New York City's abundant wildlife

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By LIDIA CURANAJ, @LidiaNews

NEW YORK (MYFOXNY) - Take a walk down any city block and many are noticing that New York City is becoming increasingly more jungle than concrete.

A fuzzy squirrel digging for nuts may be photo worthy for tourists but they're the norm for New Yorkers. And so are at least 75 different species of birds in New York City alone. It's no wonder birds have made themselves home in the most interesting places. And then there's the marine life, too. Whales and dolphins have been spotted in the Rockaways. And don't forget about the coyotes. They're also making frequent appearances in the city leaving many wondering "what's going on?"

Sarah Aucoin is the director of the Urban Park Rangers. She says that improved parkland and habitat make New York City appealing to wild animals.

So far this year, there have been at least half a dozen coyote sightings in the city as well as quite a few raccoon sightings.

Aucoin says many of these species coexist with humans by scavenging in our trash.

Coyotes aren't the only ones moving into the city. There have been sightings of snowy owls, red-tailed hawks, and even bald eagles.

Dr. Mary C. Pearl, wildlife biologist and provost at CUNY's Macaulay Honors College, says it's actually a good thing the city has become more habitable for everyone.

So where are many of these animals coming from? From the wildest borough, of course: the Bronx. Pearl says because the Bronx is attached to the mainland of the United States, the animals migrate down the parkways into the city.

While it can be unnerving to come face to face with a wild animal, at times you could be witnessing history. Recently a bald eagle built a nest on Staten Island and that hasn't happened in New York City in about a century.
New York City’s abundant wildlife

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Scientists Find a Natural Way to Clean Up Oil Spills, With a Plant-Based Molecule

Researchers at the City College of New York are testing a spray made of phytol, a molecule in chlorophyll, on oil in lab wave pools.

Skimming Oil in the Gulf of Mexico (NOAA Office of Response and Restoration)

By Heather Hansman
smithsonian.com
July 29, 2015

After an oil spill, the number one priority is finding a way to contain and remove the oil. Boat operators sometimes deploy physical booms to trap the oil so that it can be siphoned or burned off of the water's surface. But, because oil in water is tricky to contain, other methods for corralling it call for adding manmade chemicals to the water.

In a technique called dispersion, chemicals and wave action break down the oil into smaller particles, which then disperse and slowly biodegrade over a large area. Then, there is chemical herding. To clean up an oil spill with a chemical herder, crews spray a compound around the perimeter of the spill. The compound stays on the surface and causes the oil to thicken. Once it's thick enough, it can be burned off. Chemical herding requires calm water, which makes it unreliable in some spills, but, unlike mechanical removal or dispersion, it gets all the oil. The technique has been around since the 1970s, but, until now, the chemicals used to herd the oil, called soap surfactants, didn't break down over time. After the oil burned off, they'd still be in the ecosystem.
Researchers at the City College of New York, led by chemist George John and chemical engineer Charles Maldarelli, have developed a way to clean up oil using a chemical herder made of phytol, a molecule in chlorophyll that makes algae green. It’s the first non-toxic, natural way to remediate oil spills.

“We didn’t want to add anything to the environment that would make it worse, so we decided to make molecules that came from natural products, so they would automatically biodegrade,” Maldarelli says. “We like the idea of using a molecule that’s abundant in nature to arm against something humans have done to the environment.”

The researchers settled on phytol, which they harvest from algae. It is a natural molecule that cleaves off as the chlorophyll breaks down, so they knew it would be stable in the environment. The phytol didn’t quite do the job on its own, so they added a plant-based fat, which helped align the molecules in a way that broke the water’s surface tension.

In their Manhattan lab, the team tested the natural herder on fake oil spills, to see if it could condense the oil as effectively as current chemical herders. They dialed in the balance of elements until it herded just as fast as the chemical versions. Maldarelli says they looked closely at both biodegradability and toxicity, and at what they might need to source the new herder commercially.

“The commercial ones, they’re fairly non-toxic—some are more than others,” says Maldarelli. “But our claim is that if you start with natural products you’re ahead of the game.”

The researchers are testing the natural herder in wave tanks and monitoring how long it takes to break down, as they think about scaling up and using it in emergency situations. They’re still unsure if the lipid they’re using is the best option, so they’re testing other options for binders.

The natural herder can be sprayed from a plane, so Maldarelli says it’s best use case will be in calm waters where it’s hard to navigate a boat. “The Arctic seas are usually calmer and have icebergs floating, so chemical herding works there,” he says.

On July 22, President Obama approved two of Royal Dutch Shell’s permits for drilling in the Chukchi Sea, off the coast of northern Alaska. Shell had an accident the first time they tried to drill in the Arctic, in 2012, so having multiple cleanup methods could be a boon.
De Blasio and Cuomo talking again for first time in weeks, mayor says, as gov seeks to move on from feud

BY JENNIFER FERMINO, ERIN DURKIN, KENNETH LOVETT / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS /
Published: Wednesday, July 29, 2015, 2:47 PM / Updated: Wednesday, July 29, 2015, 11:50 PM

Maybe it's the summer heat, but the tensions between Gov. Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio just can't seem to cool down.

Cuomo on Wednesday described himself as a "grownup" — implying that the mayor is the child in the relationship. And he flirted with opening another front in their battle when he said de Blasio could afford to give more money not only to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, but maybe even to CUNY.

Meanwhile, the mayor acknowledged that he and the governor spoke for the first time in weeks Friday, but said their conversation did not heal wounds. "I think it was an airing of concerns," de Blasio said. "And I wouldn't say a resolution was reached. But you know, this is going to be an ongoing thing."

The two powerful Democrats have been openly feuding since June 30, when the mayor accused Cuomo of thwarting the city's agenda.

Cuomo said he believes the mayor was venting out of frustration at not getting everything he wanted from the Legislature.

Saying he did not want to engage in the "drama and the soap opera," Cuomo recalled how he used to tell his father, former Gov. Mario Cuomo, to "calm down, rise above" his attackers. He said he told his father: "You are the governor, in
Gov. Cuomo (l.) and Mayor de Blasio have been feuding since June 30, when the mayor publicly accused Cuomo of thwarting the city's agenda for political reasons.
'I think it was an airing of concerns,' de Blasio told reporters Wednesday, revealing the two recently spoke by phone.

your job description it says 'grownup.'"

"I gave my father good advice, and now I'm going to follow the advice that I gave my father," he said.

Cuomo said he still views de Blasio as a friend.

Asked what friendship meant to him, de Blasio demurred. "I appreciate you asking a big philosophical question," he said. "Again, I'm not going to get into personalities, I'm not going to get into a lot of back and forth."

Cuomo is applauded by Vice President Biden (r.) during an event Monday where they announced a new plan for LaGuardia airport. 'Life goes on,' Cuomo said Wednesday of the feud with de Blasio.

Cuomo, speaking earlier on upstate public radio's "The Capitol Pressroom," said he had spoken to de Blasio about funding the MTA's five-year capital plan.

The governor urged the city to go along with a plan in which the state would put forward $8.3 billion and the city $3.2 billion over five years. Cuomo said the city is now in better financial shape than the state.

Noting that "the city was broke when the MTA was established," he said: "The
state came in and had to save the city. For example, CUNY, the City University of New York, the state pays almost the entire cost of about $1 billion a year. Why? Because the city was broke."

But he added: "This isn't the '70s anymore, so the fundamental philosophy has to be revisited."

A spokeswoman for the mayor said he increased funding for CUNY in his first two budgets and that the rate of the city's funding increase significantly outpaces the state's rate.

TAGS: bill de blasio , andrew cuomo , mta
Obama: Investing in minority men is not ‘charity,’ it’s lucrative

Liz Goodwin | Senior National Affairs Reporter | July 30, 2015

Students with President Obama at the launch of My Brother's Keeper alliance at Lehman College in the Bronx, N.Y., in May. (Susan Watts/The Daily News via AP, Pool)

If you can't appeal to their hearts, appeal to their pocketbooks.
That’s what the president and his administration are doing to sell his My Brother’s Keeper initiative, which seeks to help minority boys and young men succeed at school and in the workforce.

In May, the president said the business and nonprofit leaders who support My Brother’s Keeper are “not doing this out of charity” or to assuage societal guilt.

“They’re doing this because they know that making sure all of our young people have the opportunity to succeed is an economic imperative,” Obama said.

Now the White House has released a report highlighting the potential economic gains the country would sustain if persistent educational gaps between boys of color and white boys were closed, one of the key goals of My Brother’s Keeper. Minority men would earn $170 billion more each year, the total U.S. gross domestic product would spike by 1.8 percent and all American workers would see a 3.6 percent raise, the White House predicts. The more productive workers on the job, the more the economy will grow, the report argues, and investing in education for minority boys would be a fast way to get there.

The alternative is to allow more and more young men of color to continue to drop out of the labor force, adding to a long list of what the New York Times has called “Missing Black Men.”

“For every [minority man] who was born 25 years ago, only
half of them are employed today,” said Betsey Stevenson, a member of the president’s Council of Economic Advisers who helped write the report. “That means there are half of them we have lost — that’s a lot of talent we are losing. When you think about it that way, it becomes obvious the toll it’s taken on our nation.”

The boys are lost to jail, early death and high unemployment, all societal problems My Brother’s Keeper hopes to urge private businesses and local governments to tackle. Though the president’s initiative has attracted hundreds of millions of dollars in pledges, the daunting goal of closing education and achievement gaps would take significantly more investment to solve.

The president started My Brother’s Keeper last year, in part prompted by the death of teen Trayvon Martin, who was shot by a neighborhood watchman in an Orlando suburb. Obama was unusually vocal about Martin’s death, arguing that stereotypes about minority boys and men being dangerous make them more likely to face violence themselves. “Trayvon Martin could have been me 35 years ago,” Obama told the press two years ago, recalling how he would hear car doors locking as he walked down the streets. “We need to spend some time in thinking about how do we bolster and reinforce our African-American boys.”

The president will make the goals of My Brother’s Keeper a major part of his post-presidency. (“This will remain a mission for me and for Michelle not just for the rest of my
presidency but for the rest of my life," he said in May.)
Private-sector leaders have formed an independent
nonprofit, called the MBK Alliance, that will continue the
work long after Obama leaves office.
Mayor appoints new EDC board members

The de Blasio administration today announced the appointment of ten new members to New York City Economic Development Corporation’s Board of Directors.

The appointees, who include business, community, nonprofit and academic leaders, will join the organization’s 27-member board, which helps to guide NYCEDC’s agenda.
As the City’s primary economic development vehicle, NYCEDC leverages the City’s assets to create good jobs and drive growth, ensuring equitable and sustainable development across all five boroughs.

“Right now, New York City is experiencing the strongest job growth in two decades. Through the NYCEDC we are working to invest in fast-growing sectors like bio-tech, advanced manufacturing and life-sciences, and making sure that New Yorkers can participate in the next great economic chapter of our city. We are honored to have these new leaders from tech companies, non-profits and academia join our team as we invest in the human capital, infrastructure and space needs to drive a fair and strong economy,” said Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“The NYCEDC Board plays an important role in establishing crucial projects to catalyze inclusive innovation in our city,” said NYCEDC President Maria Torres-Springer. “I look forward to partnering with this accomplished and talented team to create an equitable and sustainable economy for New Yorkers from all five boroughs.”

The new members of NYCEDC’s Board of Directors are:

William S. Floyd is head of external affairs for Google New York, leading Google’s government and regulatory interactions, public affairs programs, and community relations.

Wilton Cedeno is the Director of State Regulatory Affairs for Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison).

Matthew Hiltzik is the Founder and CEO of Hiltzik Strategies, which provides communications services including strategic counsel, crisis management, and corporate positioning.

Pam Kwatra is President of Kripari Marketing where she serves as a link between major American corporations and the Indian community.

David Lichtenstein is chairman and CEO of The Lightstone Group, one of the largest privately held real estate companies in the United States.

Lichtenstein is a member of the Board of Governors of the Real Estate Board of New York, a Trustee of the Citizens Budget Commission, a Member of the Real Estate Roundtable and Co-Chair of the Real Estate Capital Policy Advisory Committee.
He is a founder of the Friendship House, an organization that provides housing for families of sick children and adults in the Greater New York City area.

Lynn B. Kelly is the Chief Executive Officer and President of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden.

Dr. Gail O. Mellow has served as President of LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City since 2000.

Fred Heller is owner of Team Systems, a family-owned and operated taxi fleet and garage in Long Island City.

Timothy A. Wilkins is a corporate partner at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, where he advises leading U.S. and international corporations on cross-border mergers and joint ventures.

Mark Patricof is Managing Director and Co-Head of Houlihan Lokey’s Technology, Media & Telecom Group, where he advises technology, telecom, media, entertainment, and gaming companies.
CBRE executive named to prestigious life sciences council at ASRC

CBRE Group, Inc. announced that John Isaacs, executive vice president and the company's New York City Life Science practice leader, has been named to the City University of New York's Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC) Leadership Council.

"John Isaacs' participation will help ensure that the mission and goals of the ASRC are fully realized in the coming years," said Dr. Gillian Small, CUNY Vice Chancellor for Research and Executive Director of the ASRC.

In joining the ASRC Leadership Council, Isaacs noted its support for New York City's Life Sciences business sector.

"New York City is poised for exponential growth in Life Sciences, and the ASRC is a valuable resource in that expansion. Already, the city possesses an impressive concentration of intellectual capital, and
with the continued strong growth of our academic and business community, New York will continue to attract and reinforce its commitment to advancing scientific research and education.

The ASRC is the keystone of CUNY’s Decade of Science, an initiative launched in 2005 to strengthen the University and its institutions and reinforce its commitment to advancing scientific research and education.

Isaacs, who has long made a study of the real estate requirements of NYC’s Life Sciences sector, commented: “From a real estate standpoint, we need a lot more new and highly specialized inventory for laboratories, research and development and incubator space for us to successfully reach our potential and compete with global bioscience hubs like Boston and San Francisco.”

However, the city is well-positioned to be the world’s next leading Life Sciences center, he says, noting that New York’s academic and medical institutions employ more than 29,000 physicians and more than 165,000 medical workers.

The city is home to 30,500 science and engineering graduate students and postdoctoral students, and 165,000 medical students. Combined, these skilled professionals are a strong attraction for major life sciences companies.

The latest such company to put down stakes in New York City is Nestlé Skin Health, which announced its 16-year, full-floor lease for 30,400 s/f in the Alexandria Center for Life Science’s West Tower in Manhattan. Nestlé will open its first innovation hub as part of a network of research and development centers. Isaacs represented the tenant in the lease.
Photonics center latest piece in SUNY Poly puzzle

Jon Campbell, Albany bureau 10:34 p.m. EDT July 28, 2015

ALBANY — When President Barack Obama made a 2012 visit to what is now known as SUNY Polytechnic Institute's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering in the state's capital city, he said he "wanted what's happening in Albany to happen all across the country."

Now, with SUNY Poly leading a broad new photonics partnership unveiled Monday, the Rochester area may get that chance.

Obama's remark referred to the wide-ranging, public-private partnership at SUNY Poly's crown jewel: the $20 billion Albany NanoTech Complex, where more than 3,500 scientists and researchers from global giants like IBM and Intel use state-owned facilities and equipment to research and advance nanotechnology.

On Monday, Vice President Joe Biden formally announced that the Rochester area would house the American Institute for Manufacturing Integrated Photonics, a more than $600 million partnership between the federal government, New York and a coalition of universities, nonprofits, major businesses like General Electric and 20 other states.

The basic approach will mimic that of the NanoTech Complex, whose consistent rise over the past two decades has made SUNY Poly's President and CEO Alain Kaloyeros one of the most powerful men in the state.

The state will spend $250 million to build and equip the photonics center, which will have a presence at the Canal Ponds business park in Greece but likely will be headquartered downtown, possibly at the Sibley building. The federal government, which selected Rochester as the winner of a nationwide photonics competitive process, will contribute $110 million to the effort, with the rest coming from private companies and other partners.

"All the job creation and all the economic investments are going to be in Rochester," Kaloyeros said Monday in an interview with the Democrat and Chronicle's editorial board. "Based on the level of investment and the experience we've had with other prior programs, we predict 5,000 to 7,000 jobs direct in the Rochester area over the next five to seven years."
By owning the facilities, the state limits the threat of private interests uprooting from the region while private companies benefit from the use of the equipment.

The approach appears to have worked at the NanoTech Complex, which has gone through five major expansions since 1997, growing from a 70,000-square-foot facility in its early days to the 1.3 million-square-foot behemoth it is today.

The Rochester photonics center is the latest in a long string of facilities operated by SUNY Poly, which has become the state’s go-to facilitator for economic development in the high-tech industries.

In recent years, Kaloyeros and Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s administration helped establish a second major nano outpost in Utica, where a $1.5 billion facility is being constructed that, when completed, is expected to create 1,500 jobs. A $1.7 billion medical research facility is planned for the RiverBend site in Buffalo.

Some SUNY Poly initiatives already exist in the Rochester area, including the Smart System Technology & Commercialization Center in Canandaigua, which maintains 130 high-tech jobs.

Two new Rochester-area initiatives were hatched in recent years: the $500 million New York Power Electronics Manufacturing Consortium at Canal Ponds and the Photovoltaic Manufacturing and Technology Development Facility in Eastman Business Park.

Danielle Merfeld, the technology director for electrical technologies and systems for GE Global Research, said GE has become more involved in partnerships with SUNY Poly as it has branched into new, non-silicon technologies.

GE is among the 50 private companies that will partner at the Rochester photonics center.

"The last couple years, we've seen a shift in their interests to much more broad-based technologies that are more in line with our industrial breadth, whether it's health care or energy or transmission communications," Merfeld said. "That alignment has opened up a lot of opportunities for us to work with SUNY Poly through the consortia they are good at developing."

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21-year-old launches Staten Island cell phone repair business

Tracey Porpora | porpora@siadvance.com By Tracey Porpora | porpora@siadvance.com
Email the author | Follow on Twitter
on July 30, 2015 at 7:00 AM, updated July 30, 2015 at 7:05 AM

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Growing up in the digital age, Adam Mohamed, 21, was always fascinated with technology.

"I always liked to keep up on the latest cell phones and devices that were coming out," he said.

As the son of an electronics store business owner, he's been taught from a young age that hard work and dedication pay off. So when he saw how smart phones were rocketing in price, he came up with the idea for a niche business.

"I realized the potential of a cell phone repair business when I saw how cell phones were increasing in price," said Mohamed, who is currently pursuing a business degree at the College of Staten Island.

"My first repair was actually on my own phone. I had cracked the screen on my iPhone and when I went to my cell phone carrier to get it replaced they told me to replace the phone through my insurance was more than the phone was worth, so I decided to fix it myself," he added.

This was the catalyst for launching the Meiers Corners-based Fast Fix Wireless Inc., which offers cell phone/tablet repair, pre-paid smartphone services and cell phone and tablet accessories, in April.

STARTING YOUNG

"I saw the benefits of owning your own business through my father, who owned a store in Brooklyn for 22 years," he said.

"The way I feel is you're better to start a business when you're young and have the time you need to put into the business. It's now or never. The longer you wait, the harder and more unlikely it is that you will do what you want," said Mohamed.

CARVING OUT A NICHE

Since we now live in a high-tech society, Mohamed believes his business is one that will always be in demand.

Adam Mohamed, owner
Fast Fix Wireless Inc.
1970 Victory Blvd.,
Meiers Corners

Age: 21
Website:
fastfixwirelessinc.com

Home community:
Annadale
"Cell phones are used everyday by mostly everyone -- young and old. If your phone breaks and you are not properly covered for it, purchasing a new phone will cost a lot more than it would to get it repaired. And the prices that we give our customers come out to be even less than going through insurance," he said.

Working more than 16 hours per day and taking college classes at the same time, Mohamed is determined to succeed in his first business venture.

"In this business it takes patience and hard work to be successful. Like any business, it takes time for it to grow, and get it to the place where I know it has the potential to be," said Mohamed.

"By doing this I feel I'm giving inspiration to other young business entrepreneurs who can realize if you want to do something you can, as long as you put your mind to it," he added.

And Mohamed has learned from a young age that good customer service is integral to running a successful business.

"Seeing my customers leaving happy with service my business provided them is something that makes me feel great. But what I love most about my job is that it's something I wanted to do, and I made it happen," he said.
The 10 Richest People of All Time

A comparison of wealth across history

Who had more money, John D. Rockefeller or Genghis Khan? It's a simple question with a very difficult answer.

This ranking of the richest people of all time is based on hours of interviews with academic economists and historians. To read more about how the order was determined despite the difficulty of comparing wealth across a wide range of time periods and economic systems, read this.

But for now, suffice to say that the following is a rigorous but highly debatable attempt to list the wealthiest historical figures in order of their economic influence.

10. Genghis Khan

Lived: 1162-1227

Country: Mongolian Empire

Wealth: Lots of land, not much else

Genghis Khan is undoubtedly one of the most successful military leaders of all time. As leader of the Mongol Empire, which at its height stretched from China to Europe, he controlled the largest contiguous empire in history. However, despite his great power, scholars say Genghis never hoarded his wealth. On the contrary, the Khan’s generous

“One of the basis of his success is sharing the spoils with commanders,” says Morris Rossabi, a distinguished professor at Queens College.

Jack Weatherford, author of Genghis Khan and the Maki explains that Mongol soldiers, unlike many pre-modern armies, taking personal loot. After an area was conquered, every official clerks and then later distributed amongst the mill

Genghis still received a share of the spoils, but that hard:

palace for himself or family, no temple, no tomb, and not Weatherford. “He was born in a wool ger [yurt] and he was wrapped in felt, like any common person, and then b

Even so, it's hard not to include Stalin on a list of the most in history. His wealth might be uncertain, but there's no e economic influence is unrivaled in recent history.
America's Top Colleges Ranking 2015

The No. 1 FORBES Top College 2015 is Pomona College, followed by Williams College and Stanford University. The highest ranking public school is the University of California, Berkeley.

The nation's 18 million undergrad students heading off for the next school year will pay an estimated total $18,943 on public college tuition and fees ($42,419 for private schools). An average newly minted grad with student loan debt will have to pay back some $35,000; overall national student debt has escalated to an all-time high of $1.2 trillion.

Top 25 Colleges
While the cost of U.S. higher education escalates, there's a genuine silver lining in play. A growing number of colleges and universities are now focusing on student-consumer value over marketing prestige, making this a new age of return-on-investment education. This pivot is the result of intense public scrutiny on the substantial cost of a degree vs. long tail worth — the very heart of FORBES definitive Top Colleges ranking, now in its eighth year. (View full methodology here [link].)

This year's No. 1 FORBES Top College is Pomona College [link], followed by Williams College [link] and Stanford University [link]. The first Ivy League school to show, Princeton University [link], comes in at No. 4, followed by Yale University [link] (No. 5), Harvard University [link] (No. 6) and Brown University [link] (No. 8). Rounding out the 10 finest schools in America are Swarthmore College [link] (No. 7), Amherst College [link] and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [link].

Click here for our full list of America's Top Colleges [link]

Read: America's Most Entrepreneurial Colleges 2015 [link]

The three highest ranking public schools are University of California, Berkeley [link] (No. 35), University of Virginia [link] (No. 36), and the College of William & Mary [link] (No. 39). Three of the U.S. Service Academies earn highest medals as some of the nation's leading higher education institutions: the U.S. Military Academy [link] at West Point comes in at No. 11, followed by U.S. Naval Academy [link] (No. 27) and U.S. Air Force Academy [link].
The number of large, brainy, research-oriented universities closely associated with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) have a slight edge at the peak of the rankings over small, student-centric, liberal arts colleges, although the Gold and Silver medals go to the latter. Wellesley College (http://www.forbes.com/colleges/wellesley-college/) (No. 26) was ranked the best all-women’s college.

**Recipe for a Top College**

*Satisfied students:* Almost no one at the top schools transfers out. Ninety-nine percent of Stanford and Yale students opt to stay put, and the lowest retention rates for a top college is Swarthmore at 96% and Wesleyan University (http://www.forbes.com/colleges/wesleyan-university/) (No. 17) at 95%. These same schools rate high on student satisfaction with professors and overall campus experience.
NY, City College

Profile

City College of New York, created in 1847, is considered the flagship campus of the City University of New York system. Its 35-acre campus overlooks Harlem in Upper Manhattan. Although highly reputed for its STEM education, undergraduates can select from majors as varied as sonic arts, bilingual childhood education and business. Ten City College alumni are Nobel laureates, which is the most from any public college in the country. More »

Financial

Population: 15,331
Undergraduate Population: 12,501
Student-Faculty Ratio: 11
Annual Cost: $34,087
Tuition: $6,389
State Tuition: $13,199
Financial Aid: 79%
Grant Aid Received: $6,500
Admitted: 34%
Acceptance Range: 990-1230

Forbes Lists

#177 Overall
#78 In the Northeast
How to Compare Fortunes Across History

A simple question with a very difficult answer

Comparing the wealth of our contemporaries is hard enough. When Forbes ranks its annual 500 richest people, the publication not only has to sift through mountains of data, it also must decide what even qualifies as wealth. For example, should people who draw their money from the country they rule, such as Vladimir Putin, be included? (Forbes says no).

When comparing wealth across history, however, we run into even more challenges. How does one contrast riches in a pre-industrial age with the wealthy of today? It’s not just a matter of adjusting for inflation; coinage and currency is a relatively recent invention. Much of pre-modern wealth was held in stuff, and commodity prices have drastically fluctuated across history as the total amount of resource wealth has grown.

Another issue is that wealth is a relative measure that doesn’t equate very well to standard of living, at least across centuries. King Louis IV was one of the richest men of his day, but his money could not fix his rotting teeth. Meanwhile, in modern times, air travel and electric toothbrushes are available to hundreds of millions of people.

One way to account for the value of goods that did not exist in the past is to measure wealth through the amount of energy a person can command. This method resembles the labor theory of value, made famous by Marx and Adam Smith, which states that the worth of an item is the total amount of labor that goes into its creation.

If we expand the definition of labor to include non-manual power, like fuel, we can see how the average person became better off as technology improved.
"The big difference between the last couple of hundred years and all earlier times is the immense amount of energy that the industrial revolution unleashed," says Ian Morris, a professor history at Stanford University. "Every time you flick on a light switch, it's as if half a dozen slaves leap into action, all thanks to coal and oil powering our electricity plants."

In his book, The Measure of Civilization, Morris calculates the average hunter-gatherer captured between 5,000 and 10,000 kilocalories of energy per day from the environment. With the invention of agriculture, that number moved up around 10,000 kcal per day, and in the time of the Roman Empire (and once again in 12th-century Song dynasty China) the average kcal per day jumped to 50,000.

By comparison, the average American burns through something like 250,000 kcal per day; nearly eight times as much as Romans and 23 times that of our ancient agricultural ancestors. "Basically, we're all rich," says Morris. "Which is why our lives are so different from those of prehistoric and ancient peoples."

In that respect at least, the typical college student might be richer than the greatest Roman emperors, and the wealthiest individuals in history will nearly always be modern figures who can benefit from technological advances.

But when we speak of wealth, we generally don't mean whether someone can buy a computer or a horse-drawn carriage. Most of the time, we're using money as a substitute for economic power. And power is both relative and sensitive to time and place. The typical American may have access to more resources than a Roman emperor, but none have the same kind of economic influence that can reshape societies.

Luckily, there is a method of calculating wealth that can measure the influence of one's money while accounting for changes in value over time. MeasuringWorth, a website run by a group of economics and history professors dedicated to comparing wealth throughout history, recommends measuring economic power by taking an individual's wealth and comparing it to the total economic production in the economy—its GDP, in other words.

That's the metric I've chosen to use when compiling this rich list, but it's still not perfect. No scholarly list of wealth historical figures exists—the closest might be The Richest of the Rich, by Philip Beresford and William D. Rubinstein, which compiles the 150 wealthiest people in Britain since 1066—leaving us to peruse the history books for rich list "nominees."

But once we picked an eligible group, we run into the same problem as Forbes: How do you separate the wealth of the monarch from the wealth of the state? In this list, with the generous help of several historians, I've done my best to select individuals with large private wealth, or monarchs in nations where wealth was especially concentrated amongst the ruling class.
Another issue: Wealth and GDP data get increasingly scarce the farther you go back in time. That's a big problem because ancient leaders were much more proficient at extracting wealth from their society than our modern elites, making them far more powerful economically.

Branko Milanovic, a CUNY economics professor specializing in inequality, estimates that pre-modern societies dating from the Roman Empire to British India in 1947, were able to extract nearly 75% of the maximum amount of wealth that could be taken before their people would slip below subsistence levels. Modern nations, measured from 1998 through 2002, extracted a comparatively small 43% of that limit. For this reason, the most accurate list of the richest people to ever live (based on economic power) would likely include almost exclusively pre-modern rulers.

A final difficulty is measuring economic power between countries with different levels of economic output because one person might have a higher share of wealth in a less economically powerful nation. A truly correct international comparison would require knowing each person's wealth as a percentage of global GDP, and old global economic data is even harder to come by.

But perhaps the governing rule of lists like these is to not let the perfect become the enemy of good, or at least the enemy of fun.

My ranking, based on hours of interviews with various economists and historians, does its best to order some of the wealthiest historical figures in order of their economic influence, and gives a rough estimate of their monetary wealth when possible. Most importantly, it tried to put their riches in context.
Two Borough of Manhattan Community College students were selected to participate in the 2015 Accounting Scholars Development Program (ASDP) held July 12 through July 18 at Howard University School of Business in Washington D.C.

The Accounting Scholars Development Program, presented by the School of Accountancy at the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver, is designed for community college students in the African American, Latino and Native American communities who are interested in accounting.

Students from across the nation applied for the program, but only 18 were selected to attend. The two BMCC students were accounting majors Chaim Aaron Brandon Walters and Aderogba A. Salami.

"The students heard presentations and developed career relationships with professionals in nearly every area of accounting," said Professor Sidney Askew, who also attended the program.

Askew said that in addition to traditional accounting areas such as taxation and auditing, the students learned about career opportunities in forensic accounting, government accounting and other specialties.

They also looked at comprehensive case studies, visited accounting firms and participated in mock interviews and mock job interviews.

Walters attend Brooklyn College (CUNY) this fall and Salami plans to attend Baruch College (CUNY). Both students plan to obtain Certified Public Accountant licenses.
An Over-Achiever's Advice: Not So Fast

Ocean Road Advisors' Anthony Meyer urges students to take their time

By MELANIE GRAYCE WEST
July 28, 2015 9:17 p.m. ET

Anthony E. Meyer sped through college, graduating from Harvard Business School with an M.B.A. at the age of 22. Now, he wants to encourage students of the Macaulay Honors College at the City University of New York to slow down.

Mr. Meyer, the 54-year-old head of New York-based Ocean Road Advisors, an investment-management company, recently gave $1 million to support Macaulay's Opportunities Fund. The gift will, in part, cover costs for students who study abroad or seek other similar academic fellowships that aim to broaden an undergraduate education.

"I rushed through my schooling and then realized, 'What was the rush?'" he said. "Every chance I've had to take a sabbatical, I've done it."

Macaulay was launched in 2001 as a way to provide a competitive program to
academically gifted high-school graduates. Some 2,000 students are part of Macaulay, pursuing a customized course of study within eight of CUNY’s senior colleges.

Many Macaulay students are the first in their family to attend college. Those who graduate from New York state high schools receive a full-tuition scholarship, and all students get a laptop computer and access to a $7,500 grant from the Opportunities Fund.

Mr. Meyer said he is at the stage in his life where philanthropy is taking a larger role. Previously, he said, he had been “writing much smaller checks.” Now he has decided to spend more time and resources supporting entrepreneurial do-good social ventures, he said. The gift to Macaulay is his first major capital pledge, and from a financial standpoint, he said, “I’ve sort of gotten comfortable.”

Mr. Meyer said he has been involved with Macaulay for about seven years and that the organization is now past its startup phase, with a record of success and ready for a larger presence among New York philanthropists who want to invest in the city’s youth in what he calls an “early stage” entrepreneurial way.

Mr. Meyer said the goal, as the college gets to its 15th year, is to take it to a higher profile and attract more applicants and philanthropists who, for example, are the kind that support charter schools.

“Macaulay is sort of the uber-charter school at the college level,” he said.

Write to Melanie Grayce West at melanie.west@wsj.com
Caribbean Life

July 30, 2015 / Caribbean / New York local / Brooklyn

Caricam plays ‘Musical Instruments’

By Nelson A. King

As the Brooklyn-based Caricam Contumes plays “Musical Instruments” this Labor Day, band leader Trinidadian Lisa Nurse says she’s looking forward to making a “running impression” on the children, spectators and especially the judges.

“I always pick a theme that the children can identify with,” said Nurse, who has been participating in mas-making for the past 28 years, in New York, in a Caribbean Life interview. “They can easily tell anyone, including their teachers, full details about their summer presentation.”

Nurse, who is also Caricam Contumes’s designer and producer, said the band comprises five sections: “Dancers,” “ Singers,” “Tambourine,” “Guitar” and “Music Sheet.”

She said while the girls will play in any section, comprising 20 masqueraders in each, the boys will play in Guitar, Singers and Music Sheet.

There are also eight “huge individuals,” including the King and Queen, said Nurse, adding that the band comprises “every nationality.”

“Everyone is welcomed,” she said, disclosing that, every year, since 2006, Caricam Costumes’s Children’s band has won a prize at the West Indian American Day Carnival Association’s (WIADCA) Junior Carnival at the Brooklyn Museum.

“The children will be satisfied, as they are every year, because we treat them to refreshments, eats, water, juice, whistles, balloons and toys to keep them occupied along the route,” said Nurse, who is also an English professor at Medgar Evers and LaGuardia Community Colleges, of City University of New York (CUNY).

She said a team of parents, volunteers, supporters, members and mas-makers are working to produce Caricam Costumes’s “biggest presentation” this year. Nurse said some costumes are created by children “to start them as young designers,” with some early masqueraders returning to assist, such as Safiya Black, T.J., and Veneca Little, and mas-designers, such as Michael Warner.

This year, Caricam Contumes is supported by Bennita Clarke and the four-year-old United Super Soccer League (USSL).

Founded by Leben McGregor, USSL, hosted the first ever Trinidad and Tobago Family Day on July 12, 2015, said Nurse, who, for the past five years, has also assisted WIADCA in its Children Costume Design Workshop in which children are encouraged to become young costume designers.


Costumes were also donated to children in Guyana in 2012. In 2014, costumes were given to children in that Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country, with assistance from Lara Payne and Michael Thorne, Nurse said.

She said Caricam Costumes has “the best DJ,” DJ Toto, who has been the band’s DJ for the past four years and WIADCA’s “resident DJ” for the children’s parade for years. Nurse said.

Caricam Costumes is located at 547 Lincoln Place, between Franklin and Classon avenues in Brooklyn.

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Harlem Community Responds to New School Of Medicine at CCNY

Community leaders have hailed the establishment of the first public medical school in Harlem by The City College of New York in partnership with St. Barnabas Hospital. The CUNY School of Medicine at City College will accept its first intake in fall 2016.

Lloyd A. Williams, president and CEO of the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce (GHCC) called the City College development "historic."

"In light of all the health issues that dominate in the upper Manhattan area, the fact that a medical school will open at the City College of New York is historic and of dramatic importance to the health and well-being of upper Manhattan in particular and the entire New York City in general," he said.

Williams commended City College as a leading public institution in upper Manhattan that has worked closely with the GHCC on health initiatives. "This includes the Percy Sutton 5K run which promotes exercise and well-being in the community," he added in reference to the annual Harlem Week event scheduled for August 22 this year.

The Reverend Calvin O. Butts III, pastor of the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, applauds City College President Lisa S. Coore for what he termed "this monumental achievement."

Noting that the medical school was an expansion of CCNY's Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education established in 1973, Butts said: "I was here when Sophie Davis started, I saw the program charged to increase accessibility to careers in medicine for underrepresented groups and to train primary care health care professionals to serve in medically underserved communities."

His church, designated a New York City Landmark in 1999, became a destination for some Sophie Davis students.

Butts hoped that the new medical school would be sensitive to the changing racial and ethnic demographics in both the city and Harlem.

Ydallis Rodriguez, Councilmember for District 10 and a 1993 City College alumnus, also hailed the new development as an "historic achievement by his alma mater."

"With the establishment of this school not only does CCNY expand its footprint but also creates a new path forward for communities of color to enter the medical field which has sometimes been all too exclusive. As an alumnus, I'm especially proud of my alma mater for this historic achievement," said Rodriguez.

In nearby Washington Heights, Dr. Bumedette Drysdale, principal of the City College Academy of the Arts, a CUNY Early College High School, said the medical school is long overdue.

"It's a wonderful idea and will make medical school accessible to students who think they can't afford or aspire to study medicine because schools are far away. Now we have a medical school in our community and this is amazing," said Drysdale.

Operating on the City College campus in Harlem with its clinical campus at St. Barnabas Hospital, the new school is the only medical school in the CUNY system.

(CUNYNowswire)