College Board President

Gaston Caperton

Conflicts In Testing
A Funny Thing Happened

By STUART DUNN

This article started out as a critique of the Chancellor and the Board of Education (BOE) for moving the date forward when New York City’s school children had to take the highly competitive test for the selective “science” high schools. I felt that insensitivity had been shown to the parents of these children. When questioned about not leaving sufficient time for the children to take prep courses, the Chancellor dismissed parent concerns, saying, “Maybe some people feel that prep courses are necessary to be competitive, but then they ought to think whether these are the right schools for their children.” A great deal is at stake for these children, with 20,000 students competing for less than 3,000 places. It is reasonable to expect that parents can, in all they can to help their children gain acceptance. The issue isn’t whether prep courses can help, but rather that they are not universally available, free of charge, to all who wish to take advantage of them.

The Chancellor indicated that the date was being changed, “to better coordinate admission among the science schools, other public schools with specialized curriculums, and private high schools; and also to reduce the focus on preparation.” While coordination with the other schools was a reasonable justification, moving the date forward by six weeks, rather than decreases, the focus on preparation. It is a funny thing happened on the way to my article. The BOE announced that three new selective high schools for academically quali-

...
A Conversation With Gaston Caperton, President, College Board

By MERI ROSENBERG

Given the trepidation and anxiety with which most high school students view the College Board from afar—or from the vantage point of a humble test-taker confronting the ominous SATs—a visitor somehow expected to find snapping alligators, snarling guard dogs, or at the very least, a grim and forbidding entrance at the building where the College Board is located.

Instead, there was a very welcoming and affable receptionist directing visions to the discreetly understated and corporate offices of the College Board president, Gaston Caperton, former governor of West Virginia, whose Southern roots were well in evidence in his gracious demeanor and unstudied charm.

“I hope this organization is understood as a gateway, not a gate,” said Caperton, who admitted that as a child he had himself suffered with dyslexia. “The idea of the College Board is not to stand in people’s way, but to help them to go to college, to go to the right college and be successful. Our mission is to serve young people as they go to college. We want to prepare them and inspire them. We’re sincere about our mission of equity and excellence.”

He added, “I took this job because you impact education. The College Board can provide things that no one else can, so that students are better prepared to go to college, and help colleges and universities find the students who are the right fit. Our equity and excellence agenda is critical; it has to be available to everybody.”

The organization, originally founded in 1900 when it was located on the Columbia University campus, is a membership organization, with some 4000 members from the ranks of the nation’s colleges, some high schools and school districts. Not surprisingly, those at the New York headquarters pay careful and close attention to what the organization’s regional council members tell them.

Even last year’s challenge to the College Board, when the president of the California university system questioned the use of the SAT in the admissions process, is one example of how Caperton has responded to a crisis situation during his three-year service with the organization.

“The College Board has consistently looked for ways to improve the SATs,” said Caperton. “California’s challenge speeded up the process. We put together the best team we could to work with the University of California, to look at the ideas in more depth. The College Board and the University of California learned a lot through that conversation. The faculty at the university said that there were three important things: one, that they need an admissions test; two, that the tests are not biased, and three, that they wanted to have a test that would evaluate writing. They thought that writing should be part of the core competencies, that now are verbal and math.”

To Caperton, “the addition of writing is very important. The ability to write is more critical in a technology-grounded world. If we put writing in the SAT I, it would have an impact on writing in this nation.”

Still, as such an influential and admittedly powerful organization, change has to be measured. “The SAT hasintricated data that is very important to schools and colleges, as well as parents and students,” said Caperton. “We can’t make such radical changes to the test. And the test needs to have portability, so that students applying to California can take a test in Iowa.”

To those detractors and critics who assert that tests like the SAT favor students who can afford to take pricey review courses, or hire expensive tutors—or people like Stanley Kaplan, who has founded a multinational business on the premise that exams like the SAT, GMAT, GRE, LSAT and others measure preparation more than aptitude—Caperton is ready with his answer.

“Anybody who practiced for anything does better than somebody who doesn’t practice,” he said. “That’s the essence of national studies, that are recognized as well researched, that show that after the testing process, scores only go up 20 to 40 points. The SAT I is basically what I would call a test of college competencies. To be successful in college, you need to think in words and numbers. This is a unique and effective examination that shows if students have developed skills, and the ability to think and answer questions. And as far as test prep is concerned, you can’t stop people from taking prep. The scores are only a small part of the admissions process. You need the tests, because it’s another way for colleges to look at the grades from a school.”

Caperton is well aware that the College Board’s high visibility makes it an easy target for critics.

“If you’re the best at what you do, with products that are highly visible, you’re always going to be under a magnifying glass, whether you’re the president of the United States, the president of I.B.M., or the governor of a state,” said Caperton. “We are interested in helping schools with low ability,” said Caperton. One of the College Board’s programs, in fact, provides $25,000 to schools to help them improve their performance; this month, three schools—in Boston, Fresno and Florida—are being honored for their improvement. As Caperton said, “The success of these schools gives kids an opportunity.”

Similarly, Caperton is a fierce proponent and defender of the Advanced Placement program, proud of the fact that 57 percent of the nation’s high schools now offer an AP program.

Like others, Caperton credits the influence of significant mentors in his life. First and foremost was his father, who gave him a dictionary and taught him to memorize the words when he still wasn’t reading in fourth grade, due to dyslexia. Then, too, Caperton said he was inspired by reading biographies of influential and significant individuals.

“I think we learn from anyone,” said Caperton. “And anyone you learn from is a mentor.”

He cited the example of a disabled coal miner that he had met while campaigning for the governorship of West Virginia, who spoke to him about how much he missed his job when he could no longer work because of his disability—an epiphany that made Caperton realize that “all jobs are important to people.”

Maintaining that kind of balanced perspective helps Caperton keep his exalted position in perspective, an attitude that he would like to communicate to many of the College Board’s customers.

“Nobody has a successful life because of high SATs,” Caperton contends.
Testing the Limits of No Child Left Behind

By BRUCE MYINT

President Bush’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires public schools to administer reading and writing tests each year between grades 3 through 8. The new guidelines are the nation’s latest instalment in a standardized testing movement that began over 30 years ago. But although testing has remained a school reform fixture, many have expressed concern that the new testing scheme could worsen—not better—U.S. public schools. Shortly after taking office, President Bush unveiled No Child Left Behind as a cornerstone of his administration’s school reform agenda; a framework intended to revamp the distribution of federal funds and improve education for traditionally underserved populations. Despite nearly $200 billion in federal spending since 1965, Bush emphasized, “too many of our neediest children are being left behind.”

How will NCLB ensure that no child is left behind? Primarily, states will be responsible for breaking down their annual assessment results by poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and English proficiency. This breakdown will help schools identify whether particular groups are being ‘left behind.’ If those groups are not eventually brought into the fold, schools may be subject to “reconstitution.”

“By requiring regular testing of public school students in key subjects...failure would no longer be hidden from parents’ view and poor results would no longer be subsidized by tax-payer funds,” said Rep. John Boehner (R-OH), chairman of the House Senate confer-

Ironically, federal dollars provide for a very small portion of school budgets. For example, the Office of the New York State Comptroller has estimated that only about 4 percent of school budgets are paid for by federal funds. School districts garner most of their funding from property taxes (56 percent) and state aid (40 percent). But despite the relatively meager support offered by the federal government, cash-poor school districts cannot afford to lose federal dollars. This high-stakes equation has put some testing-watchdogs on alert. To them, NCLB’s testing scheme stands to do the greatest harm to poor schools with underserved students—the population for whom the new policy is intended.

“You get high stakes exams and it’s teaching to the test, learning to the test, and the system suddenly revolves around the test,” said Bill Wetzel, Founder of Students Against Testing, a nationwide network of young people who resist high-stakes standardized testing. “We were pretty shocked at the overwhelming amount of bipartisanship support that [NCLB] got despite the fact that, state after state, once these tests become high stakes, these schools are going to have a higher dropout rate among poorer communities.”

“At best these tests only give numbers,” Wetzel added. “They’re not changing any fundamental structure affecting why the school system is or isn’t working for certain students.”

According to the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest), an advocacy group based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, standardized tests most damage schools serving low-income children since those schools are the ones that need to get scores up the most. “What happens with schools serving low income kids is they’re supposed to make a huge amount of progress very quickly and they don’t have the resources to do that job,” explained FairTest president Ms. Neil. “They serve very needy children whose needs extend beyond anything a school can do. And so schools are going to get rather desperate to try to get the test scores up and they’re going to do it by very narrow teach-

ing to the test. It won’t work but that’s what many schools are likely to do.”

“Teaching to the test tends to produce inflat-

ed results—the equivalent of holding a match to a thermostat,” added Neil. “But it doesn’t work in the long run because, to use another metaphor, it’s like eating a candy bar before a race; you get a quick boost of energy and it may help you. But the conclusion that you should live on a diet of candy bars does not work very well. And that’s what teaching to the test is. It’s a diet of candy bars. It’s educational malnourishment.”

How can school districts curb educational malnourishment? Neil urges schools to take a long term view, encourage a lot of reading and writing across the curriculum and make sure the kids know how to think and ask questions. To do so, they must resist teaching to the test.

“In the long run it will probably work better for raising test scores than teaching to the test,” said Neil. For Carmen Farinha, superintendent of Brooklyn’s District 15, testing is only one part of the school reform equation. “The strength of the new policy is that it raises expectations for all students and doesn’t allow excuses for low performance. The weakness of the new policy is thinking that the test is the curriculum and that ‘test prep’ is how children can learn,” she said.

“The challenge is to balance results from standardized tests with a variety of other indicators including evidence of student work in order to make decisions about student performance. The best preparation for students to suc-
ceed in tests is good teaching every day, which requires exemplary practices,” Farinha added.

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Do You Want To Own a Bookstore?

By TOM KERTES

“[To operate a bookstore] you must love reading books...and you must enjoy talking about books to other people,” says Harris Healy III, the President of Logos, a pleasantly relaxing bookstore on a shady York Avenue block on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Logos, like its owner, dares to be different.

“I’m kind of an American expatriate living in America,” Healy says. “What I mean is, I live owner, dares to be different.

Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Logos, like its

III, the President of Logos, a pleasantly relax-

ning, he became manager by 1990, and

President and principal shareholder in 1991. “It

satisfied my need to serve, to widen peoples’

horizons,” he says. “I wanted to expose people to

different type of literature. I wanted to show them that it’s okay to be yourself, to dare
to be different, to avoid the hype.”

Originally, Healy wanted to serve in the min-

istry. He attended elementary school in New York and France and studied history and

romance languages at Hamilton College in

upstate New York. After graduating from

Hamilton he attended the Drew Theological

School in Madison New Jersey “for both spir-

itual reasons and for a basic conversion to the

Christian thought,” he says. After changing

life-course, he now has Logos specialize in reli-

igious literature and books.

“Healy has that chance because Logos is a

medium sized neighborhood bookstore that is

surviving in an age when huge conglomerates

are nearly taking over the bookselling-market. Although Healy was interested in the busi-

ness of books and publishing since his school
days, he began his job at Logos almost by acci-
dent.

“I was Director of Marketing of the Brooklyn

Opera Society,” he says. “And when, in the mid 1980s, the owner decided that there was no real

future for a small non-profit opera company in

Brooklyn, I applied for a part-time salesclerk

job at Logos.”

Healy enjoyed doing sales and interacting with the customers so much that, moving up on the
corporate ladder with the speed of light-

ning, he became manager by 1990, and

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Yet, Healy is profoundly steeped in American
culture as well. He has to be. He says, “in order to

be successful book-store manager, you must

keep up with what interests people, and be curi-

ous about – and really interested in – what they

want.” At the same time, Healy feels that his

responsibility goes beyond that.

“You also have to do your best to educate,
to get people beyond the hype,” he said. “Running a bookstore you really have a chance to impact on peoples’ tastes, to get them to read books of quality that may be different, that might be out-

side of the ordinary group of extremely popular books everyone wants to read at certain times.”

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life-course, he now has Logos specialize in reli-

igious literature and books.

“Oh course, we serve the general market as

equal,” says Healy. “And our other specialty,

children’s books, recognizes the foremost need

of the neighborhood.”

Indeed, Logos, which in Greek means “The

Word,” does much to be a signal part of the

community, using its picturesque back garden
to host everything from community meetings,
to summer parties, to theater and comedy per-

formances, to staged readings by well-known

authors.

“We also have a monthly book club–we call it

the Kill-Your-TV Reading Club –that people

really seem to enjoy,” says Healy. “Probably

because it’s very democratic both in its choice

of books and in participation.”

And, what is his advice to prospective young

bookstore owners? “Love books,” Healy

smiles. “Enjoy talking to people. Learn to real-

ly listen. Then learn the business side. Be aware

of what’s going on in the culture. Yet know how
to separate real value from hype.”

“And don’t ever think that this will be a pro-

fession where you can relax, sit, and read books
during business hours,” concludes Healy. “If

anywhere, you’ll be doing your reading at home. Running a bookstore is more than a full-
time job.”

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After-School Programs: Lively Exchange at Open Society Institute

By JOAN BAUM

The After-School Corporation (TASC), in just four brief years has moved to the forefront of one of the country’s most concerted efforts to reform public school supplementary education. Since its initial funding in the form of a challenge grant by George Soros’ Open Society Institute, TASC, has managed to attract public and private money, wide parental and community involvement, and the increasing attention of education administrators and lawmakers across the state. In New York City alone TASC is already part of 150 schools. The goal, says TASC president Lucy Friedman, is to expand “in the shortest time possible” into every public elementary, middle and high school district, and sustain “high quality” programs.

This first Conference on Supplementary Education, which took place recently and was co-sponsored by Teachers College at Columbia University and The College Board, drew an impressive array of prominent educators, researchers, and political leaders. It could not have come at a more timely juncture for the city. As keynote speaker Alan Gartner, the University and The College Board, drew an SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS 

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SHARP!
INSIDE THE SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE: TONY SAWYER

By MARYLENA MANTAS

“I accept no less for any single child in this district than what I would for my own biological child,” says Tony Sawyer, superintendent of Manhattan High Schools.

Appointed superintendent three years ago, Sawyer considers himself an “educational facilitator” whose job is “to help principals succeed.”

“My job is to meet with everyone that has a concern,” he says. “I’ll speak to everyone in my school district, including students.”

Maintaining a hands-on leadership style, the superintendent leads a district that serves approximately 42,000 students, of which 48 percent come from one of five boroughs other than Manhattan. One of the district’s attractions is the large variety of options it offers to students, including 12 large academic-comprehensive high schools, six smaller theme-centered schools, two specialized high schools, four vocational high schools, 16 educational option high schools and nine (6-12 grade) high school and community school district collaborative secondary schools.

According to Sawyer, the district opted to establish theme-based schools more than a decade ago and he considers these schools a unique feature of the district.

“The advantages of theme-based school were identified early on,” he said. “Whatever the theme has been it has been our goal to make truth in advertising. The district has the responsibility to live up to the expectations of the parents and the students.”

According to Sawyer, the incorporation of the arts and technology in the curriculum is an integral part of the district’s philosophy.

“An interdisciplinary curriculum is at the heart of what happens in our schools,” he said. “The challenge is for content driven teachers to create a thematic approach through the arts. We strive to make that a reality.”

Sawyer underscored the focus placed on student achievement in the ninth grade. In an attempt to provide ninth graders with a proper support system, the district provides them with the best educators, thus reversing the traditional trends of specialized teachers targeting only higher grades.

“If you put the weakest teacher with the kids that have the strongest need you have a philosophy of failure,” said Sawyer.

According to Sawyer, the advantages of theme-based schools and the focus placed on ninth graders produce positive results when combined with the district’s efforts to offer smaller class size, an extended school day, courses to students who need support in certain areas and double periods of literacy and math for those demonstrating need. The results include an increase in the number of students who achieve high scores on the Regents, a decrease in the dropout rate and an increase in the graduation rate. Sawyer measures the district’s success based upon the overall number of students who pass their classes, the district’s ability to infuse the arts and technology into the curriculum and the attendance rate in the borough. He believes that “good attendance means good quality of instruction.”

He added, “the only way I know how successful a school is, is by speaking to the kids in a school about how they feel about their scholastic environment.”

His mission consists of “selecting really good leaders and then providing them with assistance to ensure their success.”

“You want leadership born out of a sense of pride,” he said. “You need someone that can go out and take the bull by the horns and make decision for his/her school. You need strong leaders that know how to create a team.”

At a time when the district $267 million budget might be cut by $20 million, Sawyer believes in keeping “the classroom sacrosanct.” Necessary cuts will take place mostly on the district level.

When he interviews potential principals and assistant principals he looks for experience, commitment, charisma but most of all “how much they like children.”

“Because so much has changed, they might have all that and then I have to provide the professional development to support that,” says Sawyer. “This creates trust.”

Principals who have less than three years of experience also participate in “the next step conferences” where they are guided on how to create a team, how to deal with unrated teachers and more topics. All principals belong to a quad (a four principal team), which meets regularly to discuss and find solutions to concerns raised during their monthly meetings with the superintendent. “They form an alliance,” says Sawyer. “This creates trust.”

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Academic Olympics: A Golden Educational Tool

By TOM KERTES

So it wasn’t Barcelona, Atlanta, or Sydney. But, in many ways, the District 8 Bronx Academic Olympics couldn’t have been more enticing, demanding, and chock-full of thrills for all who participated as the “real thing.”

This, of course, was no coincidence. “We do everything we can to make this an Olympian experience for the students,” District Director of Social Studies John-Paul Bianchi (aka The Father of the Academic Olympics) said. “I think there’s so much about the Games – discipline, self-sacrifice, team-work – the students can learn from, beyond the academics.”

The feeling in the spacious PS 101 auditorium was Olympian, indeed. From the line-up of the nine teams for the Opening Ceremonies, to the Presentation of Colors, to the 30-40 strong squads marching in to the stirring sounds of the International Olympic Anthem, the difference between this event and The Games was merely in the size of the competitors (pint-sized instead of muscle-bound) and the nature of the competition (intellectual vs. physical). Even though the atmosphere was good-natured and fun, you could also sense tension in the air.

The lighting of the Olympic Torch – a funky-looking, student-made contraption turned torch-like by electricity and wind-power. Then things got serious.

“Are we going to see any smiles on this team?” a few officials teased as I.S. 125 marched in. Finals opponents, purple-clad I.S. 192, was bedecked with good-luck beads, and multi-colored papier-mâché hair-ornaments. One girl even sported toy devil’s-horns on her head. “She wants to win,” principal Maria Paese, who cried when she saw her kids march in, said. “I am the emotional Principal,” she explained. “My kids are just like me. They work hard, then they like to have a good time.”

“All the teams, and all the coaches, in this competition have a different style,” by-the-books 125 coach Dan Evangelista said. “And that’s fine. Whatever works. I just want my kids to respect the discipline and all the hard work that went into this. The students, the teachers, the coaches, we’ve all been meeting since February almost every morning at 7:30 a.m., and after school, and on weekends to prepare for this competition. So, yes, we’re serious.”

But seriously, the Academic Olympics is an intellectual competition for middle school students in grades 6-8 in four disciplines: English/Language Arts, Math and Science, Social Studies and Omnibus General Trivia. Hundreds of students in all of the District’s nine schools auditioned to be on their team. About 30-40 of them made it.

“This is a wonderful educational tool,” said Bianchi. “Due to the competitive aspect of the Games, the kids work really hard, in many cases much harder than if this was just another one of their regular classes. We also try to make the questions more than just factual, to get beyond memorization, to encourage logical, creative, contextual thinking. And the discipline, focus and togetherness that’s developed through this is priceless.”

And so was the great display of sportsmanship - After the team from 125 put a serious defeat onto their bedeviled opponents, I92 lined up to congratulate and hug each and every winner. Without any encouragement from coaches or teachers. “Aren’t they the greatest kids?” a proud Ms. Paese asked.

“This is what it’s all about, what we try to develop in our District: team work, togetherness, bonds of trust, and love.” Community Superintendent Dr. Betty Rosa, who handed out the Gold Medals to I25, said. “And these Academic Olympics have not only been an excellent academic tool but a wonderful instrument for developing those things as well.”

So why aren’t other Districts doing something so simple, something that can be so cheaply done? “You tell me,” Dr. Rosa said, shrugging her shoulders in frustration. “I think we’ve set a really wonderful example here.”

A NEW PUBLIC ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

BARD HIGH SCHOOL EARLY COLLEGE

A JUMP START ON COLLEGE

The Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) of the New York City Public School System, now finishing its first highly successful year, will open this fall in its new, permanent, Manhattan location at 525 East Houston Street. The BHSEC is currently accepting applications from motivated, academically strong students now completing the 10th grade who are interested in beginning college study this fall, 2002. At the end of two years, these students will earn an associate of arts degree. The school is also accepting applications for students entering grades 9 and 10 this fall.

The BHSEC, an innovative partnership between Bard College and the New York City School System, offers motivated high school students from throughout New York City a rigorous four-year curriculum with two years of college study culminating in the awarding of an associate of arts degree. College credits earned at the BHSEC can be transferred to a four-year college. Tuition is free.

To obtain information and application materials, call the BHSEC at 718-486-6898, extension 442, visit the website at www.bard.edu/bhsec, or e-mail bhsec@bard.edu.
overstretched when it comes to supervising special education programs. Akin to a general practitioner performing brain surgery, it wouldn’t happen in an operating room and it shouldn’t happen in our schools.

In my 30 years in special education, I, and scores of special education teachers and supervisors created innovative programs for ignored and under-served children. We answered the call to duty when the school system, responding to court decisions and revamped special education laws, needed specialists. Some of the best and brightest served, people with whom I have been proud to work.

And to become experts we went through a grueling training process. Before sitting for the NYC licensing examination as special education teachers or clinicians, we had to have a master’s degree. We were licensed as supervisors in our respective areas only after working as teachers of special education and upon completion of an arduous exam that tested our knowledge, our human-relations skills and our problem-solving abilities.

We were advocates for our clients – special-needs children – and we were proud of our profession. We developed programs, trained and supported teachers, educated and supported overwhelmed parents, and worked with principals and district staff to craft educational interventions at the district level.

But the special needs environment in the NYC public schools was evolving in an ugly way. The system shifted its attention from educational expertise to compliance with regulations. It developed an across-the-board approach to children with unique problems.

First, we have to acknowledge the disparity. Not all children are equally prepared for standardized tests. We have to be honest about the fact that schools and families need help. Then we need to work to level the playing field as far as school and testing are concerned. A mentor is an invaluable part of this process for a disadvantaged child. Mentoring USA makes a complete effort to develop the child in all ways. A mentor works with a child not only on academics, but on developing social skills and competencies and in a heartening, real-life example of the difference a mentor can make. These Fordham kids (mentees) are primarily recent immigrants from the Caribbean and Central America. Last year six of the 16 children in this after-school program were identified by their teachers as being at risk of not passing the citywide tests—and not being able to advance to the next grade. Our mentoring program staff and mentors met to discuss this.

We both agreed that it makes sense to begin English immersion for immigrant students as soon as they enter the school system, and their young brains are able to embrace foreign sounds and letters and ease. I have always advocated for universal pre-kindergarten in order to give all of our children a sound, equal academic foundation, and that universal ESL education would work hand-in-hand with universal pre-K to help put all students on an equal footing.

Mentoring USA’s Fordham Youth Ministry site, located in the Fordham section of the Bronx, provides our students with a sense of home, or in an overcrowded school or community center. These children will remember their dedicated mentors for a lifetime. In addition, Mentoring USA mentors address a range of issues with their mentees, from school to friends to family life. Mentors aren’t afraid to tackle the “tough topics” with kids.

As you might suspect, these dramatic attitudinal and behavioral shifts result in enhanced performance in the classroom. The United States Department of Justice has noted that “the experience of failure itself” during the crucial elementary years increases the risk of school dropout, drug abuse, delinquency, violence and teen pregnancy. Early-intervention mentoring seeks to get students on the path to success early, before a child has gone too far down an undesirable path and intervention becomes difficult.

This most September, Mentoring USA began to work with ERL students. ERL students are outsiders in terms of both language and culture. I was recently visiting a school in Brooklyn as “Principal for a Day” and was discussing with the principal the need to begin ESL programming as early as preschool. We both agreed that it makes sense to begin English immersion for immigrant students as soon as they enter the school system, and their young brains are able to embrace foreign sounds and letters and ease. I have always advocated for universal pre-kindergarten in order to give all of our children a sound, equal academic foundation, and that universal ESL education would work hand-in-hand with universal pre-K to help put all students on an equal footing.

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By CHRISTINE WEBB

Families come to the decision to homeschool in a variety of ways. For some it is a lifestyle deci-
sion; for others it is an education choice. Deciding to homeschool can be a daunting task. It takes in-depth research, insight, thought, discussion and perhaps a little courage, but it is a commitment that is made every year for hundreds of thousands of children across the nation.

Homeschooling offers families the opportunity to provide a loving environment in which their children can mature and learn. The benefits of homeschooling include the strengthening of family life, providing a superior education geared to their children's individual needs, learning styles, personalities, and interests, and the flexibility homeschooling provides.

Homeschooling is legal in all 50 states. Laws and regulations vary from state to state, and interpreta-
tions can vary among school districts. A copy of your law can be found in your public library, on the Internet, or from a local homeschool support group.

To get information about homeschooling in your state, contact your state or local homeschool support group. The support groups usually have copies of the state law, information about getting started, lists of activities and resources, and many offer a newsletter as well.

To find out which approach to use, read, ask questions, listen carefully and observe. There are as many homeschooling styles as there are homeschooled families. The approach you choose should be comfortable for your lifestyle. This decision will depend on your philosophy of learn-
ing, the structure of your family's life, and the types of resources available through which each of your children learns best. Homeschools that thrive on schedules are often more com-
fortable settling a regular time each day for homeschooling activi-
ties. Others approach homeschooling as an integral part of what they do each day, with no set schedule. A child who likes text-
books and workbooks might use a ready-made curriculum. For a more wholistic learner, you may choose to use the library, museums, and life experiences as your pri-
mary learning resources. Resources will vary in time commitment, philosophy of learning, and expense. Be prepared to do some experimenting to find the combination that works best for each child and understand that as children mature or situ-
tions change so, too, might your approach.

If your child wants to learn something you can't teach, they might successfully opt to self-teach, or to get together with other students to form a study group around a particular subject. You can hire a tutor or mentor for help with another interested fam-
ily. Classes over the Internet or via television, videos and computer software are increasingly available options for many families. Some stu-
dents choose to take classes at a community col-
lege. When searching for teachers, don't overlook friends, or businesspeople in your community—
most people are delighted to have a young person around who is sincerely interested in what they know and do. (More on homeschooling next month.)
**Phi Delta Kappa, Columbia University Honors Superintendent Patricia Synan & Inclusion Pioneer Teachers**

Superintendent Patricia Synan, District 14 in Brooklyn and 10 special education teachers from District 75 who pioneered inclusion, (the integration of special education children into regular classrooms), were honored at Phi Delta Kappa (POK), Columbia University, spring awards banquet. The teachers represented schools in Queens, Brooklyn, Staten Island and Manhattan. Principal Joan Washington of P 811Q and Dr. Catherine Rikhye, supervisor from District 75, cited them for their talent in rewriting and adapting curriculum to fit the needs of their students and for their bravery in implementing their beliefs about inclusion despite opposition.

Superintendent Synan was named the Educator of the Year for her outstanding life-long efforts on behalf of children as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. One of the honored guests present was Howard Tames, Chief Executive for Labor and Policy and his wife Marla Tames, principal of PS 319 in Brooklyn.

For more information about Phi Delta Kappa, see www.dynatek.com/pdk

The teachers honored as “Inclusion Pioneers” were: Vera Banach—Inclusion Facilitator Brooklyn/Queens; Mindy Greenspan—PS 811Q @ 227Q; Karen McHerney—PS 811Q @ Bayside High School; David Coedington—PS 811Q @ Francis Lewis High School; Alice Miller—PS 811 K @ PS 329K; JoAnn Mauro Solano—PS 811K @ IS 281 K; Paula Smith—PS 53K @ PS 104K; Barbara Kania—PS 721K; Sherry Berti—PS 721M @ Chelsea High School; Dawn Burdi—PS 138 M @ PS 134M.

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**Art Expressing Pain, Discovery & Hope**

Edited by Harold S. Koplewicz & Robin F. Goodman
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Childhood Revealed is the centerpiece of the National Child Mental Health Initiative, a public awareness campaign by the NYU Child Study Center.

New York City exhibition sponsored by the NYU Child Study Center and the Mental Health Association of New York City, Inc.

For more information visit www.AboutOurKids.org
National Association for Visually Handicapped (NAVH) Founder Awarded Honorary Doctorate

Lorraine H. Marchi, Founder and CEO of the National Association for Visually Handicapped (NAVH), was recently awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters (L.H.D.) by the State University of New York. Dr. Alden N. Haffner, President of the State College of Optometry, nominated Marchi for her outstanding achievement in founding the only national health agency solely devoted to the “hand of seeing,” one of America’s most prevalent disabilities, second only to hearing impairment.

Although the honor came as a total surprise, Lorraine Marchi had often been taken for a doctor because of her extensive knowledge of vision and eye disease. She founded NAVH in San Francisco in 1954, largely as a result of what she learned from investigating resources for low vision elementary school children, who, like her visually impaired young son, had special reading needs. In addition to supporting a free-by-mail 7,000 volume large print lending library throughout the United States, NAVH provides a host of large print educational materials—in English, Spanish and Russian—on vision related issues including eye disease, nutrition, and proper lighting, and delivers direct services to visually impaired people from its national offices at 22 West 21st Street. For more information, phone 212-889-3141, or visit the NAVH website at www.navh.org.

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Multisensory Reading Instruction, Parts I
Dates: July 15-19
Time: 9 AM - 1 PM
Fee: $495
Instructor: Phyllis Bertin, M.S.
Janice Bochicchio, M.S.

Multisensory Reading Instruction, Parts II
Dates: July 29 – August 1
Time: 9 AM – 1 PM
Fee: $400
Instructor: Phyllis Bertin, M.S.
Morrie Bertin, M.S.

Language and Learning
Dates: July 22-24
Time: 9 AM - 1 PM
Fee: $300
Instructor: Lydia Soffer, Ph.D.

Improving Math Competence
Dates: July 29-30
Time: 9 AM - 12 PM
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For further information call 914-949-1279.
www.windwardTTI.org

Windward Teacher Training Institute is part of Windward School, a co-educational, independent school for learning disabled students located in White Plains, NY.

National Association for Visually Handicapped (NAVH) Founder Awarded Honorary Doctorate
Lorraine H. Marchi

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WINDWARD SCHOOL: SPECIAL EDUCATION AT ITS BEST

By TOM KERTES

Wise men say that some of the greatest things in the universe once started out small. The Windward School — one of the leading places of learning for language disabled children in the U.S. — is the perfect example of that adage. “Back in 1930, the school got its name because the imagery of sailing into the wind was so fitting to all the difficulties involved in establishing it,” says Assistant Head and Director of Admissions Maureen Sweeney. “Our founder, Isabel Greenbaum Stone, had three boys and she was looking for a good independent progressive school for them to get into. After many travails, she managed to find two teachers she liked. Then she decided to buy seven acres of land right in White Plains. And the Windward School was formed.”

Over the years, while the focus has changed, the name remained. “In 1976, we became a school specifically for children with language based disabilities,” Sweeney said. “And in the late 1980s, due to the unique vision of Judith B. Highman, we became the school that we are now.” And that is a focused place of learning strictly adhering to the Orton-Gillingham curriculum, a school that places a great emphasis on the processing of language, while teaching reading, writing, spelling and, basically, an entire way of thinking in a multi-sensory manner.

“Over the years, there has been much research done in the area of teaching language disabled students,” Sweeney said. “But for some reason, not much of this research got into the classroom. We always felt that we followed what was known to be the best available way to teach reading. And now the research is finally catching up to us, confirming what we do.”

Currently with 328 students, the Windward School is probably the only place of learning in the U.S. that hopes to decrease its student-body. “We feel that we will have accomplished our goal when our students successfully return to mainstream education,” said Sweeney. “The average term of a student here is 2.5 years — and we hope to make it briefer. In a way, our ultimate vision is to actually disappear one day. That would mean that all schools are using the best research and the Windward School would no longer fill a need.”

That, of course, could only occur in an ideal world. In the real world, Windward — currently serves Grades 1-12 — is about to eliminate its high school grades by 2004. “The main reason is the State’s new emphasis on a Regents diploma, rather than a local diploma,” said Sweeney. “We do more remediation. We are not a test-prep program. To change into that would completely compromise our purpose.”

Responding to current needs, Windward is actually growing. The school has just purchased nearby Berkeley College and will move its 6-12 Grades onto that campus next September. Even on wider territory, Windward will continue to proudly define itself narrowly. “Students come here based on their disability,” said Sweeney. “We follow a rule-based curriculum. So if a student has another primary disability, we can’t accept him.”

“Teachers can’t just come in here, they must be specially and extensively trained,” added Sweeney. “In fact, there is a tremendous amount of teacher training and teacher supervision going on around here. Our mission is to teach with a completely consistent focus, following the same philosophy no matter what the academic subject might be.”

“Thus everybody leaves their door open around here. We are all on the same page. This is indeed a very different place. And we are proud of that difference.”

Windward has its own individual philosophy. “We put kids in ability groups. The classes are very much teacher-centered. And the students first do expository writing — in order to learn the basic rules of the language — before they embark on more creative writing.”

Sweeney feels that early identification is the best and most important way to counter disability. “Look for an otherwise intelligent child in kindergarten or first grade who doesn’t hold the sounds well when reading,” she said. “Or a child who has trouble rhyming or segmenting words, who has trouble taking away the ‘cow’ from ‘cowboy.’”

It’s not an easy road: language disabled children are indeed sailing against a harsh wind. But the Windward School clearly makes for a far smoother sailing. For more information visit windwardny.org or call 914-949-8220.

400+ LEARNING LEADERS

LEARNING LEADERS SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS CELEBRATE

Learning Leaders, the city-wide public school volunteer organization, convened its annual Queens Borough Recognition Ceremony at St. John’s University recently. The event featured Learning Leaders who shared their experiences in the city’s schools this past year and exhorted their fellow volunteers to keep up their incredible work.

One volunteer, Carol Torres, a parent at PS 101 in District 28 and a police officer, spoke about her daughter who was having a lot of difficulty in school. Torres worked the night shift and only saw her daughter for an hour each day. Then, a Learning Leader began working with her daughter twice a week and she learned to read. In an emotional and moving speech Torres remarked, “I can now sit with her and she can read an entire book to me.” She cried as she thanked the volunteers for what they do to help children.

Additional speakers included Teri Thomson, Queens representative on the Board of Education and new New York City Councilman Tony Avella, Allan Jennings and James Gennaro. The officials thanked Learning Leaders for their hard work and commitment.

Councilman Jennings remarked that he was so impressed by the work of the volunteers “that I am in favor of increased funding for Learning Leaders.”

“This has been a difficult year for many children and for the school system,” said Carol Kellermann, Executive Director of Learning Leaders. “Our year-end ceremonies provide a much-needed chance for volunteers to celebrate and talk to each other and feel the encouragement and support of hundreds of their fellow Learning Leaders.”

This year, 11,000 trained Learning Leaders volunteers (75 percent of them parents of public school children) are working with over 165,000 NYC public school students in 780 New York City public schools.

Grads in U.S. History

Compiled by Chris Rowan

U.S. Presidents

(1) Who was the first U.S. President to graduate from college? Where did he attend? When did he graduate?
(2) Although 26 Presidents were lawyers, only one attended Harvard Law School. Which President?
(3) Which of these Presidents never attended Harvard?
(a) John Quincy Adams (b) William Howard Taft (c) Theodore Roosevelt (d) Franklin D. Roosevelt (e) James Monroe
(4) Which President dropped out of Princeton but graduated from Harvard?
(5) How many Presidents never attended any college?

FATHERS DAY FACT: In 1909, Mrs. John B. Dodd of Washington state proposed the idea of honoring the nation’s fathers. She was inspired by the memory of her father, a widower who raised six children. Father’s Day was first observed in Spokane, Washington in June, 1910, and in 1966 President Lyndon B. Johnson issued a national proclamation declaring the third Sunday in June as Father’s Day.

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Athletes and Drugs…The High Price of Success

By Dr. RICHARD FRANCES
AND NANCY BELLE

The widespread use by athletes of “performance enhancing drugs” of which many are sold over the counter, was discussed at the recent seminar on Addiction Psychiatry at Silver Hill Hospital in New Canaan, CT.

Steroids and other “dietary supplements” sold in health food stores are commonly used, not only among professional athletes, but among college, high school and even junior high school students, according to Dr. Robert B. Millman, a medical director of the major baseball leagues and Professor of Psychiatry and Public Health at Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

“Athletes take drugs for the same reasons as everyone else—performance enhancement, self medication, and recreational use. Performance enhancing drugs tempted Olympic contenders for over 2000 years. “To be the best, the swiftest and strongest,” from the beginning people took everything they could to help them compete. A 1950s American Olympic coach noticed that foreign athletes were bigger and stronger, discovered they were taking steroids and introduced the concept to American athletes,” said Dr. Millman.

“The current problem is athletes trying to beat the tests. Do we want some wrestlers or gladiators? Since the l950s, records document this still said yes. In most high schools today, 15 percent of the kids are taking steroids, testosterone, or other performance enhancing drugs purchased over the counter, said Dr. Millman. “When you combine weight training with steroids, there is no question that you get results.”

“However, if a young person hasn’t completed growing, these drugs stop bone growth. This is a major issue. the side effects are hypertrophied muscles and sexual organs, as well as acne, oily skin, and baldness in male and females. And the problem of withdrawal symptoms is like reverse anorexia; athletes feel like they can’t stop taking the drug. One negative symptom is hyper-alertness, a form of paranoia,” Dr. Millman said.

People wrongly assume that what they buy over the counter is not harmful. “The Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994, states that ‘if you don’t claim your product cures an illness, there are no regulations on its sale.’ The ingredients don’t even have to be listed,” said Dr. Millman.

“Some of our locker in professional sport. Olympic athletes have been busted for taking drugs which contains steroids, even if bought over the counter. It’s very difficult to get baseball players not to take steroids. They say, ‘I’m being offered a four million a year contract and if I don’t take the stuff, I won’t make the team’,” he said.

You have to have a degree of narcissism to become a famous athlete or celebrity. If they don’t get admiration, they suffer from paranoia,” Dr. Millman said.

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Dr. Richard Frances

ADD children show undiagnosed vision problems

A free screening may find the cause of your child’s concentration problems and these symptoms:

* avoids reading, incomplete work, restless (caused by focus disorder)
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* slow work, poor handwriting (caused by poor eye-hand coordination)
* poor word recognition, reverses letters, poor reading comprehension (caused by poor visualization)

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The Vision Improvement Program (VIP), a nationally-known program developed by an optometrist, an educator and a psychologist, attacks the causes of these problems and dramatically improves [3+ year information processing gains in 10 weeks in some cases] a child’s ability to learn.

“Approximately seventy percent of children labeled as having a learning disability have impaired visual skills,” states Dr. Henry Ettinger, director of a local Vision Improvement Program. “Many of my patients have gone from failing or special ed classes to A’s and B’s as a result of treating this area.”

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There is a free screening consisting of 15 tests that measure concentration, comprehension, visual memory, letter reversals, eye-hand coordination, processing speed, and focusing. It’s a wonderful opportunity for parents to determine if poor vision is affecting their child’s learning. Call the Manhattan office, (212) 265-4609.

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“What a difference VIP makes! This 10 week program was a success!”

-Karen Lenti

“I’ve seen significant improvement in all areas. He gets his assignments done before I ask.”

-Amril Ogiste

Dr. Ettinger assists student with a processing speed procedure

Dr. Richard Frances

POETRY By D. A. FEINFELD, M.D.

GLOW-WORMS

“I do not warm myself at fantastic fires and dance in the light of glow-worms.”

- Roberton Davies

What better light for dancing than the flickle glow of fireflies as males seek mates below?

The sun paces our patient steps, but at dusk reason and color sneak off, leave gray wisps.

Flashes of lightning-bugs fingerprint the air, call our feet to kick to katydids’ fiddles, leap and cross like whirring beetle-wings.

We dance till music ends in dull dawn.

Where do glow-worms go by day when their sparks are cold? Behind the skein of sky they teach hiding stars to flicker and spin.

Dr. D.A.Feinfeld is Professor of Clinical Medicine at SUNY Medical Center at Stony Brook and co-Chief of Nephrology at Nassau University Medical Center.
that the 2-LTR circles remain stable for at least
nucleus of the infected cell—form.

circles—a closed circle of viral DNA in the

to integrate with the cellular DNA and 2-LTR

HIV replication process. "So little is known

says Cunningham, who studies a quirk of the

Diamond AIDS Research Center in Manhattan.

conducts his own research at the Aaron

when few women, and especially African-

provided by his grandmother—a woman who

showed me cells. That was my draw to science.

fascinating. I was fascinated the first time she

a staff researcher at NCI for 33 years.

its to the local playground. His own playground

prestigious David Rockefeller fellowship, qual-

Rockefeller U. Fellow Aspires To Make a Difference in Society & Science

The research that he and his colleagues con-

Center due to the large number of patients

heroin clinic, which eventually became an HIV

Dr. Borer said that although physicians have

... "It's my social responsibility," he says. "a

try for a few years. He quickly came to a cross-

I have taken with me."

board-certified electrologist.

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Understanding:

of her clients’ delicate needs

ELECTROLYSIS

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techniques of a specialist who has the

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of her clients’ delicate needs

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WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE ADVANCES

EDITED BY HERMAN ROSEN, M.D.

Study of Cardiac Scarring That Leads to Heart Failure

A new study from Weill Cornell Medical College supplies “important missing links” in our knowledge of “the causes, mechanism, and composition” of the scarring that occurs in heart muscle when there is cardiac valvular disease, according to the lead author, Dr. Jeffrey S. Borger, Professor of Medicine. The study, which is published in a recent issue of Circulation, suggests possible approaches to preventing scar formation and thus reducing both the risk of heart failure and the need for valve operations. Dr. Borger said that although physicians have long known that a leaking aortic valve will lead to the formation of scar tissue in the heart mus-

cle, their knowledge has been incomplete as to what causes this scarring and what might be done about it.

It had been thought, for example, that as the

valve leaks and allows blood to enter the heart, scarring occurs as a secondary effect of the changes in other parts of the heart. The new study shows, instead, that the scar tissue results directly from the stretching of the scar-forming cells of the heart that occurs as large volumes of blood enter the organ through the leaking valve.

The study also identifies several of the genes responsible for this abnormal scar formation. In addition, the study shows that when the aortic valve leaks, the resulting scar tissue is unusually rich in certain proteins that prevent a normal pumping of the heart. This can lead to heart failure. Scars are formed when the heart accumulates an abnormal amount of the material that it pro-
duces as a scaffolding on which new muscle cells are arranged. To prevent scar formation, new
drugs may be created, and the study identifies some of the specific chemical reactions in heart
cells, which can be targeted by the new drugs. Dr. Borger adds that evaluation of these same chemi-

cal reactions may be useful in determining the need for valve surgery in asymptomatic patients.

“The implications of these results are not lim-

ited to leaking heart valves,” Dr. Borger said.

“arresting mechanical strains that cause scarr-

ing when heart valves leak are present in the

hearts of patients who suffer heart attacks, and

are likely to be important causes of heart failure

in these patients, too.” Thus, application of this knowledge may lead to treatments to prevent

many causes of heart failure. Herman Rosen, M.D. is Clinical Professor of Medicine at Weill Medical College of Cornell University.
Kids Hunt for Allergy Clues at Bronx Zoo

By TOM KERTES

What could zoos and allergies possibly have in common? According to Linda Corcoran of the Wildlife Conversation Society, zoos are educational places that also provide fun for children. Therefore, what better place to find out about allergies. If you turn kids into detectives as part of a Detective Weekend program, they can find allergy clues everywhere. The Detective Program has visited 14 zoos around the United States in the last two years, touching thousands of lives in a surprisingly significant way.

“For it’s significant, because allergies are a serious, ever-growing problem,” said Dr. Roberto Zambon, an internist at St. Luke’s-Roosevelt Hospital who’s affiliated with the project. “In fact, an estimated 41 million Americans suffer from the condition. Allergies cost U.S. companies more than $250 million last year. And amazingly, we, as a people, are still exceedingly uninformd about it.”

What are allergies? “They are a specific immunologic reaction — a heightened sensitivity, if you will — to a normally harmless substance that does not bother most people,” Dr. Zambon said. “It can cause watery eyes, sneezing, even sinus congestion for weeks at a time.”

“Why do people develop allergies? “It’s not yet fully understood, but heredity may very well be a factor,” said the doctor. Scientists believe that people inherit a tendency to be allergic, although not to any specific allergen. “If one parent is allergic, a child has a 25 percent chance to develop allergies,” Dr. Zambon said. “If both parents have allergies, the chances rise to 75 percent.”

As part of the “Be a Zyreto Detective” program, children received a “detective kit” upon entering the zoo, complete with a clue map. As they toured through the various exciting attractions, including the monkeys, birds, and tigers, they sought out clue signs with allergy-related riddles. After all three clues had been solved, the letters received from each clue provided the answer to the final word jumble. Then the completed clue cards were redeemed for a prize at the Detective Zone, including a picture with Bunches — a friendly grape-colored ape character that appeared to be a close relative of Barney.

The Detective Zone also included a “detective debrifing area” where kids, and their parents, could ask Dr. Zambon all kinds of information about allergies. A computer keyboard was even available to help adults identify their particular allergy profile. People with allergies are often sensitive to more than one substance. The most common ones are seasonal outdoor allergens like tree, grass, and weed pollen, and year-round indoor allergens such as dust particles, animal dander, and mold.

“Some can be harder to treat than others,” Dr. Zambon said.”For allergy sufferers, understanding their unique profile can help the doctor select the treatment that works best.” Of course, as with so many other illnesses, prevention may be the best medicine. “The key to managing your allergies and your kids’ allergies is preventing a flare-up before the symptoms intensify,” Dr. Zambon said.

The kids detectives learned that, in order to avoid allergy flare-ups, allergy-proofing the home and compliance with prescription medications are the best methods. “All signs point to the pollen level being extreme at the highest ever in fact, this year,” Dr. Zambon said. “So what a great time this is for children to learn about allergies.”

June in History
Compiled by Chris Rowan
Flag Day
On June 14, 1777 the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States.

Firsts in June:
The first Republican national convention was held June 17, 1856.
Samuel J. Battle became the first black New York City policeman on June 28, 1911.

World History:
In 1215 (on June 15), King John of England signed the Magna Carta, considered the first step toward representative government in England.

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Electives Can Be Enlightening

By DR. CAROLE HANKIN WITH RANDI T. SAGAR

A great deal of pressure is placed on high school students to take the most challenging courses available to them in order to impress college admissions officers. The advice is valid, but it can take too literally it can restrict students from taking elective courses that just may have a strong impact on their lives.

At a Board of Education meeting in Syosset, we recently had a demonstration of student work in architecture, which is a three-year sequence in our high school’s Technology Department. We were very impressed with the spectacular model homes the students had created, and the computer-aided design programs that they had mastered. When one of the students announced that he would be attending the United States Naval Academy in September and that as a result of his taking this course that he had chosen naval architecture as his field of study, I felt truly proud.

Look at what participation in an “elective” course had done for this young man. It was incredible.

High school is certainly a time for experimentation and growth and if your child is fortunate enough to attend a school that provides a wide range of electives, you should encourage him or her to explore courses other than AP and Honors classes. Elective classes can be found in such departments as Business, Technology, Family and Consumer Science, Health, Physical Education, Music, Art, Language, and others. A course in American Sign Language could spark an interest in working with hearing impaired individuals. A course in nutrition or cooking could bring out a student’s “inner chef” or restaurateur. A Health class in Peer Leadership can provide a unique opportunity for a student’s social growth and in experience working with peers and younger students as a mentor or advisor.

Of course, elective classes can benefit all students, not just those hoping for acceptance to the Ivy League schools. Taking a sequence (three, four, or five years) can be a way to learn about a subject in depth. It can also serve as an outlet for creative or artistic students who choose sequences in art, music, or theater. And by completing a sequence in an elective rather than taking a number of very different courses, you are demonstrating a true interest in achieving a proficiency in that subject—a factor that is looked upon favorably by admissions officers at all types of colleges.

If your child insists that there is no room in his or her schedule urge him or her to look again. Go through your high school’s course catalog together and read beyond the titles to see what the classes really cover. Consider also, that finding a course that engages your high school senior can be a great way to cure “senioritis” and keep him or her involved in school. Your child may discover new interests that can take him or her in an exciting and rewarding direction in life.

Dr. Hankin is the Superintendent of the Syosset School District in Long Island.

Mentoring USA

At this time of year, when graduation caps are flying, I recall the graduations of my own five children, from high school, college, and then graduate programs. It is such a tremendous source of pride for parents to watch their children fulfill their educational promise. It is our mission to impart this knowledge to children. My father’s lesson to me, “the best gift I can give you is a college education,” is perhaps even more true today in a tight job market.

We encourage all parents, mentors, teachers, and friends to not merely help children to achieve the standards outlined by the Board of Education, but also to “raise the bar” with respect to both school and personal achievement. Children need to be taught how to do their best in all areas of their lives. It is up to us to work with parents to show children good work habits, solid values, discipline and respect for one another. Every graduate will succeed in life with these skills in place.

Matilda Cuomo is the former first lady of NY and founder and chairperson of Mentoring USA.
This summer visit the Everett Children's Adventure Garden and discover why plants love summer almost as much as we do! The Everett Children's Adventure Garden is a 12-acre indoor/outdoor interactive museum where kids can have hands-on fun and learn about plants, science, and the natural world.

Special Weekends

In conjunction with our on-going programs we offer at the Garden, we also have special weekends for families including:

June’s Blooms—
Saturday and Sunday, June 8 and 9
The New York Botanical Garden is bursting with color and fragrance as the days stay brighter longer. This weekend get to know the trees at the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden; create a tree art gift for dad for his special day using leaves, twigs, bark and tree cookies. Family activities include discovering what trees need to stay green and make their own food, creating collages and pendants using tree parts, making tree impressions in clay, potting a baby plant in a seed and take away your Garden memento to share with the folks at home.

Saturday Afternoon Storytelling Series—
June 15 – August 31
In the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden, master storytellers weave amazing tales about plants and wildlife, insects and animals, to keep kids spellbound. Famed performers are listed in the weekly schedule below. Performances kids spellbound. Famed performers are listed 

Family activities include discovering what trees need to stay green and make their own food, creating collages and pendants using tree parts, making tree impressions in clay, potting a baby plant in a seed and take away the Garden memento to share with the folks at home.

Children’s Adventure Garden

Summer Exhibits in the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden

Travels of a Plant Scientist — Going on now through August 31

Explore what life is like for a traveling plant scientist. Sit in a botanist’s tent, use scientific tools, read jungle field journals, and contribute your own field drawing to the Garden’s wall journal, in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden.

Roger Tory Peterson Institute Photography Exhibit — June 4 through July 28
Explore the beauty of plant and animal interactions through this series of striking nature photographs on loan from the Roger Tory Peterson Institute. Taking inspiration from the photographs, children investigate plants and animals and record their observations in field notebooks in the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden.

Bring Your Camp or Summer School Class To The Garden
Take advantage of over 250 acres of gardens and children's facilities. Explore the one-of-a-kind Everett Children’s Adventure Garden, a 12-acre, hands-on, indoor-outdoor museum with interactive exhibits. Giant topiaries and mazes capture children’s imaginations at every turn. Visit the Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden where ponds teeming with life, a flourishing meadow, open-air pavilions, and Global Gardens beckon. To register, call (718) 817-8181.

For more information please call (718) 817-8700 or visit us on the web at www.sylvan.org

The Everett Children’s Adventure Garden has been made possible by the leadership generosity of Edith and Henry Everett.

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Requiem for Expertise continued from page 9

rather than custom-tailoring programs child-by-child.

It is painful for me to watch the inept handling of some of these children when I know what a team of instructional and clinical supervisors could accomplish if only their expertise was tapped into to improve and enhance classroom instruction for the special-needs child as well as the rest of the class. Indeed, some districts see my fellow special education professionals as superfluous.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Inclusion works best when we include the experts. We have some very good examples right in our own backyard. Why does The Children’s School in District 15, an inclusion institution, work so well? Ask its principal, Lorraine Boylan, a special education professional.

Why do District 75’s inclusion initiatives work? Look to the experts who support and train everyone in their classrooms and provide the supervisory oversight to protect the integrity of instruction.

So my friend, I am pained that we must have more of these conversations about your grandchild. There is much you need to learn. I assure you, however, that the educational and instructional expertise he needs is available.

And because of your new experiences, I am also sure you will have a newfound regard for special education teachers in your midst. And I also know that in the future you will probably be a little less comfortable supervising special education teachers now that you know how much they don’t know.

Jill Levy is the president of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators (CSA)
Barnard Graduates Reminded to Turn Talents & Energies Outward

Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, activist, educator and managing director of the World Bank, spoke to a graduating class of 550 women on their responsibilities and opportunities as Barnard graduates and as women. “There is a pressing need,” she said, “for you to turn your exceptional talents, sensitivities and energies outward: to the community, the society, and the world at large, and the many problems that deprive billions of your fellow citizens of a secure, dignified and meaningful existence.”

Ramphele received the Barnard Medal of Distinction, one of the College’s highest honors, in 1991. She spoke before a crowd packed into all corners of Lehman Lawn and Altschul Plaza for Barnard’s 110th commencement.

She began by remembering the challenges she faced when she graduated 30 years ago from the University of Natal. Pursuing her M.D. as a black woman in apartheid South Africa was practically unheard of at the time. “Yes, that was eons ago, a continent away,” she said, “and the challenges I faced in a politically and socially complex South Africa were very different from the challenges you face as you enter the world today. The challenges you are facing are no less real and difficult, however.”

Ramphele reminded the graduates of the changes that have occurred, not only since they graduated from Barnard, but of the last few months, Ramphele said, “In today’s world, it is no longer possible to live a life in isolation, detached from the rest of the world.” Solving the growing AIDS crisis, world poverty, lack of education, and lack of clean water were cited as ones for which the graduates “have an important role to play.”

She also called on the graduates to fight against gender discrimination worldwide: “In no part of the developing world are women equal to men in legal, social, and economic rights. Gender gaps are widespread in access to and control of resources, in economic opportunities, in power, and political voice. Women and girls bear the largest and most direct costs of these inequalities — but the costs cut across society, ultimately harming everyone.”

Ramphele closed with a quote from William James: “The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.”

Also receiving the Barnard Medal of Distinction were: Barbara Novak ’50, Barnard Professor Emerita of Art History and one of the most influential theorists of American art; Alice M. Rivlin, Senior Fellow in Economic Studies at the Brookings Institute and Henry Cohen Professor of Urban Management and Policy at the Milano Graduate School, New School University, a highly regarded policy maker in Washington; and, Harold Varonis, cancer researcher, Nobel Laureate and head of the National Institutes of Health, whose research has led to great strides in the understandings, diagnosis and treatment of a variety of cancers.

In a Barnard Commencement tradition, the Frank Gilbert Bryson Prize was given to the graduate whose classmates voted to have conferred the most to Barnard in her time as a student. This year the prize went to Kathryn Curran. Keeping with tradition, no student knew who would receive the award until the moment President Judith Shapiro announced the name.

President Shapiro praised the graduating class for their learning of the past year, citing the interfaith dinner organized during Ramadan by Columbia/Barnard Hillel and the Muslim Student Organization: “I would like to believe that the students who attended that dinner are viewing the current hostilities from a broader, more critical and informed perspective.”

SPRING INTO ADVENTURE AT LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER

Toddlers: It’s not too late to make your field trip plans for the spring! We have TWO new exhibits and TWO new films in the IMAX® Theater that cannot be missed!

New Exhibits:

Kid Stuff: Great Toys From Our Childhood
(May 25, 2002 - January 6, 2003)

If you built it, played with it, or created it as a kid, chances are that it will be part of this traveling exhibit. Inspired by the book, Kid Stuff: Great Toys From Our Childhood by David Hoffman, the exhibit is a remarkable presentation of more than 200 of the most popular toys of the past fifty years, from Tin Toys and Tinkenyos, to Colorforms and Cooties, to Raggedy Ann and Radio Flyer. Get ready to throw Nerf balls at priceless crystal, run through clothes in an old red fire truck, play dress-up with a life-sized Mr. Potato Head, and share memories with your students.

XP: Experiments in the Future of Reading
(May 18 - September 15, 2002)

Imagine a book as big as a table-top with pages that turn when it falls. Think of the possibilities of a Reading Eye Dog a device that combines optical character recognition and speech synthesis to create a loveable reading companion. Or a children’s book that produces audio effects when you “conduct” it with simple hand gestures. See all of this on the cutting edge of reading technologies in the XP: Experiments in the Future of Reading.

In the IMAX® Dome Theater:

Australia: Land Beyond Time
(May 18, 2002 - March 2003)

Witness Australia’s birth as it broke away from Antarctica millions of years ago, and watch as the film captures in a beautiful landscape fossilized evidence of the first life on earth. Explore how life has managed to adapt to the harsh environment and even boards on the impoverished soils of Australia, revealing its spectacular landforms and strange and beautiful animals that populate it. See how the hounding giant red kangaroos has become more efficient than most athletes, and how plants and animals cooperate to maximize their chance of survival.

Lewis & Clark Great Journey West
(May 18, 2002 - February 2003)

Relive an amazing tale of discovery and exploration as National Geographic Films brings to life the first crossing of what would become the United States. With careful research and meticulous recreations, this scientific expedition lives again on the big screen. Two hundred years after their epic journey, go back in time with Lewis, Clark, their guide Sacagawea, and their brave Corps of Discovery, as they discover the adventure, danger, and wonder of the unmarked West.

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NJ Asst. Principal Reflects on HS Graduation

By GINA M. VERNONE

As we reach the close of another school year, students, teachers, parents and administrators across our great nation will find themselves reflecting on the future of the young adult lives that are a part of the graduating class of 2002. Students in our high schools today are faced with the challenges and promises of tomorrow. As an administrator, I have been touched by the accomplishments of many students. However it is one student in particular this year who has provided tremendous hope and comfort to many of his peers.

Christopher Cimorrelli will be graduating from Pequannock Township High School on June 14. I had the opportunity to sit down with this fine young man and discuss with him his experiences as a high school student and the excitement he is embracing with regard to his future. Chris reflected all the way back to sixth grade and how it was at this time he dedicated himself to going to a military academy. When the question of why was posed to him, he poignantly stated, “I have a desire to make a difference and be in receipt of a prestigious honor.” In wake of the trials our country is facing, I personally want to thank Chris Cimorrelli for restoring in me the faith that the work we do as educators must certainly be making a difference. I asked Chris if he desires to serve his country increased after September 11th. Without hesitation, he responded, “This made me want to serve my country more.”

While I can cite statistics about Chris, (4.4 GPA, 1310 on the SAT, in the top 5 of his class, Boys’ State representative, Peer Leader, National Honor Society member and secretary, Spanish Honor Society member and vice president, boys’ track, Concert Choir, varsity football captain and Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholar), it is not these figures that separate him from thousands of others who might have a similar profile. It is his strong character and commitment to our country on a daily basis that prompted West Point Military Academy to appoint him membership to the class of 2006.

When I asked Chris about his heroes he mentioned Eisenhower, Patton, and MacArthur; how they changed history and influenced the United States of America in a more positive way. Heroes may be defined differently by many of us, but Chris’ greatest hero has been his father, a lieutenant in the New Jersey State Police, who has instilled in him a tremendous work ethic. Chris is not influenced by titles or names; he respects most what people stand for and their values. As an educator, I am proud to have known the student leader, role model and graduating senior called Christopher Cimorrelli.

In his own words, “the sacrifices made along the more difficult path will allow a person to achieve more than he or she ever thought possi-
EMENTS AROUND THE CITY

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY: PRES. RUPP’S LAST GRADUATION

More than 10,000 students from Columbia, Barnard and Teachers College participated in the 2002 Columbia University Commencement ceremony, which took place on Low Plaza on Wednesday, May 22, with more than 20,000 family members and friends looking on from the white chair rows of South Lawn. President George Rupp officiated at his last graduation before stepping down from his position in July. Former Senator George Mitchell, author Joan Didion and Columbia President-elect Lee Bollinger were among those who received honorary degrees. Also receiving honorary degrees were Brown University President Ruth Simmons, Latin American literary scholar Roberto Gonzalez Echevarria, neuropsychologist Brenda Milner, and Jack Beeson, Columbia’s MacDowell Professor Emeritus of Music. Molecular biologist and geneticist George Yancopoulos received the University Medal of Excellence, which is given each year to a Columbia alumnus who has made significant contributions to society. Each school within the University also held its own graduation ceremony. The featured speakers at these ceremonies represented a variety of fields, including politics, business and academia. The following are excerpts from President Rupp’s speech:

“Our destiny cannot be divorced from the fate of the rest of the world, including those furthest from us in geography, ideology, and socioeconomic status. The United States may be the world’s lone superpower. But we cannot simply impose our will, even on those who seem relatively powerless.”

“One challenge we face together is, then, to make globalization work for the impoverished as well as the wealthy. To meet this challenge we certainly require more generous programs of foreign assistance than the post-Cold War era. But we also have a right for everyone including prisoners in the bounty that learning gives us in the company of one another.”

NY Medical College: Paul LeClerc Honored

Paul LeClerc, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of the New York Public Library, addressed graduates of New York Medical College, Valhalla at the university’s 143rd Commencement. The university awarded 195 doctor of medicine (M.D.) degrees, 98 master of science (M.S.) degrees, 49 master of public health (M.P.H.) degrees and 8 doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees.

Dr. LeClerc praised an honorary doctor of humane letters degree, has led the New York Public Library, an American treasure and a New York City landmark, since 1993. Previously he served as president of Hunter College, as university dean and acting vice chancellor for academic affairs of the City University of New York (CUNY), and as provost and vice president for academic affairs at CUNY’s Baruch College.

The university also awarded an honorary doctor of science degree to Catherine N. Hinterbichler, M.D., professor and chairman of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at the College. A resident of Rye, N.Y., Dr. Hinterbichler served as chief of rehabilitation medicine at Metropolitan Hospital Center from 1964 until last December, the first woman in Metropolitan’s history appointed to the position. She continues to serve as chief of rehabilitation medicine at Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in the Bronx. A member of the college faculty for nearly 40 years, she became the first female department chair in 1971.

NY Medical College: Paul LeClerc Honored

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

The clattering of the silver and excited voices of graduates and faculty suddenly stopped at the gala commencement luncheon as President Augustus Kappner began to speak. In her customary warm manner, she congratulated the 266 masters students who were about to embark on their new careers. Dean Jon Snyder followed quipping about “not leading the graduates but their new careers. Dean Jon Snyder followed masters students who were about to embark on their warm manner, she congratulated the 266 graduates and faculty suddenly stopped at the New York Public Library, an American treasure and medical college...

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY: PRES. RUPP’S LAST GRADUATION

New School University: Pres. Kerrey Reflects on 9/11

Excerpts of President Robert Kerrey’s Commencement Address: “Today we grant 892 undergraduate and 784 graduate degrees to students from 100 countries and all continents on the face of the earth except Antarctica. At the Graduate Faculty our graduates have learned to understand what it means to be human and to help us understand what is going on between human beings throughout the world. At Parsons School of Design our graduates have gained the ability to design solutions to human problems and to create art which helps us understand our humanity. At Eugene Lang College our students have gained a progressive education in small, seminar style classes. At the Actors Studio Drama School our students now have the skills to write, direct, and act that allow us to connect with the pathos and humor of our lives. At Mannes College of Music our students have prepared for orchestral and operatic careers in order to bring music’s unique power into our lives. At the Jazz and Contemporary Music Program our students have acquired a thorough grounding in a special and endangered idiom which has the capacity to change the way we feel about our lives. At the Robert J. Milano Graduate School of Management and Urban Policy our students have thoroughly prepared themselves to solve the problems of modern urban civil society. And, finally, at The New School our students have juggled careers and classes and faced other obstacles in their pursuit of greater knowledge into... “Students aren’t the only ones facing challenges at our university. This is my second commencement and I have learned a lot since last year. Most of all I have learned how much love there is between the students, faculty and staff of New School University. I have seen that love expressed by men and women who were willing to go above and beyond the call after the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center. The men and women who have chosen to work and teach at this university simply decided to work a little harder, to sustain the effort through physical fatigue and in short do the one thing that has confounded skeptics over and over again. They refused to give up.

“Let me stop my address and gaze across the faces of great accomplishment and promise, and say: I am proud of your success, hopeful for your future, and prayerful for the courage you will need to carry you through the fascinating disappointments of every good life. Best wishes to you all.

Honorary degrees were presented to investment banker and New School Trustee Henry H. Arnold; President and CEO of Thirteen/WNET William F. Baker; Middle Eastern historian Bernard Lewis; jazz singer Abbey Lincoln; Chairman of the September 11th Fund Franklin A. Thomas; and Chairman and CEO of Fisher Realty & Construction and New School Trustee John L. Tishman.

Bank Street College of Education: Integral to Building A Better World

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

The clattering of the silver and excited voices of graduates and faculty suddenly stopped at the gala commencement luncheon as President Augustus Kappner began to speak. In her custom-

HIV/Aids. Dr. Mindy Fullilove expressed how special this graduation was in being the first to take place after 9/11. While she underscored social justice as being high on the agenda, she decided to work a little harder, to sustain the effort through physical fatigue and in short do the one thing that has confounded skeptics over and over again. They refused to give up.

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HIV/AIDS. Dr. Mindy Fullilove expressed how special this graduation was in being the first to take place after 9/11. While she underscored social justice as being high on the agenda, she noted that “the great thing about this luncheon was the family of Bank Street giving gratitude for the bounty that learning gives us in the company of one another.”

Dr. Fullilove spoke about the importance of “building the community together and then aiming for an educated populace.”

The fourth honorary doctorate was awarded to David Wulffenberg, an illustrious teacher who has been at Bank Street for many years. He spoke of teaching as the most “fun and rewarding work that anyone can do.” Of primary importance in early childhood education, according to Wulffenberg, is the relationship of trust and profound respect between teacher and child as well as teacher and parent.”

In 1916, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, founder of Bank Street College of Education said, “We as teachers are integral to building a better world.” These words have even greater significance in 2002 and are clearly the mission at Bank Street. August to its graduates!”

High School there are 1335 students in the 9th grade and 145 in the 12th grade. According to Fine, “it’s nobody’s fault and it’s everyone’s responsibility.” Fine credited President Kappner with ensuring that a college education should be a right for everyone including prisoners in Bedford Hills, New York. Expressing her outrage for social injustice, Fine stressed to the assembly, “that’s your work when you graduate.” Citing teachers who dare to fight for fiscal equity, Fine concluded that “there is no peace without justice. May we all grow up to be half the woman that Gussie Kappner is.” Two honorary doctorates were awarded to husband and wife team Dr. Mindy Fullilove, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and Dr. Gary Fullilove, Associate Dean of the Columbia School of Public Health for their seminal work on
With springtime here and summer just around the corner, now is the time to walk the city for enjoyment and come visit Logos and Thrills around the corner, now is the time to walk the store you might want to look at The Little Big Book for Dads, edited by Lena Tabori and Hiro Clark. Book Magazine's Book of the Year Award Winner, and The Little Big Book for Moms edited by Lena Tabori and Alice Wong. Both books, designed by Timothy Shaner, are wonderful collections of retold fairytales, meditations on being Dads and Moms by well-known authors, folktunes, poetry, nursery rhymes, stories, recipes, finger games, activities, jokes and tongue twisters accompanied by marvelous illustrations of children, animals and fairy tale characters. Each book has a ribbon bookmark so you will not lose your place in this enchanting world. Other books in the series are: The Little Big Book for Grandmothers and The Little Big Book For God's Children, edited by Lena Tabori and Alice Wong, The Little Big Book Of Animals edited by Lena Tabori and Karmina Fried and The Little Big Book of Chills and Thrills edited by Lena Tabori and Natasa Tabori Fried, all available at Logos.

MOTHER & SONS WRITE ON DIABETES
By MERRI ROSENBerg

For families struggling with a child’s chronic illness, managing the physical practicalities and emotional turbulence can be a challenge. Initially overwhelmed by the sheer shock of the diagnosis, it is too easy for youngsters and their parents to dwell on the dangers and difficulties of their condition. In these two volumes—written by two brothers, now young men who were each diagnosed with childhood diabetes while still in elementary school, and one written by their mother—the emphasis is placed on the positive.

For example, the serious medical issues that diabetes poses, not unlike focusing on the limitations that diabetes could potentially present to children and teenagers, these slim volumes offer practical information to help families manage the disease, instead of being managed by it.

As Mrs. Loy writes, “We like to focus on what can go well with diabetes.” Both boys are engaging, with a breezy tone that strongly communicates to the reader that the authors understand fully the realities of living with diabetes without terrifying a newly-diagnosed younger or his parents. Perhaps it helped Spike and Bo that, by being diagnosed at the ages of seven and six respectively, living with diabetes was simply the normal backdrop of their lives. It’s as if someone with blond hair and freckles accepts the normal backdrop of their lives. It’s as if diabetes, instead of being managed by it, communicates to the reader that the authors understand fully the realities of living with diabetes without terrifying a newly-diagnosed younger or his parents.

Similarly, Virginia Loy’s guide, geared for the parents of children who has diabetes, provides ample lists for stocking the family kitchen, including what to take on road trips (even for something as small as an away-soccer match). Mrs. Loy also offers practical strategies for explaining a child’s medical condition to the people who need to know about it—the school nurse, the bus driver and monitor, classroom teacher, and even substitute teachers.

To her credit, Mrs. Loy does not shy away from confronting the issues that all protective parents have to deal with when their once-biddable, dependent young children are transformed into independent-minded pre-teens and teenagers. She doesn’t pretend that teenagers don’t eat fast food, or possibly drink at parties; what she does give is guidelines that parents can use with both their own children, and their offspring’s friends, to be sure that in the balancing act between independence and protection, a diabetic won’t come to harm.

And Mrs. Loy, in a section clearly labeled for parents only, confronts head-on the fears that parents of diabetics live with: that their beloved children may go blind from the disease, that diabetes may be difficult or that future grandchildren may be afflicted with the disease. These books would be a valuable addition, if not to a classroom teacher’s library, then at least to a school library as a resource for children, teachers and other staff alike.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN BOY begins his routine day on the family farm. In simple, handmade typeface, these rhymes are as comforting and lulling as a lovely summer day: “In the hive/fruit on the trees. Sun’s sun’s/sun’s summer time.”

Illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. (Harcourt, unaged, $16.00). Do Americans eat chocolate on the Fourth of July? A Chinese American is plagued with the anxiety that customers won’t be ordering new items or any other food for this most American of occasions. How can her parents be so naive as to open shop for business? A child’s fear about cultural differences is rendered with cheerful and bright illustrations as spirited as the holiday.

FICTION: AGES 8 THRU 10

That Summer by Tony Johnson. Illustrated by Barry Moser. (Harcourt, 32 pp., $16.00). The freedom of summer ending and the start of blissful summer is harrowingly short-lived when the Fourth of July finds Joey suddenly terminally ill. His brother narrates this story of loss with heartbreakingly simplicity. Moser’s artwork respectfully reflects the moments of sorrow. As his dedication reads: “For all the courageous people who care for terminally ill children...”

POETRY: AGES 8 THRU 12

Summervaults by Douglas Florian. (Greenwillow, 32 pp., $15.95). Simple, rhyming verses capture the essence of summer and all its fun-filled activities from jump-roping to base- ball. Clever wordplay adds humor and light-hearted zest to this most carefree of seasons: “June: We seeded/July: We weeded/August: We worried/September: We worried. We worried.”

SUMMER Sun Rises’ by W. Nikolka-Lisa. Illustrated by Don Tate. (Lee and Low, unaged, $16.95). As the morning sun rises, an
Queensborough Community College Establishes Language Program for Immigrants

Queensborough Community College (QCC) has been awarded a $300,000 grant to fund the Queens Civics Collaboration of the City University of New York (QCC), a partnership program between Queensborough, Queens College, and the CUNY School of Law. This grant will provide both English language and civics education to the adult and out-of-school youth immigrant population in the borough of Queens.

Participating students will study various aspects of American culture and government. As part of the program’s emphasis on both civic participation and technology-based learning, the program, beginning this summer, will offer a theme-based curriculum for students as a means of preparing them for effective communication in a variety of media. Instruction in the functions of government and civic rights and responsibilities will also be stressed.

Information from the latest census reveals the increasingly diverse makeup of the Queens populace. The Latino population within the borough increased 46 percent over the past decade, and the Asian population grew 7 percent, highlighting an overall increase in immigration during the time period. This has created demand for programs to assist this population’s assimilation into the overall Queens community.

“The impetus of this program grew out of the tremendous growth of non-native immigrants into the Queens community,” says Professor Kitty Bateman, Director of the QCC Literacy Program, who will serve as director and be responsible for implementing some of the curriculum. “It’s essential to integrate these new immigrants into the already existing institutions of our community, and this program is a direct response to this need. The number of seats currently available in Queensborough’s Literacy Program does not meet the demand for instruction.”

The program, an expansion of the already existing adult literacy program established at QCC, is an outgrowth of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, a Federal program whose partial goal is “to consolidate, coordinate, and improve employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs in the United States.”

Product Review
MANAGING SCHOOL RECORDS WITH NEW SOFTWARE

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Elementary School Scheduler and Class Aggregator are two new software programs that lead to less paperwork and more effective management of students, staff and parents in schools. Each program has a self-tutorial that explains in simple terms what the program does and how it can be used.

The Elementary School Scheduler creates a master schedule from data, deals with schedule conflicts, and enables the school administrator to edit and revise schedules. The program, beginning this summer, will offer a theme-based curriculum for students as a means of preparing them for effective communication in a variety of media. Instruction in the functions of government and civic rights and responsibilities will also be stressed.

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Language Events
Dual Language Education in the New Millennium Summer Institute

The second annual “Dual Language Education in the New Millennium Summer Institute” will take place in the Harrington Hotel on 85 Squawmy Street in Hartford Connecticut on June 28 and June 29. The program will address a wide variety of topics regarding dual language education including strategies and techniques for the bilingual, mainstream, and dual language program classrooms. The Institute will bring together nationally recognized experts in dual language education and research as well as teachers, administrators, curriculum specialists, policy-makers and others interested in the subject. Educators can earn continuing education units for 1.2 hours of institute participation. For more information call the Bilingual-Bicultural Department at (860) 695-8449 or (860) 695-8444, or visit www.hartford-schols.org.

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157th Commencement at Fordham U

Retired AOL Time Warner CEO Gerald M. Levin told more than 10,000 graduates and their families at Fordham University’s 157th Commencement that technology is important, but love and compassion create a better world.

Levin told graduates to strive to love not only their families, but also those who struggle daily to overcome hunger and poverty.

“Each of us has not only a mind that can conceive of a world better that we have and haven’t,” said Levin, who received an honorary doctorate of humane letters, honoris causa.

“We also have a heart that can show us how to seek that world. And we have a will, a will that can enable us to try.”

Levin explained to the graduates that although technology provides the world with the means to heal itself, it is not enough to make us see the common humanity that binds together all the people of the world.

“This sometimes cruel, often callous, always imperfect world of ours needs you very badly,” said Levin. “It needs the knowledge, the expertise that you have been getting here at Fordham. It needs your faith, your hope and hard work. Even more, it needs your love, your compassion and commitment to shine forth for all of us and show us how to live as well as survive.”

Levin recalled the example set by his late son John, who “chose to invest his life in a classroom not far from here in the South Bronx where he awoke the talent and dreams of students seeking to escape the nightmare cycle of discrimination, deprivation and despair.” Levin remembered that his son “loved in a way that causes ordinary men and women in every corner of the world to stop ignoring the injustice and start fighting.”

In presenting Levin’s honorary doctorate, Paul B. Guenther, chair of Fordham’s Board of Trustees, noted that “in the information age, a new kind of business leader is needed, one who can recognize the opportunities implicit in technological discoveries and at the same time appreciate the challenges that come with such opportunities. In a remarkable career that spans four decades, Gerald M. Levin has demonstrated both the strategic vision and the skills necessary to bring diverse interests and personal interests together in the pursuit of a pioneer project.”

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Also receiving an honorary degree was Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington, D.C., who was presented with an honorary doctorate of humane letters. The Rev. Jeffrey P. von Arx, S.J., dean of Fordham College at Rose Hill, noted “when Ted McCarrick left the Rose Hill campus of Fordham University at the end of his sophomore year to attend St. Joseph’s Seminary in Dunwoodie, fellow members of the Fordham College Class of 1954 predicted that someday he would be an archbishop. Today, 50 years later, Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop of Washington, past Archbishop of Newark, founding bishop of the diocese of Metuchen, returns to Rose Hill, his classmates’ expectations more than fulfilled.”

John D. Feerick, retiring dean of Fordham Law School, received an honorary doctorate of laws.

Sister Francesca Thompson, O.S.F., associate professor of African and African American studies and assistant dean/director for multicultural programs at Fordham, received an honorary doctorate of fine arts.

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‘KEEP SMILING’ AT MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE

By JOAN BAUM

Recently, at Marymount Manhattan College “Keep Smiling,” the watchwords of 94-year-old philanthropist Mortimer Levitt’s life and philosophy of life, needed no prompt: to be elicited. Smiles came naturally from him and from the five happy New York City high school students who gathered in the College’s Mezzanine to celebrate their having been finalists in the first Mortimer Levitt Essay Contest on the theme of – what else! – Keep Smiling. In bringing greetings to the group, Marymount Manhattan president, Judson R. Shaver thanked Mortimer, his gracious wife, and the students for having demonstrated the importance of writing as thinking. It was a theme that was addressed by Daphne Merkin, freelance writer and culture critic at the New Yorker, the contest’s final judge, and later that day by William Zinsser, Marymount’s Writer-in-Residence at The Writing Center, who spoke of the importance of writers, having to jumpstart themselves, be flexible, and have a sense of humor. When the five contest finalists were finally placed in order, the event was no less cause for smiling; the runners up – Jennifer Gonzalez of The High School for Environmental Studies; and Jessica Ventura of Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers – each received a bond of $100, a certificate of appreciation, and the admission of attending principals, families and friends. After the third- and second-place winners were announced – Nicole Burgan of the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Performing Arts below. #

Midwood High School Essay Winner Receives $1000

“Smile With Your Eyes”

By DENISE ELYSABETH FRIEDMAN

I’m fat. Not ugly, but fat. That right away separates me from most girls my age. Another thing that separates me is that I know the difference between fat and ugly, and that none of it really matters as long as you know how to keep smiling.

Fat is a fact, not an opinion. Someone 4’11 and 300 pounds is fat. There is no such thing as “thinking you’re fat.” A person either is or isn’t. Fat is an adjective, the same way as thin, tall, short, blue, and green are adjectives. I never used to see it that way. I always thought that something was wrong with me, that I was defective because I was fat. Now, I’ve realized that being fat doesn’t make you ugly. Being ugly makes you ugly. I’m not even talking about things that are strictly physical. Someone who is rudy, nasty, mean or anything like that instantly becomes physically repulsive, where someone who may not be the stereotypical beauty could be the most amazing person in the world. I know I’m not classically beautiful, but I know how to smile, and to keep smiling. One of the tricks is to walk the right way. I know that I feel low when I don’t look good, because it’s a cycle. Looking good and feeling good are directly connected. If you wake up feeling sad, then you won’t put as much effort into how you look, and then when you look in the mirror you’ll feel sad all over again. It’s no different for a size 18 woman than for a size 4 woman. I wear dark boot cut jeans, V-neck shirts, and black boots with my black coat. I put effort into my looks, and my weight doesn’t matter. I walk with a strut, not in an egotistical way, but in a way that says, “I know who I am, what I am, and there’s absolutely nothing any of you can do about it.” All that works, all of that attitude, it all amounts to nothing without a smile. People think the mouth is where the smile is really found, but that’s not where. The smile is really found in the eyes. When I walk down the hall, shoulders straight, hips swinging, the sound of my boots hitting the floor as I make my way through the world, I feel just as good, if not better, than a woman who weighs 90 pounds. And it shows in my eyes. My perfectly arched eyebrows and dark, dramatic eye makeup frame a smile in my eyes no match for the smile on anyone else’s face. I’ve learned that no matter what life throws me, no matter how different I may seem to be, no matter how much I weigh, as long as I keep smiling, everything will be okay.
An Ongoing Series of Interviews with Deans of Education

NYU Dean of Education: Ann Marcus

BY MARYLENA MANTAS

“Teaching is a very difficult job and it needs to be a respectable middle class profession,” says Ann Marcus, Dean of the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University.

Since 1989 Marcus has led the school of education, which traces its origins to the School of Pedagogy established at NYU in 1890 and was the first education school of its kind in the United States. Today the school prepares approximately 2,300 undergraduate and 4,500 graduate students to enter the field of education. Over 80 percent of its graduates teach in the public school system.

“Teacher quality is the single most important thing. What we need are highly competent, experienced people,” says Marcus of the current challenges facing public school education. She cited the lack of certified teachers and the low retention rate as education’s primary challenges and emphasized that new teachers need support.

“Under any circumstances teaching is a difficult job in the first years,” she said.

According to Marcus, several factors can bring more individuals to the teaching profession, including providing youth with positive exposure to teaching through internships. She also suggests creating mechanisms to support the number of new people entering the teaching profession, such as the establishment of a five-year program that allows students to complete their Bachelors and Masters degrees in education in five years. In addition, she emphasized that career changers must be supported and that immersion programs must be established to allow current uncertified teachers to gain certification.

“A source for certified teachers has to be the current uncertified teachers. There needs to be a huge investment in helping them get their degrees,” says Marcus, adding that “the basic strength of the profession can be found in the people who want to go into teaching.”

To address the retention of teachers, Marcus underscored that new teachers must be supported as soon as they enter the profession and be provided with professional development. In addition she highlighted that an improvement in working conditions, such as an increase in salaries, must take place.

“We have to emphasize the highly sophisticated approach to teaching and learning,” says Marcus. “The reason schools of education exist is because there is so much to be learned in terms of pedagogy. In the end there are no shortcuts.”

According to Marcus, the number of applicants to the school of education has increased in recent years, which she considers indicative of the fact that “teaching still maintains a positive hold on the public’s imagination.” Students of the Steinhardt School of Education are immersed in an educational environment upholding research and practice.

“NYU always had a strong populist tradition,” said Marcus. “We believe in students having connections with schools. That is the platform from which we do research.”

According to Marcus, the Steinhardt school retains strong relationships with several New York City school districts, including districts, 4, 10, and 13. The collaboration with district 13 in Brooklyn, which has been in place for eight years, has been the strongest.

The establishment of several Centers and Institutes over the years allows students to conduct field-based research and to provide services to the public schools. Marcus cited the NYU Reading Recovery Program as an example of the collaborations between the school and the community. The program, which involves 16 NYC school districts and districts in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Northern Virginia, “is designed to identify and assist those first grade children who are at maximum risk of reading failure.” In addition to providing teacher training and technical assistance to school administrators, the program provides students with one-on-one intervention for up to 12 weeks. According to Marcus, 80 percent of the students who receive intervention never fall behind again.

Other programs administered through the NYU Steinhardt School of Education include, The Professional Development Laboratory, The Institute for Education and Social Policy, and The Metropolitan Center for Urban Education.

“Over the years schools of education have become more connected to urban education and more focused on the broad issues of training, rather than just training teachers,” Marcus said, adding that NYU has a long tradition of such collaborations. “We’ve insisted that our faculty remain involved with the community.”

An emphasis on research remains an integral part of Marcus’ vision for the Steinhardt School of Education and for its students, whom she characterized as “young, diverse, idealistic” individuals who come to NYU “wanting to be teachers.”

“I’d like us to become more of a leading center of research because we are a leader in practice,” she said. “Teachers should know not only how to understand research, but also how to do research in their own classrooms.”

For previous interviews with deans, visit www.educationupdate.com and go to archives.
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By TOM KERTES

Famous for having one of the very best art programs in the nation, Queens’ Community School District 25 “has always tried to be a frontrunner of Arts in Education,” said Arlene Jordan, the District’s Supervisor of Expressive Arts. “And that was so both in good times and bad. So naturally, when the programs were cut, we were on the forefront of the fight to put the art programs back into education as well.”

“So, when the programs were finally restored in 1992, the question that faced us was where to go next? How do we stay a step ahead?”

The answer was the marriage of art and technology. “Once again, we raised the bar,” said Jordan. “We felt that the next level was the integration of art, technology, and literacy.”

The marriage that allowed this union to come to fruition – to enable 10-12-year-old students to produce multi-media works of art digitally – was the marriage between District 25 and Teaching Matters, a nonprofit organization that’s committed to working on integrating technology into the public school classroom.

“I felt that there was an economic gap in public schools,” said Elizabeth Rohatyn, Teaching Matters’ Chairman of the Board. “And, especially due to the extreme expenses involved in the new informational age push, I was very concerned that this gap would result in an intellectual gap. I felt that we could make a difference in this area.”

The result of this commitment was an proud display at “Dancing Across the Digital Divide,” the third annual multi-media show put on by the district’s fifth and sixth-graders at Flushing Town Hall. It was, as in, a word, spectacular.

“First, we had to get the teachers hot to trot,” said Rohatyn. “This was a daring avenue, requiring a new way to think. What people needed was a curriculum, to make art and technology integrated into what the students were learning. Teachers needed to be re-trained. But, once we had the educators on our side, we knew the kids – they get naturally excited about new things – would follow.”

And follow they did – in spite of the fact that the program got off the ground two years ago with Digital Opera. Why use such an alien (to fifth-graders, at least) art-form? “The operas are art and literacy together,” said Jordan. “It allowed the kids to create a little musical theater, write a story, then digitalize the text and the images.”

Classrooms were transformed into studios, where academic subjects such as reading, writing, math, and social studies meshed with every aspect of music and theater. The students, routinely sacrificing sleep, lunch-hours, and weekends, made the works about fables and myths an art-form relevant to their lives. And the program’s momentum – spurred on by the kids’ surprisingly high level of commitment – only increased the following year, with the presentation of the no-less challenging Digital Shakespeare.

Though educators were first doubtful, the students’ natural curiosity about history and warfare once again won out. “It was great,” said Meri Ezrarty, an art teacher at JHS 189. “The kids had to make the words in the book come to life. The kids had to visualize the characters, they had to make them move, they had to make them appear and disappear.”

And give them voices, too. Students, who uniformly thought of Shakespeare as “boring” up to that point, now found the Bard “kind of cool”. “I finally understood how Macbeth was feeling,” one said. “And that people today often feel the same way as well.”

After the success of the first two shows, the District allowed each school to develop its own project for the year’s gala. The result was Digital Storytelling, an eclectic marvel that kept the audience of 300 enthralled nearly all day. Two of the biggest hits were Through the Eyes of Children: 9/11 and Beyond, a fascinating multi-media presentation of young teenagers’ shockingly different reactions to the tragedy, and Antigone, a freshly updated version of Sophocles’ classic Greek tragedy in which “two brothers vie for the U.S. Presidency and one wins – even though the other had more of the popular vote.”

“Antigone’s combination of drama, video, dance, and mime was nothing less than stunning.”

“Arts education can inspire children to learn in a way that textbooks and standardized tests cannot,” Rohatyn said. “We know Digital Storytelling is working – and it’s working in a multitude of different ways. The spectacular productions these young people created speak for themselves.”

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THE LINCOLN CENTER SUMMER INSTITUTE: BRAVO & ENCORE

By JOAN BAUM

Sometimes it’s the little word that makes the difference. In the matter of the Lincoln Center Institute (LCI) Arts in Education program, the key to understanding how this particular school-arts collaboration differs from other programs that supplement, augment, and enrich the learning lies in the preposition “in” as opposed to the conjunction “and.” Where other fine programs also serve to bring the arts into closer play with the curriculum, LCI wants the arts — all the arts — to be integral and inseparable from teaching and learning. In this sense, among others, LCI directly affects teachers and teaching in a way that, in the words of LCI Executive Director Scott Noppe-Brandon, makes it “unique.” For starters, he points out, the 25-year old program has a philosophy — Aesthetic Inquiry — and a philosopher — Maxine Greene — behind it. For another, the program’s integrative approach to the arts, from pre-service teacher education through Focus School and Partnership School collaborations, insures that philosophy gets practically grounded as experiential learning. And specifically grounded, LCI may be the only arts-in-education program to center study on a specific work of art, whether in dance, theatre, museum art, or music, and then challenge teachers to draw out general principles about how the arts affect teaching. There is also the fact that LCI has prestigious affiliations in its collaborative efforts — Lincoln Center — not to mention this summer’s additional coup: partnering with England’s Royal Academy of Music. The July 8-19 session, part of LCI’s annual Professional Development series, co-sponsored by the New York Performance Space and Juilliard, that performances to be truly appreciated needed an education context, the idea, now shaped in light of Aesthetic Education, prompted studies into the role of imagination in professional life, no matter what the profession. Soon business and science leaders started holding conferences on the idea, then town meetings, and the idea expanded directly into the schools. “We don’t get into discussions of standards or high-stakes testing,” Noppe-Brandon says. The focus is on the depth and breadth of the arts in the curriculum, on realizing the theory of Aesthetic Education for grades K-12. Maxine Greene, LCI’s philosopher-in-residence, is the “soul” of the program, guiding, checking, being the honest broker on how we “operationalize” the ideas, Noppe-Brandon says. At the heart of the program is the hallmark of progressive education. As the LCI website proclaims, “Each individual child as well as adult – has the capacity to respond to any given work of art in ways that challenge preconceived notions, stimulate fresh insights, and encourage deeper understandings. Without the limitations imposed by ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, this process of response builds cognitive abilities in powerful, fundamental ways.”

How do schools find out about LCI? “Word of mouth,” Noppe-Brandon says, though he admits that he’d like to have a better presence in the high schools. Still, there’s a waiting list for the lower grades. The majority of participating institutions are public schools, and the Director keeps careful watch on the kind of school that appplies, its level and location. Every effort is made to represent diversity, he notes. Collaboration comes in basically two forms: Partnership Schools and Focus Schools. The former, new numbering 140 (Elementary, Middle and High Schools) and involving 65-70 percent of the faculty, allow individual teachers to participate in the Institute’s various programs and creatively design their own curricula, draw up their own budget, establish their own procedures for testing, and provide for additional coverage. In Focus Schools, now numbering 11, the Institute works one on one with every student in the school over a period of five years.

The beauty of the overall LCI idea, Scott Noppe-Brandon says, is that 85 percent of the participating students and especially parents, for whom the program has been particularly “inspirational.” One innovation it has inspired, he says, has been the Museum Night, when parents and children together with teachers go to a museum to study a particular art work. The quality of the discussion, she reports, is “absolutely amazing.”

This summer LCI is instituting new repertory and institutional partnerships for educators, with Arts Coordinators Workshops, and fabulous dance and theatre performances, including an LCI co-commissioned presentation, “Shadow’s Child,” performed by the Urban Bush Women and National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique; “Siutarta,” a program of traditional Indian dance; “As If the Past Were Listening,” Latino folktales; “The Alice in Wonderland Folies,” performed by New York Theatre Ballet; Poulenc’s “Piano and Winds”; “Ghost Lovers,” a comic Chinese opera; and the Royal National Theatre production of “The Tempest.”

For more information about LCI, access the website or call (212) 875-5535.
By NEIL SCHULDINER

Most individuals never contemplate that most-often used piece of computer hardware—their keyboards. Keyboards only enter user’s consciousness when late night cups of chicken soup or cans of soda spill onto their generic input devices, thus rendering their keyboards useless. In the classroom, these odd moments include those nasty grins and sighs which classmates pitch towards their fellow students who are typing notes using so-called “quiet-click” keyboards found on most laptops. To alleviate such odd situations and mishaps, Crywolf has recently introduced the Amazing Enabling Keyboard, their specifically education-branded product. Featuring 106 full size PC/Mac keys and a USB or PS/2 connector, the Enabling Keyboard’s claim to fame is its “amazing” flexible architecture which enables users to literally bend, twist, curve, and fold their keyboard.

Based on our experience with our review model, students can quickly and easily “roll” their keyboards into the shape of a cylinder measuring 3.75 inches wide for easy transport, and silently type their notes in class with its mute, no-click keys. While initially the no-click keys were uncomfortable, as time elapsed they felt as natural and more ergonomic that a regular keyboard.

For the typical student who crams all night and is prone to flooding their keyboards with liquids, the Enabling Keyboard features a waterproof silicone casing. After showering our keyboard with 12 ounces of soda, a can of Budweiser, and even a tepid cup of tea, the Enabling Keyboard still functioned perfectly, albeit wet.

Keep in mind that the Windows version of the Enabling Keyboard is exclusively sold factory-direct. So if you’re the conventional student who mistreats his/her computer equipment, it pays to contact Crywolf at their toll-free number (866) 466-5622 to attain their “amazing” product.

TrueTip fingertip PDA Stylus

**By MITCHELL LEVINE**

As industry experts, sophisticated journalists, and intelligent laypeople agree, one of the most remarkable phenomena in recent education technology history has been the growing impact of personal digital assistants in our nation’s schools. Although a lot more attention has been paid to the distribution of laptop computers proper, increasingly school administrative assistants have begun to offer their students the benefits offered by the other branch of the mobile computing family, outfitting them with products like the Palm M-Series or Handspring Visor models. Anyone who has used a Palm Pilot, however, has noted at least a few of the liabilities that these systems can present.

Often, especially in less expensive models, it seems as if exceptional fine motor coordination is a pre-requisite to negotiating even the simplest tasks. Actually, even with the built-in holster, just trying to hold onto a stylus without losing it is a challenge. Considering the fact that adults find these qualities frustrating, how can the education community take advantage of the convenient, discrete form factor, and robust affordability that pen computing can make available, while still providing a practical solution capable of being employed by children and adolescents?

A pragmatic answer has entered the marketplace in the form of the TrueTip fingertip stylus. Designed to adjustable fit over a first or index finger, the TrueTip stylus allows you to enter characters, navigate screens, and manipulate information on the touchscreens of PDAs or Smartphones completely and naturally. Since it requires no grasp of an instrument, the fingertip stylus can permit data entry or text formatting with far less screen blocking, or injury-producing repetitive stress. The TrueTip can quite easily be carried on a belt, pen, or finger, making it much easier for a student to keep without losing. And a list price of under $10 ensures that this is a product for just about any budget.

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TEACHERS COLLEGE HOLDS EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY SUMMIT

By BRUCE MINT

Nobel laureate Niels Bohr once said: “Prediction is very difficult, especially if it’s about the future.” In spite of that caveat, scores of educators, policy makers, school administrators, and representatives from the tech industry gathered at the recent Education Technology Summit held at Columbia University, to discuss technology and the future of education.

Their prediction was nearly unanimous: in the immediate future, computers will become a permanent fixture in American schooling. Soon, online and distance learning will be as common as face-to-face classrooms.

“We’re going to experience a revolution in the next few years,” said Teachers College President Arthur Levine, in a speech welcoming delegates to the two-day event.

The Education Technology Summit offered a variety of different seminars on such topics as: “Preparing Knowledge Workers for the 21st Century,” “Safeguarding the Wired Schoolhouse,” “Follow the Money: Paying for Educational Technology,” and “Evaluating Online Professional Development.”

Building on the success of last year’s event, the summit informed educators about the latest innovations available to schools and how educational technology survived through the dot-com bust. Corporate sponsors such as Classroom Connect and National Semiconductor played a central role during the conference by supplying product demonstrations and speaking at seminars. Their increased presence may be a signal of what can be expected from the ed-tech revolution. “The private sector is a factor in a way it has never been in the past,” said Levine.

Reasons for the impending educational technology boom include: the rise of overcrowded schools, family/work restrictions of college students, and the premium students now place on convenience and access in education. By moving education online, technology promoters asserted, computers can play a role in meeting these new demands.

“Education can come to a child no matter where they are, at home, school or at work,” said John Bailey, Director of the US Department of Education’s Office of Educational Technology. “There was a time when you would have had to go to school. There was a time when you would go to work. Now those times are merging.”

Another force driving the technology revolution comes from the need to develop a generation of “knowledge workers”; a common theme repeated over the course of the event. In order for the nation to remain globally competitive for the nation to remain globally competitive, schools must change to meet the technology needs of the future.

But introducing such radical changes present significant problems for the educational technology community. Historically conservative institutions, schools do not change easily. “There is a math and science upward bound program for elementary school children, teens, and career training for adults at night. Princeton graduate Rahsan Harris is the director of the program, while a cadre of 10 bright and energetic young people teach at nine computers. There is a math and science upward bound program and a summer program to teach students dreams of owning her own computer company. Via field trips to Sony Wonderlab and making digital journals, students like Shaneeva learn a variety of skills. Play to Win is just one of 136 Community Technology Centers (CTC) in New York City.

Among the many attendees, Mary McFerran, the Director of Education Technology at the Fieldston School, found the visits extremely useful. The last step was The Harlem School of the Arts, founded by New York City opera diva Dorothy Mayeur. Our tour, led by Bernard Phillips, showed how software such as Music Ace (ages 8-12) and Practica Musica help in the students’ learning and progress. Some of the software aids in composition, some can print out each part, which can be heard and modified easily. Different melodic lines and instrumentation can be heard immediately by the student composer, thereby allowing instant modifications. One can’t help but think of Beethoven as a mature composer, deaf and only able to hear the music in his mind!”

In a wrapup, Lincoln, noted that we are at the epicenter of the technology movement, that we have a more technology oriented city council that we are seeing cablevision and RCN now giving money to learning and contributing to CTCs. His hope is that education becomes a ubiquitous, seamless process.

Field Visits Part of Summit

By POLA ROSEN, E.D.D.

One expects brilliant keynoters, erudite professors, the business sector and educators to exchange ideas at various panels when Teachers College, Columbia University organizes a special 3-day technology conference such as this one.

What is novel and extremely effective is being out in the field to see programs in action in the community, and that is just what Professor Joshua Halberstam, Chair, Education Technology Summit and Bruce Lincoln, Manager of Community Outreach at the Institute for Learning Technology (Teachers College) arranged for participants to do.

Playing to Win is a program located in Harlem since 1990. In partnership with the Boys and Girls Harbor of New York and affiliated with Columbia University, 100 people are taught computers each day including an after-school program for elementary school children, teens, and career training for adults at night. Princeton graduate Rahsan Harris is the director of the program, while a cadre of 10 bright and energetic young people teach at nine computers. There is a math and science upward bound program and a summer program to teach students dreams of owning her own computer company. Via field trips to Sony Wonderlab and making digital journals, students like Shaneeva learn a variety of skills. Play to Win is just one of 136 Community Technology Centers (CTC) in New York City.

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Last week, the FBI notified the New York Police Department of a possible terrorist threat against our City. Because familiar New York City landmarks were named, the threat got a good deal of media attention. I want to take this opportunity to outline what we are doing to protect New Yorkers’ security and what you can do to help.

Unfortunately, New York City receives many threats on a daily basis. Be assured that we take each one seriously and investigate them all. I can’t disclose the details of the process, because publicly discussing specific counter-terrorism measures would undermine their effectiveness.

But you should know that we believe intelligence and preparedness are the keys to stopping terrorism—and New York City is better prepared on those fronts than ever. One of Police Commissioner Ray Kelly’s first actions was to add two new deputy commissioners to the NYPD ranks, both of whom bring valuable experience in fighting terrorism. Deputy Police Commissioner for Intelligence David Cohen joins the NYPD after 35 years with the CIA. Deputy Police Commissioner for Counter-Terrorism Frank Libutti was a highly decorated Lieutenant General in the United States Marines, and now directs the NYPD’s prevention, training and investigation efforts for terrorist threats directed toward New York City. Along with new leadership, the NYPD also has received the equipment and training needed to combat terrorism. For example, we recently sent police officers to Israel to receive counter-terrorism instruction that they will then use to educate our uniformed officers back home. We’ve also greatly improved communication with intelligence and law enforcement agencies at the State and Federal levels.

What can average New Yorkers do to help? Two things. First, exercise common sense. If you see something suspicious, dial 9-1-1 and report it to the professionals; it’s their job to investigate it, and they will. Second, keep things in perspective. If you want to take safety measures, don’t drink and drive and be sure to wear the seat belt when you ride in a car. Follow through on that present New Years Resolution and finally stop smoking. I promise, these measures will protect the life of you and your loved ones more than worrying about terrorism will.

There is a danger though. If we isolate ourselves from one another, or begin to harbor baseless suspicions of our fellow New Yorkers then we will have allowed the terrorists to win. We cannot let our lives be dominated by fear. We’re a free and open society. That’s what our enemies hate. But that’s also what unites Americans and makes us strong. These are difficult times. But we will get through them together.

By MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

Working Together for a Safer New York

Perseverance Pays Off—State Budget Provides $600 Million More for City Schools

By ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN SANDERS

As Chairman of the Assembly’s Committee on Education, working closely with Speaker Silver, I successfully fought for and secured an increase of $440 million in operating aid for public schools under provisions of the State budget adopted in mid-May.

In New York City, the Assembly’s victory in adding this money should be sufficient to enable Mayor Bloomberg to eliminate his proposed citywide school cuts of nearly $400 million. Additionally, this budget will give the City approximately $200 million more in State school aid as well as ensure that the City is promptly repaid over $435 million owed to it in what are referred to as “prior year claims,” relating to costs or contracts involving renovation, construction and transportation—usually repaid over many years.

The budget provides a solid foundation for the City to conclude—once and for all—a contract with the teachers. We came a long way last year that we clearly need more funding for our schools than he originally proposed. The fact that the Governor seems to finally grasp how badly his school aid cuts would have hurt our children, teachers, and taxpayers could be a good sign. While we need to do much more in the future, this budget is a good start in the direction we need to go.

Steven Sanders is chairman of the NYS Assembly Education Committee. You can contact him at 201 E. 16th St., New York, NY 10003 (email sanders@assembly.state.ny.us). Tel: (212) 979-9696.

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**Film Review**

**WILD GLIDE: DOGTOWN & Z BOYS & NEW YORK CONVERSATIONS**

*BY JAN AARON*

If you think you need to see a movie about skateboarding as much as a fish needs a bicycle, you’re wrong. Stacy Peralta’s 90-minute documentary, *Dogtown & Z-Boys*, gives you a fascinating whiff through the freewheeling story of skateboarding 70s kids from the wrong side of the L.A. tracks. The movie is set in the down-at-the-heels beach towns of Santa Monica, Venice Beach and Ocean Park, known as “Dogtown,” itself the home of the Zephyr Productions Surf Shop. This was the hangout for this group of punk-rock latchkey kids who translated their love of surfboarding to skateboarding.

The group known as “Z-Boys”, who included Peralta, revolutionized the course of skateboarding with their contempt for convention and acrobatic derring-do. Sean Penn, who is still remembered for his role as the spaced out surfer Jeff Spicoly in *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, narrates the film. Peralta and co-writer Craig Stecyk, get every inch of drama and excitement out of their story.

As kids, Z-Boys found they could fill in downtime for surfing by transferring their devil-may-care surf skills to the “asphalt waves” of playgrounds and empty swimming pools, which were everywhere at their disposal during the mid-70s California drought. After winning many skate meets, the Z-Boys became superstars, who were courted by corporate sponsors, which eventually led to the team’s demise.

Kudos must go to editor Paul Crowder for splicing together the wealth of magazine and newspaper articles, still photos, vintage footage, and recent interviews with the now-middle-aged skateboarders. Crowder’s pick of music from the 70s for the thumping soundtrack appropriately ignites the antics of yesterday’s daredevils who opened the door for today’s extreme sports craze.

Now to NY. Look for *13 Conversations About One Thing*, a movie that interweaves five contemporary New York stories into a single tale that explores the dramatic impact people have on each other. Its star-studded cast include superb acting by Alan Arkin as cynical claims adjuster and Cleo Duval as somewhat mystical housekeeper.

*(Dogtown, 90-minutes, PG strong language, drug references. Conversations, 102 minutes, R. For venues: 212-777-FILM.)*

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**Theater Review**

**Splash Hit: Metamorphoses**

*BY JAN AARON*

Okay everybody into the pool!” If you think this is no way to describe a Broadway play, it is — when the play is Mary Zimmerman’s *Metamorphoses*. The show, which had a sold-out Off-Broadway run last fall, now is a Broadway hit at Circle In the Square.

Ms. Zimmerman’s play adapts ten tales by Ovid to explore the enduring and transforming power of love. It offers a great way to bring the classics into the classroom.

The length of the stage is taken up with a big wading pool surrounded by a narrow wooden deck. Water, the most changeable element, works well to tell these tales. As Gods and mortals jump in and out of the water, splashes hit the front rows. Management provides protective towels.

The tales are not classically mounted but thoughtful contemporary retellings with plenty of humor. The play opens with King Midas, here impeccable in a tux. When he wishes for the golden touch, Bacchus’s warning: “That’s a really bad idea,” sounds very hip. But the story grows darker and richer as it sets the stage for the dramas to follow. Perhaps the most memorable comic moment is Doug Hara’s Phaeton, the spoiled son of Apollo, who blabs to his therapist while lounging in the pool. Touching episodes like the tale of Alcyon and Ceyx, lovers separated by death, but reunited as birds, linger long in the mind.

The play combines the key ingredients of enjoyable theater — a good story (here several of them), interestingly told, a striking setting (by Daniel Ostling), lovely costumes (Mara Blumenfeld), drama, leavened with humor and hope, and a lot of laughs. All 10 people in the cast are completely convincing in many roles and very graceful, which also is important to the story telling. Morsels of sex and nudity are not enough to keep this from being family fare.

*Metamorphoses* ends memorably with the story Baucis and Philemon, which told here is not about hospitality but the power of love.

*(Tickets $30-$75, at the Box Office or telecharge 212-239-6200)*

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*Photo by Glen E. Friedman*

Tony Alva in Dogtown & Z-Boys

*Photo by Joan Marcus*
NOT NO MORE!!: St. John’s Women’s Basketball

By TOM KERTES

“No more!” is sure to become the battle cry for the St. John’s Women’s Basketball team this season. Though grammatically incorrect, it’s certainly right on target in expressing the emotions of a ready-to-fight-back team coming off of an atrocious 3-24 season.

Then again, while Hungarians may not be big on grammar, emotions have always been their strong point. So the Red Storm should be an emotional juggernaut with no less than three Hungarian girls on next season’s roster.

Five-seven guard Reka Szavuly, “the author,” will be accompanied by 5-11 swinger Nora Gyurus, and 6-4 center Kati Kurtosi. “Not no more!”, Reka repeats, her dark eyes flashing. “We’ll be much better than that! For one thing, we have a new coach. She seems wonderful! For another, myself and Kati were out with injuries all last year. But this time around we’ll be ready!”

And what is this terrifically Hungarian trio doing right now to get ready for next season? “Not much,” Reka raps. “Just chillin’.” Think what you will of hip-hop expressions, if you haven’t heard one pronounced with a Hungarian accent….well, you haven’t lived yet.

Rap, of course, has been the least of the culture shock the three girls have experienced during their brief U.S. stay. Thing is, in the new millennium the world may be getting smaller and smaller, but people hailing from different societies, cultures, and traditions remain quite different.

And that takes some getting used to – especially if you are a true student-athlete with a smile. “Chillin’ Time” on your hands during the season. And especially if that athlete wants to succeed both on and off of the basketball floor.

“Understanding people, and making yourself understood, was the toughest thing at first,” says Kati who, along with Reka, has been in the U.S. less than two years. “I only had one year of English at home.” “I had eight!” adds Reka with a smile. “And I’m still having problems communicating. Studying a language a couple of hours a week at home was one thing. But living it full-time is quite another.”

Nora, a junior who played some valuable minutes last year and speaks the best English, says Kati who, along with Reka, has been in the Hungarian National Cadet (Junior) Team, all heavily recruited by U.S. colleges – should never have ended up at St. John’s. “I’m not religious, so when I was getting all those recruiting letters I threw every one of them that started with a ‘St. Something’ into the garbage,” says Reka. So why the Storm? “Well, they were the one school that really followed up with us aggressively,” Nora says. “And we all wanted to play in the Big East, which is the best competition, the No. 1 women’s basketball conference in the country.”

“And, most of all, we wanted to live in New York!”

Which, of course, is very different from Colby, Kansas. Or the rest of the U.S.A. Or Hungary.

“Everything’s just so huge, you can’t believe it,” laughs Nora. “The cars, the buildings! We’re in Manhattan walking around every free moment we have. And we still haven’t seen half the things we’ve wanted to see.”

And, for the longest time now, St. John’s basketball fans haven’t seen a truly competitive women’s team. But this year, helped by the Trio of Magical Magyars, they might very well see a much-improved squad.

Or, at least, a much more emotional one.

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