

# EDUCATION UPDATE

EDUCATION NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER WORLD TOMORROW



Volume XIII, No. 1 • New York City • SEPTEMBER 2007  
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

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## BACK TO SCHOOL 2007



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## NYC EDUCATION LEADERS REFLECT ON THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

### A Year of Challenges & Opportunities

By ERNEST LOGAN,  
PRESIDENT, CSA



The 2007-2008 school year brings both formidable challenges and exciting new opportunities for school administrators. The relief of having a contract is tempered by trepidation over how the new reorganization will affect our day-to-day roles as instructional leaders. The anticipation of greater control over our schools is coupled with anxiety about the level and quality of available resources and expertise. The key to success this year will be all about collaborations between administrators, their school communities and the DOE.

Ensuring support, resources, and a clearly defined accountability system are at the forefront of our union's priorities in these first few months. The latest reorganization of the system has forced all of us—not just Principals, but also Assistant Principals, Supervisors and Education Administrators—to make adjustments. Many questions remain and the reaction to the new structure is decidedly mixed at this point. However, CSA and its members have never shied away from high expectations and accountability procedures, and we have been supportive of the DOE's recent initiatives thus far. The summer has been spent working closely with the DOE on several fronts. For example, the criteria and procedures that go into the Principal Performance Review are being reworked and realigned with the DOE's school report cards, progress reports and quality reviews. Our Executive Principal program, which allows select Principals to earn an extra \$25,000 a year by volunteering to work in low-performing schools, is also moving forward.

It is vital that school leaders, who are responsible for advancing student achievement throughout the city, be given the proper supports and authority—real authority—to use their expertise and judgment to direct resources and personnel. It is also essential that administrators' voices are an integral part of policy-making and decision-making. Our members' skills and knowledge must be part of the equation. If these matters are addressed appropriately, CSA members will rise to the occasion and guide their schools smoothly and effectively. Success will be rewarded in a variety of ways,

including Performance Differentials, which will soon top out at \$25,000 and other programs such as the Rewarding Achievement (REACH) Pilot Program, which will give cash awards to students, teachers, principals and schools based on enrollment and scores in AP courses.

New advances in data collection and data management are also on the minds of school administrators, as is the importance of having quality relationships with community superintendents. ARIS (Achievement Reporting and Innovation System) will soon be a key component in each of our schools. However, the true nature of a school and the individuality of students cannot be illustrated in spreadsheets on a computer screen, so it will be up to Community Superintendents to be actively engaged in every school community in every district. Those relationships are very important. After all, data by itself is not a means to reform. Rather, it should be a tool that principals, assistant principals and teachers can work with collaboratively and creatively, learn patterns, identify targets, set goals, and develop new instructional strategies. It is imperative that the ARIS system is accurate and that principals and assistant principals are trained in how to use the information available to them. It is equally important that the new data collection and analysis responsibilities do not adversely affect the time school leaders spend in the classrooms and halls, engaging with students and staff.

For parents, School Leadership Teams and Community Superintendents will be the key links to input and access. Along with their oversight of principals, school budgets and discipline, Community Superintendents are required by state law to communicate and meet regularly with all parent associations, and provide information so that associations are provided with information concerning matters of pupil achievement. They are there to help you. Parental involvement on the school level includes having a strong School Leadership Team, and CSA is committed to that concept. Our Executive Leadership Institute will be conducting workshops with Principals on how to build and improve SLTs.

Beyond the reorganization, a num-

### Partners for Success in Education

By RANDI WEINGARTEN,  
PRESIDENT, UFT



Students, parents and teachers across New York City are preparing for a challenging new academic year as the public school system embarks on its third major reorganization in five years.

The new structure puts schools at the center of decision-making, and creates both opportunities and challenges. Experience tells us it will likely take some time for schools to adjust to the changes. But New York City's 100,000 public school educators stand ready to roll up our sleeves and work with principals, parents and students to achieve academic success. Regardless of what the bureaucratic structure is, we know that true partnership is the key to making our schools work for kids.

As with any new undertaking of this size and scope, it's not unexpected that some of those affected might experience a degree of apprehension. But this much is clear—in order for the new school autonomy to work, teachers need to be part of the decision-making process. Principals provide our school children with the best possible education only if they create partnerships with teachers and parents.

Teachers have earned and deserve this respect. When touting the school system's academic improvements, Mayor Michael Bloomberg regularly, and rightly, credits city teachers, calling them "spectacular" and "the best in the world" for moving schools in the right direction. Just imagine how much more we could do for students if teachers were treated more professionally, schools were run more collaboratively and the system itself became more open and transparent for parents.

How to realize this partnership? One excellent vehicle is the School Leadership Team, wherein teachers and principals work with parents to shape each individual school's educational mission and determine how best to achieve it.

ber of issues are priorities for school administrators, including the school governance law and No Child Left Behind, expanding and enhancing early childhood education (specifically the wonderful programs in our city-funded Day Care centers), reforming the Taylor Law, and protecting the pension and health benefits of both our active and retired members.

Despite the numerous challenges

This type of team approach to running our schools is very promising but only if done properly and allowed to flourish. The Department of Education cannot simply pay lip service to the concept of partnership; it has to be real in order to be meaningful. It's one thing for the DOE to set lofty goals, but real education is a product of the magic that occurs between teachers and students in the classroom, not the boardroom.

The United Federation of Teachers is prepared to fight for real collaboration and the conditions necessary for every school community to help students succeed because we feel that the school system has an unprecedented opportunity to excel.

Given the additional state education funding and other resources our school system is slated to receive this year, New York City public schools are in a position to make solid and sustained academic improvement. We should focus on utilizing the additional resources to:

- Reduce class size;
- Improve school discipline and
- Engage in meaningful partnership that emphasizes a team approach to tackling the problems of individual schools. This will strengthen the bond between stakeholders in education and put our schools on a path of sustained academic improvement.

Our educators can work within any structure or framework the Department of Education chooses—as long as they are given the necessary resources and support and are allowed to teach without micromanagement or excessive testing and other unilaterally imposed bureaucratic mandates that cut into teaching and learning time.

This is an auspicious time for New York City's public schools, and in order to make the most of it all of the players and those affected are going to have to learn to work together. We at the UFT are ready to hit the ground running, and we can only hope that our partners are, too.#

ahead, we all have the opportunity to play a role in providing a great education for our children. Amazing things are happening in our schools, and it is in no small part due to the commitment and dedication of administrators, teachers and parents who go above and beyond every day to make a difference in children's lives. By working together, we will achieve great things.#

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RE: Muriel Petioni, M.D., Saves Harlem Hospital From Closing

### To the Editor:

Dr. Petioni was my first doctor. Thanks so much for such a wonderful article. Not only was she my first doctor, but she was an example that being Black and Female does not necessarily hold you back. She was and is truly an example to me. Having kept in contact with her over the years, she was truly a mentor to me. I am blessed to have retired from the central office of the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation where over the years I had the honor of working with my doctor. Thank you again for this article.

Gloria Courts Willis  
Bronx, NY

RE: An Interview with Geoffrey Canada

### To the Editor:

Jeff, we are very proud of you and the course that you have chosen to travel. Continue to fight injustice wherever you find it. Your old school-mate (& B-Ball manager).

Emile Worthy, Atlanta, GA

RE: Homeless Prevention Programs for At-Risk Families

### To The Editor:

I just wanted to say that this is a very informative article. I'm a school student researching homelessness in the US, and found this very helpful! Thank you!

Caitlin Brown, Brooklyn, NY

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— Chancellor Matthew Goldstein



## CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein Announces Plan to Improve American Students' Math & Science Performance

By EMILY SHERWOOD, Ph.D.

High school students nationwide got a C-minus on their universal report card when the recent Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) revealed that they lag far behind their international counterparts in math and science performance. The study—which placed US high school seniors, including our most “advanced” scholars, at the bottom of the international barrel—sounded a penetrating wake-up call to our nation’s educators.

CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has taken our domestic educational failure to heart, becoming an eloquent spokesperson for improved math, science, technology and engineering education in our schools, combined with career development for the best and brightest. “We are losing our competitive edge largely because we are not getting as many people trained in these disciplines at the highest level,” decries Goldstein when interviewed in his book-lined office atop CUNY’s east side administrative complex. Goldstein, who holds a doctorate in mathematical statistics and has co-authored three books on statistical analysis, has offered up an innovative proposal to reverse American students’ relentless global decline in the skills needed to sustain our nation as a world power. In a nutshell, Goldstein recommends identifying talented math and science students at a young age (perhaps as early as sixth grade) and nurturing them in their indigenous home and school environments. Once accepted into college (“they’d be invited into CUNY’s honors college” among others), they’d be simultaneously guaranteed a spot in a top Ph.D. program in math or science, provided they met

acceptable performance milestones during their undergraduate years, if Goldstein’s proposal were to become a reality.

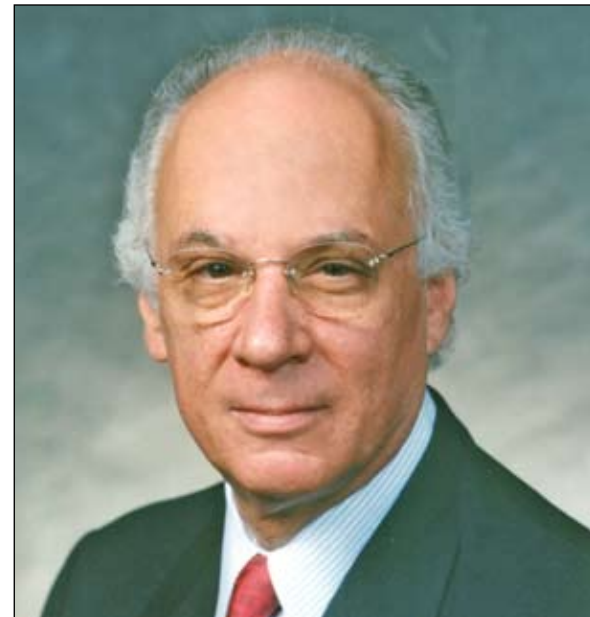
As evidence that his idea could work, Goldstein points to the seven year joint BA/MD program, whereby talented students are admitted to baccalaureate programs with the guarantee of continuing into medical school if they achieve according to predetermined standards. Extending the BA/MD model to the Ph.D. math and science arena, adds Goldstein, “creates an incentive for a student to do very good work and stay in the field...and it creates a sense of value that [students] now believe in themselves because they have been validated by some extraordinary institution that says, ‘We think that you, at age 17, have such potential we’re going to guarantee you a spot in a Ph.D. program.’”

Goldstein admits that there are obstacles to putting his idea into practice. For starters, there is a shortage of math and science teachers in the United States, in part because college graduates who have majored in math and science can earn more money in other sectors. Moreover, the American liberal arts tradition resists early tracking of students in specific fields of study; but that’s precisely why Goldstein believes we need a dramatic change: “There’s a tradition in Asia and Europe to track students at a very young age. We don’t do that in the United States. We are not getting students at an early enough age to get them excited about science,” he argues.

While he’s the first to acknowledge that the details of his proposal will require fine-tuning, Goldstein contends that we must seek pragmatic solutions to America’s educational shortfall now.

“Economies across the world on a going forward basis are going to be very much determined by what we would call the innovation economy. It’s largely going to be an economy of goods and services that will be determined by those companies that can provide a work force that is trained in science and technology” he explains, noting that a failure to produce technical talent in line with other countries could lead to a weakened economy and ultimately social discord between those people being trained and those who have little to offer our work force. Consider this alarming statistic: close to half of the recent US Ph.D.’s that have been granted in engineering, computer and life sciences are to foreign born students, according to the National Science Board. “If you go into just about any science laboratory at a university, it is dominated by non-Americans...many of these students stay, but many now want to return to their own countries...we’re making a huge investment and we’re not getting a return on that investment,” Goldstein adds ominously.

If anyone can lead the charge to improve America’s math and science education, it’s Goldstein. An avowed advocate of high standards, Goldstein has been executing a methodical plan to raise CUNY’s admissions standards since he was named Chancellor in 1999. Goldstein recently put a new proposal on the table, recommending that CUNY ratchet up its requirements for students to qualify for select college-level

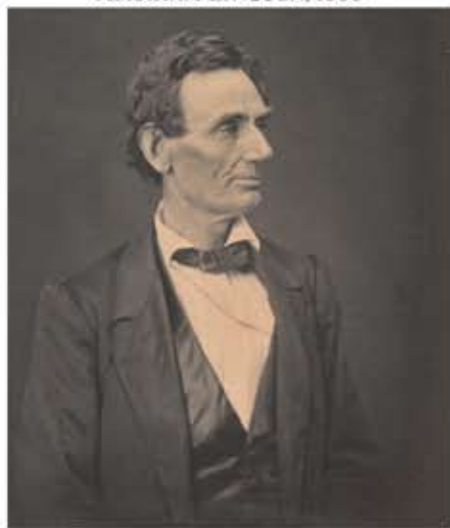


courses, with higher cut points for SAT and placement test scores.

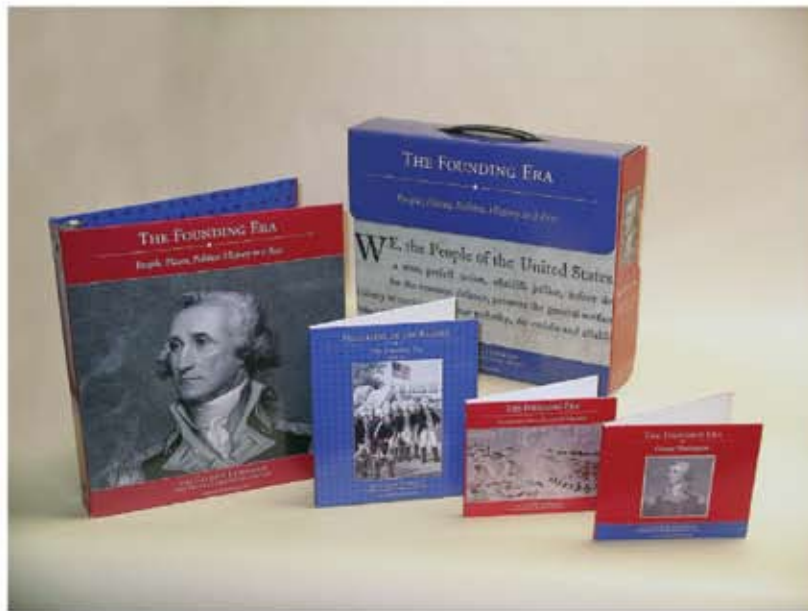
Goldstein’s bold ideas could go a long way toward closing the achievement gap in the inner cities. “There are lots of parents out there who have very smart kids and they can’t afford private schools,” laments Goldstein, who was himself a CUNY graduate in the sixties. “In the public schools, we need to have more opportunities for these bright kids to pursue,” he concludes. As he makes his mark on the nation’s most prominent urban public university, Goldstein leaves little doubt that he will accomplish an even grander vision for improving the education that American students will need to sustain our country’s position as a global economic leader. #

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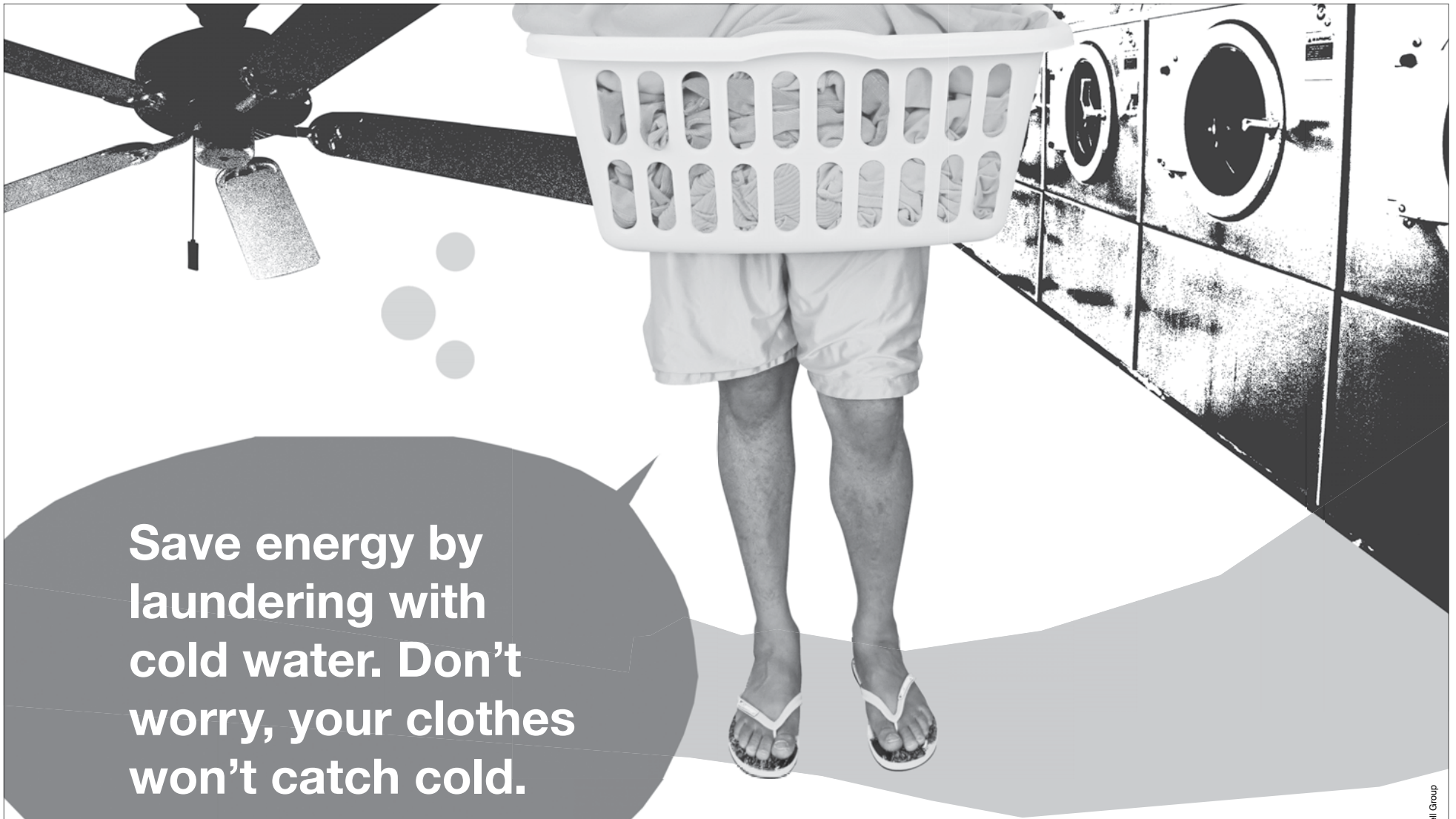


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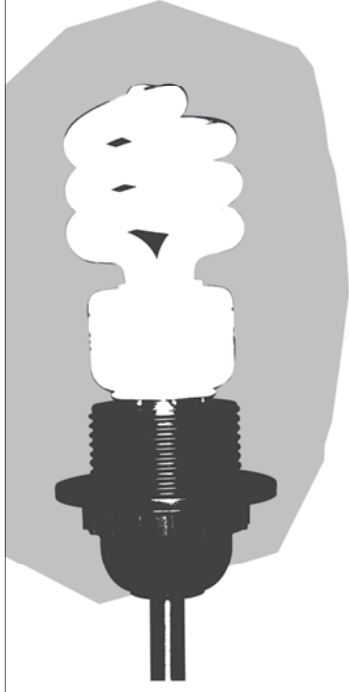
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## THE LYCÉE FRANÇAIS

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The French curriculum is supplemented by a program incorporating the essential elements of a top-tier American private-school education. The blending of the French and American programs distinguishes the Lycée Français de New York and creates graduates who have a deeper understanding of both the European culture in which they are educated and the American culture in which they live. Although the primary language of instruction is French, many classes are team taught in French

and English. This cross-disciplinary approach ensures that students are equally prepared to continue their course of study at either North American or European institutions of higher education (US colleges results 2007: Cornell, M.I.T., Columbia, Pratt School of Design, Princeton, Yale...).

Required courses include: French and English language and literature, modern language (Spanish, German, Italian, Mandarin-Chinese), classical language as an option (Greek or Latin), Mathematics, Sciences, Computer science, History, Geography, Physical Education, Music and Arts.

From Sept. 2007, the Lycée offers Mandarin-Chinese classes in 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th and 10th grade; and a new module in 8th grade which will include public speaking, mental gymnastics arts, fitness and relaxation.

With the opening of the auditorium in 2005, the school has a cultural center which provides a unique venue for the students to express their artistic creativity. The Lycée's Cultural Center will offer the students the opportunity to

participate in a host of artistic and cultural performances as well as listen to leading speakers addressing a variety of international topics.

The academic curriculum and after-school calendar include a rich program of sports, artistic and cultural activities, fostering the development of independent, creative minds and a strong work ethic. The school's location also allows it to integrate into its curriculum numerous field trips to museums, art galleries, educational and business organizations as well as to encourage inter-school athletic, artistic, musical and literary competitions. The Lycée's 24 Junior Varsity and Varsity teams compete with other New York City schools in the ISAL (Independent Schools Athletic League) and the AIPSL (American and International Private Schools League).

For more information about the Lycée Français de New York, please contact The Admissions office at (212) 369-1400.

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THE DEAN'S COLUMN

THE IRRATIONALITY OF  $\sqrt{2}$

By DR. ALFRED S. POSAMENTIER

When we say that the  $\sqrt{2}$  is irrational, what does that mean? Students should be encouraged to inspect the word "irrational" to determine its meaning in English.

Irrational means not rational.  
Not rational means it cannot be expressed as a ratio of two integers.

Not expressible as a ratio means it cannot be expressed as a common fraction.

That is, there is no fraction  $a/b = \sqrt{2}$  (where  $a$  and  $b$  are integers).

If we compute  $\sqrt{2}$  with a calculator we will get (if, of course, your calculator has a large read-out):

$\sqrt{2}=1.414213562373095048801688724209698078569671875376948073176679737990732478462107038850387534327641572$

Notice that there is no pattern among the digits; and there is no repetition of groups of digits. Does this mean that all rational fractions will have a period of digits\*? Let's inspect a few common fractions.

$1/7 = 0.142857 \overline{142857}$   $142857 \overline{142857}$  ... , which can be written as:  $0.\overline{142857}$  (a six digit period)

Suppose we consider the fraction  $1/109$   
 $1/109 = 0.009174311926605504587155963302752293577981651376146788990825688073394495412844036697247706422018348623$

Here we have calculated its value to 100 places

and no period appears. Does this mean that the fraction is irrational? This would destroy our nice definition above. We can try to calculate the value a bit more accurately, that is, say, to another 10 places further.

$1/109 = 0.0091743119266055045871559633027522935779816513761467889908256880733944954128440366972477064220183486238532110091$

Suddenly it looks as though a pattern may be appearing, the 0091 also began the period.

We carry out our calculation further to 220 places and notice that in fact 108-digit period emerges.

$1/109 = 0.009174311926605504587155963302752293577981651376146788990825688073394495412844036697247706422018348623853211009174$

If we carry out the calculation to 332 places the pattern becomes clearer.

$1/109 = 0.009174311926605504587155963302752293577981651376146788990825688073394495412844036697247706422018348623853211009174311926605504587155963302752293577981651376146788990825688073394495412844036697247706422018348623853211009174311926605504587155963302752293577981651376146788990825688073394495412844036697247706422018348623853211009174$



We might be able to conclude (albeit without proof) that a common fraction results in a decimal equivalent that has a repeating period of digits. Some common ones we already are familiar with. Such as:

$1/3 = .3333333\overline{3}$   
 $1/13 = 0.0769230769230769230769230769230$

To this point we saw that a common fraction will result in a repeating decimal, sometimes with a very long period (e.g.  $1/109$ ) and sometimes with a very short period (e.g.  $1/3$ ). It would appear, from the rather flimsy evidence so far,

that a fraction results in a repeating decimal and an irrational number does not. Yet this does not prove that an irrational number cannot be expressed as a fraction.

Here is a cute proof that  $\sqrt{2}$  cannot be expressed as a common fraction and therefore, by definition is irrational.

Suppose  $a/b$  is a fraction in lowest terms, which means that  $a$  and  $b$  do not have a common factor.

Suppose  $a/b = \sqrt{2}$ . Then  $a^2/b^2 = 2$ , or  $a^2 = 2b^2$ , which implies that  $a^2$  and  $a$  are divisible by 2; written another way:  $a = 2r$ , where  $r$  is an integer. Then  $4r^2 = 2b^2$ , or  $2r^2 = b^2$ .

So we have  $b^2$  or  $b$  is divisible by 2. This contradicts the beginning assumptions about the fact that  $a$  and  $b$  have no common factor, so  $\sqrt{2}$  cannot be expressed as a common fraction.

Understanding this proof may be a bit strenuous for some students, but a slow and careful step-by-step presentation should make it understandable for most algebra students.#

\* A period of a sequence of digits is a group of repeating digits.

Dr. Alfred S. Posamentier is Dean of the School of Education at City College of NY, author of over 40 books on math including Math Wonders to Inspire Teachers and Students (ASCD, 2003) and Math Charmers: Tantalizing Tidbits for the Mind (Prometheus, 2003), and member of the NYS Standards Committee on Math.

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**Peg Ogden welcomes Israeli President Shimon Peres to the Ogden Lecture series.**

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Several years ago, Shimon Peres, who recently became the president of Israel, was a guest speaker at the Ogden Lectures. Peggy A. Ogden, sister of Stephen Ogden, Jr. is an alumna of Brown University and appears at the Ogden Lectures to represent the family.#

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## PROFILES IN EDUCATION

*Eric Nadelstern, CEO, Empowerment Schools*

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

“The resources are now where they belong,” says Eric Nadelstern, CEO of Empowerment Schools for the NYC Department of Education. No doubt the 496 principals now so empowered, enjoying new “freedom and flexibility,” would agree. The facts on the ground have changed—dramatically—not to mention motivation for both school administrators and their faculty and staff. The empowerment idea, one of eleven autonomy zone and learning support organization initiatives launched by the Chancellor, has been making itself felt as an important psychological as well as structural force for improving teaching, student achievement and accountability. Schools are now grouped into 22 self-selected networks of 20-25 schools, each, with each network having a Network Leader and a support team of four, selected by the principals themselves. The job of the team, Nadelstern says, is “to get to ‘yes’ as quickly as possible when a principal calls with a request or problem as a means of removing obstacles to student success.” No more revolving door delays, top-heavy central bureaucracy, educational outsiders basically making major educational decisions. The inherent principle behind empowerment is power to the principal and partnering with partners of choice.

“By shifting responsibility, resources, authority and accountability from the central office to the schools themselves,” Nadelstern says, and with principals working directly with teachers they hire and community and school representatives they choose, “more students will be more successful.” Empowerment means broader decentralized authority over educational programming and curriculum, greater local discretion over budgets and a significant role for principals in also determining and evaluating their collaborative teams. Is the new philosophy, the new premise, working? Nadelstern, who attended NYC public schools and City College, an educa-

tor who, unlike many others, really knows The System—old and new (half his 37 years were spent as founder and head of the International High School at LaGuardia Community College, the first city school to convert to charter status), cites recent data. Empowerment schools did better than others, citywide, 1.5% on the State ELA Exam, compared with 0.1% for the city, and 8.8% in Math, where the city average was 8.1%. Moreover, Empowerment schools not only outperformed non-Empowerment schools but, in the last year, outperformed themselves!

On the financial front the figures are also telling. Where, under the old structure, schools got 50 cents of the educational dollar, with principals

having discretion over 35 cents, schools now get two-thirds of every dollar, and principals have discretion over 50 cents to work with, over 75% of which goes toward hiring and retaining “innovative and thoughtful teachers.” From the central department’s perspective, the goal is to have principals primarily determine how their school’s budget should be spent. Empowerment has meant nothing less than a change in school culture and school support. How have the principals themselves responded to empowerment? To judge from last year’s questionnaires, alone, Nadelstern says, forms filled out three times a year, the consensus was “satisfaction.” He also points to a number of long-term studies under

way nation wide that show that autonomy-based schools are proving attractive and effective, with New York City out front in development.

The future looks promising for empowerment schools, with a new parents councils in each network taking shape, in collaboration with Family Engagement CEO, Martine Guerrier, that aims to strengthen the 20-25 schools in each network, individually, with each other, and with other networked schools. Plans to share best practices, perhaps online, are also under consideration. Nadelstern does, however, wish that presidential candidates and the media covering the various presidential debates would pay more attention to what’s going on in the small school movement, particularly as No Child Left Behind undergoes reform. Perhaps, after primary day, this primary passion will get the attention it deserves.#



Model used for illustrative purposes only.

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**PROFILES IN EDUCATION: PRESIDENT PAUL LE CLERC**

*New York Public Library: Key to City's Future*

By LISA K. WINKLER

"The New York Public Library must remain a major player in developing human capital in the city," said President Paul LeClerc, noting that other nations are investing heavily in education. "We need to provide services to our clients so New York City can maintain its position as a global leader, he told *Education Update* in a recent interview.

With its 90 branches, more than 14 million visitors, and another 22 million electronic readers, the library continues to address the needs of the city's diverse population. Through surveys and soliciting input from users, the library has strived to deliver to patrons what they want. "It's a lot about shifting attitudes. We no longer just stock a library with what we think it needs. Instead, we try to deliver specific resources to each neighborhood branch," said LeClerc.

The Bronx Library Center, opened a year ago, is an example of how the local population has determined programs and services. Teenagers are using the libraries more than ever, said LeClerc, noting that the library enlists their assistance in planning spaces, including areas for playing music. The idea that libraries and books are the

thing of the past, is a myth, he said. In reality, the libraries and all the activities and resources, are in high demand, serving more than 30,000 school children daily in after school programs and as homework centers. Teens are hired as computer pages to assist patrons with internet and other computer uses.

Rapid technological developments present additional challenges to the library. "Libraries are in the single most important transition period since Gutenberg," said LeClerc, referring to Germany's Johann Gutenberg, credited with inventing the printing press in 1440. "We're in an era of radical change in how information is distributed, and we're seeing a shift in how younger generations access information."

While LeClerc believes books and print materials will continue to thrive, he's adamant about the library strengthening its electronic presence. One idea LeClerc has is to encourage teachers to place curriculum materials on the library's website, granting global access, and establishing interactions, perhaps through blogs, for teachers to further



**I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library.**

-JORGE LUIS BORGES

exchange ideas and materials.

To achieve these goals, LeClerc spends a lot of time raising money. Though the library receives government funding, it functions as a private, non-profit foundation with its own, non-governmental Board of Trustees. LeClerc, with the library since 1993, solicits from donors and corporations, and raises the staggering sum of \$1 million a week. "As a library, we're committed to embracing technology without neglecting the ser-

vice needs of our multiple constituents," he said.

Yet despite a busy fund raising schedule and overseeing one of the largest libraries in the world, LeClerc finds time to read. On a recent jitney from the Hamptons, he read Richard Ford's latest novel, *The Lay of the Land*. On his night table sits David Damrosch's *The Buried Book: The Loss and Rediscovery of the Great Epic of Gilgamesh*.#



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"You know that woman in the neighborhood who takes care of everyone else's children? That was me. What can I say? People have always trusted me with their kids. That's why it didn't surprise anyone that I became a foster/adoptive parent. A friend of mine was in foster parent training, and I decided to go with her to see what the classes were all about. That day changed my life. The class was so awesome, that in 1994, I decided to become a foster/ adoptive parent myself. The staff at Episcopal Social Services has kept me motivated and involved in foster parenting and adoption for the past 13 years. Keeping children with their siblings has been a priority for me, and so far, I have adopted 4 of the children placed with me. Two of them are siblings and I hope to adopt the sibling of another child soon. My kids feel as strongly as I do about keeping siblings together; as a matter of fact, this next adoption was their idea! It's important for people to know that being a foster/adoptive parent takes a lot of work. But, it's also important for people to know that the rewards are far greater than you could ever imagine."



- Shirley

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## COOKE CENTER FOR LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT CELEBRATES 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

By LISA K. WINKLER

For parents of special needs students, navigating the quagmire of government and private services can be an enormous headache and legal nightmare. Through partnerships with schools, its own high school, staff development workshops and other services, The Cooke Center for Learning and Development strives to ensure that special needs students obtain the services they require. Now in its 20th year, the Center advocates programs that maximize the inclusion of special needs students as much as possible in schools and communities. Michael Termini, PsyD, director, discussed the Center's goals and programs in an interview with *Education Update*.



"We work to provide inclusive opportunities, not full inclusion in classrooms," said Termini. "Families who approach the Cooke Center have students who are on the cusp of needs. They're not the classroom at the end of the hall that no one ever sees," he said, explaining that while many students remain in special needs classrooms for part of their school day, they are mainstreamed in general education classes for art, music, lunch, gym, and perhaps other classes.

The Center has established partner schools that serve elementary and middle school students, serving more than 2,000 students, and opened its own high school, the Cooke Center Academy two years ago. "Being in a traditional high school proves more challenging for our students. The changing schedules, the size, and the overall atmosphere aren't conducive for our students to

succeed," said Termini.

Designed to provide both academics and a transition curriculum, or "Transition to Life" the high school serves 75 students and emphasizes internships and life experiences to best prepare students for leaving the school structure. Students take about 35 to 40 trips a year, ranging from museums to grocery stores, to learn life skills. The high school program also requires a service hours, designed to teach students skills necessary for employment. A popular placement, noted Termini, is at *Sports Illustrated* magazine where students work at archiving and cataloguing materials.

Once students have completed high school, the Cooke Center assists families place students in appropriate living situations and counsels on how families can receive support from government agencies. The group home concept, popular for special needs adults, is being re-examined as these become more expensive to operate. Independent living in apartments is preferred. "The goal is always to have the least restrictive environment as possible," said Termini.

Attitudes about the special needs population are changing, said Termini. "More and more educators are realizing the benefit that special needs students get from being included in general education classes, and the benefits general education students receive from having our students there," he said. At Cooke 11 years, Termini recalls visiting a school and seeing a young girl with cerebral palsy struggle up a flight of stairs. Upon reaching the landing, the student, grinning, exclaimed,

## TEACHING READING AT BANK STREET COLLEGE

### WHY JOHNNY CAN'T READ

In a recent lecture at Bank Street College, Richard Allington criticized "we keep doing the same thing, the same way every time and expect a different outcome." The audience laughed, noting the double entendre: the state of Reading Instruction and Government Affairs. As educators, our moral responsibility is to teach children using the research that works.

Two premises have been documented for decades. First, children differ: To search for the one best way to teach kids to read is futile. Secondly, there are about 6-8 distinct profiles of struggling readers. Therefore, intervention designs must be based on empirical research. In order to equalize this system—53% readers who get it right and 47% who get it wrong—we need to assess the quality of instruction and provide struggling readers with more help across the school year.

So what do we need to teach reading? We need small groups, the expertise of a professional teacher, and books kids can and feel motivated to read.

Whole class instruction is the least effective way to teach. It guarantees that the struggling readers will get zero minutes of high success reading instruction. It's been found that the curriculum is over the head of 80 percent of the kids in a 60-minute class. Side by side and individualized teaching that's highly personalized works better reaching over 60 percent of the class. Kids also collaborate better in small groups and help

each other out.

The teacher plays the critical role of both model and coach in reading instruction. They monitor reading by questioning kids and discussing with others their thoughts after reading a text. Teachers coach students to use strategies that help them to read independently. Effective reading instruction requires teachers to be careful observers of the speaking, listening, reading and writing practices students bring to school. With this knowledge, a teacher designs reading instruction that meets the current needs of the whole group, small groups, and individual students. Expert tutoring is also needed for struggling readers.

Children need access to interesting text and books they can read. They feel empowered when they have a choice (or the illusion of choice). This is motivational and assists in students' reading, comprehension and achievement. These texts should engage and allow them to practice recognition and comprehension of unknown words simultaneously. Teachers create fluency problems when books are too difficult to read. Research has found that good readers are interrupted less often than poor readers, who are asked to read aloud. The teacher, either by intonation or using phonics, interrupts the struggling child constantly until he/she gets the word. Allington argues this method is akin to dodging traffic: It is not productive and destroys the kids' memory. A library of good books, book rooms, and a certified reading specialist is also an essential resource, which leads to better reading scores.

As a literacy teacher, our aim is to have kids read fluently, accurately, with a 90-98 percent accuracy of comprehension. We don't need any more studies. If we teach them how to read, there is a reciprocal effect on their ability to write, spell, decode and comprehend their subject matter.#

"Now I'm going to my classroom." That moment he knew he was in the right place. "I felt privileged to be helping provide an education to kids who have to go through so much," he said.#

For more information contact: [info@cookecenter.org](mailto:info@cookecenter.org) or 212-280-4473.



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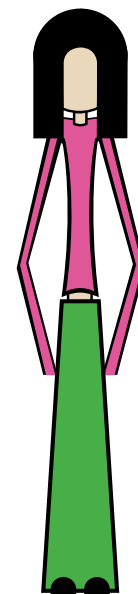
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**FROM THE NYU CHILD STUDY CENTER: ASK THE EXPERT**

***How Can I Help My Child Start School on the Right Foot?***

By GLENN S. HIRSCH, M.D.



Each of my children approached homework in a somewhat different manner. Only one came home immediately after school, took out her books, and plugged away on her own until she finished. A few needed some rest and relaxation time and a bite to eat before starting, and one frequently needed help and supervision. This daughter occasionally forgot her books in school and did not all always write down the homework assignments.

Despite the potential hassles, homework is essential to learning; it allows students to review classroom material, practice academic skills, learn to work independently, and develop organizational skills. Homework is also an important tool for linking parents and teachers.

While there are periodic outcries in the national press that the amount of homework being given to our children is onerous and overly burdensome, most studies suggest that children are not doing enough homework. What is true is that the amount of homework given to children has been increasing at the same time that the demand for time for extracurricular activities is increasing.

Given that homework is here to stay, the most useful approach for parents is to be involved but not intrusive. It is a parent's responsibility to find out what the teachers' expectations are, show interest, provide encouragement, and be available to help out. Remember, helping out does not mean doing the homework.

The following suggestions on how you can help your child complete his/her homework with less stress and frustration are by Susan Schwartz, the Clinical Director of the Institute for Learning and Academic Achievement here at the NYU Child

Study Center.

Choose a specified space and time to do homework. Remove distractors. Help your child concentrate by turning off the television, limiting personal telephone calls, and setting a good example by reading and writing yourself.

Make sure that your child has all the tools and supplies needed to complete work. It is a good idea to accompany your child to an office supply store at the start of each semester to purchase new

school supplies as necessary.

Help your child to set realistic goals regarding how long each assignment may take so that he or she knows that they will also have free time.

Talk about the assignment so your child can figure out what needs to be done. Also, reviewing a completed assignment is helpful. For younger children, it is appropriate to help them with their homework and closely monitor their progress. For children age 12 and over, you may want to leave it up to your child's discretion whether he/she wants help.

If your older child does not ask for help with homework but you notice that he/she is having difficulty, you will want to intervene and help your child get outside supports (i.e., extra-help sessions with a teacher, after-school study sessions, individualized student homework contracts, or a tutor).

Regardless of your child's age, never underestimate the importance and impact of your praise and encouragement on your child's success. Talking about an assignment and showing interest in your child's schoolwork may also help your child maintain his/her motivation and interest.

I hope that the new school year is a successful one in your home.#

*This monthly column provides educators, parents and families with important information about child and adolescent mental health issues. Please submit questions for ASK THE EXPERT to Glenn S. Hirsch, M.D., Medical Director at the NYU Child Study Center at glenn.hirsch@med.nyu.edu. To subscribe to the ASK THE EXPERT Newsletter or for more information about the NYU Child Study Center, visit www.AboutOurKids.org or call 212-263-6622.*

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The New York Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (NYB-IDA) is a non-profit organization that provides information, referrals, training, and support to professionals and families regarding the impact and treatment of people with dyslexia. Each year, we answer the calls of thousands of parents, adults, and professionals seeking advice on what to do and where to turn in their efforts to cope with dyslexia. As the largest branch in New York State focusing solely on dyslexia, we are a key link in connecting families and professionals to information and services.

Wait a minute! I think I'd better back up. Do you know what dyslexia is? Is it the reversal of letters? Is it when we see letters and numbers backwards? I'm here to explain dyslexia. Its effects, scope and range. Let's start with defining the term dyslexia.

Dyslexia is a neurobiological disorder and is characterized by an unexpected difficulty in reading in children and adults who otherwise possess the intelligence, motivation, and educational opportunities to learn. So, you can be really smart and still have difficulty learning to read.

To clarify it further, read on.  
Dyslexia causes people to have difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition as well as poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language. For example, people with dyslexia have trouble with the smallest parts of words, particularly when associating a sound with a letter.

Did you also know that dyslexia represents one of the most common problems affecting children and adults. It affects 85% of all individuals identified as having a learning disability. In the United States the prevalence of dyslexia is estimated to affect up to 20% of the population.

With this many people affected with dyslexia, you can imagine how busy we are. This year alone the NYB-IDA has reached almost 35,000 people. We accomplish this through four main program areas that include our annual conference, professional development, direct services and general awareness and education.

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## REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

*EDUCATION UPDATE's illustrious Advisory Council was asked to contribute memories, advice, reflections on the coming academic year. Speaker Christine Quinn, Councilman Robert Jackson, and Dr. David Goin also contributed.*

## ADVICE TO A YOUNG PERSON STARTING COLLEGE

By BONNIE KAISER, Ph.D.

Oh, mercy! Have the years brought wisdom with the wrinkles for me to dare offer advice to the young?

Could relating my first day at The University of Chicago weeping with my weeping parents—who lived less than an hour away by car for gosh sakes!—touch an emotion that would resonate with anyone else?

Could my sophomore epiphany that I was undergoing some Mobius strip kind of turning inward and then outward help anyone else who might be aware that they, too, were undergoing some kind of metamorphosis?

Could my joy in my third year that I could concentrate on my major and not have to struggle any longer with Aristotle or readings in *The People Shall Judge* help those who are equally eager to get on with the business of becoming USEFUL?

As a transfer student, I had been mitigated from The History of Western Civilization.

What a crime.

So, after I got my Ph.D. in Biochemistry and as a young mom, I audited William McNeill's Art History course. Oh, and as a graduate student, I took a Life Drawing course from Harold Hayden because I missed that part of me that I had been denying in my race to the finish line.

And, I remember staring at the dapper Saul Bellow in the corner drugstore and at Norman Maclean as he trudged by my house while I was clearing the snow, and hearing Milton Friedman lecture, and lunching with a Nobel laureate in chemistry as he conversed with my toddler.

Although I have great respect for my first encyclopedic Biochemistry text by West & Todd, my favorite book that I keep returning to as an adult is *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf.

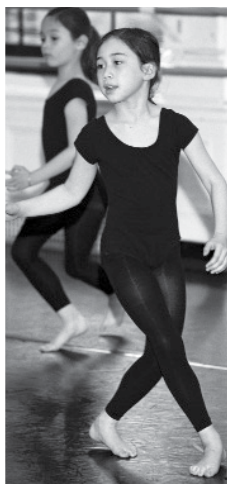
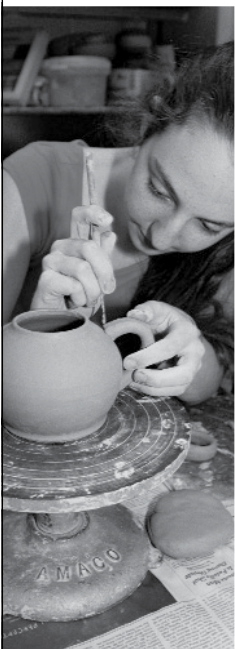
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*Bonnie Kaiser, Ph.D., is Director of the Precollege Program at Rockefeller University.*

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## WELCOME BACK, ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEAGUES!

By MARY BRABECK, Ph.D.

Welcome back, all colleagues in Arts and Sciences who teach the courses that help teachers become high quality educators! I believe that high quality teachers need to love the kids they teach, and to love the subject matter they teach. If teachers love the kids, they will strive to be proficient in the latest methods that research shows are effective in teaching each of the diverse learners in their classes. They will acquire skills in structuring instruction to motivate each student to achieve at high levels. They will take the time to find and help address the non-academic barriers to learning (addictions, poverty, violence, etc.) that impede so many from achieving their potential.

If teachers love their subject matter, they will be as curious about learning math, science, music, history, literature, languages, as they want their students to be. Teacher educators need colleagues in Arts and Sciences to partner with us so that teachers develop deep content knowledge, and ways to continue increasing that knowledge.

Talking with Arts and Science colleagues at NYU, I know many of you want to be involved in teacher preparation. Faculty who are parents want excellent teachers for their children and some understand education issues through spouses who are PreK-12 teachers. Some professors see involvement with teachers as a civic responsibility and seek to understand K-12 state standards for their discipline. Some faculty realize that if PreK-12 students are not prepared in higher order math and sciences, if they do not know history or languages, they will not be ready for our universities, and the United States will lose its place in the world economy because of our entrepreneurial invention and discovery.

So welcome back Arts and Science faculty! Together we will prepare the high-quality teachers our students and our nation need and deserve.#

*Mary Brabeck is Dean, NYU School of Education.*

## REFLECTIONS FROM A CEO

By ERIC NADELSTERN

For the 2007-08 school year, Empowerment Schools in NYC have nearly doubled to 496. Schools are grouped into 22 self-selected networks of 20-25, with a Network Leader and support team of 4 selected by the principals themselves. The job of the team is to get to "yes" as quickly as possible when a principal calls with a request or problem as a means of removing obstacles to student success.

Our student achievement results last year were better than the citywide averages, with

Empowerment Schools improving by 1.5% on the State ELA Exam, as compared to an increase of .1 for all city schools; and, 8.8% on the Math Exam, as compared to 8.1%. Our goal is to demonstrate that by shifting responsibility, resources, authority and accountability from the central office to the schools themselves, more students will be more successful.

Those interested should contact me for further info at [nadelstern@aol.com](mailto:nadelstern@aol.com), or 212-374-6684.#

*Eric Nadelstern is the CEO of Empowerment Schools, NYC.*

## BIBLES FOR A CLASSROOM TEACHER

By ANDREW GARDNER

I would recommend the following books: *Teaching Children to Care*, The First six weeks of School and other books published by the Northeast Foundation for Children (NEFC). These books were bibles for me when I was a classroom teacher, guiding me to set a tone of

order, care and shared ownership within the classroom culture. I still refer to them constantly to help identify best practice for creating a responsive classroom.

*Andrew Gardner is a Technology Teacher & Advisor at The School at Columbia University.*

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<b>Wednesday, November 28</b>	<b>5:30 PM - 7:00 PM</b>
<b>Thursday, December 13</b>	<b>5:30 PM - 7:00 PM</b>
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## FROM NYC CITY COUNCIL MIDDLE SCHOOL INITIATIVES

With **SPEAKER CHRISTINE QUINN** AND **COUNCILMAN ROBERT JACKSON**

**Education Update (EU): What are the most salient advantages of the Middle Schools Initiative for parents, students, teachers, and administrators?**

**Speaker Quinn (CQ) and Councilman Robert Jackson (RJ):** The Middle School Task Force report put forth 39 comprehensive recommendations aimed at improving the learning and academic performance of middle grade students.

While we believe all the recommendations will help improve middle grades education, the most critical recommendations are as follows:

**Middle Grades Leadership**—Establish an effective training model for middle-grade school principals to create stronger instructional leaders.

**Professional Development for Middle-Grades Teachers**—Establish ongoing professional development to make middle-grades teachers more effective instructors and help them encourage student development.

**Recruitment and Retention of Quality Teachers**—Institute specified training in adolescent development for middle-grade teachers and recruit and retain quality teachers, especially in the areas of ESL and content-specific bilingual study.

**Parental Involvement**—Encourage parents to play a larger role in their children's schooling to stimulate academic success and reduce discipline issues.

**Middle Grades Curriculum**—Incorporate rigorous coursework, effective recuperative programs for students left behind, and greater enrichment activities to foster achievement and benefit academic development overall.

**Student Support and Counseling**—Increase access to guidance counselors, support staff and other counseling services for students to help ease their transition into adolescence, which will result in more attentive, successful students.

**Middle Grades Governance & Organization**—Mandate smaller class-sizes and scheduling flexibility to promote healthier learning environments.

**Safety & Discipline**—Establish clear and firm disciplinary practices to elicit positive student behavior and create safe and productive learning environments for students and teachers.

**EU: What is a realistic time frame for the Initiative to be implemented?**

**CQ & RJ:** The Department of Education has already committed to implementing the following Middle School Task Force recommendations as of this school year:

Hired a Director of Middle School Initiatives who is responsible for designing middle school professional development programs, implementing task force recommendations, and maintaining an ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders, including Task Force Members, regarding middle school reforms; Committed five million dollars this year to help 50 high-need schools with middle grades to implement Task Force recommendations; Waived fees for Professional Development for high-needs schools; and Committed to expanding Regents-level courses citywide.

We believe that as discussions continue between the DOE, Task Force Members and other stakeholders, we will see additional recommendations

## FROM A SUPERINTENDENT IN OKLAHOMA

By **DAVID GOIN**

With its emphasis upon monitoring and responding to the performance of student population subgroups, No Child Left Behind has established multiple avenues for schools to be labeled as "failing." But the law also has prompted educators to focus more keenly upon our mission to all students. The response within our school district has been for teachers, administrators and instructional staff to collaborate in very meaningful ways to identify and implement practices that have strengthened support systems for children who are faced with significant learning chal-

lenges. At the same time, the commitment has remained strong to ensure the rigor that is needed to motivate otherwise successful students to achieve at even more advanced levels.

It is the diversity of public schools' student populations coupled with the universality of our mission that both motivates and at times, can exasperate educators. But, the bottom line is that we cannot be satisfied to thrive with certain groups of students to the exclusion of others, for with or without No Child Left Behind our mission is to "empower all students to succeed..."#

implemented citywide in the coming years.

**(EU): How does the Middle School Initiative interface with NCLB?**

**(CQ and RJ):** NCLB is geared towards improving student academic performance, especially for high need, underserved students. The Middle Grades Initiative also focuses on improving student achievement in middle grades, focusing on high-need students first. One of the key components of NCLB is requiring a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. Among the MSTF recommendations are incentives to attract and retain qualified and experienced middle grade teachers to low performing schools, as well as providing professional development to improve the skills of all current classroom teachers. The MSTF report also recommends developing a career ladder as a means of retaining experienced


and qualified teachers, and expanding the lead teacher program which offers mentoring for novice teachers.#



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## United Cerebral Palsy: Pioneers In Improving The Lives Of Others

By ALBERTO CEPEDA

Cerebral palsy is a group of neurological disorders such as that severely affects different parts of the human brain. The disorders are made up of Ataxia, Athetoid, Spasticity or a combination of the three, attacks different aspects of a person's motor skills. These disorders rob people of the ability to do the simplest tasks such as speaking, walking and being able to pick up or hold the smallest of items such as a coin.

For over 57 years, United Cerebral Palsy and its network of affiliates have been striving to improve the quality of life for people of all ages afflicted with Cerebral Palsy.

United Cerebral Palsy, one of the largest networks was founded in 1949 by Leonard Goldenson, the founder of ABC television and renowned New York City businessman and philanthropist Jack Hausman along with their wives Isabelle Goldenson and Ethel Hausman. Both families were not strangers to the disorders as their children Genise Goldenson and Jack

Hausman were born with cerebral palsy. Each family's objective was to create a national organization where parents who had children with cerebral palsy could join in unison to create a support system and build better awareness of the disorder by raising money for research and bringing UCP and its mission to the national forefront.

Before UCP was founded, little was known about cerebral palsy among the medical community. Care and treatment for the disorders were very inadequate. Doctors advised parents who had children with cerebral palsy to place them in isolated institutions.

Since the founding of UCP, millions of dollars have been raised for research in the treatment and prevention of cerebral palsy. UCP has also made tremendous strides within the medical and political communities throughout the years.

In 1971, a vaccine was created for the rubella virus which was responsible for over 20,000 cases of cerebral palsy. UCP also pushed for states to pass laws to improve access to assistive

technology and provide services for people with cerebral palsy.

In 1990, in large part due to the efforts of UCP, then President George H.W. Bush passed the American with Disabilities Act which ensures that people with disabilities are provided with the most fundamental of civil rights.

With over 100 affiliates in 39 states as well as affiliates in foreign countries such as Canada and Australia, UCP continues to provide over 170,000 people with cerebral palsy opportunities in education such as computer training classes, First Aid and CPR classes, sign language classes individual program plans and activities as well as other special services such as, "physical therapy, occupational therapy, behavior management, speech therapy, assistive technology, adaptive therapy, nutritional services, psychology, nursing,

social work, and other such specialty services as described in the Individual Program Plan." according to a UCP spokesman.

There is still work to be done for the cerebral palsy population and people with disabilities in the United States.

According to UCP, "The United Cerebral Palsy Research and Educational Foundation, Cerebral Palsy receives 22 million dollars from the NIH; this is disproportionately low when the relative incidence and prevalence of CP is compared to other conditions with much higher funding and far fewer people affected." Now, fifty eight years after its inception, United Cerebral Palsy has shown a unique and unwavering loyalty in providing people with disabilities the services they need. #

*Alberto Cepeda is an intern at Education Update and a CCNY student.*

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**LAW & EDUCATION**

**STUDENT EXPRESSION:  
BEYOND "BONG HITS"**

By **MARTHA MCCARTHY, Ph.D.**

The Supreme Court in 2007 was asked to review two significant student expression decisions rendered by the Ninth Circuit. The Supreme Court recently reversed one of these rulings in

*Morse v. Frederick*, holding that school authorities could discipline a student for displaying a banner with "Bong Hits for Jesus" when students were released from their high school to cross the street and see the Olympic torch relay. The

Supreme Court recognized the special circumstances in public schools and held that students can be disciplined for expression reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use.

The second Ninth Circuit decision addressed an equally important issue that remains unresolved. This case, *Harper v. Poway Unified School District*, focused on the authority of school personnel to censor expression that is demeaning toward others. The Ninth Circuit upheld a California school district's ban on students wearing t-shirts with disparaging messages about homosexuality, including "Be Ashamed, Our School Embraced What God Has Condemned" and "Homosexuality Is Shameful 'Romans 1:27.'" This school had a history of conflicts pertaining to sexual orientation, and teachers felt that the phrases on the shirt were inflammatory. After Harper refused to change his shirt, he was kept in the office where he completed his work. There

was no disciplinary action, but Harper challenged the ban on wearing the shirt. The appeals court relied on the second prong of *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969), finding that the derogatory statements collided with the rights of others. While many lower courts have relied on *Tinker's* disruption standard (prohibiting student expression that is linked to a disruption of the educational process), this is the first federal appellate court that has based its decision in a free expression case primarily on *Tinker's* prohibition on expression that intrudes on the rights of others. The appeals court held that the shirt at issue infringed on others' rights in the most fundamental manner, because students in public schools should be protected from attacks based on "a core identifying characteristic, such as race, religion, or sexual orientation." The court rejected the assertion that

*continued on page 16*

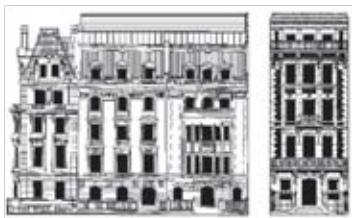
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## PROFILES IN EDUCATION

## SANDRA BENNETT: A PERSONAL WAR ON DRUGS

By SYBIL MAIMIN

Sandra Bennett has learned that “doing the right thing” can be stymied by politics and opposing agendas. After her oldest son, Garrett, a college senior, died of substance abuse in 1986, she

embarked on a personal mission to fight drugs, only to be met by strong, well-financed groups who promote legalization. Moved by the sacrifices of the soldiers from her small town in the state of Washington who serve in Iraq, she began

sending letters of support and then packages, only to read and hear harsh media bashing of the war and, to her mind, undermining of the troops. Bennett thinks her compassion and generosity were fostered by her mother who, she remembers, praised her for giving her bag of candy to a poor woman one Halloween when she was only three years old. Bennett does not consider gifts that “do not have meaning to the donor” as genuine giving. She recommends extending time and energy to help others.

A true crusader, she believes she is fighting two wars—against drugs and to make the world safer. In her letters to soldiers in Iraq she often refers to “the war on this front, too—drugs.” In addition to expressions of appreciation and warm, folksy chat about life and family, she adds, “My passion is drug prevention.” Her frustration is evident in, “For whatever reason, the media has chosen to ignore the fact that more than 16,000 American youngsters die every year from the use of illegal psychoactive and addictive substances.” Her packages often include Educating Voices, Inc.’s anti-drug playing cards. This determined woman, who has researched and gotten a handle on soldiers’ needs and how to reach them, explains, “Iraq is not like WW II and the Vietnam War where our troops slept in ditches for weeks on end.” Most troops live “behind the lines” in various kinds of “housing” and have some electricity and computer access. Her packages include computer games, microwave popcorn, and DVDs as well as candy, toothpaste, sun block, and socks. She is proud of the thank you notes she receives and sees them as reminders of the importance of support. A long, moving letter from 1st Lt. Jason Blackston in Iraq says, “I am impressed with your willingness to share your hearts with a complete stranger.” Describing giving candy from her package to local children, this soldier muses, “The kids tell the whole story...It breaks my heart that I could give everything I have and not make a dent in their need.” Bennett finds soldier contact information on several Web sites including America Supports You.mil. “That Web page should be in every newspaper daily,” she suggests. “People don’t know how to help.”

To bolster her war against addictive substances, Bennett makes radio and TV appearances, edits and writes articles, gives legal testimony, has



appeared before Congressional committees, volunteers for advocacy organizations, speaks to parents, students, and medical personnel, and has been president of Drug Watch International. She sees a dangerous shift in the culture. “Unless you’re in this line of work, you have no idea of what is going on.” She explains, “Treatment rather than prevention is the buzzword.” Drug prevention education should start early, yet DARE, a formerly popular police sponsored program, is no longer in the schools. “Nearly every college campus has a pro-drug club.” Her particular *bete noir* and biggest challenge is those who would legalize marijuana for medical use. Bennett believes “medicalization” has been chosen strategically as the best route to gain eventual general acceptance of the drug. Heavily funded organizations such as Drug Policy Alliance, Open Society, and HEMP are experiencing successes as medical marijuana is now legal in 12 states (not New York). Bennett sees marijuana as “a gateway drug” that breaks the barrier between legal and illegal activities. She is frustrated by a “manipulative” media and the power of money to influence legislators. She continues fighting and looks forward to a world of “drug-free, healthy cultures.”#

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## School Spending Increases to \$106M

The city’s Department of Education will spend \$106 million to hire 1,300 teachers and create 400 new classrooms next year. The increased spending to reduce class size is a result of an additional \$700 million in state education funding that came after a long legal battle. About a third of the total amount has been set aside for collective

bargaining contracts and special education. The city also plans to use \$57 million for instructional time for students, \$44 million for professional development for teachers and principals, \$20 million for middle and high school restructuring and \$294,000 for expanding full-day pre-kindergarten slots.

## “Bong Hits”

continued from page 15

injurious slurs interfering with the rights of others cannot be barred unless they also are disruptive. In 2007, the Supreme Court vacated the Ninth Circuit’s decision with instructions for the appeal to be dismissed as moot because the district court had entered a final judgment dismissing the claims. Thus, the Supreme Court did not address the merits of the case, leaving resolution of these sensitive issues for another day.

Given the important role of public schools in transmitting fundamental values, including respect and civility toward others, it might follow that the Supreme Court will uphold an anti-harassment provision that protects vulnerable groups of students from ridicule by classmates. But how to balance these important interests against competing free expression rights presents a significant challenge that the Supreme Court may try to avoid at least for a while longer.#

Martha McCarthy is Chancellor’s Professor and chair of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Indiana University.





## Digital History in a Digital Age

BY LESLEY HERRMANN

If you were walking the streets of Manhattan during the last week of July there's a good chance you ran into groups of camera-toting, wide-eyed out-of-towners. Of course, there's nothing unusual about such a sighting—summer in the city is the high season for tourists—but among the ordinary vacationers were twenty-six American history educators, armed with digital cameras, determined to revolutionize the way American history is taught.

The teachers were in town for *Teaching Digital History*, a competitive application seminar hosted by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History ([www.gilderlehrman.org](http://www.gilderlehrman.org)) and funded with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Led by Steven Mintz, a professor of history at the University of Houston and the creator of the popular education website Digital History ([www.digitalhistory.uh.edu](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu)), the seminar instructed teachers on how to use the Internet effectively, conduct primary source research online, and create projects with their students using cutting edge photo, video, and editing technology. By the end of the seminar, the participants, many of whom had no previous experience in multimedia technology, had created short documentaries on different aspects of American history. This hands-on assignment required participants to do online research to find images and write the script for their presentation, with the goal of teaching the same skills to their students.

Promoting the study and love of American history is the core of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's mission. For too many high school students, U.S. History classes are dull marches through dusty textbooks, but by bringing new technologies into the classroom, combined with a primary source document-based approach to teaching history, students at all levels can produce creative

responses to the past, engaging American history in ways unimaginable just a few years ago.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute has long been at the forefront of using new media to foster American history education. *History Now* ([www.historynow.org](http://www.historynow.org)), the Institute's quarterly online journal which was recently selected by the NEH as one of the best online resources for education in the humanities, features historical scholarship and classroom resources for teachers of all grade levels. The Institute features online exhibitions on its website, and creates multimedia classroom materials in its acclaimed *History in a Box* series. Today's students are creative and technologically savvy—skills that will serve them well both in the classroom and in the workforce. At the Gilder Lehrman Institute, we believe that teachers and students should expand American history beyond the textbook, and upgrade teaching for our digital age.

*Lesley S. Herrmann is the Executive Director of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. She has spearheaded the Institute's efforts to promote the study of American history and improve the quality of history education since 1994, creating summer seminar programs for high school and middle school teachers, National Park Service rangers and museum educators; designing a network of more than thirty American history programs in high schools across the United States; and producing dozens of American history publications, online resources, and traveling exhibitions for students and teachers.*

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### The Club Of Queer Trades

by G.K. Chesterton  
 Dover, \$7.95

G.K. Chesterton noted for his Father Brown stories and *The Man Who Was Thursday* among his fiction works as well as a noted essayist for *The Everlasting Man* and *Orthodoxy*, in 1905 penned a series of unusual stories that he linked together with the final story of the collection to construct, what is called these days, a novella titled *The Club Of Queer Trades*. The hero of this collection is Basil Grant, a retired judge who figures out the mysteries of each story. His fellow participants in these adventures are Rupert Grant, his younger brother and amateur sleuth and Charles Swinburne, a friend and the stories' narrator. From the 'The Tremendous Adventures of Major Brown' when a retired major becomes embroiled in someone else's gruesome fantasy, 'The Singular Speculation of the House Agent', where the trio track down a retired lieutenant to the countryside where he is living in a tree house, he found through a House Agent who deals in tree house rentals and purchases to 'The Awful Reason Of The Vicar's Visit' where what is told may not be what really is, the reader is led on an intriguing maze that seems to have no rhyme or reason until the final story, 'The Eccentric Seclusion of the Old Lady' where the pieces of the puzzle come together and the reader finds out about the Club of Queer Trades.

Chesterton's writing flows smoothly whether

it is narrative or dialogue and he has constructed stories that keep the reader wondering what will happen next. Do find out Come over to Logos and get your copy of *The Club Of Queer Trades*. While you are up here check other writings of Chesterton like the Father Brown stories, *The Man Who Was Thursday*, *Four Faultless Felons*, *The Napoleon Of Notting Hill*, *The Man Who Kew Too Much* and *Paradoxes Of Mr. Pond* for fiction, and *The Everlasting Man*, *Heretics*, *Orthodoxy*, *Tremendous Trifles* and *What's Wrong With The World* for nonfiction.

There are plenty of other good books as well as fine greeting cards, music and gift items and appropriate gift selections for Rosh Hashanah. Check the schedule below to see what is happening this fall at Logos!

### Upcoming Events At Logos Bookstore

Tuesday, September 4 and Tuesday, September 18, 2007 at 7 P.M., Sit-n- Knit, Logos' resident knitting group meets.

Wednesday, September 5, 2007 at 7 P.M., KYTV Reading Group will discuss *March* by Geraldine Brooks.

Monday, September 10, 2007 at 7 P.M. The Sacred Texts Group led by Richard Curtis will discuss *Jesus/Sermon on The Mount* and more.

Wed., October 3, 2007 at 7 P.M., KYTV Reading Group will discuss *The Fall Of The House of Usher* and *Other Writings* by Edgar Allan Poe.

Transit: 4,5,6 Subways to Lexington Avenue and 86th St, M86 Bus (86th St.), M79 Bus (79th St.), M31 Bus (York Ave.), M15 Bus (1st & 2nd Aves.)



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### POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OFFERS GRADUATE TUITION SCHOLARSHIP FOR EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS TO ENHANCE MATH & SCIENCE TRAINING IN SCHOOLS

In his bestselling book, *The World Is Flat*, Tom Friedman writes "By any measure, our students are falling behind the rest of the world, especially in math and science." This quote underscores the decline in U.S. education in the arenas of math and science and exposes a critical need for the system's improvement.

It is key, therefore, that we redouble our efforts in engaging students in these subjects, and also show them the multitude of career opportunities available with advanced training in math, science, engineering, and technology. It is in this spirit that Polytechnic University

provides the educational community with a special graduate scholarship designed with this urgency and the needs of educators in mind.

In recognition of the fact that New York schools need to keep their teachers and staff on the cutting edge of their fields, particularly in the arenas of Math and Science, Polytechnic University is pleased to announce the Scholarship for Teachers and Education Professionals.

This scholarship entitles teaching and educational professionals working in grammar schools, middle

and junior high schools, high schools and college a 50% tuition scholarship on graduate education at Polytechnic University. This is a tremendous opportunity for teachers and for other educational professionals who are seeking an advanced degree.

The NYS Dept. of Education now requires all science teachers with a BS in science and an MA in education to take 12 additional graduate course credits in the branch of science in which they are teaching. For example, high school Chemistry teachers who do not have a MS in Chemistry will be required take 12 graduate credits

in Chemistry.

Teachers and other educational persons at all levels are invited to take advantage of this career-building opportunity. Interested persons can apply to Polytechnic University at [www.poly.edu/graduate](http://www.poly.edu/graduate). Once admitted, applicants will need to submit proof of employment in the form of a letter from the school district in which they work. #

To learn more about this scholarship and the Power of PolyThinking visit: [www.poly.edu/graduate/edscholarship](http://www.poly.edu/graduate/edscholarship).

### UI&U ANNOUNCES NEW ED.D. PROGRAM

Since 1964, Union Institute & University has taken a different approach to higher education. UI&U is a nationally recognized, accredited university with programs of study leading to bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees. All programs combine flexibility, interdisciplinary studies, a concern for social relevance, and innovative collaborative learning. UI&U is particularly excited to announce the launch of their new Doctor of Education Program (Ed.D.). The program is designed for working adults who are interested in advancing their career in education, leadership as well as enhancing their skills. Union Institute & University is the ideal place for those who want to make a difference in the lives of their students. The Ed.D. Program is based at UI&U's headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio, and learners are coming from all over the country to pursue this low-residency doctoral degree.

The field of education is understood to be interdisciplinary in that educational issues draw from academic study in a number of related fields such as: history, public policy and political science, leadership and organizational studies, and more. The Ed.D program retains and strengthens the institution's long-standing commitment to interdisciplinary learning, which is grounded firmly in the belief that learners must examine the knowledge base and approach to discovery of more than a single academic discipline.

#### Engagement of Differences

Related to the concern for social justice, an additional goal of the Ed.D program is for learners to acquire advanced understanding of the complex issues (historical, sociological, psychological, political, philosophical, and ethical) related to the presence of difference among individuals and a complex array of alternative identities and social groups. Grounded in studies within the humanities and social sciences, a related and equally important goal associated with the study of difference is to explore the various possibilities for engaging and addressing difference. The issues and possibilities explored include assimilation, mutual understanding, dissent and resistance, tolerance and accommodation, mutual respect, separatism, opposition, cooperation, discursive communication, negotiation and compromise, conflict, matters of translation and possible reconcilability or irreconcilability, synthesis and transformation.

#### Serving Educational Professionals

Union Institute & University's Ed.D program is designed to serve education professionals in two ways. First, learner's academic activities will focus on real world problem-solving and interactive learning that values and builds on their professional experience and prior knowledge. Second, the Ed.D curriculum is presented within a hybrid model that combines intensive face-to-face academic residencies, professional development practice, and utilizes online learning.

The UI&U Doctor of Education program's mission is to serve learners and help them acquire advanced scholarship in the field and to assist them as they develop the skills and attributes necessary to become effective researchers and professionals in their area of specialization, either Educational Leadership or Higher Education. Additionally, the program has a strong emphasis on social justice, focusing on developing leaders who can also serve as change agents, affecting, modeling, and improving the education systems.

UI&U Ed.D. staff and faculty encourage those interested to call to learn more at 800-486-3116, 513-861-6400 or email them at [doctoraladmissions@tui.edu](mailto:doctoraladmissions@tui.edu).

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## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S SEAT



## Every Grade is the Opportunity for a Fresh Start

By DR. CAROLE G. HANKIN With RANDI T. SACHS

One of the greatest advantages that children have is the opportunity each September to begin again with a new teacher, a new set of classmates, and a new determination to make some positive changes and try some new experiences.

Unlike the often short-lived New Year's resolutions we might make in January, plans for change made at the start of a new school year have much greater potential for success for a number of reasons. First, children and teens often experience a surge in growth both physically and socially over the summer. You can help encourage them to initiate changes by praising them on how much they've matured.

The beginning of the school year is a time that your children will receive many notices and information about school activities, community programs, auditions for musical groups, try-outs for sports groups, and more. Help your child keep track of all the programs that may be of interest. Now is the time to reevaluate whether to continue with former programs or try something new.

Extra-curricular activities can be as important to a child's development as academics. Encourage your children to become involved in a group or organization that will help them to pursue their interests, hone their talents, and broaden their knowledge. Discuss the range of offerings with your children before they can make decisions based more on their friend's preferences than their own.

September is also the time to make sure that practices that caused your child difficulty last semester are not repeated. Did you have concerns over last-minute homework preparation? Take the time to set up a homework schedule. Was there a subject that gave your child consistent trouble? Don't wait for that to happen again. Arrange now for your child to receive extra help or private tutoring. Many schools offer peer tutoring by Honor Society members, and it's your child's for the asking.

School is unquestionably the center of your children's social lives, and conflict with peer relationships can often overshadow successes in academics. The older your child, the less likely he or she is to share these problems with you if they occur, therefore you need to be as observant as you can without intruding in your teen's privacy. Express your hopes that your children will make some new friends this year. Once parents can no longer make play dates for their children our direct influence in selecting their friends is strongly diminished, but your teens can still benefit from your guidance and your calm, subjective observations. Initiate conversations about their friendships, they may hear more of what you say than they appear to.

Above all, help your children to start the new school year with a positive attitude and the knowledge that you will do all that you can to help them to succeed academically, to participate in the activities that are important to them, and to enable them to enjoy spending time with good friends and family, too.#



## How To Register New K-2 Students For School And Expanded Bus Service

By MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG

If you happen to be new to New York City, or your child is new to the public school system, and you don't know which school he or she should attend, you can go to one of 15 student registration centers around the City. Call 311 or visit the City's web site at [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov) to learn more about the process and to find a registration center convenient to you.

Our Department of Education is also taking extra steps this year to make sure that more students will be able to ride school buses, and that

they all get to school, and home again, safely.

Last school year, more than 51,000 public school general education students in kindergarten through 6th grade rode school buses. They were joined by thousands more special education students of all ages, as well as by nearly 30,000 students attending religious, private, and charter schools. Every student eligible for a school bus seat last year and who is still in those lower grades will remain eligible this year, too, unless their families have moved so close to school that students don't need transportation help.

*continued on page 21*

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# MEDICAL UPDATE



New York City • SEPTEMBER 2007  
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS & STUDENTS

• 21

## NYU CANCER INSTITUTE HAS A UNIQUE UNDERSTANDING OF CANCER—& CANCER PATIENTS

NYU Cancer Institute brings together the vast resources of NYU Medical Center to offer advanced cancer research and treatment. Dedicated to understanding cancer and reducing its occurrence by accelerating innovation, NYU Cancer Institute strives to surround patients and families with the support they need to maintain as normal a life as possible while fighting the disease. As one of the few National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer centers in the region, NYU Cancer Institute offers access to the latest research, treatment options, technology and clinical trials. Its multidisciplinary team of experts may offer surgical, radiation, chemotherapeutic, biologic and/or investigational therapies designed to address each indi-

vidual's specific type of cancer and situation. This approach to cancer care is complemented by a wide variety of programs in cancer prevention, screening and diagnostics. Patients and families also have the benefit of counseling for mental health, nutrition and genetics, as well as individual and group support. Patient care is centered in two Manhattan locations: NYU Clinical Cancer Center, 160 East 34th Street, and the Stephen D. Hassenfeld Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders, 160 East 32nd Street. NYU Clinical Cancer Center provides a single location for treatment programs, advanced technology, physician offices, clinical research and a full range of support services to offer compre-

hensive and convenient care for adult patients. The recently expanded Hassenfeld Children's Center provides pediatric cancer care in a setting that meets the special needs of children and families. The Hassenfeld Center is nationally recognized for combining innovative treatment with groundbreaking child-life and emotional support programs. As a member of the Children's Oncology Group (COG), the leading consortium of pediatric cancer centers in the United States, the Hassenfeld Center is able to offer a variety of treatment options and clinical trials. NYU Cancer Institute, as part of NYU Medical Center, has earned a reputation for providing the highest-quality care. NYU Medical Center was awarded the prestigious Magnet Award for

nursing excellence from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, the country's leading nursing accrediting and credentialing organization.

Only two percent of the nation's hospitals have won this award. NYU Medical Center is also ranked among the top 50 hospitals nationwide in the Leapfrog Hospital Quality and Safety Survey, a national data-based rating

...maintain as normal a life as possible while fighting the disease.

system endorsed by the National Quality Forum. # To learn more about NYU Cancer Institute's unique understanding of cancer and cancer patients, visit [www.nyuci.org](http://www.nyuci.org) or call 212-731-5000. For specific information about children's cancer care, visit [www.med.nyu.edu/hassenfeld](http://www.med.nyu.edu/hassenfeld) or call the Stephen D. Hassenfeld Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at 212-263-8400.

## CCNY, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Team Receives \$1.36 Million For Breast Cancer Research Using Near-Infrared Light

A team of researchers from The City College of New York (CCNY) and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) has received a grant of \$1.36 million over four years from the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Breast Cancer Research Program to evaluate whether near-infrared light can be used to detect and diagnose breast cancer and assess tumor aggressiveness.

Breast cancer is the second-leading cause of death among women in the United States and other industrialized countries. If the researchers are successful, their techniques could provide a more accurate alternative to current diagnostic methods that use x-ray mammography, sonogram and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

"Our goal is to use near-infrared light to get images of tumors and try to determine whether they are malignant or benign," said Swapan Gayen, Professor of Physics and principal investigator for the project. "We also want to be able to distinguish between slow and fast-growing breast tumors, and assess how rapidly tumors are growing."

Another aim of the program is to build a strong breast cancer research program at City College that would draw on wide-ranging expertise in such fields as biology, tissue engineering and medical research, Professor Gayen added. "We will be able to train students and researchers in the biology and technology of modern breast cancer research."

Mammograms detect the possible presence of a tumor in a woman's breast. However, they cannot be used to diagnose the condition. Usually, doctors must perform a biopsy, an invasive procedure that can be a source of anxiety for patients, in order to make a diagnosis. However, in 80 percent of cases no tumors are found, Professor Gayen noted.

With near-infrared light, researchers can change the wavelength and color of the light to detect different types of molecules found in the breast such as hemoglobin, lipids, proteins and water. "It's essentially molecular spectroscopy, and it provides diagnostic potential," Professor Gayen added. "MRI can provide similar information, but it is more expensive and not readily available."#

## Mayor Bloomberg

continued from page 20

In addition, new DOE rules this school year will make it easier for more of our youngest students to qualify for bus service. For the first time, every student in kindergarten through second grade who lives a half-mile or more from school will be eligible for bus service, if their parents or guardian request it, and if the school is in their home district and has existing school bus service. In years gone by, students also had to live within a quarter-mile of an existing school bus stop in order to qualify for bus service; this year, that requirement has been dropped. To register youngsters for bus service, or find out about bus stops and routes, or answer other questions, you should go to the principal's office in your child's school. And remember: If you're not eligible for bus service, please make other plans to get your

children to school.

Safety in school, and on our school buses, is a basic right for students. So this year, the Department of Education also will have more investigators assigned to promptly review complaints of disorderly behavior by students, drivers, and monitors on the buses, and to see that infractions are punished. The procedures for investigating such complaints have been tightened up, and DOE officials have made sure that the companies operating school buses, and the union representing their employees, understand the new rules.

A quintessential New Yorker, Woody Allen, once said that '80 percent of success is showing up.' There's a lot of truth to that—and because we want all our students to succeed, our Department of Education is taking these new steps to help our youngest students show up for school safely, and on time, every day of the new school year.#

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## SPORTS

## Staten Island High School Student Sports Star: An Interview with Dillon McNamara

**Education Update (EU):** When did you start to play baseball?

**Dillon McNamara (DM):** I first started playing baseball for Mid-Island Little League when I was about 6 years old.

**EU:** Who was your first teacher and/or mentor in sports?

**DM:** My first teacher/mentor was my father. He coached me throughout Little League and is still my main influence in athletics today.

**EU:** How many hours of practice daily does it take to keep in shape?

**DM:** During baseball season I practice for at least 2 hours a day; and during this upcoming basketball season it's probably going to be around 3 or 4 hours daily. We practice before and after school hours.

**EU:** What positions have you played and what is your best position?

**DM:** For basketball I play both forward positions and center. For baseball I play all over the place; catcher, first base, third base, outfield and, my best position, pitcher.

**EU:** How tall are you? Does your height give you an advantage and how?

**DM:** I am 6'4, and yes, it definitely gives me an advantage. A misconception about height is that it gives you a reason to be lazy but, still be good. When in reality it actually gives you more of a reason to work and work and work, so that your size isn't put to waste. Size is important when it comes to sports, but hard work is a necessity.

**EU:** Where have you traveled to play and what teams have you been looking at?



**DM:** I've traveled to Pennsylvania, Florida and all over New York and New Jersey. In Florida my team got the opportunity to play against teams from different countries, which was very fun. However I have never actually been out of the country under any circumstances. I will also be attending different showcases in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

**EU:** Do you plan to go to college? If so, which ones?

**DM:** I definitely plan on going to college, as to which one I'm not quite sure yet.

**EU:** Would you like to go professional in the future?

**DM:** I would love to go professional in the future. There hasn't been a day in my life when I haven't thought about it. As to how realistic my chances are, if I keep working hard anything is possible.

**EU:** What other sports do you play?

**DM:** I play baseball, and basketball. I was going to play football in my sophomore year but, my dad and the Athletic Director of my high school (Moore Catholic High School) thought I would be better off focusing on two sports.

**EU:** Which sports figure do you most admire? Why?

**DM:** I most admire Roger Clemens because he has always been a great competitor, he intimidates his competition and, lastly, because he can't quit something he loves. If I was in his situation I don't think I would be able to stop either.

**EU:** What classes are you taking in school this year?

**DM:** This year I will be taking Math B and Pre-Calculus, Physics, AP English, AP United States History and Italian Level 12.

**EU:** What's your favorite subject?

**DM:** My favorite subject is easily Global History, I find the past and how far we have advanced more interesting than the future.#

## 4th Grader Runs 3 Miles in New Jersey



By DR. POLA ROSEN

Emily Wertheimer, a 4th grader at the South Mountain School in Millburn, New Jersey ran 3 miles recently. As Emily demonstrated, running can not only enhance your physical well-being but also increase math skills. As Emily said, "Three miles is equivalent to 5 kilometers."

What a great way to start the school year: exercise and learn math at the same time!

## MUSIC, ART &amp; DANCE

## NEW GUIDE HELPS PARENTS SUPPORT ARTS EDUCATION IN THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL

The Center for Arts Education (CAE), the leading voice in restoring and revitalizing the arts in New York City public schools, is offering a FREE guide for parents just in time for back-to-school. My Child, the Arts and Learning: A Guide for Parents PreK to Second Grade, gives parents the information they need to advance and support arts education in their child's school and to help them understand how they can make a difference.

Most American parents believe that arts education is central to a top quality education and most want more arts education in the schools. Research shows that children who participate in the arts do better in other subjects. The arts have been shown to foster literacy and math skills, as well as strengthen verbal and nonverbal communication, critical thinking, intercultural understandings, team building and leadership skills.

"Arts have traditionally been regarded as the pinnacle of a culture's achievement; it is so important that this traditional educational function continue in our schools," said New York City Councilman Robert Jackson. "This Guide is an exciting tool to remind parents and educators that arts education plays an important role and it is helpful in showing them that how they support it."

The Guide offers parents helpful tips and covers key issues for parents including:

- How the arts fit into your child's education
- How your child can benefit from the arts
- It's the LAW: The Arts are for Every Child

- What to look for in your child's school
- How YOU can support the arts

"This guide is an indispensable tool for any parent. It clearly outlines the important place of art in a child's intellectual, emotional, and social development," said Daniel O'Donnell, New York State Assembly. "It recommends how parents—even busy ones—can get involved in their children's arts education at school, at home and in the community."

The Parent Guide will be distributed to 300 NYC public schools the first week of September, all parents have to do is ask for one at their child's school. It will also be made available to download in several different languages from [www.cae-nyc.org](http://www.cae-nyc.org).

The Center for Arts Education (CAE) is committed to restoring, stimulating, and sustaining quality arts education as an essential part of every child's education. CAE provides information and resources that demonstrate the benefits of and need for arts education as part of a quality, balanced education. CAE also identifies, funds, and supports exemplary partnerships and programs that demonstrate how the arts contribute to learning and student achievement. CAE is dedicated to influencing educational and fiscal policies that will support arts education in all of the City's public schools. Since its founding in 1996, CAE has awarded nearly \$40 million in private and public funding to support arts education partnerships and programs.#

## MOVIE REVIEW

## AUSTEN IN THE MOVIES: LESSONS FOR ALL

By JAN AARON

Sometimes movies can be teacher's tools. So at the start of the new school year, the following are two movies about Jane Austen to consider vis-à-vis the classroom:

Julian Jarrold's *Becoming Jane*, which has been playing a while, is a nicely done British import about the young Austen starring the American actor Anne Hathaway with a finely tooled British accent. Taking the few facts known about the brief encounter between the novice novelist and a charming Irishman, Tom Lefroy (James McAvoy), the screenplay by Sarah Williams and Kevin Hood, creates a scenario that is almost identical to *Pride and Prejudice* and subsequent novels. In their script, Austen's romance is doomed, within the strict mores of the era. The movie's ending is particularly interesting as we catch up with Austen and Lefroy in their later years.

Featuring fantastic scenery (Ireland standing in for rural England), this romantic movie might get students interested in reading Austen and keeping their own diaries.

Less interesting, but still useful to teaching, *The Jane Austen Book Club* (opening September 21) is based on the famous Karen Jay Fowler novel of the same name. It features five women and one man who meet once a month to discuss the six works in the Austen canon. The notion in the book and Robin Swicord's movie is this: There is very little in life today that can't be found within Austen's output. Could this idea inspire classroom study of Austen?

The story confronts mature problems suitable



for students in high school or older. Set in contemporary California, it starts when good friends, Jocelyn (Maria Bello) and Bernadette (Kathy Baker) persuade Sylvia (Amy Brenneman) and her lesbian daughter, Allegra, (Maggie Grace) to organize an Austen book club to distract the long-married Sylvia from her recent divorce. Deciding to read one book a month, they add Prudie (Emily Blunt) still struggling with memories of a terrible mother, and a lone male Grigg (a miscast Hugh Dancy). Initially he irritates the women but, with wit and wisdom, he wins them over. Their meetings are more than literary discussions; they mirror the participants' emotions and lives.

Austen, of course, was an assured story-teller, sharply creating characters we long to know about. Here, we follow the book club members for momentary delights. Still we might find guidance in Austen for our lives.

## Get Your Child Ready For A Successful School Year

By DR. RAYMOND J. HUNTINGTON

For many students, going back to school is an exciting occasion—a chance to make new friends, embark on new extra-curricular activities and take on new responsibilities. For all students—including those who may have struggled through the last semester—it's also a chance for a fresh start toward academic success. Here are some key steps parents and caregivers can take to prepare them for the journey ahead.

**Step One:** Schedule a conference with your child's teachers.

Whether you attend an "open house" or schedule a one-on-one conference, you should meet with your child's teachers. Ensure that they have contact information for you and encourage them to call or email you to discuss your child's progress during the year. Most teachers will also appreciate a brief recap of your child's educational experiences to date, such as any major successes or stumbling blocks along the way. Did your child score off the charts in mathematics? Did he or she require extra tutoring to improve

reading comprehension? Providing a snapshot of your child's educational "resume" will help the teacher personalize instruction to suit your child's special needs.

**Step Two:** Look out for key benchmarks on the academic calendar.

In the early fall, many school districts administer important tests to gauge students' preparedness for the months ahead. By talking with your child's teachers and/or going to the Department of Education Web site for your state, you can usually find out which tests will be given to students by grade level, and when. You can find out the key subject matter that will be tested, and when you should expect to see your child's results. Keep in mind that these tests are not given simply to see how your child "measures up." They're offered as a diagnostic tool for revealing academic strengths and weaknesses. Understanding these strengths and weaknesses in the fall will help you and your child prepare for the higher stakes tests given in the spring—the results of which may be factored into decisions about grade advancement

and graduation.

**Step Three:** Raise the bar on expectations.

Whether your child is an excellent, capable or struggling student, earning the best possible grades should be one of the most important goals. This means envisioning certain targets and committing to the hard work it takes to reach them. If your child had relatively good study habits, worked moderately hard and earned "B's and "C's" last year, set a goal to earn all "A's and "B's" this year. In most schools, this GPA level will qualify for the honor roll and signify that your child is performing at grade level, and is well-prepared for increasingly difficult work. If your child is already an "A/B" student, set a goal to earn all "A's and do everything possible to help achieve that goal. If your child struggled last year and ended up with "C's and "D's, talk with teachers right now about the subject areas that proved most troublesome so they can shape their instruction and find the extra help your child will need.

**Step Four:** Establish a learning schedule.

The beginning of the school year is also a good time to establish parameters for homework. Setting aside a designated period of time after school or in the early evening that is to be used only for schoolwork is a strategy that has been proven effective for countless students over the years. There are several factors that can influence the decision about which time is best. Some children, for example, may complete homework more successfully by beginning immediately

after school, leaving the rest of the late afternoon and evening for other activities. Others may need time to "wind down" after being in school all day before they're relaxed and focused enough to complete homework successfully.

**Step Five:** Balance learning time and leisure time.

You should also think through the right balance of academics and extracurricular activities. Keeping in mind the significant amount of study time most children need to make good grades, take a look at all of the other activities that your child wants to fit into his or her day. Have a frank discussion to determine which activities are most important to your child, and see if you can arrive collaboratively at a decision about which should be pursued. Then see if you can also determine, together, the best time to be set aside for studying in the midst of these activities.

While it's important to set and maintain a schedule throughout the year, most high-achieving students also plan ahead to ensure they have enough flexibility to fit in extra effort that may be needed during high-pressure periods, such as the approach of mid-term and final exams. By establishing the right environment at home and a strong, positive connection to what's happening at school, you can give your child a head start that will drive success all year long.#

*Dr. Raymond J. Huntington and Eileen Huntington are co-founders of Huntington Learning Center*

### PARENT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH VOLUNTEERISM

When Learning Leaders was founded in 1956, the organization had to challenge the perception that parents had no place in their children's schools. For a decade parents were barred from volunteering in schools where their children were enrolled. Subsequent decades of research, however, have documented that parent engagement in their children's education has wide-reaching benefits for students, teachers and parents themselves. Learning Leaders is now New York City's New York City Department of Education's primary partner in fostering parent engagement. The organization developed its expertise in parent engagement in response to this research and the unique needs of the city's public schools.

Learning Leaders initially trained volunteers to offer aid to overextended teachers. As programs stretched from a single Manhattan school to schools throughout the five boroughs with growing immigrant populations, varying language needs, and disparate academic challenges, demand for volunteers grew. In response, by the 1960s principals began asking Learning Leaders to train, supervise and incorporate their school's parents into volunteer programs.

Learning Leaders discovered a highly effective model for parent engagement—inviting parents into schools as volunteers (as tutors, classroom helpers, office assistants) made them part of the school community. Parents became more comfortable talking to their children's teachers and each other. They grew eager for knowledge about the school system, advice on how to facilitate their children's education at home, and motivated to pursue their own educational and professional goals.

In the ensuing years, Learning Leaders created training programs geared specifically towards parents. Beginning in 1994, Family Literacy workshops were offered to help parents in inner-city neighborhoods become more effective and confident reading with their children. By 2000, when No Child Left Behind spawned the DOE's Children First reforms in New York City, and parent engagement became a nationwide education priority, Learning Leaders had established itself as an expert in involving parents in the schools—both through volunteer efforts and a large repertoire of parent workshops. In retrospect, it seems fitting that an organization designed to help teachers would grow to focus on children's first teachers: their parents.

Today, 79% of Learning Leaders' 14,000 volunteers are parents. As one elementary school volunteer said, "Becoming a Learning Leader has taught me how to be patient, encouraging, and enthusiastic with my children and their schoolwork. It is the best thing I could have done for my family."

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Learning Leaders at (212) 213-3370 or visit [www.learningleaders.org](http://www.learningleaders.org).

### RESOURCE & REFERENCE GUIDE

#### BOOKS

##### Bank Street Bookstore

112th St. & Broadway ; (212) 678-1654  
Exceptional selection of books for children, teachers and parents. Knowledgeable staff. Free monthly newsletter. Open Mon-Thurs 10-8 PM, Fri & Sat 10-6 PM, Sun 12-5 PM.

##### Logos Books

1575 York Ave. (@84th Street); (212) 517-7292  
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##### High Marks In Chemistry

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#### SCHOOLS

**Lycée Français De New York**  
505 East 75th Street; NY, NY 10021  
212-439-3834;

Admissions@LFNY.org [www.LFNY.org](http://www.LFNY.org)  
The Lycée Français de New York is a multicultural, bilingual institution with students from sixty nations (preschool-12th grade). The school is an American, private, non-profit school chartered by the NY State Board of Regents, and accredited by the French Ministry of Education.

#### THERAPY

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### Calendar of Events SEPTEMBER 2007

#### Conferences

##### GILDER LEHRMAN INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

19 West 44th Street, Suite 500  
New York, NY 10036

##### HISTORY NOW LOOKS AT THE AMERICAN WEST

The institute is pleased to present the ninth issue of history now, a quarterly online journal for history teachers and students, available at [www.historynow.org](http://www.historynow.org). The issue examines the American West, with essays by some of the most eminent scholars in the field. As always, history now accompanies these scholarly essays with imaginative and accessible supporting material and lesson plans. Don't miss this issue's interactive feature -- "a view of the west" -- a photographic tour of the late 19th and early 20th century American west.

##### 2007-08 HISTORIANS' FORUMS IN NEW YORK CITY

For the 11th straight year, the Gilder Lehrman Institute presents distinguished scholars and historians to lecture on their most recently published books and answer audience questions. The historians' forums are open to the public and are followed by a reception and book signing. Check out the 2007-2008 schedule and buy tickets: [www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/public\\_lectures.html](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/public_lectures.html)

##### FEATURED DOCUMENT

The institute regularly features documents from the Gilder Lehrman collection. In the spotlight this week is a broadside, printed in 1805 in New York City, which illustrates the atrocious treatment of slaves. See the broadside and read the transcript: [www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/docs\\_current.html](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/collection/docs_current.html)

#### Medical Lectures

##### NYU CANCER INSTITUTE News & Events - Fall, 2007

Registration is required for all events, and seating may be limited. Please call 212-263-2266 or e-mail [NYUCIcommunityprograms@med.nyu.edu](mailto:NYUCIcommunityprograms@med.nyu.edu) for more information and to register, unless otherwise noted.

##### CERVICAL AND OVARIAN CANCERS: HEW HOPE ON THE HORIZON

In Recognition of Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month  
Tuesday, September 18, 6:00PM - 7:30PM  
Location: 550 First Avenue (at 31st Street)  
Smilow 1st Floor Seminar Room  
Description: Advances in medical research have the potential to revo-

lutionize the prevention, early detection and treatment of cervical and ovarian cancers. Join us to learn more about this research, including the development of a vaccine to help prevent cervical cancer, advances in the early detection of ovarian cancer and new treatments for these diseases.

Presenters: Stephanie V. Blank, MD; David Fishman, MD

##### OVARIAN CANCER: SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT

This program will be conducted in Spanish.

Wednesday, September 19, 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Location: Children's Aid Society

130 East 101st Street (between Lexington and Park Avenues)  
Description: Learn how you can protect yourself and reduce your risk of developing ovarian cancer. An ovarian cancer survivor will share her story.

Presenters: Karen Carapetyan, MA; Carmen Diaz; Ivis Febus-Sampayo  
This program is co-sponsored by LatinaSHARE, Self-Help for Women with Breast or Ovarian Cancer. To make a reservation or for more information, please call 212-973-5576.

##### PROSTATE CANCER: KNOW YOUR RISK, KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

In recognition of Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Tuesday, September 25, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Location: NYU Medical Center

550 First Avenue (at 31st Street), Alumni Hall B

Description: Our prostate cancer experts will present the latest information about screening and diagnosis and will provide an overview of treatment options. A prostate cancer survivor will also share his story. This program is presented in conjunction with the American Cancer Society's Man to Man® Prostate Cancer Education and Support Program.

Presenters: Anna Ferrari, MD; Harriet Mannheim, LCSW; Nicholas Sanfilippo, MD; Samir Taneja, MD

#### Open Houses

##### TOURO COLLEGE NEW YORK SCHOOL OF CAREER AND APPLIED STUDIES

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Fax: 718-265-0614

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