More CUNY Award Winners!

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National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship 2015 Medgar Evers College

THE DAILY BRIEF

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OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS
More CUNY Award Winners!

CUNY students are winning the most prestigious, highly competitive awards in the nation. In the past five years, they have won 81 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships, 79 Fulbright Awards for research and teaching English abroad, and 12 Barry Goldwater Scholarships for outstanding undergraduates who intend to pursue research careers in mathematics, the natural sciences or engineering. And two CUNY doctoral candidates captured prestigious prizes that are rarely awarded to students—a Pulitzer Prize and a Guggenheim Fellowship, both for poetry. Providing quality, accessible education has been CUNY’s mission since 1847, a commitment that is a source of enormous pride, as are these students.

— James B. Milliken
Chancellor

Join the winners’ circle!
For more information about The City University of New York visit cuny.edu/welcome
The Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC/CUNY) (http://www bmcc.cuny.edu/j2ee/index.jsp) is leading the way among City University of New York schools as it transforms itself...
into one of the city's most sustainable campuses.

Energy saving projects that range in size and scope from a soon-to-be-installed solar array on the BMCC main campus rooftop, to efforts as simple as wrapping steam-filled pipes that heat the buildings, are either in place or in the planning stages. Funding has come from federal, state and city sources.

BMCC is also the first CUNY campus to develop an online dashboard (http://buildingdashboard.com /clients/cuny/bmcc/) that is using real time energy use data to promote conservation and engage students, faculty and staff.

At the dashboard, BMCC community members can see precisely how much energy the college is using in each building at any given time of day. The dashboard also provides a tool that tallies the financial cost of the energy used by the campus.

For example, by 3:00 P.M on Thursday July 2, BMCC had used 41,774 kilowatt-hours of electricity according to the dashboard. The dashboard explains the cost of that energy is $6,683, or the equivalent of 73,175 hamburgers or the amount of cash it would take to drive a small car 52,000 miles.

"The dashboard engages the BMCC community to become active participants in energy conservation efforts, both on campus and at home," said Thomas Ching, Chief Administrative Superintendent of BMCC buildings grounds department.

Ching, along with Vice President of Administration and Planning, G. Scott Anderson and Senior Stationary Engineer Roy Montgomery have been spearheading BMCC's green efforts.

New York City government operations, of which the BMCC campus buildings are a part, together generate about 6.5 percent of all the greenhouse gas emissions in the five boroughs according to the New York City Mayor's Office of Sustainability (http://www.nyc.gov/html/planyyc/downloads /pdf/publications/NYC_GHG_Inventory_2013.pdf). Last fall, Mayor Bill De Blasio pledged an 80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, making New York the largest city in the world to commit to such a goal.

"If we identify strategies and implement practices we'll be 40 percent ahead of the game," said Ching.

**The nuts and bolts projects**

Since 2014, BMCC has received $3.3 million from the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), (http://www.nyc.gov/html/dem/html/Programs_and_Projects /ace.shtml) That money includes $2.4 million from the DCAS Accelerated Conservation and Efficiency program (ACE). The goal of ACE is to fast track and streamline funding for shovel-ready energy saving capital projects.
BMCC has received the largest amount of ACE funding earmarked for energy conservation projects of any CUNY school. So far, the return on the city's investment is measurable.

In 2015 alone, the $1.3 million in ACE funded BMCC projects are estimated to have reduced the college's annual CO2 emissions by more than 1,880 metric tons and simultaneously reduced the college's power bill by $948,944.

In just three years, almost all the DCAS initial investment funds allocated to BMCC thus far will have been recouped in full.

Included among the upgrades are an independent chiller for Theatre One, a UV filtration system along with 700 steam traps and new thermal insulation blankets for the college's maze of heat carrying steam pipes.

The blankets alone cost $109,000, but in just one year, saved $192,000 in energy costs.

"Putting thermal blankets on pipes is not very sexy, but it saves a lot energy and it's cheap," said Anderson.

Plans for 2016 call for $1.8 million in new projects including new lighting controls and variable frequency drives for air handling units and pumps. DCAS estimates those initial costs will be recouped in savings in 3.6 years.

**Fiterman's green roofs**

When construction of BMCC's new Fiterman Hall was completed in 2012, the building was designated LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Silver by U.S. Green Building Council (http://www.usgbc.org/).

LEED is an acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ certification. It designates environmentally responsible—sometimes referred to as "green" or "sustainable"—commercial buildings designed, built and operated to optimally use the building location, minimize non-renewable energy use, reduce water consumption, while offering healthy settings in which to work and live.

A spokesperson at the U.S. Green Building council explained that Fiterman Hall is listed as in the top 76% of all activities in New York. That means the building rates as well, or better than 76% of all other green buildings (or buildings with associated "green" activities in the Green Building Information Gateway) in the state of New York.

Among its green features, the I.M. Pei designed structure is home to 12,000 square feet of green
roofs that are covered by perennial plants and succulents that absorb sunlight and heat.

Beneath all the plant life sits a filtration system that absorbs rainwater and converts it into what's called graywater. The graywater gets funneled to a holding tank at the top of the building. From the holding tank, the water flows down pipes to the building's chillers, where it is used to cool the building as needed.

**Rubber hats and solar panels**

Similar features are absent at the BMCC 199 Chambers Street building. The four block long structure was built in an era before green design became in vogue for public buildings and private developers. But the investments BMCC has made so far are making the building markedly more efficient.

For example, BMCC is retrofitting its entire HVAC system for more efficient cooling delivery.

The college also just completed replacing the rooftop with a new state-of-the-art three-inch white rubber insulated cover. The new rooftop fits “much like a giant hat,” says Anderson.

He said the rubberized roof will help keep cool air inside during summer months, and prevents warm air from evaporating into the atmosphere during the winter.

Starting in spring 2016, BMCC will begin installing the 926 solar panels on that same rooftop. When the solar array comes online, it will be the largest working solar power station on the entire island of Manhattan.

The BMCC solar project will be capable of producing 325-kilowatt (kWh) hours of electricity each day, much needed power that will get released back into the nation’s grid during peak usage hours.

Buildings and Grounds staff were also able to secure $300,000 from DCAS that will pay for 100 kWh batteries, which can store some of the new BMCC produced solar power and be tapped into during emergency situations such as a power outage in Lower Manhattan.

**Why BMCC is leading the way**

“There were a number of cascading events that led to the green undertakings,” said Anderson.

The main BMCC campus was picked by the Governor’s office in 2008 to be the first public building in New York State that would retrofit its preexisting condition to make it more green, said Anderson. The school also received federal and city funds that are enabling the upgrade of the roof, the HVAC systems and the solar array.
"We can do paper coffee cups, instead of Styrofoam or we can do away with plastic bags, which can survive a billion years, all those things are very important, but the thing that saves electricity in a cumulative way is the way you manage your buildings," said Anderson.

**Doing the right thing**

"This is not theoretical stuff, this is real stuff you can do for a price and get a return on the investment" said Anderson.

Unlike with CUNY four-year schools, the city's community college utility bills are paid by DCAS.

Still, Anderson says the irony of all these efforts is that unlike with a senior college, BMCC gets nothing in return for the savings.

"We're proving that we're good citizens. We're doing the right thing because it's the right thing to do," said Anderson.

*For more on BMCC Energy conservation measures see the BMCC interactive energy dashboard.*

(http://buildingdashboard.com/clients/cuny/bmcc/)
Snail Venom Yields Potent Painkiller, But Delivering The Drug Is Tricky

AUGUST 03, 2015  3:30 PM ET

JOE PALCA

Listen to the Story
All Things Considered

3:26

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The sea snail Conus magus looks harmless enough, but it packs a venomous punch that lets it paralyze and eat fish. A peptide modeled on the venom is a powerful painkiller, though sneaking it past the blood-brain barrier has proved hard.

Courtesy of Jeanette Johnson and Scott Johnson

Researchers are increasingly turning to nature for inspiration for new drugs. One example is Prialt. It's an incredibly powerful painkiller that people sometimes use when morphine no longer works. Prialt is based on a component in the venom of a marine snail.
Prialt hasn't become a widely used drug because it's hard to administer. Mandé Holford is hoping to change that. She and colleagues explain how in their study published online Monday in the journal *Scientific Reports*.

Holford is an associate professor of chemical biology at Hunter College in New York and on the scientific staff of the American Museum of Natural History. As is so often the case in science, her path to working on Prialt wasn't exactly a direct one. She's a chemist, and her first passion was peptides — short strings of amino acids that do things inside cells.

"I started out with this love for peptides," Holford says, then laughs. "Love! Sounds weird to say you love peptides out loud."

When Holford was in graduate school, a visiting scientist named Toto Olivera gave a lecture about the peptides in snail venom.

"He has this amazing video of a snail eating a fish," she says, "and it just looked so crazy." National Geographic has a similar video posted on YouTube.

Holford was captivated. How could a snail eat a fish? The secret, she learned, was a powerful venom the snail uses to paralyze the fish.

"It's amazing," Holford says.

Now, it turns out this venom is made of a hundred or more different peptides, most of them harmful to people.
"If I were to inject you with the complete cocktail of cone snail venom, it would kill you," says Holford. But one particular peptide in the venom is able to do something medically useful: It dramatically reduces pain. In 2004, the FDA approved the drug Prialt, made from a synthetic form of this particular peptide. Right now, Prialt is only used in cases of extreme, unrelenting pain because there's a major problem with the drug.

"It doesn't cross the blood-brain barrier," Holford explains.

The blood-brain barrier is a kind of membrane that prevents most compounds in the blood from entering the brain. In many ways, that layer of protection is helpful, but if Prialt doesn't get into the brain, it can't ease pain.

So, at this point, the drug can only be administered via an injection directly into the spinal column — which isn't very convenient for patient or doctor.

Holford has been looking for an easier way in. "We're using what I call our 'Trojan horse strategy,' in which we put the peptide inside of a carrier — which is called, in this case, a viral nanocontainer," she says. It's a tiny receptacle made from proteins found in viruses.

"Then," Holford explains, "we sort of shuttle it across the blood-brain barrier, using another peptide, which is a cell-penetrating peptide, which can cut through all sorts of membranes — including the blood-brain barrier."

As Holford and her Hunter College colleague Prachi Anand note in their journal report, the system seems to work in a laboratory model of the brain barrier. If her idea stands up to further testing, it would be possible to inject the drug intravenously — or maybe someday just take it as a pill.

But there's still a lot to do before Holford and her colleagues will know if that's really possible.

"The next step is to figure out if the peptide is still functional once we get it across the blood-brain barrier," says Holford. In other words, whether it still works as a painkiller once it's delivered with Holford's Trojan horse.

I'll report back when they've figured that out.

This story is part of Joe Palca's series Joe's Big Idea, an exploration of how ideas become innovations and inventions.
Bill would direct how tuition revenue is spent

By NICK MUSCAVAGE, Gazette staff writer

August 04, 2015
A bipartisan bill that would increase the state funding in public universities and take pressure off of the need to raise student tuition passed both houses nearly unanimously this session. The bill (S.281-a/A.5370-a) passed the Senate with a vote of 62-1 and the Assembly by 146-1 and is now waiting on Governor Andrew Cuomo’s decision on whether to sign it into law.

The bill — referred to by advocates as the “maintenance of effort” bill — if passed, would guarantee that the state university health science centers, utility costs such as heat and electric and other costs be covered by the state instead of student tuition.

On July 21, college students, professors, advocates and legislators met in the capital to urge Cuomo to sign the bill. They say the state has not kept its promise it made under the NYSUNY 2020 legislation to provide a consistent level of state general funds and maintain a rational tuition policy.

According to United University Professions, state funding for New York public universities has been cut since 2007 from $1.4 billion to $900 million while student tuition revenue increased over the same time period from $900 million to approximately $1.7 billion, a near reversal of roles. In 2015, students have paid for 64 percent of SUNY funding while the state has paid 36 percent.

In 2011, Cuomo signed into law NYSUNY 2020 with a goal of making SUNY a leading catalyst for job growth throughout the state and to strengthen the academic programs of university centers by maintaining a rational tuition policy and consistent general funds, but not much has changed according to these advocates.

Assemblywoman Pat Fahy, D-Albany, referred to the nearly unanimous bipartisan support of the bill and said, “I think it really is telling that [maintenance of effort] was so overwhelmingly supported.”

She also said it is important that student tuition remain affordable and accessible because higher education is transformative and a necessity. Fahy is a cosponsor of the bill as well as a member of the Committee on Higher Education.

Generation Progress, a nonprofit organization that promotes progressive political and social policy through which awards college students with grants, was referenced in UUP’s press releases. According to their research, there are 43 million college loan borrowers in the U.S. carrying $1.3 trillion. In New York, there are roughly 2.8 million students carrying $73.2 billion in debt due to the college tuition hikes.
Fahy said the state must bring these numbers back "out of whack" and increase funding on a state level.

Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, who worked in the software industry for 30 years, asked, "Is there any other priority that the state has that is more important than education and higher education?" The Democrat from Round Lake said the impact of budget cuts in public education can negatively affect New York becoming a high tech industry state - the opposite of NYSUNY 2020's goal. She is Vice President General Manager of MeetMax Conference Software.

Assemblyman John McDonald, D-Cohoes, said that in a world driven by technology, it is important the state give New York students the opportunity to have an impact.

Pamela Malone, a member of faculty at Empire State College, said, "Since 2008, state support for SUNY and CUNY has been slashed by $1.5 billion. The state has kept funding for SUNY stagnant since 2011." Due to this, she said the amount of professors remained the same as enrollment steadily increased. Malone is president of the Empire State College chapter of United University Professions.

Nadia Amin, a psychology student at SUNY Cortland, said classrooms intended for 20 students have swelled to numbers of more than 30 at her campus. "These cuts have had an impact on my education quality as well as the education of my peers."

The classroom she referred to is intended for a class that seniors must take and pass to be able to graduate. She also said some students cannot get into classes due to the lack of professors and therefore graduate later than expected.

Bret Benjamin, a professor in the English department at University at Albany, said, "For far too long, students have been the ones who have been burdened with providing the lion's share of SUNY operating costs." He said University at Albany cut five academic programs since the cuts began.

The New York Public Interest Research Group, NYPIRG, as well as the Student Assembly of the State University of New York, both support the maintenance of effort bill and urge Cuomo to sign it into law.

Ken LaValle, R-Port Jefferson, said, "Students of this state have made an investment in their education through the 2020 legislation. The maintenance of effort is critically important to maintain the State's investment in our students." He is director of Senate Higher Education Committee and the sponsor of the bill. Deborah Glick, D-Manhattan, sponsors the bill in the Assembly.
Burke rehab to receive $1 million for spinal cord injury research

ALBANY – The state is awarding $1 million to the Winifred Masterson Burke Medical Research Institute in White Plains.

The funding, part of a total of $5.7 million the state is distributing to nine research teams at institutions across the state, seeks development of treatments and cures for various forms and effects of spinal cord injuries.

Burke will receive just under $1 million for two research programs related to spinal injuries.

The other grants are going to Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University; CUNY City College in New York City; Health Research Wadsworth Center, Rensselaer/Albany; Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York City; Regenerative Research Foundation, Rensselaer; and SUNY Downstate Medical Center, New York City.
CUNY Dean Accused Of Sexual Harassment

by Emma Whitford in News on Aug 3, 2015 2:35 pm

George Ranalli (via)
An acclaimed CUNY architecture professor and dean has been accused of sexually harassing a female colleague after a faculty holiday party in December 2013.

George Ranalli, 68, has been dean of City College's Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture since 1999, and previously taught for 20 years at the Yale School of Architecture. (He's been on administrative leave from CUNY since April.) Ariella Campisi, who was 23 when the sexual harassment allegedly took place, worked part time as an office assistant in the architecture school, the Post reports.

According to the lawsuit, after a faculty holiday party at Smoke Jazz & Supper Club, Ranalli offered Campisi a ride home, and proceeded to rub her knee and thigh "in a sexual manner right below where her skirt ended" while his car sat in traffic for 30 minutes on the West Side Highway. Campisi fled the vehicle soon after, but not before Ranalli allegedly said, "You look so beautiful tonight. Can I kiss you?"

According to the tabloid, Campisi reported the incident to the school the very next day, and was assured that an investigation would be made. But 18 months later, when she asked for a status update, Campisi learned that there was none, allegedly because her superiors had reported the incident to the wrong administrative department.

Ranalli's lawyer, Andrew Celli Jr., told the tabloid that his client denied the allegations brought against him.

In February, the American Institute of Architects elected Ranalli to its College of Fellows, which recognizes architects that "have made a significant contribution to architecture and society on a national level, as well as achieved a standard of excellence in the profession."

CUNY, which has been accused in the lawsuit of "deliberate indifference," did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

UPDATE: A CUNY spokesman issued the following statement: "The matter was investigated by City College. The dean was forced to step down, and a disciplinary proceeding is ongoing."
One-Time ‘College-for-Cops’ Stretches Its Legs While Staying True to Roots

By RICHARD STEIER | Posted: Monday, August 3, 2015 5:00 pm

Four years ago, shortly before the 10th anniversary of 9/11, John Jay College of Criminal Justice essentially christened its new $600-million, 14-story building on the Upper West Side by unveiling a battered piece of steel from the World Trade Center.

Mounted on a gleaming platform with the inscription, “Dedicated in memory of those from the John Jay College community who lost their lives on September 11, 2001,” it was a memorial to the 67 alumni and members of the college—most of them firefighters—who perished at the Trade Center.

‘Reminder and a Tribute’

“When we created that memorial, it was meant as a constant reminder to future students,” said John Jay President Jeremy Travis, “and it was a tribute to their bravery and sacrifice.”

The reminder part, he said in a recent interview, is important because at this point “the incoming student—they were 3 years old when the World Trade Center was attacked.”

The ceremony has become an annual event, and Mr. Travis noted, “I can’t say I enjoy doing that bit, but it is an honor to do it.”

When John Jay was founded in 1964, it was known as the College of Police Science, with COPS as its acronym. By the time classes began the following September, there were complaints among the students that it lacked the panache of, say, NYU or UCLA.

And so it was renamed in honor of one of the nation’s founding fathers, who in addition to being the first Chief Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court had served as New York’s second Governor.

The college nonetheless continued to be strongly associated with police officers, many of whom had
enrolled while already on the job because they were looking to advance their educations and, in the process, their careers. As Mr. Travis described it, “It was all in-service police officers coming off a shift and taking a course or two.”

Not Typical 1970 Campus

This created an atmosphere on campus that was not typical at most urban universities during that era. In May 1970, a majority of the college’s faculty voted to close the college to protest the Vietnam War and the killing of students at both Kent State University and Jackson State College by National Guardsmen who had been called in to deal with demonstrations at those schools. When the issue was put to students to decide, however, by a 74-vote margin out of more than 1,600 ballots, they opted to keep it open for classes.

On the other hand, a young FBI Agent attending the school wrote a master’s thesis in which he concluded that one John Jay Professor who had been sharply critical of the agency’s conduct was on target with parts of his analysis. When J. Edgar Hoover got a copy of the thesis, he was so angered that he ordered the Agent to resign and prohibited other members of the bureau from attending unless the Professor, Abe Blumberg, was fired. Mr. Blumberg outlasted Mr. Hoover, who died in 1972, and his directive was buried along with him.

After a while, firefighters and other civil servants began gravitating to the school, which offered easy access by subway to those working in Manhattan or The Bronx, but it was not considered one of the upper-rank schools within the City University of New York. During the fiscal crisis that began in 1975, there was talk of merging it into Baruch College, but by early 1976 the decision was made to cut the school’s budget so it could remain independent.

The man who had been its Acting President, Gerald Lynch, a year later was given the job on a permanent basis—he stayed there through 2004—and began building it up academically. In 1980, he established its first Ph.D. program, in criminal justice, and as the school took on more of a liberal-arts flavor, its enrollment grew and the student body became more diverse, both demographically and in terms of its interests. Its roots, though, can still be found in the college’s motto: “Educating for Justice.”

A Rising Star With Koch

Mr. Travis first became acquainted with John Jay in the late 1980s as a key aide to Mayor Ed Koch during the last of his three terms in office. He started in the administration in 1984 as Special Counsel to Benjamin Ward, the city’s first black Police Commissioner, and while in that role he created the Police Cadet program, which groomed high-school students for future jobs with the NYPD.

His skills as a trouble-shooter attracted the attention of First Deputy Mayor Stanley Brezenoff, who hired him in that same role and made him a top official in the Mayor’s Office of Operations in early
1986. Mr. Travis’s usefulness in devising programs to deal with jail violence and in mediating a tense stand-off between Mr. Ward and the Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association over the attempted transfer of all cops working the night tour in response to corruption problems led Mr. Koch by the end of the year to make him a Special Advisor to the Mayor. In that role, one of the duties he assumed was to oversee CUNY for the administration.

**NYPD Deputy for Dinkins**

Under Mayor Dinkins, Mr. Travis became the NYPD’s Deputy Commissioner for Legal Matters. After Rudy Giuliani defeated Mr. Dinkins in the 1993 mayoral election, Mr. Travis joined the Clinton Administration as Director of the National Institute of Justice; he moved on, at the end of Mr. Clinton’s term in 2000, to the Urban Institute in another top post.

When the presidency of John Jay opened up 11 years ago with Mr. Lynch’s retirement, there were several things about the job that appealed to him. “First of all, it brought me back to New York” after a decade in the nation’s capital, Mr. Travis said. “John Jay is a mix of the public education and the value of CUNY, and to be part of the renaissance of CUNY under the previous Chancellor, Matthew Goldstein, was very attractive.”

Having spent more than 30 years in the criminal-justice realm, he said, John Jay appealed to him as “the premier institution in my field.”

There was also a less-idealistic motivation grounded in reality, Mr. Travis added: “Because I’m not a traditional academic, I could not have been a president anywhere else.”

His aptitude for being able to assess situations and figure out what needed fixing and how to do it was quickly put to use. “I particularly like the challenge of coming into an institution and deciding what is its core mission—is it doing it well?—and in what ways can it be strengthened. John Jay was poised for big change.”

**Revised Degree System**

One of the more-significant decisions he made, after a couple of years of “very deep introspection,” was to phase out the associate-degree program that is generally connected with community colleges. In its place, the CUNY Justice Academy was created, under which graduating high-school students who start at any of six community colleges get their associate’s degree and then finish out their pursuit of a bachelor’s degree at John Jay. This has given those students who are struggling early on an incentive to “complete their associate degree,” Mr. Travis said, and “there’s been a rapid rise in our standing within the university.”

He also restored majors in English, economics and sociology that had been phased out during the fiscal crisis, saying, “It makes us much more attractive to a wider band of students.”

About 60 percent of John Jay’s student body is female, and 72 percent consists of people of color,
with Latinos at 39 percent the largest ethnic or racial group. There are still signs of its roots: between 300 and 400 of those enrolled are cops, and roughly 400 military veterans are students, which Mr. Travis noted is the largest contingent at any CUNY school and has led to John Jay being ranked third nationally among "military-friendly" schools by Military Times. And in contrast to the era when most of the students were fitting in courses around their work schedules, he said, 75 percent of the school’s first-year students graduated last year from a city high school.

“We are now a very traditional college,” Mr. Travis said.

A Real-World Edge

There is, however, one significant difference because of the relative preponderance of students who also work in agencies like the NYPD. "You can be in a classroom here talking about Ferguson," he said, referring to the Michael Brown case and the violence that followed his death in that St. Louis suburb, "and there may be someone living in a neighborhood where there are policing questions and a police officer in the 77th Precinct dealing with those issues on a real-time basis...the nitty-gritty of street life and some real intellectual questions of how some things should be changed."

The school has launched a year-long project "reimagining police/community relations," he said. "The most-gratifying part of my job is being in touch with the energy of the students. They come here hungry."

One of John Jay’s problems when he arrived, Mr. Travis said, was, "There was a sort of achievement gap between the research activities of the faculty and what was possible." He wanted the school to be the best in its primary research areas such as anthropology, literature, economics, and international human rights. During his time there, funding for research has been tripled, and one result, he said, is that a variety of criminal-justice issues have come to the forefront of the national dialogue over the past few years, "We’re in the middle of every conversation" in areas ranging from "cybercrime to policing young men of color." He spoke of "the confluence of issues where John Jay faculty has something to say," on topics ranging from recent Supreme Court decisions on same-sex marriage and Obamacare to mass incarceration.

Professors like Gene O’Donnell, a former cop and prosecutor, and Eli Silverman, a co-author with John Eterno of “The Crime Numbers Game: Management by Manipulation” whose analysis of NYPD tactics and abuses of stop-and-frisk infuriated former Police Commissioner Ray Kelly, became go-to people for candid comments on policing issues here and elsewhere. Asked whether officials from either the Bloomberg or de Blasio administrations had complained to him about less-flattering assessments of their performance in this area, Mr. Travis said, "I’ve never gotten that phone call. Part of my job is to protect the academic freedom of our faculty. There are times when I open the papers and there’s one John Jay faculty member on one side of the issue and there’s another one on the other side of the issue, and that’s great. And there are times when a John Jay faculty member says something that’s really controversial—and that’s okay.”
And the longtime association with the Police Department—John Jay alumni who hold top NYPD positions include First Deputy Commissioner Benjamin Tucker, Chief of Patrol Carlos M. Gomez, Chief of Housing James A. Secreto, Chief of Community Affairs Joanne Jaffe and Deputy Commissioner for Public Information Steve Davis—can be seen in the continuing and expanding links between the two organizations. (Police Commissioner William J. Bratton, Mr. Travis noted, said at a 50th-anniversary celebration for the college last year that there were 5,000 alumni who had worked in the department.)

Joint Initiatives

There are, said Mr. Travis—who is married to Susan A. Herman, the NYPD’s Deputy Commissioner for Collaborative Policing—“a number of initiatives we’re working on with” the Commissioner. The college’s psychology faculty are advising the NYPD on how to deal with emotionally disturbed persons. The Police Cadet program, which withered under the previous two mayoral administrations, has been rebuilt to its original strength of 500 under Mayor de Blasio.

John Jay currently is providing professional-development training for more than 3,500 law-enforcement officers, from 1,985 NYPD recruits up through 20 Captains and hundreds of Department of Homeless Services police and Taxi and Limousine Commission Inspectors. Its NYPD Leadership Program, a 12-credit certificate curriculum, has roughly 3,700 members of the department taking undergraduate courses and 2,300 enrolled in graduate courses.

And the decision by Mr. Travis early in his tenure to create relationships with community colleges rather than continuing the associate-degree program in-house has proved useful in a new initiative with the NYPD known as APPLE Corps, an acronym for the Academic Preparation Program for Law Enforcement, recruiting high-school students who will move through either community colleges or John Jay into the Police Cadet Corps, with selections to the program made based on academic potential, interest in a future with the NYPD and a desire to do public service. Each year 100 students will be selected to participate, with 60 enrolled in community colleges and 40 going directly to John Jay. The long-term goal is to produce 500 Police Academy candidates annually from the program. Participants will receive stipends for each of their two years in the program as well as paid summer internships, with students starting in the summer after they graduate from high school by working in communities. This experience will give them their first sense of how to do policing in those areas.

A key focus will be on the relationship between the police and the communities they patrol. “It’s get an education first and then start thinking about these issues in an academic way,” Mr. Travis said.

Talking With FDNY, DOC

John Jay’s efforts are not confined primarily to the NYPD, he said. He met with Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro a couple of months ago, after an earlier sit-down with Correction Commissioner
Joseph Ponte, about creating similar relationships with the school to what now exists with the NYPD. Mr. Travis noted that Mr. Nigro's predecessor, Salvatore Cassano, is a graduate of John Jay, and the school is involved in the implementation of the consent decree worked out following a Federal Judge's 2010 finding that the entry exam for Firefighter had discriminated against minority candidates. John Jay has also begun an Emergency Medical Technician program that figures to serve as a feeder to that component of the Fire Department.

The school is working on smaller initiatives with the Departments of Probation and Investigation—with a special master's program in oversight and investigation and a fellowship from City Comptroller Scott Stringer's office to train people from DOI's Inspector General program to work for the Comptroller.

"There's an obvious need for the workforce to be better," Mr. Travis said. And as the school has focused more on digital, global and national issues, he said, it has broadened its reach: "We have John Jay students now in London, in Kiev, all around the world, getting degrees here." And increasingly he has looked to connect students "not only to the city government, but to the non-profit sector."

Where once John Jay attracted people who either were already part of law-enforcement or had grown up watching "Law and Order" and been attracted by the school's forensic-science program, he believes it is increasingly being viewed as "a launch pad for ambitious, motivated kids who come from working-class, middle-class backgrounds.

"Eleven years in," the college's 67-year-old President said in reference to his tenure, "the foundation is really strong."
First Came Summer Camp Marriage, Then Came a More Mature Love

By ELIZABETH A. HARRIS  AUG. 3, 2015

They met when they were 17 and 19 years old, and a week later, they were married — in a play.

Now, two years later, something about that feels right.

Ashwini Chawla and Sanam Wadhwani met in the summertime when they were counselors at a camp, a breeding ground for summer romance for generations, and a coupling tradition left largely unchanged by cellphones and Facebook.

While their meeting was classic, these two do not seem like a typical young couple. A tragedy shortly after they met tethered them together, and today, they seem more comfortable with each other, more sure of their pairing, than most couples their age. When they speak about their future, about a song they want to play at their someday wedding or about the ring he wants to buy for her, one is inclined to believe that they really might get there.

"I cannot even explain my love for this girl," said Mr. Wadhwani, an open-chested avowal unusual for a 21-year-old man.

"We danced together while everyone clapped around us," he added, recounting the marriage scene in that early play. "I looked right into her eyes, and I didn’t care about anyone else in that room of 100 people."

Ms. Chawla, who grew up in Queens, and Mr. Wadhwani, a child of Long Island,
met two years ago at a religious and cultural camp for children of Sindhi descent, an ethnic group from South Asia. Campers and counselors spent a few weeks in Kerhonkson, N.Y., not far from Poughkeepsie, learning a bit about Hindu scriptures and traditional dance, and playing sports like basketball. But not everyone in attendance wanted to nurture their connection to a cultural past.

"I was honestly just going for a job," Ms. Chawla said. "I had broken my iPhone, and I wanted to get another."

On the first day, she was paired with Mr. Wadhwani for icebreaker events, and though she was dressed in a style she describes as "casual bummy," he was smitten right away.

"She was this girl who caught my eye immediately," Mr. Wadhwani said. "We were doing the whole glancing thing."

But it was a religious camp, Ms. Chawla explained, not a retreat set up to facilitate dating, so they had to be creative to get to know each other without an audience.

Mr. Wadhwani would let his campers watch movies on his laptop so he could steal away to see Ms. Chawla. Other counselors would spend a few minutes keeping an eye on their charges so they could be alone. Sometimes, they would meet in a stairwell after their campers went to bed; she would bring Milano cookies and they would talk. They also found extensive use for walkie-talkies provided by the camp so staff members could communicate.

"We were bad," Mr. Wadhwani said. "Late at night, we'd go on a random channel and talk to each other for hours."

When the three-week camp ended, they were eager to learn more about each other. In one crucial way, they knew their time was limited: Mr. Wadhwani's father was gravely ill with cancer. So less than a week after camp ended, they significantly accelerated one dating ritual, and Ms. Chawla met her new boyfriend's father.

Mr. Wadhwani said Ms. Chawla and his father spoke, not like strangers rattled by nerves, but like two people who already knew each other well.
“He said, ‘Promise me you’ll always take care of my son,’ ” Ms. Chawla recounted. And she did.

Just days later, he was gone.

Mr. Wadhwani had known Ms. Chawla for only a month, but on the day his father died, he needed to see her. She met him in Central Park, and he brought pizza from Singas, a favorite of hers.

It was a little awkward, they said. But it was a comfort. And from that moment on, she was the support that kept him grounded amid so much grief.

“He was in a single-parent home, so after he his father died, he was alone,” Ms. Chawla said. “He would come every weekend, and I’d just take care of him. I’d cook for him and try to give him that home vibe that he missed.”

After sharing the intensity of his father’s death, the services she attended, and the support she gave, their relationship deepened quickly.

“It went from a basic relationship, just teenage love, to almost a husband-and-wife, soul-mate relationship,” he said.

Today, she is a student at Macaulay Honors College at the City University of New York, focusing on biology. A young woman with dark hair to her waist and a certain quiet confidence, she might go to medical school one day, she said, or get a Ph.D. and focus on research. Mr. Wadhwani is studying marketing at Hofstra University. A solidly built man with deeply set eyes, he is by far the more romantic of the two. (“Of course” he knows the date they first met, he said: June 30.)

While their bond may be unusual for a couple so young, in many ways, they themselves are not. They do not live together; she is in Harlem, near school, and he is in East Meadow, on Long Island. Every few weeks, they have dinner at Ms. Chawla’s mother’s apartment in Jackson Heights, where she cooks for them. The only time they are not texting, Mr. Wadhwani said, is when he is driving. And their favorite activity is to go to the mall, or several, and shop.

Both of them enjoy fashion — Mr. Wadhwani estimates that he has about 20
pairs of sneakers — and sometimes, they will subtly coordinate their outfits. On a recent trip to Roosevelt Field mall in Garden City, on Long Island, she wore a summer dress in a bright blue. He was wearing black pants and a black shirt, but his Nike Airs popped in the same shade of blue as her dress. He carried their bags and rarely let go of her hand.

“She’s been with me through the worst time,” he said, as she took a French fry off his plate at mall restaurant. “So hopefully we’ll be together for a very long time, hopefully forever.”

“I’m hoping for the next life, too,” he added. “But we’ll see!”

A version of this article appears in print on August 4, 2015, on page A19 of the New York edition with the headline: ‘Married’ at Camp, Then Came a Deeper Devotion.
New York NEWS

Violent crime spike in New York City similar to increases in cities nationwide, authorities say

Updated August 3, 2015 9:55 PM
By ANTHONY M. DESTEFANO anthony.destefano@newsday.com

New York Police Department Commissioner Bill Bratton speaks at a press briefing on May 13, 2015 in New York City. Photo Credit: Getty Images / Andrew Burton
homicides and shootings in New York City come at a time when many major U.S. cities this year are seeing similar or greater surges in violence following years of steady declines, according to the latest law enforcement data.

NYPD Commissioner William Bratton, who Monday attended a meeting in Washington, D.C., of the Major Cities Chiefs Association that addressed the nationwide increase in violence, is scheduled to discuss the city's spike Tuesday with reporters.

The surge in violent crime citywide was underscored this past weekend when 22 people were hurt in 10 separate shootings. Ironically, the weekend saw a 55 percent reduction in shootings with 18 incidents compared with the 40 in the same three-day period in 2014, according to NYPD statistics.
But the shootings, including at a Brooklyn house party where 11 were hurt, prompted a number of politicians to demand that more be done to take guns off the streets.

Through Aug. 2, the city recorded 196 homicides compared with 178 in the same period a year ago, an increase of 10.1 percent, according to NYPD data. Shootings totaled 669 compared to 674 a year ago, a drop of 0.7 percent.

Other major- and medium-sized U.S. cities are showing increases in violence from 2014, according to their police departments. Baltimore, a city of about 622,000, this year reported 179 homicides, an increase of 56 percent. Baltimore has also seen 506 shootings compared with 269 in 2014, a rise of 88 percent. Baltimore's homicide rate is 28.77 per 100,000, compared to New York City's rate of 2.3.
Chicago has reported 252 homicides compared with 209 in 2014, an increase of 21 percent while St. Louis, according to news reports, had 114 homicides, about a 50 percent rise.

"This is not a phenomenon unique to New York," NYPD spokesman Stephen Davis said Monday about the rise in homicides and shootings. "If you look at a number of major cities there is an increase in violence."

Criminologists and police officials are trying to come up with reasons for the nationwide spike, which is a marked contrast to the period between 2013 to 2014 when FBI data showed homicides dropped 6 percent and all violent crimes dipped 4 percent.

Some think the contentious relationship police had in the past year with their communities has made officers pull back from proactive policing.

"A major development in the world of policing and the country is that police are avoiding interaction, adversarial interaction, with people in a way that is most troubling," said Professor Eugene O'Donnell of John Jay College of Criminal Justice. "They are adverse to being involved in confronting people."

"Cops are worried about being on the video of the week," said Joseph Giacalone, a policing consultant and a former NYPD detective, referring to viral videos of cops.
SAVANNAH- It's a collaboration of the Chatham County justice system, street level law enforcement, and public leaders to research and combat violent crime.

Following weekend shootings, city leaders return to Savannah with criminal justice experts from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice National Network for Safe Communities team to meet with local law enforcement officers to talk about documenting crime and researching known criminals.

"They will identify the individuals that they know to be whether we can prove it legally or not but from intelligence filings and from criminal history people who have participated in
violence," says SCMPD Chief Jack Lumpkin.

City and public safety leaders are launching Operation Ceasefire, a program that several communities have enlisted in to reduce and target violent crime offenders. Now is the stage of data processing and information gathering for the criminal justice teams that the DA's office say will become accessible to all levels of the justice system.

"You're going to see numbers change, I'm not going to just stand her and spout this program you're going to see numbers, that's empirical data and that's something I think everybody wants to know," says District Attorney Meg Heap.

Chief Lumpkin says the team is breaking down the who and the why violent crimes take place in Savannah.

"Who did what and what group is it linked to," says Chief Lumpkin.

Heap's office backs the new program hoping it will yield results in attempts to reduce violent crime. At this time, there is no time frame for when Savannah will see the operation's impact.

"Let's let them get it started let them do the research, let's find out, we all know there's a shooting, what's the reason for it, who are the groups we need to target we're laying the foundation," Heap says.
Ellis Cose: Reform criminal justice now

Ellis Cose  4:34 p.m. CDT August 3, 2015

From demonizing young black “superpredators” to rallying around “black lives matter” is a journey that has taken America some 20 years. And it covers territory even more daunting than we have seen on the twisty road from Ferguson, Mo., to Cincinnati (where a cop was just indicted in the killing of an unarmed black motorist).

The virtually non-stop commotion around policing, justice and race is part of a much bigger phenomenon — and one that is forcing us, at long last, to question policies that have made America into the most jail-happy democracy on the planet.

In a major study last year, the National Research Council/National Academy of Sciences pointed out that our incarceration levels were five to 10 times higher than those in Western Europe. The majority of our prisoners are black and Hispanic. And keeping many of those people in jail has little to do with keeping us safe. So why are we here?

“We are here because we chose to be here. Our mass incarceration reality is a matter of choice… not … crime. Once you come to that bracing realization, then you have to say … Can’t you choose something else?” observed Jeremy Travis, president of John Jay College of Criminal Justice and chair of the NAS committee, during a recent interview.

In the 1990s, as politicians took aim at “child predators,” Travis’ question was nowhere on the table. We were essentially sold on the notion of being tough on criminals — even child criminals. “The murderers, robbers, rapists and drug dealers of yesteryear were typically adults. Now they are typically juveniles,” declared Sen. (and later U.S. Attorney General) John Ashcroft in 1997 in arguing for legislation to make it easier for children to serve adult time.

We are now at a very different moment. We are more capable of seeing that many children in desperate circumstances look more like victims than perpetrators. Glenn Martin believes this growing consciousness has created a unique possibility for change. Martin, a former vice president of the Fortune Society, which works with the formerly incarcerated, has started a new organization called Just Leadership USA. He is recruiting a cadre of former offenders to help him achieve his mission of cutting the prison population in half in 15 years. He notes that we have already seen a dramatic drop in the number of juveniles incarcerated.

“Young people are … a little bit more politically palatable,” admitted Martin. But he believes the trend bodes well for the adult incarcerated population. And he credits former president George W. Bush for helping to make that possible. In his 2004 State of the Union Address, Bush proposed a prisoner re-entry initiative, calling America “the land of second chance.”

Since then, the issue has garnered attention from people all over the political spectrum. This Congress, which can't agree on much of anything, seems primed to pass a sentencing reform bill. And President Obama has become increasingly outspoken. Last month, he visited a federal prison in Oklahoma only days after telling the NAACP that we were locking up too many people for too long. Low-level drug dealers, he said, owed society a debt. “But you don’t owe 20 years. You don’t owe a life sentence.”

Republican Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner has said that he intends to cut his state’s prison population by 25 percent in 10 years. The American Civil Liberties Union has launched a campaign, backed by a $50 million grant and state lobbying efforts, to cut America’s prison population in half by 2020.

For all the new energy, some think this moment might soon pass — that an outrageous crime by an ex-offender could easily derail us. “We just live in fear of the Willie Horton moment,” Travis said. JoAnne Page, president of the Fortune Society, recalled that when a parolee in Massachusetts killed a police officer in 2010, the state sharply reversed course. Gov. Deval Patrick removed five parole board members who had voted for the killer’s release, and parole rates plummeted. “This is fragile,” Page said.

Indeed, most politicians are compelled less by common sense than by the passions of the moment. Even so, this particular moment has lasted for a while. Even before Ferguson, people were increasingly questioning a justice system that seemed to bring out the worse in many Americans — that led police to shoot innocent black men, led politicians to condemn errant children to an earthly hell and reinforced bad behavior in felonious adults. One reason this moment has not quickly gone away is that we have been hit with almost constant reminders (often captured on video) that something is not quite right about our Dirty Harry approach. It is getting too many people gunned down by their presumed protectors as others die in custody. And it has left too many former prisoners (and most inmates do get out, as Bush observed a decade ago) with no road to salvation.

For decades, we told ourselves that in showing the world the most vindictive and biased version of our collective selves that we were being tough on
crime. Now, it's hard to ignore the evidence that we were just being foolish and hardhearted. That awareness, I suspect, will not soon or easy go away.
And it could lead us to conclude, as has much of the civilized world, that vindictiveness and hope rarely go together.

Ellis Cose, is a member of USA TODAY's Board of Contributors
The CUNY Graduate School of Journalism mourns the loss of a great friend to the school and a champion of excellence in journalism. Jerry Kohlberg was that rare person who used his resources unstintingly to advance the greater good while asking nothing for himself. We shall miss him always. Sarah Bartlett, Dean

She didn’t go to class, but ‘free pass’ grad is heading to college

By Susan Edelman and David K. Li

The Queens teen who admitted she received a high-school diploma she didn’t deserve is looking forward to attending Marymount Manhattan College in the fall — and aspires to be a doctor.

Melissa Mejia, 18, told The Post on Sunday that she got the final credits needed to graduate from William Cullen Bryant HS when she was passed in a Government class that she had been failing and had barely attended.

She said Monday that she doesn’t regret her confession and doesn’t believe it will impact her enrollment at the private Upper East Side liberal-arts college.
Students say school lets them cheat in online summer classes.

"I don't think I did anything bad," she said.

Mejia hopes to be a pre-med student, adding, "I want to do psychiatry."

A Marymount spokeswoman refused to confirm or deny her enrollment.

But Mejia's revelation raised troubling questions about whether undeserving high-school grads could gain admission to four-year colleges and universities.

"Most colleges in America are not selective, period," said David Bloomfield, a professor of education leadership at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center. "A lot of schools are looking to fill seats. They're looking for warm bodies."

Bloomfield said elite universities would be more likely to consider academic shortcomings, such as barely passing grades.

"But most of the programs — especially ones where a struggling student will apply — are not going to subject that student's record to that kind of close analysis," he said.

Reps for CUNY, SUNY and California State University, the nation's largest public four-year-college system, all declined to make admissions officers available for comment Monday.
Myron Magnet

A Great Gift to Charter Schools—and to Gotham

John Paulson and Eva Moskowitz create opportunity.

3 August 2015

Three cheers for hedge-fund tycoon John Paulson for his $8.5 million donation to Success Academy, the string of charter schools founded and run with such aplomb by ex-city-council member Eva Moskowitz. This generous gift accomplishes two worthy goals—one direct and one devious.

First, charter schools have proved a canny way to work around the teachers’ union/ed school stranglehold on public education. These are fully public schools, open by lottery to all comers, but they don’t operate under union work rules, don’t have to hire union teachers, and are open to hiring teachers who aren’t products of the ed schools, with their social-justice, racial-grievance worldview, along with their belief (based on a false Latin etymology) that education is a “leading out” of knowledge that is already in the student rather than a “putting in” of skills, manners, and information. As a result, charters can set high standards of behavior and achievement for both teachers and students, and their students’ performance dramatically vindicates that approach.

Just compare Success Academy Harlem 1 and P.S. 149, schools that share a building and a similar population of mostly minority, overwhelmingly poor students. At the charter school, 86 percent of the students score “proficient” on the state reading tests, as do 94 percent in math, while the P.S. 149 kids score 29 percent and 34 percent respectively, numbers that closely mirror the overall performance difference between the city’s charter and public schools. According to economist Caroline Hoxby, charter schools erase 86 percent of the “Scarsdale–Harlem achievement gap” in math and 66 percent of that gap (the difference in scores between students in the affluent New York suburb and in Harlem) in reading. Moskowitz wasn’t kidding when she called her 32 schools Success Academies. No wonder 71,000 kids are scrambling for the 21,000 New York City charter school seats.

But the second reason Paulson’s gift is so welcome is that it deftly deflates the hot air of Mayor Bill de Blasio’s campaign against inequality. New York until the 1960s had always been the Opportunity City, where excellent public schools and colleges provided as much opportunity and challenge as any gifted or ambitious student could handle—or any kid driven by demanding parents hungry for him to succeed. But once the 1968 Ocean Hill-Brownsville school dispute and its ensuing strike demoralized the city’s white teachers by slandering them as racists, leading the unions to be hyper-protective of teachers’ “rights,” and once open admission of all comers, qualified or not, crashed the standards at the City University two years later, that ladder of opportunity buckled. But the advent of charter schools, and the return of standards at CUNY (thanks in large part to the efforts of City Journal writer Heather Mac Donald and the late CUNY chancellor and former congressman Herman Badillo) has substantially restored what was a glory of New York. And kudos to Mayor Michael Bloomberg for allowing charter schools to increase more than ten-fold, from 14 to 159, during his tenure.

But not everyone is applauding. All those who believe that merit and “social justice” are antithetical—from the ed schools to de Blasio—charge that it is somehow “unfair” to the kids whose
parents are too unmotivated to sign them up for the charter school lottery to leave them stuck in the hugely expensive and grossly inefficient ordinary public schools. But it is hard to imagine a standard of justice that requires clipping the wings of a motivated kid because unmotivated kids won't learn to fly—the de Blasio standard of equality, which requires lowering the top to bring it more in line with the bottom.

So Paulson’s gift is also a poke in de Blasio's eye. And as New Yorkers look for an alternative to a mayor who in a year and a half has brought back intimations of the disorder and criminality of the New York of 25 or 30 years ago, and who now threatens to unravel welfare reform, how helpful of Paulson to highlight the achievements of Eva Moskowitz—a New York ex-politician who knows that Gotham stands for a hand up, not a handout.

*Muron Magnet*, City Journal's editor-at-large and its editor from 1994 through 2006, is a recipient of the National Humanities Medal. His latest book is *The Founders at Home*. 
Queens College gets federal grant for disability services project

By Madina Toure
TimesLedger Newspapers

U.S. Rep. Grace Meng (D-Flushing) announced a $1.1 million, five-year federal grant for Queens College to continue a disability services initiative that seeks to help low-income students with disabilities.

The funds, allocated by the U.S. Department of Education’s Student Services Program, will be used for the school to maintain its Disability Student Support Services project. The school will receive $220,000 every year for the next five years.

Under the program, 100 low-income students with disabilities are given support services to help them with their studies and ensure their graduation.

“Queens College does an outstanding job preparing students for their futures,” Meng said. “I am happy to deliver the great news about these important funds, and I’m pleased that that money will allow this critical program to continue. I look forward to many more Queens College students benefiting from the Disability Student Support Services project.”

The project’s services include an Assistive Technology Training program, an equipment lending program, assessments of career development and counseling, self-advocacy training, personal and academic counseling and academic advising and regular coaching through texts, emails and phone calls.

The college previously had the grant for about 20 years but lost it in 2005, according to Dr. Mirian Detres-Hickey, director of Queens College’s Office of Special Services.

She applied for the grant in 2010 and received a perfect score, she said.

“CUNY pays a great deal of money and the college pays a great deal of money to help support the office,” she said. “Without CUNY or Queens College, we would have major problems. We actually survive off of that. The other grants are very small.”

Reach reporter Madina Toure by e-mail at mtoure@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4566.

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