HISTORIC EVENT

Outstanding NYC Teachers Honored
MONEY THE ROOT OF REGENT PROBLEMS?

By Dr. Alfred S. Posamentier

Two recent events making education headline news seem to be unrelated but, in fact, are quite closely related. The New York State Regents examination for Math A was deemed to be flawed. The New York State Court of Appeals ruled that education in New York City was under funded.

It is clear that the Math A examination had some items that were ambiguous, some were unnecessarily tricky, while others were simply inappropriate. The newspapers boldly reported the drastically low passing results, blaming the test writers for the dilemma. Yet a closer look at the test and the results reveal that there were enough items to allow a reasonably competent student to pass the test. Getting a high score would have been considerably more challenging. Yet, passing the test is the issue of concern here, since failure prevented high school seniors from graduating with a Regents diploma. The truth be told, those students who are “on-track,” taking the test at the time at which it was designed to be taken (after the first year and a half of high school math) did relatively well on the test. Seniors taking this test typically have had a long history of failure in mathematics, hence are taking the test much later in their high school career. These weaker math students were just not properly prepared to pass this test.

Not all of the blame for the high failure rate of this latter group should be placed on the poorly written exam. And not all of the blame for failure should be placed on the backs of these weaker math students. The real problem lies in the relatively weak math teaching force in our schools today. It is well known that there is a severe shortage of math teachers. (New York City will need to hire 1,000 new math teachers this fall.) Shortages of any commodity result in a diminution of quality. When the Court ruled last week that New York City was being short-changed in its State funding, it stated that “the quality of New York City school-teachers is inadequate.” For the subgroup of math teachers the situation is more severe. Specifically where might these inadequacies be seen? From its inception, the Math A exam was distinguished from its predecessor in its emphasis on problem solving. I contend that most math teachers today are not adequately prepared to incorporate genuine problem-solving skills into their regular instructional program. That is where many of the failings might have been avoided. Had students been provided with problem-solving skills, they would have fared considerably better. Hopefully with increased State funding, teacher salaries will become more attractive and we will experience the elimination of the math teacher shortage, resulting in the recruitment of better teachers to staff our classrooms. In the meantime, this new funding source can be used to better train our current math teachers in the art of problem-solving.

Dr. Alfred S. Posamentier is the Dean of the School of Education at The City College of New York

LETTERS

About the Awards Ceremony
To the Editor:

Just a quick note to tell you how impressed I was by your award ceremony and all the teachers you have identified and awarded. What a deserving bunch! The NY school system can be proud! Congratulations for this successful event!

Dorothea von Haeffen
East Chatham, NY

To the Editor:

Thank you and keep on promoting good teachers as is a great way to focus on the reason why our children excel in so many ways.

Jim Quail, Principal

To the Editor:

Ms. Rhonda Morman is one if not the best teacher I’ve dealt with in my position as the coordinator of the stock market game. Her enthusiasm to impart knowledge and devotion to her students is worth emulating. Ms. Morman stays late in school every day to help her students with their work. She is both a mother and teacher to the students, not only the students in her class but to all the students in the school. I have never come across any teacher like Ms. Morman. Congratulations Ms. Morman!

Victoria Chukwuka
New York, NY

Lasers: State-of-the-Art in Dermatology
To the Editor:

I fully agree with your ideas regarding laser for cosmetic as well as non-cosmetic purposes. It is being dramatically used in my native country, Pakistan, where senior doctors in the field of dermatology are utilizing it with good results. I would be honored if I could work with you for 1-2 weeks so that I further learn about lasers. I am a dermatologist working at Bispebjerg hospital in Copenhagen, Denmark with Dr. H.C.Wulf, Prof of Dermatology.

Dr. Masood Sohail
Copenhagen, Denmark

How Basketball Players Spend Their Money
To the Editor:

Yeah, it’s all good and that’s how it’s supposed to be. I’m also a ball player and I want to live a life just like that. I’m 19, 5’9” tall, good at the game but lack support and I have big dreams of making it to the NBA. I still hold at the game but lack support and I have big dreams of making it to the NBA. I still hold

Nelson Kay
Kampala, Uganda

Vienna Choir & Harlem Boys Choir
To the Editor:

The boys choir from Harlem have great voices as do the Vienna Boys Choir. That was the day.

Dr. Masood Sohail
Copenhagen, Denmark

Cover Photo: Chancellor Joel Klein and Time Warner Cable VP Harriet Novet congratulate honoree Susan Bellack.
UNREST IN EDUCATION IN FRANCE: TEACHERS ON STRIKE

By SARAH ELZAS

Paris, France
Special To Education Update

Recently, thousands of people, mostly teachers, marched through the center of Paris from Bastille to the Assemblée Nationale to protest, among other things, the decentralization of part of the French national education system. This was not the first time teachers had taken to the streets this year, nor even the first time that month. Teachers all over France had been on strike for several weeks, some since March when the education minister, Luc Ferry, announced the government’s planned education reforms. Education in France is centralized, managed by the minister and his office, with input from other ministries, such as culture, agriculture or employment. Teachers must take a national entrance exam, and if they pass, they become part of the Education Nationale, an institution that includes not only teachers, but all school personnel as well, from guidance counselors to maintenance staff. They join the vast fonction publique (public service sector) that provides nearly 30% of French jobs. Nationalized degree requirements that are taught by teachers from all over the country in theory guarantee that every student in France receives the same education. But today, many people, teachers and politicians alike, are unhappy with how the system currently functions; they just disagree over how it should be fixed.

To explain his proposed reforms, Ferry published a book in April, entitled “A letter to all who love school”, in which he set out, in 134 pages, ten problems which he says can be fixed by decentralizing the non-teaching members of the Education Nationale. “We will experiment with giving more management autonomy to school establishments, which should allow them to make changes…and be held accountable,” he writes. “This autonomy could be the key to all the other reforms.”

What exactly does decentralization mean, and why does the idea make thousands of teachers across the country so angry?

In 1984, a decentralization plan gave ‘local communities’ the autonomy to build and maintain school buildings, something that until then had been done with direct oversight from the centralized ministry. These communities consist of France’s 26 regions, 100 departments, 36,700 communes (the smallest territorial divisions) as well as overseas territories.

The current plan, presented in March of this year, suggests extending this decentralization to personnel, mostly to the approximately 100,000 technical staff, called TOS, who include orientation, cafeteria, housing as well as maintenance workers. Until negotiations in June exempted them from the plan, school health and social workers as well as guidance counselors were also set to be decentralized.

For those on strike, decentralizing any personnel is tantamount to privatizing what should stay public sector jobs and would jeopardize the whole education system. Communities could contract out decentralized jobs to private companies, which would change work conditions and work hours. This would disrupt what some people say is an important continuity of adults in school environments.

Particularly in difficult schools, it’s not just the teachers, but a team of adults who each have a pedagogic role in the school and come together to make a collective,” explained Tristan, a young physics teacher in a high school in a northern Paris suburb who was marching and did not want to give his last name.

Indeed, the French Legislative Education Code states that even non-teaching staff “are members of the education community. They work directly within the mission of education as a public service.”

Another argument against decentralizing the TOS is that it could lead to complete decentralization of the education system.

“Right now, school is the same everywhere,” said Alain, a colleague of Tristan’s who was also marching. “If we let the TOS become decentralized, education might become limited to regional needs.” And this would negate the fundamental of the French system: a national system that guarantees the same education for all students, whether they are in Paris, rural Normandy or in Corsica.

While the teachers themselves are not directly affected by the proposed reforms, they were striking anyway, out of solidarity for their colleagues with more precarious work situations, and also out of a fear of what the reforms could lead to. Of course, no one can predict where the proposed reforms will lead, or even in what form the plan will take when negotiations are finished and it is finally presented to Parliament next fall for a vote.

Ferry writes that he is committed to nationalized education. “National programs, exams and degrees guarantee justice, and the possibility even of a common world.” Yet, along with arguing for decentralizing the staff, he hints at decentralizing academics. He writes that schools need to be given “tools and means, within a national education policy, to exercise their prerogatives.” With a national curriculum already in place, this implies further decentralization.

“We don’t want to end up with an American system,” said Marie-Claude, a middle school history teacher in Paris’ 13th arrondissement. When pressed to elaborate, she explained: “It’s a system without public servants, without national diplomas or even national health care.”

For her and many of her colleagues, changes in the education system are a first step down a slippery slope.

This is the first of a two-part series on the French education system. Next month: The changing face of French students and teachers.
Sarah Elzas is a former assistant editor at Education Update and is currently living and working in Paris.

SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS

SUMMER IN THE CITY

Why is everyone so worried about electricity? Are we really using that much more?

It’s all the stuff that’s part of our daily lives. We’ve got more PCs, printers and scanners. We’re charging cell phones and laptops. We’ve got more TVs, DVD players, CD players and video games.

Our energy supplies are tight, but adequate, although New Yorkers will be using more energy than last summer.

Con Edison expects that New Yorkers will buy 1,000,000 air conditioners over the next five years.

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What Do Superintendents Do In the Summer?

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

It’s certainly quiet here in the summer, but that doesn’t mean that a superintendent can relax. For a superintendent, students or not, school is a twelve-month a year experience. You could say that the three R’s for our summer are Review, Revise, and Regroup. Regardless of how successful our school year has been, there is always room for improvement. During the summer I can review our curriculum and other school programs and policies with my administrative staff. We take the time to review—look at how things have operated during the past year and identify any areas that should be changed. We then revise—deciding how to make the changes that will have a positive result. Finally, we regroup by planning how to make these revisions and assigning specific responsibilities to individuals in order to accomplish the goals we have set.

One of the other activities in the summer that takes the most time and energy is hiring. Teachers often make life-changing decisions after the school year is over. A fully-staffed faculty invariably becomes one with openings each summer—our faculty, and often need to see candidates several times before we make a hiring decision. Once all classes are over for the summer we finalize the budget for the coming year. The financial issues in operating a school district also get a close look during the summer. We take this time to carefully examine how the funds we had budgeted were spent during the year and confirm that we have planned the new budget accordingly. Once all classes are over for the summer we have all the information we need to completely finalize the budget for the coming year.

One thing is certain, the summer goes by all too quickly for superintendents as well as for students. I don’t mind though. I always love the first day of school and seeing students arrive ready to learn a new grade. I don’t mind the heat that has to be the most exciting career path there is. Each student holds endless possibilities for the future, and it is a privilege to be a part of it.

Dr. Hankin is superintendent of Syosset Central School District. Randi Sachs is Public Information Officer of Syosset Schools.

New York Studies Weekly

New York Studies Weekly is a curriculum supplement enjoyed by tens of thousands of students in New York since 1997. It is currently available for the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. Each grade level supports the New York State Social Studies Resource Guide recommendations for that grade. A single student subscription consists of 28 weekly issues filled with history, current events, and fun history-based activities. For as little as $3.65 per student for the year, New York Studies Weekly fits easily into your classroom budget. To receive your free sample or to place an order please call:

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The Sir Program (see next page)
SIR: A UNIQUE PROGRAM FOR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
By JOAN BAUM, PH.D.

According to Professor Emeritus Jed Luchow of the College of Staten Island, the four-year phonics-based teacher training literacy program he directs—called Success in Reading or SIR—is not only having “dramatic” effect in the Hebrew day schools where it has been introduced, but holds out extraordinary promise for the public schools.

The project, which runs under the auspices of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York, recently was given a grant by the Dichtler Foundation which will make it possible for SIR this September to work with P.S. 163 on West 97th Street as part of that school’s partnership with Fordham University, where SIR strategies will be introduced. So how is this literacy program different from all others? Prof. Luchow, forthright, thoughtful, organized and quiet—mannered—until he riffs through his papers for corroborating evidence from his data charts—notes that SIR, first, is fulfilling its mandate, which is to provide yeshiva teachers, who need not be state certified or have a Master’s degree, with the latest research-based principles and strategies about teaching reading and writing in grades K-1. The goal is to lower the risk pool of students who do not meet New York State benchmarks in various literacy categories—a number that consistently hovers at about 15%. Luchow also says that a concomitant goal is to encourage intervention with these strategies at the earliest possible time. For the Hebrew day schools, whose environments do not typically include the kind of pre- and post-testing engaged in by the public schools, the hope is to introduce those teachers to the research-validated “screening tools” that will help them assess “phonological awareness.”

Interest in phonics is hardly new, but newer studies begun in the ’70s and widely disseminated in the ’90s (particularly the work of Shepherd & Ulry and Vellutino & Scanlon) show that decoding or word recognition (“the act of transcribing a printed word back into speech”) is not the same as reading comprehension, (“interpreting the message or meaning of a text”). In other words, children who mani-

The American Israel Friendship League (AIFL), a non-profit, non-sectarian organization, provides an opportunity for students from both countries to meet across the world and discuss political and social issues. Since its inception in 1977, the US-Israel High School Youth Ambassadors Student Exchange Program has brought together over 4,000 students of diverse religions, ethnic groups and socio-economic statuses from the two nations.

“The overall objective of the program is to teach character development, tolerance and appreciation for diversity,” said William Behrer III, Director of Special Projects for the AIFL, and a coordinator for the exchange program. The exchange program began with the idea of bringing students together, coordinated by the New York City Board of Education and the Ministry of Education in Israel. In conjunction with the AIFL, the pilot program sent 30 New York students to Israel for five weeks. In its most recent exchange in November, the exchange sent 120 students from cities including Dallas, Tucson, Omaha, and San Francisco and more than 25 New York students to Israel.

Known as youth ambassadors, the students continued on page 6
Creating Community at Baruch College Campus HS

By ROB LUCHOW

It was still hot outside by 6 PM on June 24, but the heat didn’t stop all 97 students of the Baruch College Campus High School Class of 2003 from wearing their caps and gowns. In high spirits, students, faculty, and family members packed the Baruch College auditorium to witness the sixth graduating class in the high school’s history.

They ignored the formality commonly seen at such a ceremony. Parents, teachers and students cheered and hollered loudly for one another. Students presented personal films and songs at the graduation which expressed their emotions for three years at the school.

“We are very much a ‘we’ place,” said Principal Jill Myers. Community is the quintessence of what make the school outstanding. The school is structured around a tightly knitted system where personal relationships operate as a “safety net over the Grand Canyon.” Myers believes that “intellectual care” is of equal importance to “social and emotional care.”

The foundation for this individualistic approach is the advisor system, where teachers play the role of a mentor and keep in close contact with students and parents. Not only does the advisor discuss the daily life of the student, but actively engages in his academic pursuits. For example, students and teachers write bi-weekly letters to each other reflecting on outside readings.

History teacher Kiara Vigil, who has taught and served as an advisor at the school for five years, feels that the system keeps students on track and challenges them on various levels. While she recognizes the greater amount of work required by both the teacher and the student, Vigil says the intrinsic rewards more than compensate.

“View us as a family,” she said. “When I saw my students at graduation, the feeling was overwhelmingly amazing.”

Lauren Santiago, a member of the 2003 graduating class who will be attending Plattsburgh State University next fall, said, “The teachers’ high expectations push you to perform better. Without the advisor system, I wouldn’t have gotten through it.”

Baruch College Campus High School is one of several schools linked to colleges in New York City as part of Chancellor Matthew Goldstein’s vision of College Now. Some of the benefits for the school include use of the college library, college faculty providing professional development to the high school teachers and high school students inclusion in the college community. The school sets rigorous academic standards and emphasis is placed on the student’s growth as an individual and member of society.

“Students learn to self-evaluate,” said Myers. “They may not always have the right answer but the important thing is to be able to arrive at an answer.”

Vigil along with first-year history teacher Catherine Tursio shared Myers expectations for what students gain at the school. Tursio said she encourages her students to “find their voice” and hopes to instill “empowerment” and “confidence” in them.

As a testament to the commitment of Myers and her faculty, all 97 students of the Class of 2003 are enrolled in college next fall. Asked how she accomplished this feat, Myers said, “the vision was in place.” As for her future, Myers too is graduating alongside her students. She will become a local instructional supervisor of 10 schools in region 9, one of which is the Baruch College Campus High School.

High School Students win 1st Prize in Marymount Essay

Every year, Lewis Frumkes, Director of the Writing Center at Marymount Manhattan College, holds the Mortimer Levitt Contest for high school students around the city. The following essay won first prize.

Keep Smilin’

By ZACHARY WIZZLENGER

I subdivide my life into periods of Lenore; before I knew her, when we were a couple, when I hated her, and so on. I suppose it’s only natural to subconsciously come to define my later childhood, a person whom many can’t picture me without. We are, once again, a couple filled with the bliss of unassuming love, stuffed with a unique mix of teenage intellectualism and goofy lust. And yet, how clearly I remember other times, when things were not as easy. Of course, there were times I couldn’t stand to look at her, but they are irrelevant and more importantly uninteresting. It was that time when I was jealous of her, while we were going out, that has the meat of my introspection. That she was beautiful and kind, I’m sure, but that was well, brilliant… yep, that’s where my troubles sat.

Why couldn’t I deal with that? I spent so many days walking with her, as random people would congratulate her on this award and that team and so on. I was smart too! Or so I would tell myself.

But how horrible is that? I used to feel so bad about being angry at her for being successful, at my wishing she wouldn’t win. She was so promising, so good at everything. I used to wonder why she was so beautiful and kind, I’m sure, but that was well, brilliant… yep, that’s where my troubles sat.

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When I hated her, and so on. I suppose it’s only natural to subconsciously come to define my later childhood, a person whom many can’t picture me without. We are, once again, a couple filled with the bliss of unassuming love, stuffed with a unique mix of teenage intellectualism and goofy lust. And yet, how clearly I remember other times, when things were not as easy. Of course, there were times I couldn’t stand to look at her, but they are irrelevant and more importantly uninteresting. It was that time when I was jealous of her, while we were going out, that has the meat of my introspection. That she was beautiful and kind, I’m sure, but that was well, brilliant... yep, that’s where my troubles sat.

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**A New Day is Arriving For New York City's Schools**

**By MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG**

Recently state law finally giving New York City voters direct control over our public schools went into effect. That ended a school governance structure that was notorious for its unresponsive bureaucracy, waste and endless red tape. Our Administration vowed to replace it with a school system that puts children and parents first. And we’re making good on that promise.

The school governance law gave us the opportunity to reorganize the way 1.2 million public schools are administered. Last Thursday, we reached an out-of-court agreement that removed the last roadblocks to that new management structure. Now, instead of an old system of diffused and confused authority, we’ll have a clear and simple chain of command. Think of it as a pyramid. 1.2 million school principals will report to approximately 100 Local Instructional Supervisors, who will in turn answer to ten regional Instructional Division Leaders. They’ll be accountable to the School’s Chancellor’s office. And the buck will stop where it ought to: at the Mayor’s desk. School zone and district lines won’t change, and there’ll still be local school district offices. But the community school boards that too often were little more than patronage mills will become a thing of the past by the end of this month; they’ll be replaced by local panels that will give parents a real voice in their children’s schools.

The goal of our reforms is better education in the classrooms. Outstanding leadership at all our schools will be key to making that happen. That’s why we’ve established a Leadership Academy to recruit and train new school principals and provide them with professional development to incumbent principals. The Academy’s board of directors includes top educators and private sector executives. And last week, the New York City Partnership—an association run by the heads of the chief executives of 200 of our city’s top businesses—pledged $30 million to fund the Academy. Our business leaders clearly understand that improving education is crucial to New York’s future—and that investing in people is the secret to success.

School governance reform also has let us make dramatic progress in an area long marred by legendary inefficiency, delays and cost overruns: school construction. The price of designing, building and repairing schools had far exceeded what it is elsewhere in the region. That had to stop. Under the new school governance system, the school construction system has been thoroughly reorganized. The result: the price tag for the first major project being done under this new system—a substantial addition to Queens Vocational High School—is 29% lower than the average cost of previous school construction jobs. Now we’re going to duplicate that for projects across the city, allowing us to modernize our schools and end classroom overcrowding faster, better and more economically. That’s a winning formula for students and taxpayers. And like every element of our school reform plan, it shows that a new day has arrived for New York City’s schools.

**END OF SCHOOL LETTER TO PARENTS**

**By CHANCELLOR JOEL I. KLEIN**

Dear Parents,

This is the final week of what has been an historic school year. Under the Mayor’s leadership and through Children First, we have begun the monumental task of creating a system of 1.2 million outstanding schools in New York City. We know that there is a lot of hard work ahead of us in reaching this goal, but if we all continue to work together, we can make that goal a reality.

I have met with thousands of you during this school year, and I will continue to meet with parents during the summer and throughout the coming school year. The Children First agenda reflects what we heard in the meetings thus far: that parents and community members want stronger instruction in the basics of reading, writing and math; the redirection of resources to schools for classroom instruction; a voice for parents in their children’s education; and greater accountability system-wide for student performance.

Beginning July 1, you will be able to go to any of the full-service Learning Support Centers that have been established across the City. The Learning Support Centers will be open six days a week, as well as two weekends, to address any questions on school issues you may have. In addition, you can also visit any of the district-based offices, which we are staffing with an individual who can address parent issues.

For the addresses and contact information for the Learning Support Centers as well as the district-based offices, important information relating to your child may now be accessed online, including summer school, free food programs, transfers and registration, check our website at www.nycenet.edu or call the Chancellor’s hotline at (718) 482-3777.

Beginning in September, you will see many changes occurring in your children’s schools. Many schools will begin to use the new curriculum and new materials we have chosen to improve student achievement in reading and math. There also will be new coaches to assist teachers in the roll out of the new curriculum and a new Parent Coordinator who will serve as a resource and a new point of access for parents at each school.

I understand that the success of our children hinges not only on the teachers and principals in our school system, but also on you—our students’ parents. As we close out this year, I want to thank you for this extraordinary opportunity to work with and for your children. I look forward to September, when the reforms we have all been anticipating will finally become a reality in classrooms throughout the system, and I want to wish you and your family a healthy and restful summer.

Sincerely,
Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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**Summer at Mentoring USA**

By MATILDA RAFFA CUOMO and WILLIAM BAKER

Summer is here, so it’s time to take a break? Not really! At Mentoring USA (MUSA), we see summer as the perfect time to strengthen some of the connections that the mentors and mentees have established during the school year, while working on establishing new agendas. No matter how old you are, summer is a time to escape from your routine and delve into the world around you. Although many of our programs close for the summer, the city around us is anything but closed, and mentors meet with their mentees in the community to take in a ball game, visit a museum or read a book.

To support the great interest in meeting during the summer, MUSA has developed a packet of over 200 activities for the summer months. The events are fun, culturally diverse and inexpensive or free, spanning all five boroughs. From parades to festivals, museums to free concerts, mentors and mentees are encouraged to spend some unscheduled time together during the summer vacation. That time is invaluable to their relationship; it will forge new paths for them to continue to follow in the next school year.

For example, I know of one mentor that will be working over the summer to help his mentee pass the citywide exam, so that he will be able to move on to 7th grade next year. This new collaboration will afford them a new opportunity to bond even more.

Another benefit of summer outings is that the continuity is done through the parents. It is crucial for mentors and parents to feel connected to one another. By working together the mentors and parents can strategize about how best to support the child. One caring adult is great, two caring adults working together is even better.

In addition to the many activity packets, MUSA also distributes free tickets to sporting events like Mets and Metrostars games and facilitates communication between parents and mentors. We just held our Third Annual End of the Year Picnic; what a great way to celebrate! Everyone painted sandalas, ate tacos, hula hooped and danced at the Skyrink Terrace high above the city.

During the summer we hope that our mentors have an enjoyable vacation with a chance to relax. It is vital for mentors and people in support roles to take care of themselves. MUSA provides them with an opportunity to share stories, laughter and support as they are encouraged, fun time with their mentees this summer.

Matilda Raffa Cuomo is the Founder and Chair of MUSA. William Baker is the Program Manager of MUSA.
Special Education in New York City

By JILL LEVY

Thirty-five years ago, many children, including my own, did not have the right to attend public schools. They were children with “problems”—disabilities that prevented them from learning or attending school as easily as other children. They were placed in private day schools, residential schools or in institutions, removed from their communities, their neighbors and often their families.

Parents and children’s advocates fought for years to provide children with the appropriate educational programs in the least restrictive environments. I was among those who won many battles including the ones for smaller class size, the implementation of individualized plans, and evaluation by a committee of experts in specialized fields.

Special Education in New York City has evolved since then. We’ve seen increased class size, an entire district just for Special Ed students and now the growing use of immersion programs. Through it all, only one thing remains constant: the only way to navigate the complicated and unique world of Special Ed is to consistently evaluate each student’s progress.

With this in mind, let me turn to the Department of Education’s reorganization plan and pose the crucial question: Is this plan good for children? The reorganization for special education is a corporate model of management that emphasizes a top-down structure for the school, but provides little in terms of daily, ongoing, internal supports. There is little opportunity for listening to those working with the children and responding to their needs.

Principals are now expected to shoulder the responsibility for Special Education, while their entire support staff is being taken away. In my experience, principals, although well-meaning, lack the know-how, formal training and experience to consistently evaluate each student’s progress.

Nevertheless, dyslexics, often intelligent, are frequently embarrassed by their disability. General George Patton, one of America’s greatest generals during World War II and a dyslexic, did not start attending school until he was 12 years old because he could not read. Tutors read to him to make sure he gained the necessary information while he struggled to learn how to read. Nelson Rockefeller, governor of New York and vice president of the United States, was also dyslexic and had tutors to teach him to read, which he never was able to do with any ease. Yet Rockefeller graduated from Princeton University in 1936 and did not have the right to attend.

Individuals with dyslexia have difficulty decoding or breaking down a word. They lack phonemic awareness, the ability to hear the 44 sounds that make up the English language. Reading can be nearly impossible for these individuals. It is understandable that someone with dyslexia is going to find school challenging especially in middle and high school when reading requirements are considerable.

New Dyslexia Study at NYU Child Study Center

By ADAM KOPLEWICZ

A research study of teenagers with dyslexia has begun at the New York University Child Study Center. This study is attempting to shed new light and understanding on a common but disabling condition.

Using a new neuroimaging technique, DYNOT (Dynamic Near-infrared Optical Tomography) examines the brain in a safe, non-invasive manner by having a student wear a helmet that will penetrate light into his skull, producing an image of the brain. The study hopes to demonstrate differences between dyslexic and non-impaired readers. Participants are needed between the ages of 12 and 21, with or without dyslexia, to participate in one session for two to four hours. Participants will take a reading assessment test and wearing the DYNOT helmet. Volunteers will receive up to $60. Several schools have agreed to let their students receive community service credit.

Dyslexia is the most common learning disability in the United States, affecting more than 20 million individuals. Unfortunately the disorder is often misunderstood and surrounded with myths. Common misunderstandings include: dyslexics are stupid, dyslexics reverse words and flip their letters, boys are affected significantly more often, dyslexics have behavior problems, dyslexia is a “new, modern day problem.” Individuals with dyslexia have difficulty decoding or breaking down a word. They lack phonemic awareness, the ability to hear the 44 sounds that make up the English language. Reading can be nearly impossible for these individuals. It is understandable that someone with dyslexia is going to find school challenging especially in middle and high school when reading requirements are considerable.

Nevertheless, dyslexics, often intelligent, are frequently embarrassed by their disability. General George Patton, one of America’s greatest generals during World War II and a dyslexic, did not start attending school until he was 12 years old because he could not read. Tutors read to him to make sure he gained the necessary information while he struggled to learn how to read. Nelson Rockefeller, governor of New York and vice president of the United States, was also dyslexic and had tutors to teach him to read, which he never was able to do with any ease. Yet Rockefeller graduated from Princeton University in 1936 and did not have the right to attend.

Our philosophy is to treat teens as people instead of patients. Assess their strengths to accommodate their relative weaknesses.

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Changing the Face of Child Mental Health

Research Study for 12-65 year olds with and without Dyslexia

This study evaluates the difference in brain activity between non-impaired readers and dyslexics while performing game-like computer tasks. Adolescents and adults with and without dyslexia are being sought.

- Adolescents and adults in the age range of 12 – 65 years who have: - Difficulty with Reading Fluently - Difficulty with Reading Accurately - A Diagnosed Reading Disability - And Does not Take Psychiatric Medication

And adolescents and adults in the age range of 12 – 65 years who have: - Proficient Reading Skills - Reading Ability That is Equal or Better Than Other Academic Skills - And Does not Take Psychiatric Medication

Participants may be eligible to enter this study starting in July 2003. Participants will be invited for one meeting, during which they will be screened for eligibility.

If you know any adolescent or adults, or are yourself an adolescent or adult, between age 12 and 65 who would be willing to participate in this study, please contact Xavier Castellanos, Adam Koplewicz, or Eleanor Ainslie at (212) 263-8911.

For more information, please contact: (212) 263-0665 www.AboutOurKids.org NYU Child Study Center

New York University Child Study Center

Do you know a child or adolescent between the ages of 8 and 16 that...

- is restless, overactive, inattentive and distractive
- is not excessively restless, overactive, inattentive or distractible

Research Study for 8-16 year olds with and without ADHD

This study evaluates the effects of delay and uncertainty on preferences for rewards in children and adolescents with and without ADHD.

Participants will be invited to two or three meetings, during which they will perform game-like computer tasks. Subjects will be compensated $20 per visit.

Study running this summer through December 2003

For more information, please contact: (212) 263-0665 www.AboutOurKids.org NYU Child Study Center

Special Education in NYC

continued from page 8

experience to address the needs of children with special learning problems, physical handicaps and behavioral issues. In fact, under the current plan they are required to have only a paltry six credits of Special Education coursework.

In some staffing areas, the number of Special Ed employees citywide will drop from 166 to 90, doubling many caseloads. And unlike our high schools which must have Assistant Principals with Special Education expertise, our elementary and middle schools will be on their own.

But, the biggest problem concerns the 332 licensed Supervisors of Special Education (SSE) who all work in schools and report to the Principal. Their responsibilities include: observing and evaluating teachers, providing staff development for special and general education personnel, interpreting and complying with individualized education plans (IEPs) for special and general education, programming self-contained, mainstreamed and inclusion students, evaluating the quality and effectiveness of specialized equipment and techniques, including with students with special needs to answer and resolve issues regarding instruction, working with parents whose children are not yet placed in a school or program and, ensuring that all services comply with city, state and federal regulations.

NEW DYSLEXIA STUDY

continued from page 8

from Dartmouth College. Winston Churchill was also dyslexic.

The reason that boys are identified more often is that they are more likely to act up when they can’t read and therefore are more likely to get referred. Nevertheless, studies that examine the reading abilities of the general population show that girls suffer from dyslexia as frequently as boys. When a student has dyslexia he may avoid reading out loud and sometimes resort to being a “clown” or a “troublemaker.”

Dyslexia has been around since humans learned to read. Today, alternative methods to teaching students how to read have been developed; some have been found to be very effective. In addition neuroimaging techniques like MRI have demonstrated differences in the brains of dyslexics as compared to non-impaired readers. The new study at the NYU Child Study Center is attempting to find an easier, safer and less expensive technique to examine these differences that will hopefully lead to improved interventions and treatments for students with dyslexia.

For more information about the NYU Child Study Center Dyslexia Study please contact Xavier Castellanos, MD, the lead researcher of the study, at 212-263-8911.

All of these positions are being eliminated and replaced with 200 Instructional Support Specialists (ISSP). While the ISSPs will work with teachers, they leave much of the above responsibilities, including compliance and instruction, to principals and assistant principals.

Why are we willing to turn over the education of our emotionally fragil youngsters to people who have little or no expertise? Why are we willing to let them fall through the cracks, but major fissures in the system?

“Special Education is failing our children,” goes the chorus. “Special Education is draining resources from general education.”

I have known literally hundreds of families who came to the city’s Special Education program in despair for their children’s lives only to come away years later aglow with praise for the special education experts who “saved” them. Talk to some of those parents. Then talk to me about our failure to “cure” special education. Perhaps the powers that be are focusing too closely on the wrong indicators of success.

Jill Levy has served as president of the Association for Neurologically Impaired Brain Injured Children and on President Clinton’s Committee for People with Disabilities. Ms. Levy has a Master’s degree in special education and has taught graduate courses in the subject. She is president of the Council of School Supervisors & Administrators.

"I was advised to settle for something less, but kept searching. When I visited Crotched Mountain there was a tangible difference in attitude- a professionalism, respect, and “can-do” attitude that set them apart. Standards are high and the approach genuine – they really care! I am very happy with Crotched Mountain and most importantly, so is my son Jared. He has grown enormously in many ways and is becoming the young man that I always thought he could become. It’s a family’s dream come true.”

—Kathy Berns

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The College of New Rochelle’s School of New Resources (SNR) announced that the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. has awarded a grant to the Access Center at the Rosa Parks Campus in Harlem. The funds will be used to enhance technology infrastructure, purchase new equipment and software, and provide ongoing maintenance and training for faculty and students. In recognition of this generous gift, this facility will be renamed the Con Edison Access Center.

“SNR Access Centers provide academic tutoring and college and career counseling to prospective and enrolled adult students,” said Eliza Dinwiddie-Boyde, Dean of SNR. “These centers play an important role in helping students develop communication skills, problem-solving skills, mathematical skills and technological literacy. We are delighted that Con Ed has decided to invest in our Harlem campus with their generous gift.”

“One of the priorities of Con Edison is to look for ways to make a difference in the communities we serve,” said Frances A. Resheske, Senior Vice President, Public Affairs, Con Edison. “We are well aware of the role SNR’s Access Centers play in helping non-traditional students reach their educational aspirations, and are delighted that we can help future students in the Harlem community with this grant to SNR.”

The Rosa Parks Campus Access Center supports approximately 600 enrolled and 200 prospective students. The student body at this campus is 94% African-American and 6% Hispanic. Almost 90% of the campus population is female and the majority of students are the first in their families to attend college.

The College of New Rochelle was founded in 1904 by the Ursuline Order. Today, it comprises the all-women School of Arts & Sciences, and three schools which admit women and men: the School of New Resources (for adult learners), the School of Nursing and the Graduate School. The main campus of the College is located in lower Westchester County, 16 miles north of New York City. The College maintains six other campus locations in New York City.

Visit the College’s website at www.cnr.edu.
Reflections on English Language Learners

By ADAM SUGERMAN

Our city’s education leaders made the correct decision in rethinking a one-sided approach to the city’s English Language Learners (ELLs). We can’t ignore that common sense, rather than political pressure, helped Chancellor Klein and his team decide to use a variety of proven approaches in making sure this growing student population is capable of surviving the realities of adult society. Contrary to research that shows that children need one to two years to pick up social English, and five to seven years for academic English, several states have moved English learners into mainstream in an astonishingly short period of time (for example, one year of intensive English instruction in California). In theory, the best way to learn a language is by being immersed in that language. When English speakers want to learn Spanish, for example, they do it more quickly when they reside in a Spanish-speaking nation and communicate with Spanish speakers in meaningful contexts. Thus, logic would dictate that placing English learners in English immersion classes is the best way to bring students up to speed. By dropping unprepared students into mainstream classes, though, we are doing a disservice to students and teachers alike.

There are dozens of systems that have been proven effective in getting students up to speed in acquiring language. English immersion, the mayor’s first choice, is one way. Without help, though, schools will revert to the period pre-Law vs. Nichols, the landmark 1974 Supreme Court decision recognizing that providing equal access to instruction. One form of support is the use of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to plan lessons. SIOP is a research-based framework that allows educators to teach content such as mathematics or social studies while promoting English language development. Each lesson is built around specific content and language objectives. Students learn content as they build up their language skills. The SIOP model works well with a language arts intensive mathematics program, such as Everyday Mathematics.

The much-maligned transitional bilingual education has been successful in certain situations. Transitional bilingual education is based on the premise that students who master their first language have an easier time learning English. The chief complaint, though, is that it takes too long to wean students from their first language. In some cases around the country, students have very little access to ESL instruction as all content is given in the students’ first language. The strength of these programs is the strong cultural component that can help students break down barriers of living and studying in a foreign culture. The downside is that a student who has limited exposure to ESL instruction each week will need at least three years to learn enough social English to communicate in English on the playground. In the classroom setting, it is doubtful that students will ever acquire the English needed to excel in college. Students enrolled in programs with a stronger ESL component fare better as they transition to the mainstream classroom, which is the ultimate goal of transitional bilingual education.

Another form of bilingual education has been proven successful in a number of schools around the country. In two-way immersion dual immersion-programs (the U.S. Department of Education uses the term developmental bilingual education), classrooms employ one language—either the target language (e.g., Chinese, Spanish) or English—in extended periods of instruction. Ideally, the student body ratio would be half native speakers of the target language and half native-English speakers. In this way, student peers model both languages as they work together to perform academic tasks. After about five years, students are fluent in the two languages. Although this may seem a long time, the students have gained a valuable skill in today’s global marketplace: They have become comfortable in the two cultures.

Essay Contest continued from page 6

my “pride” grin persisted.

Eventually we broke up, hated each other for over a year, found each other as support in conjugal time of sadness, in the rain, in Delaware, under odd circumstances, became friends, and became a couple once more.

One night we were talking, and she mentioned a three-week trip to Germany she had won.

“Yeah,” she said, almost casually, “Steve was the only one who was really happy for me about the German thing. Not even you.” I was shocked. All that false smiling, that energy spent on trying to be the good boyfriend, and she had known.

I’d like to say, “And I was all at once happy for her,” but I can’t. At this stage, I’d hate to betray myself. But we talked, and we argued, and after a while I sort of gave up on jealousy. It was just too tiring. Thankfully, I had her to help me through it.

Zachary Zwillinger - Winner
CCNY ART PROFESSOR NAMED "DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA" AT BERKELEY

Michi Itami, a Professor of Art at City College and 1971 graduate of the University of California-Berkeley, has been named a “Distinguished Alumna” by her alma mater.

Professor Itami, who is also Director of the M.F.A. Program in CCNY’s Department of Art, was honored at Berkeley’s College of Environmental Design’s 2003 commencement exercises recently. She received her M.A. in Design from Berkeley where she studied under many renowned artists, including James Melchert, Ron Nagle, Peter Voulkos and Ed Rossbach. An artist who specializes in printmaking, painting, computer generated images and multimedia, Professor Itami’s work has earned her recognition from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York Foundation for the Arts, both of whom have awarded her grants for printmaking.

Monroe College Offers New Degree Program in Criminal Justice

Monroe College President Stephen J. Jerome announced that the college will begin offering the Associate in Science and the Bachelor of Science degrees in criminal justice beginning with its fall semester in September, 2003.

“Monroe’s venture into criminal justice reflects the college’s mission and 70-year tradition of providing high-demand courses of study that offer promising career opportunities,” said President Jerome.

President Jerome also announced the appointment of William H. McDonald, Ph.D. to chair the new department. McDonald has over 35 years experience as a highly-decorated law enforcement professional and an educator of criminal justice. A wide range of courses leading to careers in law enforcement, corrections, social work, probation, treatment and counseling, juvenile and family advocacy, the court systems, and other related fields, will be offered. Professors are criminal justice professionals with many years of experience and unique insights.

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Sigurd H. Ackerman, M.D. has been named President and Medical Director of Silver Hill Hospital in New Canaan, CT. In announcing the appointment, Steve Stillerman, Board Chairman of the nationally recognized psychiatric hospital, noted Dr. Ackerman’s distinguished career in the practice of psychiatry. “Dr. Ackerman brings to the Silver Hill community, to staff, patients and families, the breadth and depth of 25 years of outstanding leadership in clinical care, teaching, research and program development,” Mr. Stillerman said. Dr. Ackerman replaces Dr. Richard Frances who led the hospital as Medical Director and President for the past six years. Dr. Frances remains on the medical staff as Senior Medical Consultant and Director of Public and Professional Education. Formerly Chief Executive Officer and President of St. Luke’s-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York City, Dr. Ackerman also served as Chairman of the hospital’s Department of Psychiatry. He is a Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons and has held academic titles in psychiatry at Cornell University Medical College and Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

In discussing his new position, Dr. Ackerman stressed the hospital’s strengths and areas that he would like to develop. “Silver Hill,” he said, “is known for outstanding treatment of psychiatric disorders and substance use disorders which very frequently—more than half the time—occur together and are called dual disorders. The Hospital is unique in having the expertise to treat a very broad spectrum of dual-diagnosed patients. We see an increasing need for this treatment in the medical community, and we are going to emphasize it more and more.

We also want to extend the scope of our work in helping patients and their families with the process of recovering from an episode of illness. Upon discharge from the hospital, many patients continue to need help with the steps necessary to regain a full life. To achieve this, we plan to offer more transitional support to patients, their families and their therapists in the community.”

Dr. Ackerman concluded, “I’m very excited about being here. Throughout its 72-year history Silver Hill has been, and still is, on the cutting edge of psychiatric care. The physical setting is extraordinarily beautiful and that itself is helpful to the recovery of our patients. The experienced staff is very dedicated and conscious of their responsibilities towards patients and families. The Board of Directors is an active, involved group, truly committed to the betterment of the hospital. All of this together makes for a first-rate facility.”

An honors graduate of Harvard College, Dr. Ackerman received his medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine. He trained in psychiatry at Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, where for 10 years his full-time research on the effects of early maternal separation was federally funded by National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) Research Scientist Development Awards and National Institutes of Health (NIH) research project awards. Before joining St. Luke’s-Roosevelt Hospital as Executive Vice President and Medical Director, Dr. Ackerman led a clinical research unit for affective disorders and was the Associate Director for Clinical Affairs and Research at the Eating Disorders Institute of New York Hospital, Cornell University Medical Center, Westchester Division.

Dr. Ackerman is a fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and a member of numerous other scientific societies. A reviewer for professional journals, he has published widely on his specific research topics and clinical practice interests which include psychopharmacology, depression, eating disorders, sleep disorders and the treatment of dual diagnosis. Dr. Ackerman and his wife Cecilia McCarton, MD, a developmental pediatrician, have five children and reside in Stamford, CT.

Established in 1931, Silver Hill Hospital is a private, not-for-profit facility with a full range of mental health programs, including inpatient, partial hospital, intensive outpatient and transitional care.

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Protect your Eyes During Long, Summer Days

There’s so much to see and do in the summer. At the same time, there are many things about summer that could get in the way of seeing anything all year around.

Prevent Blindness America (PBA) warns parents about the following summertime activities that can harm a child’s eyes:

 Ultraviolet light: Children who spend a lot of time outside, risk the damaging effects of the sun. UV radiation in sunlight, including both UVA and UVB, has been shown to be harmful to the eye. Constant exposure to bright sunlight can damage the cornea (the clear outer part of the eye), the lens (the part of the eye responsible for focusing), and the retina (the innermost layer of the eye that sends an image to the brain). It is very important to protect children’s sight from the damaging effects of the sun—choosing well-fitted, unbreakable sunglasses with 99-100% UVA protection and a hat that shades the face are the best defense. Do not buy any sunglasses if they don’t have a label stating this degree of protection.

 Summertime sports: Children are engaged in more sports activities than ever before. Unfortunately, there are close to 40,000 eye injuries every year from participation in sports, with basketball, water/pool activities, and baseball/soccer the three leading causes. Fitting your children with protective eye gear can help prevent blinding eye injuries.

 Fireworks: Backyard fireworks are illegal in eight states for a simple reason—they’re dangerous for anyone but professionals. Every year, there are close to 10,000 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms and half are to children under age 15. In 2001, four people were killed because of fireworks. Fireworks and celebrations go together, especially during the Fourth of July, but there are precautions parents can take to help prevent these injuries. Official public displays are much safer, and generally more spectacular, although be aware that even professional displays can be dangerous.

 The best defense against kids suffering severe eye injuries and burns is to not let children play with any fireworks. Protect yourself, your family and your friends by avoiding fireworks.

 For more information on summer eye safety, contact PBA at 1-800-331-2020, or PBA’s New York Division at 1-212-463-3862. You can also visit www.preventblindness.org.

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Reflections of New Physicians

Close to one in four newly trained physicians would select a field other than medicine if they could begin their careers again, according to a survey by Merritt, Hawkins, & Associates, a Dallas-based physician search and consulting firm. Before they even enter the world of professional practice, many newly trained physicians are wondering why they didn’t chart a different course. The survey has examined the practice preferences and concerns of physicians in their final year of residency training every other year since 1991.

In 2003, 24% of physicians in their final year of training would select a field other than medicine if they could begin their careers again. By contrast, only 5% of physicians responding to the 2001 survey indicated they would select a field other than medicine. Prior to this year, no more than 11% of residents surveyed in any given year have indicated they would select a career other than medicine.

What has changed? The malpractice crisis is a factor contributing to the negativity of newly trained physicians.

In addition, 60% of residents surveyed indicated that dealing with managed care and other payers is a significant cause of concern, up from 25% in 2001. More physicians surveyed in 2003 are concerned about their availability of free time, level of education intensity and the depth of their medical knowledge than has been the case in the past.

The irony, CEO Hawkins observes, is that the job market for new physicians has never been better. Close to 70% of residents surveyed in 2003 indicated they had received 51 or more job solicitations in the course of their residency training, and over 40% indicated they had received 100 or more job solicitations.

The survey was mailed to 4,800 residents in their final year of training and 350 completed surveys were received.
The Department of Education, as the Board of Education is now known, is over 100 years old. During that time, the pendulum has swung from centralization to decentralization and back, from teaching reading via phonics to the whole word approach and now back to phonics again, from bilingual education to immersion and back. Reform movements have abounded, thrived and died. Underlying all the rhetoric, the steadfast image of the teacher has remained undiminished. And the preparation of fine, solid educators has been the cornerstone of our children’s success. Yet, no one has ever celebrated or honored outstanding teachers until Education Update decided to do so. Recommended by principals, superintendents and colleagues, 42 teachers appeared throughout the year in the pages of the award-winning monthly culminating in a ceremony at the Harvard Club on June 20th.

Teachers were proudly accompanied by their supervisors and family members. Mrs. Lee came from the furthest point, Hawaii, placing fresh leis on her son’s shoulders. All five boroughs were represented across all grade levels. Dr. Pola Rosen, founder and publisher of Education Update, and a teacher, supervisor and college professor for many years, shared the fulfillment of her dream to honor these “wonderful teachers who serve as inspirations and guides to knowledge, remembered forever by the young people whose lives they’ve touched.” Adam Sugerman, associate editor of Education Update, placed a ribboned gold medal over the heads of the teachers as they were called up to receive their certificates by the sponsors of the event.

Education Update is grateful to the following sponsors who made the event possible: Citibank,...
New York City Public Schools to Become Annual Event

President Jennifer Raab of Hunter College gave welcoming comments recalling with fondness her days in the public schools of New York before going on to Princeton and Harvard Law School. The keynote address was delivered by Regent Merryl Tisch who emphasized the importance of excellent teacher preparation and leadership in our schools today. Special guest Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein was delighted to share this special day with the teachers, principals and families, awarding several of the certificates and personally congratulating the recipients.

One of the high points of the program was the concert by student violinists from public schools (and Opus 118), taught and conducted by honoree Roberta Guaspari (Meryl Streep starred in the movie about Roberta’s life recently). The young violinists, demonstrating a range of styles and techniques from blues to Bach, from pizzicato to legato, received a standing ovation.

Rosen, recalling the words of teacher Christa McAuliffe who died on a space shuttle, “I touch the future; I teach.”

To see a video clip of the event covered by Pauline Liu of Channel 11 (WPIX News), go to www.educationupdate.com.
Homeschoolers Embrace the Internet!

The true impact of the Internet is just beginning to be felt in distance learning, home-schooling and tutoring. Online instruction vastly improves the access, quality and speed of information, enabling the individual to develop knowledge like never before with anytime, anywhere learning. The real value in online educational content is not in simply putting existing content online, but taking advantage of the Internet’s unique attributes to create new content. The key is to change educational programming, reconsidering how knowledge is obtained and then making use of the advantages this powerful technology offers. e-Tutor has created a program that is very different than traditional tutoring programs. Lessons are integrated across four broad curricular areas in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and sciences that are frequently integrated with related lessons. Subscribing students can access any of the lessons at four cross-aged levels: primary, intermediate, middle/junior high and high school any time of the day or night. Students work independently at their own pace and on their own time.

While online instruction is still in its infancy, homeschoolers are beginning to recognize its value. America’s youth have embraced the computer and the Internet as their own. Half of all kids age eight or older use the computer every day and nearly 75 percent have a computer at home. Students use the Internet for information gathering, e-mail and chat. Online learning is a natural extension of their use of the Internet now and programs like e-Tutor provide focus and guidance to increase their natural need to learn. e-Tutor provides all instructional material online, immediate feedback is provided for quizzes and exams, and educators respond to e-mail from students and parents. # For information—http://www.e-tutor.com.

Children and their families double their fun this summer at the two gardens designed especially for children: the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden and the Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden. Children participate in the following engaging programs:

Flower Power in the Adventure Garden—Going on now through September 14, 10:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. This summer children investigate the brightly-colored jumbo flower models to discover how flowers are adapted to attract their pollinators. The larger-than-life flowers showcase the exciting features they possess to attract a pollinator: Does the pollinator hover? What colors attract a pollinator? Did you know bees

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-Caryl E. Little, Glades Middle School

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Summer Adventures at the New York Botanical Garden

Children and their families double their fun this summer at the two gardens designed especially for children: the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden and the Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden. Children participate in the following engaging programs:

Flower Power in the Adventure Garden—Going on now through September 14, 10:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m. This summer children investigate the brightly-colored jumbo flower models to discover how flowers are adapted to attract their pollinators. The larger-than-life flowers showcase the exciting features they possess to attract a pollinator: Does the pollinator hover? What colors attract a pollinator? Did you know bees

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**NY Botanical Garden continued from page 16**

Like flowers that have a bull's-eye pattern? In the Bendheim Global Herbarium, children craft flowers for pollinators like bats, moths, beetles, and bees. Children play a pollinator puppet matching game that pairs up pollinators such as hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies, to their favorite flower. July is loaded with captivating, ongoing activities including dissecting live flowers and studying them under microscopes, playing a scented guessing game, planting marigold seeds to take home, and exploring the Adventure Garden on captivating flower hunts.

**Budding Botanists—Tuesday through Friday, 1:30–3:00 p.m.** For children ages 2–5

Get creative with Nature's ABCs, a program for early literacy through the study of nature. Explore each letter with stories and hands-on activities like planting, pasting, stamping, and coloring:

- July 8 – 18, July 22 - August 1: What better place to enjoy the beauty of the season? Camp groups are dazzled by the wonders of the natural world within the Garden's 250 acres. Select from a lineup of exciting summer programs:
  - How Does Your Garden Grow? Family Garden: Children plant, weed, water, compost, and much more! Pre-registration is required, so if you are not on our mailing list call (718) 817-8177.
  - Budding Botanists: Children plant, weed, water, compost with red wiggler worms, and help create a lush summer garden full of flowers, herbs, and vegetables. Each child pots up a plant to take home.
  - Seedlings Workshop for teachers of grades K–2, NEP! July 28–August 1 — AVAILABLE

There are three options for credit: Thirty units of New York City Department of Education New Teacher Credit; Three “G” in-service credits from the NYC Dept. of Ed.; Two graduate credits in education through CUNY Lehman College.

Additional fee and requirements apply for “G” and graduate credits. For more information, or to register call (718) 817-8177.

Guided Walks of the Garden Grounds or in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory: Children look, smell, and listen as they explore the natural wonders of the Garden grounds. In the Conservatory, children see a South American Healer’s House, explore insect-eating plants, and discover how plants adapt to different climates. Children are amazed at the Agave americana, or century plant. This is the first time this species has flowered at the Garden, and its spike, that can grow up to more than a foot a day, has literally grown through the roof of the Conservatory.

Self-led Tours of the Garden Grounds: In these themed tours, young detectives explore the Garden grounds, solve the mystery of the missing nectar, and discover the wonders of a 50-acre Forest. Children investigate the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory using the “Adventures for Plant Hunters” guide or search the Mitsubishi Wild Wetland Trail for aquatic plants, birds, and frogs to play “Wetland Bingo.”

**Teacher Training: Summer Institutes**

Seedlings Workshop for teachers of grades K–2, NEP! July 28–August 1 — AVAILABLE

Children’s programs at the NY Botanical Garden’s Education Center are a diverse and multifaceted internet collaboration incorporating a private Christian school with true online education. All instruction occurs online. Students receive their assignments and turn in their work through this web site.

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“I just wanted to let you know what a wonderful blessing your materials have been to me!... I feel like your guides give me a framework and confidence... We are all looking forward to school now.” — J. McDonald

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Sign up for Kathryn’s free monthly teaching help column.
Product Review: Arco Duplidisk 3

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Mathematics teachers perennially complain that students lack statistics literacy. Here’s some scary ones: an estimated 1 in 500 data centers will experience a critical hardware fail-

ure serious enough to cause a severe “data dis-

aster.” And of that misfortunate .002% of com-

mercial enterprises whom will experience such a catastrophe, 29% will never reopen. Schools must, of course, reopen, which changes the economics of data loss, but the impact may even be greater. How can a price be put on that information which represents the basics of edu-

cation? Grades, discipline, vital health info – what would happen if a severe system crash erased all of these key datum?

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gy, it offers real time data mirroring that not only protects against evils like human error, viruses, and software corruption, it can even allow your system to continue operating during a complete hard drive failure. That type of cata-

strophic failure is rare in a typical education technology environment, but, given the severe slashing of IT budgets in the current fiscal cri-
sis, how could any administrator responsibly deny the efficacy of stopping a problem before it even began?

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ity and power of this peripheral cannot be over-

stated. For more information: log on to


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THEATER & MOVIES

Summer Family Films: Sinbad; Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde

By JAN AARON

DreamWorks’ “Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas,” loosely follows the adventures of the famous Arabian sailor-turnt-lion-tamer over one thousand years ago in “The Arabian Nights.” To tell their new animated tale, writer John Logan, (co-writer of the Oscar-winning “Gladiator,”) and directors Tim Johnson (“Aamn”) and Patrick Gilmore, let their imaginations drift to different Roman and Greek mythologies for themes and add a dash of romance to their scaring saga. The film is a blend of 2-D and 3-D animations. Adults accompanying kids will find this an enjoyable sit-through.

In a nutshell: the adventure starts when Eris (voiced by Michelle Pfeiffer), the delightfully slippery goddess of discord steals the “Book of Peace” and pins her heist on Sinbad (a hip voiced Brad Pitt). Sailing away to prove he is innocent and save the life of his best friend Proteus (voiced by Joseph Fiennes), Sinbad must travel to the realm where Eris resides, a fearful place where no one has been before. At first, he thinks of just sailing to Fiji. But, Proteus’ beautiful girlfriend, Marina (Catherine Zeta-Jones) stows away to make sure Sinbad fulfills his mission. In Eris’ land, he and spunky Marina defeat all the nifty monsters—most fearsome is a mammoth swooping bird of snow and ice—but problems persist. Sinbad still must deal with the effects of Eris’ golden “Apple of Discord,” which turns friends into enemies when thrown into their midst. Does Sinbad break the spell and save his friend? See the film. (83 minutes, PG).

Tuck the kids in and take in “Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde” where pink loving Harvard law-grad Elle Woods, (the incomparable Reese Witherspoon) goes to Washington. There she turns her legal and fashion smarts on the DC establishment on behalf of animal rights and learns what it takes to get her legislation—legislated with the help of veteran comedian Bob Newhart as Sid, the doorman. Sally Field is fine as Representative Rudd who might have compromised her own liberal ideals. Surprisingly sharp! (PG-13; 95 minutes)

Call 777-Film for timings for both movies.

IMAGINATION CONVERSATION

By SCOTT NOPPE-BRANDON

During an Imagination Conversation, organized last fall by Lincoln Center Institute in 11 cities across the country, visionary thinkers, practitioners, researchers and educators from the sciences, political policy, business and the humanities, explored the role imagination plays in their personal and professional lives. A critical idea emerging from those conversations was the importance of imaginative thinking whether one is an artist, scientist, foreign service expert, business leader, arts administrator, or educator. Maxine Greene, educational philosopher par excellence, riffing off John Dewey, writes, “It is imagination that discloses possibilities—personal and social as well as aesthetic. By imagining, we are enabled to look at things, to think about things as if they were otherwise.” In the classroom, imaginative encounters with works of dance, music, theater, and other forms can nurture reflective and participatory understanding of the arts and of the aesthetic dimension in students’ lives. In addition, the noticing, the artistic exploring, and the sharing of those experiences represent, together, a conversation among individual imaginations.

What might this look like? Because imagination as a tool for planning, for implementing change, for thinking differently no matter how scary or uncertain that process may seem, is exactly what we need right now in the NYC school system. In addition to the noticing, the artistic exploring, and the sharing of those experiences, there is a need to create space for the arts. Spaces where each art form, each discipline, is developed specifically for arts-based instruction. And a new curriculum for the arts is being planned. I wish to add to this good news by suggesting a few acts of imaginative action that I believe will have direct impact on how the arts are taught within the NYC schools. As the discussion unfolds around the new arts curriculum under consideration, I hope for imaginative thinking. The curriculum should not be only what might be termed a discipline-specific approach where each art form, each discipline, is developed separate from the other arts. The “how” of teaching the arts should be connected to the “how” of teaching in general, whether it is in the arts or math. A document should be developed that teaches about each art form and interrelates the arts (whether multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary), and demonstrates how the arts relate to the entire curriculum.

This strategy would allow for the arts to be part of the core instructional and content goals of any given school, and help insure that the arts are central to the overall educational goals of a school by connecting all subject-based teaching through shared understanding and practice. Ideally, what is being considered will attempt to connect the values and goals of the arts to the specific goals any educational environment may have for its students.

The answers to who should teach about and through the arts in a school should come out of the discussion, not into the discussion. I hope it is a given that in NYC all schools should have skilled, certified arts educators; that all schools should work in partnership with the professional arts community; and that arts educators and cultural organizations partner with the classroom teachers and the subject-based teachers. Together, only not separately, can we bring about the systemic change needed to bring the arts into the daily lives of all students. Teaching, as a creative and imaginative force, is not only the responsibility of the arts teachers and the cultural community, but of all teachers. We are not separate or divided in our intentions; we all have the same goal: the best possible education for our children. It will take a united team—a team willing to employ imagination—to accomplish the job.

Scott Noppe-Brandon is the Executive Director of the Lincoln Center Institute.

MUSIC, ART & DANCE

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Children’s Books Provide a Cool Summer Breeze
By SELENE VASQUEZ

Picture Books: Ages 5 thru 8

**On the Way To The Beach**
by Henry Cole.
(Greenwillow, 32 pp., $15.99.)

Beautiful locales—the woods, a salt marsh, dunes, and the infinite line of beaches—are splendidly depicted in three-page fold-outs that the reader enters through die-cuts. Excellent realistic acrylic illustrations depict habitat scenes in three-dimensional perspectives.

**Last Night I Dreamed A Circus**
by Maya Gottfried.
Illustrated by Robert Zakanitch.
(Knopf, 32 pp., $15.95.)

Experience momentous exclamations such as “I spun circles round the stars” when a woman dances in midair from a rope between her teeth.

Enter the otherworldliness of the circus in this dreamy setting of flying acrobats, lion tamers, and colorful clowns. Experience momentous exclamations such as “I spin circles round the stars” when a woman dances in midair from a rope between her teeth.

**The Story Of Kites**
by Ying Chang Compestine. Illustrated by Yong-Sheng Xuan.
(Holiday House, 32 pp., $16.95.)

How can the Kong brothers keep pecking birds out of the rice fields? After experimentation with paper and chopsticks, they invent a wondrous and practical solution: China’s first kite factory! Lively cut-paper pictures reminiscent of traditional Chinese art.

**Butterflies for Kiri**
by Cathryn Falwell.
(Tee and Low, 32 pp., $16.95.)

A Japanese-American girl receives a brightly colored origami kit for her birthday and proceeds to follow the delicate and often complicated instructions for making butterflies. The intriguing and ancient art of origami is rendered with delicacy and reverence.

*Selene S. Vasquez is a media specialist at Orange Brook Elementary School in Hollywood, Florida. She is formerly a children’s librarian for the New York Public Library.*

Books & Basketball: Summer Reading Program Opens in Red Hook, Brooklyn

This summer, on every Saturday, children ages 8-11 in the Red Hook Rise League will enjoy reading and storytelling before a basketball game. For the past two years, Literacy Inc. (LINC), a not-for-profit organization has collaborated with Red Hook Rise to provide more out of classroom reading opportunities for young aspiring ballplayers. Parents, guest readers, senior citizens, local service providers and teenagers will join in the reading activities. Red Hook Rise is a grass roots organization of volunteers dedicated to providing educational opportunities for children.

Special guests to read with children include: Marty Markowitz, Brooklyn Borough President, Members of the Brooklyn Mentoring Network, Local Radio Station HOTH 97, and an NBA Player. The location is Coffey Park (Basketball Courts), Richards Street between King and Pioneer Streets.

For more information contact the LINC Coordinator at 212-620-5462, Ext. 230 or Earl Hall of Red Hook Rise at 917-709-5878.

Logos Bookstore’s Recommendations

**On the Way To The Beach**
by Henry Cole. (Greenwillow, 32 pp., $15.99.)

**The Story Of Kites**
by Ying Chang Compestine. Illustrated by Yong-Sheng Xuan. (Holiday House, 32 pp., $16.95.)

**Butterflies for Kiri**
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PRODIGAL SONS & MATERIAL GIRLS:
HOW NOT TO BE YOUR CHILD’S ATM

Did you know there are 80 million young people under age 25 in the U.S.? That’s nearly one-third of the population. Even more, that they spend or influence the spending of $1 trillion/year in this $10 trillion economy? Or that young people today spend 5 times more money—adjusted for inflation—than their parents did at the same age? Did you know that the average college student has three credit cards with most students carrying an average balance of $2,400? Or that the fastest growing age group filing for bankruptcy in America is young people under age 25 according to a Harvard University study? And to top it off the financial literacy rate of this demographic is at an all time low! Surprising or disturbing? From toddlers who beg for another toy to college students who graduate buried in credit card debt, do children today know the value of a dollar? As the hypnotic spell of consumerism entices the youth of America, more and more parents across the U.S. are troubled by their children’s attitudes about money and spending. The old-time values of work ethic, thrift, and satisfaction have been replaced by the need for more and pricier possessions. As virtually every message a child hears about money—from marketing, peer pressure, TV, movies, and other voices of consumerism—promotes spending, parents are the first line of defense in helping their children develop healthy financial habits that will last a lifetime.

In *Prodigal Sons and Material Girls: How Not To Be Your Child’s ATM* (Wiley; June 2003; $24.95; Cloth), author Nathan Dungan—an expert on family finances and the effects of mass marketing on young people—offers parents a practical road map for instilling children with a sense of financial responsibility that will last a lifetime. As a long-time financial advisor on this topic, Dungan blends real-world stories with the tools and techniques needed to teach children the real value of money.

Prodigal Sons and Material Girls is divided into two comprehensive parts. In Part I, Dungan outlines the disturbing facts about America’s possession-crazed youth and the society that has distorted their views. Readers will be introduced to everything from the “three-headed monster”—a high-powered trio of consumer product companies, media conglomerates, and advertising agencies—that has tremendous influence over children, to the distorted view of money that is being taught in schools. Part II sets the stage for parents to teach financial responsibility from a position of strength.

In Part II of *Prodigal Sons and Material Girls*, Dungan offers creative and convincing examples on how to leverage his highly successful “Share-Save-Spend” approach to money—critical elements for helping children break free from the materialism that has become so ingrained in our society.

Prodigal Sons and Material Girls helps young people establish healthy financial habits that will undoubtedly become their foundation for making a lifetime of responsible financial decisions.

*Nathan Dungan is President of Share-Save-Spend LLC, and a frequent speaker and consultant.*
Dear Teachers and Administrators:

In July 2003, the fiscal year for the New York City Department of Education will begin! It is at this time that budgets and vendors’ lists will be formulated and released. This is the time that education dollars are allocated for the best materials, books, equipment and services to enable our students to achieve state standards.

For eight years Education Update has been regarded as an expert and reliable source of information to help our readers, the decision makers in New York City public and private education, choose appropriate materials for their needs. Education Update is therefore providing our Marketing Supplement, a curricular and technological resource guide.

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Best Wishes,

Pola Rosen, Ed.D.
Publisher

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Compiled by KATARZYNA KOZANECKA and ROB LUCHOW

Each summer, New York City students of all ages can choose from countless work or study opportunities. These range from science research internships to creative writing classes. Many are free, but some require applications, so be sure to check for deadlines. Education Update has compiled a list of these programs. For more ideas, students may consult The New York City Youth Guide to Summer Fun 2003 at www.nyc.gov, or call the Summer Youth Employment Program at 212-442-2029.

Classes in the Galleries of the Met: Rika Burnham and Randolph Williams teach free classes for students in grades 6 through 12 in the galleries of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The History of Art (Tuesdays and Thursdays, July 15—August 7, 1 P.M.—3 P.M.) surveys masterpieces of Western art. Looking and Drawing in the Galleries (Tuesday—Friday, August 5—8, 1 P.M.—3 P.M.) teaches students that studying the fundamentals of drawing leads to understanding works of art. Walking on the Roof (August 13, 10 A.M.—1 P.M.) takes students to the Museum’s roof garden to sketch and discuss six sculptures by pop artist Roy Lichtenstein. For a complete schedule of classes, call 212-570-3961.

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Summer Internships and Study

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www.oysterdock.com
By MITCHELL LEVINE

Common sense tells us that students find physics boring, dry, and difficult. Labs are tedious. Equations are excruciating. Newton’s laws might as well be in the Principia Mathematica’s original Latin for all that today’s high school Regents students care. Yet not only is this material required for standards completion and achievements, it’s so crucial to everyday practical matters that incomprehension can actually lead to physical injury. What can a science teacher do to make this stuff interesting?

Actually, all that’s needed is an approximately fifteen dollar investment in one of the most fascinating and inexpensive science demonstration aids that this reviewer’s ever seen, the amazing Zero Launcher by Zero Toys. Think aerodynamics, fluid and statistical mechanics, torsion, and classical dynamics are too complicated for your sixth graders? Wrong! With this bargain-priced plastic unit, your class will not only receive a vivid demonstration of all of the above principles in action, but additionally experience the joy that comes only with the ability to blow six inch strawberry scented, kosher (that’s right, kosher) glycerin-based toroidal smoke rings up to fourteen feet from a handheld plastic unit.

The product uses a simple hand-triggered mechanism that looks much like a water pistol to create a vortex of non-toxic fog based on a physical law called the Bernoulli effect. With just 2 AA batteries and a little bit of practice, anyone can create endless and transfixing instances in miniature of the same phenomenon that drives volcanoes, tornadoes, and whirlpools. How much fun is this to watch? An Education Update staff member, actually wore out the batteries on the very first day we unleashed this monster on the office. Luckily, one small bottle of Superfog included with the product can produce 25,000 smoke rings! As a onetime physics major myself, I can personally say that the Zero Launcher is among the very best visual demonstration aids I’ve ever seen! For info or orders: zero.toys.com.

**Product Review: Zero Toys’ Zero Launcher**

**By MITCHELL LEVINE**

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Summer Internships & Study
continued from page 22

immersed in scientific research at the Rockefeller University where they get to use actual laboratories. Best of all: it’s free.

“We offer the highest quality one-on-one mentoring experience,” said Dr. Bonnie Kaiser, director of the program. The program is open to all students and boasts a diverse population of students from public, private, and parochial schools. They actively engage in learning research skills in various science departments including human genetics, biochemistry, physics, and computer sciences. With over 80 graduate-level laboratories, the program offers to students the latest and most advanced research facilities along with a skilled mentor.

“What most people don’t understand is that these students are doing real research,” Kaiser said. “This program has given me insight to the life of a scientist,” said Adrian Ross, a senior at Horace Mann High School who is working on gene and cell research at the program. “I have been placed in to a fabulous lab that both challenges me intellectually and appreciates my contribution to the scientific process.”

Because of the free tuition, availability to the program is limited and does require an application. According to the program’s website, about one in five is accepted. For more information visit the Rockefeller Science Outreach Program at www.rockefeller.edu/outreach.

Summer Playwriting Institute: Young Playwrights, Inc. and the Brooklyn Public Library are co-sponsoring summer courses for students between the ages of 13 and 18. Focusing on such facets as character, setting, and conflict, students will learn how to develop their own work and revise work already in progress. The Summer Playwriting Institute offers weekend intensive courses for $75 and weeklong courses for $125. Students can take advantage of a work-study program, which allows them to work in the Young Playwrights’ office in exchange for participating in the class. The classes are held either in Brooklyn’s Central Library at Grand Army Plaza or in the YPI office, 306 West 38th Street, suite 300. For more information call 212.639.5980.

Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center welcomes volunteers of any age to escort patients, deliver flowers, staff the library, and act as couriers. Students are expected to make a commitment to participate for one summer or semester. A minimum of six hours of service are required each month. Bilingual volunteers are especially needed. For more information, call the Department of Volunteer Resources at 212.639.5980.

Camp Haverim and Camp Dream Street: For students interested in counselor experience combined with volunteerism, the JCC on the Palisades in Tenafly, NJ offers two camps where counselors can play an important role in children’s lives. Camp Haverim runs for two weeks from August 14 to 22 and provides a day camp experience for children with autism. Ages four to 12, these children participate in academic and social skills training along with activities like athletics, art, dance, and cooking. With a teacher-student ratio of one to one, the assistant teachers work closely with the campers.

Camp Dream Street is a one-week camping experience for children ages four to 14 with cancer and other blood disorders. Established by the Dream Street Foundation along with sponsorships by four New York area hospitals, the camp offers these children a fun and enjoyable experience. The camp runs from August 18 to August 22. Volunteer and paid positions are available. For Camp Haverim, contact Cheryl Edelstein at 201-569-7900 ext. 302. For Camp Dream Street call Lisa Robins at 201-569-7920 ext. 381. For more information, visit www.jcconthepalisades.org.

NASA Research in New York City: This summer, a new program from NASA and the Goddard Institute for Space Studies offers high school students an opportunity to study outer space. As part of the New York City Metropolitan Area Research Initiative, this program allows students to assist NASA scientists and researchers in different scientific arenas from space vehicle architecture to the effects of the human body in space.

The program originated in 1989 as the Summer High School Apprenticeship Research Program (SHARP). Initiated by a presidential directive, it aimed to open up research and laboratories to students traditionally underrepresented in the fields of science, mathematics, and engineering. However, the program is open students of all backgrounds and encourages all students to apply. Students involved in the program will be assigned to a research team. Over the course of the summer, the student partakes in hands-on research and learns how to understand and present data. The program accepts 400 students annually. It boasts that 90 percent of their students graduate from college and some continue their work as NASA scientists.

For more info: visit www.nasasharp.com.

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