

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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UPDATE

GUEST EDITORIAL

How to Approach Learning Differences

By **GEORGE J. HAGERTY,**
PRESIDENT, BEACON COLLEGE

At least one in 10 of an institution's students has learning and attention issues and, according to the most recent national data, likely faces a 29 percent probability of graduating in six years. Addressing related challenges will increase graduation rates and have a life-altering impact on such students and ultimately their influence on society.

Students with learning and attention issues may also fit into other recognized categories such as first generation, underprepared, minority, or low-income. Services for those groups may help students with learning and attention issues, but they are not enough.

Boards can help increase graduation rates and change lives by paying attention and supporting the institution's efforts on behalf of students with learning and attention issues.

At an interview dinner with the search committee for my first college presidency, I asked about students I had often seen as a faculty member—those with learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and even autism spectrum disorder (ASD). I inquired, "How do you address students with learning disabilities?"



The board chair quickly responded, "We don't have these students." At the risk of losing a job, I politely assured him that the college was almost certain to have such students. I had seen evidence that very day. Soon after, as the new president, I found the same diversity of learning differences I had seen elsewhere.

You may not even know these students are on college and university campuses. Educators and their families know them as smart kids who live with "an island of challenge." The students' common feature is that they learn differently.
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It's Time To Focus On Work

By **PRESIDENT SCOTT EVENBECK,**
GUTTMAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

I just attended sessions at The College Board Forum where I heard repeated statements that we in Education have moved over the years from a focus on high school graduation as the most important effort for entry for jobs, to college access as the key effort, and now completion of college as the focus. But there is now, appropriately, much more attention to getting our students prepared for employment. What do we mean and what does the effort entail?

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has long surveyed employers about their hopes for their entering employees. What do they seek? They want their employees to think critically, to communicate well orally and in writing, to be able to work with others. These are amongst the student learning outcomes we stress (and assess) with our students. Here, we call them Guttman Learning Outcomes (GLOs). Centering on preparation for careers and liberal learning are not separate.

At Guttman Community College all first-year students take a core course conceived here called Ethnographies of Work. In this course, built on sociology and anthropology, students learn about the world of work. They do ethnographies of careers in their first semesters. We can't wait till they're finishing up to talk about



moving on to their careers. How do we interweave these educational and career emphases? They're not separate for students. And, they shouldn't be separate for us.

Many colleges are moving from a model of students visiting the careers office in their last years of study in order to prepare resumes and seek job interviews to a focus on careers as students begin their college study. We need to bring discussion of careers into the classrooms and advising centers. At Stella and Charles
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ADVICE FROM PRESIDENT TIM HALL OF MERCY COLLEGE



College math can be pretty tough for students. I don't mean college algebra or statistics, but the math involved in choosing a college and paying for a college education.

For example, a student of limited means might choose a public institution, whether a community college or a four-year institution, because of its relative affordability. In New York, a student might hope to take advantage of the "free public college tuition" recently made available to a limited number of students. Of course, college math doesn't end with just tuition: there are other expenses a student must calculate. In any event, the relative affordability of public institutions often comes at the price of large classes and—at least in the case of community colleges—relatively few support services.
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EDUCATION UPDATE

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Wynton Marsalis Celebrates 30 Years of Jazz at Lincoln Center

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

To many, the name ‘Wynton Marsalis’ is synonymous with the word ‘jazz’. Marsalis has won nine Grammy awards in both jazz and classical categories, has been awarded a Pulitzer Prize, named an NEA Jazz Master, and has appeared on *CBS This Morning* as a Cultural Correspondent. He’s currently the director of the Julliard Jazz Program, often referred to as one of the world’s most prestigious conservatories and perhaps most visibly, the artistic director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, which is now in its 30th year.

Jazz at Lincoln Center currently programs over hundreds of concerts a year across three stages at its home at Columbus Circle. The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, lead by Wynton, performs countless times a year throughout the country and overseas. With a career so uniquely fruitful, it would be safe to assume that Wynton’s outlook on jazz would be particularly rose-colored. Within the first five minutes of speaking with Wynton it became clear that this is not so.

“There are no jobs in this field,” said Marsalis bluntly. Generally speaking, he’s right. In the United States, there are thousands of students graduating with a degree in ‘Jazz Performance’ or a comparable jazz-oriented degree every year from a number of well-respected institutions like Juilliard, Manhattan School of Music, Berklee College of Music, and others. Meanwhile, the rate of pay in New York City for club dates has stayed stagnant. As funding for the arts continues its traditionally uphill battle, there are fewer and fewer orchestras readily hiring. In most circles, a teaching posi-



Wynton Marsalis

tion is coveted but elusive. So what is a young musician to do? For Wynton, the only way to succeed is with an entrepreneurial outlook. “You need to create jobs. If you want to be part of this, you can’t just walk out in the wilderness and look for a road. You need to get ready to lay the pavement down. You need to create the infrastructure for it.” This sentiment is drilled into the heads of his Juilliard students; many of which do indeed go on to have fruitful careers in music. Jon Batiste, who currently leads the house band on the “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” is just one in a long line of Juilliard alumni that have risen to prominence in the last few years.

Regardless of the career outlook, Wynton thinks that jazz education is incredibly important- and not just to musicians. The fundamentals of jazz (improvisation, swing and the blues) can be influential symbolically, literally and metaphysically in life. “Improvisation teaches us to have respect for ourselves. Swing teaches

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THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION BEGINS TODAY AT DWIGHT GLOBAL ONLINE SCHOOL

By CHANCELLOR STEPHEN SPAHN

Imagine walking into a lively high school debate about Chinese history. An American student in California recounts her visit to the Great Wall of China just the week before. Another student from Paris notes a parallel to French history. A third student, who is from Tokyo, joins the class courtside after finishing tennis practice and adds her unique perspective. The teacher, located at a school in New York, guides the discussion.

Is this classroom setup a figment of the imagination? In the past, it would have been, but at Dwight Global Online School, it’s now a reality, thanks to technology that links the best faculty and students around the world.

Inspired by the ethos of the International Baccalaureate, Dwight has long embraced the vision that our graduates should be prepared to thrive and prosper anywhere in the world. This mission is more important than ever in today’s interconnected society, where the pace of technological change is so rapid that we cannot envision what tomorrow will hold. Designed to be the best school in the world, Dwight Global embodies what truly may be the school of the future — today.

A Look at Dwight Global’s History:

Dwight, the first school in the Americas to offer the comprehensive International Baccalaureate, has long been an IB frontier school. Three years ago, Dwight was one of six original schools worldwide selected by the IBO to be an IB Open World School. Through this pilot program, the IB aimed to widen access to its curriculum and eliminate geographical barriers by authorizing



Chancellor Stephen Spahn

designated schools — IB Open World Schools — to link digitally with other schools to offer IB classes. While the IB did not move ahead with this program, Dwight embraced online education as the way of the future.

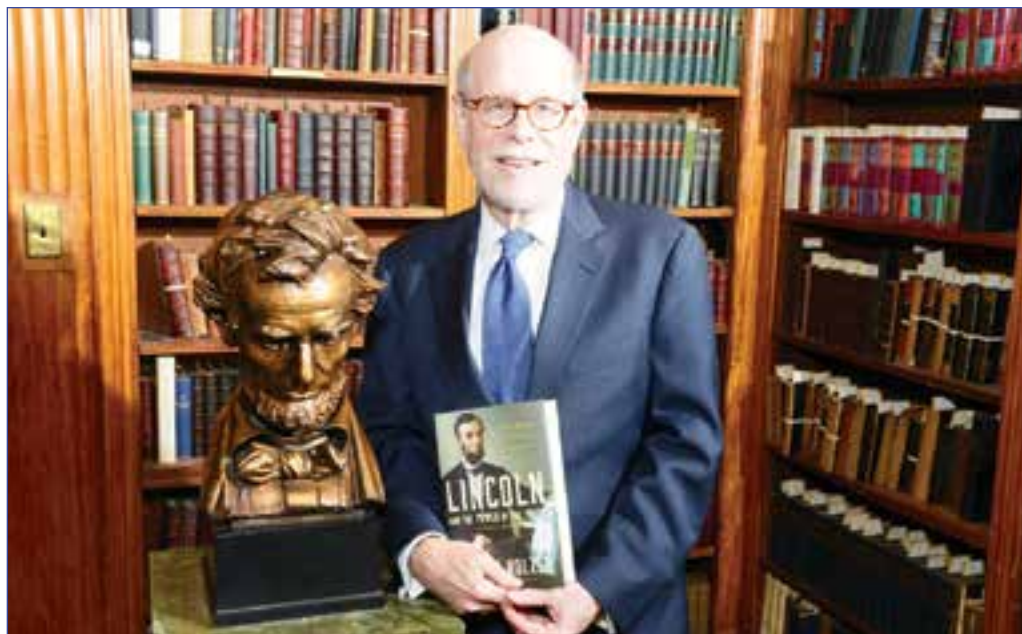
Led by experienced, independent school educators with dedicated Dwight faculty, the program quickly grew in size. Over the last three years, graduates have received acceptances from some of the best colleges and universities in the

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U.S. Civil War Historian Harold Holzer Fêted at Cooper Union

By SYBIL MAIMIN

Harold Holzer, renown authority on Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War era, was recently awarded the 2017 Empire State Archives & History Award before an audience of friends, colleagues, family, students, admirers, and celebrities at The Great Hall of The Cooper Union. The Great Hall was a particularly appropriate location for the presentation as it was here that Lincoln gave the historic speech against the expansion of slavery that launched his bid for the Presidency. On stage, site of the “Lincoln Podium,” a relaxed and upbeat Holzer engaged in a delightful conversation with Tony Award Nominated Actor and friend, Stephen Lang. The two men clearly enjoyed the exchange, as did the audience. The Jonathan F. Fanton Director of The Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College since 2015, Holzer has had a long and interesting career that took him to the front lines of



Harold Holzer

the political and cultural worlds. He discovered his interest in the Civil War while a student at Queens College. Despite discouragement from his professor about entering the Civil War field and parents who had ideas different from his about “success,” Holzer considered a career in journalism, the museum world, the theater, or politics. Early on, together with his wife, Edith, he wrote for and became editor of a neighborhood news weekly, “Manhattan Tribune,” that covered the Upper West Side and Harlem. The paper ultimately folded, but he remembers it fondly, quoting his editor, “This is the best job you’ll ever have.” As a young man, he tried the world of politics, working in the NYC mayoralty campaign of Mario Cuomo and the U.S. Senate and NYC mayoralty campaigns of Bella Abzug. Not interested in running for public office himself (“I’m not good with people . . . I lost five elections for people”), he channeled his interest in public affairs into the candidates he supported. He cites Abzug and Cuomo (as well as his father) as his heroes. Abzug was

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THE CHILD MIND INSTITUTE HONORS DR. KENNETH A. DODGE AT ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM



Dr. Harold Koplewicz



Dr. Kenneth A. Dodge

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, the Child Mind Institute held its annual On The Shoulder of Giants symposium. The morning celebration of scientific achievement in child and adolescent psychiatry, psychology and developmental neuroscience showcased the work of Dr. Kenneth A. Dodge. Dr. Dodge, Pritzker Professor of Public Policy and Founder of the Center for Child and Family Policy at Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, was honored as this year's Child Mind Institute Distinguished Scientist. In addition, the event recognized five "Rising Scientists."

Dr. Dodge's work primarily focuses on the causes of anti-social and aggressive behaviors. In the words of Dr. Harold Koplewicz, President of the Child Mind Institute, Dr. Dodge's work "provides a model for understanding why some young children grow up to engage in aggressive behaviors and provides a framework for intervening early to protect children and their communities from the consequences of violence."

The first two presentations were by two distinguished protégés of Dr. Dodge. The first to present was Dr. Jamie Hanson, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh. His presentation, titled "Advance Models of Developmental Neurobiology and Learning to Understand the Effect of Early Life Stress", showcased the imaging research he has done with children in a longitudinal study. He found that students who experience early stressors such as trauma or child abuse are more likely to experience changes in the brain circuitry—specifically the neuro-connections that are associated with

rewards and impulsive decision making.

The second presentation was by Indil Yazgan, a Gender Violence Prevention intern at Duke University Women's Center. Yazgan's presentation, "Early Childhood Social and Environmental Risk Factors and Later Criminality: the Potential Mediating Role of Neurocognitive Functioning", marked the first time that the symposium highlighted an undergraduate. Her presentation concerned her longitudinal study regarding children who experience trauma early in life. She found that those who experience early trauma grow up to show a decision making style that is very impulsive and reward driven. Dr. Dodge's presentation "Prevention of Serious Conduct Disorders and Chronic Violence in High-Risk Children" followed. It showed how one could translate these findings into intervention.

In keeping with the idea of mentorship and protégés, the Child Mind Institute also awarded laurels to five "Rising Scientists." The honorees were Sarah Adamo of Smithtown High School West, Zara Malik of Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School, Hawthorne Ripley of the Packer Collegiate Institute, Amy Shteyman of John L. Miller Great Neck North High School and Kyle Zarro of Ossining High School. "Meticulous", "organized", "patient", "responsible" and "extraordinary" are just some of the descriptors of the Rising Scientists according to the teachers that nominated them.

The event was held at the Advanced Science Research Center at the Graduate Center of The City University of New York. Dr. Koplewicz praised The City University of New York for increasing its science program—a priority across their 24 campuses. #

New Hope for Children with Autism Rises in the Bronx



Dr. Cecilia McCarton

By WHITNEY LOY

With the opening of the McCarton Achievement Center scheduled for the first quarter of 2018, the Bronx will finally have a local resource dedicated to supporting young children with autism and their families. While the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Surgeon General, and the National Council on Education agree that early intervention services are the most effective means of treating children with autism, far too many children don't have access to early diagnosis and services. On average, children from low-income families, Latino, and black children receive their autism diagnosis years later than other children, which increases the likelihood that they will regress developmentally, potentially leading them to stop talking, crawling, making eye contact and even walking. In New York City, these disparate statistics are especially troubling in areas like the Bronx, where the state's Early Intervention Program has the lowest success rate in getting children from the referral stage to the evaluation stage. The Bronx also lacks center-based early intervention programs designed specifically to meet the needs of children with autism.

"All children deserve access to the treatment and education they need to meet their

full potential," says Dr. Cecilia McCarton, Founder of Manhattan's McCarton Center for Developmental Pediatrics, McCarton Foundation for Developmental Disabilities, McCarton School for children with autism, and Children's Academy for children with speech and language learning delays. "Access to high quality therapies and education shouldn't be predicated on family income."

Over the past two years, Dr. McCarton and her team at the McCarton Foundation have raised 85% of the budget they'll need to bring the McCarton Model to children from low-income families in underserved communities in the Bronx. The McCarton Achievement Center, which will be the borough's first early intervention center designed specifically for children with autism, will offer evaluations, center and home-based education and therapy. Ahead of their 2018 launch, the McCarton Foundation team is building awareness about their resources and has forged relationships with their Post Road neighbor Metro Community Health Center, as well as community organizations throughout the borough.

Learn more at www.mccarton.org.

Whitney Loy is the Managing Director of the McCarton Foundation.

No Hidden Figures Allowed

By REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT,
NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER,
76TH DISTRICT

Last time, I wrote about our ongoing efforts in the State Legislature to ensure gender equality in our great State of New York. This includes my legislation mandating insurers to cover 3-D mammograms, amending the New York State Constitution to include the Equal Rights Amendment, and my legislation proposing an enduring inventory of women appointments to policy-making boards, commissions, and top level agency positions to be maintained by the Secretary of State. These initiatives and more were advocated in the spirit of Women's Equality Day on August 26 in the year that marks the 100th anniversary of the women's suffrage movement. While we can point to many significant gains, the overall progress of women in our society needs more than a big boost. Let's take the figures out of hiding and examine the record.

Despite the fact that the U.S. ranks number one worldwide in female/male parity in educational attainment, women are far behind in holding positions of power in the professions and business. In academia, women win more than 55% of the most prestigious awards, but hold only 29% of tenured positions. In law, women make up 47% of law school graduates, yet they are far below that percentage in being equity partners and managing partners in law firms. In business, women hold less than 20% of executive positions and Board of Directors seats in Fortune 500 Companies, and the percentage of female Fortune 500 CEOs remains in single digits. This is especially true in the field of technology. The U.S. Department of Labor predicts that between 2010 and 2020 there will be nearly 1.4 million computing-related jobs, and while women hold over half of professional occupations in the country, only 26% of computing occupations are held by women.

The era of Information Technology (IT) has significantly changed how we think, live, communicate and conduct business. It has not only improved the efficiency and productivity at the workplace, but created competitive high-paying salaries and stable jobs that keep overall unemployment rates lower. Yet, women have remained far behind the curve in obtaining senior jobs in the technology industry.

Just the other day, a young woman who recently was graduated from high school and volunteers at my district office, shared a story that truly speaks to the core of the problem that is before us. After taking coding classes



NYS Assembly Member Rebecca A. Seawright

every summer, despite her fervid interest in computers and technology, she decided to cancel her enrollment. "I was the only girl in my coding class and in my physics class in my senior year. The boys didn't let me into their study groups. I am still interested in computer science, but my experience in high school was riddled with sexism," she added.

While we will continue to fight to pass legislation in our city, state and federal government that will prevent women from being treated as second-class citizens, we must also encourage young women to explore their interests and potential, regardless of the occupational gender stigmas that are embedded in our society. Women should never fear to explore their interests because of sexism. We need educational programs early on in all schools that encourage STEM interest; and we need to identify and help fund programs that work best and bear replication elsewhere. I was proud to partner with the National Foundation for Women Legislators and Google's Made with Code in their outreach efforts and to provide a free screening of the movie "Hidden Figures" and a coding class at a high school in my district. It is initiatives like these that inspire young women to go past sexism, societal expectations and other norms to achieve their potential to the fullest. #

New President, Hank Foley, Talks About Vision for New York Institute of Technology

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Concluding a heady interview about technology, including algorithmic thinking, "block-chain" transactions, cybersecurity and new chip embedding, NYIT President Hank Foley, who assumed office this past June, instinctively volunteers, "I want NYIT to be the coolest, hippest school in the New York region." He means it, he repeats it. He'd like to see the institute be even more The Place students select first because they know it's where "they can make and do things and learn the theory behind them." And, needless to say, have their education translate into rewarding careers.

President Foley, who has a Ph.D. in physical and inorganic chemistry and holds 16 patents, is already proud of the jobs record at NYIT, but he wants to advance it, and, he hopes, down the line, to build programs that can bring together the arts and technology (NYIT already has a theatre program and the president would like to see fashion addressed as well). In the meantime, he's pleased with the numbers: "over 93% of NYIT graduates find employment or go on to graduate school in tech areas, such as coding or working on web design, an amazing statistic, especially for "one of the most diverse student bodies of any institution" he's known – most first-generation, 40% female). That diversity, he says, was one of the main reasons he applied to NYIT to become its fourth president.

The president is frank about how graduate study for some tech fields may not be as necessary as it is for many physical sciences. He's also mindful about how "technology" has changed over the last 20 years, challenging faculty and students to keep current with the latest research. He cites, for example a piece he's just read in The Wall Street Journal about hackable cars (hello Jeep Cherokee) and home appliances (is your toaster connected to the Internet?) Advances in tech have been "incredible." It's like we're in "the third chapter of Artificial Intelligence."

NYIT will continue to invest in faculty who are researchers as well as good teachers, he says. By that he means men and women who not only learn the latest applications but appreciate the cognitive principles that underlie those applications, such as "algorithmic thinking," the ability to reduce problems to a process or set of rules that constitutes the heart of problem solving operations and their variations. Deep Blue played chess differently from the way Kasparov did, he points out. The president is aware, however, of the "worrysome," even "embarrassing" trend to hire more adjuncts than tenure-track professors. Although NYIT has an approximate 50 /50 ratio, he does not hesitate to note the "exploitation" inherent in a "gig" academic economy that forces part-timers to scatter to make ends meet.

President Foley has also thought about the



President Hank Foley

kinds of courses that lend themselves to online teaching and which do not. In engineering curricula, for example, a certain amount of "knowledge transfer" can be expedited online, but for the analysis of principles, hybrid courses would better suit. Put factual material online and then generate class discussion. He appreciates the need to start in on critical thinking in the freshman year, the importance of "foundation" courses that teach or enhance listening and writing skills. His overarching concern, however, is technology. His training and professional life outside academia have been in nanotechnology research and related high-level systems, and he is pleased to note, by the way, that he has always credited graduate students who have worked with him.

Before coming to NYIT, President Foley held top administrative posts where he concentrated on strategic planning, economic development and advanced collaborative program development. He served as Interim Chancellor of the University of Missouri-Columbia and before that as Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at MU. Prior to those positions, he was vice president for research and dean of the graduate school at The Pennsylvania State University.

Yes, he's focused on technology, but in an April interview President Foley gave to "The Box," an NYIT blog, he said "Never attribute to malice that which may simply be a matter of ignorance, a lack of knowledge, or under-developed social skills." The question of hacking inevitably comes up. The president is well aware of both its "white and black hat" aspects – hackers who work to secure data for the common good and those who work as wild cards out of pique or malice. And thus, though his "first love as an educator is in science, engineering, technology, and business," he values the humanities and the fine arts for, among other considerations, the degree to which they can infuse ethical considerations into a tech curricula. #

Ann Tisch & The Young Women's Leadership Network Empower Girls at Annual Breakfast



By LYDIA LIEBMAN

The Young Women's Leadership Network held their annual (Em)Power Breakfast this Fall at Cipriani in Manhattan. The star-studded event honored four incredible role models including Joanna Podell, Executive Vice Chairman at Cushman & Wakefield; Liz Robbins, founder of Liz Robin Associates; Tony Award winning Broadway producer and documentary filmmaker Amanda Lipitz and Kenya Barris, the Creator and Showrunner of ABC's hit series "black-ish".

The morning kicked off with welcoming words from YWLN founder and president Ann Rubenstein Tisch. "Today is an homage to wisdom and it comes from our amazing honorees passing it on during interviews with our students," she said, referencing the informative and exciting interviews YWLN students have with the honorees as captured on film by Amanda Lipitz and then shown during the breakfast. "Our girls learned the value of starting at the bottom of a career, how lasting success can come from failure and the impact of perseverance," she added.

The first honoree was Joanne Podell. As the Executive Vice Chairman at Cushman & Wakefield, Podell is considered one of the most esteemed and respected retail brokers in New York City. Podell was named "Woman of the Year" by WX in 2012; it was then that she first engaged with YWLN. Since then, Cushman & Wakefield and their employees have participated in YWLN volunteer programs. After an introduction by 11th grader Micayla Bignon, Podell took to the stage to accept her award. In her acceptance speech, she praised Tisch and YWLN as an organization and thanked her colleagues and family. "How can we change the world and make it a better place? Ann, you've figured it out!" she said to thunderous applause.

Liz Robbins was the second honoree of the morning. In 1977, Robbins founded the first woman-owned public and government affairs firm in Washington, DC. Since then, Liz Robbins Associates has earned a myriad of successes in almost every policy arena. Senior Mariama Stevenson and 8th grader Raazia Khan, who introduced Robbins, aptly described

her as a "trailblazer" who taught them how to "dream big." Upon accepting her award, Robbins also praised Tisch, the YWLN students and thanked her family.

The morning's third award was given to Broadway producer and filmmaker Amanda Lipitz. This award was particularly special because Lipitz is an integral part of the YWLN family, known to all who attend the annual (Em)Power Breakfast for her short films as well as her recent feature documentary film "Step", which focuses on the Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women (which is run, coincidentally, by Lipitz's mother). Lipitz's speech was particularly emotional due to her longstanding connection with YWLN. "We always tell young women and men and that education changes your life. And I am living proof of that," she said as she told the story of how she dreamed of attending NYU Tisch School of the Arts when she was a young girl in Baltimore. Like the others before, she also praised Tisch for her outstanding work. "I learned from you to always put the student first," she said speaking to Tisch.

The final award of the morning, awarded to a man and titled "The Man We Love" was presented by YWLN graduate and singer Ziarra Washington to "black-ish" showrunner Kenya Barris. A television vet, Barris has worked on several popular shows such as "Girlfriends", "America's Next Top Model", "I Hate My Teenage Daughter" and "The Game", among others. "black-ish" has gone on to become more than just a critically acclaimed audience favorite; it's smart commentary on social, political and racial issues has been widely praised. Barris delivered an impassioned speech that included tidbits of his own personal story and thoughts on the current political climate, as well as the importance of women in his life. "There is something about the power of womanhood that makes you stronger," he said.

The Young Women's Leadership has had an undeniable impact since its founding by Tisch in 1996. The class of 2017 boasts a 97% high school graduation rate. Since 2001, their college acceptance rate is near 100% and there has been more than \$100 million in financial aid awarded to students. #

Dr. Margaret Cuomo Moderates Panel on the Brain and Body



By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, the Jewish Community Center Manhattan hosted "Fall Open House: Total Health for Body + Brain." A partnership with the Dana Foundation and New York-Presbyterian Hospital and Weill Cornell Medicine, the day-long event brought together a variety of the nation's top experts in the health of the brain and body.

The highlight of the event was the keynote presentation: "Successful Aging + Your Brain." The panel included three highly-regarded experts: Matthew E. Fink, MD, Neurologist-in-Chief, New York-Presbyterian and Chairman, Department of Neurology, Weill Cornell Medicine; Wendy A. Suzuki, PhD, Professor of Neural Science and Psychology, Center for Neural Science, New York University and Charles Mobbs, PhD, Professor of Neuroscience, Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Mount Sinai School of Medicine. The moderator was Margaret I. Cuomo, MD. Dr. Cuomo is a radiologist and staunch advocate for the prevention of diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Her book "A World Without Cancer: The Making of a New World and the Real Promise of Prevention" was recently made into a series for PBS.

Dr. Mobbs provided an overview of brain's capabilities and functions, with a focus on the cognitive, and how these change during the aging process. He explained that as aging occurs, cognitive functions tend to suffer. A classic example is the "tip of the tongue" phenomenon—when one knows a word or a person's name but just cannot remember what it is. Processing and episodic will also see a slowdown as one ages. However, happiness actually tends to improve with aging and procedural functions—i.e. how to ride a bike or how to swim—rarely get lost.

Dr. Fink continued the discussion by turning the focus to the conditions that cause much of the slowdown of brain function. He explained that over the last 50 years, there has been a marked improvement in how humans survive as they age. While we are able to recover from conditions such as heart attack, stroke and cancer, we are also subjecting ourselves to brain-related disorders. There are five common brain disorders that humans suffer from that are age related: Strokes, which affects over 5 million people, Alzheimer's (5 million as well), Traumatic Brain Injury (2 million), Epilepsy (2 million) and Parkinson's Disease (1 million). Many of these emerge due to slips and falls. The byproduct of these conditions is commonly referred to as dementia, which is not a disease itself, but a state of cognitive impairment that go far beyond memory problems and encompass a general inability to take care of oneself.

Dr. Fink stressed that reducing the risk factors for a stroke is one of the most helpful and important steps one can take to ward off brain-related conditions. Reducing one's cholesterol or changing one's diet, as well as exercise and not smoking would have a dramatic effect in reducing the risk for stroke.

Dr. Suzuki echoed this, saying that the "single factor that will have the most transformative effect on brain health" is physical activity. Exercise is the only lifestyle change that produces brand new brain cells. The more brain cells one has in the hippocampus, the better off to fend off the conditions that come at advanced age. Exercise has the ability to stimulate levels of neurotransmitters like no other activity, which is why it is incredibly beneficial.

Overall, the presentation painted an enlightening picture of the brain and aging and presented helpful advice.#

POETS IN OUR MIDST

Poet of the Year Michelle Valladares at Americas Poetry Festival of New York



Michelle Valladares

By JACOB M. APPEL MD JD

Michelle Y. Valladares, the filmmaker-turned-poet who was recently named “Poet of the Year” by the Americas Poetry Festival of New York, offers unconventional advice to aspiring writers hoping to follow in her estimable footsteps: “Be kind to everyone.” According to the widely published and anthologized author, who serves as director of City College’s MFA Program in Creative Writing, kindness “doesn’t cost you anything” and “accelerates good karma coming back to you.” Another suggestion she offers young poets is even more fundamental: “Show up.” What she means is “showing up for life”—being actively engaged in one’s experiences and one’s creative endeavors. “The artistic life is not predictable,” she explains. But a combination of what she describes as the “extraordinary” kindness of mentors, and her own tenacity in showing up for life, has enabled Valladares to pursue her literary dreams.

If she could have chosen to build her teaching career anywhere, she says with obvious delight and gratitude, it would have been City College. “I feel completely at home here,” she explains. “So many of the students are immigrants. There is such diversity of language and cultures.... The majority of students really care about their educations.” She adds that it is a privilege to “know that you’re making a difference” and “to feel relevant as an educator.” Her own background and longstanding intellectual interests make her an ideal match for such a diverse academic community.

Valladares was born in India, but her family emigrated to Kuwait when she was five and she attended a diverse international school until she turned thirteen. Later, after a brief sojourn on Long Island, the family settled in Arizona. “Long Island was very homogenous,”



Jacob M. Appel, MD, JD

she recalls. For the first time in my life, I encountered people who had not grown up knowing about other cultures.” The experience helped solidify her deep interest in diverse languages, voices and societies. In Arizona, a gifted English teacher, Mary Hunt, took Valladares under her wing. “She had great faith in me – faith that I had something to give to the world,” says Valladares, who still had a photograph of Hunt posted above her desk. Another early influence was her own mother, who championed the value of education as a tool for success. Yet both film and poetry proved a rebellion of sorts. “Nobody in my family had pursued a career in the arts. It wasn’t an option,” says Valladares. “We were encouraged to become doctors, then a lawyer if being a doctor didn’t work out.” After college at Bryn Mawr, Valladares worked in the administration of Mayor Ed Koch before leaving public policy for filmmaking.

Her first documentary, “Imagining Indians,” was a joint project with Hopi filmmaker Victor Masayesva, Jr. that explored Hollywood’s imagining of Native Americans. The pair travelled to reservations and interviewed former actors, some of whom had been cast as extras in films for which the larger Native American roles were given to Italians. What struck her most was the living native languages still in use. “If you want to destroy a culture,” she said, “first you destroy its language.” Language has been a driving force behind her own work and she makes a point of exposing her CCNY students to translations each semester. She also notes that the Americas Poetry Festival of New York is the first major multilingual poetry festival in the city. After “Imagining Indians,” two more co-produced films followed—*El Diablo Nunca Duerme* (The Devil Never Sleeps) directed by Lourdes Portillo and *O Sertão das Memórias*

Paul Laurence Dunbar, First African-American Poet To Achieve National Acclaim, Friend of the Wright Brothers

By SARAH MATUSEK

The title of Maya Angelou’s 1969 autobiography, “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,” pays tribute to another writer’s opus from the turn of the twentieth century. The phrase alludes to “Sympathy,” a poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar, in which a bird thrashes against its cage in a bruised pursuit of freedom against oppression.

As the first African-American poet to reach national acclaim, Dunbar has left a prolific contribution to American literature—from fodder for the Harlem Renaissance to his haunting presence in this year’s Pulitzer-winning poetry by Tyehimba Jess.

Dunbar published over 400 poems and numerous other works that ranged from plays to novels to lyrics. Though his subjects varied, Dunbar is principally remembered for humanizing the experience of post-Civil War African-Americans in the face of racial stereotypes. Dunbar is still noted for his dialect poetry, an embrace of slang that departed from the standard English of his other poems.

“Dunbar’s audiences, locally and beyond, were chiefly white—it’s partly because of the white demand for dialect poetry that Dunbar wrote some of his more frustrated pieces,” wrote Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park historian Edward Roach to *Education Update*. “He wanted to write in a variety of meters, but his audience at the time preferred dialect writing.”

When Dunbar was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1872 to former slaves, the census at the time reveals that his county had only 800 “free colored” people out of a total population of 64,000. Dunbar was one of few black students to attend Dayton’s only high school. That’s where he met Orville Wright, another ambitious Daytonian, who became a famed aviator and inventor along with his brother Wilbur. The trio

(Landscapes of Memory), directed by Brazilian filmmaker José Araújo, which won Best Latin American Film at the Sundance Festival. But after three films, Valladares felt “burnt out” and entered the prestigious MFA program in poetry at Sarah Lawrence College.

Another of Valladares’s “emanations”—her term for the guardian angels whose generosity facilitated her career—was Linsey Abrams, the novelist who helped her secure an initial teaching job at CCNY. “More than 400 people applied for two lectureship positions,” she recalls. “There are so many incredible poets in New York.” She had soon published her first collection of poems, “Nortada, The North Wind.” And the rest, as they say, is poetry..... #



Paul Laurence Dunbar

are remembered through sites at Ohio’s Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park.

Dunbar proved himself an excellent student with a love for storytelling, a passion shared by his mother. He edited his school newspaper, published his poetry in the local *Dayton Herald* and ran a few weekly issues of an original African-American paper, *The Tattler*, which Orville published. Without funds for college and no luck securing a newspaper job, Dunbar was hired to operate an elevator in an office building downtown. Dunbar paid for his first self-published book of poetry, “Oak and Ivy,” by selling to elevator riders for a buck. Dunbar’s travels around the Midwest sparked interest with civil rights activist Frederick Douglass and Dr. Henry Tobey, a major patron of the young poet’s work who, through his support of Dunbar’s second book, helped launched Dunbar to national recognition.

Dunbar traveled around the United States and to London to promote his work. He also worked briefly at the Library of Congress before committing to writing full-time, but his declining health impeded his productivity. Physical abuse against his wife—coupled with alcoholism—helped ruin his marriage to writer and activist Alice Ruth Moore. Dunbar rejoined his mother back home in Dayton for a few years, before his death from tuberculosis in 1906 at the age of 33.

“I did once want to be a lawyer, but that ambition has long since died out before the all-absorbing desire to be a worthy singer of the songs of God and nature,” wrote Dunbar in a letter to Dr. Tobey in 1895. “To be able to interpret my own people through song and story, and to prove to the many that after all we are more human than African.” #



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Workshop topics are as follows:

- Guiding Conversations with Students and Parents regarding Issues of Concern in the Black Community
- Diversity Matters! Men of Color as Educators, Leaders and Advocates
- The Power of Literacy as Liberation
- Empowering Educators, Parents and Students as Change Agents for Social Justice

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Workshop C: The Power of Literacy as Liberation

Workshop D: Empowering Educators, Parents and Students as Change Agents for Social Justice



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

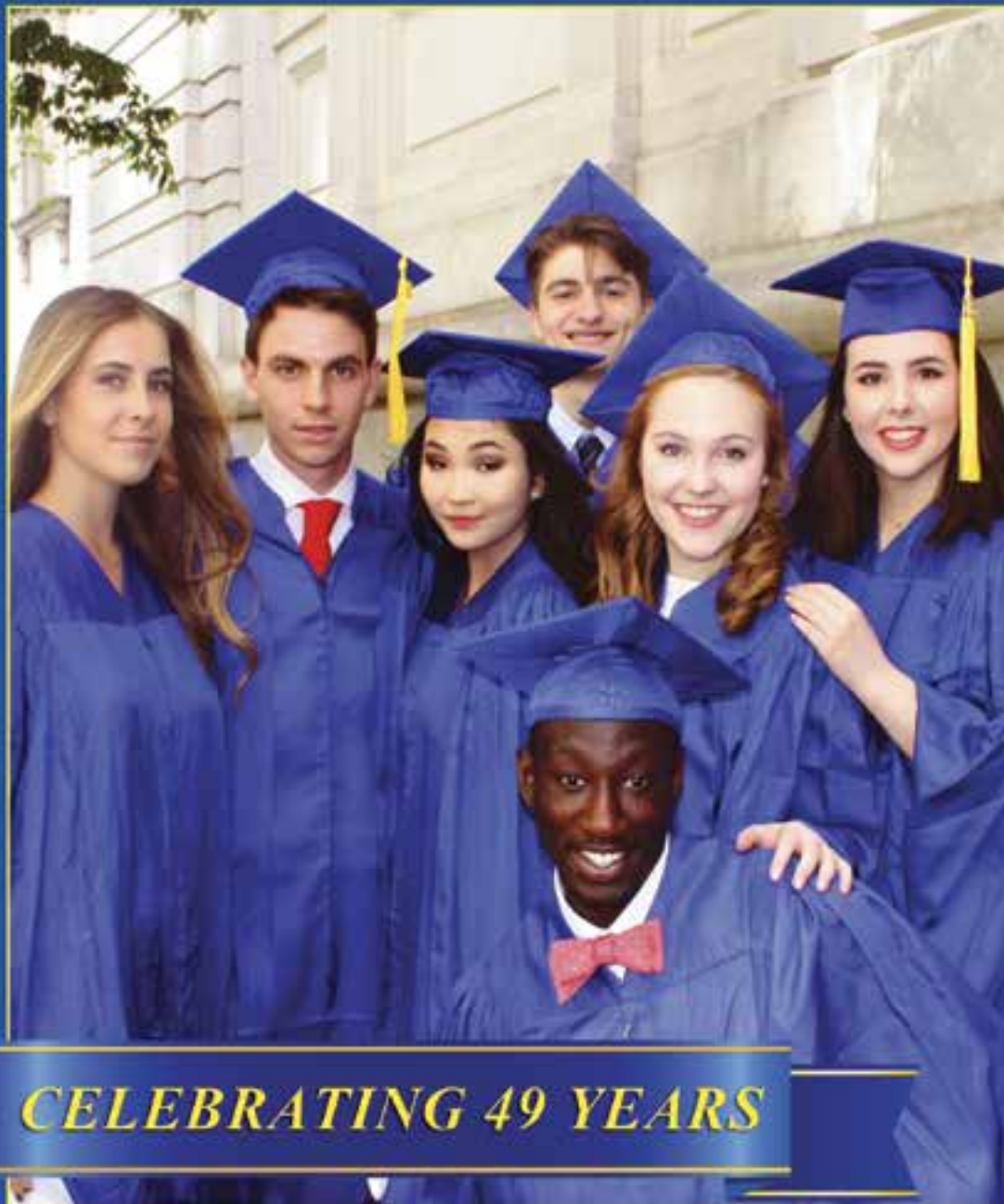
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LAW & EDUCATION

Academic Fraud and the NCAA

By ARTHUR KATZ, JD

On October 13, 2017, the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Committee on Infractions ("NCAA") issued its long awaited report and decision (the "Decision") regarding infractions of NCAA policies by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ("UNC"), arising from UNC's "paper courses" sponsored for approximately 17 years by UNC's Department of African and Afro-American Studies (the "Department").

The underlying facts are notorious and not in dispute. In fact, certain aspects were previously reported in *McCants and Ramsey v. the NCAA and University of North Carolina*, Education Update, Vol XX No. 4, May-June 2015.

A number of courses (which became known as "paper courses") offered and administered by the Department were (a) known for their easy grading, and (b) were characterized by the fact that students were not required to (i) go to class, (ii) take notes, (iii) pay attention or stay awake during class, (iv) meet with faculty, or (v) engage with the material. Although, apparently, the paper courses were not a secret on campus, they were populated primarily by student-athletes who were directed to the courses by UNC's "academic support services for student-athletes". Moreover, grading was delegated to a Department secretary who admitted that she frequently did not even read submitted assignments before grading them.

These paper courses were discontinued in 2011 after "formal knowledge" emerged and was publicized. Thereafter, UNC hired a well-regarded New York City based law firm to conduct an investigation, during which several UNC staff members refused to cooperate. After an extensive inquiry, the law firm released its report and found that the paper classes disproportionately favored student-athletes and had a positive impact on their grade point averages and that academic support personnel colluded to favor student-athletes.

In January 2015, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools ("SACS"), UNC's accreditor, characterized UNC's conduct as "academic fraud" and UNC admitted that the report of its retained law firm demonstrated that "the academic fraud was long-standing".

However, more recently, UNC disavowed its previous use of the phrase "academic fraud" telling SAC that UNC's use of such term was merely "a typo" or oversight. As a result of this change in position, the NCAA determined that, except for a violation of ethical conduct expectations arising from the refusal of two UNC staff to cooperate (which individuals were sanctioned by the NCAA), the NCAA was unable to conclude that academic fraud had, in fact, occurred at UNC, that the Department's faculty chair had acted unethically, or that UNC violated any NCAA rules.

The Decision spans twenty-four single-spaced pages, and is replete with statements in which the NCAA expressed skepticism of



Arthur Katz, JD

UNC's change of position with respect to a documented pattern of on-going academic fraud. However, the NCAA determined that, due to the inability or refusal of certain UNC staff members to testify before the NCAA, and the difficulty of staff members to recall with specificity certain circumstances and events, the NCAA could not confirm that academic fraud did exist.

This conclusion was reached even though the record developed by UNC's retained law firm was voluminous and the investigation by such law firm reached the opposite conclusion. The NCAA stated that it was "skeptical of UNC's modified position," "skeptical of UNC's recent complete repudiation of its [law firm's] report" and "troubled by UNC's shifting position".

The NCAA then went on to rationalize why it did not consider academic fraud to exist "despite the fact that the [paper] courses involved little, if any, faculty engagement and were often graded by the secretary." The NCAA stated that its reasoning was based on the fact that "the courses [apparently] violated no UNC policy [and] work [which] was assigned, [apparently was] completed and graded, and the grades [from the paper courses then were] counted towards a UNC degree." However, and as the Decision sets forth, student-athletics were, in fact disproportionately benefited and the athletic staff intentionally steered student-athletes to these paper courses.

The NCAA's website recites that the NCAA has three principal priorities – academics, well-being and integrity. Unfortunately, the NCAA failed in achieving two of these priorities – academics and integrity – in reaching its determinations concerning UNC. Perhaps, it is time for the NCAA to either revise its internal rules to better achieve its stated priorities or revise its priorities to enable it to meet its expectations. #

Arthur Katz is of Counsel to Otterbourg P.C.

THE MATH COLUMN

WITHOUT A CALCULATOR! – AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD FOR EXTRACTING A SQUARE ROOT

By ALFRED S. POSAMENTIER, Ph.D.

Why would anyone want to find the square root of a number today without using a calculator? Surely, no one would do such a thing. However, you might be curious to know what is actually being done in the process of finding the square root of a number. This would allow you some independence from the calculator. The procedure typically taught in schools many years ago was somewhat rote and had little meaning to the students other than obtaining an answer. There is, However, a method that was generally not taught in the schools, but gives a good insight into the meaning of a square root. The beauty of this method is that it really allows you to understand what is going on, unlike the algorithm that was taught in schools before the advent of calculators. This method was first published in 1690 by the English mathematician Joseph Raphson (1648–1715) in his book, *Analysis alquationum universalis*; Raphson attributed the idea to Sir Isaac Newton (1643–1727) from his 1671 book *Method of Fluxions*, which was not officially published until 1736. Therefore, the algorithm bears both names, the *Newton-Raphson method*.

It is perhaps best to see the method as it is used in a specific example: Suppose we wish to find $\sqrt{27}$. Obviously, the calculator could be used here. However, you might like to guess at what this value might be. Certainly, it is between $\sqrt{25}$ and $\sqrt{36}$, or between 5 and 6, but closer to 5.

Suppose we guess at 5.2. If this were the correct square root of 27, then if we were to divide 27 by 5.2, we would get 5.2. But this is not the case; since $(27/5.2) \neq 5.2$, we know that $\sqrt{27} \neq 5.2$.

In order to find a closer approximation, we will calculate $(27/5.2) = 5.192$. Since $27 \approx 5.2 \cdot 5.192$, one of the factors (in this case, 5.2) must be bigger than $\sqrt{27}$ and the other factor (in this case, 5.192) must be less than $\sqrt{27}$. Hence, $\sqrt{27}$ is sandwiched between the two numbers 5.2 and 5.192; that is, $5.192 < \sqrt{27} < 5.2$. So, it is plausible to infer that the average of these two numbers, that is, $((5.2 + 5.192)/2) = 5.196$, is a better approximation for $\sqrt{27}$ than either 5.2 or 5.192.

This process continues, each time with addi-



Dr. Al Posamentier

tional decimal places, so that an allowance is made for a closer approximation. That is, $((5.192 + 5.196)/2) = 5.194$, then $(27/5.194) = 5.19831$. Taking this another step to get an even closer approximation of $\sqrt{27}$, we continue this process: $(27 / 5.19831) = 5.193996$, then $((5.19831 + 5.193996)/2) = 5.1961530$. We can then keep going until we reach the accuracy of $\sqrt{27}$ that we desire.

This continuous process provides insight into the finding of the square root of a number that is not a perfect square. As seemingly cumbersome as the method may be, it surely provides you with a genuine understanding about the value of a square root. For those interested in pursuing other curiosities that are typically omitted from the school curriculum, consider *The Joy of Mathematics – Marvels, Novelties and Neglected Gems that are Rarely Taught in the Math Class*, by Posamentier, Geretschlaeger, Li, and Spreitzer. (Prometheus Books, 2017).

Dr. Alfred Posamentier is currently Executive Director for Internationalization and Sponsored Programs, Long Island University, New York.

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BEN GOTIAN GARNERS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Ben is a senior at Schechter Westchester where he is the first chair alto saxophonist in the Schechter Westchester High School band and is also in the choir and barbershop quartet. Ben is also a second degree black belt in karate. He enjoys history and government and likes traveling to historical and military sites—he's seen over 30 sites in two countries!

Ben enjoys doing community service work. He's completed over 160 hours of community service projects in three states. He credits



the Jewish value of tikun olam, repairing the world, as his catalyst for doing community service. His service projects range from playing saxophone in nursing homes, preparing and serving food in food banks, rebuilding homes in flood ravaged Baton Rouge and New Orleans, planting sustainable gardens and running holiday parties for disadvantaged children.

He is a member of Beth El Synagogue Center in New Rochelle where he enjoys reading Torah and Haftorah.#

CAREERS

Ziarra Washington, Musician



America's Gateway Ellis Island

By JAN AARON

Some people say “build a wall” because they fear being drowned by a tsunami of people. But this is against our ideology that we are all created equal and it's a violation of human rights and a backward movement. With this in mind, I decided a visit Ellis Island's Museum of Immigration would be especially relevant. Between 1892-1924, approximately 12 million men, women and children first set foot on the Ellis Island Federal Immigration facility there. By the time it closed in 1942, it had processed more than 40 percent of Americans.

The museum tells this story in words, pictures and striking installations in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty. The Island's administration building, now a national monument, is known as the Ellis Island Museum of Immigration. Plan to spend a full day here.

First stop at the information desk for a pamphlet, and ask about guided tours, special programs, and the documentary film schedule. Then sit on one of the wooden benches and stare at the soaring Manhattan skyline, and try to picture it as it might have looked when the first of the millions of immigrants passed through here.

Highlights include the white tiled Registry Room(second floor) also known as the Great Hall, filled today with tourists, was where immigrants underwent medical and legal examinations. Following inspections, they walked down the “Stairs of Separation”. Most boarded New York or New Jersey bound ferries. Some where detained for further medical and legal examinations. At the bottom of the stairs, many immigrants met family or friends at the “Kissing Post.” Be sure to glance up at the gorgeous Gustavano tiled ceiling installed in 1918. Also here “Peak Immigration Years” (a personal favorite) explores the massive immigration wave 1880-1924, covering why people left their homelands and how they adjusted to their new lives. Here also is an explanation of how changing attitudes toward immigration led to new laws and processing procedures.



“Journeys: New Eras of the Immigration-1945-Present” continues the Ellis Island years to the present day. Here on the First floor there is a database of immigrant ships' manifests from the Port of New York. It was the Baggage Room, where immigrants left their belongings, before going to the examination process. Now here's the Information Desk audio tour pick up and exhibit about the rooms original use. Here you can look up ancestors at the American Family Immigration History Center. Search here (free) or at libertyellisfoundation.org.

“Treasures From Home” Third Floor offers a great view of the registry room and some displays over 2,000 possessions immigrants brought from their homelands. Here also a replica dormitory room shows “Silent Voices” concerns the aftermath of the 1954 closing and abandonment of the immigration station.

There's a pleasant indoor/outdoor cafe and well-stocked gift stores offer tasteful items. My favorite is a replica of immigrant child's teddy bear.

GETTING THERE:: There is no admission charge for the Statue of Liberty or Ellis Island. Cruise fees are posted on the web site Be sure to book in advance (www.statuecruises.com). Arrive early to allow time for security check. There are ferries 9-5 Daily; last trip 3:30pm. Extended hours in summer.

Education Update (EU): Where do you work, how long have you been there and what is your full title?

Ziarra Washington (ZW): I am a singer/songwriter from Harlem, NYC. I sing all types of genres from Pop, Rock to Jazz with many different bands. I also sing for recording sessions, writing songs for other artists as well as my own solo projects. I have been in the music business professionally for roughly ten years.

EU: Where did you attend school and what did you study?

ZW: I attended The Young Women's Leadership School, 7-12th grade and began my music career while in High School. After graduating, I began working as a full-time freelance musician- traveling and performing around the world.

EU: What is your favorite part of your job?

ZW: My favorite part of my job is its creative and artistic flexibility. I love being able to explore different types of music and I love traveling to places around the world as a vocalist. I want inspiration to find me. As a songwriter, there are stories waiting to be written and through life experience is how I find my next song.

EU: Some challenges?

ZW: The inconsistency of work. Being a self-employed musician means that you will be lacking the stability found at a 9-to-5 job. There are many different types of gigs. Some may pay very well, others not as much. Finding financial comfort as a freelance musician can be a task if you do not know how to find work for yourself. Finding that flow is one of the most important parts of being successful in this business.

EU: What is the salary a young person

coming out of college could expect in this field?

ZW: For a young person coming out of college or a young freelancer starting their own business as a musician, the great gigs come with time and experience. Your salary can be anywhere from \$50 to \$50,000 annually depending on the type of gigs you are hired for. Establishing your network of musicians will ultimately turn into dollars for you. Whether it be a weekly restaurant gig, singing background on a TV show or singing and playing with cover bands every weekend. Your network will call you for work and your network will also refer you to others in their circle. The network that you create will eventually work for you. It takes persistence and patience.

EU: Do you have any mentors?

ZW: I do. Throughout the years I have gained wisdom from my grandfather John E. Johnson who was a freelance musician and entertainer as well as my uncle Philip King who is a graphic designer and photographer. They both have helped me sculpt my business strategy and taught me the ropes when it comes to successfully working for myself.

EU: What advice would you give to someone looking to have a career in your field?

ZW: Embrace the journey. You WILL fail, you WILL be frustrated when great gigs are not coming to you as fast as you'd like. Despite all of the normal stress that comes with owning any business, every performance stage you step on should be reassurance that you are where you belong. Focus on your love for music, focus on your business strategy, discover unique ways to find work for yourself. Focus on building great connections with like-minded people in the business. Just LOVE what you do!#

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Panel 6:30-8:00pm

Reception 8-8:30pm



Featuring leaders in the field: **Brittany Brathwaite** (reproductive justice activist), **Lindsay Fram** (Children's Aid), **Emily Kadar** (National Institute for Reproductive Health), **Shammara Wright** (Office of School Wellness), and **Wazina Zodon** (sex educator), among others!

For more information please visit: www.swgproject.org
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OASID at OASID@tc.edu, (212) 678-3689,
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EDUCATION UPDATE *Visits the Cornell Lab of Ornithology*



When a dead bird is found and is intact, sometimes it is sent to the Lab for dissection. According to Sibley Guides, windows are the leading cause of bird deaths, estimated at 1 billion per year. The second leading cause of death is from feral cats.

By ADAM SUGERMAN

As a native Floridian, it is ironic that I have never visited any of the popular Orlando area amusement parks. As an avid birder, though, I am proud to have escaped on a number of occasions to the Disney Wilderness Preserve, the Yonkers-size conservation area managed by The Nature Conservancy close to the home of Mickey, Donald, Goofy, and Snow White. The undeveloped land for the Preserve was purchased to help mitigate the development of the eponymous theme park and resorts.

In the Northeast, The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and its surrounding campus are my personal Disney. The modern facility is nestled in Sapsucker Woods northeast of Ithaca. Its trails are open to the public from dawn to dusk. The crown jewel, though, is the building and the Lab's staff and resources. Visitors are greeted with a 300 square-foot wall mural entitled "From So Simple a Beginning" that includes the 375 million-year evolutionary history showing the stages of birds' evolution from fish to dinosaurs to the present day. Each species, from a great hornbill to a chestnut-crowned gnatcatcher, is painted life-size and with precision. Also there is a viewing room with a telescope overlooking a pond teeming with mallards, Canada geese, egrets, herons, American goldfinches, cardinals, hawks, warblers, on dozens of others depending on the season.

Behind the scenes, the Macaulay Library includes the world's largest repository of birds' audio recordings of songs and calls. This collection is named after Linda and Bill Macaulay, who are dedicated environmentalists and key funders of the Ornithology Lab as well as CUNY's Macaulay Honors College.

The Lab also partners with local and regional organizations around the world to help engage local communities to identify birds and protect habitats as well as to promote sustainable development from a local perspective. One example of a collaborative effort is the Lab's partnering with La CONABIO, a Mexican governmental consortium that promotes, coordinates, and supports that nation's efforts to protect its biodiversity, to provide researchers the resources to compile and generate data on the environment, to develop areas of information technology (ie, big data) using topics with real-life tangible examples, and to serve as a public resource for citizen scientists.

Although the Lab supports the efforts of environmental groups worldwide, its leaders also recognize that different organizations with diverse perspectives share in conservation efforts. The Lab frequently collaborates with groups such as Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and other organizations dedicated to the outdoors.

The Lab also has developed its own programs. The Celebrate Urban Birds project, for example, incorporates citizen science into collecting data. Working with school districts, for example, students learn to identify 16 focal species (e.g., peregrine falcons, rock doves, and house sparrows) depending on the locale. Then they choose a place to watch the birds over several days, collect quantitative and qualitative data, and share the data with the Lab's staff as well as ornithologists worldwide.

The Celebrate Urban Birds project under the leadership of Karen Purcell has worked with over 250,000 students and 10,000 partner organizations. The Celebrate Urban Birds project as



well as the Lab's other endeavors are free and materials are available in Spanish and English. The Lab has other free programs:

- BirdSleuth K-12 includes content about evolution, student investigations, and lifecycles, as well as providing conferences, workshops, and free one webinars for professional development. birdsleuth.org
- Bird Academy broadens everyone's understanding of birds, from the basics to college-level ornithology, through interactive content, webinars, and courses. academy.allaboutbirds.org
- Crossing Boundaries motivates students with online videos about young conservation scientists and use web-based technology for biodiversity lessons. crossingboundaries.org
- All About Birds is a popular bird guide along with web cams and access to the Lab's resources with a single search. allaboutbirds.org
- Merlin is a database of birds when a birder attempts to make an identification. The user answers five simple questions about the bird, and Merlin comes up with a list of possible matches. merlin.allaboutbirds.org
- eBird is a program that keeps track of watchers' bird sightings while collecting data to contribute to the scientific and conservation knowledge base. Included are dynamic maps and graphs of worldwide bird distribution. ebird.org Citizen science is increasingly important for the Lab and its researchers as the amount of data available has increased tremendously. "Citizen science," according to David Bonter, senior lecturer and director of the Lab's Citizen Science program, "involve projects in which volunteers partner with scientists to answer real-world questions." There are drawbacks to asking volunteers to observe and gather statistics. A few

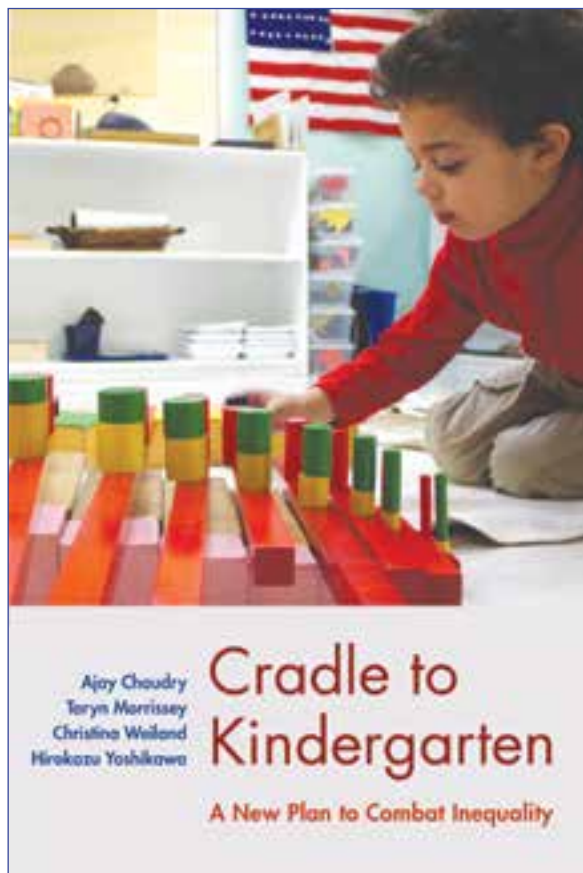
years ago, for example, a web cam was focused on a bald eagle nest in Minnesota. An eagle will typically lay two or three eggs, and when they hatch, the older chick commonly kills its younger siblings. To scientists, it's preferable to let nature take its course, but as humans, we tend to save all the eaglets. Another obstacle is the inconsistency of collecting information over the long-term. Nevertheless, the role of citizen scientists on projects such as Project FeederWatch are invaluable because they act as eyes and ears as birds are mobile and most species in the project are widely distributed. Citizen-science researchers not only observe and gather data, but they work with the Lab's scientists to organize the long-term data, cross-validate with other surveys, and use modern statistical approaches to detect patterns, investigate mechanisms, and understand changes among bird populations.

For the last two months, I have been fascinated with the Merlin Bird ID app for iOS having traveled to and birded in Tucson, Phoenix, Oklahoma City, Miami, Bogota, Ithaca, and New York City during that time. The matches have been very accurate, with its database of 2000 species and 3000 bird songs. According to Merlin project leader Jessie Barry, more species and audio files are added continuously. The app's user interface is very intuitive, and I feel like I am making a contribution to science by sharing my observations with the Lab. I am looking forward to the spring when adolescent individuals' plumage in certain species is of a different color, which for me could be a challenge when I try to identify a bird's gender.

Amusement parks are fun places to visit, but learning while having a good time is truly living. And besides, standing on lines all day long is for the birds.#



NYU Hosts Book Launch for “Cradle to Kindergarten, A New Plan to Combat Inequality”



By MARGAUX MONTAGNER

NYU’s Institute for Public Knowledge held an event at the Puck Building for the release of *“Cradle to Kindergarten, A New Plan to Combat Inequality”*, a book co-authored by Taryn Morrissey, Christina Weiland, Ajay Choudry, and Hirokazu Yoshikawa. The book presents their findings on the ways inequality starts even before a child enters kindergarten: indeed, according to the authors, children who don’t have access to schooling before then tend to lag before the others and can never quite catch up. To fight those disparities, *“Cradle to Kindergarten”* also unveils an ambitious plan to make Pre-K care universally available in the U.S. A plan is already underway in New York, as more than 70,000 4-year olds have been able to join Pre-K classes this fall.

Opening the discussion, Mayor Bill de Blasio’s office was represented by Richard Buery, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, who took the stage first to introduce the discussion. He started by recalling his own fond memories of attending pre-school in East New York, then moved on to the less-fond memories of having to find childcare for his own sons in the city. Such experiences made his pride in the Pre-K for All program even more understandable. “Not only did we build the system, but we built a quality system”, said Buery, mentioning the successes and satisfaction rates

of the initiative. He then introduced two of the book’s authors, Ajay Choudry and Hirokazu Yoshikawa.

Choudry, a senior fellow at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and a former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Services Policy at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Yoshikawa, the Courtney Sale Ross Professor of Globalization and Education at the Steinhardt School, first discussed the details of their findings. At the heart of the issue, as the U.S. spends far less on early education than the majority of advanced nations, is the fact that access to pre-K generally depends on income.

“In a city like New York, you had to make more than 100k to access quality early childcare”, Choudry said. And as the best childcare lead to the best test scores, children from richer families pull away from the rest, creating a seemingly impossible task to close the achievement gap. Consequently, universal pre-K has proven to greatly reduce the inequalities in test scores at the start of Kindergarten. And while

poorer and middle-class families benefit more from the program, Choudry insisted on the need for its universal quality, as “when everyone’s kids are in the system, it’s much more likely that [its] quality will be better.”

The authors were then joined on the stage by Heather Long, an economics correspondent for The Washington Post, and Jane Waldfogel, professor of social work and public affairs at the Columbia School of Social Work. Questions were raised about transparency and quality assurance, but also about applicability, as Long pointed out that such a program might be difficult to implement in a more conservative state. Choudry and Yoshikawa mentioned that universal Pre-K was popular across the aisle, but conceded that getting the necessary funding would be a challenge.

Lastly, Jane Waldfogel argued that the program was bound to be extremely beneficial for working parents as well, as finding childcare can be complicated, and many working parents have to rely entirely on family or more unreliable sources, thus creating stress and restraining growth. That issue is eliminated under universal Pre-K, and she added that the educators jobs created, as well as the valorization of early childcare workers, were also a boost for the economy. “We are just starting to capture the other benefits and perks of the program”, said Waldfogel. #

BOOK REVIEW

A COLUMN OF FIRE

By Ken Follett



Ken Follett & Erica Jong

A COLUMN OF FIRE

By Ken Follett
Viking Press, 909 pp., \$45

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Popular novelist Ken (161 million books in print world wide) Follett proves once again that he’s not only a blockbuster writer, but an international chartbusting phenomenon as well. Such has been his extraordinary success since the award-winning *Eye of the Needle* (1978) put him in public eye that when he was asked in an interview not too long ago how to pronounce his name, he wittily replied: “it rhymes with ‘wallet.’” Education Update recently met him at his best friend’s home, novelist Erica Jong, who feted him with an amazing celebration of his success attracting 90-100 people. Over the decades, his reputation has only grown – thanks also to various movies and TV series made from his novels - and it shows no signs of diminution. Within a week of publication this past September, his new historical fiction, *A Column of Fire* catapulted to the top rungs of best-seller lists.

Can it be in our Twitter-Instagram culture of fast reads and contemporary frenzy that so many buyers have read another huge Follett saga that spans nearly 150 years and is set in The Elizabethan Age? Media reviews and online comments suggest yes, even if summary-based praise eclipses critical evaluation. Which is not to say that Follett’s latest but stand-alone book in his Kingsbridge series, after the over 1,000 page predecessors *Pillars of the Earth* (1989) and *World Without End* (2007) does not earn its best-seller place, but rather that it might be instructive to read why in an age when thrill-

ers are the number-one genre, Follett succeeds. What is it about *A Column of Fire*’s five-part structure or its “plain and direct” prose, as the former journalist once described his style, that makes his historical fiction, which he’s been concentrating on over the last decade, so accessible? At least one answer is: Follett focus on a comparatively simple plot line (vis-à-vis John Le Carré), even if he appropriates at times a version of “meanwhile-back-at-the-ranch,” chapter ending, such as his protagonist’s revisionist declaration that he put down a challenge: “But I was wrong. It was not over yet; not quite.”

Follett, an appreciative reader of spy fiction, knows the advantage of linking a political plot and an off-again-on-again romance. In *A Column of Fire* he follows Protestant Ned Willard and Catholic Margery Fitzgerald – their early affection, continuing passion in separation, severing pain as partisans on opposing sides in the religious wars, and enduring love. And, of course, there are those exciting action scenes, including the surprising defeat by Sir Francis Drake of the more powerful Spanish Armada, and the foiling of the Guy Fawkes Gunpowder Plot that would have blown up Elizabeth and Parliament. Follett relies on his training as a journalist to deliver a story with clarity and accuracy, but as a novelist, he fleshes out characters as they would inform a contemporary popular novel—sadists, queers, rapists, racists, sodomites.

A fervent admirer of Ian Fleming (along with Stephen King, Lee Child and—would you believe—Jane Austen, whose characters reflect their time and place but also rise to universal types without becoming stereotypes?), 68-year old Follett brings to *A Column of Fire*’s

continued on page 30

DR. CHARLOTTE K. FRANK HONORED AT AMERICAN FRIENDS OF KIDUM RECEPTION



Dr. Charlotte K. Frank



Peter Yarrow

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Philanthropist and education guru Dr. Charlotte Frank was honored this October at the American Friends of Kidum's Inaugural New York Reception with an AFK Leadership Award. Held at the Jewish Museum, the event celebrated the philanthropic leaders whose generosity and support provided educational opportunities for talented teens from disadvantaged communities throughout Israel.

Dr. Frank was being honored particularly for her contributions to the Dr. Charlotte K. Frank Science Center at Mae Boyar High School in Jerusalem. The Mae Boyar High School was created in 1964 through the vision of philanthropist Louis Boyar. While Boyar has consistently ranked as one of the top high schools in Israel for the past 50 years, the science facilities were in need of an upgrade to meet the acceptable safety and education standards. These upgrades were made possible by the generous philanthropy of Dr. Frank.

The ceremony kicked off with remarks from Master of Ceremonies Roni Rubenstein, followed by a greeting from Ambassador Dani Dayan, Consul General of Israel and Eitan Moran, Executive Director, Society for Advancement of Education in Jerusalem.

MOMENT MAGAZINE HONORS WOLF BLITZER



(L-R) Wolf Blitzer, Edith Everett & Daniel Rose

Edith Everett attends Moment Magazine, a publication that highlights Jewish events. Wolf Blitzer was Washington correspondent for The Jerusalem Post. Wolf mentioned how his parents, both of whom are Holocaust survivors, were so proud that their son could be the lead political anchor and journalist for CNN in what they perceive as the great country of America.

In addition to Frank, United Israel Appeal-IEF was also awarded an AFK Leadership Award. United Israel Appeal is responsible for the allocation and oversight of funds raised by U.S. Jewish Federation campaigns expended in Israel- which was more than \$1 billion in the past five years. The award was accepted by Executive Vice Chairman David Mallach. A Silver Anniversary Award was awarded to the Naale Elite Academy and Director Yeshayahu Yechieli.

Peter Yarrow of the world-famous folk group

Peter, Paul and Mary was the special musical guest. Yarrow is associated with Dr. Frank through Operation Respect, an educational nonprofit that they founded together 18 years ago to create safe, bully-free environments for children.

Dr. Frank has been recognized countless times for her philanthropy and contributions to education and has received over 70 awards. She is currently a Senior Advisor of Research and Development for McGraw-Hill Education. She has been with the company since 1988. #

ISADORA DUNCAN, AMERICAN DANCE IS BORN

By KENNETH TOPPING, PRINCIPAL DANCER, MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY (1984-2004)

At the beginning of America's 20th century came a new dawn in the arts. With the epic developments of the Industrial Revolution, women's suffrage, the fight for workers' rights, the impact of the gilded age, World War I (you get the idea), a new world was emerging. The need to respond to these shifting times grew feverishly in the hearts and minds of artists from every discipline. Their urge to reflect, to interpret, and to feel the rapidly changing world around them found expression in their creations. From the fine arts, to music, to sculpting, to dance, these artists and their new ideas carried us into the "Modern" era.

Isadora Duncan (1878-1927) blazed a trail for a distinctly American form of dance. She defied tradition, claiming not to need formal ballet training in order to dance, in order to create beauty in dance. To the shock of her contemporaries, she removed her ballet slippers and danced barefoot. Inspired by the ancients in Greece and by Nature, Isadora searched within herself, within her own body, for a universal spiritual essence. The human body was something to be celebrated, not hidden away. Combining Greek poses with the ideas of the Renaissance, wearing flowers in her hair, draping herself in flowing silk fabric, exposing her bare legs and arms, she interpreted some of the most beautiful music ever composed.

Like all dancers in the early 1900s, Isadora understood that performers outside the world of classical ballet were not taken seriously: meaning, if you were not a ballet dancer, you were a "show dancer", an entertainer, part of vaudeville or a minstrel show. But Isadora could not have disagreed more. She knew women's natural inborn beauty was being overlooked or left undiscovered. She believed in nature. To her, classical ballet fell short with artifice, far removed from the body's natural, organic qualities. "The dance is not a diversion but a religion – the religion of beauty." To her the choreography of classical ballet "constrains people to adopt unnatural attitudes and cramps the free expressions of their emotions." And with that, she undertook the impossible: namely, to sever the connection between dance and entertainment in the minds of the public whilst the remnants of the Victorian age and American Puritanism were helping to firmly anchor long-held traditional views.

Isadora danced with a Shakespearean Company for two years before giving a concert in the small Music Room of Carnegie Hall where she danced Narcissus, Ophelia, The Water Nymph, and Spring with a composer at the piano. It was a great success and led to her performing in New York drawing rooms. After a summer of dancing at Mrs. Astor's villa in Newport, she embarked on a tour to Europe, performing in London, Paris, Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, Vienna, Florence, Moscow, Athens,



and beyond! Her popularity grew enormously. She ended up staying in Europe for eight years, where she befriended painters, poets, and intellectuals. Rodin painted and sketched her. She danced to poets' readings and often spoke after her performances, sharing her ideas on dance and on life.

"Her power lay not in composed pieces but in her personal performances," exclaimed Agnes De Mille. Although untrained and unschooled in the classical sense, Isadora communicated through her dance something classical ballet, up to that point, could allude to, but did not express outright. Isadora became a symbol of freedom on and off the dance stage. She took the first steps toward unchaining a hitherto fettered and stilted tradition while also bursting the constraints of accepted societal forms with far reaching implications difficult to quantify. The call of the artist was for Isadora nothing less than the call of the revolutionary or freedom fighter: dress as you will; love who you choose; married or not, bare and raise children as you will. And with her numerous lovers and children born out of wedlock, art became visceral and real; perhaps never more so than when she happily performed for her audiences while pregnant, bulge and all.

The first of the modern dance rebels, Isadora paved the way for the next generation of women to carry on the revolution by returning dance to the human body's primordial strength, grace, and natural movement. She did not develop a technique to train the body as much as she shifted the consciousness of the public's view of The Dance. No small feat. The female pioneers that followed continued what Isadora started. They would create in less than fifty years what classical ballet took hundreds to create: a new dance form, uniquely American, calling it "Modern Dance". #

The Medicare Rights Center Holds Annual Awards Dinner



Joe Baker, President, Medicare Rights Center

The Medicare Rights Center recently held its 2017 Annual Awards Dinner. This year, the honoree was the Healthcare Education Project. The Healthcare Education Project (HEP) is a unique labor-management alliance between 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East (1199SEIU) and the Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA). HEP's mission is to protect and expand access to quality, affordable healthcare for all New Yorkers through education, advocacy, and coalition building. From conceiving the landmark Family Health Plus insurance program to protecting Medicaid funding in New York State to breast cancer screening awareness campaigns, HEP has evolved into one of the nation's most influential healthcare advocacy voices.

Kirk Adams is the Executive Director of the Healthcare Education Project (HEP), a healthcare advocacy organization jointly funded by 1199UHE and The New York League of Voluntary Hospitals. At HEP, Adams has developed a state and nationally based capacity to speak on behalf of providers, healthcare workers and consumers in promoting affordable, high quality healthcare for all.

The Medicare Rights Center is a national, nonprofit consumer service organization that works to ensure access to affordable health care for older adults and people with disabilities through counseling and advocacy, educational programs and public policy initiatives.

Since 1989, the center has been helping people with Medicare understand their rights and benefits, navigate the Medicare system and secure the quality health care they deserve all free of charge to everyone. They are the largest and most reliable independent source of Medicare information and assistance in the United States.

Edith Everett sits on the Board of Directors. President of the Everett Foundation, she and her late husband, Henry, created the family foundation in 1955. For over thirty years Mrs. Everett was a senior vice president of Investments at Gruntal & Co., a New York Stock Exchange member firm. She entered the male-dominated world of Wall Street in 1961, becoming one of the few women of her generation to work in this field. Prior to her career in the financial world, Mrs. Everett was an elementary school teacher in New York City. #

Chapel Haven Breaks New Ground



Board of Trustees members (L-R) Trustee Dr. John Bilezikian, Dr. Sophie Bilezikian & Daughter Diana Bilezikian celebrate Chapel Haven



Trustees breaking ground for the new building

By MARGAUX MONTAGNER

Recently, the Chapel Haven school held a celebration for its 45th anniversary, as well as for a ceremonial groundbreaking on its campus. Located in New Haven, Connecticut, the institute specializes in education for adults with disabilities, such as Downs syndrome or autism, and serves over 250 students. As the school has grown steadily over the last decades, an expansion of its campus, classrooms and dorms has been sorely needed to accommodate students drawn to Chapel Haven's mission: to teach students how to live independent, social and productive lives, with a strong sense of community.

The updated campus is set to include a new welcome center, a building dedicated to the REACH program, and an aging service facility for older students — Chapel Haven teaches adults from 18 to 65 years old — thus offering them the opportunity to grow old within their community, with the continued support and engagement from the school staff.

Michael Storz, Chapel Haven's president, said that it had been a true privilege "watching our goals go from living at home with mom and dad, to coming to Chapel Haven, making friends, learning independent living, securing employment, and flourishing into happy, healthy members of our community". For him, the upcoming changes on campus would make it "worthy of their determination for independent living". Both the welcome center and the REACH building are set to be ready for new

students by summer 2018.

As the ceremony started, Peggy Baker, president of the Board, took the stage. "Look at how we are all continuing to grow", she marveled, to the cheers of a very enthusiastic crowd of students, families and staff. Her son, himself a student, is part of the Chapel Haven Building Committee. She then introduced fellow board members David and Harriet Fletcher. Mrs. Fletcher shared the palpable joy and pride of the staff, but reminded members of the audience that there was still much to be done. Chapel Haven has successfully raised \$36 million for the expansion of the campus, but \$9.6 million more are still needed for the completion of the aging facility. She then encouraged families to volunteer. "Get the word out and keep the momentum up".

They were followed by several speeches from faculty members, parents and students, like published author Diana Bilezikian, who confided that living independently "wasn't easy, and it took me 20 years, and it never would have happened without Chapel Haven". Several state officials were also present, like State Comptroller Kevin Lembo, whose own son attended the school, and who expressed his gratitude towards Chapel Haven. The school had helped his son live independently, and taught him how to advocate for himself. Mr. Lembo said: "countless families have been touched by your loving kindness and so many yet to come, and now the buildings will reflect the dignity that they deserve".#

ROBERTA FLACK AND DARYL ROTH HONORED AT 96TH ANNUAL TOWN HALL CELEBRATION



Roberta Flack

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

Recently, The Town Hall celebrated its 96th year with its annual Gala Celebration. The star-studded event began in the afternoon with a special benefit concert featuring the Town Hall Ensemble. This was the debut performance for the Town Hall Ensemble, which is made up of an eye-popping lineup of some of today's greatest contemporary musicians including Bria Skonberg, Lakecia Benjamin, Lenny Pickett, Scott Robinson, Natalie Cressman, Luis Bonilla, Nels Cline, Marc Cary, Ricardo Rodriguez, JT Lewis, Zach Brock, Marika Hughes, Lisa Fischer, Will Hermes, Eric Mingus, Toshi Reagon and Hal Willner. Renowned musical director and trumpeter Peter Bernstein led the ensemble.

This year's concert highlighted social, cultural and historical moments that played great historical significance at Town Hall over its history. Musicians such as Peter Seeger, who recorded multiple albums at Town Hall and fought for environmental causes were honored as well as Coretta Scott King, whose 1964 concert told the beautiful and moving story of the African-American struggle for freedom.

Following the concert was a cocktail reception and dinner at the Princeton Club. This year the recipients of The Town Hall Friend of the Arts Award included legendary singer Roberta Flack and Award Winning Producer Daryl Roth.

Grammy winner Roberta Flack is considered

a monumental singer, due to her unparalleled career that ranges from pop to soul to jazz. Flack's catalogue of hit tunes include "Where Is the Love?" with Donny Hathaway, "Killing Me Softly", "Tonight I Celebrate My Love" and "Set the Night to Music" among so many others. She is also the founder of the Roberta Flack School of Music at the Hyde Leadership Charter School in the Bronx which provides free innovative and inspiring after school music programs to disadvantaged children. Upon receiving her award, Flack shared an important sentiment: art knows no boundaries.

Throughout Daryl Roth's 30+ years as a Tony Award winning producer, she has produced some of New York's most important and thought provoking works. A sampling of her credits include *The Normal Heart*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *War Horse*, *Proof* and countless others. During her acceptance speech Roth noted that while her choices have been varied over the years, there have been common threads that weave her tapestry. Some of these threads are being true to ones beliefs, finding ones purpose, finding your voice and strength, and paying homage to history while looking toward the future. "That remains my mission," she said proudly.

Roth and Flack join a distinguished group of past honorees including Garrison Keillor, Jennifer Raab, George Wein, Laurie Tisch, Tony Bennett, Bobby Short, Sheldon Harnick, Dizzy Gillespie and so many others. #

Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng Leads Thought Provoking Workshop at Peace Conference



Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

In a world that feels increasingly divided, the need for peacefulness is felt now more than ever. Ceeds of Peace, a nonprofit organization co-founded by Dr. Kerrie Orosevich and Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng, are working hard to fill that void. Based in Honolulu, Hawaii, Ceeds of Peace utilizes a 360-degree approach to raising peacebuilding leaders primarily through the use of workshops and talks. This year, for the first time ever, Ceeds of Peace hosted a day-long Peace Studio Leadership Program in New York City. The highly immersive and interactive event brought together an array of prominent peace leaders and performing artists in all fields to promote peace.

One of the most engaging aspects of the event was Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng's talk on how to become an effective peacebuilder using universal needs. Dr. Soetoro-Ng spoke primarily of the importance of recognizing needs of others in everyday life. She began by illustrating her own personal challenge of recognizing needs—particularly with her husband whose needs differ from her own. The sharing of this typical marital issue helped to bring this subject to a common place where almost all attendees could relate. “This very basic

conflict-resolution technique of focusing on needs rather than pathways to get there is very helpful for problem solving,” she said.

Dr. Soetoro-Ng then posed a scenario to the audience: police brutality. “At the moment that a police officer is beating on somebody what does the victim need at that moment?” she asked the crowd. Safety, protection, dignity, fairness, justice, and community were among the answers. She then asked the same question, this time regarding the police officer. Validation, understanding, structure and order, recognition, and empowerment were some of the answers. Dr. Soetoro-Ng then acknowledged that very often the needs are similar, if not shared. This process, she said, is intended to humanize both sides in order to understand how to move forward. “When you begin with universal needs, you can begin to develop a sense of courage about how to move forward and feel less fear.”

This was a perfect set-up for the brainstorming session that followed which encouraged the audience to break up into groups and come up with some universal needs and the resources that can feed back to them. Afterwards, the groups shared their findings which led to a thoughtful and thought provoking discussion.#

LANDMARK COLLEGE PARTNERS WITH MIT IN BOSTON



Dr. John Gabrieli

By MARGAUX MONTAGNER

Landmark College, a leading institute dedicated to students with learning disabilities, partnered with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for its 5th annual Innovation Symposium. Aiming to further “new and emerging technologies for people who learn differently”, the event was held at the McGovern Institute for Brain Research, and was attended by students, parents, researchers and educators alike.

The daylong symposium featured informational sessions by researchers from Landmark College, MIT, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Technical Education Research Centers on subjects as varied as the use of Virtual Reality in teaching, game-based learning and environmental influences on brain development. The keynote speech, “ADHD and Learning: A Perfect Storm” was given by Dr. Eric Tridas, and the day ended with a plenary presentation by Dr. John Gabrieli, “Cognitive Neuroscience & Dyslexia: From Biology to Remediation”.

Dr. Tridas, medical director of the Tridas Center for Child Development, president of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics Consultants, Inc., and author of “From ABC to ADHD: What Every Parent Should Know About Dyslexia”, spoke to an engaged public about the difficult process to diagnose ADHD correctly, and about many of the misgivings people can have about the condition. For instance, ADHD is not simply a lack of attention — it is instead misdirected. Many children who cannot follow their teachers' words will instead remember minute details from other

aspects of their days.

Dr. Tridas also discussed the wide range of difficulties that can arise for ADHD patients, saying “[it] is the diabetes of child development: if you know everything there is to know about diabetes, you know everything there is to know about medicine, and if you know everything about ADHD, you know everything about childhood development, because ADHD affects every aspect of it”. Young patients suffering from the condition tend to perform worse in school than their peers, but they also often develop anxiety from increasingly high expectations, and tend to be socially unaware as well. “ADHD is not a school problem, it's a life problem”, said Dr. Tridas. It is possible to manage it, especially with new technological advances, however Dr. Tridas insisted on the importance of treating every patient as an individual, as the condition can vary wildly from one individual to the other.

Closing the symposium was a plenary presentation, “Cognitive Neuroscience & Dyslexia: From Biology to Remediation”, by Dr. Gabrieli, professor in Health Sciences, Technology and Cognitive Neuroscience at MIT, investigator at McGovern Institute for Brain Research, and director of the Athinoula A. Martinos Imaging Center. Dr. Gabrieli presented his findings on how dyslexia manifests in a patient's brain structure during MRIs: brain plasticity, the ability for the brain to change and thus learn, is diminished for those suffering from the disorder, proving that “it isn't the fault of the children, the parent or the educator — dyslexia exists in the brain itself”.#



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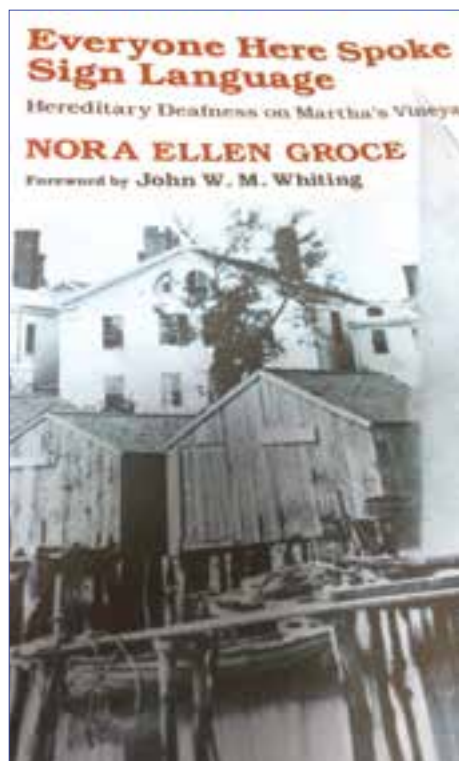
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Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard



Dr. Elaine Gale



By DR. ELAINE GALE,
HUNTER COLLEGE

Nora Ellen Groce's book, *Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard*, published in 1985 (Harvard Univ. Press), describes an extraordinary community where a large population of deaf community members lived alongside hearing community members from the 17th to the mid 20th century. The first half of the book covers the deaf history of Martha's Vineyard, plus deaf origins and genetics on the island. The second half of the book covers adaptations and perspectives, the focus of this review.

Through oral sources (mainly a core group of 50 Island elders), Groce uncovered that hearing people on the island adapted by learning sign language. Sign language was not just reserved for communicating with deaf Vineyarders, it was common for hearing Vineyarders to sign with one another without anyone deaf in their company. Sign language served as a convenience in certain situations such as communicating at a distance beyond the range of the human voice. Regarding perspectives, Groce's informants commented that deaf people were not "handicapped" and that "there was nothing at all unusual about them." In fact, informants did not always remember who was deaf or hearing, similar to not remembering if someone had blue or brown eyes.

Being bilingual in sign language and English eliminated communication barriers and social isolation. Deaf Vineyarders regularly married hearing or deaf fellow Vineyarders, earned an average or above average income, and par-

ticipated in church affairs. As Groce wrote, "This adaptation had more than linguistic significance, for it eliminated the wall that separates most deaf people from the rest of society." Deaf people are "just like everyone else" when living in a society where communication is fully accessible and inclusive.

Today, when children are born deaf it is likely that their hearing parents never met a deaf person. At least 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents. New parents of deaf babies are often advised on ways to restore hearing and not as frequently on the important benefits of sign language and engaging with a variety of deaf people. Groce's book offers insight into a culture where sign language is used naturally by both deaf and hearing people.

Since everyone on the island could communicate using sign language, being deaf was not considered a problem that needed to be fixed. The book demonstrates the benefits of sign language for both deaf and hearing alike. Benefits include the notion that sign language provides full access to communication and can be used beyond hearing range. Another benefit is increased cognitive development through bilingualism. The latter two benefits are examples of the term "Deaf-gain" coined in 2005 by Aaron Williamson. When he became deaf as an adult he questioned why doctors used the term "hearing loss." From his perspective, he gained a valuable language and culture. This extraordinary community on Martha's Vineyard is an example of how people benefit from Deaf-gain and is a model for embracing human diversity.#

THOUGHTS FROM THE AUTHOR ON "ADDICTED TO REFORM: A 12-STEP PROGRAM TO RESCUE PUBLIC EDUCATION"

By JOHN MERROW

"The more things change, the more they remain the same" certainly applies to public education. Today's headlines are about Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and her 'Rethink School' tour. Apparently we have forgotten that in 2015 and 2016 Education Secretaries Arne Duncan and John King took their own bus tours around the country right around this time of year. Last year's theme was 'Opportunity Across America.' My new book offers a long-range perspective; we have been 'reforming' schools for many, many years, generally without any real change, even though headlines suggest otherwise. A good example of a recent faux reform is the effort to raise the high school graduation rate, a signature campaign of Education Secretary Arne Duncan. During his tenure, the rate climbed from about 70% to 83%. In some cases, struggling students graduated because of tutoring and other compassionate attention, and that's a good thing. However, many other struggling students achieved pass-

ing grades because of 'Credit Recovery,' the dubious practice of putting students in front of computers for a week or so of pushing buttons, for which they could earn a full semester's credit in basic courses. Other students got diplomas because adults cheated by either helping them on standardized tests or by changing their answers post-test. The graduation rate was also manipulated when some schools 'persuaded' struggling students to leave school to enroll in GED programs--but failed to ensure that the students actually enrolled. (We reported on this twice for the PBS NewsHour; the first piece was nominated for the Emmy for Investigative Reporting.) When the rate jumped, reformers celebrated this accomplishment, while of course taking pains to say things like, 'The struggle isn't over and won't be over until every student graduates.' After a while, the system returns to where it was when the 'reform' effort began, and then politicians and others begin assigning blame. "It's the families," or "it's the *continued on page 25*

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Jhumpa Lahiri at Barnard College

By MIRANDA GOODWIN-RAAB
& MARGAUX MONTAGNER

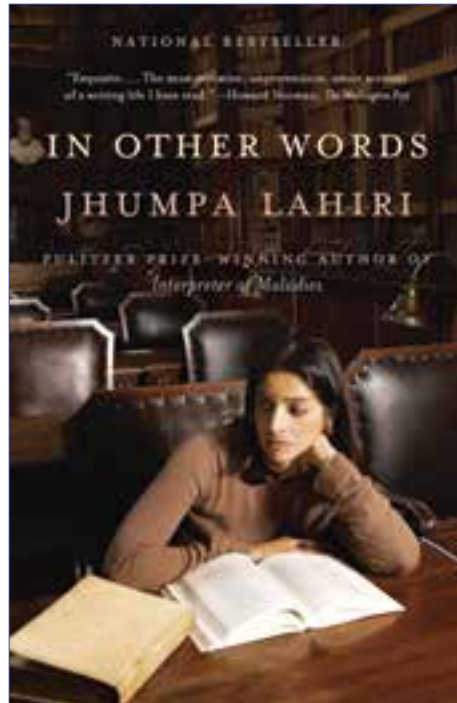
It's easy to forget that Barnard is in one of the biggest cities in the world. The second you step on campus, the blaring sirens and city slickers are quickly replaced by the frenetic energy found on the main quad of most American colleges. That, and lines—lines for printers, lines for vending machines, and lines outside of events. On a recent brisk fall evening, the line that is the longest and the loudest is made up of women of all ages waiting for Jhumpa Lahiri. One of Barnard's very own, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author has returned to campus for a reading of one of her stories as well as being interviewed by Professor Hisham Matar.

The never-ending line gave way to a full, yet almost intimate auditorium where a loud chatter filled the room, interrupted by squeals of glee at securing a spot at the event, discussions of five year plans and where free food could be found on campus for dinner that night. Dr. Timea Wizell, Director of Creative Writing at Barnard, introduced Dr. Matar and Ms. Lahiri, the latter whom she had taught as a student. She told a story of reading the *New Yorker* many years ago, describing a heart-wrenching fiction piece of love and loss surrounding a stillborn baby. "Imagine my shock, when I look and see that the author is Jhumpa. *My Jhumpa!*" But, she conceded her surprise didn't last long, noting that Lahiri had always paid "exquisite attention to details" in her writing. Lahiri later detailed the close relationship she and her former professor have developed, calling her a neighbor, friend, and "guiding light."

Lahiri began by reading "Il Confine (The Boundary)"—a story she had written in Rome three years ago, that she noted she had just translated from Italian and had never before read aloud in English. It centered around a young woman who helped her father run a guesthouse in a tiny village in Italy. All of the guests who visited took delight in being far away from everything, while the narrator only wished to escape the house and town.

"I was terrified, in general, for four years." Lahiri said with a wry smile, when asked about her time at Barnard. "But, it's important to feel terror at that age." She fondly recalled the scholarly foundation she received in the same halls she was currently speaking from, how her classes opened her mind. She described her path through academia, and the anguish that writing can bring her. "Do I dare do this?" she recalled repeatedly asking herself. "Can I put words on paper that I can bear? That interest me?" She summed up her incessant feelings of self-doubt and lack of assuredness with an image she repeated throughout the interview: "I always feel like I have the wrong suitcase."

Matar remarked that her first four works all dealt with the same themes of dislocation, personal identity, and the private ways in which families and individuals navigate them. "I see them as basically the same book", Lahiri said. While working on her first novel, *The*



Lowland, she didn't feel quite prepared to write that particular story, and realized as she finished it that she hadn't reached the end of that road. Considering those four early works, she described them "as a block, as a whole — they're talking to each other".

When Matar then pointed out the deep sense of longing towards India, present in that same bloc, Lahiri said: "I wrote them for my parents". Those stories were motivated, deep down; by her desire to create through words the reality her parents lost and longed for. Lahiri added that while she knew India herself, the emotions she was writing about weren't hers, as she doesn't have that kind of attachment to the country herself. "You're translating for yourself your mother's separation, her longing", commented Mahar. She agreed, and recalled the words of a colleague in Princeton, who told her that all writing was translation, as one translates emotions and thoughts into words. "I've never not translated. I have no conception of being without the need to translate on some level", Lahiri said.

Mahar next asked about her decision to switch to writing in Italian switching to Italian "at a point in her career when her prose matures". Lahiri responded that as she always felt as if she was "hovering between two languages" anyway, therefore switching to a different one altogether relieved her of that uncertainty. As Mahar noted that she seemed to have found "ease and playfulness" in Italian while she never seemed to be totally at ease with being American, Lahiri concurred. She admitted to having a lot of anxieties about learning and writing in a new language, naturally, but still finds a "pure, childlike joy" and freedom in it, whereas learning English made her feel inadequate. Lahiri smiled as she concluded: "Italian just made me drop the suitcase altogether".#

THE CHINA INSTITUTE



The China Institute, led by President James Heimowitz, and leaders Shenzhan Liao (Director of Education, The China Institute) and Dr. Ali Mazzara (Director of Educational Programs, SUNY Office of Global Affairs) collaborated on creating a wonderful venue for people of all ages to learn Chinese, literature and politics. Visit their new headquarters at 100 Washington Street.



Addicted to Reform

continued from page 23

teachers,” or “it’s the kids themselves....” At the macro-level, the cumulative effect of years and years of faux ‘reform’ is decidedly negative: 1) a damaging pessimism about public education, 2) waves of criticism of teachers and their unions, and 3) increased national and state regulation. However, at the local level, parents remain satisfied with the schools their children attend, even as they give the overall system a bad grade. And just today a poll from GenForward reveals that “Majorities of Millennials give their own education an ‘A’ or ‘B’ grade, but the nation’s public schools score lower.” This cognitive dissonance is more than a paradox. It’s problematic because only 37% of adults can name ONE basic right guaranteed by the US Constitution. Given that many Americans seem not to grasp the uniqueness of our nation, one has to wonder how strong the fabric of our democracy is today. The solution is not more faux ‘school reform’ but real change. As with all addictions, the process must begin by acknowledging our addiction to superficial (and easy) change. There are 12 steps in all, most of which are familiar to followers of Maria Montessori, John Dewey and others. But it’s time for words, not deeds. For example, most Americans support preschool, but only 43% of our 3-year-olds are enrolled, a huge contrast to the OECD average of 73%. That has to change. Another example: we need to ‘measure what we value,’ instead of valuing what we can measure cheaply. Most countries use tests to determine how students are doing. The US seems to be alone in using test scores as a way of punishing teachers. Example: As Aristotle teaches us, ‘We are what we repeatedly do.’ For that simple

reason, students should spend their time in school doing work that matters. Project-based learning, when students learn, fail, and learn from their mistakes together, is essential preparation for adult life. Test-prep is not preparation for anything except taking tests. I’m arguing that we must create schools which consider each child individually by asking, in effect, “How are you intelligent?” and not “How smart are you?” We simply don’t have enough children to go sorting them into ‘winners’ and ‘losers’ when they are 6, 7, or 8 years old. As Willie Nelson might have sung, “There’s time enough for sorting when the game is done.” During my 41 years of reporting, I’ve seen three major changes, only one of which is positive: 1) the inclusion and acceptance of children with special needs; 2) the resegregation of public schools after long and concerted efforts at desegregation; and 3) the rise of high-stakes testing with all of its unfortunate consequences, including widespread cheating by adults and the dumbing down of the curriculum. If you are wondering about technology, it is--so far--not on my list because many schools are using its unprecedented powers to attempt to stuff more facts into students’ heads, instead of giving them more agency over their own education. On the other hand, there is hope, because, in some high schools in the last two years, 80% and even 90% of students have ‘opted out’ of mandated standardized tests. Perhaps real change does begin at the bottom. #

John Merrow reported on public education for the PBS NewsHour and NPR for 41 years before retiring in late 2015. During his career he received two George Foster Peabody Awards, the George Polk Award, and the McGraw Prize. Addicted to Reform is his fourth book.

Harold Holzer

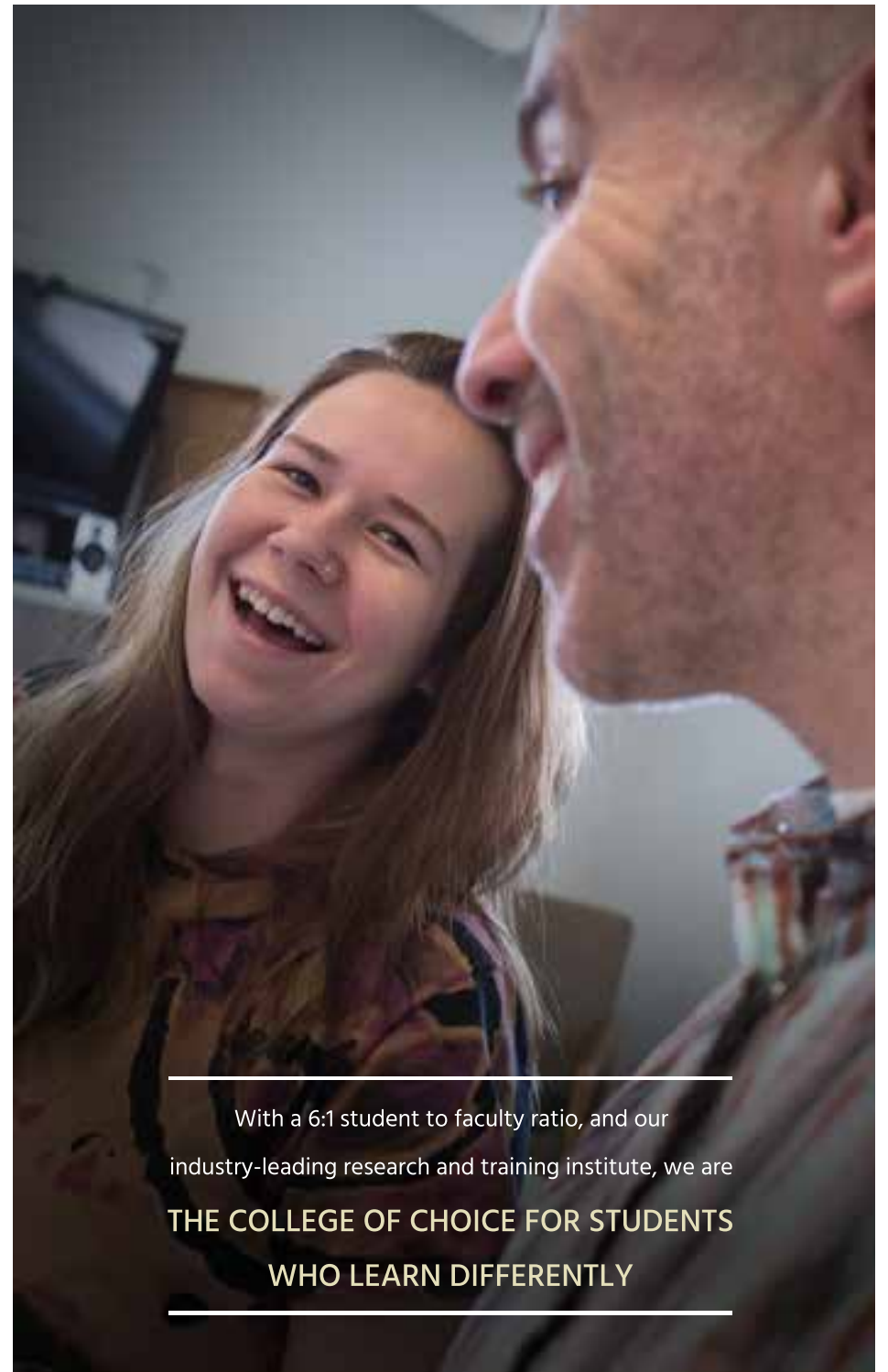
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“extraordinary,” he exclaimed. “She was there the moment we needed her on women’s rights. She paved the way for other women. When she ran for the Senate, there were no women senators.” Holzer extolls Cuomo as “the most articulate person I ever heard,” happily stating, “I got to work on a book with him.” Holzer also served as Director of Public Information for WNET/Channel 13, and for 23 years as senior vice president for public affairs at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. When questioned by Lang about the length of his stint at The Met, Holzer explained, “I worked for director Philippe de Montebello. I worked for the best museum in the world, one that did everything better than any other institution in the world.” He left the museum to write books, but could not resist the offer for his current position at Hunter College’s Roosevelt House. “I wanted the job,” he says.

At heart, a historian and Lincoln scholar, Holzer was chairman of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Foundation for six years and co-chair of the U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial Commission for 10 years. He has authored, co-authored, or edited 52 books on Lincoln and

550 articles for magazines and journals. His books, including “Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech That Made Abraham Lincoln President,” “Lincoln and the Power of the Press: The War for Public Opinion,” and “The Civil War in Fifty Objects,” have won many awards. He is currently writing a “very timely” book on Lincoln and immigration. He notes, “Lincoln’s record on this is not perfect. He flirted with Nativists for political reasons, but changed. . . I’m very happy to be doing it.”

Cooper Union’s Great Hall was founded in 1859 as a place for public discourse on important issues of the day, an “experiment in practical democracy.” It’s where abolitionist Frederick Douglass defended Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, suffragette Elizabeth Cady Stanton called for women’s right to vote, Oglala Tribe Chief Red Cloud defended the rights of Native Americans, and the NAACP held its first meeting. More recently, presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama have spoken from the “Lincoln Podium.” The New York State Archives, administered by the State Education Department, collects, preserves, and holds 200 million documents that record the history of the state from colonial times until the present. It has been open to the public since 1978. #



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SPORTS

NICOLE CRANE FLIES HIGH IN SNOWBOARDING



By MIKE COHEN

When Nicole Crane first started snowboarding she was so small as a three year-old, that one of her socks, along with her boot and the board, slipped off her foot from the chairlift and slid all the way down the mountain. She was forced to get off the lift with a bare left foot and an introduction to the cold. But it didn't deter her. Six years later, she is now a nationally ranked snowboarder, who has collected 11 total medals at the USASA Nationals.

"I ride for fun, said Nikki, as her friends call her. "Winning medals is nice, but, it's really meeting new people and being with friends." Nikki, who is 10 years old now and from Glen Rock, New Jersey, competes in snowboarding against kids from all over the country and the world. The lengthy season packed with competitions starts in December and runs through April. The goal is to qualify for the nationals. Since 2013 that's exactly where Nikki and her dad, her travel partner, have ended up each year. Nationals take place in scenic Copper Mountain, Colorado, and last year Nikki won three national medals including gold in her favorite event, rail jam. It's no wonder that Nikki has her own board sponsor, Never Summer Snowboards. "It's a team effort," said Dave, her dad. "I do the driving, she does the riding."

During the season the two travel around

the northeast, training and competing while racking up countless miles. Nikki does most of her training with a team in Big Boulder, Pennsylvania. Her competitions take place anywhere from Pennsylvania to Vermont. The goal for Nikki is to keep having fun and improving. Wherever the sport takes her, the experiences of seeing the country and meeting friends have already made it worthwhile.

Even with her hectic snowboarding schedule, Nikki finds time to play top-level club soccer and lacrosse. The land sports are a good supplement to her snow training. She plays soccer for World Class FC out of Rockland County, New York, while lacrosse is with STEPS Elite, based in Randolph, New Jersey. Just as she does when flipping and flying down the hill, Nikki competes with joy and enthusiasm on the field. With all these sports, as a fifth grader, she takes her studies very seriously, and, of course, still values her time to just be a kid.

"You can find Nikki on the street with a big smile on her face riding her skateboard with her friends," said her dad. With a proud grin he added, "That's where she's the happiest." #

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). He can be reached at throwbacksports@verizon.net

Developing Parent-Teacher Relationships

By DR. ANN MULVEY,
TOURO COLLEGE

Children are parents' and teachers' top priority. They both want to give the students every opportunity to succeed. There are many strategies which may be incorporated to build ideal relationships and to support the common goal.

Some suggestions are:

1) During the summer months each teacher may send each assigned student a "welcome note" via email or by United States Mail. This simple gesture will indicate to parent and to child the teacher's warmth and concern. Students enjoy receiving mail, especially over the summer from their teacher. To a parent, this gesture indicates a sense of professionalism.

2) A teacher might develop an information sheet containing the usual statistics as well as providing space for the parent to share child's interests, strengths, needs and spare-time activities. Space should be available for parents to indicate allergies etc. as well as any questions or suggestions.

3) Schedule time to meet with parents like "coffee and conversation" time. At this meeting, stress teacher's desire to be a partner with the parents in the learning environment. Furthermore, a form might be available for parents to write preferable address, email address, or preference for "communication book" or landline phone to be used at a specific time frame. In return, the teacher may discuss the best way for parents to reach her/him.

Furthermore, at this meeting, let the parents know how best to assist the teacher and child eg. to volunteer, to monitor, to offer to be a lunch aid and/or chaperone on field trips. With

fewer paraprofessionals, parents can assist in reinforcing learning in the classroom and at home.

Often teachers of younger children ask parents to read to them nightly and with pivotal questions check for comprehension. In addition, parents may enjoy reading to a class to honor children's books like Dr. Seuss, visiting a class to discuss their occupation or hobby. To enhance multi-cultural learning, parents from foreign countries may wish to come to school to discuss their school days, the dress and food of their countries of origin. Children frequently enjoy parent participation in the classroom.

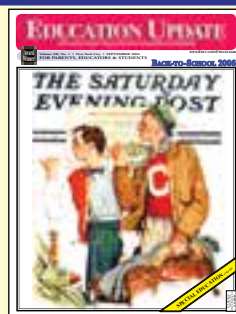
Parents welcome positive phone calls or "caught being good forms". Children often ask Teachers or Principals to mail these forms to be sure that they will arrive safely at home. Children seek and need parental recognition for both academic and behavioral success. With tight budgets, parents can participate in fund raising activities sponsored by ParentTeacher Groups. One such fundraising activity is sponsored by General Mills. This corporation has a box top program which assist schools to buy much needed supplies and video equipment.

Additionally, some corporations donate computers and grants to enhance technology. Always, parents want to help their child's schools, however they need guidance to know how best to assist schools effectively.

An "open door" policy always enhances a cooperative relationship. For both parents and teachers, a smile and a "Thank You" work wonders to form that ideal working relationship for the good of the child.#

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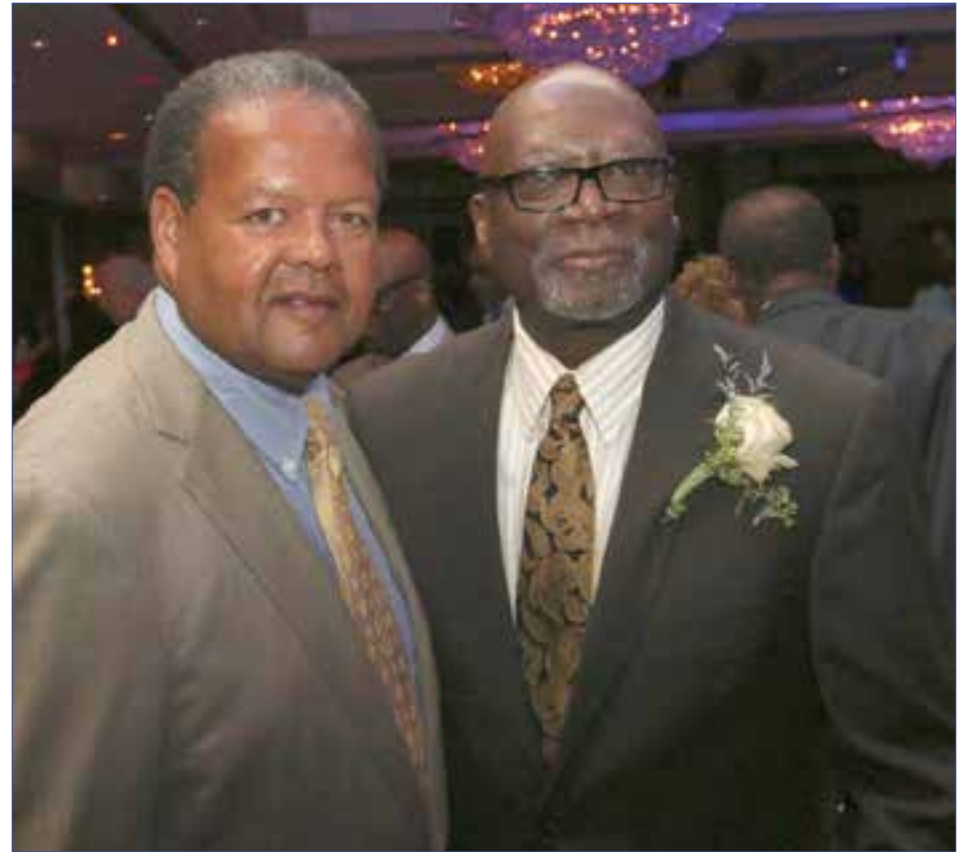
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COVER STORY

CSA PRESIDENT ERNEST LOGAN CELEBRATED AT GRAND RETIREMENT PARTY FOR 44 YEARS OF SERVICE



(L-R) Shelia Evans-Tranumn, Chair, Board of Trustees, Casey Family Programs Foundation & Ernest Logan, Retiring President, CSA



(L-R) Rudolph Franklin "Rudy" Crew, President, Medgar Evers College & Ernest Logan, Retiring President, CSA



(L-R) James Logan & Ernest Logan

By LYDIA LIEBMAN

After 44 years of dedicated service to New York city children and families and 10 years at the helm of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA), Ernest Logan announced his retirement earlier this year. This October, CSA held an impressive retirement celebration for the larger than life figure. Of the 700 attendees, there were many distinguished and important figure including former CSA Presidents Jill Levy and Donald Singer, former Director of Operations at CSA Anita Gomez-Palacio, President of American Federation of School Administrators Dianne Woodard, New York State Regents Lester Young, Judith Chin, and Kathy Cashin, and New York City Department of Education Chancellor Carmen Fariña along with former NYC DOE chancellors, several superintendents, assembly members, principals, and unions as well as Logan's friends and family.

The MC was Erminia Claudio who is the Executive Director of Operations at CSA. In her opinion statement, she praised Ernest for his many years of service and spoke of how he is so highly regarded and loved. "You have touched the lives of countless students, educators, community members, politicians and national figures," she said proudly, and truth-

fully judging by present company.

Current CSA President Mark Cannizzaro spoke next. He shared some personal background on Logan (he is the 11th of 13th children and lost his father at a young age) and shared how they first came in contact during the 2003-2004 school year. "Ernest, to many your legacy will be that of a charismatic man who led this union to new heights and a man from humble beginnings who became a prominent figure in NYC," he said. He continued: "To me, your legacy will be of a man who remained humble, who loved others and sacrificed for them... I will remember you as the man who paid at the subway station for a someone in need, the man who provides a scholarship for students in financial need, the man who assists family - a man who pays forward everyday what his mentors did for him."

Other speakers included Chancellor Fariña, AFSA President Diane Woodard, NYS Regent Lester Young, former CSA President Jill Levy, Mark Brodsky, Gayle Lockett and Gary Goldstein of the Retiree Chapter, poet Lindamichelle Baron, Logan's son James Logan, Assembly Member and Chair of the Education Committee Catherine Nolan and Assembly Member and Logan's former student Latrice Walker. #



Oran Etkin Fosters Fluency in the Language of Music with Timbalooloo

By DR. POLA ROSEN

What do Naomi Watts, Martha Stewart and Herbie Hancock have in common? They all love Timbalooloo! The music education program, founded by internationally acclaimed musician Oran Etkin, is entering an exciting phase with the opening of a new flagship space in New York City's Soho neighborhood. Currently offering a limited number of classes now, the official opening will be in January of next year.

In the Timbalooloo Method, instruments come to life and speak through their music so that children learn to express themselves not by having to execute the correct notes, but rather by making their instruments "come alive" and actually "speak the language of music". Through fun games, stories, songs and movements, children engage with a diverse cultural heritage ranging from Tito Puente to Mozart, Willie Nelson to Herbie Hancock. The benefits reach far beyond music, developing skills in math, history, cultural appreciation, empathy, speech, and fine and gross motor skills. In addition, children learn what is arguably the most important skill in life -- to really listen to what is happening in the moment, and then find a way to add their own beauty.

Over 10,000 children have experienced the joy of music through Timbalooloo worldwide including the children of celebrities such as Naomi Watts, Liev Schreiber, Ken Burns and even Martha Stewart's grandchildren. "He has touched both our boys' lives," said Watts and Schreiber of Etkin.

Education Update sat down with Etkin, who has a slew of critically acclaimed albums to his name including his most recent *What's New? Reimagining Benny Goodman* on Motema Records, to discuss his music program and this exciting new phase.

Education Update (EU): Why did you begin Timbalooloo?

Oran Etkin (OE): I have always believed that part of being a musician is passing along the tradition to the next generation. I was lucky to be mentored by some wonderful musicians growing up - both in a formal educational setting and in looser mentorship experiences. While I love teaching all age groups, I have found that working with children at the youngest ages can have an immensely profound impact on the way they conceive of music in fundamental ways. If we want to enable children to really speak the language of music as fluently and comfortably as they speak their mother tongue then I think it's imperative to start "speaking" music with them from the youngest ages. Many children in America grow up only hearing children's songs that are all in a major key, 4/4 meter and rhythmically super straight and simple. I think this is akin to speaking to a child using only one-syllable words. I believe we can share the full

musical "vocabulary" with children, drawing on harmonically, melodically and rhythmically rich music from all around the world so that the children learn to really express themselves fluently through music. A child born today inherits a rich musical tradition that has been cultivated over centuries and I want them to have access to that rich culture so they can go forward and engage with the artistic world throughout their lives - as creators and/or lovers of music!

EU: Did anyone or anything in particular inspire you?

OE: First and foremost, I am inspired by the children themselves! I am in awe of the way young children learn languages so fluently and naturally. Unlike older students, they are never taught the rules of grammar, how to conjugate a verb, etc but somehow they internalize how languages work and speak with perfect grammar with much more ease and fluency than an older student learning a second language. Often times music is taught in the same way that foreign languages are taught - rules first. Observing the way children learn languages has inspired me to pursue a different approach to teaching them music so that they can be just as fluent in the language of music as they are in their mother tongue.

We all know people who seem to be naturals at playing music and seem to do so effortlessly. I believe a lot of that has to do with how they interacted with music at a young age. I have learned a lot from observing people like this. For example a West African singer I work with named Abdoulaye Diabate has a son named Toumani who, even at the age of 3, was an amazing musician! I believe one reason why is that a rich vocabulary of music was spoken around him since he was in the womb and instruments were available for him to explore all the time so he was making his drum talk before he could speak with his mouth.

EU: What do you hope children come away with after attending Timbalooloo classes?

OE: I hope the children develop a lifelong closeness with music that comes with an intuitive and natural understanding of how music works. I hope that this deep connection with music is there for them in the moments of joy, moments of community and togetherness as well as the moments when they need comfort throughout their lives. Secondly, I hope they develop an openness to other cultures. As I travel the world playing music, I see how music can be a very positive way that cultures can meet, share their beauty and enable people to experience the humanity of another culture. I bring back songs, stories and instruments from my travels to incorporate into the Timbalooloo



program for the kids back home so they can see themselves within this world of beautiful cultural traditions. Of course in learning music, so many skills are developed - math, history, fine and gross motor skills, etc. I think perhaps the greatest skill that musicians develop is to really deeply listen, take in all that is happening and then find a way to add one's own voice to create more beauty - it is an essential skill no matter what we do as adults as well!

EU: Who are some of your mentors?

OE: One of my mentors is Joan McIntee, who was the sight director at Washington Market School's Duane St location during 9 1/2 of the 10 years that I taught there. She created an atmosphere where everyone wanted to be at the school. Teachers felt respected and were inspired to give their all to their teaching and parents and children felt welcomed and respected as well. Since 2010, I have brought on other musicians and teachers to work with kids through Timbalooloo. That is always a challenge, and as I work to maintain the vision and the love behind Timbalooloo, I am inspired by the way Joan led the school by empowering everyone to be their best.

EU: With the opening of this new space, what do you hope the future of Timbalooloo will be?

OE: My goal for this new SoHo Timbalooloo space is that it becomes a musical and cultural home for the wonderful community of families that has come together around music and the arts. It is wonderful having a place of our own that we can design in a way that is ideal for children to learn, fill it with instruments from around the world that the children can explore. Timbalooloo as a whole has been growing internationally in many ways -- the touring

Timbalooloo performances around the world, Timbalooloo CDs, videos and hopefully soon also books and possibly TV. As we grow to reach more children around the world, it is great to have a home and develop a deeper relationship with the families that are at the core of our program here in New York.

EU: Do you enjoy playing or teaching more? Why?

OE: I have to be honest - I cannot imagine my life without playing music. Those are the most sublime moments I have experienced. However, I absolutely love teaching as well and I find many of the same elements are involved in both. First of all both involve an intense focus and being 100% in the moment in a way that is almost meditative. Both involve improvisation, leading me into moments of creativity that I would not have expected. Both are collective acts of creativity - just as the best music is created in a flowing musical dialogue between musicians, the best moments of teaching are a two-way dance of creativity between the teacher and the student. Also both involve playing with the energy of the room. Just as in a concert I might play a fast and exciting song suddenly followed by a slow touching melody in which time seems to stop and everybody in the room is experiencing a magical moment together, that same flow of energy is a key component to keeping a class meaningful for children. There is much more being taught in Timbalooloo than just the content of the words, and for the children to be part of these magical moments that happen when the energy goes up and down is a beautiful way for them to experience what the beauty of music is. #

More information can be found at www.timbalooloo.com.



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Learning Differences

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From their earliest years of grade school, they have been both inspired and haunted by one abiding desire: to learn like everybody else.

For the now emerging adults entering college who have likely traversed an uncertain, even sometimes unfriendly, K–12 arena, they and their families wonder anxiously whether the preparation and workarounds of the past provide the “right stuff” for college success. American colleges and universities weigh similar questions each year as just one element of an applicant’s mission-preparedness and academic profile. If national student outcome data is any indicator with respect to these undergraduates, higher education is at an unhealthy distance from where it wants to be.

Students who learn differently are a disparate crowd. At the collegiate level, they are too frequently misclassified as underprepared or immature students. The cause of their challenges is, however, organic, and likely was determined through a psychoeducational evaluation at some point in their K–12 experience. These students may be diagnosed with a specific learning disability (e.g., dyslexia), ADHD, or ASD.

Intellectually, these entering collegians span a range from high to low-average. Let me say that again another way: Learning disabilities have nothing to do with intelligence. Helping students with learning and attention issues (LAI) succeed does not mean watering down the curriculum. It means using different teaching strategies because they learn in different ways.

Depending on the definition of learning disability, estimates are that 7 to 12 percent of all undergraduates qualify. Since many do not admit to or even know of their disability, the proportion may be much higher. Some of them had inadequate K–12 preparation and some have difficulties that make it harder for them to persist. Moreover, it appears that LAI students are a growing segment of the undergraduate population.

As Catherine Morris reported in a 2014 *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* article, “Over a 15-year period (1990–2005), the rate in growth of students with learning disabilities (20 percent) eclipsed considerably the same rate of growth for the general student population (8.5 percent).” She further noted that our most recent national data reflects that 45 percent of LAI students are entering postsecondary education upon high school graduation. A recent national study confirms the enrollment growth trend, adding, “We see growth in all types of schools.”

The same national study reported a dismal 29 percent six-year degree completion rate for LAI collegians in 2009. Only consistent and responsible action by those entrusted with setting policy and implementing it on our campuses can move the needle measurably for the growing LAI population.

Cautious, college-ready LAI students and their parents know full well that all institutions of higher education do not share similar records of success with students with learning differences. Increasingly, these students and their parents are asking the crucial questions boards and institutional leaders should ask themselves:

What are the four- and six-year graduation rates for students with LAI and other learning differences?

How many professional staff support the academic success of these students and what are their qualifications and caseloads?

How accessible is the staff?

How welcoming and accommodating are the classroom and campus environments to students who learn differently?

How does the institution empower its students with disabilities to advocate for themselves?

Do appropriate faculty and staff members understand best practices in helping students with learning disabilities?

How does the institution work with parents and students during the enrollment cycle and after enrollment?

From the research on K–12 systems that effectively educate LAI students, we know quite a bit about what instructional strategies and spaces are best suited to the learning profiles and instructional preferences of these students. The holistic approach to student learning, multi-modal delivery of instruction, and mastery-based approaches can benefit all students, including those with LAI. Ensuring that appropriate campus personnel are trained and receptive to students with learning differences is essential.

In addition to classroom strategies, the National Center on Learning Disabilities (NCLD) reports that students exiting high school generally fall into one of three classifications: navigators, copers, or strugglers. Of the numerous factors measured, NCLD found that 83 percent of the variation by which students were categorized was based on three variables (referred to as “drivers” in the NCLD study): (1) availability and access to an influential adult role model, parent, or mentor; (2) degree of self-knowledge and self-advocacy; and (3) the extent to which the student felt part of and participated in a community.

Not knowing how their differentness might affect either institutional or personal relationships, it’s not so surprising that only 17 percent of undergraduates with learning and attention issues seek out specialized accommodations or support services once on campus. A university culture that openly welcomes students with learning disabilities is more likely to know who they are and be able to help.

PREPARING THE WAY

Beacon College is the nation’s first accredited baccalaureate institution devoted exclusively to the undergraduate preparation of students with learning differences. It is a traditional liberal-arts college where students learn via multi-modal instruction, with a structured and readily accessible system for academic and developmental support. Our persistence, graduation, and post-degree employment and graduate study rates substantially exceed the average national measures for all undergraduates not because Beacon is specialized, but because it is focused. This focus embraces high expectations, universal design, training, and ongoing support of our faculty and staff, and the channels of communication among professors, learning specialists, students, and even parents.

Beacon’s most significant contribution to understanding how to serve students with LAI is that success does not demand a deviation from or

“watering down” of values, traditions, expectations, or the standards of academe. Each institution’s distinctive mission and curriculum set the content and expectations for student mastery among disciplines. The change is not “what to teach” but “how to teach it” and “what supplementary academic assistance will best support the greatest number of students.”

Here are five of the more important lessons from Beacon’s journey:

Know your institution. Ask for data on the numbers and outcomes of students with learning and attention issues. Ask how students are encouraged to self-identify and what happens when they do. Find out what services are available for them and how faculty are prepared to support them. Include improvements in your strategic plan. How satisfied are they? In line with the new NCLD study, do the students have a mentor, a community, and ways to understand themselves better?

Ensure that the institution is both welcoming and honest with students who learn differently. Prospective students need to know the level of rigor in a given program and the likely availability and opportunity for daily support should a student’s needs demand it. The more candid both students and institutional representatives are before and during enrollment, the more positive the outcomes will be. Do your admissions personnel have the answers, and do they know how to encourage candor?

A “fading scaffolding” model is advantageous. Scaffolding is the integration of support mechanisms designed to aid a student’s efforts to master a curriculum. Support systems should start at the student’s level of need and incorporate strategies to wean the student over time to achieve optimal independence. The process should help students better articulate their needs and advocate for themselves.

Foster a culture of acceptance. For undergraduates with LAI, campus culture is critically important. Expressions of interest, acceptance, and support from boards and institutional leaders reverberate throughout the campus and inspire students with learning disabilities.

Pursue a coherent strategy. Fostering diversity and doing the best for all students entrusted with our care and undergraduate stewardship is hard work and demands sustained attention. Boards can help their institutions assess how supporting students with learning disabilities fits with their mission and values and then (1) welcome LAI students within the context of a rigorous academic mission, (2) advertise the benefits of disclosure to students who may gain from accommodations, (3) express a commitment to the goals and standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act in a public voice, and (4) cultivate faculty and staff who are comfortable with universal design for learning and the need to accommodate learning differences, and are prepared to embrace high expectations for all students, regardless of their learning and behavioral profiles.#

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A Column of Fire

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Elizabethan world a modern feel. No doubt purists will be put off by the anachronistic words and phrases, among them “dreamboat”; “she kneed him in the b---s”; “talking trash,” “Native Americans”; “Hell yes,” “penny-pinching” – but it is just this kind of informal and slangy diction that generates attachment to characters, as they move circuitously though one of the most politically complicated and murderous ages of Western Civilization: the accession of Protestant Elizabeth I to the English throne on the death of her half sister, “Bloody” Mary Tudor in 1558, and the various assassination attempts that followed. It’s a story steeped in violence, extremism, intolerance, including the Papal Bull of 1570 that excommunicated Elizabeth and any and all of her followers. Let it also be said that strong women are a feature of Follett’s books, starting with Queen Elizabeth but also including women of different ages, classes and ethnicities who suffer brutality and sacrifice themselves for their loved ones and beliefs.

Although Follett’s prose at times comes close to being predictable, it could be argued that for this very reason, readers will stay with a plot and theme they can understand -- tolerance against tyranny. So, let Ned wonder “in the depths of despair” whether “it had all been worth it,” (one of several inexplicable shifts Follett makes from the third-person point of view to first-person musing), the narrative as a whole works. Everyone knows how history turned out. Follett’s skill is creating suspense about it. In his historical fiction, history, not Game of Thrones fantasy, rules.

Follett has more than done his homework. He immersed himself in 228 books, he says, that not only allowed him to research in depth the major Who, What, Where, When and Why of the times but that provided him with details that reflect the culture of the day as seen in food and drink, clothing (underwear? sometimes!), domestic arrangements (bathing only twice a year?), birth, torture, adultery, sailing skills, business acumen, so much more.

Yes, movies and cable have served Follett well, but this former Chair of the National Year of Reading initiative, and eternal lover of Shakespeare would probably be delighted if educators were to see how his books might well help to advance and enhance literacy. #

Message from Caroline A. Wamsler, Ph.D., Chairman of NYBG’s Education Committee

It was great to hear about the variety of programs taking place in Children’s and Adult Education—from learning about NYBG’s new partnership with five local Bronx schools, to our acclaimed School of Professional Horticulture. The great news is that the Edible Academy Opening will take place on June 14, 2018. As Gregory Long reminded us, the NYBG has the largest, most comprehensive education platform of any botanical garden, and its scope reaches children, families, and continuing learners in the Bronx, greater New York City, and beyond. Your participation on the Education and Edible Academy Committees is making an impact on the programs that affect so many. #

Dwight Online School

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world, including Harvard, Stanford, Brown, Berkeley, Notre Dame, University of Southern California, and Vassar.

In the fall of 2017, Dwight is launching Dwight Global Online School, which is an exciting next step in the evolution of our program. Working with a team from Stanford Online High School, we are offering more real-time classes, as well as residential experiences so that students can come to Dwight in New York to meet each other and their teachers in person.

Our Methodology:

Dwight Global provides students with a complete independent school experience designed to prepare them to be global leaders. We offer a “best of all worlds” approach, which draws from the strengths of our master teachers and programs at Dwight campuses worldwide.

Dwight Global classes are “synchronous,” which in online terminology means they take place in real time: Students and teachers log on to a virtual seminar, where they can see and hear each other, talk, and collaborate — just as though they were sitting around a seminar table. Robust debates and discussions occur online just as they do in real life.

Through a “flipped classroom,” students prepare for class in advance by reading or watching teacher-recorded videos, so that class time is used for discussion and to challenge one another, guided by a teacher. This approach puts students at the center; teachers truly act as guides, rather than as the “sage on the stage,” imparting knowledge in a one-direction fashion. It also enables students to develop problem-solving, critical-thinking and collaboration skills, just as they do in a physical Dwight classroom.

Dwight Global students have a full complement of work outside class (or “asynchronous work”), which they complete on their own time, though a teacher is always available to help if needed.

We welcome Dwight Global students to our New York campus several times a year for residential experiences. They also have opportunities to join extracurricular activities and Dwight trips around the world. Students receive excellent college guidance starting early in ninth grade. And, for students who are located near, or are traveling to, a city with a Dwight campus, they may take some of their courses in person.

Igniting the Spark of Genius in Every Child:

For 145 years, Dwight’s mission has been to ignite the spark of genius in every child. Dwight Global Online School extends this legacy and enhances Dwight’s ability to customize an educational path for every student. Most significantly, our students have found that the pursuit of excellence in one domain does not mean having to settle in others. Our students, who hail from around the world, include:

Performers: Students pursuing acting, dancing, music, and modeling are able to audition, train, and rehearse while maintaining their academics.

Athletes: Students pursuing elite athletics outside of school have found that Dwight Global gives them the time and flexibility to pursue their passion and compete at the highest levels.

Students seeking a premier U.S. independent

Wynton Marsalis

continued from page 4

us that others are creative and the blues teaches us that sometimes things don’t work out,” he said. These principles go well beyond musicality and can be applied to most any profession.

Starting early, he says, is key. He encourages parents to bring their children to at least 4 non-commercial events a year such as a play or a symphonic performance. “They’re going to be bored. They won’t like it. But make them sit through it... and make sure they see you engaged in the art form,” he offered. This will help to develop their attention span, which will be beneficial to them later in life.

For those that want to engage their child with specifically jazz at an early age, Jazz at Lincoln Center offers an entry point with WeBop: an early-childhood jazz education program for families and children starting at 8 months through five years old. In addition to WeBop, Jazz at Lincoln Center provides a multitude of jazz education programs for all ages including Middle School Jazz Academy, Jazz For Young People, and Swing University, which is open to all ages. “From 8 months to 80 years old, we’ve got you covered,” said Wynton.

While New York City is fortunate to have an institution such as Jazz at Lincoln Center so involved in the community, most other cities are not so lucky. The exceptions are San Francisco, where the SF Jazz Center (which produces

school experience not available in their home countries.

Travelers: Students who travel with their families have the freedom to move without disrupting their education. Students can take classes from anywhere, as well as on Dwight campuses in New York, London, Seoul, and Shanghai.

Others desiring a more personalized educational path: Just as no two students are alike, no two student journeys at Dwight Global are the same. Our faculty work one on one with students to map an individualized course of study.

Preparing Global Leaders:

Dwight has long recognized that to succeed in our interdependent world, students must be equipped with the communications and critical-thinking skills needed to bridge cultures and countries to solve problems on a global scale. They need strong language skills, as well as other competencies such as creativity, collaboration, and flexibility. Not only do students learn these skills at Dwight Global, but also they have a full complement of world languages from which to choose.

Additionally, the Digital Age has rapidly accelerated the need for educators to prepare students to succeed in a highly competitive global marketplace. They must be prepared to succeed at jobs that have yet to be invented; some studies estimate that one-third of today’s graduates will have to create their own jobs. That’s why Dwight and The Dwight School Foundation launched Spark Tank, an incubator where students learn how to develop their own ideas from concept through market launch. Dwight Global students have the opportunity to participate in this cutting-edge program that teaches the skills students need to be entrepreneurs and to chart their own futures. #

around 300+ jazz concerts a year) is located, and in Washington DC, where Jason’s Moran’s Jazz program at the Kennedy Center is making great strides. Still, Jazz at Lincoln Center remains the most prominent of these due to its sheer scale, the involvement of Wynton and its location in the de-facto jazz capital of the world.

In the age of the certainly not pro-arts President Trump (especially compared to his predecessor who celebrated International Jazz Day at the White House), how does Wynton wade through the waters? “Advocate. There are battles being waged all the time,” he said. “If you think you shouldn’t fight you’re going to lose. If you aren’t ready for that big man to hit you’re going to lose. For good causes, you need to be aggressive.” The first step to this, according to Wynton, lies in advocating for jazz, aggressively.

Advocating for a cause is something Wynton has done consistently throughout his life. He has consistently advocated on behalf of African Americans and against racism. His Pulitzer Prize winning oratorio “Blood on the Leaves” which told the story of slavery in the United States and “what it means to be free” is just one example of this. When Hurricane Katrina hit in his native New Orleans, Marsalis was extraordinarily visible when it came to raising money and providing relief. Therefore, his call to action to advocate for jazz should be taken seriously. #

President Tim Hall

continued from page 2

On the other hand, a student might choose to attend a private college because of its smaller classes and greater number of support services. Unfortunately, most private institutions are less affordable than public colleges, and students may find themselves saddled with excessive levels of debt, even if they can afford to graduate.

So, what can be done in the face of math like this? Well, here at Mercy College, through the Mercy Scholars program, we are re-writing the equation. We start with a private college experience—no huge lecture halls, no getting lost and overlooked if you are a student. We have excellent faculty, but one of their most important contributions is that they get to know their students personally. They call on them by name; and their students get to know them. Mercy College is the kind of college John Henry Newman had in mind when he spoke of the ideal university as “an alma mater, knowing her children one by one: not a foundry or a mint or a treadmill.” We don’t do factory education at Mercy.

Next, we fight hard to make a college education affordable for all of our students. And with the help of some special friends—a college can never have too many friends—the Mercy Scholars program has re-written the equation for college math so that qualifying students are assured of graduating without any tuition or book-related debt. For students who are eligible for full federal and state need-based support, Mercy Scholar supporters join with the college itself to make sure that four years of tuition and text-book expenses are fully covered. Students

Focus on Work

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Guttman Community College, Student Success Advocates serve students in their first years of study, and we have advisors we call Career Strategists working with students in subsequent years. Nearly all our students are seeking baccalaureate education. We work hard to support students’ aspirations both to continue their educations and to prepare for careers. They come to college in order to find job and career pathways for themselves.

The “gold standard” for students engaging with the world of work has long been internships. Higher education is stressing experiential education, and internships are a primary exemplar of experiential education. There’s great work underway in New York City with HERE to HERE focused on making sure students from the Bronx beginning in Grade 9 through age 25 benefit from a sequenced set of experiences and curriculum, working with Pathways to Prosperity founded by Bob Schwartz and Nancy Hoffman, co-founded by Dreamyard, Big Picture Learning and the Dimon Foundation, and lead by Abby Jo Sigal, Randy Moore and Richard Rivera. Additionally, the Chancellor of CUNY, J.B. Milliken has prioritized the “Career Success” of students as a major strategic pillar for the University. The CUNY-wide strategy calls for stronger employer engagement, a re-envisioned set of career development services for students, and a sector strategy for faculty to help create a more cohesive student, employer and faculty experience that is aligned and informed by industry ultimately leading to better employment outcomes for graduates. At our college, we have a very promising effort with JP Morgan Chase for students to work as part-time tellers while they complete their education; if these students continue their employment at Chase, they will be on track and well-positioned for a variety of wonderful careers.

CUNY community colleges educate the low income, first generation New Yorkers, reflecting diversity, who are the present for New York City but who will largely define the future of our city. Few things are more important than melding together the world of education and the world of work. New York City is the optimal place for the success of that enterprise. #

don’t have to sacrifice the personal attention of a private education to avoid tuition and book-related debt.

Some of the Mercy Scholar supporters are Bob and Kate Niehaus, Jim and Marsha McCormick, Irene Buckley, and my friends Dr. Pola Rosen and Dr. Charlotte Frank. Here’s what I can say about all of them: they believe in our Mercy Scholars, they believe in their potential, in their capacity to be college students and college graduates and to make a difference in their lives and in the lives of their families and communities because someone believed in them and gave them a chance. They’ve committed not only to support your dreams but to cheer you on.

Welcome to the 2017 cohort of Mercy Scholars and to the donors who are making their dreams possible!#



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VS.

37.8% NATIONAL AVERAGE
4-YEAR GRADUATION RATE
National 10-year average for ALL students, with and without an LD (Source: NECS)

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The College is committed to student success, offering academic and personal support services that help each student achieve his/her goals. Just a few of our impactful programs include:

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