City Tech holds topping off ceremony for $400M complex

By Rob Abruzzese
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

The New York City College of Technology's new $400 million academic complex going up in Downtown Brooklyn reached a major milestone on Monday when the school held a "topping-off" ceremony to mark that the final steel beam has been placed upon the structure.

"This whole thing has been inspirational for us because the college has been waiting for this building for a long time," said City Tech's President Dr. Russell K. Hotzler. "We're more than 10 years into the project. It took us many years to get the funding together so we're very excited to see this happen.

City Tech held a topping off ceremony on Monday for its $400 million academic complex that is going up at the corner of Jay and Tillary streets in Downtown Brooklyn. The facility is expected to be finished in time for the fall 2017 semester. Eagle photos by Rob Abruzzese.

This is the most important thing to ever happen in the history of the school."

The final beam, which was painted white and signed by all officials on hand as well as the site's construction workers, did not actually go atop the building during the ceremony. It is expected to go up within the next few days as there are still a few more beams to be put in place. Nonetheless, it was a celebratory event for everyone involved.

Standing at one of the busiest intersections in Brooklyn (the corner of Jay and Tillary streets) the project cost a little more than $400 million, according to Hotzler. Joseph Mizzi, president of Schiame Construction, said it has taken an average of 100 workers nine months to remove 50,000-cubic-yards of earth from 35-feet below the ground to place more than 4,500 pieces of steel that weighed at least 4,600 tons to get to this point.

"I think this is going to open City Tech to the next level which is an important institution for Downtown Brooklyn," Mizzi said. "I think it's significant and a beautifully designed building."

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THE DAILY BRIEF
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OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS
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"I think this is going to open City Tech to the next level which is an important institution for Downtown Brooklyn," Mizzi said. "I think it's significant and a beautifully designed building."
City Tech was initially built in 1946 as a place for soldiers returning from World War II to enroll in vocational classes. It has had five different official names but it is not expected to change again. In fact, the college expects this building to have a major impact on its future. The new building will have a theater as well as a bevy of classes including biology, chemistry and clinical health programs in medical imaging, nursing, dentistry, vision care and other human services.

Construction is expected to be finished by spring 2017 so the school can begin to occupy the building in the summer and be ready for its first full semester in the fall. So far everything is on schedule, according to Hotzler.

"There are unique moments that help define an institution and I think today is added to that list," Hotzler said. "Those moments define where we are going and looking around this morning gives you a clear indication of where this school is going."
Brewer announces $30 million in Manhattan capital grant awards for 2015

June 24, 2015
by RealEstateRama

Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer today announced her office’s Fiscal Year 2016 capital grant awardees. The grants will be included in the final Fiscal Year 2016 city budget, whose adoption by the City Council is expected later this month.

BP will fund investments in 92 schools, 9 CUNY and SUNY campuses, 16 public parks, and more

NEW YORK – June 24, 2015 – (RealEstateRama) — Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer today announced her office’s Fiscal Year 2016 capital grant awardees. The grants will be included in the final Fiscal Year 2016 city budget, whose adoption by the City Council is expected later this month.

“Capital grants give us the opportunity to both fix nagging problems and invest in our neighborhoods’ future, and we’ve worked hard to evaluate every proposal and give New Yorkers the most bang for their buck,” said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer. “Whether we’re fixing the roof at a branch library, renovating a playground, or building out a new computer lab at a local school, these capital grants are going to strengthen our communities and improve people’s lives.”

Each year, as part of the city’s budget process, the five borough presidents are mandated by the City Charter to allot a portion of the city’s capital budget for the purchase or improvement of fixed assets such as buildings or other infrastructure. Each borough president then allocates that funding to City agencies, cultural institutions, or nonprofit organizations according to each office’s own process and priorities.

Funding for Manhattan public schools

Earlier this week, Brewer announced her office’s capital budget allocations for advancing the use of technology in Manhattan’s public schools. Overall, Brewer funded a range of tech projects at 57 public schools, including upgrades and renovations for computer and media labs, the purchase of “Smartboard” instructional tools, and funding for general equipment upgrades. Each of these 57 schools received at least $100,000 in funding, enabling them to pursue major purchases and upgrades with significant impacts on students’ learning opportunities.

In addition to these tech projects, Brewer also funded auditorium upgrades at the Columbus Secondary School for Math, Science and Engineering, the Jackie Robinson Educational Complex, Park East High School, P.S. 189, P.S. 83, Stuyvesant High School, Talent Unlimited High School, the Eagle Academy for Young Men of Harlem, Frederick Douglass Academy I, Urban Assembly Gateway School for Technology, and West Prep Academy.

Brewer funded an array of other infrastructure upgrades at P.S. 347 American Sign Language and English Secondary School, the A. Philip Randolph Campus High School, Baruch College High School, the Beac Fuller Rodgers International School, I.S. 528, C.S. 154, Food and Finance High School, the Harriet Tubman Learning Center, the Hamilton Heights School, the High School of Fashion Industries, the I.S. 70 Campus for NYC Lab High School, NYC Lab Middle School, the Museum School, LaGuardia High School, M.S. 54, the NYC iSchool, P.S. 130, P.S. 178, PS 187, PS 198, PS 199, PS 6, PS 84, the Special Music School, the Children’s Workshop, the Neighborhood School, the Roosevelt Island School, and the Harbor School.

Funding for Manhattan parks

Brewer also funded sixteen Parks projects, including renovation of the Red Panda exhibit at the Central Park Zoo. Other Parks projects include:

- Multiple playground and athletic field renovations, including: renovations to create an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant playground at the current
Bloomington Playground site (Morningside); East River Park soccer field and track renovations (East Village / Lower East Side); Jacob K. Javits Playground redesign and renovations (Inwood); Samuel Bennerson Playground renovations (Upper West Side).
- Pathway construction at Randall's Island Park
- Lighting improvements for the FDR Four Freedoms Park (Roosevelt Island)

**Funding for Manhattan public libraries**
Capital funds were included for five public libraries throughout Manhattan, including: the 125th Street Library Branch (East Harlem), the Bloomington Library Branch (Upper West Side / Manhattan Valley), Jefferson Market Library (West Village), Roosevelt Island Library (Roosevelt Island), and the Seward Park Library Branch (Lower East Side).

**Funding for CUNY and SUNY campus improvements**
Investments were also made at local CUNY and SUNY campuses, including lighting upgrades at Borough of Manhattan Community College and a range of tech improvements at Barnard College, the CUNY Graduate Center, CUNY in the Heights, Hunter College, Fashion Institute of Technology, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and the City College of New York.

**Support for Manhattan cultural institutions**
Forty-two different cultural institutions across the borough also received support in Brewer's capital grant allocations, including: Aaron Davis Hall, the American Museum of Natural History, the Americas Society, Amigos del Museo del Barrio, the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, City Center of Music and Drama, Clemente Soto Velez Cultural & Educational Center, Downtown Art Co., East Harlem Arts and Education LDC, Elaine Kaufman Cultural Center, Fountain House, Harlem School of the Arts, Henry Street Settlement, the Hispanic Society of America, Home for Contemporary Theatre and Art, Hospital Audiences, Irish Repertory Theatre, Jazz at Lincoln Center, La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Lower East Side Tenement Museum, Mabou Mines Inc, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Metropolitan Opera Guild, Museum of Jewish Heritage, New 42nd Street Studios, New-York Historical Society, Nuyorican Poets Café, Performance Space 122 Inc., Playwrights Horizons, Publicolor, Roundabout Theatre Company, Second Stage Theatre, Seventh Regiment Armory Conservancy, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Studio in a School Association, Studio Museum in Harlem, the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, Theater for the New City, Vivian Beaumont Theater, WNET, and the Young People's Chorus.

*To view or download the full list of capital grant recipients and projects, click here (PDF).*

Contact:
Andrew Goldston | agoldston (at) manhattnbnp.nyc | 917.960.1187
Here's Kalief Browder's Heartbreaking Research Paper On Solitary Confinement

Bronx Community College was proud of Kalief Browder.

At the end of the 2014-15 school year, the 22-year-old had an impressive 3.55 grade point average. He led study groups. He tutored other students. And on June 5 -- just one day before Browder died by suicide in his mother's Bronx home -- he volunteered at a graduation rehearsal for other students.

"He was so happy," Elizabeth Payamps, a Bronx Community College faculty member who worked closely with Browder, remembers of his last day at the school. "He was acting completely normal."

Years earlier, Browder had been robbed of an education. When he was just 16, he was arrested on a burglary charge that would ultimately be dismissed. While his high school classmates went to prom and graduation, Browder languished for three years in New York City's notorious Rikers Island jail.

There, he suffered appalling violence at the hands of guards and fellow inmates, and spent an accumulated and torturous two years in solitary confinement -- where the teen was locked alone in a tiny cell for 23 hours a day.

Browder reflected on the use of solitary confinement in the United States in a research paper for his community college English class this spring.

"Instead of solitary confinement rehabilitating inmates there is evidence of it actually causing severe mental problems for inmates and in the long run leaving the mental disorders for their families to deal with," Browder writes in the paper, a copy of which was obtained by The Huffington Post.

[SCROLL DOWN TO READ BROWDER'S FULL RESEARCH PAPER]

Browder, of course, knew firsthand the horrific mental health consequences of solitary confinement. After being released from Rikers, he struggled to adjust to the outside world. He suffered deep bouts of depression, became increasingly paranoid, spent time in a psychiatric hospital, and made multiple attempts to end his own life.

"Me, I can't take it anymore," Browder reportedly told his mother shortly before his death. According to his family, it was the demons Browder developed while in solitary confinement that would eventually lead to his suicide.
But in his paper, "A Closer Look At Solitary Confinement In The United States," which he turned in to his professor on May 11, Browder makes no mention of this personal anguish. Like any good academic, he keeps to the third person.

Citing a study from University of Toronto professor Brent Story, Browder's paper traces the history of solitary confinement in America to the early 19th century, when the Quaker church in Philadelphia implemented it as a means of rehabilitating inmates instead of punishing them.

The practice was meant, Browder writes, as a way for inmates to "reflect on the misbehaviors they conducted in the jail or prison and change their behavior."

Solitary confinement then spread throughout American prisons. "However," Browder adds, "many health defects were beginning to present themselves within inmates. According to Story, 'As early as the 1830s, reports had started to materialize about the various mental disorders isolated prisoners were exhibiting. These included hallucinations, dementia, and monomania.'"

"By the late 1850's," Browder continues, "solitary confinement began to be frowned upon because of the adverse mental health issues it continued to cause to inmates and by the early 1900's it was abolished."

Browder's attorney, Paul Prestia, read a copy of the research paper before going to Browder's funeral, at which he delivered the eulogy.

"I learned something from [the research paper] and I'm an expert of sorts on solitary confinement," Prestia told HuffPost.

"I don't believe there's any place for solitary in our society," he added. "It's inhumane and I wasn't aware of its history, and now I am, and I learned it from Kalief Browder, who was the face of [solitary confinement] in this city."

Browder's paper goes on to detail the aggressive resurgence of solitary confinement in the 1980s, and its overuse in the ensuing decades.

"Many inmates who go through these problems of being in solitary confinement are now stuck with mental health issues and some don't even have health insurance to even tend to their care," Browder writes.

He cites a 2013 article in the Law and Psychology Review, in which John Cockrell lists the physical effects of solitary confinement ("chest pains, weight loss, diarrhea, dizziness, and fainting") and its psychological effects ("decreased ability to concentrate, confusion, memory loss, visual as well as auditory hallucinations, paranoia, overt psychosis, violent fantasies, anxiety, depression in huge numbers, lethargy, and trouble sleeping").

And then, in a sentence that today carries an awful poignancy, Browder writes: "Attempts to commit suicide are not uncommon."

Prestia said he hopes New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio will read Browder's paper.

Since Browder's story gained national attention last year, de Blasio has implemented a series of major reforms to Rikers. Perhaps most notably, he and Department of Correction Commissioner Joseph Ponte ended the use of solitary confinement for 16- and 17-year-old inmates.

And in April, the mayor announced "Justice Reboot," a program to clear backlogs in the city's courts in hopes of preventing people from staying on Rikers for long periods of time without a trial.

"I'd like the mayor to continue the reforms, continue them in the direction he's made them," Prestia said. "Kalief was the impetus behind the move to abolish solitary for juveniles, but the city could go further, consider abolishing it for anyone under 21, and maybe go beyond that."

Although Browder became a national symbol of the problems with solitary confinement, Payamps, the Bronx Community College faculty member, said Browder didn't want to be known for his time at Rikers while on campus.

Once, when other students were watching Browder's appearance on the television program "The View," he "politely asked them to turn it off," Payamps said.

"He kept himself anonymous," she added.

Recently, Payamps met with Browder's mother, Venida, and showed her photos of her son's happy times on campus. Payamps also told her that she is currently lobbying the City University of New York -- which operates Bronx Community College -- to bestow her son with a posthumous associate's degree in business. Upon hearing this, Venida broke down in tears.
"I think Kalief would've graduated with honors had he continued," Payamps said. "He was a really good student."

For his paper on solitary confinement, she added, Browder received an "A."

Need help? In the U.S., call 1-800-273-8255 for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

"A Closer Look at Solitary Confinement in the United States" by Kalief Browder by Christopher Mathias
Boston medical device company eyes European market with France expansion

Jun 23, 2015, 2:08pm EDT

Jessica Bartlett
Boston Business Journal

As medical device company PathMaker Neurosystems Inc. begins exploring clinical trials in the U.S., it has unveiled expansion plans into France that will facilitate the company's move into the European market.

The Boston-based company, founded in 2014, is hoping to commercialize technology that uses non-invasive electrical pulses to address neurological motor disabilities, such as paralysis, muscle weakness and muscle tone disorders.

While the company is moving forward with clinical trials in the U.S., it hopes to move forward with clinical trials in France in the next year with the establishment of operations at the bioincubator at the Brain and Spine Institute at the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris.

"For us, if you're a medical device company, you have to be thinking about not only the U.S., but how you're going to obtain European approval and get access to the European market," said Dr. Nader Yaghoobi, president and CEO of PathMaker, in an interview. "France has been proactive and the relationship...has been growing in the last few years."

Yaghoobi added that receiving CE Mark approval – the regulatory approval required for
commercialization in Europe – is easier than obtaining Food and Drug Administration approval in the U.S.

“It’s a matter of being able to be on the ground there, move forward with our regulatory strategy with an eye to getting market approval,” Yaghoobi said.

The technology was developed by and licensed from City University of New York. While doctors have been using electricity to address neuromotor disorders for some time, Yaghoobi said his company’s technology is novel in that the electrical pulses are sent through the body without the need for surgery or other invasive techniques.

A weak direct current is applied to the spinal chord by devices placed on a person’s back and stomach, and is able to influence the signals in the spinal chord that go from the brain to the body’s muscles.

The market for the device is in the billions, Yaghoobi said, considering the 12 million patients in the U.S. and Europe have a muscle condition known as hypertonia, and the 21 million patients in the U.S. with muscle weakness and paralysis.

“There are huge numbers (of patients) and inadequate treatments,” Yaghoobi said.

The company, which has five employees, is privately funded. Yaghoobi said it is working on additional financing rounds.

Want Boston Health Care news in your inbox? Sign up for our free email newsletters.
BOSTON, June 23 (UPI) -- Undocumented immigrants paid $35.1 billion more into Medicare than they withdrew, extending the program's viability a year longer than predicted had they not paid into it at all.

Researchers discovered that between 2000 and 2011, undocumented immigrants contributed between $2.2 billion and $3.8 billion more than they withdrew from the
Medicare Trust Fund each year. That created a total surplus of $35.1 billion over the 11-year span.

Had this surplus not been added to the trust fund, it would become insolvent by 2029, one year earlier than analysts currently predict.

"For years I have seen my unauthorized immigrant patients be blamed for driving up health care costs," lead author Dr. Leah Zallman, a faculty member at Harvard Medical School, researcher at the Institute for Community Health and primary care physician at Cambridge Health Alliance, told Physicians for a National Health Program. "Yet few acknowledge their contributions. Our study demonstrates that in one large sector of the U.S. health care economy, unauthorized immigrants actually subsidize the care of other Americans."

The study also found that if 10 percent of undocumented immigrants were authorized each year for the next seven years, the surplus created by undocumented immigrants would total $45.7 billion.

It's likely the age of most undocumented immigrants factor into why there is a projected surplus. A demographics report released by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2012 found that 5 percent of undocumented workers are 55 years or older. The age at which a person becomes eligible for Medicare is 65.

In comparison, the 2010 U.S. Census found that 15.1 percent of the total U.S. population is 65 years or older. Even should all of the undocumented immigrants in the United States be legalized, there's a smaller percentage of them eligible to receive Medicare based solely on age than the overall population.

The study concluded that should policies be put in place to halt the influx of undocumented immigrants to the United States, the Medicare Trust Fund's depletion rate would increase.

"The numbers contradict the myth that unauthorized immigrants are a drain on the health system. Reducing immigration would worsen Medicare's financial woes," senior author Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, professor of public health at City University of New York and lecturer in medicine at Harvard, told PNHP.

In November, U.S. President Barack Obama issued an executive order that would grant temporary legal status — including access to Medicare — to 5 million undocumented immigrants. Should the program go into effect — it is currently tied up by a lawsuit from
states opposing it – those who have been granted legal status and pay into Medicare would be eligible to receive benefits from trust fund.

Speaking to Bloomberg three days after Obama’s immigration announcement, Republican Presidential hopeful Ben Carson said undocumented immigrants should not have access to “free” education and medical care until they are full citizens.

“You have to reverse the polarity of the magnet that is attracting people here,” he said. “All the goodies, you just turn those off. Then, you seal the border.”

The study, conducted by researchers from Harvard Medical School, the Institute for Community Health and the City University of New York School of Public Health at Hunter College, was published online Thursday by the Journal of General Internal Medicine.

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Certificate Programs Offer Opportunity for At-Risk Youth

by Robert Cherry, Jun 24, 2015

Brooklyn Army Terminal (photo: @NYCEDC)

Today, there are many problems facing disadvantaged New Yorkers but one of the most pressing is the large share of youth who are not transitioning well. This is most apparent with black boys who experience a disproportionate share (http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/resources/projects/center-for-civil-rights-remedies/school-to-prison-folder/federal-reports/out-of-school-and-off-track-the-overuse-of-suspensions-in-american-middle-and-high-schools/Exec_Sum_OutofSchool_OffTrack_UCLA.pdf) of suspensions and have low high school graduation rates (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/19/black-male-hs-graduation_n_1896490.html). Indeed, in New York City, only 28 percent of black males complete (http://magazine.good.is/articles/is-public-education-failing-black-male-students) high school on time. This weak school progress, however, is not limited to black boys and is so pervasive that New York City has initiated a number of alternative high schools attended by youth who are significant credits behind and often older than eighteen years of age. It is reflected in the almost 200,000 youths, 17 to 24 years old, who are neither in school nor in paid employment.

What can be done? City school chancellor Carmen Farina has instituted (http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2015/02/8562324/city-unveils-long-awaited-school-discipline-reforms) policy changes to dramatically reduce the number
of school suspensions. As I wrote (http://www.gothamgazette.com/index.php/opinions/5494-we-cant-ignore-family-roots-of-school-behavioral-problems-cherry) earlier this year, policies that reduce suspensions will not be very effective if they ignore an important source of anti-social behavior: often chaotic and sometimes abusive home environments. In another initiative, Farina announced (http://queenscourier.com/tag/carmen-farina/) that General Electric Corporation will provide funding to support Career and Technical Education (CTE) pilot programs at ten schools. CTE programs link high school coursework to community college occupational programs.

While CTE programs can be effective, certificate programs can be very beneficial for a large share of the most at-risk students. Certificates are recognition of completion of a course of study based on a specific field. They differ from industry-based certifications and licenses which typically involve passing an examination to prove a specific competency or completing an apprenticeship. By contrast, certificate programs take place entirely in the classroom.

A comprehensive report (https://cew.georgetown.edu/report/certificates/) began, "In America, the postsecondary certificate has become a cost-effective tool for increasing postsecondary education attainment and gainful employment.” The survey involved pointed to studies that found certificates of at least one year provided a wage premium identical to Associate's degrees—almost 40 percent for women and around 20 percent for men.

While the average certificate of less than one year has more limited value, this is not true in all cases. For example, police and protective services certificates are predominantly short-term and earned by men, but exceed the average 27 percent wage premium for male certificate holders. Certificates in business and office management are predominantly short-term and earned by women, but exceed the earnings of the median female certificate holder.

Nationally, public colleges award half of all certificates. However, in large cities where many at-risk students reside, public community colleges award only one-third of certificates; less than five percent in Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. The extremes go from New York City, where community colleges award only 1.5 percent of certificates, to Chicago and Detroit, where two-thirds are awarded by the community colleges.
This evidence indicates that the CUNY system is an outlier and is ill-serving adolescents who are most at risk. CUNY’s neglect leaves many with no choice but to seek certificate programs in the for-profit sector. These schools have been demonized for their high failure rates and level of indebtedness many of their students experience. Yet they do have strengths that other institutions lack. The education sociologist James Rosenbaum suggests (http://hechingerreport.org/students-returning-profit-colleges/) "that many for-profits have developed good counseling departments that help student not only with their academic goals, but also with their economic and social problems...They put resources into counselors and they’re much better at retaining students than community colleges." A recent New York City study (http://cityjournal.org/2015/25_2_for-profit-colleges.html) contends that the best for-profit schools offer real opportunity.

At-risk students too often must navigate the for-profit world after leaving school and many will make uninformed selections of schools and/or programs. Certainly, if the CUNY system would dramatically expand its certificate offerings this problem could be ameliorated. In addition, if high schools form partnerships with best-practice for-profits, at-risk students can be channeled into the best schools and the most appropriate programs. Given how valuable these links would be for the for-profits, high schools could negotiate very favorable conditions, enabling students to avoid high debt burdens while gaining valuable occupational skills.

For many educators, the ideal is academic learning – meaning a four-year college education – for all. Disadvantaged youth, however, may do better in the long run if we prioritize better and more immediate pathways into the labor market. At a time when 36 million American workers who attended college did not complete a degree, certificates are piecemeal, attainable, bite-size educational awards that can add substantially to postsecondary completion.

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Robert Cherry is Stern Professor at Brooklyn College and CUNY Graduate Center.
Education

Meet our 2015 journalism scholarship winners

by The Suffolk Times | 06/23/2015 12:00 PM

Julio Saccocia, Haylee Bergen, William Tondo and Carolyn Saito were among our 2015 journalism scholarship winners. (Credit: Robert O'Rourk)

The following seven local students were recipients of this year's journalism scholarships awarded by The Suffolk Times and Riverhead News-Review.

We’re pleased to honor such an accomplished group of young men and women.

Cary Saito
Greenport High School

Cary was a member of Greenport’s Student Council and the Southold Youth Advisory Council.

She also held the title of assistant editor and layout editor for Greenport High School’s student newspaper, The Quill.

She enjoys playing the bassoon and piano.

Cary plans on integrating medicine and journalism in college and majoring in neuroscience.

Kaylee Bergen
Mattituck High School

Kaylee participated in cross country and was a member of the track team.

She was a member of Mattituck High School's student council and was also part of the stage crew for school plays. She enjoys running and working out as well as learning about health and nutrition.

Kaylee plans on attending Fairfield University's nursing school to become a nurse practitioner.

Julia Saccamano
Southold High School

Julia was involved in many activities at Southold High School including the school newspaper, Interact and the National Honor Society. She also played the cello in a variety of local orchestras.

She is interested in upcycling, which is the process of converting old materials into something useful and beautiful.

Julia plans on studying chemical engineering at Macaulay Honors College at the City College of New York.

William Tondo
Southold High School

William was a member of the varsity football team, student government, the National Honor Society and the drama club.

He also participated in select choir and chorus.

He enjoys singing, photography and working out.

William plans on attending Bryant University in the fall with a major in marketing. He will also be part of Bryant University's Army ROTC Unit.
Topping Out at the New York City College of Technology (City Tech) New Academic Building

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June 23, 2015 6:31pm

Perkins Eastman Joins City Tech in Celebrating Construction Milestone

New York, NY (PRWEB) June 23, 2015

The New York office of top international design and architecture firm Perkins Eastman congratulates New York City College of Technology and The City University of New York on the June 22 topping out of its new academic building for allied health. Designed by Perkins Eastman, the approximately 360,000 sf, eight-story academic complex is being constructed on the site of the former Kittredge Building at the corner of Jay and Tillary streets in Downtown Brooklyn. The building is expected to be completed in 2017.

Bradford Perkins FAIA, Chairman of Perkins Eastman, says, “We have been very proud of the many projects we have completed that have contributed to the rebirth of downtown Brooklyn, but none has given us more professional pleasure than this major addition to the CUNY system.”

Located directly across from the school’s main campus at 300 Jay Street in downtown Brooklyn, the new academic building will significantly alter the face of City Tech—the largest public college of technology in New York State—creating a new campus gateway along Jay Street and enhancing the surrounding urban context. In its striking design—a cantilevered rectilinear academic volume suspended over the sculptural theater, gymnasium, and main lobby—the new academic building creates a new identity for the college. Featuring a high-performance glazing system and natural daylighting throughout to help reduce energy consumption, the project was designed to achieve LEED-Silver certification.

In addition to classrooms, the building will predominantly house laboratories, faculty offices, clinic, and support spaces to enhance the College’s health and science curriculum in radiology, dental hygiene (the oldest and largest in the New York metropolitan area), nursing, biological sciences, bio-research, chemistry, restorative dentistry, and vision care. Student life/recreation areas, a 1,000-seat auditorium, a 800-seat spectator gymnasium, and a Community Service Center will further enhance City Tech’s institutional strengths and community significance.

About Perkins Eastman

Perkins Eastman is among the top design and architecture firms in the world. With almost 900 employees in 14 locations around the globe, Perkins Eastman practices at every scale of the built environment. From niche buildings to complex projects that enrich whole communities, the firm’s portfolio reflects a dedication to progressive and inventive design that enhances the quality of the human experience. With projects in 46 states and more than 40 countries, the firm’s portfolio includes high-end residential, commercial, hotels, retail, office buildings, corporate interiors, schools, hospitals, museums, senior living, and public sector facilities. Perkins Eastman provides award-winning design through its offices in North America (New York, NY; Boston, MA; Charlotte, NC; Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; Pittsburgh, PA; San Francisco, CA; Stamford, CT; Toronto, Canada; and Washington, DC); South America (Guayaquil, Ecuador); North Africa and Middle East (Dubai, UAE); and Asia (Mumbai, India, and Shanghai, China).
Political club honors nine deserving fathers
By Nelson A. King

A major political club in New York on Sunday conveyed Father's Day honors on nine community and business advocates at a gala ceremony at Tropical Paradise Ballroom on Utica Avenue in Brooklyn.

The Brooklyn-based Progressive Democrats Political Association (PDPA) bestowed the honor on Dr. George Irish, the managing director of the School of Liberal Arts and Education at Brooklyn's Medgar Evers College; Barbadian-born Earl Phillips, secretary treasurer of the Transport Workers Union, Local 100, the largest transportation local union in the United States; and Haitian-born musician, singer, songwriter and civil rights activist Kinomors Divers, also known as King Kino.

The other honorees were: James Cortice, the pioneer of St. Vincent and the Grenadines' participation on the prestigious Penn Relays in Philadelphia; Pa. Franklin "Supad' Richards, president of the fast-rising Internet-based group, VincyCares; Jamaican entrepreneurs Oscar Palmer and Winston Williams; Tobagonian businessman Martin Baird; and Guyanesen-born businessman and newspaper publisher Zamal Sankar.

The event was also in keeping with PDPA's Caribbean American Heritage Month celebration.

"Today is a day to have them (honorees) smell the roses while their noses are still working," said U.S. Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke, a PDPA executive member, in jest, in addressing the ceremony.

"These gentlemen are very special," added Clarke, who represents the 9th Congressional District in Brooklyn and whose Jamaican-born mother, Dr. Una S.T. Clarke, a former New York City Councilmember, is PDPA's founder and president.

"Thank you for being the standard-bearers in our community," continued the younger Clarke, who presented the honorees with congressional citations.

New York State Assemblywoman Latrice Walter also presented State proclamations to the honorees.

Dr. Irish currently resides in the Bronx, where he serves as spiritual/pastoral elder of various ministries - Spiritual Awakening Ministries, Come World Ministries, Come Bible Institute, Zion Pentecostal Faith Center, Mount Calvary United C.O.G.I.C., Soul Harvest International Ministries in Long Island and Beulah Pilgrim Holiness Church in Boston.

Besides being dean at Medgar Evers College, Dr. Irish is the executive director of the Caribbean Research Center at the college.

He is a tenured full professor of Caribbean and Latin American Studies, president/CEO of Caribbean Diaspora Press Inc., and Caribbean-American Research Foundation Inc., and also chancellor Universidad Popular de Las Americas based in Panama.

A native-born Barbadian, Phillips migrated to the U.S. in 1987 and made Brooklyn his home. He is the proud father of two children - Tina and Alexander.

In 1993, he secured employment with the NYCT as a chassis maintainer, and 1994, after one year with NYCT, he decided to dissolve his auto repair shop and concentrate on his job with NYCT.

His activism and determination to protect the safety of all transit workers propelled him to a job with the union as a Field Safety Representative. In 2010, he teamed up with the current Local 100 President John Samuelson to form a start that among other things promised a more aggressive workplace safety agenda.

In 2011, Phillips filled the vacancy in the office of Local Secretary Treasurer; and, in 2013, the Local 100 membership elected him to a full three-year term in that office.

Lord Kinomors Divers, King Kino, a renowned Haitian star musician, singer, songwriter, humanitarian and civil rights activist, said he was "born to be a leader."

He began his successful career path at a very early age, singing gospel music in church.

He later progressed to playing musical instruments and popular music during his teens, but he never forgot the teachings and disciplines he received in the church.

In 1975, after residing in New York for five years, businessman Palmer visited his native Jamaica for a two-week vacation. While in Kingston, the capital, he wanted jerk pork, but, at that time, they only sold pot roasted pork and called it jerk pork.

He and some friends went to Boston in Portland, the home of jerk pork, and got some "real jerk pork."

During that time, the idea came to him that this would be a good business in Kingston. On returning to Kingston, he started to look for a place for a restaurant. He rented a store in the then new plaza, Kings Plaza.

Palmer then returned to New York and, two weeks later, he was back in Jamaica and opened Jerk City Restaurant in May 1975. That was the beginning of the commercialization of jerk, he said.

Sankar is an independent businessman, social entrepreneur and community activist.

In addition to his work as CEO at the Caribbean Daylight newspaper which he founded more than two decades ago, Sankar is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CACCI), and vice president of The Friends of Crown Heights Educational Centers, Inc., a leading provider of early childhood care and education in the City of New York.

Baetel, a proud father of six children, migrated to the US in June 1988 and relocated his enterprise, ZDK Transporters. He has worked as a building superintendent for a housing complex in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

He said ZDK Transporters has expanded from shipping cargo worldwide to managing home relocation and transporting ration from food banks. He said he's using his transportation resources to support and develop his food distribution program.
Cordice, a former president and public relations officer of the Philadelphia-based St. Vincent and the Grenadines Organization of Pennsylvania (SVGOP), has served the community in various capacities, including: block captain in Philadelphia and Kensington, Pennsylvania; panelist, Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office; youth aid panelist; former chair of Team Jamaica Bickle-Philadelphia; co-founder and research analyst of the Philadelphia-based Caribbean American Heritage Collaborative (CAHCO); Legal and Election Committee member, Philadelphia Mayor’s Commission on African and Caribbean Immigrants Affairs; chair of SVG Economic Development Plan summit in Philadelphia; SVG representative on the U.S. Census 2010 Philadelphia Caribbean Complete Count Committee; and pioneer of the Thomas Saunders Secondary School’s participation in the Penn Relays for the past five years, and the hoisting of SVG flag on Ben Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia.

Richards was involved in organizations from an early age, and was the treasurer of Young Turks Entertainment Club at 16.

As a budding artist, he designed his first CD cover and commercial T-shirt for his uncle, calypsonian and former diplomat Cyril “Scotch” Thomas, while still a student in St. Martin’s.

Richards was also affiliated with, and attended several leadership workshops held by, the National Youth Council and New Artists Movement (NAM).

After migration to New York, he immediately enrolled at the New York College of Technology, where he received an associate degree in Lithographic Office Technology and a bachelor’s in Graphic Arts and Advertising Design Technology.

In 1997, he launched a graphics design firm, Black Shuga Enterprise, with a division called Black Shuga Graphics.

Richards was the manager of the pressroom department at Esposi Printing in Manhattan, and worked at Quad Graphics, the largest commercial graphic design and printing company globally.

After working for five years at Cossete, a global public relations firm, Richards left in 2014 to "develop and focus on the demands of Black Shuga Graphics."

Over the years, he also became very active with the art form; he loves calypso, and joined the Brooklyn-based Dynamite Calypso Tent, where he served as president for about six years.

"To receive such a prestigious award was very humbling to me,” he said. "I love to help and contribute to the betterment of humanity, and especially our people in St. Vincent and the Grenadines," he added.

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6 Things Your Height Says About Your Health

Prevention | June 23, 2015

Cancer-prone? Might want to check your height. (Photo: Getty Images)

Small comfort for all the short and tall women out there: There isn't a perfect height for your health. Turns out, extra inches lower your risk of some common health problems, but increase the odds of others. Sigh. Here's the long and short of it:

When Short Is Sweet
You're not as cancer-prone. "Melanoma, thyroid, kidney, breast, colon, and rectum cancers, in particular, are strongly associated with height," says Geoffrey Kabat, PhD, senior epidemiologist at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City. Over a series of three studies, he found that women who are $5'10"$ are about 30 to 40% more likely to develop these types of cancer than women who are $5'2"$. "Taller women tend to have larger organs and more cells, so the chance of developing mutations that lead to cancer is greater," explains Kabat. "It's also possible that the hormones and growth factors that influence height also affect cancer risk."

Related: 10 Cancer Symptoms Most People Miss

Your chance of blood clots dwindles. If you're $5'2"$ or under and your weight is normal or close to it, you're three times less likely to get a blood clot. According to a study from the University of Tromso in Norway, blood must be pumped a longer distance in taller women, which may lead to reduced flow and the increased risk for a stroke-causing clot. While you can't change your height, dropping a few pounds will help: Tall women without a weight problem had no increased risk of clots.

You might still be going strong at 90. One of the genes linked to longevity is also responsible for short stature, according to research at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. The scientists found that a gene mutation impedes insulin-like growth factor from doing its job also seems to extend lifespan.

Related: What Your Heart Rate Says About Your Health

When Tall Is Tops
Your heart is safer. Women who are 5'8" are 28% less likely to develop heart disease than those who are 5'3"; according to a recent British study published in the New England Journal of Medicine. In fact, for every two-and-a-half inches taller you are than someone else of the same gender, the researchers found that your risk of heart disease diminishes by about 14%.

"While being tall doesn't give you a free pass to smoke and eat junk food, it offers some protection," says Daniel Munoz, MD, an instructor of medicine in the division of cardiology at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. What gives? The genes associated with being short also increase the risk of high LDL cholesterol levels. (Need to lower your blood pressure? Find out how to do it without drugs in Lower Your Blood Pressure Naturally.)

Your mind will stay strong. A woman who is 5'7" is about 50% less likely to die from dementia than one who is 5'1", according to preliminary research from the University of Edinburgh's College of Medicine. Scientists believe the factors that contribute to smaller stature—childhood illnesses, stress, and poor nutrition—are at the root of the increased risk rather than genetics.

Pregnancy and childbirth won't be as tough. Moms-to-be who are 5'6" are 18 to 59% less likely to develop gestational diabetes than those who are 5'2", according to a study at the City University of New York that looked at more than 220,000 pregnancies. Researchers aren't sure why, but they speculate that the genes related to height have an effect on glucose
tolerance. More good news for average size or tall women with a bump: a study from Thailand found being 5'1" or taller reduces your risk for a C-section.

By Karen Cicero

This article "6 Things Your Height Says About Your Health" originally ran on Prevention.com.

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University campaigners hail Columbia's vote to divest from prisons

New York University, Cuny and Wesleyan activists aim to follow suit
Trustees: 'This action occurs within larger discussion of mass incarceration'

Joanna Walters in New York
Wednesday 24 June 2015 07.00 EDT

Activists at a growing number of elite US universities hope their institutions will follow the lead of the Ivy League’s Columbia University by divesting from the private-sector prison industry and enshrining policies to avoid buying into the business in future.

Campaigners at Columbia, in New York, have called upon other colleges across the US and beyond to heed its example as it became the first university in the US to adopt an official policy to divest permanently from the for-profit prison business, in a trustee vote on Monday.

Students, faculty and alumni of neighboring New York University, and at Wesleyan University in Morristown, Connecticut, hailed Columbia’s move and vowed to follow suit.

City University of New York (Cuny) also has a strong divestment campaign that is principally aimed at persuading the college to take its money out of fossil fuels in response to climate change, but additionally wants Cuny to shun the incarceration industry.

NYU and Wesleyan’s campaigns are also aimed at fossil fuel divestment.

The Facebook page of the group NYU Divest, formed by students, academic staff and alumni of the elite, private New York institution, hailed the decision made at Columbia.

“This is a HISTORIC victory,” the campaign group wrote on its page on Tuesday.

It praised the Columbia campaign group Columbia Prison Divest.

“Columbia is the first major university to divest from private prisons, thanks to the incredible student leaders of Columbia Prison Divest. From fossil fuels to private prisons, injustice is NOT an investment,” the message said.

The similar campaign group “Wes, Divest!” at Wesleyan also posted ecstatically to its Facebook page after the result from Columbia.

“So proud of/excited for our allies at Columbia Prison Divest! Let’s look to bring this
momentum to Wes for the upcoming year," said the statement.

The board of trustees at Columbia on Monday voted to adopt an official policy of disposing of shares in commercial prison companies anywhere in the world and refusing to invest in the lucrative industry in future.

The move followed a concerted campaign by students and faculty, which was ultimately supported by the college president, Lee Bollinger.

The parallel campaigns urging the universities to divest from fossil fuels have not yet achieved their goals at Columbia, NYU, Wesleyan or Cuny.

But activists are celebrating the decision on Monday to block any of Columbia’s $8bn endowment from being spent on shares in companies dealing in for-profit prisons.

“This action occurs within the larger, ongoing discussion of the issue of mass incarceration that concerns citizens from across the ideological spectrum," Columbia’s trustees said in a statement.

Columbia had held investments in Corrections Corporation of America, a company specializing in contracts to run private prisons and detention centers in the US. And the institution had also held shares in the British security giant G4S, which runs private prisons in Britain and other countries and until recently had a contract via a US subsidiary to run the Guantánamo Bay facility in Cuba where terrorism suspects are held offshore without trial by the US government.

Campaigners objected to mass incarceration in the US, which is becoming a political hot topic in the 2016 presidential contest, and conditions behind bars. G4S has come in for repeated criticism about violence and drug abuse at its facilities.

Columbia had disposed of those holdings in advance of Monday’s meeting and the trustees then enshrined the decision in official policy that vowed not to invest in any part of that industry in future.

Other colleges should now follow suit, Dunni Oduyemi, an undergraduate organizer of the student campaign Columbia Prison Divest, told the Guardian on Tuesday. She pointed out that included in Columbia’s decision was the pledge to promote the policy more widely, and campaigners were awaiting details from the college on how it planned to do that.

She praised activists at Cuny, NYU and Wesleyan and said she was extremely happy they were taking heart from Columbia’s success.

“We are really pleased and we hope this will encourage other institutions to do the same. There needs to be a lot more transparency about where universities invest their money," she said.
Senate Republicans outdo de Blasio on mayoral control

Legislative leaders dealt Mayor Bill de Blasio a political blow on Tuesday, announcing that mayoral control of city schools, one of de Blasio's top legislative priorities in Albany, would only be renewed for one year.

De Blasio started the legislative session by calling on Albany to make mayoral control permanent, but last month said he would settle for a three-year extension that was backed by Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Democratic majority in the Assembly.

The one-year extension was announced by Cuomo in a press conference with legislative leaders on Tuesday afternoon, and still has to be formally approved by the Senate and Assembly.

De Blasio has said he continues to support permanent mayoral control, and has offered only tepid praise for the three-year deal, calling it "sensible" and "practical."

MORE ON CAPITAL

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The one-year extension offers some revenge for Senate Republicans, who have publicly feuded with de Blasio after the mayor tried and failed to elect a Democratic majority last year.

The brief extension will force de Blasio to lobby Senate Republicans, hat in hand, for a longer renewal during in election year in which he's
already vowed to target their majority again.

De Blasio will also have just a few months to reassemble the large coalition of allies he convened on mayoral control this year, including a large swath of elected officials, business leaders and even former mayor Rudy Giuliani. Federal education department secretary Arne Duncan joined the debate recently, advocating for an extension of mayoral control.

David Bloomfield, a professor of education at CUNY's Graduate Center and Brooklyn College, said the short renewal is just another opportunity for Cuomo and the Senate Republicans to keep de Blasio on the ropes.

"From the governor and Senate's point of view it's just mischief to do this all over again and to put de Blasio on the defense," he said, adding, "they can enjoy the power play, which is really all it is."

While de Blasio and his allies have repeatedly argued that renewing mayoral control should not reflect any specific mayor or set of policies, but rather a general support of the system of governance, the Senate has done just the opposite.

Pro-charter group StudentsFirstNY released a statement from its executive director Jenny Sedlis saying Tuesday's deal allows the mayor to "restore parent confidence in his ability to run schools."

United Federation of Teachers president Michael Mulgrew criticized the Senate on Tuesday for using mayoral control as leverage over de Blasio, saying, "whether you agree with this version of mayoral control or not, a one year extension is purely a political statement."

"It's a statement that some people don't like our mayor, and they're going to hold this provision into an election year," Mulgrew added.

Mulgrew said the short extension was "the symbol of this entire legislative session, when politics interferes with good education policy."

But Mulgrew has not been a full-throated supporter of mayoral control this year, and said the U.F.T. wants to see changes to the way the Panel for Educational Policy is structured.

Kathryn Wykle, the C.E.O. of the Partnership for New York City and a supporter of mayoral control, also faulted the politics at play.

"The political reality is that everybody has an election every couple years and it's in their interest that New York City keep coming back to the well," she said.

But Wykle said the extension was at least a partial victory, considering that the current version of mayoral control was renewed without changes. One proposal in the Senate would have extended mayoral control for a year and mandated that city school budgets be approved by Albany, a bill that de Blasio called "unacceptable."

"Anything that would have changed diluted or created stronger state intervention over
local school districts would have defeated the purpose,” Wylde said. "The major victory that we see is the fact that they are coming back with no alternative to the current system."

Wylde said she and other members of the city's business community would "absolutely" lobby for mayoral control again next year, when it comes up for its next renewal.

The Senate Republicans have not been the only de Blasio critics who questioned his control over city schools. Success Academy C.E.O. Eva Moskowitz recently argued that de Blasio has not proven that he deserves mayoral control, thus finding a new way to undermine the mayor on one of his most crucial priorities. A spokeswoman for Moskowitz declined to comment on the one year deal on Tuesday.

De Blasio would not address any aspect of the Albany deal in a scrum with reporters on Tuesday afternoon, saying only "we'll have more to say when we know the whole package."
Worksite Video: Vital Signs Look Good for Health Information Field

By Marc Bussanich | 2 hours ago

A major tool of modern medicine.

If you want to land a job in the Health Information field, you'll have plenty of resources at your fingertips with the latest report from New York City Labor Market Information Service.

A separate entity within the City University of New York system, NYCLMIS profiles different industries and produces regular, data-centric reports that are presented graphically so that job seekers can easily digest the information. Released in March, Planning Your Career in Health Information (http://bit.ly/1BlhUnJ) explains what is the Health Information field, followed by the types of jobs and their accompanying salaries and the necessary skills to qualify.

To help us understand better the new report, we video interviewed Ronnie Kauder, senior research director at NYCLIMS, who said that there was a lot of confusion around the health information field and that compelled the institution to clarify the exact opportunities.

"The health information field is a couple of different things—it's Information Technology in health care [employing] web developers, software developers, programmers, help desk staff and network administrators. But [for this report] we focused on the people who actually manage the information that's generated in the course of providing health care such as people who enters your information into electronic health records, the people who code that information for billing and the people who analyze the information to learn certain trends," said Kauder.
Kauder also noted that NYCLMIS tracked for the report, because it has a license to a proprietary product called Help Wanted On Line that aggregates job listings on the Internet, the number of top advertised jobs, and the education, certifications and credentials employers were asking for.

"Over the last four years the trend is upward for the health information management field. We profiled it because it's promising, it's changing and there's demand for it. We wanted to help people figure out what they needed to do," Kauder said.

For job seekers who want to work in healthcare but don't want to care for or interact with patients, Kauder said the health information management field suits all personality types.

"We looked at who would be happy in this kind of work. There was agreement that you have to be detail-oriented, you have to like information and analyzing things and you have to like computers and not mind being at a computer a fair amount of the day."
What is Race and Will it Ever be Irrelevant?

June 23, 2015

An anthropological perspective on race in America

Stephen Henderson talks with Dr. Leith Mullings, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate School, about what race is, its historical origins, and what it means today. She is also a contributor to the American Anthropological Association’s RACE Project.

- **Racialization**: Mullings says that race is a social construct with no sound biological basis, and is the result of racialization. She says that racialization is imposed on groups to reinforce their inferiority to dominant groups, such as in slavery or under colonialism.

- **Ramifications**: Mullings emphasizes that while race itself is a social construction, racism is real and has serious consequences. She mentions race-based health disparities between black and white people as one of the effects of racial discrimination. She says that this type of race-based inequality is why the government and census must continue to record race.

- **Not post-racial**: Mullings says that while we have taken many steps forward, including eliminating slavery and legal public segregation, there have also been steps backwards. She points out that economic disparity between black and white people has increased again in recent years, and believes SCOTUS had “gutted” the VRA and Civil Rights Act. She says that this does not bode well, especially with gerrymandering.

- **Cultural and historical context**: A caller points out that racism not only hurts black people and radicalized groups, but also has provided white people with an advantage since the beginning of US history. Mullings agrees, and says that there are many historical and anthropological works exploring the history and construct of whiteness. She says that race depends on context, and whiteness has existed in different ways in different times and locations.
Doing Your Homework

June 24, 2015
By Melissa Dennihy

One of the most common — and valuable — pieces of advice offered to academics on the department and institution before going to a campus interview. But college websites navigate, containing much more information than an interviewee could or should consume. What information should job candidates be looking for as they prepare for campus interviews?

An obvious starting point is to learn what you can about the department chair and other senior faculty members you interview with will make it easier to forge connections and avoid wrong things. Don’t stop at checking faculty pages housed within the department website: browse any personal webpages for the institution. If their CVs or syllabi are available online, read them. Note their research interests and assignments used in their courses, and the types of departmental and college service they are getting here are not only snapshots of your interviewers, but also of the department and institution.

Another useful thing to pay attention to as you research your prospective employer is the curricular, pedagogical and ideological language used — and not used — on the department and program descriptions. Such language can offer clues on how to talk about research and teaching. A discipline of English, for example, terms such as “remedial writing” or “basic writing” are commonly avoided by others. If possible, you’ll want to have some sense of your interviewers’ language and you go in for an interview — as well as how you’ll respond if asked to discuss a topic in your area.

You should also review available information on courses you can expect to teach if you get the opportunity, and familiarize yourself with any required course texts, and, if available, download and examine web search for specific courses in addition to looking at what’s available on the departmental web page. You may be able to find publicly viewable class blogs or websites that type of work instructors assign and the skill level of students in the courses you may teach.

In addition to researching the search committee and department, it’s worth trying to get a sense of the institution as a whole, especially if your campus visit will include an interview with an administrator. Usually, these are usually high-profile, most current initiatives at the institution’s faculty and administrators are likely to be particularly proud of and involved with the campus initiative or activity outside of your own discipline that you can envision yourself being a member.
For teaching-oriented positions, especially, it's also important to take some time to learn at closely with on a daily basis if you are hired: the students. Start by reading the institution's demographics: What languages do students speak? What racial and ethnic backgrounds do international students are on campus? What types of academic and economic backgrounds and career paths are they pursuing?

These are not mere statistics, but questions that should inform the way you talk about teaching and get some sense of what student life is like by browsing pages that list student clubs and activities and Greek life. Learning about what students are interested in, academically and otherwise, can guide your teaching during an interview.

For any interview, but especially one for a community college position, it is also worth learning which the campus is situated. Especially if you've never been there before, do some research and historical knowledge about the county or city where the campus is located. Candidates who can talk about the culture surrounding the campus are more likely to say the wrong thing in an interview or even drinks. Faculty members who are devoted to and proud of the larger community in which they work can make stereotypical or clichéd comments about the area.

Finally, in any situation where you can explore the campus physically as well as virtually, take close enough to visit the school prior to your interview, do it, even if it means a two-hour drive. Talk to students, chat with faculty, visit the library — and familiarize yourself with much as you can to get a feel for the academic and local cultures of which you may soon be more successfully give the impression that you will fit in there.

BIO

Melissa Dennihy is an assistant professor of English at Queensborough Community College of
Write On Graduates Making Their Mark On Campus

Four college students, alumni of The Jewish Week's Write On For Israel educational project, were honored for their pro-Israel leadership on campus at Write On's 2015 graduation ceremonies June 11 at Park Avenue Synagogue.

Forty-six high school seniors from 25 public, private and Jewish day schools in New York and New Jersey completed the two-year program. Founded in 2002, it is designed to provide a solid grounding in the Mideast conflict and prepare students for campus life, where Israel has been the target of increasingly virulent rhetorical attacks.

Rena Nasar, a 2010 graduate of the Yeshivah of Flatbush, founded a pro-Israel group at Baruch College called YOFI (Youth Organization for Israel), now headed by its fourth executive board. It seeks to engage students from many backgrounds and showcase Israel's diversity.
Katie Hartman, a 2013 graduate of Trinity School, just completed her sophomore year at the University of Pennsylvania, where she serves on the board of PIPAC, the Penn Israel Public Affairs Committee, and organized the group’s first advocacy training program.

Jonas Singer, a 2013 graduate of Millburn High School, is a rising junior at Brandeis University and co-president of the Brandeis Israel Public Affairs Committee, where he was vice president as a freshman. And Daniel Silvermintz, who spoke on behalf of the four honorees, is a 2015 graduate of the University of Southern California. He graduated from the Frisch School in 2011 and was active at USC in TAMID, which focuses on the strength of Israel’s start-up nation ethos in forging relationships with college students across the country. He served as president of the USC chapter and as national chair, with TAMID reaching 1,400 students around the country.

The featured speaker was Harriet Levin, mother of Michael Levin, a lone soldier in the Israel Defense Forces from the Philadelphia area who was killed in the 2006 war with Hezbollah in Lebanon. She described her son’s tenacious commitment to Israel from an early age and noted that his is the most visited grave in the Mt. Herzl military cemetery in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Yotav Eliach, the founding core educator for Write On’s first 12 years, was honored for his passionate leadership and ongoing involvement in the program. Tuvia Book, the current core educator, spoke of the powerful experience he and the seniors shared when they visited Israel in February.

Linda Scherzer, founding project director, and Gary Rosenblatt, Jewish Week editor and founding chair, noted in their remarks to the graduates and their families and friends that when Write On was founded, during the second intifada, the hope was that it would not be necessary for more than a few years. “But sadly, Write On is needed now more than ever, as the BDS movement has become increasingly active on college campuses,” Rosenblatt said.

editor@jewishweek.org
The Paradox Of Poland

Opinion
Tue, 06/23/2015
Samuel C. Heilman
Special To The Jewish Week
Story Includes Video: 0

I am in Poland. Sent here by the United States as Fulbright Senior Specialist whose mission is to teach and give lectures in my specialty: the sociology and anthropology of Jewry. I am to teach a short course to undergraduates in the Wroclaw (once Breslau, when the city was part of Germany) University Jewish Studies Program, offer lectures in Krakow's Jagellonian University, and speak at other academic and community venues in both cities as well as in the capital, Warsaw. Except for a short weekend when I attended a conference here, I have never been to Poland — but Poland has been a part of my life since before my birth.

This is where generations of my forebears lived and died, including two grandfathers after whom I am named. Here my parents were born and married; and here they were imprisoned in the Plaszow concentration camp, and later saved when they were added to Oskar Schindler's famous factory and list. Here my grandmothers and most of my uncles and aunts were murdered, and here, too, I will be reunited with the woman who helped care for my mother in the waning years of her life and became like a member of our family. I speak Polish, the language my parents used when they did not want their only child to understand their private words, and which I therefore learned. Indeed, from the moment I came here and heard that language around me, it aroused feelings of tenderness for it echoed with sounds that recalled home. Everyone here sounds like my parents.
When I went to the synagogue Friday night and Sabbath morning, it was full, the service led by the American-born Modern Orthodox rabbi who came, by way of Israel and his own personal journey, to religious observance. But while the pews were full Friday night, there was no minyan since, as the rabbi explained, there were not 10 men present who met the Jewish legal religious criteria for being a Jew.

The same happened the next morning. Not that these would-be Jews were ignorant. One, a former Protestant minister who came with his wife, could pray like a practiced native and quote Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) by heart, and did so when the rabbi taught a Mishnah from it. Another read Hebrew as if he were speaking it all his life, and talked about how he had prepared a kosher meal at home. The women were no less knowledgeable and engaged. The man who led the morning service, wearing a square black kipa and a tallit, had a beautiful voice and vaguely Israeli accent. But he also spoke and read in Polish the portion from the Bible (without a minyan there was no Torah reading). This man, who seemed to be a native, turned out to be a convert with absolutely no Jewish roots. (After the services, he whispered to me that I should not wear my kipa on the streets since there were many anti-Semites out on this May Day weekend, "and I know what I'm saying," he added for good measure.)

In my university course, as I talked about the various types of Jews who today make up the Jewish demographic profile in America, I mentioned those who come from a Jewish background but do not consider themselves Jews. As with all the categories, I asked my students if they could describe what such a Jew would be like. One young woman raised her hand: "I know that well; that would be me," she said.

"I was born a Catholic," she said. "I cannot separate my identity from Catholicism. My mother is a born-and-raised Catholic, and her mother, my grandmother, became a Catholic to survive." She added this last point, as if she were talking matter-of-factly about the color of the curtains in her home. But of course, it was extraordinarily striking to me. The young woman had only recently learned this fact of her background and now she was taking these courses in the Jewish studies program, where my course is being taught, to find out about Jews.

These students, almost none of whom is a Jew, know a great deal. They knew what the Amidah prayer is; they know a lot about Jewish history; they're smart and engaged in the topic. But when we talked about the number of Jews in the world, and I told them, and then
asked how many died in the Shoah, no one knew. I might have been surprised, but the night before I'd been watching Polish television, where a debate was being held about the place of Jews in Poland. One panelist, a historian, noted a survey question asked in 1945 and again this year. The question: Which people had suffered more in World War II, the Jews or the Poles? In 1945, only 32 percent answered the Poles; today 62 percent said it was the Poles. While I have no idea how good a poll it was, none of the other panelists challenged its findings.

The Poles have all been very nice to me, especially the people at Wroclaw University, who do not display the slightest trace of anti-Jewish bias. I'm learning a great deal, but I have yet to sort it all out. I am especially excited about going to Krakow, which will also be a chance to trace my roots, see where my family lived, see the graves of my grandfathers, and see the Schindler museum. Of course I'm thrilled to be speaking about Jews at the Jagellonian University, where my late father was once refused entry under the numerus clausus rules that limited the number of Jews at the university.

I'm not sure yet if I should mention that detail to my new colleagues.

Samuel Hellman is a professor of sociology at Queens College.
The Town Shrink
Trained as a psychiatrist, Mindy Thompson Fullilove now puts entire cities on the couch.

By ROBERT SULLIVAN  JUNE 23, 2015

High Bridge, spanning the Harlem River and connecting Manhattan to the Bronx, is the oldest bridge in New York City. It is also an aqueduct, or used to be. Built in the 1840s, when public health officials across the country were battling cholera, it carried clean water from upstate to a growing urban population. In just a few decades, planners would build not just aqueducts but the so-called sanitary greens that today we call parks, including Highbridge Park, on the Manhattan side of the bridge. A side benefit of High Bridge was the walkway above the aqueduct that allowed Bronx pedestrians to reach Manhattan. By the 1960s, though, the aqueduct was no longer in use, and city planners, working to fight what was then called urban blight, decided to disconnect the boroughs. The Parks Department closed the old bridge, cutting off an artery.

In June, the Parks Department reopened High Bridge to pedestrians, not just resuming the flow of foot traffic but also connecting it to a more recent innovation in public health, called the Giraffe Path, which was spearheaded by Mindy Thompson Fullilove, a research psychiatrist at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. Fullilove has spent the past 30 years investigating how broken connections between various parts of cities harm public health and, more recently, exploring ways to reconnect them. The Giraffe Path, a six-mile trail that runs from Central Park to the Cloisters, is designed to do just that, providing links between communities that have, by Fullilove’s analysis, undergone systematic disinvestment, resulting in numerous public health crises: AIDS epidemics, crack
addiction, asthma, post-traumatic stress and obesity.

The Columbia Center for Children’s Environmental Health is a sponsor of the trail initiative, called City Life Is Moving Bodies, or Climb, along with the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, a local nonprofit. This year, after more than a decade of community meetings with the Parks Department, local college students who started hiking the Giraffe Path when they were kids at last saw their route extended, as the gates on High Bridge were opened, a victory for the city’s entire circulatory system. “People have a pretty easy time accepting the analogy between the body and the city,” Fullilove says. Indeed, when considering the health of the city as a whole, metaphor and reality neatly align. Rule No. 1 for long life: Stay active, keep the blood flowing. Rule No. 1 for urban planning: Never close an artery.

The idea of a psychiatrist’s treating an entire city emerges from straightforward questions about how people interact with extreme environments. Fullilove was inspired in particular by the work of Alexander Leighton, who, as a Navy psychiatrist during World War II, studied an Arizona internment camp for Japanese-Americans. Leighton expected to see a tremendous amount of illness and mental trauma — the conditions in the camp were terrible — but the internees, though they were suffering, proved to be startlingly resilient. “He sees this heroic effort to reorganize life,” Fullilove says, and the ability to organize their own community appeared to be at the root of their success. After the war, Leighton launched a multigenerational study (still ongoing) to document the ways communal ties influence individual mental health.

Nonetheless, psychology of place remained a radical notion even into the 1990s, when Fullilove was working as a specialist on the mental health problems associated with H.I.V. and AIDS. “The idea that the location was important — people were just looking at me aghast,” she recalls. But as she continued her work through the ’90s, researching community trauma in Pittsburgh and New York, Fullilove increasingly came to see cities as ecosystems, with streams and channels, one flowing unseen into the next, disruptions wreaking havoc, threatening vitality everywhere. In a 1999 article in The International Journal of Mental Health, she showed federal urban renewal policies to be a fundamental cause of disease.

In the 1970s and ’80s, for instance, city managers practiced what Roger Starr,
the New York City housing commissioner, deemed “planned shrinkage,” whereby planners focused their limited resources on high-wealth neighborhoods; the poor, primarily in minority neighborhoods, were left with fewer firehouses, dilapidated housing, parks fenced off, bridges shut down. “A Synergism of Plagues,” Rodrick Wallace’s 1988 paper in Environmental Research, described how disinvestment accelerated H.I.V. infection, not just in the inner city but also in the suburbs.

Fullilove’s approach turns the standard story of the American ghetto upside down. Instead of neighborhoods with intractable problems of their own making, isolated from their more comfortable neighbors, she sees people in constant motion, shifted, pressured and harassed by ever-changing federal and state policies that work actively to sort cities by race. In the 1930s, the federal Home Owners’ Loan Corporation steered bank investment away from areas that surveyors identified as minority or foreign-born. In 1949, the Housing Act designated older neighborhoods with high minority populations for slum clearance; cities received federal money to replace thriving neighborhoods with civic centers and housing projects. In the terminology of place psychology, the pathways of the constructed community were devastated. Fullilove’s research showed a total of 2,500 renewal projects in 993 neighborhoods, 67 percent of them black.

Many of these communities are then mined of their jewels, young people who flee the places where their families struggled to raise them. “I grew up hearing all the stereotypes — ‘There’s nothing here!’” Khemani Gibson told me a few months ago at a youth summit that Fullilove helped organize. Gibson, a 22-year-old Ph.D. candidate in history at N.Y.U., grew up in Orange, N.J., Fullilove’s hometown. “I wanted to leave instead of actually trying to improve my community.”

Fullilove diagnosed the health consequences of this largely African-American displacement as “root shock” — which she defines as “the traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one’s emotional ecosystem.” It can also follow displacement relating to natural disasters or gentrification, and her term has been adopted by urban planners and community psychologists. Fullilove’s diagnosis of root shock begins with an analysis of a traumatic past, to identify the breaks in the civic fabric. One treatment, says Fullilove, is to teach young people that they do have roots, and they can tend them by learning history. In Orange, she helped middle-school students write a history of their city, chronicling its troubled legacy,
but also celebrating it.

On a recent tour of Orange with Fullilove as my guide, we visited a still-functioning black-owned funeral home, as well as a historic black church, Union Baptist, just paces from the highway that cut it off from downtown. “People mortgaged their homes to build this church,” Fullilove said. We saw the park, fenceless on what had previously been the white side, fenced off on the black side, and we went downtown to see the vibrant small businesses on Main Street. We passed an elementary school just in time to encounter the students spilling out at the end of their day. Miphilove Milord, a seventh grader, approached the psychiatrist. “Are you Mindy Fullilove?” she asked. Milord, it turned out, had been a participant in one of Fullilove’s history projects. “Are you the famous Miphi?” Fullilove answered. The girl beamed.

Last year, on the 10th anniversary of Climb, Fullilove, who was recovering from hip surgery, didn’t get to see much of the trail. This year, hip healed, she was excited to walk the Giraffe Path again, but also a little nervous about the pressure on neighborhood rents from Edgecombe Parc, new luxury condominiums half a block from Highbridge Park. “It was deeply moving to be there today,” she wrote me after. “So much work has been done — so much remains.”

Robert Sullivan teaches the ecology of cities at Macaulay Honors College and writing at the Bread Loaf School of English. His most recent book is “My American Revolution.”

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