

# EDUCATION UPDATE

EDUCATION NEWS TODAY FOR A BETTER WORLD TOMORROW



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CUTTING EDGE NEWS FOR ALL THE PEOPLE

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## MICHELLE OBAMA'S LEGACY

## Howard Gardner, Harvard Professor Shares Opinions

You've been asked to be secretary of education for the new administration. What do you see as the role of the federal government in K-12 education?

It is my fortune — good or bad — to have become secretary of education at a time when the winds of politics and education have shifted decisively. Until the middle 1960s, the federal role in education was modest. In the latter years of the 20th century, the federal government not only became far more involved in civil rights, surveillance of behavior and misbehavior on educational sites, and financing of education for the less wealthy; in conjunction with the governors of many states, the federal government also played a significant role in testing of students, evaluation of progress toward national educational goals, and even support for the creation and evaluation of curricula and pedagogical approaches, both live and online.

For reasons that future historians will have to unravel, the federal role in education is almost certain to become much less pronounced during my term in office. Some might say that the federal government has achieved its principal goals. But it's more likely that the country is simply exhausted by the ribbons of rules and regulations that have rained down from Washington — without the resultant progress that had been hyperbolically promised ("Goals 2000", "Race to the Top", "No Child Left Behind"). In its wisdom, the nation has determined to remand the principal agency back to the states and to even smaller jurisdictions. Despite threats, the Department of Education



Dr. Howard Gardner

has not been shut down — at least not yet; and yet it clearly has been cut down in size.

Having less to push for or ask for, I will use my office as a "bully pulpit:" to describe what should happen in our educational systems; to call attention to positive

as well as negative examples; to cheer lead for promising initiatives; and, whenever possible, to demonstrate by example the kind of education that I favor, and the kind of society that I hope we can achieve.

**Our world is changing rapidly. What is your position on curriculum? How can education put our students on the right path towards shaping the future?**

We need to think of education much more broadly than ever before — a new "when," a new "where." To many people, education means K-12 public schools; or now that "college has become the new high school," K-14 or K-16 education. But education begins at birth — or indeed, as we now know, in utero — and continues as long as the individual is active, motivated, capable.

How we nurture our infants and toddlers is more important than ever; even after one has raised a family, even after one has quit the workplace, one can and should still be both teaching and learning.

Much of education can and should take place in schools and other formally designated com-

*continued on page 26*

### GUEST EDITORIAL

## Looking Forward to the Trump Era: Cross-cultural Programs Between U.S. and China

By SHENZHAN LIAO, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AT CHINA INSTITUTE

For the past 9 years as the director of education at China Institute, I have been returning to China every year for cross-cultural programs building a deeper understanding between U.S. and China among students, educators and the general public. This December I was not surprised that the presidential election in the U.S. and new President-elect Donald Trump were a regular topic from formal conferences to private conversations, especially after a phone call in early December between President-elect Trump and the Taiwan's president, Tsai Ing-wen, which rippled the diplomatic relationship between U.S. and China.

Indeed, cultural and educational exchange can hardly escape the political environment and cross-national programs could be easily open for scrutiny. Those with government support



are often viewed as backed up by agendas representing national interests. However, I truly believe the need for people to be connected at a more general level of humanities is essential for cross-cultural programs. In

another word, regardless of President Trump's foreign policy towards China and China's response to the administration shift of the U.S. government, there should be ways for China to be understood not through the political lenses. At the moment when the political uncertainties seem to dominate the conversations regarding the U.S.-China relationship, cross-cultural programs with a focus on arts, culture, language, literature and humanities shall play an even more important role building trust, understanding and friendships.#

## First Lady Michelle Obama's Last Speech at the White House

Recently, First Lady Michelle Obama delivered her farewell speech at the White House. Throughout her address, the First Lady underscored the importance of education. Below are some excerpts from her speech that we at Education Update loved the most:

"So we decided to flip the script and shine a big, bright spotlight on all things educational. For example, we made College Signing Day a national event. We wanted to mimic all the drama and excitement traditionally reserved for those few amazing football and basketball players choosing their college and university teams. We wanted to focus that same level of energy and attention on kids going to college because of their academic achievements. Because as a nation, that's where the spotlight should also be—on kids who work hard in school and do the right thing when no one is watching, many beating daunting odds.

We are also very proud of all that this administration has done to make higher education more affordable. We doubled investments in Pell grants and college tax credits. We expanded income-based loan repayment options for tens of millions of students. We made it easier to apply for financial aid. We created a College Scorecard to help students make good decisions about higher education. And we provided new funding and support for school counselors. (Applause.) Altogether, we made in this administration the largest investment in higher education since the G.I. Bill. And today, the high school graduation rate is at a record high, and more young people than ever before are going to college.

And as I end my time in the White House, I can think of no better message to send our young people in my last official remarks as First Lady. So for all the young people in this room and those who are watching, know that

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### EDUCATION UPDATE

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GUEST EDITORIALS

## *New Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos Acknowledges Importance of School Choice*

By ERIC NADELSTERN, PROFESSOR  
OF PRACTICE IN EDUCATION  
LEADERSHIP, TEACHERS COLLEGE  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

President-elect Trump's choice for Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has a strategy, but no plan to improve educational opportunity for our nation's schools. Her strategy rests on the conviction that school choice leads to improvement and innovation. I'm forced to admit that I don't disagree. The question becomes how do we follow up on a choice strategy to ensure improved student achievement? That is: How do we ensure that those left behind in failed district schools are not forgotten? How are we to ensure that charter schools are accountable for serving our students well? What do we do when a voucher offered is insufficient to afford private school tuition? Are the issues of Church/State separation that must be dealt with when students use public funds to attend parochial schools? Will we hold higher education similarly accountable for raising student performance while reducing costs to students and their families?



These and many other questions will determine whether Secretary Betsy DeVos has an idea or a well-thought out plan that will ensure that more of our student's are more successful. She will likely continue to face massive opposition from our nation's teachers unions. Will she prove up to the task of working with them and other sectors of society to ensure that American education is dragged screaming and kicking into the 21st Century? Our students deserve nothing less. #

## *Education in the Age of Trump*

By REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT,  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, NYS

In the last Education Update, I wrote about the legislation I introduced in the Assembly that would allow persons to opt-out of state jury service based solely on age without the burden of traveling to the courthouse to make the application, similar to the federal court system. Many seniors who are not disabled still have difficulty traveling to courthouses in order to make the application for excusal. We will continue to fight this legislative session to expand senior citizen rights. Now, after the presidential elections, we are faced with many challenges to build on the progress made, and even more worrisome – what we need to do to prevent our nation from going backwards. As the new administration takes office, we are left in the dark on what the future holds for our country's education system when it comes to education policies, funding and the support needed to ensure that our nation remains competitive. There are five key questions that should concern all those who are committed to ensuring opportunities for quality education.

Will President-Elect Trump's nominee for Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos work to strengthen support for public education or seek to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education and privatize our education system?

Will the new administration safeguard and enhance funding for research, particularly for science, engineering, and health, as well as sup-



port for workforce development, early childhood education, and teacher training programs of proven value?

Will college affordability be addressed at this crucial time when families across the country are hurting in the wake of high tuitions, mounting attendance costs, and increasing reliance on student loans, or will the nation move towards creating a permanent generation of debtors?

Will high school and college students have greater access to paid and meaningful fellowships and internships that allow them to participate in our nation's economy and gain real-life work experience?

What protections will be offered to ensure full funding for Federal Pell Grants, College Work-Study Programs and loan forgiveness programs

## *An Open Letter to President Trump*

By EILEEN MARINAKIS R.N., M.A.

January, 2017

Dear Mr. President,

You have repeatedly expressed the desire to be the President of "all the people". With your statement in mind, I write to you respectfully requesting that you set education as one of your primary goals, to include the thorough and comprehensive education of all of America's students, those from all sectors of our society, mindful that a well-educated populous will lead the world socially, scientifically, medically, technologically and economically.

The American public education system has long served all learners who come to its doors regardless of their ethnic background, family finances, spiritual practices or domestic locale. No other society or country has set such universal and comprehensive goals. The public education system of the United States of America has, throughout its long history, been credited with making our country great. Millions of foreign students have and continue to come to our shores to pursue graduate degrees. Yet, in recent decades our very system has been under attack by those who would propose diminishing the positive impacts of the system by lessening its financial resources and redirecting them to alternate enterprises which would elect to educate only select candidates at the risk of compromising the learning of the majority of the students. Thus, the achievements of the many would be lost at the cost of preferential education for the few.

As our society has become more complex and societal ills have affected our learners, the public schools have enhanced their goal to educate everyone. The system partners in addressing the multiple societal ills that impact its learners, such as violence, poverty, homelessness, teenage pregnancy, unemployed, alcoholic, drug abusing and incarcerated parents, and sexual predators, etc. Coincidentally, the public school system has responded to industry demands to stress STEM curricular. All of this is being addressed in aging and inadequate facilities, with outdated



equipment and limited, qualified staff. Your presidential intervention is needed to finance new construction, better equip schools and communities with modern technology and attract high quality faculty and staff. How else can our country compete on the world stage if we do not provide top quality free education for all of our young and aspiring students?

Mr. President, I ask that you embrace your position of power in strengthening the very core of our society, our public education system. Insist upon high standards and make college affordable to all learners who have worked to achieve entrance to our institutions of higher learning. Do not dismantle that which has made our country great, but, instead improve it by funding and staffing it at the level necessary to advance our country over the generations to come. You are positioned to see to it that students from all states and communities have equal access to high quality educational opportunities. This is essential.

I thank you for your serious consideration of the points which I have delineated.

With best wishes for your successful Presidency.#

*Eileen Marinakis R.N., M.A., is an Advanced Practice Nurse, Beacon College Board of Trustees Chair, 2011-2016 in*

*Leesburg, Florida*

in areas of key shortages: teaching in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) disciplines, special education, and nursing?

These are some of the questions that must be asked at confirmation hearings for the new Secretary of Education and the Federal Director of Office of Management and Budget. In addition to reviewing the background and qualifications of every nominee, we must hold them accountable to elaborate on the positions that the Trump administration will pursue with respect to the lifeblood of our democracy – the federal funding and support needed for public and higher education to supplement the ongoing responsibilities of individual states.

This year in the State of New York, a budget was passed that marks the largest investment in our education system so far: a total of

\$24.7 billion, increasing education aid by \$1.47 billion, fully eliminating the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA), including \$175 million to transform struggling and high-needs schools, as well as SUNY/CUNY tuition freeze and increased capital funding. However, there is still much more to do. Our state must close the carried interest loophole at the state level that could generate up to \$5.2 billion a year, increase investment in the operating budgets of CUNY and SUNY (instead of relying on tuition), expand Technology and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs, continue to support Universal Pre-K, and pass the Dream Act to include academically eligible undocumented students. We must, in summary, do our part here in New York, while working to ensure that federal officials do not shirk their responsibilities. #

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

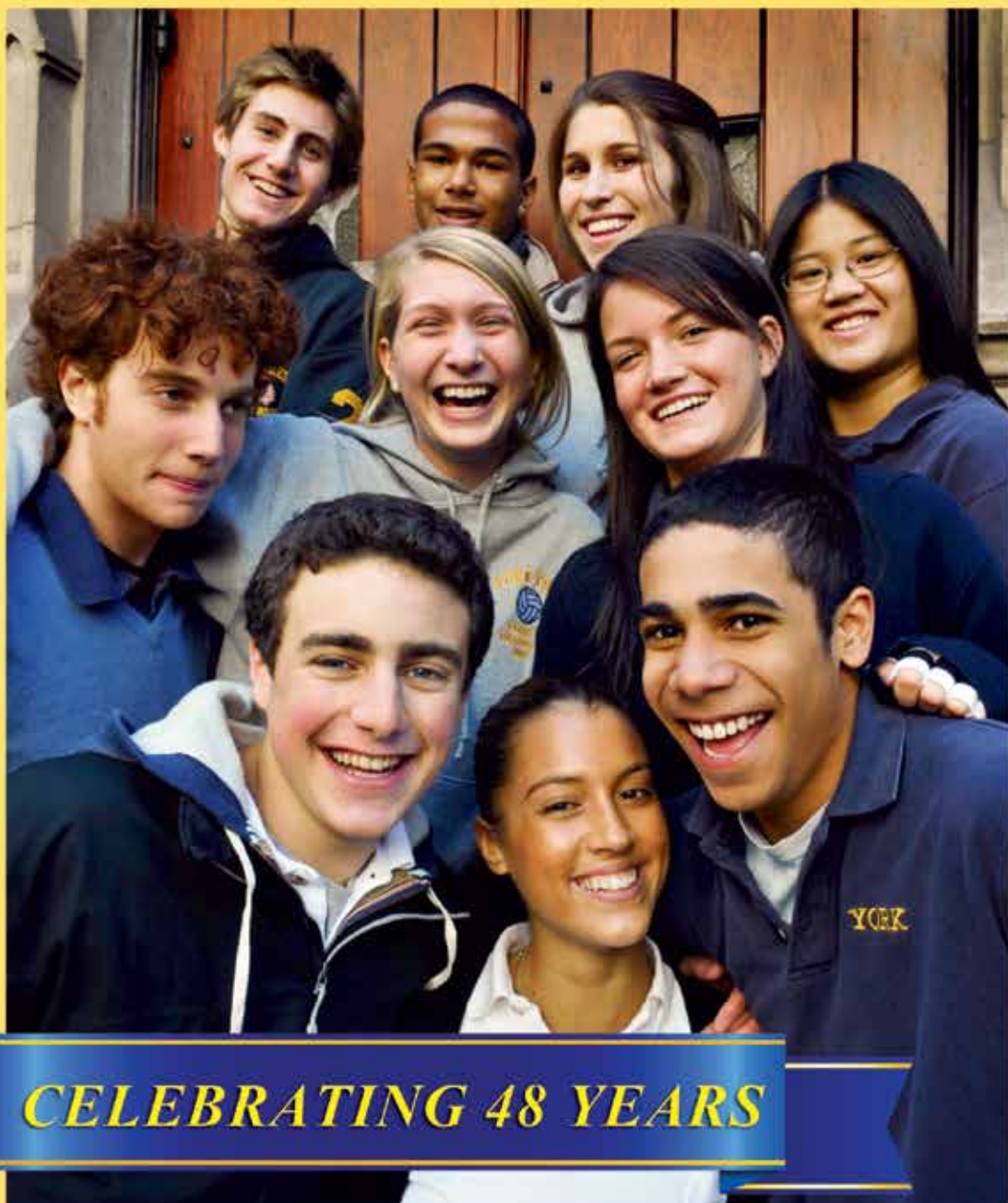
—WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS



## WHAT'S NEW AT YORK PREP

At York Prep we pride ourselves in developing new and innovative ways to challenge our students and to engage them in the learning process. New courses that are being offered this year include Robotics, Coding, STEM labs, AP Bio, AP U.S. Government, AP Spanish, and AP Calculus. We also understand that learning should extend beyond the classroom. We, therefore, offer a wide variety of clubs . . . seventy-two in fact . . . ranging from beekeeping to Model U.N., hiking, Key Club, and Young Doctors Club. Varsity Fencing and Varsity Swimming were added this year. Those looking for additional challenge will find it in our York Prep Scholars Program.

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- Tuesday, January 24th                      9:10 AM – 10:30 AM
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RSVP to the Admissions Office at:

Elizabeth Norton 212-362-0400 ext. 103 - [enorton@yorkprep.org](mailto:enorton@yorkprep.org)  
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*York Prep is a coeducational college preparatory school for grades 6-12.*

# Recruitment of English Language Teachers for Primary and Secondary Schools in Hong Kong

## THE EDUCATION BUREAU (EDB) OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POSITIONS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN PUBLIC-SECTOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN HONG KONG

### ROLE

The positions are required to teach English as a second language to Hong Kong students and assist in teacher and curriculum development in public-sector primary schools (for students aged between 6 and 12), secondary schools (for students aged between 12 and 18) and schools for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT

Applicants should be able to use English fluently and spontaneously, to give grammatically accurate responses in communication and to write or speak creatively. They should fulfill the following qualification requirements under respective Schemes. For more information and download of application forms, please visit the following webpages:

**(A) Primary school positions:** <http://www.edb.gov.hk/pnet>

**(B) Secondary school positions:** <http://www.edb.gov.hk/snet>

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

- The appointment will be on a two-year contract basis normally from August 16 2017 to August 15 2019, subject to renewal after expiry
- Remuneration package:
  - i. Salary from HK\$26,700-HK\$54,230 (USD3,425-USD6,950\*) per month (Primary)
  - ii. Salary from HK\$28,040-HK\$65,150 (USD3,595-USD8,350\*) per month (Secondary)
  - iii. End of contract gratuity for satisfactory performance and conduct

- iv. Cash retention incentive for satisfactory completion of continuous service from third year onwards
- v. Passage, baggage, medical allowances and a special allowance of HK\$20,989 (USD2,690\*) per month are provided for appointees whose normal place of residence is established to be outside Hong Kong and if he/she or his/her spouse is not receiving any similar benefits

- The salary and the terms and conditions of service to be offered are subject to the candidate's qualifications and post-qualification teaching experience and the prevailing conditions at the time the offer of appointment is made.

\* USD 1 = HK\$ 7.8 (subject to fluctuations)

### INTERVIEWS

Suitable applicants will be required to attend an interview and written test in person. Interviews will be held in late February 2017 in New York.

### HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants who choose U.S.A. as the interview venue please apply through Teach Away, EDB's recruitment agent in North America, on or before February 10 2017. An advisor will contact you with full application information.

Teach Away's webpage is:

<https://www.teachaway.com/teaching-public-schools-hong-kong>

Email enquiry: [rebecca@teachaway.com](mailto:rebecca@teachaway.com)  
or [netrecruit@edb.gov.hk](mailto:netrecruit@edb.gov.hk)

Telephone: +1 (416) 840-5736

## GUEST EDITORIAL

HIGH EXPECTATIONS  
ARE NOT HIGH ENOUGHBy DR. JOHN J. RUSSELL, HEAD OF  
THE WINDWARD SCHOOL

In a New York Times Op-Ed piece (November 4, 2016), David Leonhardt argues that students who attend charter schools with “high expectations, high support” outperform their peers in other schools. He cites data indicating that these schools close the achievement gap that exists for underserved students, most notably students of color and those with special education needs. Research confirms that expectations and support are necessary, but they are not sufficient to close the achievement gap. What matters most is teacher expertise. The most powerful ways to improve student learning identified by study after study depend on what a teacher does in the classroom.

Stanford economist Eric Hanushek’s research demonstrates that during an academic year students taught by teachers at the 90%tile for effectiveness learn 1.5 years’ worth of material, while those taught by teachers at the 10 percent

tile learn a half years’ worth. So having a highly skilled teacher teaching your child is a matter of the utmost importance.

Highly effective teachers combined with high expectations and high support are a particularly potent combination for closing the achievement gap for underserved students.#

## First 126 Fellows Will Be Funded to Take TC’s Cowin Financial Literacy Program Online

Teachers College Trustee Joyce B. Cowin wants every single American high school student to be financially literate. That’s why she’s funding an inaugural group of 126 Cowin Fellows to take her unique financial literacy program online.

“When the market collapsed in 2008, many wonderful, hard-working people who had saved money throughout their lives were snookered about sub-prime mortgages, and they lost their homes, their credit and their money because they didn’t know the right questions to ask,” says Cowin. “They were told ‘Here’s that home you’ve worked for all your life, and you can have it with a 2 percent mortgage – and your children will be able to attend a better school.’ And then within the year the mortgage rates went up and they couldn’t afford to pay the increased rate – and they were left with nothing. And that should never happen again.”

To that end, in 2012 Cowin funded the creation of the Cowin Financial Literacy Program, which provides classroom teachers, pre-service teachers and other educators with instructional resources and strategies to teach high school students basic financial concepts such as savings,



investing and budgeting. The program was developed by TC Professor Anand Marri, who is also Vice President and Head of Outreach and Education at the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

The Cowin Program is unique among the nation’s numerous financial literacy programs both in focusing on teachers and in employing case studies drawn from real life. In one case study, for

example, a young college student chooses her first credit card; in another case study, an immigrant couple planned for their children’s college education.

“Our program is built on the principle that people learn best by doing, as first espoused by John Dewey a century ago at Teachers College,” says Marri. “It also reflects TC’s belief that the best way to approach any educational or social problem is to teach the teachers. That way, you’re changing an entire field because each teacher touches so many lives.”

More than 70 educators enrolled in the 2016 Cowin Summer Institute. More than 400 educators have come to TC for the week-long Summer Institutes of the Cowin Program, and educators in 48 states are using its course materials via

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

DEAN MICHAEL MIDDLETON,  
HUNTER COLLEGE,  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

By DR. POLA ROSEN

**Q. With a new US president at the helm, what do you think the education landscape should emphasize?**

I think about the educational landscape from two perspectives – policy and practice. These two areas are interrelated, and both policymakers and practitioners can take action in the coming years to support the success of individuals, families and communities.

There are critical policy issues for us to grapple with as a new presidential administration begins, as there are with any transition of leadership. Three important areas in which educators need to take a strong role in advocating politically for policies that support the achievement and well-being of every child are early education, enhancing the profession of education, and increasing resources. First, we need to create policies that create more opportunities and support for our youngest children. High quality early childhood education is one of the most cost effective ways to support future success. Next, we need to advocate for policies that enhance, not diminish, the professionalism of educators. Advocacy for teachers includes focusing on support for high quality educator preparation and providing teachers with the resources and autonomy to act in the best interest of their students. Finally, it is critical importance that we advocate for increasing funding and resources for our public schools and direct resources to the neediest communities and children. Because economic and educational success are closely linked, policy makers can be reminded that better public schools create a strong economy and a strong economy creates better schools.

On the level of educational practice, there are several long-standing challenges for educators to continue grappling in the coming years. It is vital that we focus on creating cultures of high expectation and engagement for every child in order for them to achieve at their fullest potential. Creating that strong academic climate also



depends on supporting teachers, counselors and administrators who work with children every day to adopt innovative and effective practices. We need to find ways to honor their professionalism and provide them with the resources and autonomy to act in the best interest of their students. Finally, a critical need in practice is to transform classroom and school pedagogies to meet our society’s advancing knowledge and technologies. As our world changes rapidly, schools and classrooms need to evolve as well to incorporate those technologies, create technologically literate citizens and prepare our youth to be informed, engaged citizens.

**Q. What do you think your main challenges will be and how do you plan to address them?**

Leading a School of Education in a public university during times of decreasing resources, major societal change, and a shifting view of the education profession comes with several challenges. One area of focus for me is to grow and evolve our academic programs and research to meet the needs of our communities and the education profession.

**THIS ARTICLE CONTINUES  
ONLINE AT  
[www.EducationUpdate.com](http://www.EducationUpdate.com)**

free download. Now the first online version of the course will run from February 6–April 14. The course will be based upon the program’s original case studies, which teach basic financial concepts through real life situations. Resources will include supplemental readings, videotaped lectures, live-streamed video discussions and expert responses to the cases.

Participants completing the 30-hour course will receive a certificate of participation from Teachers College worth three Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in most school districts. In addition, at the end of the course, participants will have the opportunity to take the certification exam offered by W!SE (Working in Support of

Education), which has partnered with TC on the Cowin Program from its inception.

“I’m excited that we’re taking this program into the future by moving it online,” says Cowin. “We’re delighted that so many teachers and program alumni nationwide are already downloading and using the case studies and other free course materials.” To alumni of the program, Cowin adds: “Good luck, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that no one in the coming years will ever be snookered again.”

Visit [cowinfinancialliteracy.org](http://cowinfinancialliteracy.org) for more information about the Cowin program and materials.#

*This article was originally posted on Teachers College, Columbia University Newsroom.*



# DEDICATED

## Graduate Open House January 11 • All Four Campuses

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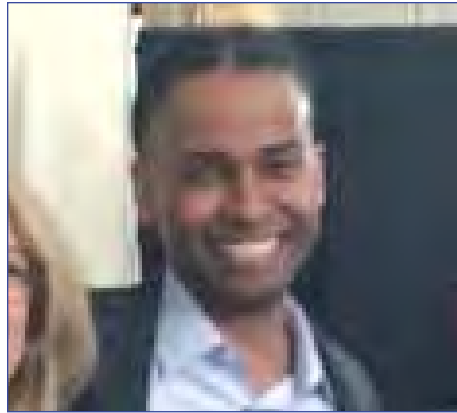
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## LeDerick Horne, Poet, Author, and Disabilities Advocate

By SHARON FLEISCHER, DIRECTOR  
OF LD VIRTUAL TUTORING,  
FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY

Recently, Fairleigh Dickinson University's LD Virtual Tutoring Program hosted LeDerick Horne, nationally recognized poet, author and advocate for people with disabilities. LD Virtual Tutoring (LDVT) was very proud to sponsor this evening. LD Virtual Tutoring is a virtual one to one, real time, support program for college students with learning disabilities, to help each student be successful academically and reach his/her potential. The professional staff of LDVT is committed to supporting individuals who learn differently. LeDerick Horne embodies everything LDVT represents and strives for. This event was held on the Madison Campus, and Horne shared readings from his new book, he recited his spoken-word poems, and he inspired all in the audience.

Horne has gone from sitting in a special education classroom as a child, to speaking on behalf of people with disabilities at the White House, the United Nations, and departments of education across the U.S. as an adult. He has transformed his learning disability into his lifelong passion for the art of the spoken word. Horne tirelessly advocates for the rights of all



people with disabilities.

*Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success*, is the recent release LeDerick Horne co-authored with Margo Vreeburg Izzo, Ph.D. This guidebook is inspiring and encouraging. Powerful strategies and personal stories and blended in this resource for educators, self-advocates and students. Horne shared his stories and motivated an audience of college students with learning disabilities, parents and professionals. Horne is an ambassador for all- whether you have a disability or not! #

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### A NIGHTMARE: UNPREPARED FOR TEACHING

By SANDRA PRIEST ROSE, READING  
CONSULTANT, READING REFORM  
FOUNDATION OF NEW YORK

I had a nightmare in which I faced a class of high-school students to whom I was supposed to teach Spanish. I do not speak nor understand Spanish, nor was I trained to teach the beautiful language of Cervantes.

This is the same nightmare that America's elementary school teachers face every day of their lives. They are not trained to teach reading, writing, spelling, or comprehension of written material. They read about teaching methods, but they are not taught HOW to teach in either their undergraduate or graduate education.

They have not been shown the two dozen or so rules of English spelling that govern most of the language. They have not been shown how to teach handwriting nor composition.

A study done by the National Council on Teacher Quality in 2006 concluded that out of 72 schools of education throughout the country, only 11 included the teaching of the sounds of the language (phonics) in its curriculum. Only 15% taught all the components of the science



of reading. This was a sample of 1271 higher-education institutions that house elementary education programs. Subsequent studies were done in 2013 and 2014.

Vast research from the 1930s on has proven the efficacy of the systematic teaching of phonics approaches to the language.

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## THE DWIGHT SCHOOL

# A Conversation with Stephen Spahn, Chancellor of Dwight School

By DR. POLA ROSEN  
& LUCAS MAUTNER

*EDUCATION UPDATE sat down with Chancellor Stephen Spahn to discuss the outstanding work he has accomplished in his record-breaking 50 years of service as Chancellor of Dwight School. Spahn talks about the forthcoming Dwight School Dubai campus, the history of Dwight, and the benefits of an International Baccalaureate diploma.*

**Education Update (EU): How did you decide to choose Dubai as a center for your outreach?**

**Stephen Spahn (SS):** We were approached by the government of Dubai that felt there was a real need for American International Baccalaureate (IB) schools. Dubai is the economic hub of the Middle East and a place where many different nationalities convene. We felt that Dwight was best equipped to offer a world-class, American, International Baccalaureate education and are excited to expand our network of Dwight Schools, all dedicated to educating the next generation of global leaders. The school in Dubai will open in September 2018.

**EU: You are celebrating 50 years in education. Are you talking about Dwight itself when you say 50 years?**

**SS:** I've been at Dwight for 50 years. I'm the longest-serving head of an independent school in the U.S., but Dwight has been in existence since 1872.

**EU: Who founded the school?**

**SS:** The school was founded by Julius Sachs in 1872. His brother, Samuel, co-founded Goldman Sachs; and another brother, Bernard, was instrumental in discovering Tay Sachs disease.

Timothy Dwight V, after whom the school is named, was President of Yale University in the late 1800s. He was instrumental in changing the school from its focus on Greek and Latin to math and science.

**EU: What are some of the global challenges you face?**

**SS:** Probably the biggest global challenge that we face and that we're trying to prepare our students for is the creation of new jobs. The reality is that many of our graduates are going to have to create their own jobs. To help ready them, we have developed something called Spark Tank, which is our incubator for student ideas beginning as young as kindergarten. Spark Tank is designed to nurture innovation, entrepreneurship, and leadership skills, and to help students bring their own ideas and inventions to the marketplace. Students are developing a wide range of things, from new products to nonprofits aimed at helping people overcome physical challenges or to help make the world a better place.

Our mission is to nurture the unique talents and passions, or sparks of genius, in all our students both inside and outside the classroom. Spark Tank is a program in which students



can pursue their own passions and learn about the product or business development process — from the germ of an idea to acceleration, and from prototyping to market launch. Our students present their ideas to a committee of talented parents who provide feedback, advice, mentorships, and help them to reach different levels of accomplishment within the incubator. We think that Spark Tank is a very exciting and unique aspect of our school; and with support from The Dwight Foundation, students can receive funding to help bring their novel ideas and innovations to fruition.

**EU: How long has Spark Tank been around?**

**SS:** This is now our second year. We had a very successful launch and the program has since expanded in both size and the number of students participating. We also have a leadership program, which we've added to the Middle School curriculum, so that students can learn the process of starting and running a business.

**EU: What age students are involved in Spark Tank?**

**SS:** It starts in kindergarten. So far, the youngest Spark Tank presenters have been eight years old. The oldest, of course, would be a senior.

**EU: Is Spark Tank also going to be in Dubai?**

**SS:** Yes, absolutely.

**EU: What are some of the differences between the students in Dubai and Manhattan?**

**SS:** This is a difficult question to answer only because we haven't yet opened the school in Dubai. But I can say that we will be creating a new Center of Excellence for Arabic Language, Culture, and the Arts that will be on our school property. All the schools in Dubai are required to teach Arabic, and they're facing an issue where it hasn't been taught very well. So this center is going to be a model for international understanding and cooperation when it comes to Arabic studies.

**EU: Do you think it's important for American students to learn Arabic as well?**

**SS:** The answer is a resounding yes. Learning different languages is a norm at all Dwight Schools around the world, whether it is

Arabic or any other language. Language is also a very important part of the International Baccalaureate curriculum. We teach three core languages, Mandarin, French, and Spanish; and we teach 14 languages in total. By learning a language, students have a means of better understanding a culture, so it's something that we definitely support. If you can speak the language, you're better able to have a meaningful discussion cross-culturally. It's absolutely critical to have that.

**EU: And what languages are taught in New York?**

**SS:** The core languages, as mentioned, are Mandarin, French, and Spanish. We also offer a range of languages, including Japanese, Italian, Hebrew, Arabic, Hindi, German, Russian, and Latin. The list goes on and on.

**EU: Which language would you say is most popular in New York?**

**SS:** Right now, it would be a tie among Spanish, Mandarin, and French.

**EU: Were there any unique challenges or issues or experiences operating in Dubai that you didn't encounter in the States?**

**SS:** We haven't begun to operate there and won't until September 2018. As mentioned earlier, one of the opportunities we're excited about is creating the Center of Excellence for Arabic Language, Culture, and Arts on the property. Another unique aspect of our new school in Dubai is the partnership we forged with Brighton College, the number-one co-ed school in England. Dwight School Dubai and Brighton College Dubai will be sharing a one-million square-foot "super campus." It will be unique to have two independent schools working very closely, with one teaching an American International Baccalaureate curriculum and the other a British curriculum. We'll be able to collaborate in so many ways, such as creating a joint orchestra, working on student productions together, etc.

**EU: How did you get involved with Brighton College?**

**SS:** Dwight was the first American independent school to establish a campus in England. In 1972, we opened what is now known as Dwight School London. So we've known the British landscape extremely well and knew Brighton College as the top-ranked co-ed British school in London. An education group in the Middle East helped bring us both together in Dubai.

**EU: Where would you like to see the school five years from opening?**

**SS:** I believe that Dwight School Dubai will, like all Dwight Schools, be recognized as a top school in the world. What we want in five years, in ten years, is to be recognized as igniting thousands of sparks of genius in children around the world through personalized learning, which is the hallmark of a Dwight education, and to become better known as a school whose graduates can be dropped anywhere in the world and thrive. In addition, we look forward to seeing the results of the work

we're currently doing to expand a world-class Dwight education to students anywhere in the world through Dwight Global Online School, our campus in the cloud. We're working with the founder of Stanford Online High School to create Dwight Global. In five to ten years, I think it will be the number-one online high school in the world.

**EU: Which of the Dwight schools is most popular?**

**SS:** I would say they're all popular among their student bodies and parent communities. They all have waiting lists. The challenge, for example, is being able to interview all the applicants. In Shanghai, for example, they can have thousands of children applying for 200 places and all are so incredibly talented academically. Our faculty spends hours every weekend interviewing hundreds of children to determine the incoming classes.

**EU: Which of the schools that you run is the largest in terms of numbers?**

**SS:** Dubai will probably be the largest in terms of facilities. Dwight in New York currently has almost 1,000 students, from preschool through grade 12. That's way up from 50 students, which is what we had 50 years ago when I began.

**EU: What will the student makeup of the Dubai school be and what will be some specific advantages that those students have?**

**SS:** Ninety percent of the students will be international and ten percent will be local Emiratis, following the make-up of Dubai. In terms of the advantages, they will be the same as all Dwight students have in our global network. One of the unique benefits of a Dwight education is being a part of this global family in which students enjoy numerous cross-campus curricular and creative collaborations and exchanges. For example, in New York, our entire fifth grade spends ten days at Dwight School London and their entire year six comes to New York in a reciprocal home-stay program. In ninth grade, our students go to Dwight School Shanghai and theirs come here [to New York]. And each year, all of our performing artists, from all over the globe, come together in New York to perform together onstage at Carnegie Hall, which is really spectacular.

**EU: What sorts of extracurricular and culturally enriching activities will be available for students in Dubai?**

**SS:** In terms of extracurricular activities, we will have anything you can imagine, from Spark Tank, coding, and model U.N.; to the arts, including a music conservatory; and athletics. We're going to have the best-in-class field in Dubai for soccer, track, tennis courts, and an Olympic-size swimming pool.

**EU: How does an IB diploma differ from a regular school diploma?**

**SS:** The IB diploma is the most well-respected diploma in the world. It's accepted by colleges and universities around the world.

*continued on page 11*



## THE DWIGHT SCHOOL

### *An Inside Look at the International Baccalaureate in the U.S.*

By **DR. BLAKE SPAHN, VICE CHANCELLOR OF DWIGHT SCHOOL**

The philosophical underpinnings of the International Baccalaureate trace back to Kurt Hahn, a British educator of German origin who worked for a negotiated peace after World War I. He believed that implementing an international curriculum around the world could abolish national and racial prejudices, thereby wiping out the main cause of war. His thinking influenced Alec Peterson, Director of the University of Oxford's Department of Educational Studies, who aimed to broaden the British A level curriculum, enabling children to develop to their fullest potential. His work to reform the A levels ultimately took shape in the late 1960s as the universal IB curriculum, independent of any government and national biases and systems.

I took an initial interest in the IB when my own high school, Dwight School, adopted the curriculum. I saw first-hand how the IB impacted our school and its culture, and was struck by the transformation in such a short period of time. I later delved deeper while pursuing my DPhil in comparative international education at Oxford. My doctoral thesis focused on the development of the IB in the U.S., through the



**Dr. Blake Spahn**

lens of four case-study schools. My goal was to answer the following questions through extensive research:

Why would an American school adopt the IB? The primary reasons were the curriculum's high academic standards across a wide array of integrated subjects and a school's desire to raise its academic standards. Additionally, the IB enhanced the school's ability to attract foreign students and to increase diversity within its community.

How is the IB implemented in a U.S. school? It was clear that prior to implementation, a school must understand its own core values to ensure compatibility and that successful implementation relied on the leadership of a senior faculty member, such as an IB coordinator or principal, to help smooth the way. Implementation also required that the school gain consensus among senior faculty by making them part of the decision-making process. Once on board, everyone needed to steer clear of creating a division between IB and non-IB students.

What is the effect of the IB on the institution? The predominant impact was improved academic standards and increased pride in the school both for its enhanced reputation and for being part of a larger global group.

I published these research findings in greater detail in America and the International Baccalaureate: Implementing the International Baccalaureate in the United States in 2001. Since that time, the IB has grown exponentially nationwide for many of the same reasons and with even more enthusiasm in today's globalized world — an ever-evolving world in which employers seek internationally minded, multi-lingual, culturally sensitive and agile employees. The IB provides the best academic preparation available anywhere for graduates to enter this global marketplace equipped with the requisite skills and knowledge to succeed — and, in the spirit of Kurt Hahn, to build a better world through intercultural understanding and respect. #

*Dr. Blake Spahn is Vice Chancellor of Dwight School, the first school in the Americas to offer all four IB programs for students from preschool through grade 12. Founded in 1872, Dwight School is dedicated to igniting the spark of genius in every child.*

## Stephen Spahn

*continued from page 10*

Students who graduate with an IB diploma have the credentials as open-minded and advanced critical thinkers. IB diploma graduates have higher college acceptance rates, are known to perform better in post-secondary education than their peers, and are proficient in multiple languages. They're internationally minded. They're just more agile in a very competitive global marketplace.

**EU: Is there anything we didn't ask you that you feel is important to note?**

**SS:** If I were to add anything it is that the real revolution in education is the movement toward a new, student-centric world. I've always believed in the power of students to innovate. To turn them loose is to give them freedom, which is what we're seeing today. I think it's necessary for the world our graduates are entering. They have to be able to have all the skills and talents, to ask the right questions. A big question we should be asking as educators is what do we take out from a curriculum, and what do we add, so that students are able to keep up with a rapidly changing world, whether it's coding, robotics, artificial intelligence; students have to become knowledgeable about each of these areas. To me, education itself is in the midst of a maelstrom of change, and what we have to do is give students the capacity to research and to come back with solutions to share with one another. And then, of course, this must all be done in an inspiring way. This presents a new, emerging, challenging opportunity for educators to re-think education. #

## CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

### CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION CELEBRATES PROJECT BOOST AT ANNUAL GALA

By **LYDIA LIEBMAN**

Recently, the Center for Educational Innovation hosted their annual gala at the Mandarin Oriental at Columbus Circle, New York. The Center is headed by Seymour Fliegel, former principal and Gilder Senior Fellow. The 2016 gala celebrated the dedication and commitment of educational innovators and honored Patrick Duff and Marc Sternberg. Funds raised at the dinner went toward CEI's Project BOOST: Building Options and Opportunities for Students. The event was attended by a who's who in education. Attendees included Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents Betty Rosa, fellow regents Lester Young and Nan Mead, as well as former New York City Education Chancellor Joel Klein and Deputy Chancellor Milady Baez.

Early on in the evening, CEI Chair of the Board of Trustees Judy Roth Berkowitz outlined Project BOOST. Described as CEI's signature school-based program, it is an enrichment program that works to provide students from low-income communities the "boost" they need to compete with more affluent peers. According to Berkowitz, in 2016, there were 140 schools with over 18,000 students in Project BOOST. "Tonight we are helping New York City students to believe in themselves, their school and



their community and we hope that this belief will serve our scholars throughout their school career and life," she said.

The first honoree of the evening was Walton Family Foundation K-12 Education Program Director Marc Sternberg. He was introduced by former chancellor Klein, who showered praise on Sternberg for his many accomplishments. Specifically, Klein spoke of Sternberg's success as founder and principal of the Bronx Lab School, stating that his work there was

"remarkable". Klein said: "This young man controls more philanthropy in public education in America than anybody else in this country. It's a tribute to the fact that those who know want him to advise them."

Upon accepting his award, Sternberg thanked Klein, his wife, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, former Chancellor Dennis Walcott and many others. "If schools and adults do what is right we can truly change the odds for kids in this country," he said.

The second honoree was Patrick Duff, who told a personal story about his father when accepting his award. According to Duff, it was his father who took him to the floor of the Stock Exchange one day and opened his eyes to the world on Wall Street; an experience that inspired a 5+ decade career. "So much of education happens outside the classroom and I think all of you, if you were to stop and pause... and you think about the moments when you were inspired... whether it was from a teacher or an event or some experience that opened up your eyes and you thought what was possible... that's what attracted me to CEI," he said.

Other speakers at the event included CEI's new CEO, Michael Kohlhagen, and several student members of Project BOOST, who shared stories of success. #

## LAW &amp; EDUCATION

## The N.L.R.B. is Permitting College Student Employees to Organize

By ARTHUR KATZ, JD

In a seminal 2004 opinion involving Brown University, the National Labor Relations Board ruled that (i) graduate student assistants were not “statutory employees” within the meaning of the National Labor Relations Act (the “Act”), since the relationship between the University and the student assistants was “primarily educational” and (ii) allowing graduate student assistants to organize would be detrimental to the educational process. The Brown opinion also said that “collective bargaining is not particularly well suited to educational decision-making and that any change in emphasis from quality education to economic concerns will prove detrimental to both labor and educational policies.” Furthermore, “the goal of collective bargaining, promoting equality of bargaining power is largely foreign to higher education and that collective bargaining would unduly infringe upon traditional academic freedoms.”

In late August of this year, the NLRB (in a three to one vote), in a case involving Columbia University, issued a game-changing decision that overturned Brown in a lengthy, reasoned, written opinion (364 NLRB 60) and held that students who perform services at Columbia in connection with their studies are, in fact, statutory employees within the meaning of the Act and have the right to organize. In overturning Brown, the NLRB characterized Brown as “having deprived an entire category of workers of the protection of the Act without a convincing justification in either the statutory language or the policies of the Act.” “Statutory coverage is permitted by virtue of an employment relationship; it is not foreclosed by the existence of some other, additional relationship that the Act does not reach.”

The NLRB said that “the fundamental error” of Brown “was to frame the issue of statutory coverage not in terms of the existence of an employment relationship, but rather on whether some other relationship between the employee and the employer is the primary one” and that the allegations on which Brown is based “are almost entirely theoretical.” The NLRB then continued and said that “collective bargaining and education occupy different institutional spheres. In other words, a graduate student may be both a student and an employee; a university may be both the student’s educator and employer” and that, in the view of the NLRB, such roles do not present a serious conflict.

The NLRB then discussed whether permitting students to organize violated academic freedom, and pointed out that the U.S. Supreme Court has held that “academic freedom, in the constitutional sense, involves freedom from government efforts to control or direct the content of the speech engaged in by the university or those affiliated with it” and that no such



Arthur Katz, JD

effort is involved in the set of circumstances before the NLRB.

Lastly, the NLRB said that merely because student assistants may have short, finite terms of employment (such as an academic semester, or less) should not, in itself, be relevant when weighed against the denial of the Act’s coverage to large groups of employees.

Perhaps, the most succinct way to describe the NLRB’s holding is, in the NLRB’s own words – “where a university exerts the requisite control over the research assistant’s work, and specific work is performed as a condition of receiving the financial award, a research assistant is properly treated as an employee under the Act.”

The NLRB then held that its decision will permit not only research assistants, but teaching assistants and others, whether attending the university as a graduate student or as an undergraduate, and whether the student’s stipend or salary is being funded by the university, by a grant supervised by the university, or by a third party contracting for work to be done by the university, to organize and that all of such students had the right to organize as a single group, since a “sufficient community of interest” existed. “While Master’s and undergraduate assistants may, arguably, have different priorities from those of Ph.D. assistants, there are also overreaching common interests.”

The Columbia decision was not completely unexpected; however, the NLRB’s strong reversal of the 2004 Brown decision was. Although the Columbia decision (and the reach of the Act) does not directly affect public universities, private universities are significantly affected. The application of the Act

## THE ETHICS COLUMN

## A RIGHT TO STARVATION?

By JACOB M. APPEL MD JD

One of the underlying ethical principles of modern medicine is that a mentally competent patient with a physical illness has a right to turn down life-sustaining treatment including artificial nutrition. But what of a patient with a mental illness, such as anorexia, in which the primary symptom of that illness is a desire to restrict nutrition to life-threatening levels? That was the case before New Jersey Superior Court Judge Paul Armstrong on November 21, 2016, when he ruled that a twenty-nine year old woman, identified in legal papers as A.G., had a right to refuse a feeding tube—even if that resulted in her self-imposed starvation. The former NYU film student and barista, who weighs only 69 lbs. and has the bone density of a ninety-two year old, suffers from an eating disorder and has been a patient at Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital since January 2014. A psychiatric evaluation found that she possessed the capacity to refuse force feeding and that she understood the result might mean death. More than ten years of intensive treatment had failed to alleviate her symptoms or her suffering, leading both her family and her court-appointed guardian to support her decision. The state’s Department of Human Services had sought an order allowing them to feed her against her will.

A.G.’s case raises two distinct questions. First, why is the risk in eating disorders treated differently from the danger in other conditions? In most jurisdictions, physicians and authorities will not allow anorexic patients to drop below a certain bodyweight—and will forcibly hospitalize and treat those who do. The theory is that even if death is not imminent, the path toward death without treatment is likely or even inevitable. Compare that with the “hopeless” alcoholic or severe drug abuser on a nearly certain road to cirrhosis or overdose. Most jurisdictions will not allow a court to force such a patient into a rehabilitation program. Why the difference? It is difficult not to conclude that economic and demographic perceptions regarding the “typical” anorexia patient (as compared to the “typical” substance use disorder patient) play a role in shaping legal and social norms.

A second question is whether the mentally-



Jacob M. Appel, MD, JD

ill more generally ought to have the same right to refuse care as the physically ill. Yet a complex continuum of mental illness exists. Clearly, the nineteen-year-old who overdoses on Tylenol after a romantic break-up and refuses to have her stomach pumped is not analogous to a patient terminally ill with cancer. But what of a seventy-five year old patient with intractable depression of many years, who says: “I’ve given you head-shrinkers five decades to make me feel better and you’ve failed. Now I’m ready to end my own life.” At least one Swiss court has viewed such a case as analogous to physical illness and has permitted euthanasia.

Judge Armstrong, who years earlier, as a young litigator, successfully argued the celebrated “right-to-die” case of Karen Ann Quinlan before the New Jersey State Supreme Court, cited a long register of such decisions in his opinion. If widely accepted, A.G.’s cases promises to be another such landmark ruling. #

*Dr. Jacob Appel has an MD from Columbia Presbyterian Medical School, a law degree from Harvard, an MFA from NYU and is a published writer of many fiction books. Currently he works as a psychiatrist at Mt Sinai Hospital in NYC.*

to handbooks, rules, disciplinary proceedings and other aspects of university administration respecting employees is more immediate. Moreover, because student teaching and research assistants, in their respective roles as such, are now considered as employees under the Act, the various decisions of the NLRB in extending rights to unorganized workers in a broad range of areas from social media policies to the sharing of personal information about others will now be applicable to students who are newly considered to be employees.

In a strong dissent to the Columbia decision

by one NLRB member, a number of potential consequences of the decision are set forth, such as student assistants who go on strike may not only be forfeiting their monetary compensation during the strike period but, depending on the actions then taken by the student assistants or the university, their academic degrees could be jeopardized or delayed. However, on balance, the Columbia decision is a step forward that has been too long in coming. #

*Arthur Katz, a corporate attorney, is a member of the New York City law firm Otterbourg, Steindler, Houston & Rosen, P.C.*



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## AMERICAN HEBREW ACADEMY DEDICATES DR. CHARLOTTE K. FRANK CENTER FOR PLANT SCIENCE & ECOLOGY

By LUCAS MAUTNER

Recently, the American Hebrew Academy in Greensboro, North Carolina, held a dedication ceremony honoring Dr. Charlotte K. Frank's contribution to the Plant Science & Ecology Center. The Board of Trustees said that "the American Hebrew Academy thrives in the richness of experience that is found when we glean what is best from a variety of sources and then build something new. The Charlotte K. Frank Center for Plant Science & Ecology embodies this philosophy and creates a space where our students, the world's future Jewish leaders, unlock their potential while an entire people is enriched and strengthened."

The Center will allow students to learn the art and science of hydroponics, enabling them to make the world more sustainable. Alex Troy, Head of the American Hebrew Academy, said that "the Center is the fulfillment of our dreams; it is a place and program where science and Jewish values are taught simultaneously."

Dr. Charlotte K. Frank was the Senior



Vice President of McGraw-Hill Education of The McGraw-Hill Companies. In 2012, she received a lifetime achievement award from The Bank Street College of Education. Dr. Frank was a Regent of the University of the State of New York, as well as a founder of the Frank Aerospace Study Center in Israel. At CCNY, she established The Dr. Charlotte K. Frank Center for Mathematics Education, and at Hunter, where she is a member of the Hall of Fame, she has endowed the Charlotte K. Frank Smart Classroom. #

## LaGuardia High School Shines With "Les Misérables"

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, Fiorelli H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts presented their rendition of *Les Misérables*, the iconic Broadway musical based on the novel by Victor Hugo.

The performances took place over the course of two weekends this past December and featured an all-student cast and production crew. The age-old story is of convict Jean Valjean, who after serving 19 years of hard labor for stealing a loaf of bread to feed his starving nephew breaks his parole and rebuilds his life only to be relentlessly hunted by the ruthless Inspector Javert. "*Les Misérables* leaves us with key questions which cry out for an answer," said Executive Director and LaGuardia Principal Dr. Lisa Mars, adding the questions: "What is your obligation to your fellow human beings living in poverty, in starvation? Can those who live in poverty find a way out of social condemnation?"

Under the directorship of Harry Shifman, a robust cast addressed these questions and others with their high soaring voices and bursting energy. Education Update was honored to attend the final performance, which featured senior vocal major Ian Binder-Tulenko in the lead role of Jean Valjean and Henry Thrasher as Javert. With extraordinary voices,



Binder-Tulenko and Thrasher represented LaGuardia exceptionally well. Another standout was the pairing of senior drama major Grace Ferrera and junior drama major Evan Dominguez as the boisterous and conniv-

ing Thénardiens. Their delivery of "Master of the House" was spot on and well supported by a dancing cast that could have passed for an ensemble straight from Broadway.

The Artistic Team included the Director, Harry Shifman, who directed the first LaGuardia school-wide musical, *West Side Story*, in 1998 as well as Assistant Principal, Theater Department Sandy Faison as Producer. Faison has worked on countless productions for LaGuardia including *City of Angels*, *A Chorus Line*, *Beauty and the Beast* and others. Also included was Musical Director Larry Pressgrove, and Conductor Joseph Meyers, among others.

LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts has provided a spectacular education for those interested in the arts and also a rigorous academic education for all students seeking to excel in academia. Among its illustrious graduates are writer Erica Jong, Al Pacino, Murray Perahia and Milton Glaser. Publisher Pola Rosen counts herself to be fortunate to have been a graduate as well. #

## MUSEUMS AS EDUCATORS

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL  
HISTORY EXPLORES CUBA IN  
LATEST EXHIBIT

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, the American Museum of Natural History debuted their newest exhibition ¡Cuba!, which will run through August, 2017. The bilingual exhibit is the first of its kind to debut in any American museum in regards to its size and depth. “American Museum of Natural History scientists have worked in collaboration with colleagues in Cuba for many decades, studying the extraordinary biological diversity and endemism of this island nation,” said Ellen V. Futter, President of the American Museum of Natural History in the official press release. “We are delighted now to work in collaboration with the National Natural History Museum in Havana in a groundbreaking partnership to present this major exhibition exploring Cuba’s amazing and unique nature and culture, especially at a time when cultural understanding and education are critically important.” The extraordinary exhibit showcases not just the unique history, traditions and culture of the island but also looks closely at its diverse ecosystems, unique native species.

Upon visiting the exhibit, visitors are first met with life-size portraits of modern day Cubans that offer what the AMNH calls “a chorus of voices”. One of those is the life-size image of tattoo artist Jose Francisco Casanova Perez from Sancti Spiritus, Cuba. “I would define the Cuban as a brave person who has learned to live with many problems, who laughs at all those problems, who lives each day in order to try to live the next,” it read besides his photograph. Following these portraits, visitors are treated to some geographic information about the island

in the form of an easy to read map. This map outlines the largest cities, national parks and the marine reserve. Many of Cuba’s natural wonders, such as its unique caves that are millions of years in the making, are explained for visitors. Of note in this section is the immersive walk-through reconstruction of the Zapata Biosphere Reserve, which in real life covers 1.5 million acres and is home to much of Cuba’s wildlife.

The next part of the exhibit features Cuba’s exquisite biodiversity. Since items could not be shipped directly from Cuba due to restrictions, the museum made a concerted effort to create realistically sized models of crocodiles, a venomous shrew, the world’s smallest hummingbird and a scientifically accurate representation of an extinct 3-foot-tall owl that is unique to Cuba. In addition to the models, there are some live lizards, frogs and snakes to be seen.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing parts of the show is the “stroll through the city”. Made to replicate a Cuban street, each storefront and/or entrance gives way to another part of Cuban culture. Each section is totally immersive. A Cuban cigar shop, a produce stand, and a display of music and dance are all to be viewed and enjoyed. Particularly beautiful is the homage to the orisha religion, also known as Santeria. Made to look like a home prepared for worship, the exhibit boasts two beautiful thrones (altars).

**THIS ARTICLE CONTINUES  
ONLINE AT  
[www.EducationUpdate.com](http://www.EducationUpdate.com)**

CAN COMPUTER PROGRAMS  
TEACH PEOPLE TO COMMUNICATE  
AND SOCIALIZE?

By GILLIAN GRANOFF

One emerging tech start-up believes so. Sentidio, a company founded by Ariel Brunner and Roni Kirsh have developed an application named Confikid to help kids with autism spectrum disorder overcome social and communication challenges.

Here, children with social, emotional and cognitive impairments can reenact appropriate interactions and social communication safely. Brunner and Kirsch believe that practicing social “scripts” in the virtual world, free from the peer pressures they often face in schools, will help to reinforce needed constructive behaviors.

Social communication empowers independence and instills confidence. “Independence is the goal,” Brunner says, “to empower their

quality of life as adults.”

Here’s how it works:

Confikid imparts critical social communication skills using interactive simulations and videos in the context of games.

The game begins by displaying a short situational video of an actual social experience that the child may encounter in daily life and allows them to choose between three potential reactions. Users then have the chance to try out and test their own reactions using video modeling.

By enacting real social experiences in the non-threatening domain of the virtual world, the child can practice and learn the positive and negative consequences of their reactions without risk, and integrate these lessons to teach them social communication that will help

*continued on page 21*

## MEDICAL UPDATE

Hunter College and Weill Cornell  
Researchers Present Findings

By LUCAS MAUTNER

Recently, researchers converged in a conference center at Cornell Weill School of Medicine to present their findings from a joint collaborative project between Cornell Weill, Hunter College, Cornell Ithaca, and other institutions. Jennifer Raab, President of Hunter College, organized the full-day event. In her opening remarks, President Raab addressed “the impact of the research we’re doing on communities” as she spoke about Hunter’s plans for a nursing school and the recent expansion of the School of Social Work in East Harlem.

The all-day event featured presentations by many leading researchers from Hunter, Cornell, and other institutions. The collaboration was funded by generous grants, but the most innovative system was the way in which the grants were handed out to the institutions. No institution was allowed to use the money unless they were involved in a collaborative project with another. For example, if researchers at Hunter wanted to experiment on a certain protein, they would need to join forces with a team at any of the other participating institutions to be eligible to receive grant money. This focus on intra-institutional research, in both public and private capacities, shows the dedication to excellence and patient wellbeing that these institutions have. The presentations focused on topics as varied as melanoma, mutated genes,



**Pres. Jennifer Raab addresses audience**

and an especially detailed report of the funding and which institutions and teams received it.

In 2013, President Raab and Weill Cornell Medical College Dean Dr. Laurie H. Glimcher announced a new partnership between Hunter College and Weill Cornell in which Hunter College would purchase the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Belfer Research Building, which would allow for more bench-to-bedside care. In 2012, Weill Cornell received a National Institutes of Health grant of \$49.6 million, which Hunter is able to access. “This partnership between a top public and a top private institution is something that rarely—if ever—happens,” said President Raab, in 2013. “This is a physical expression of a long-standing relationship between two institutions that will advance scientific study and train the next generation of scientists. We are incredibly fortunate to have this first class space to work side by side with Weill Cornell.” #

Traditional Medicare Should Be  
Allowed to Compete

By LEONID PORETSKY, M.D.

In the debate about repealing and replacing Obamacare, surprisingly little attention is being paid to the largest and one of the most popular health care plans in the country – Medicare, which already enrolls about 54 million beneficiaries.

In spite of some problems with excessive regulation (which need to be addressed), most Medicare recipients and health care providers prefer traditional Medicare to other insurance plans. One of the problems with Medicare is that it enrolls only elderly or disabled populations, in other words, those at the highest risk for a serious illness. If employers were allowed to offer enrollment in Medicare to their workforce, an influx of premiums from healthy young people could dramatically improve Medicare finances and offer workers an opportunity to enroll in one of the most popular insurance plans. Similarly, Medicare could be opened to individuals who currently participate in Obamacare.

Competition between private plans and



Medicare could strengthen both the stability of Medicare finances and consumer satisfaction. Why not to give Medicare a chance to compete?

*Leonid Poretsky, M.D. is the Chief, Division of Endocrinology; Associate Chairman for Research, Department of Medicine, Professor of Medicine, Hofstra Northwell School of Medicine.*



## GRANDFATHER & GRANDSON SHARE VIEWS

# A Debate On The Pros And Cons Of Aging And Death



**Tyler Frances**



**Dr. Allen Frances**

By ALLEN FRANCES, MD  
& TYLER FRANCES

At age 74, I have already experienced many of the indignities of aging and before very long will also confront the inevitability of death. Although neither prospect is particularly pleasant, I strongly believe in the normality and necessity of both. Claims that science will soon prevent aging and dramatically prolong life strike me as irresponsible hype and false hope. I am all for efforts to expand our healthspan, but see little value in prolonging our lifespan, and little possibility that we will soon discover a fountain of youth.

My grandson, home from college for Christmas break, disagrees with what he regards as my sentimental and regressive attachment to the status quo. Tyler is participating in stem cell and genetics research and believes that it is feasible and desirable to double the human lifespan and make aging just another curable disease. Tyler has no qualms about this research and regards my doubts as technically naive and ethically unnecessary.

Here is a very brief point by point summary of our ongoing debate.

**Me:** Evolution requires aging and death to make room for each new generation and also favors a fairly rapid succession of generations. Both are necessary to provide raw material for the variability and beneficial mutations essential to natural selection.

**Tyler:** Evolution has little interest in aging and death. Natural selection focuses its selective pressure on producing optimal reproductive fitness in the mating members of any species. Once the period of reproduction and weaning have passed, natural selection applies much less pressure on how the rest of the lifespan plays out. There is thus no inherent evolutionary reason to prohibit research that would prevent aging and prolong life. And there are excellent reasons to pursue it-although evolution does a remarkable job when given enough time, it works far too slowly and imperfectly to help us solve our current problems. Whenever, in the past, it has served our

interests, humans have always felt free to speed up natural selection. We would still be hunters and gatherers were it not for the artificial selection of domesticated plants and animals that constituted the agricultural and pastoral revolutions. If we have the genetic tools to promote human health, longevity, and happiness, why not use them.

**Me:** But the world is already terribly overpopulated and is rapidly becoming even more overpopulated. Extending the lifespan will mean more crowding, more mouths to feed, more environmental degradation, and more resource depletion. Malthusian dynamics ensure that providing a longer life for some must be purchased at the high cost of a more brutal life for the many- a life threatened by even more wars, migrations, famines, and epidemics.

**Tyler:** Overpopulation is best solved by reducing birthrates. This has already been done with great success almost everywhere in the world except Africa and the Middle East. It will be a better, more mature, and healthier world if people live longer and have fewer diseases and fewer children. A longer lifespan will make people wiser, more future oriented, and less willing to take foolish risks in the present. This could lead to more rational decisions on how best to preserve our planet as a decent place to live.

**Me:** Only the rich will be able to afford new products that prevent aging and promote longevity. The resulting caste system based on lifespan will be even more unfair than our current divisions based on wealth and power.

**Tyler:** The distribution of benefits that will accrue from aging research is a political, economic, and ethical question, not a scientific one. Given human nature and existing institutional structures, the benefits will almost certainly be enjoyed in a markedly unequal and unfair fashion- greatly favoring the rich and powerful, with only a very slow trickle down to the population at large. This inequity has accompanied every previous technological advance in the long march of human progress

## The Appeal of Mindfulness

By RACHEL EHMKE, SENIOR EDITOR, CHILD MIND INSTITUTE

One New Year's resolution we imagine more than a few families have made is to live more mindfully. The appeal of mindfulness is clear: experts credit the therapeutic meditation practice with helping alleviate everything from ordinary stress to anxiety, ADHD, behavior problems and depression.



**Harold S. Koplewicz, MD**

**The Art and Science of Mindfulness**  
How and why turning off repetitive thoughts and being in the moment help us feel better and be mentally healthier.

### Mindful Parenting

Learning to step back and assess calmly can take a lot of the stress and anxiety out of raising children — and help kids calm down too.

### Managing Social Media Stress With Mindfulness

The technique that lets teens stay connected with their friends online while boosting self-esteem and self-awareness.

### Mindfulness in the Classroom

The practice helps students regulate their behavior and focus on learning.

### How Mindfulness Can Help Caregivers

Parents of children with special needs find these techniques reduce stress and anxiety.

Our friends at Cohen Children's Medical Center of New York are conducting a major national study about children with ADHD and household chores. They're asking parents and professionals who live or work with children with ADHD to complete a short anonymous, online questionnaire.

**Please go to [www.HouseholdChores.org](http://www.HouseholdChores.org) to take the survey and/or request a copy of our results. #**

*Harold S. Koplewicz, MD is the co-founder of The Child Mind Institute.*

It has ancient roots, but the practice many of us know today was created by a scientist who described mindfulness as "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally." The practice of living in the moment can be a powerful antidote to the stress created by multi-tasking in our hyperconnected and fast-paced world. And the results can be substantial for children struggling with mental health disorders.

This week we've gathered some of our best mindfulness resources, from a scientific explanation of how it works to suggestions for applying mindfulness to different areas of life, including parenting, the classroom and even social media.

—Rachel Ehmke, Senior Editor

### The Power of Mindfulness

How a meditation practice can help kids become less anxious, more focused and more in charge of their own behavior.

and is not specifically disqualifying to progress in slowing aging and death.

**Me:** Every scientific advance can, and usually does, have harmful, unintended consequences (medical, social, political, economic) that cannot possibly be predicted in advance. Scientists always have intellectual and financial conflicts of interest that bias them to exaggerate the potential benefits to be derived from their discoveries and to minimize the potential risks.

**Tyler:** Surely, aging research will have its hype, blind alleys, and unexpected complications- these are an unavoidable risk in all scientific advances. But the risks and difficulties should not paralyze efforts to make the advance or call into question whether it should be made; instead, they should increase caution and vigilance in how it is done. And we must remember the context. Our world is already going to hell in a handbasket- the risks of advancing science are real, but the potential benefits may be all that stand between us and disaster. Science is necessarily disruptive, but may offer our only road to salvation. To quote Mark Watney in the movie 'The Martian': "In the face of overwhelming odds, I'm left with only one option, I'm gonna have to science the shit out of this."

**Me:** There is something arrogant and unseemly about tampering with anything so fundamental to life as aging and death. Their inevitability has always been an essential element governing the ebb and flow of all the species and all the individual organisms that have ever lived on our planet. Why assume that we have the right,

or the need, to tamper with such a basic aspect of nature?

**Tyler:** Scientific progress has always challenged conservative values based on a sentimental attachment to the past. My grandfather would probably have worked hard to convince the first agriculturalists that they were breaking some sacred and natural code when they chose to settle down in one place rather than continue following the hunt. There is no inevitable, inexorable, over-riding, and natural law defining and governing one correct path of human destiny.

**Me:** Curing disease is the primary goal of medical science. But aging is not a disease- it is an entirely expectable wearing down, an expression of biological entropy that cannot be reversed. We should certainly target the diseases that occur in old age in an effort to extend the average human healthspan. Success will improve the well being of the elderly and have a small subsidiary effect on lifespan- eg, more people living into their 80's, 90's, and 100's. But we should not expect that better treatment for diseases will allow people to live to biblical ages. Despite the hype to the contrary, there is no reason to believe it is scientifically feasible or ethically desirable for people to stay young for 150 years. The most compelling lesson of scientific research is that the body is far more complicated and intricately balanced than we could possibly imagine.

**THIS ARTICLE CONTINUES ONLINE AT [www.EducationUpdate.com](http://www.EducationUpdate.com)**

## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

*Accepting the Invitation to Speak  
in Hyderabad, India*

By CAROLE PERRY WB2MGP

As chairperson of the Radio Club of America's (RCA) Youth Activities Program, I am always interested in showcasing and supporting young and technically talented amateur radio operators and technically creative high school and middle school students. In my capacity as moderator of the world's largest ham radio convention's (Hamvention) Youth Forum for the past 29 years, I am privileged to present 8 to 10 young speakers who give brilliant presentations on their inventions and projects in radio/technology. This 3 hour forum highlights our best and our brightest every May.

In 2015 the National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) in Hyderabad, India sponsored the appearance of then 15 year old Tom Jose VU2TO at my Youth Forum. As a result of his terrific appearance at the Youth Forum, and the warm reception he received there, his escort Mr. S. Suri VU2MY, invited me to visit and speak at his terrific organization; the NIAR in India. The purpose of my visit would be to share ideas with teachers and principals about teaching amateur radio in their schools and supporting young hams.



Carole Perry in India

In an upcoming series, I will highlight the good works of the NIAR with their efforts to introduce and educate young students in technology, and with my amazing and enlightening experiences with being a keynote speaker at their Education Conference at their grounds in Hyderabad, India. One of my main goals on this trip was to encourage and support an international effort to get young people on the radio; communicating with each other and sharing information about their cultures and histories; and most importantly; sharing all that they have in common. #

STEM SHARE-BROOKLYN  
MARINE STEM EDUCATION  
ALLIANCE (BMSEA)

By LANE ROSEN

The BMSEA, in conjunction with the NYCDOE STEM Department, created a STEM SHARE event at John Dewey High School, (JDHS) held in conjunction with this year's FTC competition in an effort to share best practices.

Collaborating with First Robotics, JDHS science teacher Filippo Dispenza hosted the annual FTC First Qualifier weekend event for the third time at JDHS. The First Tech Challenge (FTC) is a competition between student led teams to engineer a robot within specifications and perform tasks to earn points. Students design, engineer, test, and program robots for this competitive event. Teams pick alliances and cooperate together to advance by winning individual matches. Forty eight total teams from all over NYC participated in this two day competition. Witnessing the robotics teams working together in the pit area is a jaw dropping experience. Teams in the pit area are diagnosing problems, rewiring, soldering motors, changing axles and reprogram-



ming their robots. Teams are also scouting, borrowing tools, talking, learning and working

ICONIC ARTIST AGNES  
MARTIN CELEBRATED AT THE  
GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum held a retrospective on artist Agnes Martin. Born in western Canada in 1912, Martin's singular abstract style, which paid special attention to lines, grids and simple forms, left a lasting legacy that has inspired many but replicated by none. The retrospective, which was the first comprehensive survey of her work in over twenty years, originated at the Tate Modern in London and appeared in California at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as well as the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf before landing at the Guggenheim.

The exhibit at the Guggenheim had a particularly distinctive flavor due to both the architectural nature of the Frank Lloyd Wright designed museum itself, which complimented Martin's works in a way that seemed to emphasize her famous grids and lines, as well as the fact that Martin herself lived in New York in the late 50's. Her move to the historic Lower Manhattan street Coenties Slip proved to be especially pivotal as her work excelled swiftly during this period.

This expansive display of Martin's work featured an array of standout pieces including 1954's *Mid-Winter*. This early painting provides an interesting comparison to her later pieces, as it is less linear. There is a hint of the lines and grids to come, but it is bolder than her later, more famous pieces. Another standout is the collection of *The Islands I-XII* from 1979. As stated alongside the paintings at the museum, *The Islands I-XII* features 12 delicate, muted canvases that seem to embody the following assertion made by Martin: "my paintings have neither object nor space nor line nor anything- no forms. They are light, lightness, about merging, about formlessness, breaking down form." It is also noted in the same text



that Martin was a practitioner of meditation and an avid reader of Asian philosophy. The aforementioned paintings easily relate to this interest.

A third favorite was *White Flower* from 1960, which exemplifies her grid style most masterfully. From afar, the painting screams uniformity, but upon closer investigation, the textured surface featuring the brown and blue hues can be found.

With Agnes Martin's stature as one of the most well respected and highly regarded female artists in the male-dominated art field, a retrospective such as the one at the Guggenheim was most appropriate. As Senior Curator Tracey Bashkoff helpfully explains on the Guggenheim's website, Martin is considered a pivotal figure between Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism. "Her content- an expression of essential emotions - relates her to the earlier group, the Abstract Expressionists, but her methods - repetition, geometric compositions and basic means- were adopted by Minimalists," she says, adding, "Martin's work is more than a bridge between the two." #

collaboratively while competing for a variety of awards.

Taking advantage of this exciting live STEM event, this first STEM SHARE event had several BMSEA members facilitating workshops, including Filippo Dispenza (JDHS) and Carlos Reyes (Murrow HS). Joe Gulino (IS 281) and myself hosted a workshop on the BMSEA programs and partners. Bruce Gamsey (IS 278) offered a workshop on Sea Perch underwater robotics and First Lego League. Kingsborough Community College STEM lab specialist Michael Danza setup a display on the South Brooklyn Engineering Pipeline. BMSEA partners Everfi, Engineering is Elementary, Civil Air Patrol and NYC Cultural Affairs attended as well. The STEM workshops offered opportunities for schools and educators to get involved with STEM programs with support from the BMSEA.

The STEM SHARE was supported by a

number of key partners to the BMSEA schools. Long term supporter and advocate City Councilman Mark Treyger was in attendance. Mark has been instrumental in helping local schools obtain millions of dollars for STEM and Career Technical Education programs. Deputy Brooklyn Borough President Diana Reyna and her team have supported the BMSEA by attending events and awarding millions of dollars in STEM infrastructure projects to schools. Dr. Reza Fakhari, Kingsborough Community College, VP Workforce Development & Strategic Community Partnerships came to support the BMSEA at the event. Patricia Daly, Executive Director of NYC First also attended the event. These STEM Education supporters have strongly supported our schools and the mission of the BMSEA. #

Lane Rosen is a Science Teacher at John Dewey HS, BMSEA Coordinator and NYSMEA President.



## RADIO CLUB OF AMERICA HONORS MORGAN O'BRIEN AT ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTATION



*Belle O'Brien enjoys Morgan's success*



*Kitty and Ed Colbert*



*Welcome to new grandson O'Brien*



*(R) Morgan O'Brien Receives Award*

By LUCAS MAUTNER & LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, the Radio Club of America awarded Morgan O'Brien, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors for pdvWIRELESS, with the Armstrong Medal. Bell O'Brien and Kitty and Ed Colbert, close friends, shared the joy of the award. The Radio Club noted his outstanding achievements and lasting contributions to the radio arts and sciences and wireless communications. Other honorees included keynote speaker Dr. Joseph Taylor, a Princeton University Professor and

Nobel Laureate in Physics; William Murphy, an amateur radio operator of over half a century; and Dr. Mischa Schwartz, Charles Batchelor Professor Emeritus of Electrical Engineering at Columbia University, for his achievements and contributions to the advancement of electronics for the benefit of humanity.

President Tim Duffy welcomed the audience to the 107<sup>th</sup> Banquet & Award Presentation along with Master of Ceremonies, Elaine Walsh. "Those of you who were with us last year know what a special, special evening this will be,"

President Duffy said.

In his keynote address, Dr. Joseph Taylor offered some personal reflections, which emphasized the "circuitous route" that his life has taken. He spoke of he and his brother's early affinity for gadgets and radio, which sparked a life long interest in physics and science. "Part of what made this progression good for the two of us was that we worked by doing. We didn't have anybody to teach us this stuff," he said. He then went on to present his latest projects and professional achievements.

Mr. O'Brien was a co-founder and chairman of Nextel Communications, where he was responsible for the creation of the first all-digital nationwide wireless network. He brought IDEN technology and push-to-talk capabilities to the mass business and consumer market. Afterward, he co-founded Cyren Call Communications, served as a consultant to wireless start-ups, and has been on the board of multiple charitable organizations and private businesses. In 2005, he was inducted into the Washington, D.C. Business Hall of Fame. #

## REVIEW OF "ENGINEERING INSTRUCTION FOR HIGH-ABILITY LEARNERS IN K-8 CLASSROOMS"

**Engineering Instruction for High-Ability Learners in K-8 Classrooms**

Edited by Debby Dailey, Ed.D & Alicia Cotabish, Ed.D  
Publisher: Prufrock Press, Waco, Texas; \$39.95

By LINDA ROLNITZKY, ABD

Many Americans are discouraged by the lack of mathematical ability among American students. To address part of this problem, programs such as the federally-funded Head Start program have been designed to prepare young students who, for various reasons, have a low potential

for accomplishment in mathematics, science and engineering.

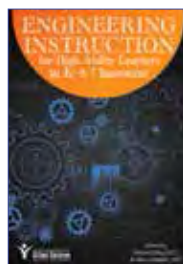
Also to be considered is the inadequate performance among exceptionally talented students. Highly gifted students are often bored by standard teaching methods. It is incumbent among educators to develop methods for the education of highly gifted students in technical fields such as mathematics, science engineering and technology. This book describes and encourages a method based on engineering

techniques.

This book describes the many types of problems that can be addressed using engineering methods. The book presents many carefully crafted, detailed and very informative teaching plans that will capture the interest and skills of these exceptional students.

The many educators involved in the writing of this book are enthusiastic about the positive learning experiences that will occur when practical problems are approached in an engineering environment. This method provides an opportunity for practical, exciting, self-motivated learning. Any scientific or mathematical information that is needed to solve a problem will be addressed and studied by the student. This top-down learning may seem inadequate, but keep in mind that we are speaking about high intelligent, highly motivated and highly encouraged students.

This book is loaded with carefully presented information, both as text and in tabular form, that will enable a teacher to learn about the practical issues teacher often face when using these



methods. It would be of help to parents if a similar but less detailed discussion of this teaching method were developed for parents who might be interested to participate helping the children using this method at home.

The authors suggest that this engineering method can be altered for use with students at less than the top academic level. This would extend the scope of this powerful method.

Perhaps the altered method might supply the same independence and excitement than that of the highly-motivated students. #

*Linda Rolnitzky holds an ABD in Biostatistics from Columbia University in New York. She has taught graduate level courses in Biostatistics and has performed statistical consulting for scientists and physicians at both the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York and New York University Medical Center. She has been involved in many Multi-Center trials. She is interested in designing studies of group comparisons, such as the comparison between students who were and were not taught using a new method.*

### Michelle Obama

*continued from page 2*

this country belongs to you—to all of you, from every background and walk of life. If you or your parents are immigrants, know that you are part of a proud American tradition—the infusion of new cultures, talents and ideas, generation after generation, that has made us the greatest country on earth.

If your family doesn't have much money, I want you to remember that in this country, plenty of folks, including me and my husband—we started out with very little. But with a lot of hard work and a good education, anything is possible—even becoming President. That's what the American Dream is all about.

So that's my final message to young people as First Lady. It is simple. I want our young people to know that they matter, that they belong. So don't be afraid—you hear me, young people? Don't be afraid. Be focused. Be determined. Be hopeful. Be empowered. Empower yourselves with a good education, then get out there and use that education to build a country worthy of your boundless promise. Lead by example with hope, never fear. And know that I will be with you, rooting for you and working to support you for the rest of my life.

And I can think of no better way to end my time as First Lady than celebrating with all of you."#

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# CELEBRATING THE BEST OF 2016

Education Update would like to extend our thanks to the following people who appeared in our pages in 2016, for the indelible marks they have left on education in New York City and across the country. They have touched and improved the lives of thousands of students and have been shining examples of excellence in education.



**Andrew Gardner**  
BrainPOP



**Barbara Grodd**  
US Bureau of Prisons and Philanthropist



**Clifton Truman Daniel**  
Grandson of Pres. Harry Truman



**Joyce Cowin**  
Philanthropist & Trustee, Teachers College



**Chancellor James Milliken**  
The City University of New York



**Dave Liebman**  
NEA Jazz Master



**Dr. Charlotte Frank**  
McGraw-Hill Education



**President Drew Faust**  
President of Harvard



**Eileen Marinakis**  
Chair, Board of Trustees of Beacon College



**President Ernest Logan**  
CSA



**Hayley Hershenson**  
Junior Journalist



**Jared Zeltner**  
Junior Journalist



**Jo Ivey Boufford, MD**  
President, The NY Academy of Medicine



**Diana Bilazikian**  
Asst. Professor, Montclair State



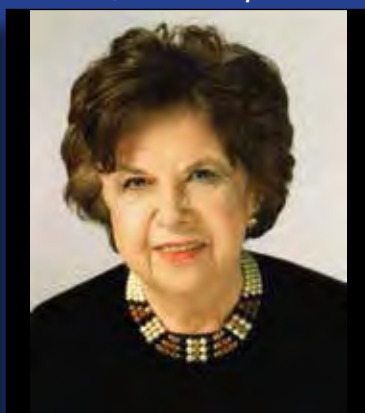
**Sam Koplewicz**  
Satter Fellow (Harvard), Human Rights Watch



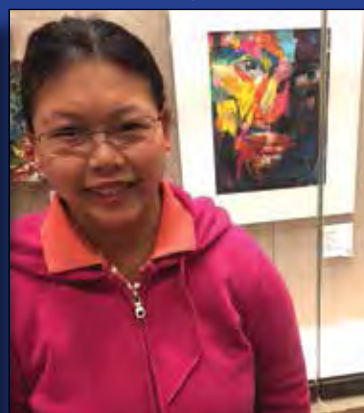
**Loree Sutton**  
Ret. Brigadier General



**Dr. Mary Farrell**  
Dir., Regional Center, Farleigh Dickinson



**Mira Van Doren**  
Documentary Producer



**Karen He**  
Junior Journalist and Artist

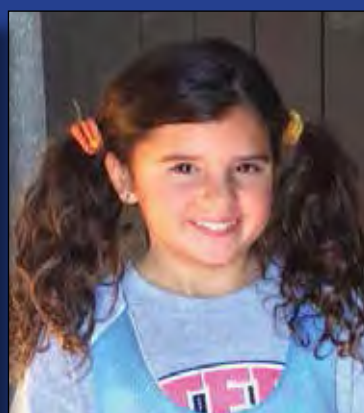
# CELEBRATING THE BEST OF 2016



**Phyllis Kossoff**  
Philanthropist and Educator



**Patrick Kennedy**  
Congressman



**Savannah Cohen**  
Junior Journalist



**Rebecca Seawright**  
Assembly Member



**Sheila Nevins**  
President, HBO Documentary Films



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**Stephen Spahn**  
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**Andrew Tisch**  
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**Ann Tisch**  
Founder, Young Women's Leadership Network



**President William Fritz**  
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**Edith Everett**  
Philanthropist, Educator



**Lin-Manuel Miranda**  
Playwright



**Ronald Stewart, Barrister**  
Head, York Prep



**Jayme Stewart**  
College Guidance, York Prep



**President Jeremy Travis**  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

## Dear Hollis

By HOLLIS DANNAHAM, M.Ed.

Dear Hollis,

I am a second grade teacher who has a very bright student in my class who is in perpetual motion. He fidgets with anything in front of him. I manage his movement within the classroom by allowing him to stand while he works and giving him breaks but I continue to have a problem with him touching and tearing down bulletin boards when walking through the halls.

*Destructive in Brooklyn*

**Dear Destructive in Brooklyn,**

It sounds like you have already implemented great strategies to support this student during work time. In regard to the touching/tearing of bulletin boards when walking in the hallway, give your student a "mystery object" to place in his pocket(s). This way his hands are occupied in his pockets and his mind is active trying to identify the object. This has been very successful with other students with the same behavior.

*In service,  
Hollis*

Dear Hollis,

I am an assistant principal and many teachers come to me to help them with students who consistently call out during lessons no matter how many times they are reminded to raise their hands. I have exhausted my strategies. What can I suggest to them?

*Calling out in Connecticut*

## A NEW ADVICE COLUMN



**Dear Calling Out,**

I have had great success with a calling out awareness strategy with students in all grades. The teacher speaks to the student privately about calling out during lessons. She tells the student that she thinks the student may not be aware of how many times s/he calls out. The teacher explains that she will put a post-it note on the student's desk and each time s/he calls out a tally mark will be put on the post-it. It is important to explain that

this is not a bad mark and does not lead to any type of consequence it is just a way for him/her to become aware of his/her calling out. When the teacher makes the tally mark she should continue teaching without making any comments about it. After the period, the teacher takes a minute to talk to the student, to count up the tally marks and make a goal with him/her to try to have one less the next period. After a short time the calling out should have diminished significantly.

*In Service,  
Hollis*

*After 30 years serving complex learners of all ages as a special education teacher, reading specialist, school leader, and clinical learning specialist, Hollis Dannaham, M.Ed., now consults with schools to design intervention and special education programs, coaches teachers and administrators, and provides professional development workshops. Please send your questions to [hdannaham@gmail.com](mailto:hdannaham@gmail.com).*

program on actual users. During the past two months, Kirsh, Brunner and their co-founder Shani Peer - a speech therapist who manages and assists in the development of the scripts - have participated in intensive sessions in the pilot program with teachers, families and the children who will ultimately benefit from the application. These sessions have been an invaluable tool for Sentidio to ensure that Confikid will succeed in its goals. In keeping with Sentidio's goals to actively engage the child in their own progress, Confikid has given the children themselves the opportunity to design the scripts that will be used in the application. By listening to their feedback, Sentidio better understands the needs and experiences of these children and has refined their application in a way that will more effectively target their specific needs. Sentidio then set to work at adapting their model to train teachers, therapists, and parents who work directly with these children.

The staff at Sentidio will begin to work with the first schools and therapists to join their pilot this month, along with parents who've already started it. They plan to launch their first commercial version in Israel in 2017, with the goal of expanding the pilot in the US. Any teachers, schools, parents or clinicians interested in learning more about the application or participating in the pilot can contact Ariel Brunner [ariel@sentidio.com](mailto:ariel@sentidio.com) or view the company online at [www.sentidio.com](http://www.sentidio.com) #

## Computer Programs

*continued from page 14*

them to succeed and build healthy relationships.

Another crucial way Confikid empowers its users with special needs is by giving them a more active role in their own treatment. Sentidio uses video modeling to actively engage children in a virtual social experience that models actual situations they will face in the real world. Visual storytelling platforms provide a tool for the special needs client to interact and "act out" social communication in a virtual world. Sentidio hopes that their tool can later be used by teachers and therapists to help their students translate and apply these experiences in real life. Video modeling helps those who struggle with Asperger's and a range of autism spectrum disorders to improve social communication skills through their interactions and relationships with others by working on skills such as emotion detection, recognition and the interpretation of social cues. The user then will select appropriate responses and behaviors in different social contexts. Helping special needs children to gain these skills is the key to empowering those who struggle with a range of special needs to lead successful, more independent and productive lives.

Winning the position as MindCET's promising startup has given Sentidio the chance to continue to test the effectiveness of their

## THE MATH COLUMN

# The SAT Math Section Should Test Math – Not Reading!

By DR. ALFRED POSAMENTIER

During the summer many parents concerned about their child's ascendance to college are providing them with support as they prepare for the upcoming SAT exams. An important issue to consider is what have evolved recently. Namely, that the questions are very heavily embedded in a student's reading ability and possibly cultural acquaintance. I have been a strong advocate for preparing students for the SATs, having written support books on the topic for both teachers and students – for teachers on how to prepare students, and for students to provide significant practice. But now the question arises as to how to prepare for the math section of the SAT, when there is considerable reading skills embedded therein.

If we agree that the test items are to assess the students' quantitative thinking, mathematical skills, and problem-solving ability, then the items presented should be geared appropriately. Today we are faced with a new form of test item for the math section of the SAT exam, which I believe is wrongly constructed, since it is too dependent on reading comprehension and cultural competence. This is coming under the guise of presenting "real-world" experiences. Just looking at the sample tests provided online and seen through the eyes of a student who may have challenges in reading, or a student whose native language is not English – a skill assessed on other parts of the SAT – one will see that they are at a definite disadvantage. After all, the SATs already have a reading test, and a test of writing and language. We don't need to "pollute" the math test with a significant degree of reading competence and cultural awareness.

We ought to assess "real world" mathematics skills without being so verbose. In previous decades, the mathematics section of the SAT focused exclusively on mathematics skills with a minimum amount of reading required. The uncluttered math items presented an advantage as evidenced by an experience I had during my years in the 1960s as a math teacher (and math team coach) at a Bronx high school, I remember the extraordinarily brilliant student, who emigrated from Hong Kong, demonstrated his brilliance in mathematics, but was rather weak with his English skills. His score on the verbal SAT was very low, but he got an 800, the top score, on the mathematics test. He was subsequently accepted to MIT with a scholarship! This was when the math questions were far less verbal than they are on today's exam – testing math alone without requiring language competence.

Unfortunately, all too often mathematics teachers neglect teaching problem-solving skills in the regular program. For example, consider the question about how many games need to be played in a single-elimination basketball tournament with 25 teams competing



**Dr. Al Posamentier**

to get a winner? Most students would simulate the situation by following the winners step by step. This would be time-consuming and open to slight calculation errors. A clever problem-solving technique here would be to consider the situation from an alternative point of view. That is, consider how many games need to be played to get 24 losers? This question is very simply answered – 24 games – with a clever problem-solving technique of adopting a different point of view. I use this example only because it is brief and makes the point of demonstrating a clever problem-solving approach, one that we should expose our students to during their regular instruction program.

Reading competence is not the only distractor from this assessment of mathematics skills. There is also the cultural factor that could put immigrant students at a disadvantage when they do not understand the topic being described. Whenever math test questions are put into "a real world context," there is always the concern about what is "real-world" for urban students may not be in the real-world of a rural students. Even if the students can read well, there could be a time delay factor as the student struggles to understand what is actually being asked. Therefore, the less verbiage used in presenting a mathematics question, the more accurate the mathematics assessment would be. So let's focus on the problem solving skills in mathematics without the distraction from other skill sets. We would be equally displeased if a reading question on the verbal section of the SAT were to be engrossed in scientific or mathematical themes, which would discriminate against those unfamiliar with the topic. So let's keep the mathematics section purely mathematical. After all, isn't that what we are trying to assess. #

*Dr. Alfred Posamentier is currently Chief Liaison for International Academic Affairs at Long Island University, New York.*

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YOUNG JOURNALISTS

*Fiction Piece: Stick-y*

By SAVANNAH COHEN

My name is Briana and I have a sticky situation going on. I love lacrosse like really, more than anything. I am going into college next year and my position is attack but I got asked to be a goalie to the University of North Carolina, last year's national champions. My dream was to play lacrosse in college at the position I choose. They want me to play goalie because I have great stick skills. I'm really stuck because I don't know what to do. Go to college for lacrosse and maybe be unhappy or go to a good school and have fun.

Suddenly, my mom who's a therapist yelled. "Briana get down here for dinner". "Coming" I screamed back. I walked down to dinner sitting in my seat. "What's new" she asked. "Well I got asked to play at North Carolina for goalie" I said. "Sweetie all I can say is follow your dreams". Suddenly, I was not hungry and went up to my room. All I could think about was what mom said. Do my dreams want to play goalie or do something else. I'm tired thought Brie as her friends called her and went to sleep.

She woke up in the morning refreshed. She got her hair fixed and did all the stuff you do in the morning and went to school. All day all she could think about was, if she should follow her dreams, and she finally made her decision.

She called back North Carolina and told them after school. Eventually, she told her mother. "Mom I want to go to North Carolina I love lacrosse so much so I guess I will learn to be



goalie" "Brie that is a great decision" said my mom. "Thanks mom but I have to leave today at 7:00 for training camp" "Oh okay we can make that work start packing" said mom. I went up to my room to pack I will really miss this place but I will also like North Carolina. As soon as I packed mom drove me over to the local airport. "Bye" I said trying not to get emotional. "Bye" she said getting emotional and we went our separate ways. I went through security and finally got to my gate at 6:20, ten minutes till boarding. Suddenly my phone started ringing and I answered it. It was Loyola a top lacrosse school telling me that could give me a scholarship playing attack NOOOO! I dropped the phone I am stuck playing goalie at North Carolina now. NOOOOO.

*Savannah Cohen is a 4<sup>th</sup> grader at the Tamaques School in Westfield New Jersey. #*

**INHERITANCE CYCLE BY CHRISTOPHER PAOLINI**

REVIEWED By WILLIAM FREEDMAN

The Inheritance Cycle, written by Christopher Paolini is, in my opinion, one of the best fantasy series. The four books in the series feature dynamic characters, complex plots, and of course, dragons. The author creates a vibrant world filled with civil struggle, a tyrant king, a rag tag group of resistance fighters and a farming boy who gets caught up in a war that could change history.

The first book in the series, "Eragon," follows the story of a young boy named Eragon growing up in a small farming village. Everything seems normal in his life until he finds a strange blue stone in a mountain range that is said to be cursed. Suddenly, Eragon's entire world is turned around after a dragon hatches out of the egg and chooses to bond with this simple farm boy. His life is filled with adventure upon adventure, twists and turns at every corner, fear and intrigue, and no one that he can trust.

The Inheritance Cycle is one of the most gripping and exciting series that I have ever read and I highly recommend it to anyone



interested in an amazing story. With its interesting plots, dynamic cast of characters, and colorful landscape, it is set above many other books in the fantasy genre. #

*William Freedman is a student at the Horace Mann School in NYC in grade 8. He is 13 years old.*

**MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM OPENS EXHIBITION ON CHARLOTTE BRONTË**

By HAYLEY HERSHENSON

At the Morgan Library & Museum, there was an exhibition honoring British novelist and poet, Charlotte Brontë, as 2016 marks the 200th anniversary of her birth. In a collaboration with the Brontë Parsonage Museum in Haworth, England, the exhibition features



*Hayley Hershenson*

collections of Brontë's manuscripts, her portable writing desk and paintbox, clothing she wore in the 1850s, deeply personal letters she wrote to friends, and two portraits of her from the National Portrait Gallery in London. The exhibition is titled after a line from her most famous novel, *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Brontë was able to defy many of the traditional beliefs concerning the role of women in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, through the main character in *Jane Eyre*. The exhibition had the original 1847 manuscript of *Jane Eyre* open to the page where Jane says to Mr. Rochester, "I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will; which I now exert to leave you." Considerably one of the most powerful lines, capturing the empowering nature of the novel. Brontë exemplifies the value of self-worth and dignity in respect to feminism, through the action of Jane deciding not to stay with a man who could support her financially, and overlook his betrayal but rather to leave him and make a life of her own. Jane is proposed to by another man after leaving Mr. Rochester,

yet she turns him down, for no reason other than realizing that she should not settle for anything less than true love. During the time period the novel was written, women were expected to want nothing more than a husband, and likely would not think twice about a marriage proposal. Though, as shown through her statement to Mr. Rochester, she has an independent will and is able to think for herself.

Brontë created a female character who was ultimately equal to her male love interest by the end of the novel, which wasn't often portrayed and went against societal beliefs. In doing this, Brontë has a way of drawing us in and allows us to feel just as the narrator does, by directly addressing the reader. After Jane returned to Mr. Rochester, he was blind and had lost almost everything, in need of Jane to take care of him. He was no longer superior to her in the relationship, in the way he was before she left him. The circumstances of their relationship would have been different, had Jane not exerted her "independent will." The true meaning behind this exhibition is to reveal that Jane was not the only one with an independent will. In fact, Charlotte Brontë herself ambitiously exercised her strong independent will in the process of creating *Jane Eyre*. #

*Hayley Hershenson is a senior at NEST.*

*Rebuilding Baton Rouge, One House at a Time*

By JONATHAN & BEN GOTIAN

Today we drove to Baton Rouge to go and work with Rebuilding Together Baton Rouge to help fix a house that someone lost during the flood that occurred this past summer. Young Judea, which is a Jewish Youth Group for tweens, organized the opportunity. We were



surprised to learn about this because the main story that happened at the time of the flood was the Presidential election which overwhelmed all other news. The supervisors found that we were a great help to finish the job faster because they had gutted the entire house by themselves without any help, and that we were the first volunteer group to help them. Some time after lunch the owner of the house came by to check on the house. After lunch, I started talking with one of the supervisors about life outside rebuilding houses, and how he goes up to New York every year to visit some family. About an hour or so later, I had a short conversa-

tion with the owner. He told me that before the flood he lived in that house for thirty years. When I asked him how much he lost from the flood, he responded with one word that made my community service all the more meaningful impact on myself and the owner: "everything", he lost his entire home in the flood: food, a bed, irreplaceable family heirlooms. It made me appreciate everything that I have and made me think about what if, God forbid, that happened to me. Weather is indiscriminate. It has the potential to destroy everything and anyone you know and love. That truly made me appreciate everything I have and to not take anything for granted. This program was part of a program they call Alternative Winter Break (AWB) because we chose to alternatively spend our winter break volunteering than going on vacation or staying home.

*Ben and Jonathan Gotian attend the Solomon Schechter School of Westchester in Hartsdale, NY.*

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## MOVIE REVIEW

### *Revealing Hidden Figures*

By JAN AARON

**W**hat do educators and parents tell kids? With persistence and intelligence you can overcome seemingly insurmountable stumbling blocks. "Be first" "Be a leader!"

Themes like these permeate "Hidden Figures" which also urges teamwork. The movie tells the story of three brilliant African American Women who worked for NASA in the 1950's. and 60's. The friendship between the women is central to their story.

Katherine Johnson (Teraji P. Henson), Mary Jackson (Janelle Monae), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer,) are terrific role models. As this publication believes: if you study hard, concentrate, strive and think creatively, you will pop out of the box and into history. The women in this film were working women, with families who overcame hideous day-to-day discrimination on the job. They served as "human computers" doing complex mathematic and engineering tasks at NASA's Langley Research Center (segregated division signaled by blacks only restroom, offices, libraries, schools), The movie's villains include Mrs. Michael (Kirsten Dunst) head of all the human computers, who treats Dorothy condescendingly and Paul Stafford (Jim Parsons), as task force supervisor who's upset because his boss wants all his figures checked by a black woman. Viewers will also learn that NASA's Langley Research Center at this time in history was in particularly segregationist Virginia.

When Al Harrison (Kevin Costner) gum-chewing director of the Space Task Group



needs someone who can do theoretical math, needed for calculations to outperform the Russians in the Space Race, Katherine is put on his team. Subplots concern Dorothy struggling to be named supervisor of her group and Mary's going to court so she can graduate engineering school.

The friendship between the three women is central to this story, but the spotlight is on Katherine who's working directly with the team that launches John Glenn into orbit.

Here Glenn is a bit of a flirt. Really? Every movie stretches reality. Tagged onto the movie are the images of the real Johnson, Vaughan, and Jackson, the hidden figures of a story, little-known, that deserved this movie's spotlight. #





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## Dr. Mary Edlow Brings New Program to Intermediate Schools

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

In initiating The Sexual/Reproductive Well-Being Program in the NYC public school system, psychoanalyst Mary Edlow's goal is for every child to be a wanted child. Dr. Edlow's professional work, her dissertation on adolescent pregnancy and her own life experiences have motivated her to delve more deeply into the conundrum of so-called "unintended" pregnancies during adolescence. "The most important thing any of us will ever do is be a parent," she said. Dr. Edlow referenced the recent farewell address by President Barack Obama in which he stated that of all his accomplishments, he is most proud of being Sasha and Malia's father. Dr. Edlow's primary goal is for adolescents and young adults to become parents when they are ready.

Dr. Edlow emphasized that the U.S. still has the highest rate of adolescent pregnancies among developed countries. In fact, over 9.5 billion dollars per year is spent on teen child-bearing and unwanted pregnancies. Her new program, tentatively titled the Sexual/Reproductive Well-Being Project, aims to inform adolescents, starting in grades six through eight in the NYC public school system, about pregnancy prevention and parenting skills.

Dr. Edlow's background as a psychoanalyst gives her an in-depth understanding of the psychosocial and developmental issues related to pregnancy in adolescence. "During the adolescent phase of development, the adolescent's primary task is to focus on identity and what they're going to do in the world," she explained, adding that in many low income,

minority, urban communities, educational and employment opportunities are limited. With these cultural sensitivities in mind, Dr. Edlow hopes to address this issue within her program.

In addition, Dr. Edlow hopes to involve the parents of the adolescents in the program. She stated, "Parents need to be informed as well and need to understand and participate. If we can convey to the parents, as well as to the adolescents, the significance of a well-timed pregnancy, we could substantially avoid a multitude of social problems, including physical complications in the pregnant adolescent, developmental delays in the offspring, intergenerational effects and the enormous cost to society."

Presently, Dr. Edlow and the team are researching existing programs before starting the pilot program in the summer of this year. What has been discovered is that no sex ed program to date has offered formal training for the teacher or a strong focus on the psychological components of unplanned, unintended, and mistimed pregnancies. Reproductive well-being literacy programs need to address the psychological dimensions in order to be more effective. In addition to psychological development, The Sexual/Reproductive Project program will also have an emphasis on brain development as it is uniquely operative during the adolescent phase. #

*Dr. Mary Edlow holds a doctoral degree in Clinical Social Work from New York University (Silver School of Social Work) and a certificate in psychoanalysis from The National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis (NPAP).*

## ENHANCING EDUCATION WITH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

By RAY BENDICI

The ever-increasing pace and variety of technological developments continues to be a challenge for K12 assistive technology products.

As education content becomes available in more digital forms—videos, software programs and apps—adapting platforms for student use is critical to help those with special needs access information as easily as do their classmates. In addition, with more devices available, interproduct compatibility is front and center as companies try to ensure assistive technology products work with any and on every platform.

Moving forward, look for assistive technology devices to become even more user-friendly so students can use the products on their own, rather than needing to rely on an educator or an assistant. By doing so, individuals will be better prepared for life beyond K12 when they may not have as much professional support and will need to be more self-reliant.

On the plus side, hardware and software increasingly include assistive technology features

as standard items. However, students continue to need better guidance in discovering and using these features in their devices, software and apps.

On the other side of the equation, manufacturers want to ensure that user experiences are the same on every device, be it a Chromebook or a smartphone. This prevents students from wasting time and effort trying to adapt to new platforms and allows them to focus exclusively on learning.

### LanguageLinks to Literacy; Laureate

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### Clarifye Digital Eye Exam; LensCrafters

The new Clarifye digital eye exam shows parents how their children see and how any vision problems can be corrected. During the

## SPORTS

## NYC High School Senior Makes an Impact Coaching Kids

By MIKE COHEN

Josh Zhuo, a senior at Baccalaurate School for Global Education in Queens, began working as a coach for Throwback Sports in his freshman year in high school. It didn't take long to notice that he was a gifted teacher and instructor. He started out assisting professional coaches experienced in working with children who some have special needs including being on the autistic spectrum, ADHD, and other developmental disabilities. Despite his limited experience, he was able to meet each child at their level giving them the confidence they needed to grow into athletes, while always making sure they had fun.

"Working with kids has meant everything to me," said Zhuo, 17, who is also a standout on his school's basketball team averaging over 16 points per game. "It is a privilege to surround myself with a vast group of positive and eager kids who earnestly work their hardest."

Zhuo is now no longer a neophyte in the coaching ranks after gaining four years of experience at Throwback Sports. Each passing season brought on more responsibility. He is now at the level where he works alongside other coaches more than 10 years his senior and is looked upon as, simply, one of the guys.

"Josh is just an enthusiastic guy," said Donte Dennis, 27, who was a three year captain for the University of Maine football team and coaches with Zhuo every Sunday. "He brings a good atmosphere to the room and he's very dedicated to helping the kids get better."

Many of kids remain in the program from when Zhuo first arrived, developing meaningful and long lasting relationships that have proved beneficial to both player and coach.

"Seeing their growth has brought profound pride to me," said Zhuo. "I definitely did not teach them as much as they have taught me."

One such boy, Wayne, who was non-verbal and is on the autistic spectrum has really developed under Zhuo's mentoring during the



(R) Josh Zhuo after a coaching session

last four years. Zhuo's passion and love for basketball has made a huge impact on Wayne. Wayne's mother said that at his schools talent show he dribbled a basketball to the delight of the crowd and that they were so proud of him. At the end of a recent session Wayne came up to Zhuo and said, "I love Coach Josh."

"It was children like Wayne who taught me empathy and patience," said Zhuo, who also played on his school's soccer team. "They showed me the value of kindness and genuineness, who removed the external drama of life, giving me insight into the perspective of others."

Zhuo would like to continue coaching in the future but for now he has his sights set on going to college in the fall. Having taken a rigorous academic program in high school he is applying to top tier University's. He is considering majoring in economics or in a pre-med program. Zhuo's sister went to Hunter College High School and now attends Hobart and William Smith Colleges in upstate New York. With her as a role model he understands the value of education and wants to make the most of his opportunities, just like he did as a coach. #

*In addition to being the sports editor of Education Update, Mike Cohen is the founder/director of Throwback Sports (a sports program for children of all abilities) and a frequent contributor to TAP in Westfield (NJ).*

exam, corneal curvature is mapped, which is used in assessing vision. The new 360-degree video experience, See How Your Child Sees, also shows how one in four children live with undiagnosed vision problems. [www.lenscrafters.com](http://www.lenscrafters.com)

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### Kurzweil3000.com; Kurzweil Education

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This article continues online: [www.EducationUpdate.com](http://www.EducationUpdate.com)

## THE MET BRUER PRESENTS THRILLING KERRY JAMES MARSHALL RETROSPECTIVE



*"De Style" by Kerry James Marshall*

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Since October 2016, the Met Bruer has displayed the transformative works of Kerry James Marshall in Kerry James Marshall: Mastry. With nearly 80 works on display, it is the largest museum retrospective to date of the American painter, whose career spans over 35 years. Running concurrently to Kerry James Marshall: Mastry is Kerry James Marshall Selects, which includes around 40 works chosen by the artist and drawn from the Met collection.

The exhibit is, in a word, thrilling. While his paintings make use of the traditional tropes of landscape and portraiture, his works, often of mural scale, exclusively showcase African American daily life and culture. "Marshall's work illustrates the American experience as unimaginable without black history and culture," said the exhibitions curator Ian Alteveer. While there are truly no duds in this retrospective, some pieces stand out more than others; one of those is his iconic "De Style" from 1993, which depicts the interior of a barbershop and highlights its place as one for creativity, community and self-transformation. The vibrant acrylic and collage on canvas greets visitors at the top of the exhibit and promptly sets the stage for the rest of the exhibition. (Of note, the sister to "De Style" is 2012's "School of Beauty, School of Culture" set in a beauty salon, is also on view later in the exhibit).

Other pieces focus on black romance and domesticity. "Slow Dance" (1992-93) is paired with "Could This Be Love" (1992) as his first foray into romantic love. In "Slow Dance", a couple embraces, swaying in the middle of a living room beneath the musical notes of "Baby I'm For Real" by The Originals, while a half-eaten dinner lingers on the table, and a bouquet of roses is located atop the speakers. "Could This Be Love" features another couple; this time staring at the viewers as they stand in various states of undress under the notes of the



**Kerry James Marshall**

Motown hit "Two Lovers" by Mary Wells.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1955, Marshall grew up in South Central, Los Angeles near the Black Panther headquarters and witnessed the civil rights struggles of the time first hand. He was 9 years old when the Watts riots took place. Much of Marshall's work is socially conscious and calls back to his roots. Black Panther's memorabilia can be seen in the nearly jet black "Black Painting" (2003) which depicts the moments before activist Fred Hampton was shot and killed by police in his apartment. Featuring black acrylic paint on black fiberglass, the copy of Angela Davis's "If They Come in the Morning: Voices of Resistance" (which was actually published two years after the Hampton shooting) on the nightstand is almost indecipherable, as is the Black Panther flag on the corner wall.

On display on the second floor of the exhibition is a room featuring "The Garden Project": massive paintings of landscaped projects in Los Angeles and Chicago. "Many Mansions" (1994), the first of the series, depicts the Stateway Gardens and features three well-dressed men digging a grave or gardening against a vibrant backdrop; spray paint and flowers are juxtaposed while a variation of John [14:2] is displayed above, reading, "in my

## NYC's "Pre-K For All" Program Offers Free Enrollment to Residents

By LUCAS MAUTNER

Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, the NYC Department of Education will offer free full-day pre-K for all students. Applications will be accepted from January 17 to February 24, 2017. All NYC families with a child born in 2013, including students with disabilities, are eligible to apply. Studies have shown that students who attend pre-K have higher math and reading skills than their peers once they enter elementary school. Early childhood education vastly improves a child's school experience in all grades. Children will be provided with "a safe learning environment with many opportunities to explore, create, and participate in engaging learning activities and to interact with other children and adults," according to the NYC DoE website. These programs will utilize the diverse backgrounds of NYC children and their families to create strong communities dedicated to academic excellence.

Pre-K for All is available five days per week from September to June. While most programs operate on a full-day schedule (6 hours and 20 minutes), 5-hour and half-day (2 hours and 30 minute) options are available. While all

students are eligible to apply, some programs will reserve spots for students who qualify for Free Reduced Lunch (FRL), English Language Learners (ELLs), those in the child welfare system, and/or families impacted by incarceration. Ten schools are participating in this initiative, including East Village Community School, The Earth School, and the Brooklyn Arts and Science Elementary School. Some programs offer a Dual Language option which has instruction in both English and the target language, with the aim of producing bilingual students. A select number of programs offer extended hours.

Parents are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, but should take note that admissions are *not* considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Interested parents should go to the NYC DoE website, where they can access the Pre-K Directory, which contains information about the admissions process, and the Pre-K Finder, which provides an interactive map of NYC pre-K programs.

Please see the following link for further information: [schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/PreK/default.htm#](http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/PreK/default.htm#)

### Dr. Howard Gardner

*continued from page 2*

munity institutions. But the world beyond the schoolhouse is crucial to education, and both traditional and new media are more important than ever.

Nowadays most teenagers spend more time consuming media than they do in school. What happens — or does not happen — in the media becomes a crucial part of the education of the young, and, for that matter, the old. So, much of the media — think "reality TV" — fosters mis-education and manipulates values. With so many changes, it's more important than ever to honor the most fundamental values of education — those that have endured over millennia.

Putting aside foolish cracks about "philosophy's (replacing "fathers") house there are many mansions".

Marshall chose a brilliant crop of works for the adjoining exhibit "Kerry James Marshall Selects". One standout in particular is Romare Bearden's "The Woodshed" (1969), which is made up of cut and pasted printed and colored papers, Photostats, cloth, graphite and sprayed ink on Masonite and depicts an African American man playing the saxophone. Other artists Marshall selected works from include Jacob Lawrence, Georges Seurat and William De Kooning. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingre's "Odalisque in Grisaille" is one of the higher profile paintings include in this collection.

The exhibit, which runs through January 29, is not to be missed. #

phers vs. welders," I'll focus on the importance of education in the liberal arts and sciences. Students should learn about the long-standing values of truth, beauty, and goodness, think hard about them, and interrogate them skillfully.

Here are some questions we, whether teachers, students or citizens, should keep front and center:

\*How do we determine which of the many statements and claims bandied about are true and which are not?

\*What methods have been used and do they stand up to scrutiny?

\*Which experiences do we cherish as beautiful and why?

\*What does it mean to be a good person, a good citizen, a good worker? And how do we achieve this trio of "goods"?

**How we behave and engage in our world — our character qualities — are considered by many to be strong predictors of students' success in higher learning. You are renowned for your work in this area. How will you help create and nurture educational communities that exemplify several goods?**

Clearly, such nurturing of good persons, good workers, and good citizens is the responsibility of many: parents, other relatives, models in the community, and ones from history and the arts; the religious, spiritual, and ideological communities in which we live; the range of traditional and contemporary media.

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## The National Jazz Museum in Harlem Celebrates America's Art Form in New Space



**Jazz Museum Assoc. Artistic Dir Christian McBride**

By **LYDIA LIEBMAN**

“Drop me off in Harlem,” Ella Fitzgerald famously proclaimed in her rendition of Duke Ellington’s eponymously titled 1933 tune. If Ella were alive today, she would have yet another reason to sing those words: the National Jazz Museum in Harlem. Located in the heart of Harlem on 129th Street, off of Malcolm X Boulevard, the National Jazz Museum in Harlem (a Smithsonian Affiliate) has been working to preserve, promote and present jazz on a local, national and international scale for nearly twenty years. Despite having been founded two decades ago, the museum is undergoing a sort of resurgence now due to the acquisition of its new permanent space in the neighborhood that is considered synonymous with the art form. “Jazz was born in New Orleans, but it grew up in New York City,” said Ryan Maloney, Director of Education and Programming at the Museum.

Leonard Garment, a Counselor to President Nixon whose early career as a jazz saxophonist sparked a lifelong dedication to arts advocacy, founded the museum in 1997 with former U.S. District Judge Abraham D. Sofaer. “When Garment decided to open the museum, it was because he realized that New York, perhaps the greatest bastion of culture in America, for all its museums, didn’t have one dedicated to jazz,” says Associate Artistic Director Christian McBride, adding, “New York couldn’t really call itself wholly cultured without a jazz museum.”

Under the leadership of Founding Director and Senior Scholar Loren Schoenberg, the museum has gone on to establish itself as an essential part of the jazz landscape in New York City and beyond. Each year, the museum produces more than 80 free programs in New York City and exposes jazz to nearly 20,000 through live performances, exhibitions, educational programs and school partnerships. With

the Grammy-winning bassist McBride and “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” bandleader Jon Batiste as the museums co-artistic directors, the National Jazz Museum in Harlem has enjoyed unprecedented exposure in recent years.

Currently, the museum is showing its exhibit “Vibration”, which tells the unique history of jazz in Harlem. “New York City is such a beacon for jazz among the world and has been for the last hundred years,” said Maloney. “Vibration” aims to tell that story. Most prominently displayed is Duke Ellington’s Baby Grand Piano, which was manufactured almost exactly a hundred years ago. Among other interesting artifacts include a NAACP concert program for 1970 that boasts a truly eclectic and monumental lineup (Sammy Davis Jr., Stevie Wonder, Lena Horne, Richie Havens and Louis Armstrong all on the same bill!) and a pair of Duke Ellington’s hand-carved dice on loan from his granddaughter Mercedes.

Perhaps the power of Harlem is clarified most by the display of E. Simms Campbell’s “A Night Club Map of Harlem” (1932). On this rather large map, all of Harlem’s many musical spots are shown within the tight vicinity: the legendary Cotton Club sits beside the Savoy Ballroom while across Seventh Avenue is Small’s Paradise.

While the current exhibit tends to focus on tradition and history, other parts of the museum look far ahead to the future. One feature is its “Beyond Category” wall, which features artists that may fall far from Duke Ellington in terms of style but still land under the jazz umbrella. A picture of Miles Davis is beside Michael Jackson, while a photograph of Kendrick Lamar looks to pianist Robert Glasper in a nod to where this music is headed.

*More information about the museum, including a calendar of upcoming events, can be found online at [#](http://jazzmuseuminharlem.org)*

## Hunter College Student, Daughter of Pakistani Immigrants Receives Prestigious Marshall Scholarship

Hunter College of the City University of New York student Faiza Masood, Class of 2017, has been selected as a Marshall Scholar. She is one of only two students in New York State to receive the Marshall this year, and a first for Hunter College. The Marshall Scholarship goes to up to 40 students a year, and is often compared to the Rhodes Scholarship. The other winner selected from a New York school this year attends West Point. “We are so proud of Faiza and very pleased that her hard work both in and out of the classroom is being recognized by this prestigious program,” said Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab. “In Arabic, Faiza means winner, and Faiza certainly is one.” According to President Raab, Hunter has a new office modeled after those at top private universities that will offer support and guidance, including interview training, to enable deserving students to make it through the top graduate scholarship application process. “We’ve always known we’ve had some of the best and the brightest, and these new services will help ensure that students like Faiza can compete among the most elite students in the world,” said President Raab. Chancellor James B. Milliken said, “We are immensely proud of Faiza Masood’s well-deserved achievement. This is a testament to her talent, drive and hard work, as well as to the quality of her education at Hunter College. Faiza, like so many students at Hunter and CUNY, is the children of immigrants and an example of the gifts they bring to our campuses. She is the seventh CUNY student to be awarded this great honor. Immigrants and their families


have always been among our most outstanding students and they go on to make great contributions to New York. I’m sure Faiza will do the same.”

Masood, a member of the Thomas Hunter Honors Program, majors in religion with minors in Arabic Studies and Asian American Studies. She already won summer fellowships to study Arabic, which is not her native language, in Jordan and Morocco. In the fall of 2015 she was also chosen to attend the Harvard Divinity School’s Diversity and Explorations Program. The Marshall will enable her to earn a Master’s degree studying Islamic law with an emphasis on gender studies and family law at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, or Oxford. While the popular perception of Islamic law is that it is inflexible, Masood discovered that historically it was nuanced and sophisticated. The fact that it has changed with the times gives her reason to believe it can keep evolving. “It is necessary for Islamic scholars to understand Islamic law within a modern context,” says Masood. Masood was raised by parents who emigrated from Pakistan. She attended a private Islamic school in Queens with 10 students in her graduating class. She has three older sisters, including one, Hajara, who is studying religion at Hunter with her now. When Masood got the call that she had won the scholarship, she was in the middle of planning an event for the Interfaith Club she started at Hunter.

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