."

"After his book came out, he received calls from all over people planning trips for everyone from President Ronald Reagan to the rock band Aerosmith," said his son John Ehret.

Ehret was born in the Bronx, and was a graduate of City College of New York. He received a doctorate in zoology from the University of Notre Dame.

During World War II, he served in the Army and fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

Ehret, began working at Argonne National Laboratory, in 1951. It is there he began the research into daily rhythmic activity schedules that led him to a diet that could help the body adjust to time shifts, particularly for shift workers or passengers traveling over several time zones.

"People called him wanting to learn more about his diet, and he'd talk with everyone moms and dads, teachers, heads of corporations, or anyone else interested in what he had to say," a former colleague and network specialist at Argonne, Ken Groh, said.

Ehret retired in 1988.
Teachers Open
A Campaign
Against Spitzer

STATE UNION SEEKS TO LIMIT SCHOOL DISTRICTS ON NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED

BY JACOB GERSHMAN
Staff Reporter of the Sun

ALBANY — Opening a new front in the battle over the state budget, the state's largest teachers union is mounting an advertising campaign attacking Governor Spitzer's proposal to expand the number of charter schools across the state.

Aimed squarely at the Legislature, the campaign represents a significant shift in tactics on the part of the New York State United Teachers, which is backing down from its long-held opposition to any new schools but is seeking to prevent the charter school movement from establishing anything more than a foothold in any one school district.

Their goal is to insulate unionized school districts from any serious competition for state money and students, striking a blow at one of the main objectives of school choice advocates, who argue that charter schools motivate school districts to improve student performance by threatening to shake loose the monopoly of education funds.

In his budget, Mr. Spitzer proposed raising the legal cap on charter schools by 150, to 250, giving the Board of Regents, the State University of New York, and the New York City schools chancellor authority to approve 50 new schools each. The cap has been frozen at 100 since the Legislature first approved establishing the schools almost 10 years ago. Mr. Spitzer also proposed giving districts with a high concentration of charter schools $15 million in "transitional aid" to offset their losses.

Union leaders say the aid is not enough, and they are lobbying lawmakers to shrink the size of the expansion and to change the law by putting a ceiling on the percentage of public students enrolled in charter schools in a single district.

Please see TEACHERS, page 4
Teachers Union Ad Campaign Targets Charter Schools-Cap

In New York school districts, public school aid follows students to the public school in which they enroll, so districts lose thousands of dollars every time a student transfers to a charter school, each of which operates independently. In New York City, where less than 2% of public school students are enrolled in charter schools, the money lost amounts to a drop in the bucket. In smaller urban districts, such as Albany and Buffalo, charter schools are teaching more than 10% of public school students and diverting a similar percentage of public funds.

"You're almost running side-by-side school systems," the president of NYSUT, Richard Iannuzzi, said in an interview yesterday.

In Albany, 2,044 students are enrolled in charter schools, taking away $20 million from a school budget of $169 million, according to the union. Officials say enrollment could grow by almost 1,600 students in the next two years under Mr. Spitzer's plan.

Mr. Iannuzzi said the union is calling for the state to impose an enrollment limit of 5%, which would effectively bar Buffalo and Albany from adding any new charter schools. Mr. Iannuzzi said the cities would also be prevented from replacing schools whose charters are not renewed.

The conditions they are setting go beyond those proposed by New York City's teachers union, the United Federation of Teachers, which said it would not support lifting the charter cap unless the state's charter school law was changed to make it easier for more charter schools to unionize.

At $125,000, the budget for the ad campaign is relatively small compared with the millions of dollars health care groups are pouring into a campaign attacking Mr. Spitzer's budget.

Rather than appeal to the public with a statewide ad buy, the union is taking its message directly to lawmakers, with ads in Albany newspapers and radio stations and with highway billboards on the two main arteries leading to the state Capitol.

The teachers union, a major donor to lawmakers, holds significant clout in Albany and has in previous years defeated Governor Pataki's efforts to expand charter schools.

Taking a cautious approach, the ads praise the governor for increasing education spending but warn that the governor is doing harm to public schools by proposing measures that serve "private interests." The ads also criticize the governor's plan to give parents of children attending private and parochial schools tax deductions of $1,000.

"This is the right budget. It's going in the right direction," Mr. Iannuzzi said. "We're asking the governor to reconsider these two issues.

A senior Spitzer official said the administration was not expecting the campaign, saying it assumed the governor's proposal to increase school aid by $1.4 billion would convince the union to put aside its grievances on charter schools. The official said Mr. Spitzer has not ruled out making changes to his charter school bill.

Asked about the campaign, Mr. Spitzer said yesterday, "My view of charter schools is pretty well known. I've said all along they are an important part of adding creativity and new models to education."
March 5, 2007

MIAMI BLUE;
The testing of a top cop.

BYLINE: ELSA WALSH

SECTION: FACT; Dept. Of Law Enforcement; Pg. 46 Vol. VV No. 000issue

LENGTH: 5238 words

On a sunny morning last fall, John Timoney, the Miami chief of police, changed into navy-blue shorts and a short-sleeved shirt with "POLICE" stencilled on the back and wheeled his mountain bike out into the parking lot of the department's headquarters, where about two dozen of his top officers were waiting. For more than four hours, Timoney led them on a twenty-four-mile tour of Miami, looping through the predominantly African-American neighborhood of Overtown, then north to the Korean-dominated Fashion District, and through the Design District and Little Haiti. After a break for lunch, Timoney picked up the pace and led the group south along Biscayne Boulevard, across the Flagler Street Bridge, and into Little Havana. There was a triumphant feel to the ride, which Timoney leads at least twice a month.

Timoney, who is fifty-eight, has short reddish-gray hair and the ruddy face of an Irish boxer. He is just under six feet tall. When he walks, he bounces on his toes with his chest puffed out, "like James Cagney in 'Yankee Doodle Dandy,' " as William Bratton, the former New York City police commissioner, noted in his 1998 memoir, "Turnaround." Timoney is widely regarded today as one of the most progressive and effective police chiefs in the country—a reformer and an iconoclast. In New York, where he served under Bratton, Timoney talked about replacing steel handcuffs with Velcro straps—pink if possible. In Philadelphia, where he was police commissioner for four years, he had his force trade in their blackjacks for pepper spray, and he gave women's groups the right to review sex-crime cases. Timoney speaks in what a friend calls a Bronx brogue, an accent that evolved from a childhood spent in Dublin and Washington Heights. (When Timoney was twelve, the family moved from Ireland to New York to join his father, who had found work as a doorman on Fifth Avenue.) He can be abrupt and defensive when dealing with critics—reporters have found him to be exceptionally thin-skinned—and he has got into trouble for his occasional outbursts, perhaps most memorably during a blowup at Rudolph Giuliani when he was mayor of New York. "I've always sold big. Very controversial. Big mouth. Loudmouth," he says, as if he didn't much care.

When Timoney took the top police job in Miami, in January, 2003, he inherited a department that had major problems, not the least of which was an alarming record for shooting civilians. The Miami Herald, in a series in November, 2002, called that record "an escalating pattern of reckless shooting"; Raul Martinez, the chief of police, resigned in 2002, and the mayor, Manny Diaz, asked the Department of Justice to investigate. On the day that Timoney was sworn in, eleven Miami cops went on trial in federal court on charges of conspiring to plant guns on unarmed suspects in order to cover up police shootings.

In the decade before Timoney's appointment, Miami police had killed twenty-eight people and fired at another hundred and twenty-four. During his first twenty months on the job, no Miami
cop fired a shot, a phenomenon that appears to be unique in a city of Miami's size. In the four years of his tenure, police have shot at seven people, killing two and wounding four. The murder rate in Miami has dropped from about twenty to fourteen per hundred thousand in the years since 2003. (Although major crime over all dropped in 2006, there was an increase in the number of killings in Miami.) Credit for the drop certainly does not belong solely to Timoney; there has been a nationwide renaissance in police work and in attitudes toward policing, and crime in many American cities, including Miami, fell steadily during the nineteen-nineties. In New York, where much of this change was pioneered, Timoney held several top jobs with the N.Y.P.D.

Timoney joined the N.Y.P.D. in 1967, at the age of nineteen. He quickly made his name at the Forty-fourth Precinct, on Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx, where he had a top record for arrests. He also earned a B.A. in American history from John Jay College and went on to get master's degrees in both American history and urban planning. In the early eighties, he was placed in charge of reviewing firearm use and became deeply interested in reforms, announced in 1972, that restricted how and when police could use their weapons. What he discovered was that, in the year before the restrictions were imposed, New York police fired their weapons about eight hundred times, and some ninety people were killed; dozens more were wounded. About a dozen officers were killed.

The pattern changed dramatically after August, 1972, when the prohibition was announced: according to Timoney, shootings in the last third of that year dropped by fifty per cent. "Without anything. Just issuing a policy," he said. "No training. No big announcements at roll calls. You get down to 1985, when only twelve people are killed by the N.Y.P.D. Down from ninety to twelve." No policemen were killed in 1985. Over the years, Timoney continued to refine what he had learned, but the most important lesson to him was that seemingly intractable problems could be solved.

Gordon Wasserman, Timoney's former chief of staff in Philadelphia, who had been an Oxford don and who worked in the United Kingdom overseeing police science and technology, told me that the first time he met Timoney they sat in the Old Stand bar, on Third Avenue, and discussed Joyce, Yeats, and Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant." (Timoney was fascinated by how quickly the Burmese natives submitted to the occupying British forces.)

Timoney has been a literary character of a sort: in "Sore Loser," a genre novel written by a friend, the late Mike McAlary, a News columnist. The first time I met Timoney, he mentioned the book, which tells the story of a detective's pursuit of a serial killer who targets sports officials. "All that was in there were Timoney stories, kind of strung together, stuff he and I would just talk about," he said. Much of the book, he added, almost incidentally, was "about my daughter and the drug habit." Behind his desk were photographs of his two children. Christine, who is now twenty-eight, was addicted to heroin for about seven years. In 2005, Sean, who is twenty-six, was arrested by federal agents and later pleaded guilty to conspiring to buy and distribute marijuana.

Over several conversations with Timoney, whenever I asked about his children’s problems he would hesitate–he didn’t want to get into it, he would say. I noted that others had remarked on the obvious irony: his success in law enforcement and his problems as a father. "Family is completely different, just completely different," Timoney said. "I actually don’t know what the answer is. But with the kids it was always this"–he pushed his fists together to suggest years of worry and clashes with his children. "It’s a life of conflict that somehow comes out for the public good," his friend Michael Julian, the former chief of personnel for the N.Y.P.D., told me. One evening, I read a few lines from McAlary’s novel aloud to Timoney. "The girl was him," I read. Timoney laughed and said, "Yeah, exactly." When I added that she "was the stiletto in her father’s heart," he let out a small sigh.

Christine’s drug problems were developing at about the time that her father’s career was taking off. By 1993, at the end of David Dinkins’s term as mayor, Timoney held the rank of deputy chief and headed the Office of Management, Analysis and Planning, which acted as a think tank for
Raymond Kelly, the commissioner at the time. (Kelly, who returned to the commissioner's job after Michael Bloomberg took office as mayor, in 2002, told me that he regarded Timoney as "a smart, aggressive young man with a good story.") Timoney's days were long, and his hours were irregular, although he had found time to coach sports teams for Sean and Christine. His wife, Noreen, whom he married in 1971, had been a director of finance and administration with ABC, but as her husband's responsibilities grew she quit that job and worked from home as a management consultant. "I handled certain things so he would not have to deal with it and not have to feel that in any way it would register with him professionally," she told me. "But the kids considered his not being around so much an abandonment, more than just 'He's busy.' He just became busier."

In January, 1994, shortly after going to work for Giuliani, Bratton named Timoney his chief of department, responsible for day-to-day operations; a year later, he promoted him to first deputy commissioner-second-in-command. Bratton had promised Giuliani to reduce city crime by forty per cent in three years, and, as it turned out, the police brought the city's murder rate down to numbers that had not been seen in thirty years. Prevention was central to this strategy. The most publicized approach was a focus on so-called quality-of-life issues: public drunkenness, panhandling, prostitution, graffiti. That in turn became a way to deal with more serious crimes-by enforcing warrants and by being on duty at the right time. Crime statistics were gathered from every precinct and evaluated brutally in front of peers. The late Jack Maple, the former transit cop who came up with CompStat, as the idea was dubbed, called it a "live audit of over-all police performance."

Timoney one day said to me, "There are these things in policing called distracters"-things that prevent a department from performing its core mission. "When a department doesn't have the proper policies and procedures in place, things are going to blow up all the time." The Timoney family's problems were, in a sense, the ultimate distractor. For John Timoney, "the whole thing started" when Christine was about fifteen and left school with a few girlfriends to follow the Grateful Dead around the country, a trek that lasted on and off for several years. "It was insane. The whole thing was insane," Timoney said. When he learned that Christine was spending time near Tompkins Square Park, a high-drug-trafficking area in the East Village, he asked for help from Michael Julian, who had commanded the precinct there two years earlier. "I agreed to drive around the neighborhood with him to all the squatters and drug locations-every block, actually-looking for her. We gave up after a few hours," Julian told me. "I know it was tearing his heart out because he couldn't stop her." Timoney told me that he thought his daughter was going to die.

Christine enrolled in more than a dozen rehabilitation programs. "It just didn't seem that it was ever working," Timoney said. "It ain't even working for a day. The minute she's out, she's gone." One day, when Christine was sixteen, she took the car and vanished. Timoney reported the car stolen, and his daughter was arrested when it was spotted in Oregon. Because she was a juvenile and could not be released without adult supervision, Timoney asked a friend in the F.B.I. to help arrange her return. "A kid that's that bad, the punishment is meaningless, so you try to talk to them," he said. "You love them, and you hope they don't do it again, and they do it again immediately."

In March of 1996, Bratton was pushed out by Giuliani-owing partly to a tense rivalry over sharing crime-fighting credit-and Giuliani named Howard Safir, the fire commissioner, as Bratton's replacement. Timoney, who had expected to get the commissioner's job, spoke angrily and on the record to Mike McAlary. Giuliani, he said, "may be the greatest mayor in this city's history. But Rudy is screwed up. There's something wrong there." As for Safir, Timoney told the columnist, "He's a lightweight." Timoney submitted his resignation, and Giuliani wanted him out of his office at 1 Police Plaza that same day. "I left in a pretty ugly state. I knew I was probably wrong. I shouldn't have run my mouth," Timoney told me.

Cardinal John J. O'Connor, a family friend-he had renewed John and Noreen's vows a month
earlier, on their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary—asked him to call. As Timoney recalled the conversation, laughing loudly, O'Connor said, "You know everybody in this city knows you should have had that job. That's O.K. Just remember," he says. 'Jesus Christ didn't become a great commanding officer until he was crucified.' "Suddenly, he had the time to take Christine to her clinic. "A month before, I was the hot shot, big No. 2 in the N.Y.P.D., and now I'm just a father of some junkie, double-parked in my Honda Civic waiting for my kid in rehab. Oh, how the mighty have fallen."

Timoney went to work as a private security consultant, and after two years he was offered the chief's job in Philadelphia, where, for nearly a decade, murders had exceeded four hundred annually, and the department was in the midst of a corruption scandal. Within two years of Timoney's arrival, the number of homicides fell to less than three hundred. "It's not just a number," John Gallagher, who was Timoney's special counsel there, said. "It's like a catastrophic plane crash not happening every year." Timoney became a highly visible personage, showing up on the nightly news and being out and about with his bike squad. During his first week on the job, while he was out jogging, he caught a purse snatcher; that summer, he startled national law-enforcement leaders by announcing that Philadelphia would not submit its crime statistics to the F.B.I., because those numbers could not be trusted.

Timoney had his detractors in Philadelphia, too. In March, 2001, it was revealed that two officers, a homicide captain and a lieutenant, covered up a drunk-driving accident from three years earlier. Timoney initially gave them what amounted to a twenty-day suspension, but the decision was widely criticized. After the mayor interceded, Timoney publicly reversed himself and demoted the captain, James Brady, who later resigned. (In 2003, both men were cleared of criminal charges, and Brady rejoined the force.) "Clearly, my reputation took a hit," Timoney said then. He did not welcome a fresh discussion of the incident, and when I asked about it he said, "Brady was a very good police officer and didn't deserve the treatment he received from the press." He also said, "The press is a double-edged sword, and they will give you up in a minute to get a headline."

Philadelphia police received more negative publicity just before the Republican National Convention in 2000, when fourteen officers were videotaped beating and kicking a man suspected in a twelve-day carjacking-and-robbery spree. (A grand jury refused to indict any of the police; the suspect, Thomas Jones, who had been shot five times, ultimately pleaded guilty.) And while Timoney was initially praised for the way the department dealt with protesters at the Convention, he was later accused of overzealousness: most of the charges against the protesters were quickly dismissed. But when Timoney announced, in December, 2001, that he was leaving, an editorial in the Philadelphia Inquirer called his departure "a monumental loss." The murder rate in Philadelphia has since returned to pre-Timoney levels, and one mayoral candidate is voting to bring him back.

Timoney said publicly that he left Philadelphia because he once more wanted to earn money in the private sector, but it was clear from our conversations that almost every aspect of the job had worn him down. He fought constantly with the union, the Fraternal Order of Police, which opposed many of his disciplinary actions, and found it almost impossible to promote on merit because of the department's civil-service policies. He spent great amounts of time in arbitration hearings and on depositions that almost always favored the disciplined cop. Timoney has always had a tendency to lash out at his critics and acknowledges that this only made things worse for him. By his own account, he began one meeting that was intended to patch things up with a union leader by saying, "Who the fuck do you think you're talking to?" But the final provocation, Timoney said, may have been the call telling him that he owed nearly two thousand dollars in parking tickets, all issued in a single month. Timoney learned that his son had used the car, and he paid the fines; he also says that a high-ranking officer informed him that some of the tickets were probably "ghosts"-made-up infractions. "It started to get real ugly with the union, and personal," Timoney said. His next job was with a private security firm in New York run by the former N.Y.P.D. celebrity detective Richard (Bo) Dietl.
When Timoney got a call in November, 2002, asking if he was interested in talking to Manny Diaz, the mayor of Miami, he didn’t hesitate. "The private sector—there’s money there, but it’s boring. God, it’s boring," he told me. Within a week, Timoney, who had never been to Miami, was meeting with Diaz, a Cuban-born lawyer who had been elected a year earlier. "The city was going nowhere fast," Diaz recalled telling Timoney. Miami, a city with a population of three hundred and eighty-six thousand, had been on the verge of bankruptcy and was recovering from a junk-bond rating from Wall Street. F.B.I. raids on City Hall were not unusual, and a handful of top city officials had been arrested and jailed. Crime and police brutality, particularly the reckless police shootings, had done serious damage to Miami’s reputation, and Diaz told Timoney that repairing the police department was a key to revitalizing the city.

Timoney agreed to take the job, which came with an annual salary of a hundred and seventy-three thousand dollars, making him the highest-paid city employee. Right away, he recruited people he could count on, such as John Gallagher, who had left Philadelphia to work as a federal prosecutor on civil-rights cases in New Mexico. Timoney sent Gallagher the Miami use-of-force policy and asked him to give it a critical look. His aims were clear: he wanted deadly force used only as a last resort, when someone’s life was in danger. The old policy had focused simply on when it was legal to pull the trigger.

He also called Louis Vega, a former undercover officer in the N.Y.P.D., who was expected to become the chief of police in Hartford. Timoney asked Vega to head up the Miami Internal Affairs Division. "I was covering my back, and I wanted to send a message," Timoney explained. "This is where the secrets are kept, and information is power. By having a very tough guy in there, my guy, I was keeping them on their toes." Vega decided to forgo Hartford.

Timoney asked Frank Fernandez, a forty-two-year-old lieutenant commander, to be his second-in-command. Fernandez had overseen the rescue and roundup of two hundred and twenty Haitian refugees in 2002, when their boat ran aground in Key Biscayne; he did this even though the effort was not officially his responsibility. "He actually saved the day for everybody in South Florida, and, you know, he didn't have to," Timoney said.

Fernandez was standing with two of his deputies in a small conference room when I stopped by his office, one wall of which was covered with maps dotted with robbery sites. Fernandez believes that the gun culture of the Miami Police Department had its roots in the 1980 Mariel boatlift, when a hundred and twenty-five thousand Cubans landed in Miami over a six-month period. A small percentage of these refugees were criminals and mental patients released by Castro, but they received much of the blame for a crime wave then gripping the city. In this climate, the department went through a rapid turnover and expansion—losing about four hundred experienced officers and hiring twice that many recruits. "The background investigation at that point was really very, very poor, and that's when they started hiring these cops that shouldn't have been officers," Fernandez explained. The new cops drew their guns more often.

Timoney’s changes angered some cops, Fernandez told me; officers worried that they were in danger, and at roll calls "you could sense the frustration in the room." Timoney heard them out, Fernandez said, and then explained why his policy would help them. He pointed out the obvious danger of shooting a driver-turning a car into a four-thousand-pound unguled missile. He armed his officers with Tasers-stun guns—but he also told them not to be afraid to use their guns to defend themselves.

Timoney and Fernandez established accountability not only in the use of force but in the chain of command: at roll calls, Timoney made it clear that he was going to hold supervisors, particularly the sergeants, accountable for everything their officers did. According to Timoney, Miami has one of the few, if not the only, police departments in the country which require the supervising sergeant to go to the scene on critical calls and announce on police radio that he’s taking charge.

Al Cotera, a former president of the Fraternal Order of Police in Miami, told me that during an
international trade summit held ten months after Timoney's arrival the Chief was "out there on a bicycle" at the front of the pack. Miami police had been anticipating riots similar to what Seattle saw in 1999, and forty law-enforcement agencies had been called in to help. The protests turned out to be smaller than expected, but there were complaints about police aggressiveness. A judge, Richard Margolius, who observed the protests, said that he saw "no less than twenty felonies committed by police officers," and John Sweeney, the head of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., who had once been friendly with Timoney, called for the Chief's resignation, saying that the police thwarted union members' access to rallies. A civilian review board later reported acts of police misconduct but said that most officers had "conducted themselves admirably."

In November, 2005, Timoney's son, Sean, and another man, Jae Seu, were arrested by D.E.A. officers in a Rockland County sting and charged in federal court with one count of trying to buy and distribute about four hundred pounds of marijuana for four hundred and fifty-five thousand dollars, a felony that carries a potential sentence of up to forty years in prison. Seu had been the target of the investigation; Sean had not been involved in the drug negotiations, but he had agreed to drive Seu and carried a gym bag stuffed with money into the hotel room that the D.E.A. had been watching.

At the time, Timoney and his son hadn't spoken in nearly two years. Timoney told me that their relationship began to deteriorate when Sean, who had been a star high-school soccer player and captain of his team, suffered a knee injury that ended his athletic career. Sean also had a mysterious debilitating illness that was later diagnosed as a severe case of Lyme disease. "He couldn't even get up. He couldn't stay awake in class. He could not function," Noreen Timoney recalled. Sean, she added, "idolized his father. His father was everything." But John, she said, never accepted that his son's problems might have a medical cause, and he showed an impatience close to indifference. "He could not come to grips with that, because that's not how he would handle it," she said. "If John had gotten Lyme disease, he would have come back stronger. But Sean is not John."

When Timoney took the chief's job in Philadelphia, in 1998, Noreen stayed in New York to see Sean through high school and to deal with Christine's drug problems—a separation that lasted for nearly two years. "I think he knew that I would be there to pick up the pieces and to do what had to be done," Noreen said. After finishing high school, Sean moved with his mother to Philadelphia, where he enrolled at St. Joseph's University. But he dropped out, citing medical reasons, and never returned. That did it, Timoney said. "He's completely unlike me. I wouldn't talk to him, and he wouldn't talk to me." When I asked if his son's problems might have been exacerbated by his injuries and illnesses, Timoney cut me off. "I don't buy any of that stuff. I just don't. Listen, you can come up with all sorts of excuses in life."

Sean began delivering pizzas. He wouldn't return his father's phone calls. His lawyer—the star criminal-defense specialist Edward Hayes, a family friend—later said that Sean felt "isolated and abandoned," suffered from depression, and had turned to marijuana as "a way to escape his psychological and physical problems." Christine Timoney told me that she felt partly responsible for her brother's woes. "I felt this guilt that I had kind of messed up his life because all my stuff started in his really important developing years," she said. "My parents always joked that my brother was an angel baby and I was horrible from the get," she added. She told her father to show some compassion. Timoney said that Christine would yell at him, "You don't understand—he just wants to die!"

John Timoney told Hayes he was not going to post bail. "Eddy kept calling me," Timoney recalled. "I said, 'No. I haven't talked to the kid. Let him just rot in there. I don't give a shit.' " On about the third or fourth day, he said, Hayes called again. Timoney finally relented and put up the family's Miami condominium as collateral. Sean, on his father's advice, pleaded guilty, and while awaiting sentencing this past December, he entered a drug-rehabilitation program and started working as a concrete laborer. "But of course he's set the race back a hundred and fifty years. That's what we did in 1840," Timoney said, not quite enjoying his joke.
Much of what John Timoney has done as a policeman in Miami is no longer particularly novel, but a lot of it was new to Miami-and, in retrospect, seems obvious and necessary. For instance, like many cities, Miami had adopted a version of CompStat, but in Timoney's view it was a kind of "faux CompStat," with little followup. A sensational series of rapes in which three young Latina girls were attacked alerted Timoney to the fact that DNA from earlier rapes in which the suspect was unknown was not being cross-checked-no one knew if this was the rapist's first attack or his tenth. DNA was checked only after a suspect had been arrested. Timoney, who had discovered a similar problem in Philadelphia, said, "If you think about it for a second, the costs were not only monetary in terms of overtime but what economists call 'opportunity' costs. By having all those detectives and uniformed officers, including myself and the other chiefs, focused on this case, we lost the opportunity to be working on something else."

"Listen, I'm not some bleeding-heart liberal," Timoney told me over dinner one night. Had he ever thrown an extra punch at a suspect in custody? "I'm sure I did," he replied. "It would be in the heat of battle, which is why I understand these things. Most people thought that the Rodney King thing was horrible because he was hit. He was a defenseless guy hit fifty-six times. That was true. But, from a policing perspective, what was the most troubling-he didn't get killed, he was O.K., and he made money-what was most troubling is that you had more than twenty cops there, including two sergeants, and not one person stepped in and said, 'Hey, listen. Stop it. You're going to kill this guy.' So the assumption is that when we're chasing this guy, and we're beating the piss out of him because we've been chasing him, the cop that arrives two or three minutes later, he's got just as much an obligation to stop it as anybody else." He said that is why he had added a "duty to intervene" in the revised use-of-force policy.

In mid-December, Timoney travelled to Albany for his son's sentencing. He had not planned to attend, because newspaper stories suggested that Sean, whose sentencing had twice been postponed, was receiving special treatment. Since his arrest, nearly sixteen months earlier, there had been some reconciliation between father and son: Sean had visited Miami several times, including last spring for Father's Day, and again for Thanksgiving. Before the sentencing, Timoney seemed to have mixed feelings about what lay ahead. "Sometimes you need the lever of the criminal-justice system to jerk somebody," he said. He also said, "This is one of those times when I wish I wasn't his father, because then he would be treated like everybody else. He'd get probation. First-time offense. Never been in trouble before. It's marijuana, and it was not his stuff. He was driving. He was making money. Don't get me wrong. He was wrong, and that's what I told him: 'You're wrong. You plead guilty. Throw yourself on the mercy of the court, and tell them what you've done.' By the way, they know, because they had wiretaps. This is one of the cases where the wiretaps are very helpful, because they show what a schmuck he is."

At Sean's sentencing, while John and Noreen Timoney listened, Hayes recounted Sean's injuries and illnesses and said that Sean had not used drugs since his arrest. Calling Timoney part of the trio of police leaders who "turned the tide in New York City," Hayes spoke to the judge about the life of a policeman: "They all have problems with their marriages. Many of them have problems with their kids, because they're never home. All night. So that was the special treatment that John and Noreen Timoney got, and in return for all of that heartache they gave back was safety and a better life in a very dramatic way for New York City."

Sean Timoney asked U.S. District Court Judge Thomas J. McAvoy's permission to speak—very briefly, it turned out. "I was addicted to drugs," he said, and "really, that's, you know, what the money was being used for." The Judge then sentenced Sean to eighteen months in federal prison. John Timoney had thought that his son would be sentenced to a year and released in six months— that he had demonstrated that he had straightened out his life. "He did all that, so the sentencing almost becomes pointless. It was just bad," he told me. John and Noreen went back to New York in January to be with Sean on the night before he went to prison—to help him pack up his apartment and store his furniture. Then they drove their son to the prison's entrance. "Not a fun day, but I spoke to him twice last week, and he seems to be managing, though he says it is
worse than he expected," John Timoney told me. "Two good points: he gave up smoking, cold
turkey, and has read his first books, well over four hundred pages." Noreen Timoney said that
Sean had kept saying, "I'm sorry I disappointed you and I love you."

Neither of the Timoneys will talk about the evident strains in their marriage. They refer to each
other with affection; Noreen at one point remarked, "It's one of those strange Irish relationships."
Christine Timoney has not used drugs in seven years, and late last year she moved to Florida to
be closer to her parents and to begin work in a drug-rehabilitation center; she has a year-old
baby and lives with the baby's father. She told me that she had become determined to get off
drugs after one particular visit by her father in New York. "He was like, 'I'm just scared the next
place I'm going to visit you is the grave,'" she recalled. "It just sort of hit me: no, he does care,
and this is killing him." Her father recently teased her, saying that her baby was much easier than
she had ever been, and she replied, "Daddy, God only gives you what you can handle."
Big Town Big Dreams
STORIES ABOUT IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS WHO MAKE THIS TOWN THE GREAT PLACE IT IS.

Educator takes extra steps to see kids off to college

BY JOSHUA M. BERNSTEIN

It’s a rainy weekday afternoon on the sixth floor of Morningside Heights’ Bank Street College, and Farhad Asghar is afoot.

“I just got back from an upstate retreat,” says the breathless Asghar, 31. He’s a trimmer Horatio Sanz wearing collared blue shirt, khakis, wire-rim glasses and scuffed black New Balances.

“We had seven adults for 94 kids. That was a handful,” he says, laughing, “but I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Asghar, a prepubescent grinner with a weakness for peppermints Life Savers, is director of Bank Street College of Education’s Liberty LEADS. The after-school academic reinforcement program attracts more than 300 fifth- through 12th-graders citywide, from East New York to the South Bronx.

Through a mixture of counseling, mentoring, college-prep classes and enrichment activities — like the upscale camping retreat — LEADS emphasizes students’ leadership skills and helps them realize their academic potential — whether that’s preparing for college or ensuring high school graduation. Impressively, more than 95% of LEADS students graduate on time.

“We’re providing opportunities and trying to lower the playing field for underserved students,” he says. “They’re not at risk kids; they simply need more services than schools provide.”

The married father of an infant daughter is by turns mentor, teacher, big brother, cheerleader and open ear, helping “kids develop inner resiliency so they can fulfill their potential,” says Asghar, who heeded his own advice during a century-long hardship.

The son of a Pakistani Airlines employee, Asghar was born in London, before jumping to Pakistan and Paris. When he was 11, his dad left the airline and brought his wife and four kids to Corona, Queens, where he still lives.

“It was the classic immigrant dream — move to New York, and make a better life,” he says. Though it wasn’t that simple. A potlatch $300-a-month salary meant the family scraped to get bills, but “even though we were poor, I had stability for the first time.”

Asghar’s New York City roots spread, and he made friends quickly.

He speaks English, French, Spanish and Urdu — “which helps when you’re a little brown kid,” he jokes.

His intellect matched his friendliness, earning him entrance into the prestigious Bronx High School of Science. “But my mom said, ‘The Bronx? You’re not going there.’” Instead, he attended the upper East Siders’ Art and Design High School.

There he channeled his outgoing personality into several surpluses. One day in class, the morning announcements mentioned student president elections. “Hey, just for kicks, let’s do it!” Asghar recalls a friend saying.

Why not indeed. Asghar ran and won. “I made sure we got doors on the bathroom stalls,” he laughs. At the end of his senior year, his second surprise was being named prom king.

“That was a shock. I was definitely not the best-looking kid,” he says humbly. “But that was a testament to my friendliness.”

He took this trait to Brooklyn College, where he graduated with a degree in English and secondary education. After teaching English at Williamburg’s School for Legal Studies, he gravitated toward Bank Street.

In 2000, he took a part-time college-prep gig, his “willingness to do whatever’s necessary” to help students catch his superior’s eyes. The following year he became a full-time education coordinator, and several years later director.

His success stems from infectious optimism, paired with an unorthodox approach. “I love it when the kids defy me,” Asghar says, smiling. “Many adults are not comfortable with kids calling them out, but they’re my boss.”

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sometimes, even the boss needs help. Asghar tells a tale of a young woman whose application to Long Island’s Stony Brook University was rejected due to subpar grades.

“During her senior year she went through many difficult experiences, and she never let anyone know,” he said. “Of course your grades slipped. Whose wouldn’t?” So I accompanied her to Stony Brook, and we told her story to the admissions office. They saw she was worth taking a risk on.”

A few months ago, Asghar received a surprising e-mail from a student. “Remember me?” she wrote, telling him she graduated and was doing social work. “Thank you for taking that extra step when no one else would.”

“I was walking on a cloud,” he beams.

Farhad Asghar helps high school students stay in school and go on to college. Photos by Mariella Lombard

Do you know an immigrant New Yorker who reached his dream in our great city? E-mail Maltie Junco at BigTown@nydailynews.com
Deloitte & Touche USA Nominates New CEO; Chairman; Barry Salzberg for Chief Executive Officer; Sharon Allen for Chairman of the Board

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NEW YORK, March 5 /PRNewswire/ -- Deloitte & Touche USA LLP today announced that it has nominated Barry Salzberg for the position of Chief Executive Officer and Sharon Allen for the position of Chairman of the Board. Salzberg, who at the present time is Managing Partner, would replace current CEO James Quigley, who has been nominated for the post of Global CEO of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. For Allen this would mean re-election to a second four-year term.

The leadership transition is part of a regularly scheduled nomination and partnership ratification process that occurs every four years and will be effective June 1, 2007, the beginning of Deloitte's new fiscal year.

Salzberg, 53, has amassed a lengthy and impressive record of ascending responsibility and professional achievement during his 30-year tenure with Deloitte. Since becoming a partner in 1985, he has held numerous leadership roles, including Tri-State (N.Y./N.J./Conn.) Group Managing Partner and Managing Partner of Deloitte's U.S. Tax Practice, where he successfully positioned Deloitte as a preeminent provider in this arena, garnering a range of awards and distinctions.

For the past four years, Salzberg has served as Managing Partner, working with CEO James Quigley, to shape the firm's strategic vision and to help Deloitte & Touche USA reach unprecedented levels of revenue and business growth. As the architect of Deloitte's innovative and standard-setting talent management strategy, Salzberg has significantly contributed to building an internal culture of integrity, flexibility and professional development that has resulted in industry-leading retention rates. A staunch champion of diversity, Salzberg has played a key role in implementing initiatives that significantly increased the number of women and minorities at Deloitte.

"I am excited to have the opportunity to continue working with our partners, principals and directors to implement Deloitte's strategy to become the standard of excellence and the preferred choice for world-class employees and clients," said Salzberg.

Allen, 55, has been serving as Chairman of the Board for Deloitte & Touche USA since 2003, when she became the first woman to hold the position of Chairman of a major professional services firm. In this capacity, she is responsible for the governance of an organization with more than $8 billion in annual revenues, overseeing strategy development and execution and directing the firm's executive succession planning process. She also serves a number of major multinational clients. Her responsibilities and influence extend beyond her U.S. leadership roles. She is a member of Deloitte's Global Board of Directors, where she serves as the U.S. representative on the Global Governance Committee and Chairs the Global Risk Management Committee. A partner since 1983, Allen has been with Deloitte throughout her entire 34-year career, serving as managing partner of the Pacific Southwest practice prior to assuming the Chairman role.

"I am appreciative of this validation by the partnership of my governance contributions to the organization and am pleased to serve in this important leadership role for another term," said Allen.
Salzberg received his undergraduate degree in Accounting from Brooklyn College, his J.D. from Brooklyn Law School, and his LLM in Taxation from the New York University School of Law. He is a member of the New York State Bar Association, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants, and the New York County Lawyers Association. In addition to his numerous professional memberships, Salzberg is the Chairman of the Board of the YMCA of Greater New York and a board member of the Jackie Robinson Foundation. He also serves on the National Board of Directors for College Summit, the Board of Visitors for Vanderbilt University's Owen Graduate School of Management and as chair of the Diversity Best Practices CEO Roundtable Initiative. Salzberg lives in Warren, N.J. with his wife, Evelyn, and has two children.

Allen holds an honorary doctorate in Administrative Science and an accounting degree from the University of Idaho. She is a passionate advocate for diversifying the American board room and is an acknowledged role model for women in leadership. Allen is the recipient of many awards and recognitions for her contributions to business and community leadership. She was recently named by Forbes Magazine as one of the 100 Most Powerful Women in the World and received the Private Sector Woman of the Year honor from the Financial Women’s Association last spring. She is a past designee as one of the "50 Women to Watch" by the Wall Street Journal and has earned the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Business Leader Award. Allen serves on the President’s Export Council and is a member of the Women’s Leadership Board at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Strongly committed to community and philanthropic efforts, Allen also serves as a board member of the Autry National Center, United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles. She lives in Pasadena, Calif. with her husband, Rich.

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Diddy Outraged Over Assault Claims; Attorney Speaks
By SARA MITCHELL

Rap superstar Sean 'Diddy' Combs is speaking out about the claim that he assaulted a man during a Oscars party. Attorneys for Combs says the claim is a 'Flat Out Lie'.

Attorneys for Rechnitzer filed suit against Combs on Friday (March 2, 2007) in the Los Angeles Superior Court. Combs is being accused of intentionally, willfully, knowingly and unlawfully attacking, assaulting and battering Rechnitzer. Rechnitzer is seeking compensatory and punitive damages in the lawsuit.

According to court documents, Gerald Rechnitzer claims that Combs became very violent when he was asked why he was flirting with Rechnitzer's fiancée. Rechnitzer stated that the assault began when he and his fiancée bumped into Combs at a nightclub (Teddy's) located in the Roosevelt Hotel (Hollywood, CA) during the early morning hours on February 26, 2007. Rechnitzer stated that Combs began yelling at him. Combs shouted out, "What the f**k are you looking at, dude?". Then Combs threatened to 'smack flames out of your a**s'.

Benjamin Brafman, the attorney for Combs, stated: "(The case will be) vigorously defended. It's just another example of an opportunist seeking to fabricate a lawsuit based on a flat-out lie to try to take advantage of Mr Combs' celebrity status.

He continued: "Mr Combs did not hit anyone and Mr. Rechnitzer suffered no injuries or damages whatsoever. There is no case. It is that simple."

Sean John Combs was born on November 4, 1969 in Harlem. He is the son of Melvin and Janice Combs. Combs attended Howard University in Washington, D.C. Shortly after college, he became an intern at Uptown Records. He is the owner of Bad Boy records, a recording label geared to hip-hop and rap artists.

This comes as no surprise as controversy often follows Combs.

In 1991, Combs was allowed to promote a concert that was headlined by Heavy D. The concert took place inside the City College of New York' gymnasium. One those with tickets was allowed inside, which left the thousands of fans outside angry. Security could not control the angry crowd. Fans broke out the windows of the gymnasium and rushed inside.

Unfortunately, nine fans died as a result.

Then in 1999, Combs was arrested for weapons violation after gunfire broke out inside Club New York. Combs' then-girlfriend, singer Jennifer Lopez, was present with him at the venue.

News Source: TeenHollywood (http://www.teenhollywood.com)
Record enrollment at SUNY schools

BY OLIVIA WINSLOW
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The State University of New York announced yesterday that fall 2006 enrollment on its 64 campuses reached a record 417,583 students, an accomplishment made possible by growing student awareness of SUNY's academic "high quality," a university spokesman said.

"More and more students are becoming aware of the high quality education available at SUNY," said spokesman David Henahan.

SUNY officials cited "especially strong growth" in its four university centers — University at Albany, Binghamton University, University at Buffalo and Stony Brook University — and its comprehensive colleges. Enrollment increases at the university centers averaged 2.3 percent, and 2.2 percent at the comprehensive colleges.

Locally, enrollment at Stony Brook in fall 2006 was 22,522; at Farmingdale State College, 6,256; and SUNY Old Westbury, 3,450. At Nassau Community College, enrollment was 21,229 and at Suffolk County Community College, 21,859.

SUNY also said the enrollment of minority students and full-time students increased.

In the case of minority students, enrollment climbed 2.6 percent in 2005 and reached a record 81,907 students. Stony Brook's minority enrollment increased slightly from 7,132 in 2005 to 7,279 in 2006. Old Westbury showed an increase from 1,695 in 2005 to 1,750. Farmingdale posted a slight decrease, from 1,676 to 1,540.

Both Nassau and Suffolk community colleges posted gains in minority students: from 7,731 in 2005 at Nassau to 8,070 last fall. At Suffolk, it was 4,670 in 2005, rising to 4,976 last fall.

Full-time student enrollment increased 2.1 percent during the previous year, for a total of 290,688 students. The total also represents a 24.6-percent increase from full-time enrollment a decade ago.

"Record-setting enrollment means SUNY continues to provide access to an affordable, high-quality education," SUNY Chancellor John R. Ryan said in a statement. "Record levels of students studying at SUNY will lead to a better educated workforce for New York."