First Lady
Laura Bush

Literacy Advocate
By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

So what does a super-dynamic, impassioned, articulate humanitarian from a well known philanthropic family do when he becomes Chairman Emeritus, after having founded and funded a significant venture for educational reform? If he’s Daniel Rose, of Rose Associates, Inc., he’s “bursting with pride” at having a distinguished new team to whom he has passed the torch—Chair Stephen L. Gessner and Vice Chair Fern J. Khan—but he continues to talk about the Harlem Educational Activities Fund, Inc (HEAF) with so much energy and fervor that it’s clear that he’ll be stoking the flame constantly to ensure that it’s always burning bright.

Metaphors naturally describe the activities that intrigue Dan Rose, a visionary who instinctively invokes his own similes and metaphors to describe HEAF, an after-school, weekend and summer program. Noting that it’s the smallest of the rocket models at Cape Kennedy that makes it to the moon, he analogizes that reach to the success of HEAF, a relatively small operation in the world of private and public funding of educational initiatives for disadvantaged minorities. Pause (only a slight one). Dan Rose is overflowing with enthusiasm. His family has always been involved in supporting culture and the arts and HEAF, he says, is his way of continuing this tradition and also of giving back. A Yale man, he expresses a great commitment to public education, noting that the 1937 graduating class of The City College went on to produce three Nobelists—and that at a time when students were largely from immigrant communities, living in tough neighborhoods and finding themselves in overcrowded classrooms. Of course, Rose is a realist: He knows that the areas HEAF serves—Central Harlem, Washington Heights, the South Bronx—are rife with conditions that all too easily breed negative peer pressure, poor self-esteem, and low aspirations and expectations that inevitably produce low achievement. HEAF’s mission is the direct opposite.

To the mother of a HEAF student in his office some years ago, for whom he had just purchased a bonsai, he spoke of the difference between the small tree whose limited growth was conditioned by its narrow root system, and the giant Sequoia, whose reach to the sky was due to its rich and supportive external conditions. He spoke of HEAF providing that kind of environment so that her child would grow to full potential. The son went on to the Bronx H.S. of Science and eventually to the Albert Einstein Medical School where he is completing his residency in pediatrics. Other students recount similar stories on video at HEAF’s website—a Yale sophomore, whose Dominican mother didn’t know about the university, a Columbia Journalism major whom HEAF coaxed out of shyness, and so on.

So what is it that sets HEAF apart? Research and development. Beginning 15 years ago with an experiment to see what truly worked, HEAF wound up concentrating on “being effective at the margin.” First HEAF took under its wing the lowest-ranking public school in the city and five years later moved it from having only 9 percent of its students at grade level to 2/3rds. Then HEAF turned its attention to a minority school with 100 percent at or above grade level but whose students were not successful in getting into the city’s premier public high schools. HEAF tutoring and counseling turned that around, and the school went on to generate the number-one student chess players in the country. Still, with success at both ends, “the sad reality” was that students from the low-scoring school did not continue to achieve after graduation. The other finding was that students from the high-achieving school would have produced successes regardless of HEAF. Thus was born The Margin, the HEAF niche—“the best use of limited resources”—working with motivated children who might not make it without HEAF but who, with HEAF support, most likely would.

“Focus on what you can do” may be a kind of “triage,” but HEAF has proved that raising expectations and therefore performance can be done. Rose is still joyously recovering from a visit he just made with 12 students to visit Federal Judge Robert Katzman in his chambers at the U.S. Federal District Thurgood Marshall Courthouse. The kids tried on the judge’s robes and listened in rapt attention to career possibilities. No one could have been more thrilled, however, than Dan Rose. See www.heaf.org.
Eli Broad: Accelerating the Impact of Education Philanthropy

By Joan Baum, Ph.D.

With 85 urban districts nationwide under its purview so far, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation in only its fifth year of existence has already distinguished itself in the world of corporate support for public education, K-12 by not just initiatives but follow through. As Dan Katzir, Managing Director of the Foundation has written, the challenge to philanthropists is to “demonstrate replicability and success in multiple locations.” Acknowledging similar philanthropic activities by private and not-for-profit organizations, Katzir, himself a product of public school, eagerly notes the four main interests of giving that he believes differentiate the Broad Foundation: (1) selecting the district rather than an individual school as the “unit of change”; (2) ensuring that effective practices are widely disseminated, a move that will be augmented shortly with the hiring of a communications director; (3) sticking to a particular strategic focus or staying the course after the “sexy” start-up period (Teach for America, where Katzir was COO, showed that constancy pays off; and (4) focusing on results through carefully monitored annual evaluations, 75 percent of which turn on performance indicators such as standardized assessments, GPAs, and graduation rates. Overall, the Foundation concluded that these four areas represented the most critical features in improving urban public education because they centered on better governance, including involvement of mayors and governors; management, meaning senior leadership positions on through; and labor relations, involving unions in a prominent way.

The reason for concentrating on urban schools is obvious: that’s where the need and numbers are. What isn’t immediately apparent is the choice of the “district” for main attention. Typically, Katzir points out, when a particular low-performing school is turned around its success is not duplicated in other needy schools in the system. “Models of [education] excellence rarely travel well,” and yet in industry and in many areas in private, nonprofit and government sectors, “cross fertilization” seems to work. With admirable frankness—a remarkable achievement in the jargon-ridden education field—the Broad Foundation clearly addresses the failures that have plagued education philanthropy in general. Its own initiatives proceeded only after a year of sustained interviews, research and analysis. Central in these efforts has been the annual three-year old Broad Prize for Education, which awards $500,000 to the winning district and $125,000 to four runners-up in the form of scholarships for high-school seniors. Katzir is delighted to point to the “integrity” of the competition and the inclusion on its panel of judges of important names from outside education (Jack Welch, for example). The selection of finalists is followed by weeklong site visits and further data collection (including grades, honors classes, kinds of courses taken, etc.) in conjunction with “education partners” such as ETS and The National Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

An essential consideration of the Broad Prizes, Katzir emphasizes, is the criterion of awarding the grants to the districts that make the most gains. That means that judgment is based on multiple performances and that the change from start to finish line must be “dramatic.” A high-performing school that improves somewhat is less significant in this calculus than a low-performing school that improves considerably. Katzir emphasizes, is the criterion of awarding the grants to the districts that make the most gains. That means that judgment is based on multiple performances and that the change from start to finish line must be “dramatic.” A high-performing school that improves somewhat is less significant in this calculus than a low-performing school that improves considerably.

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DR. SAT BHATTACHARYA’S DREAM FOR HARLEM CHILDREN FULFILLED

By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

Few of us can say that we have achieved our dream; Dr. Sat Battacharya can. Researcher at the preeminent Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Battacharya remembers being instilled with the mandate to give back to society after completing his education, leaving his country and continuing his research in New York. In 2000, he founded the Harlem Children Society to increase awareness in the sciences and provide students from the ghetto with the same opportunities that he was fortunate to have in his life. The program has grown to include 50 high school students from 20 schools (grades 9-12) in under-resourced and under-represented neighborhoods, who are paired with 43 prominent researchers in laboratories around the city including Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Cornell University Medical Center, Columbia University, Rockefeller University, Albert Einstein School of Medicine, Beth Israel Hospital, Stevens Institute of Technology, Hunter College of CUNY, New York University, American Museum of Natural History, Fordham University, Bronx River Alliance, The Gaia Institute, and the Lehman College of Natural Sciences.

Dr. Battacharya personally went to schools to interview and based his final choice on students’ motivation, enthusiasm and performance, and on recommendations from principals and science teachers. All the students are given a thorough background in the sciences related to the projects, accompanied by frequent lectures and tutorials given by scientists and researchers. All of the students are provided rigorous training relating to the techniques, safe and proper handling of devices, instruments, and chemicals relating to the ongoing projects. They are also given individual projects to complete by the end of the summer term. Proper guidance is given to enable them to build self-confidence and presentation skills. At the end of the summer, students will be required to summarize their work and present their results in the laboratory and will be encouraged to compete with other students at several regional and national science conferences and competitions. To encourage continuity of research begun in the summer, there is an after-school year-round research program. All students receive a stipend of $1750 for their summer research. Recently, grants totaling $100,000 were awarded to the program by the American Chemical Society and the New York Community Trust.

Dr. Battacharya is proud that many of his former students have participated and won several science competitions including the New York Times scholarship. Many have presented their work at national symposia in Chicago, San Diego, and Colorado. Some students have been accepted into leading universities like Penn State, Rutgers, Strathmore, Dartmouth, and medical school at UMDNJ. And perhaps most meaningful and indicative of the success of the program, all of the students have expressed an intense interest in the pursuit of research and education in the sciences and medicine.

Dr. Sat Bhattacharya is President & CEO of Harlem Children Society, a research scientist at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and President of Sigma X Honor Society, Rockefeller University Division. For more information about Harlem Children Society, visit www.HarlemChildrenSociety.org.

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EDITORIAL

City Cracks Down on Our First Amendment Rights

Have you ever thought about what it takes to publish a newspaper? What first comes to mind is reporting, writing, checking facts, editing, interviewing, assigning stories to reporters and editors, keeping up with the latest trends and the news, and dealing with important issues of the day. On a secondary level are layouts, graphics, dealing with office staff, outside printers, and truckers. The third level, and perhaps one of the most important, is disseminating the news. Education Update, an independent, non-partisan newspaper that I founded almost nine years ago after a career as a teacher and college professor, has become an integral source of positive education news that our city’s other publications have historically underserved. Since our newspaper’s launch, we have grown to inform 200,000 readers and over three million hits monthly on our website. We have interviewed some of the most illustrious people in our society, individuals who make a difference in education, medicine, law, indeed in the very fabric of our daily lives. The website in last issue’s article entitled “Spotlight on Schools” was reassuring and was just what I needed to hear. I waited until the age of 40 to have my only child... my mom died during my pregnancy and I also developed severe toxemia. Delivering a 2 pound baby at 32 weeks and leaving that hospital empty handed, well it was almost unbearable. I thought the rollercoaster ride was over and now this. I just wanted to say THANK YOU—you helped me more than you know. Your words were reassuring and exactly what I needed to hear. Here is a big hug from the family of Cole Greenberg! Maureen Greenberg Palm Springs, CA

RESPONSE TO

President of the Year Awards Ceremony

Thank you to Dr. Saenger for this brief but informative information on SGA. I woke up at 4:30 a.m. this morning feeling scared and not fully certain about whether to proceed with our choice of putting our 3½ yr old son on Genotropin. Although we feel confident with fully certain about whether to proceed with 4:00 a.m. this morning feeling scared and not

did you find it in your local supermarket or bank (we place it there with permission), it’s mailed to you at our expense, it’s distributed to our city’s public libraries (each library gets copies), and finally, you can find it in street corner boxes (just lift the door and it’s yours). But there’s trouble in Gotham. The New York City Department of Transportation has passed new regulations that dictate where a box can be placed and how it has to look. If the box has graffiti, the publisher has to scrub it off. If the box has been vandalized, we have to replace it immediately. If there are sticky labels like the ones provided by the post office (a favorite because of their mighty glue) affixed to the sides, back or front, the publisher has to scrape them off. The publisher’s identification has to appear in a readable visible place. The box cannot be on a grate or near a crosswalk or close to a bus stop. If any of these regulations are not obeyed, penalties of $500 per box are levied. To fight the penalties, I had to appear in court. I waited for four hours to be heard. My company’s identification was obvious as soon as you opened the door to remove a newspaper. The administrative judge considered it not visible enough. I hired two people to scrub and clean the boxes. After several weeks, the light yellow and red exteriors were dirty again. Again, graffiti covered our boxes; it was a never-ending, expensive war that I could ill afford. After paying about $2000 in fines, I have another court date in September about my dirty boxes. My assistant editor and I just spray painted several of our boxes dark blue. The city’s incentive is to collect millions of dollars in fines for its coffers, supported by some citizens who think the boxes deter the beauty of our city and want them removed.

But think of this: those multitudes of news boxes represent the freedom of the press, the freedom to share ideas with your fellowmen, the freedom to be inventive, original, challenging and daring. Walk the streets of Los Angeles and Chicago, Miami and San Francisco and you will see those brightly colored news boxes, symbols of our democracy. Our current policy should focus on heavily fining those who do the graffiti, paste the glued papers and deface the private boxes belonging to each publisher (purchase price: $150-$200). Small publishers are slowly being forced out of business. The dream of helping one’s fellowman, my dream, will soon be a part of the boulevard of broken dreams.

LETTERS

In Errata

The website in last issue’s article entitled “Spotlight on Schools” was reassuring and was just what I needed to hear. I waited until the age of 40 to have my only child... my mom died during my pregnancy and I also developed severe toxemia. Delivering a 2 pound baby at 32 weeks and leaving that hospital empty handed, well it was almost unbearable. I thought the rollercoaster ride was over and now this. I just wanted to say THANK YOU—you helped me more than you know. Your words were reassuring and exactly what I needed to hear. Here is a big hug from the family of Cole Greenberg! Maureen Greenberg Palm Springs, CA

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Email: ednews1@aol.com www.EducationUpdate.com Tel: 212-477-5060
Fax: 212-477-5893
PUBLISHER AND EDITOR: Pola Rosen, Ed.D.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Heather Rosen, Adam Sugarman, Rob Wertheimer
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Michelle Aczorno
GUEST COLUMNISTS: Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Matteo David Cavazos, Matilda Raffa Cuomo, Tom Ehrlich, Jason Gorbel, Dr. Carole Hankin, Bill Levy, Randi T. Sachs, Assemblyman Steven Sanders
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PACE HIGH SCHOOL TO BE LAUNCHED IN CHINATOWN

Pace High School, one of the 70 new small public schools opening in New York City this fall with funds from the Gates and other foundations, has an unusual dimension: it will introduce its 100 new freshmen to each other and their new school on Pace University’s suburban campuses in Pleasantville and Briarcliff during the summer.

The weeklong program, “First Summer,” is designed to immerse the new students in a University setting including library and computer services training, raising sights and setting a high level of expectations from the very beginning.

“The school had over 800 applications from all over New York City. The initial 100 were chosen at random by the Department of Education,” says Arthur Maloney, Ed.D. who headed the team that created the proposal for the school and is Assistant Chair of the Pace University School of Education.

The university involvement will continue seamlessly after the Westchester week. Pace High students will experience a rigorous academic curriculum, personal relations with teachers, and high level of involvement with a major national university. They will have access to the University’s computing system and e-mail. Pace’s downtown Manhattan campus is only ten blocks away from the school’s location in Chinatown, and Pace identification badges will admit Pace High students to the Pace library, student union, gym and cafeteria. Juniors and seniors will be able to attend lectures, activities and special events.

“The University and its students will add superb resources and stimulation and boost the opportunities of our students,” said Yvette Sy, the Principal and the New York City public school system’s Project Director for Pace High School.

Committed to rebuilding downtown New York and providing quality education for its citizens, Pace President David A. Caputo said, “We want to show that universities can play a major role in creating the fine schools that help young people and their communities prosper.”

Teachers, administrators and staff are getting their own weeklong series of training sessions and workshops. Pace High School students are getting the added value of involvement from a university school of education which trains teachers in both of Pace’s major locations, Westchester and downtown New York. Working with the school’s regular New York teachers, up to eight graduate teacher interns and as many as three school administration interns will be on site for the entire school year, subsidized by Pace. An intensive teacher training cohort program will support undergraduate student teachers from Pace, who will stay in the school as a team for three or four years. At the same time, Pace professors will work with Pace High teachers on curriculum and evaluation methods in mathematics, science, humanities, modern languages and technology. “Helping to design and run a school where we can prove and improve our teaching methods will add to the value of the teachers we send out to schools everywhere,” said Jan McDonald, dean of the Pace School of Education.

The New Pace High School in Chinatown

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Highly Successful Amistad Academy Plans Charter Schools in NYC

Amistad Academy, a highly effective New Haven, Connecticut charter school whose low income and minority students have achieved significant academic success, is applying to open as many as five New York City K-12 charter schools based on its model over the next several years, schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein announced.

The not-for-profit organization created to replicate the Amistad model, Achievement First, has received private grants totaling $1 million to support its expansion in New York City.

“The Amistad Academy has proven in a dramatic way that the achievement gap in America’s urban public schools not only can be closed, it can be eliminated,” Chancellor Klein said. “We are preparing to create 50 new charter schools throughout the city over the next five years. Superb results such as those at the Amistad Academy are a model for what public education can become and what New York’s charter school initiative is about.”

The Chancellor noted that Amistad Academy has shown significant success in closing the achievement gap of minority, low-income students in New Haven, where its middle school opened in 1999, and where it plans to open two more schools in September.

Amistad students improve, on average, 2.5 grade levels in math and two grade levels in reading in one year. On the 2002 and 2003 Connecticut Mastery Test, considered one of the nation’s more rigorous assessments, Amistad students, 97 percent of whom are African-American or Latino and 84 percent of whom are eligible for free or reduced price lunches, outperformed the state averages in reading, writing and math, and frequently outperformed suburban districts. Amistad’s 2003 eighth grade graduates received more than $1.5 million in high school scholarships.

Doug McCurry, director of Achievement First, said, “We are honored and excited to be a part of Chancellor Klein’s vision of providing a world-class education to every student in New York City. Amistad students have consistently recorded impressive achievement gains and the results illustrate many wealthy suburban towns. There is tremendous need and tremendous opportunity in New York City and we look forward to offering our education program here and to becoming part of the community.”

Chancellor Klein also acknowledged the generous grants awarded to Achievement First to support its expansion to New York City. Philanthropists Kevin Crisinger and William R. Berkley and the New Schools Venture Fund, a San Francisco venture philanthropy fund that supports public education, have together contributed $1 million.

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WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER? HS & COLLEGE STUDENTS SPEAK OUT

By SARAH N. LYNCH

This summer, Barnard College junior Hannah Elmer was able to find a way to exercise her passion for both plants and medieval history—a subject area where it can be difficult to find work as an undergrad.

When Hannah’s not busy doing landscaping for a woman in Connecticut, she spends her time once a week in a rare book room at Columbia University helping to catalogue secondary sources and create a computerized bibliography for the British Library in London.

All of the secondary source materials that Hannah catalogues pertain to medieval and renaissance manuscripts. By helping the British Library to create a searchable database, it will assist other medieval studies students with their research.

“I am a medieval studies major and I really enjoy manuscripts and books,” Hannah said. “Having done little research papers here and there, I know that it’s a total hassle to try and get information on a lot of these manuscripts. The job needs to be done and there are very few opportunities for any kind of medieval studies work out there as an undergrad… I’m not qualified to teach or curate at a museum, so my options are limited and this is one that fell into my lap,” she said.

Hannah is the first person to volunteer to help the British Library. She said that by doing the project, it would also help her next semester or curate at a museum, so my options are limited there as an undergrad…I’m not qualified to teach

Hannah Elmer

“I think that I’ll at least know the places where I should go for secondary sources if I were doing a paper on a specific manuscript. I’ll know how to use my tools better,” she said.

Hannah said that working the other days doing landscaping provides a nice contrast to her volunteer work at Columbia.

“I’ve done some painting and right now, I’m working on a design for this woman’s yard,” she said. “It’s a nice contrast to being inside and reading all the time and it’s fun.”

“I’m using some of my creativity and love of plants to come up with a good design for her yard.”

Hannah said that she and her boyfriend would also be taking a three-week vacation in her home state of Washington where the two will go backpacking in the Cascades.

But Hannah is not the only one doing her fair share of traveling this summer. Joann Corsetto, who just graduated Dover High School in Morris County and will be attending Rutgers University in the fall, recently went on her first trip abroad.

Because her sister is studying in Venice, Joann’s mother decided it was a great excuse for the whole family to visit Italy. “The architecture of churches” Joann said her favorite part of the was so beautiful and we went to a lot of different churches.” Joann said her favorite part of the trip was traveling everywhere by gondola. “It’s public transportation,” she said of the boats. “It was the best way to see the most stuff in the least amount of time and you can’t go speeding down the water. It was a leisurely kind of ride, and I love being on the water.”

Although Joann could make out some of the Italian thanks to studying other romance languages in high school, she said the language barrier at times proved to be difficult. She tried to give herself a crash course in Italian on the plane ride. “It was a long flight, so I had a lot of time to study and I picked up stuff as we went along,” she said. “It was a constant adventure just trying to figure out what’s going on around you.”

In addition to traveling this summer, Joann is also working as a camp counselor at the Dover Recreation Department in New Jersey. “Basically I’m guiding the kids through activities and making sure everybody is participating,” she said.

But most importantly, Joann is getting ready for her first year of college. “I’m leaning towards majoring in English, but I’m undecided now,” she said.

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AUGUST 2004 • EDUCATION UPDATE • SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS
Reach the World: Connecting Classrooms with Travelers Worldwide

By HEATHER HALSTEAD

Imagine a geography assignment that lets kids roam the globe in search of interesting places and learn about the people who live there. That’s exactly the case for many students who attend under-funded public schools in New York City. Reach the World (RTW), a New York City-based nonprofit, offers exciting, online journeys to low-income, elementary and middle school classrooms throughout the City. These journeys connect students to the world in a meaningful way, train educators how to teach with technology, and greatly enhance traditional textbook geography and other subjects.

On May 22, 2004, Makulu, a 43-foot sailboat chartered to Reach the World, sailed into New York Harbor after completing a 30,000-mile, three-year voyage around the world. On the docks, more than 200 students, teachers, friends and supporters gathered to welcome Makulu and her crew home. The John J. Harvey fireboat sprayed towering jets of water as Makulu rounded the jetty, and students threw handfuls of flowers and blew bubbles onto the crew as they approached.

Students and teachers from more than twenty New York City public schools began working with the Reach the World crew in 2001. Over 2.5 years, together they created hundreds of online, primary-source resources in Social Studies, Sciences and Literacy to complement the required curriculum, while also connecting students to a global community. Students and teachers sent the Makulu crew on expeditions to discover evolution in the Galapagos Islands; traditional village homes in Sulawesi, Indonesia; and the culture of the Cape Verde Islands, among other projects. All of these real-world, up-to-date resources appeared on Reach the World’s web site, www.reachtheworld.org, as free materials for all to use.

The New York City public school classrooms in Reach the World’s network received support from Teachers College/Columbia University interns and professional development opportunities for teachers, free of charge. It’s critical that teachers in under-funded schools receive more support on-site. Placing graduate students into our classrooms as interns is a win-win for all involved.

Over the summer months, Reach the World will refit the schoolship Makulu and hire a new crew. The next Voyage of Makulu, the company’s third, will depart from New York City in early winter 2004 for another 30,000-mile journey around the globe. To find out more about becoming a Reach the World partner classroom, or to volunteer with this exciting global studies project, please visit www.reachtheworld.org.

Heather Halstead is the Executive Director, Reach the World.
In an ongoing effort to connect with its base and find out how best to serve it, Scholastic, the world’s largest producer of educational materials, has established a Principal Fellows Program. Modeled after the successful six-year old Teacher Fellows Program, the new initiative brought three highly experienced public school principals to Scholastic’s New York headquarters in July for an intensive five-day series of meetings with company executives and division heads who wanted baseline input on the evolving education scene. Fellows were Merian Stewart of Noyes Elementary School in Altadena, California, Les Potter of Silver Sands Middle School in Port Orange, Florida, and Patricia Welch of Hillcrest High School in Country Club Hills, Illinois. Each was impressed with the program and particularly welcomed the unusual opportunity to interact with principals from schools whose grade levels were different from their own. Unlike a typical, large national conference, the small number of participants meant, “We were able to craft the discussion. We could spin off of each other’s responses,” reported Stewart. What they discovered is that on all levels and in all locations, “Test score improvement and standards are huge. You can’t go anywhere without hearing about standards.” The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is expected to bring students from 5th grade level to 11th grade level in just 2 years. We can track and show improvement, but if not at the expected level, the school is placed on a list… it will make or break you.” She suggests encouraging legislators to look at the law and enact alternate ways to measure student progress.

The Fellows shared best practices and experiences. In motivating staff, leadership must not come solely from the principal. Start with a small number of teachers who are empowered by being given chairs or other special responsibilities, and then they will make you believe in them. “Expected to be cheerleaders for our school…” She reminds us that “students are happy—then parents are happy.” Reading is now taught at all levels, including reinforcement in high school, using reading blocs geared to specific competencies. “We are in an accountability era,” said Stewart. “Everything is based on test scores. We can have a clean, safe campus, but that’s not what gets highlighted.” Potter noted a trend of combining elementary and middle schools (K-8), challenging old notions of performing youngsters) was deficient, resulting in a failing grade for the school. “It’s almost like the Federal government is playing ‘I gotcha.’ I already know certain kids are not doing well and we are working hard to improve that. I don’t need tests to show me what I already know.” While at the program, Welch wrote an article about NCLB for Scholastic. “I agree with the philosophy,” she says, but it’s where we start that matters. We are expected to bring students from 5th grade level to 11th grade level in just 2 years. We can track and show improvement, but if not at the expected level, the school is placed on a list… it will make or break you.” She suggests encouraging legislators to look at the law and enact alternate ways to measure student progress.

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Participants of the inaugural Principal Fellows Program hosted by Scholastic in New York City include, from left, Patricia Welch of Hillcrest High School of Country Club Hills, Illinois; Les Potter of Silver Sands Middle School, Port Orange, Florida; Merian Stewart of (Arthur Amos) Noyes Elementary School in Altadena, California with Ernie Fleishman, Sr. V.P., Education and Corporate Relations, Scholastic.
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Separation of age groups.

The Fellows visited PS 20, a highly regarded New York City public elementary school, and its principal, Dr. Leonard Golubchick. Impressions varied. Stewart was “amazed that there wasn’t grass for the children to play on,” and that “it was embedded in the heart of a business district.” Potter noted that the building is 100 years old and shows much wear and tear. He prefers the campus-like setting and newness of his institution. What Welch saw was an “upscale, magnet elementary school” where “the students were focused on learning.” From PS 20, she learned the technique of using pupil-led oral storytelling as a segue to good story writing.

With emphasis on standards and testing, the educational landscape has changed. In meeting with each other, the principals discovered, “we are all in the same boat.” Scholastic also recognizes there are new needs to be met, and the principals expressed appreciation for being consulted in the planning—“a win, win situation,” exclaimed Potter.

Principals Tell All
continued from page 11

Minimum age: six years
Children’s class meets once a week from 4:30-6:15
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College of Staten Island Awarded $2.3M to Expand High-Tech Research Program

New York Governor George Pataki just announced a five-year, $2.3 million grant to the College of Staten Island (CSI) to “bolster and expand high-tech research” as part of a new comprehensive initiative to spur technology-based applied research and economic development across the state.

The grant, funded through the College Applied Research and Technology (CART) program of the New York State Office of Science, Technology, and Academic Research (NYSTAR), is “yet another milestone that recognizes the scientific research accomplishments of our college’s faculty,” noted Marlene Springer, president of CSI. “CSI scientists contribute to our mission of undergraduate and graduate education while they also successfully compete with scientists at other institutions across the state.”

“Basically, we will be conducting applied research on polymers, which most people recognize as forms of plastic and fibers,” said Dr. Nan-Loh Yang, a CSI chemistry professor and chair of the CUNY Polymer Ph.D. Program, “This will significantly enhance our equipment,” he continued, “and this will benefit students by engaging them in hands-on research and exposing them to industrial activity in our laboratories.” Students and researchers at the Center will be spurred on by the promise of creating new materials, according to Dr. Yang. These materials may then go on and benefit society in a variety of ways, for example, by developing batteries with a high energy density that may power mobile phones and other consumer electronics, new fibers to enhance commercial optical communications, and “pollution abatement” resins that absorb harmful pollutants from exhausts.

“By conducting this important research, the Center will not only explore the forefront of nanotech research, but will also train the next generation of scientists by offering industry-oriented outreach programs for professionals regarding trends and current developments in the field,” commented President Springer. The Center’s research activity will be overseen by an advisory board of industry leaders and researchers who will work with CSI scientists to identify areas of research, supporting the overarching goal to promote the economy of New York State through collaborative research and development.

Last year CSI was awarded a NYSTAR grant for $2.5 million in support of its CUNY Institute for Macromolecular Assemblies on its Staten Island campus, which is focusing on research in biomedical fields.

Poly Prep Country Day School

Poly Prep Country Day School is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory school educating students at two campuses in Brooklyn. At the Lower School in Park Slope, children in Nursery School through Grade 4 grow in knowledge of themselves and the world in a safe, nurturing environment. The Lower School is housed in an historic mansion overlooking Prospect Park. The Middle and Upper Schools are located on a twenty-five acre campus in Dyker Heights. There, students in Grades 5 through 12 are engaged in a rich and challenging program of academics, athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities. Poly is a vital, diverse community of committed faculty, talented students, engaged parents, and loyal alumni.

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Princeton Review
Names Margot Lebenberg Exec. VP & General Counsel

Mark Chernis, President of The Princeton Review, Inc. announced that Margot Lebenberg has joined the educational services company as Executive Vice President and General Counsel.

Ms. Lebenberg most recently served as Executive Vice President and General Counsel for SoundView Technology Group, Inc., through the sale of the research-driven securities firm. Prior to joining SoundView, she served as Vice President and Assistant General Counsel of Cantor Fitzgerald and its subsidiary eSpeed, Inc. Ms. Lebenberg added, “I am very excited about the opportunity to use my experience and legal skills to counsel an extraordinary company that helps educate children and America’s future leaders.”

The Princeton Review (NASDAQ: REVU) is a pioneer in the world of education. Founded in 1981 and headquartered in New York City, the Company operates classrooms and online test preparation, as well as private tutoring, to help students improve their scores in college and graduate school admissions tests. The Company’s free website, www.PrincetonReview.com, helps over half of university-bound students research, apply to, prepare for, and learn how to pay for their higher education, and helps hundreds of colleges and universities streamline their admissions and recruiting activities. In addition, The Princeton Review works with school districts around the U.S. to measurably strengthen students’ academic skills by conducting rigorous assessment with professional development and instruction, and by providing districts with college and career resources for both students and guidance counselors. The Company also authors more than 190 print and software titles on test preparation, college and graduate school selection and admissions, and related topics.

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 curriculum for the 4th grade now includes a bonus issue exploring important historical documents.

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Columbus Citizens Foundation Commits $1.1 Million to Higher Education

The Columbus Citizens Foundation, best known for organizing Manhattan’s Columbus Day Parade, recently announced the 69 recipients of its 2004 College Scholarships, which total $1.1 million over four years. The announcements were part of the Foundation’s 2004 College Scholarship Awards Ceremony, which was held at the St. Ignatius School in Manhattan. Among the 69 recipients from across the country were 33 from New York City, 10 from Long Island, and 6 from New Jersey.

In remarks to the audience and scholarship recipients, Lawrence E. Auriemma, President of the Columbus Citizens Foundation, said, “Culturally, our goal is to preserve our traditions and values and foster a positive image of Italian-Americans.” He continued, “We believe education is the single best way to advance our community. We are very proud of our scholarship recipients. They are invariably warm, hard working, optimistic and family oriented. They exhibit the finest facets of Italian character and culture.”

Recipients were chosen based on financial need and commitment to education and their communities. The scholarship recipients will be attending 40 schools in the United States and Canada, including New York University (6), Fordham University (6), Binghamton University (4), Manhattan College (3), and Harvard University (2).

The Columbus Citizens Foundation is a nonprofit organization that supports cultural initiatives and scholarship programs for students in elementary and high schools and in college.

GETTING INTO COLLEGE:
THE SAT EXAMS

Tests are a fact of life throughout our school careers, but one of the most important, and, to some, the scariest, of them all is the SAT—that three-hour exam that’s supposed to measure a high school student’s chance of academic success in the first year of college. Some colleges consider SAT scores major factors in their admission process while others view high school academic performance, along with recommendations and extracurricular activities, equally, or even more, important. No matter where you’re headed, if you’re a high school student, the SAT is important to you because most colleges require students to report either SAT or ACT Assessment (another test) scores.

Why is this test so important? When should you take it? What are the questions like? What do the scores mean?

Before you start your college career, you have to take the SAT.

SAT no longer stands for Scholastic Aptitude Test, the original name of the test when it was introduced in 1941. Although you may still see that name occasionally, the College Board, the not-for-profit educational association that sponsors the SATs, decided to let the acronym stand on its own as a way of addressing controversy about the meaning of the word “aptitude.”

The College Board also rejected the alternative “Scholastic Assessment Test.”

The SAT measures verbal and math reasoning abilities that you’ve developed throughout your school years. The multiple-choice test, developed by the not-for-profit Educational Testing Service, is intended to let students demonstrate their verbal and math abilities without regard to the kind of schooling they’ve had. According to the College Board, the test looks for a student’s ability to understand and analyze written material, to draw inferences, to differentiate shades of meaning, to draw conclusions and solve math problems—all skills that are necessary for success in college and the work world.

(The American College Testing (ACT) Assessment, which was introduced in 1959, is an alternative to the SAT that virtually all colleges and universities now accept. Developers of the test tout it for its curriculum-based questions, saying that their test is more directly related to what is actually taught in high school.)

Read Education Update next month for more information about SAT II.

SARAH LAWRENCE

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By DOROTHY DAVID

If the school is failing, call in an ophthalmologist. This is what Professor Gary Orfield of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Co-Director of The Civil Rights Project (www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu) did for a poverty-stricken school in the Boston area, which was threatened with closure because too many students were failing their reading tests. His wife, the ophthalmologist, examined the children, whose vision had never been tested, and found that “about half of them had vision problems, couldn’t even see the blackboard or books. One of the children in Special Education turned out to be gifted. He had a vision problem so he couldn’t see.” How could these children pass their tests? Of course they couldn’t and they weren’t. They were given prescriptions for glasses, which in a middle class school would have done the trick. But the prescriptions were not filled—the children’s families could not afford to do so, and they could not get help. The bureaucratic paperwork maze of Medicaid was too complicated for them to negotiate and, if somehow they managed it, they would only get clunky plastic glasses, which no child would wear. “We are the only country in the world where everyone is a native. This is true around the world. If we don’t have a place in the world where all schools can perform at the same level, where all children are native, than all schools can perform at the same level, to hold them equally accountable?” asked Orfield. “In no place do you have the same achievement level in immigrant and poor schools as in wealthier schools where everyone is a native. This is true around the world. If we don’t have a place in the world where all schools can perform at the same level, what are we talking about with No Child Left Behind in the same way as wealthy suburban schools. “Does it make any sense to compare these schools and hold them equally accountable?” asked Orfield. “In no place do you have the same achievement level in immigrant and poor schools as in wealthier schools where everyone is a native. This is true around the world. If we don’t have a place in the world where all schools can perform at the same level, what are we talking about with No Child Left Behind?” According to this law, schools that don’t perform at these same high levels are subject to funding set-asides and sanctions. Over emphasis on test scores is not helping. The achievement gap is widening. This was not always so. After the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the advances of the 1960s and 1970s including Head Start, for preschool education, the achievement gap significantly narrowed. Since the 1980s and the rollback of these measures and the substitution of testing and sanctions the gap has grown substantially, beginning in the 1990s. “Dropout trends” said Orfield, “have followed a similar pattern. They went down and then up again in the 1990s. In 1988 we had the lowest level of segregation, then three decisions by the Supreme Court led to resegregation, inequality and the kind of conditions that caused the gap to widen during this period, when reforms using testing based policies were supposed to close it. … Something very troubling is going on. We had a positive trend and now it’s negative.” He compared our current testing and punitive policies to the field of corn that the University of Illinois has been measuring over the last 100 years to help agriculture in the state. “If you think a crop can grow by measuring it and hitting it you are mis-taking measurement for treatment. Measurement and sanctions cannot grow a healthy crop. It doesn’t work that way.” No educators were consulted in the drafting of No Child Left Behind. One of the positive outcomes of the discussion following Orfield’s address may be the determination of some of these leading U. S. educators to make their voices heard after the November elections, when this law can hopefully be revised. As Orfield pointed out, “Any of us who are educators can make a difference. It is time to have a sensible discussion about how to measure improvement. But the prescriptions were not filled—the children’s families could not afford to do so, and they could not get help. The bureaucratic paperwork maze of Medicaid was too complicated for them to negotiate and, if somehow they managed it, they would only get clunky plastic glasses, which no child would wear. “We are the only country in the world where everyone is a native. This is true around the world. 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A GLIMPSE INTO COLLEGE LIFE IN 1925 AT BARNARD

Freshman Bessie Bergner Writes Home

The following letter was shared with me by my Barnard classmate Dr. Joan Sherman Freilich, CFO of Con Edison, whose mother attended Barnard College from 1925-1929 and subsequently became a French teacher. The monogrammed stationery contained a beautiful calligraphic script. Dr. Freilich recently came upon these letters for the first time upon her mother’s death. Bessie left her home in Connecticut to live at Barnard College, her first time away from home. The concerns for safety and camaraderie for their daughter echo the same concerns of parents today almost 80 years later. Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose, Ed.

Wednesday
Dear Mother and Dad,

Everything is fine. I’m well and hope you all are feeling the same. Please don’t worry about how I travel. It’s not a bit hard and I’m perfectly accustomed to it already.

I met Josephine Bruell today. She has a darling room…This afternoon we went to the opening exercises—Acleu Bures, Josephine, two other freshmen and I went together. I’m never alone—always with a group of girls—which makes it very nice. After the exercises…I met another girl named Miriam Kanter—she’s lovely.

Then we all went to the afternoon tea—you know, tea and cake are served. It was held in a beautiful room—blue velour drapes, soft blue rugs, blue velour chairs and couches and pillows. Gorgeous!

The upper classmen are lovely to us—they treat us as if we were babies.

My Junior sister is named Mildred Bernheim. I haven’t seen her yet…I wonder what the Freshman Initiation will be like.

We saw a few of the Columbia freshmen. They have to wear black caps with white buttons. They certainly look comical. Poor fellows!

Classes start tomorrow. I have English at 10 o’clock. At 2 o’clock I take my physical exam. By the way, I may not take Latin. I may take Spanish. I want to take the easiest because the rest of my course is hard enough.

Please take good care of yourselves, and I certainly shall promise to take care of myself. Above all—don’t worry!

Love,
Bessie

Bessie Bergner (later Sherman)
Class of 1929
Once Bronx Community College Graduate (1997–2000) Leonardo Santana used to sell fruits on Brooklyn streets from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and vegetables and fruits in a Bronx grocery store. Today, the Leonardo, College graduate (2002), a researcher who is studying Parkinson’s disease at Mt. Sinai Medical Center, is headed for Drexel Medical School in the fall. In the help of a $6,000 Jonas Salk Scholarship, Eight medical students have been awarded Dr. Jonas E. Salk Scholarships to study medicine. All are graduates of leading medical schools.

“I received the news four weeks ago. I was working in the lab when they called to let me know I had been selected. I first could not believe it. It meant a lot to me, and his father and what it meant. I felt honored to be a Salk scholar. I am aware of the responsibility I have as a Salk scholar. I should use my energy, knowledge, and love for others to serve society through science and medicine. I should follow those who have been before,” said Mr. Santana.

Mr. Santana stated that his research as a researcher after graduating from Lehman to stay current with science. The scholarships are the legacy of Dr. Jonas E. Salk, who developed the polio vaccine nearly half a century ago. Dr. Salk, a 1934 scholar. I should use my energy, knowledge, and love for others to serve society through science and medicine. I should follow those who have been before,” said Mr. Santana.

“I decided to become a doctor in the 12th grade. I thought of becoming a doctor or a teacher would be one of the best ways to help people better themselves in life,” said Leonardo. Santana.

Leonardo's Community College’s Research Enrichment Activities Project (REAP) in the Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) program. This program provides research opportunities for underrepresented minority students.

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“WHO YOU CALLIN’?” said Leonardo. “I decided to become a doctor in the 12th grade. I thought of becoming a doctor or a teacher would be one of the best ways to help people better themselves in life,” said Leonardo. Santana.

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Reach Out & Read: A Pediatrician’s Perspective

By PERRI KLASS, MD

As a practicing pediatrician, I know how busy the health supervision visit (also known as the check-up) can be. There’s a long list of topics to cover, shots to give, measurements to take, sage advice to do (or not do), and questions to answer. But over the past fifteen years, more and more pediatricians have added early literacy and reading aloud to that long list, routinely talking with the parents of babies, toddlers, and preschoolers about how to help their children grow up enjoying books. Fifteen years ago, at what was the Boston City Hospital, a couple of pediatricians, Barry Zuckerman, MD, and Robert Needelman, MD, together with an early childhood educator, Kathleen Fitzgerald Rice, MSED, developed a simple strategy for literacy promotion in a pediatric clinic—the Reach Out and Read model. From that one site in that one clinic, which continues to serve a large urban population, Reach Out and Read has spread to many children growing up in poverty and many new immigrants and refugees. Reach Out and Read has spread to programs at more than 2000 clinics, health centers, hospitals, and private practices. I have been involved with the program for the past ten years, helping my fellow pediatricians—and family members of the practitioners—incorporate this model into their daily professional practice.

Reach Out and Read has 3 components. It starts in the waiting area where our patients and their parents often sit for far too long with volunteers reading aloud, with books for the children to look at, with displays about reading and literacy. Second, during the checkup, the doctor gives some age-appropriate advice about reading aloud, and third, the doctor gives the child a beautiful new book to take home—age-appropriate, culturally appropriate, and ready to be enjoyed. The program is aimed at children from six months through five years, and if we do it right—that is, if we keep all our well-child appointments and we manage to give a book at each visit—that’s ten books in the home by kindergarten age, each coming with advice and guidance.

For example, when I see a six-month-old, I offer her a board book—small for small hands, hard and chewable, and generally illustrated with pictures of faces. As she grabs it and starts to chew on it, I assess her development—can she sit along, fix and follow, reach and grab—and I talk to her parent about how normal it is for a baby this age to explore the world by chewing on things. I might model pointing and naming as I hand over the book—“This is the baby! This is the baby’s nose!”—and I make sure to help parents see that reading to children is important, even before they can talk. I try to help parents see that when a young child, eager for a parent’s undivided attention, eager for a parent’s touch, a parent’s voice, comes to associate that desirable contact with books, a positive association with books is formed which can help that child grow up enjoying books, and arrive at school with the early literacy skills she needs in order to tackle the job of learning to read.

As the children grow, the advice changes—I might reassure the mother of a two-year-old that it’s normal if he doesn’t sit still for the whole story. I might discuss books that increase a child’s time rituals and sleep issues. But the overall message is always there: this is something good—and something important—that you can do to help your child.

Many teachers have told me that they can see on the first day—or sometimes, in the first hour—of kindergarten or first grade which children have grown up with books. By putting books into more homes, by encouraging parents to start reading aloud early, Reach Out and Read hopes to make books a part of every healthy childhood. Research studies have shown that the program increases parent reading aloud, leads to more positive attitudes towards books and reading, and improves the language scores of children from about eighteen months of age.

On a personal level, I love practicing medicine with a book in my hand. I love the children’s responses—from the six-month-old who chews on his new book right away to the preschooler who proudly describes what she sees happening on the pages. And I love watching the children go home, holding their books, taking their toys and pictures and the pleasures of reading aloud into their homes and into their lives.

For more information visit www.readoutandread.org.

Perri Klass, M.D. is a practicing pediatrician and assistant professor of pediatrics, Boston U. School of Medicine. She is the President and Medical Director of Reach Out and Read.

Dr. Perri Klass

Reach To Your Child

Two years ago, Dr. Bruce McCandliss, a psychologist at the Sackler Institute of Developmental Psychobiology of Weill Cornell Medical College, introduced a reading program he co-developed into some of New York City’s public elementary schools. The program, known as “Reading Works,” uses computer-based reading lessons, and as students have learned from the curriculum, scientists have used brain scans and other methods to monitor how their brains are changing.

Now, two years later, results from the program are coming in from children across many parts of New York City, and the preliminary data are impressive. Children involved in the program, which encompasses 20 forty-minute sessions over a period of several months and reading at an ability level, on average, 1.2 grades higher. And, scientists now have a better idea of how children learn to read and what keeps some from becoming proficient at it.

“Reading Works” is aimed at poor readers—those students who, when given an initial test by Dr. McCandliss, scored at or below the 40th percentile. Dr. McCandliss’ study includes both non- dyslexic and dyslexic groups, and is also designed so comparisons can be made between the two.

Each eligible child (along with his/her parents) meets independently with scientists and participates in a mock MRI imaging session. At the beginning and end of a protocol, each child has a real “brain scan” while he/she does simple tasks with words, and scientists monitor brain activity. Brain scans are also given to a group of “average” readers who serve as a control group.

Dr. Trude Haecker

After the screening process, students accepted into the study are divided into two groups, and each group receives its own protocol. Students in the “Reading Works” group have computer-based lessons that focus on breaking down words and building on sounds they have used previously. Here, if a student successfully completes a lesson, he/she attempts a higher level in the next session. Should he or she experience difficulty, the level will be repeated. An adult tutor (typically, an undergraduate student) watches over each student’s lesson, and offers guidance and encouragement.

The second group is called “Guided Reading,” which could be thought of as a comparison group, or a way for scientists to compare the effectiveness of “Reading Works.” With “Guided Reading,” each child is still assigned a tutor at random, but the focus is simply on reading and understanding books. Each time a student and tutor meet, they review what the child read last, and then choose a new book that is previewed, read, and discussed.

“Both programs will have a significant impact on the students involved,” says Dr. McCandliss, “even though the methods of getting them there are very different.” To find what is most effective, the components of each program can be measured and compared.

The Sackler Institute of Developmental Psychobiology, a research group within the Department of Psychiatry of Weill Cornell Medical College, is dedicated to advancing understanding of brain mechanisms involved in the development of cognitive and emotional skills.

FAMILY LITERACY PROJECTS AT LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Twelve projects received support in 2004-2005 as part of the Center for the Book’s new “Reading Powers the Mind” family literacy program, said John Y. Cole, Director of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. Each project is in a different state and involves partnerships developed between the participating library and state and community organizations; partnership organizations come from both the government and the private sector.

The “Reading Powers the Mind” program will test several types of potential library-community partnerships that could replicate to different communities, depending on local circumstances. Whenever feasible, a state center for the book will be involved in the program.

Funding for “Reading Powers the Mind” has been provided by a recent $409,000 contribution to the Center for the Book from the Viburnum Foundation. From 1998 to 2003, the foundation awarded $3,000 grants to 222 rural libraries in 10 states as part of the Center for the Book/Viburnum Foundation Family Literacy Project. During this six-year period, the national center, often with help from its affiliated state centers, organized and staffed 12 two-day training workshops throughout the country.

Dr. Trude Haecker

Dr. Trude Haecker is also medical director of Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia, a Coalition established in 2002. Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia is establishing and sustain- ing Reach Out and Read sites in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The Coalition includes 26 Reach Out and Read locations affiliated with 10 healthcare organizations serving 70,000 children in need. Reach Out and Read Greater Philadelphia is committed to reaching a greater number of children in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties and training additional medical providers in the Reach Out and Read strategies of pediatric literacy intervention.
AN INTERVIEW WITH FIRST LADY LAURA BUSH ON LITERACY

Education Update (EU): What method did your parents or teachers use to teach you to read when you were a child? How did you teach your children to read?

EU: I’m blessed to be surrounded by people who are making gains because teachers now have better resources to measure students’ progress. For the first time in history, every state has an approved accountability plan. Schools are measuring student achievement so that children who need help are not hidden in the averages. And achievement gaps are being identified and closed. As I travel to schools across the country, I see the promise of reform in America’s schools. I see children excited and ready to learn. I see teachers and principals who refuse to accept failure and are embracing reform to make our schools the best in the world.

EU: Yes, it’s true. We still have more work to do. But we know that we can and we must accomplish our goals. The effects of failing to teach children are well documented. The National Assessment of Educational Progress shows that only one in six African-American and one in five Hispanic high school seniors are proficient in reading. We know that if children are not reading by the end of the third grade, their chances of learning to read will decrease every year. By the time they get to high school, they often drop out.

First Lady Laura Bush

A number of successful volunteer programs share this critical information with parents and caregivers. Through a program called Reach Out and Read, doctors, during well-child exams, prescribe that parents read aloud to their babies. And doctors also give a new book to the children to take home and read with their parents. Through Reach Out and Read, fostering a love of books and reading has become a standard part of pediatric care. Last year alone pediatricians distributed 3 million books to more than 1.5 million children.

First Lady Laura Bush

AN INTERVIEW WITH FIRST LADY LAURA BUSH ON LITERACY

EU: Ten years from now, what are realistic goals for literacy in America?

EU: Who are some of the people who have inspired you?

EU: I’m blessed to be surrounded by people who are passionate about education. My parents nurtured my love of reading before I started school; my in-laws promote strong schools and libraries. Our challenge is to reach all children early so that every child starts school with the skills needed to learn. Once in the classroom, our children deserve excellent teachers and a high-quality education. I’m one of the lucky few who have not only gotten to grow up with great teachers but to grow up to be teachers. I continue to be inspired by teachers. Teaching is one of the most difficult jobs, but it’s also one of the most rewarding.

EU: What were the names and locations of the schools in which you taught?

LB: After earning a bachelor of science degree in education from Southern Methodist University in 1968, I taught at Longfellow Elementary School in Dallas and then at John F. Kennedy Elementary in Houston. In 1973 I learned a master of library science degree from the University of Texas at Austin, and I then taught as a librarian at a branch of the Houston Public Library and as a school librarian for Dawson Elementary in Austin.

EU: Why are some children missing the basics?

EU: Tell us about your experiences as a public school teacher. What were the names and locations of the schools in which you taught?

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EU: Who are some of the people who have inspired you?

EU: Learning in school and throughout life begins with reading. And with the No Child Left Behind Act, the expectation of literacy is the law of the land. The goal of this landmark law is to close the achievement gap and to ensure that all children have access to a quality education. President Bush and the United States Congress are investing more money in elementary and secondary education than ever before in our nation’s history. Through the No Child Left Behind Act, historic levels of funding have been combined with unprecedented commitment to using proven methods of instruction, achieving high standards and requiring accountability to ensure that America’s schools are producing real results for every single child.

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The summer travel and vacation season is here. As families head out on the road or vacation, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests a few steps to help keep children safe while at home and away.

Parents can help prevent many of the hazards associated with summer by following some of the easy steps suggested by EPA: Be Sun Smart—Wear hats and sunglasses, cover up as much as possible, and always wear SPF 15+ sunscreen on exposed skin. Also limit time in sunlight during the hottest period of the day, between 10 am and 4 pm; Help Kids Breathe Easier—Don’t smoke or let others smoke in your home or car; Keep your home as clean as possible. Dust, mold, certain household pests, secondhand smoke, and pet dander can trigger asthma attacks and allergies.

Watch Out for Carbon Monoxide Poisoning—Don’t let cars or lawnmowers idle in the garage. Install carbon monoxide monitors that meet UL, IAS, or Canadian standards in sleeping areas; Install carbon monoxide monitors that meet UL, IAS, or Canadian standards in sleeping areas;ForgeryToken

ed more water, especially if it was built before 1978. Test old pipes for lead and run tap water until it is as cold as it will get before using it to drink, cook or make baby formula.

Before heading out for a day of fun at home or on vacation, be sure to check your local ozone/air pollution, water and beach advisories. EPA makes forecasts readily available for ozone and particle pollution through the Air Quality Index (AQI).

Still looking for more information? EPA’s Sunwise Program offers guidelines on protection from overexposure to the sun and has a daily UV index indicator.

More information on children’s environmental health is available by calling 1-877-590-KIDS.
Recently, four students from Williams L. Dickinson Technology Magnet School, a technology-focused high school in Jersey City, traveled to the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas to both work and observe as an experiment they designed is carried out in a near-weightless environment.

The students, Carlo Fajardo, 15, Humberto Guzman, 15, Jennifer Rodriguez, 16, and Denise Salinas, 17, who were selected based on merit and success on persuasive science-related projects, have been working with their teacher Howard Zlotkin, NASA scientist Greg Vogt and Liberty Science Center educator Rosa Catala to develop the unique experiments. The experiments will be performed aboard a NASA KC-135, a plane that performs a series of sweeping areas at about 38,000 feet in the air to create short periods of near-weightlessness.

After a rigorous selection process the group selected two projects to test onboard the KC-135. The first, “Effects of Micro-gravity on Bioluminescence,” will show if there is any change in the chemical reaction that produces bioluminescence in a near-weightless environment. Bioluminescence is the light produced by the chemical reaction inside the body of a living organism. Viewing the reactions that take place during a number of test flights will complete the experiment. The research will be done in an experiment chamber consisting of two boxes. The primary box is where the actual experiment will take place; the second is the storage where the replacement vials will be.

The second, “Whoa Roaches,” will test the effects of micro gravity on the sensory area of Madagascar hissing cockroaches.

During these sessions, students will learn about the scientific process, Micro G and space, with activities conducted to promote cohesiveness and teamwork. Additionally, Liberty Science Center staff scientist Dr. Betty Faber visits the students twice a month to discuss aspects of biological processes and how scientists plan and conduct research.

Since March the students have been visiting Liberty Science Center on a biweekly basis to utilize the center’s unique resources and to learn more about their project parameters through special activities designed to enrich and support their classroom curriculum.

This program is the first component of a unique collaboration between Liberty Science Center and NASA, designed to bring the excitement and challenge of science to students, teachers and families through a wide variety of community activities that can be found at Liberty Science Center, then replicated at science centers and museums across the country.

**Choosing a College: Campus Visits Are Important**

By Tom Ehrlich

Louisiana State University’s football team is ranked number one this year by the USA TODAY/ESPN Coaches Poll. Ranked number one? It’s the middle of summer. How is it possible to rank teams when they haven’t even played a game? The answer, of course, is potential. Those who do the rankings try to predict how well a team will do based on the performance of the team last year—even though many players graduated—and expectations about the new players, plus the quality of those who coach them.

U.S. News & World Report will soon announce its annual college academic rankings. Campus presidents, admissions directors, and others whose campuses may be helped or harmed by the latest listings will no longer need to hold their breath. But are these magazine scales any more reliable than those football rankings?

In many ways, their strengths and weaknesses are similar. Like summer football rankings, the rankings in U.S. News & World Report tell something about the potential impact that a college or university may have on a student. They do this because the rankings are based on the resources of campuses on the one hand and their reputations on the other. Just like football rankings, what leaders in higher education say about a campus should also be important. Even though it’s largely gossip, it’s usually informed gossip. Rankings do little, however, to tell students how they will react to the learning environment of a campus, how much they will be stimulated both in and out of class, or how well they will be stretched to excel. By all odds the best indicator of whether a campus will feel right for a student is a campus visit. When possible, prospective students should spend time on any campus they are considering. They should listen and learn from current undergraduates, for their experiences are good guides to what life will be like. It’s important to check out not just the curriculum, but also the extra-curriculum and the campus climate. Students should trust a combination of their heads and their hearts in determining how and how well they will engage at a college or university. In fact, there is lots of evidence that campus visits are the most important determinant of student choices.

A campus visit should be supplemented, of course, by as much information as possible about teaching and learning on a campus. Now there is another means to help students and parents make informed decisions: the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Each year NSSE collects information directly from undergraduates at hundreds of campuses, based on research about how and under what circumstances students learn. Prospective students can check to see whether a college in which they are interested participates in NSSE. If so, they may be able to obtain valuable insights about the extent to which students find the academic work challenging, the degree to which they are active learners, the extent of student-faculty interactions, the richness of the out-of-class experiences, the overall campus environment, the exposure to diverse cultural experiences, and the scope of technology uses. Research has shown that the questions NSSE uses give us a good picture of how much students are really learning. That’s something that rankings such as those of U.S. News & World Report can’t tell.

Fortunately, many campuses would be a right fit for any particular student, so there should be many institutions from which to choose. The quality of campus resources and of incoming students—factors that dominate most rankings—are some of what should be considered. But no one would choose a hospital based on the health of patients coming into the hospital, and no one should choose a college based primarily on the grades and test scores of incoming students. Since learning is the primary goal of going to college, students should determine what environment will best support them in becoming successful learners, and which institutions will meet their needs and interests. Making the effort and taking the time to investigate an institution fully before choosing where to apply is a short-term investment that will bring dividends for life.

Tom Ehrlich was president of Indiana University from 1987 to 1994. He has been president of the Harvard Alumni Association, chair of Campus Compact, and a board member of Bennett College and the University of Pennsylvania. He is currently a senior scholar with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

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**DR. REBECCA H. CORT, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, NYS VESID**

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Rebecca H. Cort, since February, Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Education Department’s Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), is a confident woman, which means a lot in a state whose legislature has just been identified by an NYU Law School study as the worst in the country. For Dr. Cort, who holds a doctorate in Learning Disabilities from Teachers College, Columbia, the legislature’s designation as “dysfunctional” means that funds for her office are still “on the line”—which means, for one thing, that a great number of public schools and approved private schools with disability programs don’t yet know what they’ll be able to do in an academic year that’s just one month away from starting. It also means that Dr. Cort will have to keep her dynamic marketing initiatives on hold for a while, but it’s clear from her upbeat manner and focused energy that persons with disabilities have in Dr. Cort an informed and eager activist. As for the legislature, well, she replies, with a humorous sense of duty, “I can wait; I’m used to it.”

Dr. Cort’s responsibilities, which include coordinating the state’s Office of Special Education Quality Assurance and Support Services, and was a general education teacher and a special education consultant. A co-author of a book and of numerous articles, Dr. Cort is an expert on disentangling confusing data which both advocates and critics love to cite at times of budget crunch. For example, New York City’s disability classification rate, as well as the 12 percent overall rate for the state, is actually below the national average, which sounds good, except that in the city, many kids attend private academies and keep the statistics down. The facts speak volumes about the number of children who attend public schools in urban, high-need districts. But more than money is involved, Dr. Cort notes: the “system” has aggravated problems by not concentrating on the best “critical points” to make a difference for the disabled.

In the past, the disabled were kept separate from the nondisabled (not a cost-effective way of dealing with issues) and thus special education teachers concentrated on methodologies. Now, with state-mandated content-oriented certification requirements for teachers and curricular access for all, the distance between general and special education teachers has been dramatically lessened. Teaching physics to a disabled youngster, for example, means that that teacher has really got to know physics. Recent research, moreover, shows that in some wealthy districts disabled youngsters perform better than non-disabled, a finding that argues for the importance of closing the gap in the early years, for mentoring to prevent drop out, and for promulgating model programs. Changing attitudes is crucial, both at higher education teacher training institutions and in the workplace. If H.S. teachers are not up to teaching subject matter to the disabled, then “we don’t want them.”

Her goals, Dr. Cort says, make economic as well as educational sense because it is less expensive to ensure that the disabled get and keep jobs than it is to support their institutionalization (which includes prison, in many cases). Myths still abide, but the truth is that adult constituents, a category that includes those with mental health as well as physical disabilities, tend to be loyal, responsible, and steadfast employees. Much needs to be done to educate employers to deal with relapses and to use referral services, especially those in resident communities. And of course the need remains to educate the public at large and to persuade those dilatory lawmakers.

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Lessons from the League School

By JASON GORBEL

I enjoy teaching social studies with a particular preference for aviation history. In my classroom social studies themes found their way into other subject areas. One multiplication lesson incorporated the first leaps of the Wright Flyer and a biography of Amelia Earhart launched a month of language arts activities. My propensity for historical analysis and my interest in the League School administration when I was asked to develop and teach a social studies program for the entire student body. League is a school for children with a classification of serious emotional disturbances who are too impaired to have succeeded in Board of Education schools.

After a few sweaty days clearing out a neglected storage room in the school’s basement, I decorated the walls with presidents, civil rights leaders, explorers, maps, and, of course, airplanes. The social studies department had a classroom now. Our individualized curriculum was theme oriented and the administration gave me the freedom to choose such a theme, but how was I to make the students care about their history? Where was I to start?

From the countless heroes of American history, the victories of our nation’s first African-American fighter pilots, the Tuskegee Airmen, are of paramount inspiration to me. My heart would almost race when I imagined myself soaring along with them at the controls of one of their famous red-tailed Mustangs. If I could feel it, then so could my students. I decided to include Airmen’s story among the first themes I taught.

As an experienced teacher, I knew making the information relevant to the students’ lives would ensure their involvement. The Tuskegee pilots’ plight was a dual war against prejudice on the ground and the German Air Force in the sky. Discrimination was an obstacle many of my students faced daily and courage under fire was called for in combat much as it is growing up in an often hostile urban environment. The idea of being stifled by low societal expectations was also something they understood well and here were people who, generations before had transcended the limits others had imposed upon them. These pilots’ exploits did more than protect American bombers en route to axis targets; they provided our country with evidence that given opportunities, African-Americans could excel as far more than the menial pursuits generally afforded them.

One morning my students were greeted with something other than a textbook or a chalkboard full of rote facts. A poster of Tuskegee Airmen C.-D. Lester’s red-tailed P-51 Mustang in pursuit of a burning Nazi warplane hung over the chalkboard. Upon entering the classroom, the students’ attention was caught by the colorful illustration. When they read aloud I had written below, “What would a blonde German fighter pilot who believed that he was a Superman have thought if he knew it was an African-American who had bested him in the air?” A lively discussion ensued.

Replies included, “What made him think he was better?” They remained silent—a rare pleasure as I explained Hitler’s Germany.

My question, “How did it feel to return to America, the country you had fought for, and find many doors of opportunity still closed to you because of the color of your skin?” spawned debate about issues of segregation and civil rights.

History provides an endless and ever expanding supply of heroes, villains and struggles to grab any student’s imagination. I look forward to many more years of baring my students with such elements and reeling them in before they even realize they are learning history from the basement.

Jason Gorbel, MSEd is a social studies teacher in Brooklyn’s League School.

[Education Update welcomes articles by teachers. Please email to ednews1@aol.com. In the subject line: Attr. Dr. Rosen]

In the Face of Adversity…

By MICHELLE ACCORSO

Courtney Gross was born with cataracts. By the time she was eight years old, although she had endured numerous operations, her vision began to deteriorate significantly. Glasses did not help and although she loved reading, she wasn’t able to access the books she needed for school. By the age of ten, Courtney was completely blind. Undaunted, her mother, a teacher, enrolled her at the Heiskell Library. Founded in 1895, the New York Public Library (NYPL) has spent over a century expanding its resources to children, teens and adults. With the generous support of the late Andrew Heiskell, trustee of the NYPL, the Heiskell branch located at West 20th Street now also serves as an oasis to the blind and visually impaired. With a passion for knowledge, Gross refused to let her handicap stand in the way of her goals, her thirst for knowledge and her indomitable independence. The Heiskell Library began sending her books on tape and books in Braille, allowing her to maintain her table independence. The Heiskell Library began sending her books on tape and books in Braille, allowing her to maintain her table independence. The Heiskell Library began sending her books on tape and books in Braille, allowing her to maintain her table independence.

A graduate from John Jay College with a masters degree in forensic science, Gross is certainly one of the individuals taking advantage of the many opportunities that the library offers. Her parents never let her use her blindness as an excuse, so at a very young age Gross learned to live independently. With the help of Xavier, her seeing-eye dog that she acquired when she was 18, she made her way to school via public transportation.

As someone who often came across the challenge of organizations refusing to make resources available to her, Gross was still able to take the SATs in Braille. “There’s no excuse for not making material available in whatever format someone needs,” she commented. Not wanting the SAT’s or other exams read to her, Gross has spent her entire life working towards achieving and maintaining independence. “I was always in regular classes. Some kids were understanding and some were cruel. In all honesty, however, in all the cruel people I’ve encountered in life—and there have been a few—they have helped to make me stronger. People sometimes say that if they could do their lives over again they would change so many things...for me, I wouldn’t change anything because if anything was different, who knows where I would be right now?”

More information on the Heiskell library and the many advances of technology for the blind and visually impaired will be continued in the September issue of Education Update.

The NYU Child Study Center is currently evaluating children ages 7-12 with tics, Tourette’s Disorder and/or OCD to determine if they qualify to participate in a research study comparing the course of tics and anxiety in children with PANDAS to those without PANDAS. FREE screening and follow-up care from our specialists is available to those who qualify.

For more information please call (212)263-8992

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(212) 996-9019

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IF YOUR CHILD HAS……

- Tics or Tourette’s Disorder
- Anxiety or obsessive compulsive symptoms/disorder (OCD)
- And his/her symptoms either started or increased during an infection

Your child may have Pediatric Auto-Immune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcus (PANDAS)

The NYU Child Study Center is currently evaluating children ages 7-12 with tics, Tourette’s Disorder and/or OCD to determine if they qualify to participate in a research study comparing the course of tics and anxiety in children with PANDAS to those without PANDAS. FREE screening and follow-up care from our specialists is available to those who qualify.

For more information please call (212)263-8992
Beat the Heat this Summer with the ‘Coolest’ Selection of Great Reading!

By SELENE VASQUEZ

Picture Book: Ages 5 thru 8: Harry the elephant and his soft toy friends get ready for bedtime snacks but sleep doesn’t come easily. Meticulous illustrations in colored pencil and pastels express the warmth and security of an impression of bedtime rituals for slumber land.

Nonfiction: Ages 8 thru 12: Handsome woodcuts in the boldest of colors reminiscent of 1930’s WPA murals. A history of the song and a simplified lovely version of the music is included.

“If you were a sea horse, you would enchant all who saw you. One glimpse and you would remind people that there was magic on Earth.” The underwater world of these amazing animals is revealed with poetic language.

Fiction: Ages 8 thru 12: Unusual folktales and riddles from around the world as well as familiar selections to keep kids guessing from Alice In Wonderland, The Hobbit, etc. Childlike ink-and-watercolor illustrations just as challenging.

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.

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PRODUCT REVIEW

RECORDED BOOKS’ “SOUND READING SOLUTIONS”

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Like Classic Illustrated comics and grainy videos of literary adaptations, we all know how “books on tape” can be. For a generation—or maybe the third or fourth one—uncomfortable with the verbal medium and raised on film and television, the common wisdom is that phonics and reading are simply a palliative scented with a shortcut cheat designed to take the pain out of parsing classic lit for slackers phobic of verbal decoding. They couldn’t possibly have serious education value for the practicing teacher or reading specialist, right?

Wrong: thanks to Recorded Books’ Sound Reading Solutions curriculum and Balanced Literacy Toolkit, both mainstream educators and special ed instructors can provide solid benefits to their classroom through audio books. If you don’t believe me, let statistics be your guide.

In a recent research study, thirty teachers in fifteen middle and high schools in Boston, San Diego, and several schools systems in Florida, students using the Recorded Books program gained a 34 percent edge in reading comprehension against a control group, read 77 percent more pages, and had improved fluency gains of 65 percent. Nor are those positive outcomes limited strictly to mainstream education: according to research exhibited at the 2002 ETA Conference, secondary special needs students showed an almost 20 percent gain in comprehension from pre-test to post-test.

Although the company makes available a vast selection of fiction and nonfiction titles and class guides for grades K-12, of particular interest is their Balanced Literacy Toolkit. The package includes 45 titles for young readers and teacher mini-guides, a combination cassette/CD player and eight Walkmans for individual listening, class sets of print guides, vocabulary building exercises, and even a steel cabinet to store the materials. With selections like Joe Go Ask Alice, The Chocolate War, Island of the Blue Dolphins, and Rumble Fish, the discriminating teacher can be sure of garnering maximum student interest as well as research-based skills improvement.

A diverse set of varying “core collections” are offered as well, including selections of Newbery Award-winning titles and titles chosen by distinguished reading teacher, Janet Allen.

Even better, Recorded Books suggests a number of tested teaching strategies for classroom use, including plans for independent “sustained silent reading.” small group reading, whole class listening, and even encouraging family participation. For struggling and special education use, the SmartReader product is emphasized, designed to be played at varying speeds to support appropriate rates for LD and remedial students.

Really, the best thing I could do is simply direct you to the company’s catalogue, so you can appreciate the broad range of materials and programs that can be found there.

For more information, log on at www.recordedbooks.com.

For more recommendations of Children’s Books visit www.EducationUpdate.com

STORYTELLING AT STATUE OF HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN, CENTRAL PARK, SATURDAYS 11:00-12:00 NOON

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<td>25 Helen Porter</td>
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Artistic Director: Diane Wolkstein (dianewolkstein@hotmail.com). Monitor: Ruth Lesh (609-896-1792) Storytelling is held rain or shine at 72nd Street & Fifth Avenue in Central Park. The stories are appropriate for children five years and up. Children are asked to sit with parents or guardians. Sponsored by the Hans Christian Andersen Storytelling Committee and the N.Y.C. Department of Parks and Recreation.

In Errata

The website in last issue’s article entitled Dr. Alice Bogray, Chair, Children’s Book Committee, Bank Street College of Education, should have read www.bankstreet.edu/bookcom.
Letters  

continued from page 6

that school leaders should have had the experience as effective educators. Ms. Farina surely qualifies as both an outstanding educator as well as an effective school leader. I wish her the best of luck in her new position. The principals, assistant principal, teachers and supportive staff are the beneficiaries of Ms. Farina’s experience and supportive leadership. The system’s school children of our great city will be the winners as the result of her selection.

Dr. Dan Miller
Fresh Meadows, NY
Executive Director
The Learning Zone

RESPONSE TO A Hearing Impaired Teacher Helps Children Discover the World

To the Editor:

Your story truly gave me hope. My niece has an 80 percent hearing loss in her left ear and her school is reluctant to help. I want to know what rights we have. Best of luck to you always and thanks for the enlightenment!

Sherry M.
New York, NY

Five Sheets of Plywood  

How to get started in business and the importance of spending money on only critical items

THE BARE ESSENTIALS OF SUBSISTENCE

Spires G. Rafis (the author) is a graduate of the University of Pittsburg in Metallurgical Engineering. Mr. Rafis’ first employment upon graduation was selling valves; he was very successful. Unexpectedly, three years later he was fired. He was devastated because of his dedication and loyalty to his boss. He felt the only choice left was to start his own business. He decided to manufacture valves since he was knowledgeable in this field. As this was not planned, he had no money setaside. His book, Five Sheets of Plywood [his first effort], details how he got started and the importance of spending money on only the BARE ESSENTIALS. His book also covers programs and confrontations that all new businesses encounter, such as dealing with lawyers, bankers, partners, employee relations, etc. This book is a guideline for these problems. In 2003, Mr. Rafis’ company, Red Valve Company, celebrated its 50th anniversary.
From the NY Botanical Garden: Explore A World of Plants

Why is August an exciting month for young science sleuths, birdwatchers, and artists? Because there are so many fun things to do at The New York Botanical Garden. Designed especially for children, the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden and Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden form a unique living laboratory. Check out the Adventure Garden where children participate in more than 40 hands-on activities. Then visit the Family Garden where families grow and harvest edible plants, and the fun includes storytelling, crafts, and advice from expert gardeners. Here’s a list of summer programs; teachers also have a bounty of school programs to choose from.

Waterlilies at the New York Botanical Garden

At the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden

WONDERS OF WATERLILIES The Adventure Garden becomes an aquatic learning experience this month. Children can catch a cool break and do experiments to understand how waterlilies float. Explore how these exotic-looking plants are perfectly suited to their watery home. Hands-on activities include making a watercolor painting. Tuesdays-Fridays, 1:30–3:00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

BUDDING BOTANISTS Drop-in program emphasizes early literacy through the study of nature. Ages 2 through 5. Nature’s ABC’s features a different letter every two weeks. August 3–13: P is for Ponds and Puppets, August 17–27: Q is for Quilts and Queen Anne’s Lace, August 31–September 10: R is for Roses, Rainbows and Rattles. Tuesdays–Fridays, 1:30–3:00 p.m.

At the Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden

GLOBAL FAMILY GARDENING Summer takes on a global flavor in the Family Garden at Gardens Round the World. Children discover bitter melon in the Chinese Garden, bok choy in the Korean Garden, plantains in the Caribbean Garden, and corn in the Native American Garden. Activities include cooking demonstrations and cultural crafts. Gardeners will be on hand to help children learn how to grow plants from around the world.

Tuesdays-Sundays, 1–5:30 p.m. Special Programs for Camp Groups At the Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden How Does Your Garden Grow? Children plant, weed, and water and help create a lush summer garden. At the End A. Haupt Conservatory Guided Tours Children explore a South American Healer’s House, insect-eating plants, and exotic plants from all over the world.

For more information call (718) 817-8818 or visit us on the web at www.nybg.org/chi_edu.

COMING IN SEPTEMBER Super Seeds and Fabulous Fruit, Hummingbirds and Other Flying Friends, Ballet among the Blooms with the New York City Ballet’s Education Department and School of American Ballet Dancers.

To register your summer school class or camp group call (718) 817-8818. For more information call (718) 817-8700 or visit us on the web at www.nybg.org/chil_edu.

The Everett Children’s Adventure Garden has unique living labs, an aquatic learning laboratory, and a unique living lab of the month. Children can catch a cool break and do experiments to understand how waterlilies float. Explore how these exotic-looking plants are perfectly suited to their watery home. Hands-on activities include making a watercolor painting. Tuesdays-Fridays, 1:30–3:00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

At the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory

Guided Tours Children explore a South American Healer’s House, insect-eating plants, and exotic plants from all over the world.

For more information call (718) 817-8818 or visit us on the web at www.nybg.org/chil_edu.

Watching the upcoming Games of the XXVIII Olympiad, August 13–29, is a wonderful opportunity to springboard your own family to the joys of being physically active! Here are a few suggestions from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), an association for physical educators. “The celebratory spirit of the Olympics can be inspiring for introducing your children to a wide variety of new physical activities, such as crew, kayaking, team handball, diving, discus and javelin,” said NASPE Executive Director Charles J. Burson. “Help each child identify a sport or activity that he or she would like to try or might enjoy doing as much as watching television or playing computer games.”

NASPE President Dolly Lambdin, Ed.D. of the University of Texas at Austin, said “Children 5 to 12 years of age need at least 60 minutes, and up to several hours, of physical activity per day. Just as children and youth can learn the habit of regular physical activity, they can learn to be inactive if they are not taught the skills and given opportunities to be active throughout their developing years.”

“Quality physical education, the cornerstone to developing an active lifestyle, can help students to be more active, more fit, and have better academicly,” added Dr. Lambdin. “Physical education teachers and coaches play a vital role in educating youth about the importance of practice, effort and activity. While watching and talking about the Olympics, reinforce with your children the importance of their school physical education classes for guiding their physical development and in introducing them to physical activities that they can become passionate about and enjoy for a lifetime.”

Whether it be swimming or running, encourage your children to keep improving their personal bests. Mark off the distance and use a stopwatch or a clock to see how fast they swim and run. Compare the times. How far can your child throw an object or jump? Measure it. Note improvements.

Have your son or daughter try to do some of the balance beam skills on a line on the floor. This fall visit a physical education class. You may see in-line skating, martial arts, wall climbing, golf or tennis. Ask your children to show you some of the movement skills such as hopping, dancing, rolling or jumping that they learned in their physical education class.

Encourage your child, with parental support, to look for opportunities to engage in new sports/activities for the value of the experience and possibly to expose your child to new recreational or competitive opportunities.

Have a family discussion about a different Olympic event each day—getting a broad picture of the event, the goals, and the names of American and international contenders. The U.S. Olympic team alone will have more than 600 athletes.

Share the motto: “Swifter, higher, stronger.” This great motivational slogan encourages all who participate to excel in their quest to reach the upper limits of their potential.

For more information on National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) visit www.naspeinfo.org.

“Swifter, Higher, Stronger”: Sharing Olympics’ Motto with Children
CHILDREN’S CORNER

THE “JOY” DAYS OF SUMMER
By POLA ROSEN, Ed.D.

I love New York City! As a child, I remember with great affection and nostalgia, the wonderful, relaxing days of unstructured summer days: swinging in a hammock, planting in a garden, finding salamanders in a stream, picking berries, picnicking, skipping rope, climbing rocks, playing musical duets with my father, exploring the back paths of the Bronx Botanical Gardens and the Bronx Zoo and above all, reading voraciously.

In my meanderings around the city this summer, these are some of the activities families are enjoying together.###

Evoking Eloise at the Plaza Hotel: Ali & Jessie with their parents
Miriam & Adam enjoying tea at the Palm Court

A horse & buggy ride in Central Park with Emily & her Grandpa

Lunch on historic Stone Street, originally laid out by Dutch colonists, now surrounded by financial district skyscrapers. After lunch walk to Fraunces Tavern Museum for insight into colonial history.

SPORTS

OLYMPIC GAMES RETURN TO ORIGINS—ATHENS

By TOM KERETES

It’s safe to say that the upcoming Athens Olympic Games is going to be unlike any other.

Viva la difference: in a wonderfully appropriate celebration, the Games return to their original birthplace, with some of the events actually held in the exact locations where they were first conducted 2700 years ago. (The original Games were part of a religious festival and began in 776 B.C.) Naturally, the Olympics should have returned to Greece in 1996—the 100th birthday of the Modern Games—but “Athens was simply not ready financially or otherwise to hold an Olympic Games at that time,” according to Olympic historian, and Rice University Professor Clark Haptonstall.

Not so viva la difference: to an unprecedented extent, the Athens Games are going to be shadowed, if not overshadowed, by the double whammy of terrorism and drugs. “The Greek Olympic Committee has spent an enormous amount of money—three to five times what they’ve originally budgeted—to ensure the athletes’ safety,” says Haptonstall. Yet, it’s impossible to be one hundred percent safe.

Ironically, during ancient times, people would travel long distances—untouched, out of respect for the Games, through warring areas—to get to Olympia. Now, due to the ongoing war in Iraq, U.S. athletes are particularly “on the spot.” "As far as the world is concerned, we are not the most popular right now," says Haptonstall. As a reaction to that uncomfortable fact, "Our athletes are receiving a lot of instruction these days as to how to act on and off of the playing field in order to best represent the United States. It’s actually an opportunity to improve international relations—this is one way that the Olympics can do a lot of good."

The poor timing of the illegal drug usage situation—in this country, it has exploded only over the past few months—lays equally heavily on the U.S. Fact is, we used to be mainly the accusers—now we are seen in many athletic circles around the world as both culprits and hypocrites. More than any other event, drug testing will affect track and field—the crown jewel of the Games and America’s strongest suit—as well as swimming, wrestling, weightlifting, and cycling.

In spite of the greater-than-ever challenges facing its athletes, the U.S. is expected to have its best Olympic results ever in Athens. The track squad is particularly strong and deep with a new generation of young up and comers, led by 19-year-old Allyson Felix in the women’s 100-meter dash, teaming up with heavily favored veterans Maurice Greene (100 meter dash), Allan Johnson (110-meter hurdles), Stacy Dragila (women’s pole vault), and Marion Jones (women’s long jump, relays). Our women’s gymnasts are defending their world championship team title in Athens. And 19 year-old swimming sensation Michael Phelps actually has a shot of breaking the legendary Mark Spitz’s “unbreakable” record of winning seven gold medals in one Game.

Athens is guaranteed to be the most spectacular festival of sports ever seen, yet the rejoicing is far from unanimous; many in the sporting press continue to decry the Games’ gradually losing its original amateur essence. “It’s unfortunate—but this is something that couldn’t be helped,” says Haptonstall. “When you are charging money—big money—to watch the Games, people want to see the best.” Which, in many cases in most sports, means professionals.

How will the U.S. athletes deal with the unprecedented pressure? There is a lot of focus upon us right now,” says Rice, university Professor of Sports Management John Eliot. "A lot of negative press means a lot of added stress on the athlete. It adds an element that might get in the way of optimal performance. Basically, it’s something extra to think about."

"But we’ll be better prepared than we ever have been throughout the entire history of the Olympics as well." In order to overcome the stress, and perform at his or her very best, during competition, the number one key for the athlete is to “be in the present moment, absorb whatever of the outcome or the consequences. The other key is to achieve a trusting mentality,” adds Eliot. “This is kind of a Zen mentality, the ability to really trust your training. Thus, it is the complete opposite of the training mentality where the athlete must be absorbed in the smallest details of the process.##
THE BEAT GOES ON WITH NYC TEACHERS & TAIKO DRUMMING AT LINCOLN CENTER

Members of Taiko Masala

By MICHELLE ACCORSO

Lincoln Center offered a different kind of summer workshop recently when it invited teachers from New York City public and private schools to engage in the art of Taiko drumming. Originating in 1943, the Japanese Taiko drumming borrows heavily from martial arts of Taiko drummers’ Bell out commands, much like what one would hear in a karate class, to signify the placement of the next beat. In a karate class, to signify the placement of the next beat. In a karate class, to signify the placement of the next beat.

“Each summer we conduct a summer session, meant to engage the teachers in our educational process so we can create a partnership with that individual teacher and that school to work together during the school year,” stated Scott Noppe-Brandon, Executive Director of Lincoln Center Institute, “First and foremost, we hope that teachers take back with them a love for the arts to share with their students. A key goal is to keep bringing people back to that spirit and motivation of why they became teachers in the first place. Through the world of imaginative possibilities, we really can make a change…with good teaching, good structure, good content; we really can impact the lives of individual students. We think that through this study, we can not only achieve this, but we can achieve it in many, many places.”

“I love it. It’s electrifying,” commented a teacher from New York City Public School who was chosen to play with Taiko drummers at the workshop. “We have instrumental music in our school and coincidentally a lot of our students happen to favor drums so this is perfect. I’m looking forward to incorporating this into my classes.”

Judy Hill, a full-time teaching artist at Lincoln Center Institute, led the workshop by arranging two taiko drummers in a circle and having them explain two large drumsticks in their hands. “Releasing the sound and releasing the spirit is more important than hitting the drum,” Hill explained. She went around the room asking the teachers what they felt after the experiment. “Power,” one teacher exclaimed. “It sounds like a conversation going on,” said another. “What would you call the piece?” asked Hill. “Voices!” “Talking Drums!” “Rainforest!” “Sandwich!” The answers were as original as the beats being created.

Making sure that arts are not sacrificed in the next school year. Furthermore, New York City teachers are not the only ones benefiting from this opportunity. “We are reaching out to teachers all over the metropolitan area,” commented Noppe-Brandon. “And this summer we are fortunate enough to include teachers from literally all over the world.”

For more info about Lincoln Center Institute’s Arts in Education visit www.lincolncenter.org.

Disney Gives Schools First-Class Treatment

When you let your students discover the wonder and joy of Disney on Broadway, you’ll make the experience unforgettable! This school year give your students a day to remember by taking advantage of Disney’s educational program, which provides schools with special rates for groups of 15 or more for Beauty and the Beast, Aida, The Lion King and The Little Mermaid. In addition, because we know you want to provide the necessary adult supervision, Disney gives educators one free ticket for every 15 purchased at all three shows. Flexible policies allow teachers to pay in full 2-3 months before the performance. Disney invites schools to dedicate an entire day to the theater and to enhance the group’s experience by taking a historical tour of the New Amsterdam Theater the morning prior to the performance. Finally, a 32-page workbook filled with songs, exercises, and written work, intended to give students a foundation of undeniable artistic skills and a sense of discovery.

Audio Memory’s Learning Songs

By MITCHELL LEVINE

The first thing you see when you log on to Audio Memory’s site is their slogan: “They’re not just a catchy tune; they’re a terrific learning tool.” With a catchphrase like that, is it any wonder you won’t forget what you sung! That’s not just a catchy branding line: solid research into neurological mechanisms used in learning all confirm that certain factors can increase your ability to remember. In fact, the products are well-made, educational, and fun—a rare combination of factors that can only mean excellent change of pace for teachers and parents. Of course, anyone like myself that needs to sing a familiar tune to recall what letter comes after “v” in the alphabet is already aware of this phenomenon, but it’s nice to know that there’s a foundation of undeniable scientific evidence behind it.

With a potential age group conceivably up to young adult, but particularly for young learners, Audio Memory products are a great fit. CDs and sing-along workbooks to help both classroom teachers and homeschooling parents take advantage of these effects. The products range in content area from grammar and history, to stats, geography and the Bible, and consist of a series of songs, exercises, and written work, intended to engage the publisher’s words, “use all avenues of the brain” to create mastery. For example, the company’s flagship product, Grammar Songs, teaches students all parts of speech in English through catchy music, and a large body of Greek and Latin root with sixteen songs and a 72-page workbook.

The music is professionally recorded and, while the songs may never chart on Billboard, they’re completely appropriate for both young learners and classroom instruction. While listening to the Geography Songs and States Capital collections, I was reminded several times of the Schoolhouse Rock songs of 70’s Saturday morning television show like “Conjunction Junction” and “I’m Only A Bill.” As a testament to the effectiveness of the medium, the reader should note that it may well be the case that many people in their 30’s only know the difference between adjectives and adverbs because of the latter.

To become an Audio Memory’s products are well-made, educational, and fun—a rare combination of factors that can only mean excellent change of pace for teachers and parents. Interested educators can find more information, as well as online audio samples, at the company’s website, www.audiomemory.com, or by dialing their toll-free number 1-877-365-SING.

Repression of art arises from fear of its power, fear of expression, of diversity of thought, of losing control.

As the Department of Education releases its new Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, let this message be as loud and clear as can be: art must be within the schools. We do not, cannot, will not have schools that fully educate our nation’s youth until we have art as an integral part of the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly education of every pre-K through 12th-grade student. It is imperative that high quality works of art be part of this educational experience. Students need to see, be part of, and create based on their encounters with art created by the most imaginative minds humankind has produced—and continues to produce. How will students understand what is meant by high standards unless they see examples of such standards in action? How can thousands of artists have had the privilege and responsibility to take art into the classrooms and theaters of schools around the United States. More often than not, in my opinion, the finest, most affective art has been the result of the artist’s need to share an idea, through creative expression, with humanity at large, not just with a particular age group. Such artwork repays itself over and over again, as each new generation finds something in it that it can own.

To become an aesthetic object, artworks need to be grasped by persons who have learned to engage in them, to co-exist with created things for a time in aesthetic space. Virginia Wolfe wrote that each of us is part of the work of art. We are the words, we are the music, we are the thing itself, such as we are: human at our best, not perfect. Mr. Heifetz understood that: he allowed himself a false note once in a while and consequently lived to a ripe old age of 87.

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

By MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

Recently, just blocks from Bowling Green where New Yorkers first read the Declaration of Independence in 1776, I joined governors George Pataki and J. Gibran Zaid to open New York’s newest Freedom Tower that will be the site of the World Trade Center.

The tower is the largest building site in Lower Manhattan. It will be called the Freedom Tower not simply because it will rise 1776 feet into the sky…but because its soaring design is an affirmation of our free enterprise and creativity that will send a message to people around the world: The cause of liberty can never be defeated.

We had a goal to take stock of the remarkable progress we’ve made in bringing the Trade Center site, and all of Lower Manhattan, back from the devastation of 9/11. In the days just after that attack, many people predicted that the rebuilding would be decades before Downtown recovered—if ever. But thanks to the teamwork—and hard work—of people in the private sector and at every level of government, Lower Manhattan has been reborn. We’ve still got a long way to go, but just consider what has happened in recent weeks. Four outstanding cultural organizations have been chosen to make their homes at the World Trade Center site; they’ll bring more art, dance, theater, and history to downtown than ever before. Efforts to make the Wall Street area more attractive, accessible and secure are underway. More than a dozen new parks and open spaces are in progress or nearing completion throughout Lower Manhattan. And in June, we broke ground on a new children’s aquarium and garden at the World Trade Center’s oldest and largest open space, Battery Park.

Federal funds will also be used to make other improvements on the site, including new pedestrian plazas linking the East and Hudson Rivers—as part of a recently announced $400 million plan to renovate the South Ferry subway station. That’s great news for the six million passengers who use the station every year—especially the daily commuters from Staten Island. Governor Pataki and I have one hour a day to commute down there. Fortunately, Washington to use billions of dollars in unspent September 11th aid to build a rail link from the World Trade Center site to Kennedy Airport—a major victory in our vision for revitalizing Lower Manhattan.

Every day, we’re moving ahead downtown. On our nation’s 228th birthday, we took a big step forward—and that’s something to celebrate.

The Challenge Ahead

By ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN SANDERS

While stonewalling by Governor Pataki and his delay- ing tactics and ploys have caused the State of New York to miss the Court of Appeals’ July 30th deadline in the CFE (Campaign for Fiscal Equity) case, Joel Klein has found to right the solution, the long legal battle has diverted many people’s attention from where or how substantial new dollars for city schools when they do ante forth short they’re going to be proven. That’s great news for the sixty million passengers who use the station every year—especially the daily commuters from Staten Island. Governor Pataki and I have one hour a day to commute down there. Fortunately, Washington to use billions of dollars in unspent September 11th aid to build a rail link from the World Trade Center site to Kennedy Airport—a major victory in our vision for revitalizing Lower Manhattan.

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By JILL LEVY, PRESIDENT, CSA

One of the great joys of summer is to have the occa- sional opportunity to dig into the piles of books set aside for vacation reading. This summer, however, my delight has been tempered by the ESL (English as a Second Language) program at the ESL (English as a Second Language) program at the ESL. The school system needs to walk a manageable number of five; what follows are dozens of educational issues that are important on any level, but I have been forced to delve into a topic of research that I find distasteful—workplace bullying.

Joel Klein sat for publically fund 45 Principals. All of you are by now undoubtedly familiar with what took place. The Department of Education announced the removal of the Principals who left at the end of the school year, the Interim Acting served for many of the Principals who left during the school year the Interim Acting served for many of the Principals who left during the school year, the Interim Acting served for many of the Principals who left during the school year, the Interim Acting served for many of the Principals who left during the school year. One Principal retired because she has cancer. It soon became clear to many that these people had been used to promote Joel Klein’s agenda.

Mr. Klein tried to present himself as an effec- tive leader who will not put up with poor perfor- mance and who swiftly separates the wheat from the chaff. But his publicity stunt backfired. By pumping up the numbers and misrepresenting the truth, he ended up with an even shorter shelf life. He still had a chance to show a human side. I sent him a letter asking for an apology. Now a real leader would have had the guts to stand up and admit he made a mistake. Need I say more?

Taking the Bully By The Horns

I have been in the school system since 1959. I have seen about 15 Chancellors come and go. I have seen decentralization hailed as a cure as to what aided the school system and I watched it go out with a bang, a whoop of resistance. I have seen layoffs, budget crunches, and desperate times for the city’s schools. I don’t remember a more despicable display of power by any leader of the school system.

As a teacher for 14 years, I have lived through actions were on the face of it, his remarks sent a message throughout the system, which brings me to the topic for the remainder of this column: workplace bully- ing. By publicly embracing such a policy, Mr. Klein promotes the use of such tactics throughout the system. We cannot stand for that kind of gross behavior under the cloak of so-called educational reform. Every workplace bullying is persistent, intrusive behavior exhibited by one or more individuals. It includes humili- ations, name-calling, threats, and other unwelcome behaviors intended to force an individual or groups of employees. Such malicious attacks on personal or professional performance are typically unpredictable, unfair, irrational and often unseen. Workplace bullying is an abuse of power or position that can cause such anxiety that people gradually lose all belief in themselves, and may suffer physical or mental illness as a result. Bullying has been identified as a more crippling and devastating problem than all the other work-related stresses put together.

The literature is clear about how to handle bullying. And I have said this again and again to my members. Do not be afraid. A bully works through lies and deception. You are not the prob- lem. The problem is the person who bullies you.

Jill Levy is the President of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators which represents the principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and administrators in NYC public schools and day care directors.

[Continued on page 29]
MOVIE & THEATER REVIEWS

TENSE TEEN TREK: MARIA FULL OF GRACE

By JAN AARON

S
potlighting a 17-year-old girl from rural Colombia, who drifts into the drug trade, this movie is a summer film marks striking debuts for both its writer-director Joshua Marston and lead, the incandescent, Catalina Sandino Moreno, as Maria. A bright, spirited young woman in a brain-numbing job in a rose plantation because her greedy family depends on her minuscule pay-check. But when her boss hounds her to be more productive, she impulsively quits. At the same time, she finds she is pregnant by her deadbeat boyfriend, Juan (Wilson Guerrero), who will marry her because he has to. An offer she refuses.

En route Bogota to work for a maid, she runs into Franklin (Jhon Alex Torres), a cool guy she met at a club, who lures her into the drug trade as a highly paid mule, smuggling heroin into the US. His boss, Javier (Jaime Osorno Gomez), a deceptively paternal employer, gives her a cash advance and explains the rules, downplaying any danger. She also meets Lucy (Guilied Lopez), a slightly older mule, who offers additional pointers. Maria understands the great risks, but views the job, which pays $5,000 per trip, as her only opportunity to survive. The average annual income in Columbia is $1,830.

In the next 24 hours, Maria learns how to swallow 64 heroin filled grape-size rubber pellets. If even one bursts, death is certain. On the tense plane trip with fellow mules, including her best friend Blanca (Yenise Paola Urag), Lucy is shot suggesting a burst pellet. More suspense follows at US Customs: Maria watches as an unidentified mule is apprehended, and she narrowly escapes being x-rayed because agents find she is pregnant.

Their situation worsens when Maria, Blanca and Lucy are held captive in a sleazy motel room until they eliminate their drugs. But Lucy’s condition causes brutal consequences and the other girls flee.

The film’s final stretch is an intimate portrait of the Colombian community in Queens. Here, Don Fernando (Orlando Tobon) befriends Maria. In real life, a Queens-based travel agent, Tobon has worked on behalf of drug mules and their families since the 1980’s. In the end, Maria emerges full of grace and ready for a new life. (Spanish subtitles in English, 101 minutes, R-rated.)

MUSEUMS

Cool Summer Fun at Children’s Museum of Manhattan

Beat the summer heat at the Children’s Museum of Manhattan (CMOM), either in the outdoor water area or the cool, air-conditioned galleries. The Summer Seuss Festival continues in August with exhibits, events and programs that are sure to educate, invigorate and excite kids of all ages.

Designed to open a world of reading and imagination to children, the exhibit “Oh! Seuss, Off to Great Places!” The fantastic exhibit sparking all the Seuss excitement, here kids can celebrate the magic of Dr. Seuss and free their imagination! Based on themes from Oh, the Places You’ll Go! and other Seuss classics, this major interactive exhibition sends children and families off on a journey to accomplish feats only possible in a Seussian world.

Block Party: In this interactive exhibit, children and adults alike become architects, physicists, mathematicians and logicians in a gallery filled with Kapla blocks. Using imagination to come up with ideas, participants can build skyscrapers, houses, furniture and more. Miffy and Friends: Closing September 7th, this interactive exhibit turns the drawings of Dutch illustrator Dick Bruna into a full-scale child’s playground.

Pre-schoolers will delight in seeing the lovable Miffy and her friends come alive, with opportunities for role play, reading and expression.

City Splash: Located in the outdoor Susman Environmental Center, this exhibit allows kids to exert their energy in CMOM’s water play area. Children can float boats down a 16-foot zigzag waterway, paint with water, use kid-powered pumps to turn water wheels, participate in miniature boat races, and enjoy other fun activities.

August In History

Start the School Year Right with a Grant from the NEA Foundation

There’s still plenty of time to submit a grant application by the September 15 review date to the NEA Foundation. Applications are accepted on an ongoing, year-round basis for both Innovation Grants and Learning & Leadership Grants. Never too late to apply! By September 15, you will know if your grant is approved by February 15. Grants fund activities for the next 24 hours. The NEA Foundation has funded over 1,500 grants throughout the years. Innovation Grants fund break-the-mold innovations that significantly enhance the prospects for learning for America’s children.

Learning & Leadership Grants provide opportunities to engage in high-quality professional development and lead colleagues in professional growth. These grants are available for all subjects, including the arts, literacy, science, and technology. Read about recent projects at www.neafoundation.org, and then submit your application by September 15.

All U.S. practicing K-12 public school teachers, education support professionals, or higher education faculty and staff members at colleges and universities are encouraged to apply. Grants are awarded of up to $5,000 per project to fund your BIG ideas. Visit www.neafoundation.org today for more information, including guidelines and an application. Or call 202.822.7840.

GRANTS

Student Support Services (SSS) Program: The purpose of the SSS Program is to increase the number of disadvantaged low-income college students, first generation college students, and college students with disabilities in the United States who successfully complete a program of study at the postsecondary level of education. The support services provided should increase their retention & graduation rates, facilitate their transfer from two-year to four-year colleges, & foster an institutional climate supportive of their success. The SSS Program is for Transfer students as of April 30, 2004. Eligible Applicants: Institutions of higher education or combinations of institutions of higher education. Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested $266,557,000 for this program for FY 2005. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress approves funds for this program. Estimated Range of Awards: $220,000-$350,000. Estimated Average Size of Awards: $280,000. Additional information is available online at www.ed.gov/Grants/FindGrants.FederalGrants/announcements/2004-30713044.html.

LITERACY AWARD

Deadline: January 17, 2005

In the summer of 2003, Hofstra University announced the development of an annual research award to be presented each year in a different discipline related to the mission of The Children’s Museum of Manhatten Community Services Center. The Joan and Arnold Saltzman Community Services Center, which houses four clinics and a fully licensed early childhood program, is dedicated to the education of students and the health and well-being of the community. The Clinic focuses on psychological evaluation, marriage and family therapy, reading and writing. The Award will be given for career-distinctive and pioneering work in any discipline related to the teaching of writing, including research, writing, teaching, and publication.

Applicants are to submit five copies of representative samples of their publications, along with a current CV. There are no entry fees or application forms. Recipients need not be U.S. citizens but all entries must be in English (or, translations are to be supplied). The winner will be notified in late March and there will be a public ceremony in April 2005 to honor the recipient.

Send applications and nominations to: Andrea Garcia Orbigén, Ph. D., Director, Reading/ Writing Learning Clinic Joan and Arnold Saltzman Community Services Center, Room 100 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549.

The first recipient of the Hofstra Research Award was Jerry Deffenbacher, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Colorado State University and a pioneer in the study and treatment of anger management.

August in History

COMPILED BY CHRISTOPHER ROWAN

The Roman calendar year originally was 10 months and the sixth month was named Sextilis (now August). In 46 B.C. – 44 B.C. (46 B.C. – 44 B.C.) came to power he reformed the calendar and divided the year into 12 months. Eventually the Romans changed the name of Sextilis to Augustus, in honor of Augustus Caesar (63 B.C. – 14 A.D.). The nephew and adopted son of Julius. “Augustus,” means venerable and comes from the Latin verb augere, meaning, “to make greater.”

World History

In 1492, (on August 3), Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain, on his first voyage to the New World. In 1806 (on August 6), the Holy Roman Empire came to an end. In 1914 (on August 1), Germany declared war on Russia during the opening days of World War I.
Shuttle inc.’s SB81P

By MITCHELL LEVENE

Because of the persistent attention that’s been paid to the multimedia paradigm in education technology over the last several years, a great deal of our editorial focus has been centered on portable systems for some time. It’s true that those models have many valuable benefits, but it’s also clear that there’s no “one size fits all solution” for schools looking to reach their tech mandates. Laptop advocates have their advantages, but desktop computer models do as well: the latter are far more robust, upgradeable, generally stable, cheaper, power efficient, and sometimes even more feature-rich. Mobiles are also infamous for their heat generation and cooling problems. In fact, if portability and space aren’t primary concerns, you’re probably better off with a desktop, especially in an education environment.

More and more schools have good reason to desire the advantages of mobile products. One of the largest of all concerns in institutional procurement is space: districts with the most need for technological infrastructure often find they can’t deploy them in. Is it possible to get the bonuses of the portable form factor without the costs and liabilities?

Thanks to Shuttle’s latest entry in the market, the SB81P, that’s now within the realm of possibility. A highly compact unit, the model’s style is referred to with the designator SFF, for “small form factor,” approximately half the size of a typically equipped system. This is a bare-bones package, so a mouse and CD-ROM drive are extra, but the additional specs are impressive: A P4 CPU or a Celeron ranging from 400-800 MHz; 400 MB HDD memory; support for hyper-threading; an AGP graphic card system with 64MB of dedicated visual memory; and 240W SileX power supply. Beyond the raw numbers, however, are a number of technologies and features that promise great returns for the education user. The Integrated Cooling Engine heat pipe technology keeps heat flows at a functional level, while avoiding the exceedingly noisy standards of most fan-based cooling solutions—very important in an atmosphere where instructive communication is paramount. Also supporting the design for air flow mechanics within the product itself, something usually overlooked in traditional manufacturing processes. Heat is the greatest enemy of technology, and as is said, “maximum lifespan is a supreme interest; this feature set should be a paramount benefit.”

Because of the extensive customizability and the least restrictive selection of information from the manufacturer’s site, www.shuttle.com, directly. For any institutional planners looking to derive desktop performance from a system with a minimized footprint, especially for multimedia use, when time spent configuring isn’t a first priority, the Shuttle SB81P should be a serious consideration.

Harman Shows the Importance of Music Education

Grammy Award-winning musician and actor Chris Thomas King took part in the seventh season of harman: how to listen. Harman International’s celebrated program promotes the importance of music education by bringing renowned musicians of all disciplines face-to-face with elementary school students. This year’s program featured Chris Thomas King, the innovative musical artist who has defined “hip-hop blues” for a new generation. This year’s program reached 30 schools in six cities: New York City, Indianapolis, Richmond, Denver, San Jose and Minneapolis.

Designed for elementary school children in grades 3-6, harman: how to listen takes an interactive, participatory approach designed to explore, with young minds and young ears, new ways of “how and what” to listen for in music. Using the curriculum, music teachers can bring to life musical concepts as simple as identifying instruments to the more complex elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, form and meter through performance and dialogue. The Los Angeles Times credits the program with the “enhancing of musical awareness in young people.”

harman: how to listen was created to address the country’s waning commitment to and interest in music education. Dr. Harman comments, “Harman International is pleased to continue our music education initiative, harman: how to listen. We are excited to have expanded the program to highlight various idioms of traditional American music, including blues, jazz, Latin jazz, and bluegrass. At Harman International, we believe it is the responsibility of private enterprise to give back to the community, and we urge other private entities to join in this effort to make a difference. We believe in using our commitment to music to enrich and enlarge the lives of our young people—they are our future.” Since its inception harman: how to listen has directly reached more than seventy-five thousand students in more than two hundred and seventy schools around the country.

Along with sponsoring the master classes, Harman International will donate to each school a state-of-the-art EON Power sound system designed by JBL Professional for school-size audiotoriums, which includes two 15-inch powered speakers, an EON Mix10 10-channel stereo mixer and two microphones. In addition, Harman International will donate a complete state-of-the-art multi-channel home entertainment system, the CP 10, which includes a Harman Kardon AVR 230 (6.1-channel A/V receiver), Harman Kardon DVD 101 (progressive-scan DVD player) and JBL SCS136SI (complete home cinema loudspeaker system). Dr. Harman comments, “It does not make a great deal of sense to come to schools that have been so harshly denied funding for the arts, to inspire some enthusiasm for music and then leave them empty-handed. We leave the equipment behind so they can pursue the interest we hope to spark in them.” Each school will also receive the harman: how to listen curriculum guide for future use.

Tuff Cases Portable Workstation

Long-time readers of Education Update’s Technology and Education section already know that mobile computing has been a major concern for New York City schools for some time. Over the last couple of years, thousands of students and teachers have received portable computer systems as part of an initiative carried through by the Department of Education and the Laptop Foundation of America. Unfortunately, one built-in problem persists. The districts in the public education system that most critically need access to the technology also have the least space to deploy it. And that still leaves unanswered the question as to how the systems can be safely packaged for daily transport by students to and from school. As any one that’s ever dropped a laptop can attest, even minor spills can create total catastrophe when a digital device is involved; a shock as small as 5 foot/pounds can cause anything from a hard drive crash to complete destruction of the CPU.

The portable workstations manufactured by Tuff Cases, Inc. can provide a dependable, practicable solution to all of the above. Our evaluation model, the company’s TFC 101, looks like a sturdy, stylish piece of luggage with a 17” by 19” frame and a well-d extendable porter’s handle and wheels. Unfolded, it seems to almost magically metamorphose a compact, precisely engineered station, which when completed with a, provides pretty much anything necessary to work with a laptop: a 33” high work area with a cloth file holder, a two position outlet strip, external mouse platform, and a cloth pouch to house the mouse.

No special tools were required, nor any converted gerry-rigging to create an efficient computing environment usable almost anywhere. As an environment to use a laptop in, it’s a bit more cramped than a standard workstation, but with a little practice can easily be accommodated to. Actually, once the printer’s installed, it’s really a very efficient little workspace. For the very tall, there might be a little lack of room for one’s legs, but I’m 6’1” and cleared it pronto.

Although our evaluation model was not equipped with one, the manufacturer even offers an option for a printer tray available. For anyone whom would like to be able to both carry and empower their laptop computer in just about any setting imaginable, Education Update recommends the Tuff Cases line of products. For more information, call 513-779-5420 or log on the companies’ site at www.tuffcases.com!
PRODUCT REVIEWS

SAVE TIME WITH GROUPLOGIC’S MASS TRANSIT 4.5

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Managing the largest computer network in secondary education is a vast undertaking, but New York’s Department of Education is doing it. With the new year beginning, the goal of implementing the “one-to-one computing standard” in our city’s public schools, or the ideal of one computer for every student, teacher, and administrator in the system, is quickly becoming a top priority—and formidable stressor—in technology procurement here.

With 1254 K-12 schools in the five boroughs, tech managers in New York education have a logistical challenge every bit as vast as their counterparts in the corporate sector, but nowhere near the amount of resources available to deal with it. In the corporate world, IT directors can simply buy all of the latest and greatest products with it. In the high-technology industry markets with their annual budget each year, and just throw out all the old stuff. Plus they usually have full staffs of techies to configure it all.

Needless to say, that’s not the way it works in education, where administrators consider themselves fortunate if they actually have one full-time manager handling their computers. With a major initiative like the one now facing the Department of Ed. happening, it’s a very good thing indeed that an application like GroupLogic’s Mass Transit 4.5 is now available. Mass Transit 4.5 is a systems control interface that can be run from any remote Windows NT/2000/XP computer, enabling a Systems Administrator to control most aspects of a remote environment, including starting or stopping services or devices, adding new services or devices, managing the system parameters and resources, and adjusting security levels. An integrated Event Viewer lets the Administrator monitor all events as though they were being run on the host computer, and the software even supports remote installs without ever having to be physically present on that station.

I didn’t have a large network of Windows machines available to set up my trial on, but I was able to install the software on a small (four units) one, and perform remote configurations with relatively large amount of ease, even as a non-expert. For a school system which is soon going to be configuring literally thousands of new computers, it’s easy to see how this would be a must-have app. Unfortunately, the product will be of no use to the many students and teachers that work with Mac OS only, but considering the fact that most of the mobile units currently being deployed run some variant of Windows, it still should have broadly applicable functionality for a large number of end-users in the districts.

While Mass Transit does have a learning curve—although most IT managers probably have much more network savvy than I can boast of—inability to maximize time efficiency in a school system with little to spare makes it effort well spent.

For more information, as well as a trial download, visit the manufacturer’s site at www.grouplogic.com.

PDA’s, GPS systems, and cell phones are all great tools…but using them in the car or on your desk is usually clumsy and precarious. You can buy an extra cradle, a belt clip and a car mount, but now with the MultiPivot™ you get all of that functionality and more! With over 15 different uses the MULTIPIVOT™ replaces over $100 worth of accessories!

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Christa McAuliffe Academy Offers A Personal Touch for Distance Learning

On the surface, it looked like any high school prom. Students entered through an ivy archway, the music roared, and the lights danced around the tiny mirror-walled ballroom. Rather than dancing however, many of the more than 20 teens attending Christa McAuliffe Academy's senior prom, opted to spend their time chasing each other through the halls, grazing from the food tables, or sitting in corners chatting. Several prom goers explained; most of them said they opted for this prom. Students entered through an ivy archway, the tiny mirror-walled ballroom. Rather than prom. Students entered through an ivy archway, the tiny mirror-walled ballroom. Rather than

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Alabama & Troy University Open Joint Headquarters in Germany

The grand opening of the joint Troy University and Alabama Development Office (ADO) Europe Headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany, was held recently. Governor Bob Riley, Troy University Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr., Heidelberg University Chancellor Beate Weber and ADO Director Neal Wade were among the participants in the ceremony.

This office will help us build stronger relationships with European business leaders, which is a key first step in winning major industrial projects, and it will help existing Alabama companies that want to open new markets for their products in Europe, Governor Riley said. “It will improve Alabama’s ability to aggressively pursue opportunities that translate into more jobs.” Chancellor Hawkins said Troy University is looking forward to a productive partnership with ADO and an opportunity to expand the University’s operations into Europe.

“Troy University has enjoyed a rich tradition of international service for more than 30 years,” Dr. Hawkins said. “Moreover, we have taken seriously our role in aiding economic development and in partnership with ADO and the opportunity to expand the University’s operations into Europe.

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INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
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302 ELM STREET
WESTFIELD, NJ 07090
FAX 908-789-4192
www.westfieldnj.com/wps-ohr

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Kaplan K12 Learning Svs needs people w/exp working w/kids to teach Math/English in after-school programs in NYC, Bronx, Bklyn & Queens public schools. Paid training. Work 2-10 hrs/wk. Open House: Wed 2/16 from 6-8PM at Landmark High School, 220 W. 58th St (7th & Bway).

CALL 1-800-KAPTEST or e-mail resume & arrival time to SES@kaplan.com. PLEASE bring resume & prepare 5 min mini-lesson. SEE MONSTER.com FOR DETAILS.

EOE

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WESTPORT Public Schools
Fairfield County, Connecticut

K-12 TEACHER VACANCIES

JOB FAIR
THURSDAY,
October 21, 2004
4:00 - 8:00 P.M.

One of the premier school districts in Fairfield County is seeking exceptional educators with a proven record of success. These positions offer the exciting opportunity to become part of a dynamic school system in a community where education is highly valued.

Salary Range: $40,973 - $90,998
Starting Date: January 29, 2005.

ELEMENTARY OPENINGS

Grades K-5 - Classroom Teachers, World Language (Spanish), PE

MIDDLE SCHOOL OPENINGS

Grades 6-8 - English, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Language (Spanish), Music, PE

HIGH SCHOOL OPENINGS

Grades 9-12 - English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Computer, Culinary Arts, Guidance, Library Media, PE, World Language (Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Italian)

SPECIAL EDUCATION OPENINGS

Special Education Teachers (K-12), School Psychologist (K-12)
To be considered, please submit an online application at www.westport.k12.ct.us
Applications must be received by September 11, 2004.
Interviews at the job Fair are by invitation only.

Interviews will be arranged for selected candidates who cannot attend the job fair. If you have no access to the internet, submit cover letter, resume, letters of reference, graduate and undergraduate transcripts and evidence of certifiability to:
Westport Board of Education, Department of Human Resources, 110 Myrtle Avenue, Westport, CT 06880.

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BRANCHBURG: PRINCIPAL - OLD YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADES 3-5/360 STUDENTS

Branchburg is an attractive suburban community of about 15,000 in West Central NJ. The area is surrounded by national and multinational corporations, institutions of higher learning and is about an hour’s drive from New York City, Philadelphia and the recreational advantages of the New Jersey Shore. Branchburg is a K-8 district of four schools with a student enrollment approaching 2,000.

The Board of Education is seeking an outstanding proven leader for Principal of Old York Elementary School - Grades 3-5, 360 Students.

Requirements for this position include:
A record of successful teaching and administration experience, preferably as a principal.
- The demonstrated ability to foster a collaborative, positive climate that focuses on excellence and maximizing student achievement.
- A passion for public education - Possession of, or eligible for NJ Principal Certification.
- Salary for this 12-month position will be highly competitive with a generous benefits package. Starting date is negotiable, as soon as practical, but not later than early Summer 2005.

To apply, send letter of introduction/appointment, resume, names and telephone numbers of 3-5 professional references, copies of available certificates and graduate transcripts by November 20, 2004, to:
Dr. Richard L. Fiander, Consultant RLF Associates, Inc
48 North Maple Ave.
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Tel: (908)766-1251
Confidential Inquiries are Encouraged.
E-mail: fiander@aol.com
For more information visit our website: www.branchburg.k12.nj.us

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