The Education Mayor: Michael Bloomberg
GUEST EDITORIAL

The Fertile Crescent for Fertile Minds

By SANDRA PRIEST ROSE

We face the new school year, teachers and children alike, with high hopes for a productive year. Our job as educators is to make it an exciting one, full of new discoveries.

Let’s give the children a curriculum full of knowledge. Let’s delve into ancient history, Sumer and Egypt, or Greek and Roman myths to serve as a springboard for studying those civilizations. Some third-graders with whom I work have a project at The Reading Reform Foundation working in inner-city New York City classrooms delighted in having a child’s version of the Odyssey read to them and wrote letters to their teacher, saying it was the highlight of their year.

Dr. E. D. Hirsch, Jr. has developed and published the Core Curriculum, which introduces first graders to ancient Mesopotamia (currently Iraq), followed by Egyptian studies. These civilizations are not to be taught as a classical “The Fertile Crescent” geographically.

Such studies need a good foundation for beginning reading of systematic phonetic instruction. Teaching one that makes use of all the children’s sensory pathways for learning. All children—no matter from what social or economic group—thrive on organized, step-by-step phonics teaching. Comprehension begins with the word, proceeds to the sentence and then to the paragraph. As words are written, their meanings can be discussed. Teachers can help students examine words closely for meaning from first grade on.

For example, Sunday means the day of the sun. Monday means day of the moon. Children are fascinated by this, and it is the beginning of a wonderful intellectual journey.

While this foundation for reading, writing and spelling is taking place, a teacher can read to his or her pupils about ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia or Egypt. Together the teacher and the class can look at maps to see where these civilizations were. They can draw time lines and measure with rulers to place 3000 or 2000 B. C. E on the line. They can discuss and write about them and present these to the students—such as Mesopotamia, Hammurabi, pyramids, papyrus. (all of these words can be taught phonetically) but most important, they can expand the child’s world and make knowledge exciting. This is how to develop comprehension. This kind of reading and study builds a base of wide knowledge and enriched vocabulary and is essential to avoid the “fourth-grade and beyond slump.” As Jeanne Chall wrote in her book: The Reading Crisis: Why Poor Children Fall Behind (Harvard University Press, 1990): The needs of low-income children are not essentially different from those of children from middle-class homes. Indeed, our findings suggest that low-income children benefit most from programs that work best for most children—a strong reading program that provides for learning of skills as well as wide reading in the primary grades, and a combination of structure, challenging and direct teaching, and practice in the reading of many books on a wide variety of topics in the middle grades.

Let’s use our new year to engage those fertile minds.

Sandra Priest Rose is Founder of Reading Reform Foundation of New York and Trustee of the New York Public Library and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

LETTERS

Re: Fighting Obesity Starts in Schools

To the Editor:

As an award-winning health teacher, I know how important it is for schools to help foster healthy eating habits in young children. In 2003, my students and I convinced Venice High School to replace the sodas in the school vending machine with bottled water, sports drinks, and juices; and a fruit and vegetable bar to the school cafeteria, and serve vegetarian-chili potato boats twice a week. Venice High was also the first high school in the nation to get an organic soymilk vending machine!

My students and I eventually persuaded the entire Los Angeles Unified School District to pass an obesity prevention resolution to encourage schools to provide kids with healthy snacks instead of candy bars, eliminate contracts with fast-food companies, offer students at least one healthy snack in every area school.

Jacqueline Donac
Wilmington, NY

Re: Dr. Maya Angelou

To the Editor:

I wish to salute Dr. Angelou for she is my hero. She is my hero not because she is a famous literary artist or because she is such a noted public figure in society but because she is an example of what good we can become and of the good we can do in this world when we use what is already inside of us. I have discovered that I am a writer. I want to be a successful writer. I am not a young woman (50 years old), nor am I an educated person. Tell her she is my hero in a world where there are few true heroes left. Tell her I used to be a caged bird, but no more. This “free” bird is going to sing now. Tell her I said thanks for the inspiration.

Anna Bryant
Bronx, New York

Re: The Misunderstanding of Dyslexia

To the Editor:

Great article! My son is 8 years in the 3rd grade. I am having him tested for Dyslexia. Do you know of any good schools in the New York City area?

Cynthia Ford
New York, NY

[Editor: Churchill, Gateway, Mary McDowell Center; Parkside School, Steven Gaynor School, Windward School, Winston Prep, Dwight School, Columbia Grammar.]

Re: Dr. Alexandra Levine: Caring, Humanistic Physician

To the Editor:

She is an amazing doctor... her passion and compassion are both limitless. We owe her!

Bee
Los Angeles, CA

The Incredible Maxine Greene

To the Editor:

First I want to sincerely to congratulate Dr. Greene on her “outstanding work.” Her story touched my heart in a very unique way. I love Dr. Greene’s dedication and hard work represent an extraordinary journey.

Dolcia Pena
Bronx, NY

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EDUCATION UPDATE
IS AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER
By EMILY SHERWOOD, Ph.D.

TEACHING MATTERS CELEBRATES TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Recently, Teaching Matters, a non-profit educational organization that helps teachers and students use technology effectively in the classroom, celebrated its tenth anniversary with an evening program at Rockefeller University’s Caspary Auditorium featuring guest speaker George Stephanopoulos, ABC Sunday news anchor.

Teaching Matters has good reason to rejoice. Founded by visionary chairman Elizabeth Rohatyn, a noted philanthropist whose long list of public service credits includes the Board of Trustees of the New York Public Library, the organization has become a trusted partner in the New York City public schools. In just ten years, Teaching Matters has prepared and mentored over 8,000 NYC teachers and 350 principals to use technology in advancing instruction and school management, while spinning off two brand new techno-centered schools in the Bronx and developing a dazzling array of technology-enhanced curriculum projects for students city-wide.

“When we started ten years ago, there were not a lot of people out there who were doing what we were doing,” reflects Elizabeth Rohatyn. In that ten year span, “we have been able to make a mark on the critical mass of teachers who were prepared to take a leap of faith and work with technology,” adds Rohatyn.

Rohatyn, who originated the idea for Teaching Matters when she was a sponsor for an “I Have a Dream” class of 53 inner-city, at-risk students, realized that “if you brought technology into the classroom, you’d really turn these kids on.” What happened next was like a primer for public advocacy. Rohatyn networked with corporations, private foundations and individuals to develop a formidable pool of capital (some $8.5 million to date) to bridge the digital divide and provide costly computer resources to the most disadvantaged students. She has also built up a current staff of some 40-curriculum consultants, most of them former teachers, whose job is to go into the most economically needy schools and provide customized curriculum development in the classroom.

About 80 percent of the organization’s resources are now devoted to such hands-on mentoring of teachers. Whereas ten years ago the staff was teaching basic computer skills to teachers, “now we’re really looking at creating learning experiences and environments that we can project into the classroom, whether it’s websites or units that teachers can use to expand upon what they’re doing. We’re trying to engage kids through visual animation, in discussion groups on-line or after school, and in a variety of other ways where we can take an old topic and have kids engaged in different ways,” explains Executive Director Lynette Guastaferro, a former Price Waterhouse Cooper management consultant-turned-teacher who joined Teaching Matters in 1997.

Teaching Matters’ two new high tech laboratories, East and West Bronx Academy for the Future, offer a generous 1:1 ratio of students to laptops. Teachers incorporate digital projectors and tablet computers into their daily lesson plans so that students can visualize first-hand on their laptops what their teachers are discussing. One of the most exciting offerings is the home-school connection, where parents can log onto a home or library computer any hour of the day or night and stay on top of their children’s grades and attendance. “While some parents are very tech-savvy and e-mail me every day, others don’t even have a working telephone, or their cell has been cut off. Basically, it becomes a question of how we work together to help the student,” says East Bronx Academy principal Sarah Scrogin. Mark House, a West Bronx Academy ninth grade social studies teacher, puts it this way: “If we can have parents on the same page as the students, there’s no disconnect.

Students can never say, ‘I don’t have homework tonight,’ because the parents can log on and see for themselves.” House is also enthusiastic about his ability to preset the students by computer and generate an immediate analysis of their comprehension in different areas. “I know instantly what I have to teach based on what they know and don’t know,” adds House.

Looking ahead to the future, Rohatyn notes “the explosion of technology, particularly the Internet, into our everyday lives is having a dramatic effect on our democracy. Twenty-first century citizens, young and old alike, are bargained with information, encouraged to speak up and competing for their own space on the World Wide Web.” Whether it is the challenge of keeping pace with the Information Age or providing expensive technological resources to all students equally, Teaching Matters will continue to play a valuable role in New York City’s future.

Elizabeth Rohatyn

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IF THEY LEARN TO TURN OFF THE LIGHTS.

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THE POWER BEHIND EVERYTHING YOU DI
Chancellor Klein Addresses Charter School Leadership Summit

By LIZA YOUNG

School’s Chancellor Joel Klein’s heart lies not in the glory of publicity and politics, but in the furthering of the mission of continual improvement of education. In addressing staff members from various charter schools throughout the city recently, he lent his support and advice. His words were—“Think Big. Make this a scaled up movement in our city.”

Chancellor Klein indicated that charter schools, even when dealing with a more challenging population, have surpassed public schools in many priority areas, this is an area where working together is the only viable strategy.”

“The students packed 38 backpacks with books, school supplies, games, stuffed animals, letters and drawings for children in the hurricane’s path,” said Mr. Fiedler. “They were pumped to make a difference.”

The Sterling School, a private school for children with Dyslexia and language based learning disabilities, contributed to Hurricane Katrina relief. The students packed 38 backpacks with books, school supplies, games, stuffed animals, letters and drawings for children in the hurricane’s path. The students were pumped to make a difference.

The next ones are really amazing. Notice the consecutive exponents.

- $438,579,088 = 4$
- $3,435 = 3$

Now taken one place further we get:

- $1,306 = 1$
- $1,676 = 1$
- $2,427 = 2$

The next one is really amazing. Notice the relationship between the exponents and the numbers.

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We are accustomed to seeing numbers in charts and tables as on the sports or business pages of a newspaper. We use numbers continuously in our everyday life experiences, either to represent a quantity or to designate something such as a street, address, or page. We use numbers without ever taking the time to observe some of their unusual properties. That is, we don’t stop to smell the roses.” Inspecting some of these unusual number properties provides us with a much deeper appreciation for these symbols that we all too often take for granted. Students too often are taught mathematics as a dry and required course of instruction. As teachers we have an obligation to make it interesting. To show some of the number oddities brings some new “life” to the subject. It will evolve a “gee whiz” response from students. That’s what you ought to strive for. Make them curious about the subject, motivate them to “dig” further.

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Some Amazing Number Relationships

By DEAN ALFRED POSAMENTIER

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S P O T L I G H T O N S C H O O L S  •  E D U C A T I O N U P D A T E  •  O C T O B E R  2 0 0 5

Free & Reduced Price School Meals Available

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) recently announced a new outreach campaign to encourage parents and students to submit school meal applications and help children take advantage of free and reduced-price meals in their schools. The outreach campaign includes a PSA that features Jets Safety Erik Coleman informing students to “Feed Your Mind” by eating healthily and staying fit, a sweepstakes for parents and students who submit the school meal applications, and information for parents and students about the ongoing nutritional reforms taking place in public school cafeterias, where a variety of healthy meals are now included on the menu, throughout the City. Deputy Chancellor Kathleen Grimm joined New York Jets quarterback Jay Fiedler and the students of IS 109 in Queens Village for the announcement.

“Our upgraded nutritional guidelines are serving as a model for school systems across the country,” Deputy Chancellor Grimm said.

“Children who eat properly are better able to learn and I encourage all parents to complete the 1041 form so that we may continue to provide more and more of our students with nutritious, delicious meals daily in our schools.”

“Whether I’m driving our team down the field for a touchdown or cracking a textbook, I’ve always been at my best after having a good breakfast and lunch,” Mr. Fiedler said. “I want to encourage all students to take advantage of a great meal at school.”

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Make them curious about the subject. Motivate them to “dig” further.

Who said numbers can’t form beautiful relationships! Showing you students some of these unique situations might give them the feeling that there is more to “numbers” than meets the eye. They should be encouraged not only to verify these relationships, but also to find others that can be considered “beautiful.”

Notice the consecutive exponents.

- $15^1 = 15$
- $75^1 = 75$
- $518^1 = 518$

Now taken one place further we get:

- $1,306 = 1$
- $1,676 = 1$
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S R E N D I G  S C H O O L  3 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

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By SYBIL MAIMIN

“Globalization” is the buzzword of our time and the world of higher education has taken notice. A new independent division within SUNY (State University of New York), the Neil D. Levin Graduate Institute of International Relations and Commerce, prepares students to work across borders and cultures by teaching “Cross-Management” skills and world perspectives. Reflecting the globalization trend is the tremendous growth in students seeking training and degrees abroad. A talk at the Levin Institute on “International Students in a Global Knowledge Economy” by Dr. Kemal Guruz, John W. Ryan Fellow in International Education at SUNY, highlighted the surge in student mobility and its profound effects on sender and receiver countries.

As the number of people enrolled in post-secondary schools grows around the globe China’s numbers more than doubled in the past decade) and universities increasingly serve more diverse, non-traditional populations, the competition for out-of-country students and the income and brainpower they represent has become intense. The global knowledge economy is big business, about $2.2 trillion annually worldwide. The United States earned $12.9 billion from foreign students in 2002-03 while many smaller countries such as New Zealand and Ireland received significant boosts to their economies. India earned $12.9 billion from foreign students in 2002-03 while many smaller countries such as New Zealand and Ireland received significant boosts to their economies.

China has built a campus resembling an imperial palace. Shanghai built 20,000 dormitory rooms in one year. The number of foreign students studying abroad may be related to the outsourcing phenomenon. Australia and New Zealand are motivated almost entirely by economic considerations. Still getting organized, Russia is predicted to become a key player, bolstered by its great cultural base. Some countries aggressively court international students. Britain tours the world promoting its universities. “It’s unbelievable what they do,” remarked Dr. Guruz. Beijing University in China has built a campus resembling an imperial palace. Shanghai built 20,000 dormitory rooms in one year. The number of foreign students studying in China has jumped from 13,000 in 1992 to 86,000 in 2004 and is projected at 120,000 in 2007. Eighty percent of the classes are taught in Chinese, leading the speaker to predict, “I think Chinese is going to be the biggest language rival to English around the globe.” The number of foreign students in the United States has dropped from 13,000 in 1992 to 86,000 in 2004 and is projected at 120,000 in 2007. Eighty percent of the classes are taught in Chinese, leading the speaker to predict, “I think Chinese is going to be the biggest language rival to English around the globe.”

Host countries reap many benefits. Goodwill and mutual understanding are created. Strategic alliances for collaborations in research and development can be established. Much income is generated. Germany and France hope to create an educated immigrant class needed to fuel their economies. Japan, which is suffering from slow population growth, needs a boost to its labor force and social security revenues. The explosion in the 90s of Indian students studying abroad may be related to the outsourcing phenomenon. Australia and New Zealand are motivated almost entirely by economic considerations. Still getting organized, Russia is predicted to become a key player, bolstered by its great cultural base. Some countries aggressively court international students. Britain tours the world promoting its universities. “It’s unbelievable what they do,” remarked Dr. Guruz. Beijing University in China has built a campus resembling an imperial palace. Shanghai built 20,000 dormitory rooms in one year. The number of foreign students studying in China has jumped from 13,000 in 1992 to 86,000 in 2004 and is projected at 120,000 in 2007. Eighty percent of the classes are taught in Chinese, leading the speaker to predict, “I think Chinese is going to be the biggest language rival to English around the globe.” The number of foreign students in the United States has dropped from 13,000 in 1992 to 86,000 in 2004 and is projected at 120,000 in 2007. Eighty percent of the classes are taught in Chinese, leading the speaker to predict, “I think Chinese is going to be the biggest language rival to English around the globe.”

China’s populations must pay exorbitant fees or are barred from attending the national universities to opt for study abroad. Moroccan students choose to study in France, their former colonial overseer; this phenomenon is seen in other post-colonial states. Developing countries see overseas schooling as a fast way to educate a citizenry that can help with nation-building. The top sources of students for overseas schooling are China, United States, India, Korea, Japan, and Germany.

Higher education is responding to the globalization of societies and labor markets. The goal is “credentialing” an international mobile workforce. Business, economics, engineering, information technology, and English language skills are sought. The cultural exchange offerings of the past are almost extinct. The once very large Fulbright program is down to three to four thousand students globally, a fraction of its former strength. Quality assurance is a challenge as programs, providers, and national standards and traditions vary widely. Research and books are appearing. Foreign Affairs devoted half of a recent issue to international education. Thomas Friedman’s best-selling book, The World is Flat, warns that our education system must adapt to a more level world playing field. Global higher education is a very hot topic.

"Cross-Management" skills and world perspectives are being taught at SUNY. Dr. Kemal Guruz is a Fellow in International Education at SUNY, the Levin Institute. His book "Globalization: The New International Order" is available from Rowman & Littlefield.

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Prepared by students and teachers for success has been the focus of three exceptional educators who were being honored for their innovations and accomplishments. Barbara Bowman, Sharon Lynn Kagan and Ellen Moir are the 2005 Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education winners, Harold McGraw III, chairman, president and chief executive officer of The McGraw-Hill Companies announced recently. The three were recognized for their work in early childhood education and teacher professional development. These three remarkable women were saluted recently at a dinner at the New York Public Library (NYPL).

“Few educators have thought more about student and teacher preparedness than those we are honoring today,” said Mr. McGraw. “From creating standards for model early childhood education systems to establishing support programs for new teachers, the 2005 McGraw Prize winners have brought necessary attention to what is at the foundation of successful efforts to educate our nation’s children.”

The winners of the 18th annual McGraw Prize are:
Barbara Taylor Bowman, Co-Founder, Erikson Institute—Bowman has been a powerful advocate for children for more than 50 years and is a lifelong proponent of higher education for those who teach and care for young children. Bowman is a pioneer in building knowledge and understanding of the issues of access and equity for minority children. The Erikson Institute she founded was established in 1966 to educate preschool teachers to work with at-risk children from low-income families in the Head Start programs. Today, largely because of Bowman’s leadership, Erikson’s educational programs reach more than 2,500 students and, through them, hundreds of thousands of children. Erikson alumni include teachers, social workers, human service providers, and health practitioners in the United States and throughout the world.

Sharon Lynn Kagan, Associate Dean for Policy and Mars Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy, Teachers College—Kagan, widely recognized for her work with early childhood education, is a frequent consultant to the White House, U.S. Congress, the National Governors’ Association, and the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. Kagan is a prolific author, having written over 200 publications focusing on issues including the development of an early childhood system, strategies for collaboration and service integration, mechanisms to enhance the quality, quantity, and financing of early childhood and other social programs.

Ellen Moir, Executive Director, New Teacher Center, University of California, Santa Cruz—Moir is recognized nationally for her knowledge and expertise in teacher preparation, induction and support. Moir founded the New Teacher Center (NTC) in 1998 as a place where educators and researchers could study, develop, and administer new teacher and administrator support programs. The NTC consults with organizations, educational leaders and policy makers worldwide. Current NTC efforts include mentor training initiatives in New York City and the District of Columbia. Growing from an initial staff of five, today NTC has 65 teachers and researchers who continue to spread the influence of Moir’s work.

“This year’s McGraw Prize recipients show us that support early on—be it for pre-schoolers or beginning teachers—is the key to sustained success,” added Mr. McGraw. “They have brought academic innovation as well as a tireless focus to student and teacher preparation and ultimately have made an important difference in the way we educate our children.”

The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education annually recognizes outstanding individuals who have dedicated themselves to improving education in this country and whose accomplishments are making a difference today. Honorees are chosen by a distinguished panel of judges made up of thoughtful and influential members of the education community. Each winner receives a gift of $25,000 and a bronze sculpture. The Prize was established in 1988 to honor Mr. McGraw’s lifelong commitment to education, and to mark the Corporation’s 100th anniversary.

Past honorees include: Barbara Bush, founder of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy; James B. Hunt, Jr., former Governor of North Carolina; former U.S. Secretaries of Education Richard Riley and Rod Paige; Carl Cohn, former Superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District; Yvonne Chan, Ed.D., Principal, Vaughn Next Century Learning Center; Mary E. Diaz, Ph.D., Dean of Education, Alverno College; and Dennis Linsky, Co-Director of The Met and Director of the Presidential Residency Network. In 2004, the honorees were Geoffrey Canada, President & CEO, Harlem Children’s Zone; Robert Moses, Founder and President, Algebra Project Inc.; Cecilia Cunningham, Executive Director, The Middle College National Consortium, LaGuardia Community College; and Janet Lieberman, Founder, Middle College High School.

Additional information is available at http://www.mcgraw-hill.com.

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2005 McGraw Prize in Education Given to Leaders in Early Childhood Education & Teacher Education

Harold McGraw, III and Barbara Bowman

Now is the Time for Action

By RANDI WEINGARTEN

Most politicians know that even the best poll ratings can be undone by a crisis. Sometimes the crisis can be foreseen and averted, sometimes not. Rarely does a politician ignore a looming crisis with no thought about the consequences, but it can happen. Consider, for example, Mayor Bloomberg’s approach to negotiating a new contract for New York City’s teachers.

City educators have been working almost two and a half years without a contract and three years without a raise, but they still rolled up their sleeves and helped students achieve record gains on English and math tests—gains the mayor touts in television commercials and in campaign appearances as he runs for re-election.

Teachers are understandably frustrated and angry at this lack of respect from the city. Despite the sinking morale of the city’s teaching force, Mayor Bloomberg is showing an alarming lack of urgency on contract talks. He pays lip service to teachers, praising their efforts and saying he is optimistic a contract with “substantial raises” will be negotiated soon. But his actions belie his appearances as he runs for re-election.

On September 12, an independent state panel of fact-finders issued a report with nonbinding recommendations for a new contract. Despite misgivings about some of the recommendations, teachers quickly approved using the report as a vehicle for resuming negotiations and finalizing a contract. Within days, top local elected officials gathered on the steps of City Hall to urge the mayor to return to the bargaining table to negotiate a contract as quickly as possible.

Only then did the mayor agree to schedule an official negotiating session, which was held on September 26, 2005. It was the first face-to-face bargaining meeting since October 8, 2004, almost a year ago. Conversely, the union has been— and continues to be—willing to negotiate every single day until an agreement is reached.

Surely the mayor must realize the effect his nonchalance has on teachers. They have worked hard, spending their own salaries on supplies and working long beyond the normal school day, grading papers, preparing lessons and helping their students. They have gone three years without a raise, earn 15 percent less than teachers in the suburbs and must cope with the largest class sizes in the state.

The teachers have never turned their backs on the mayor. Consider, for example, Mayor Bloomberg’s approach to education experiments.

The New York Times said, “Teachers are understandably demoralized and angry” and called the UFT “a cooperative partner in New York’s most successful education experiments.”

We have reached a time of urgency for our schools and our children. Educators and the children they teach must be made a priority. Mayor Bloomberg should not have waited for this crisis to take the contract matter seriously. It is time for Mayor Bloomberg to heed the advice he gave Rudy Giuliani to do four years ago: Both parties should be locked in a room until they work out the compromises needed to get a fair deal. If the mayor is serious, that’s exactly what he’ll do—and we stand ready to join him there.

Randi Weingarten is the President of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City.
In every school in America, it's likely that at least one child has Tourette Syndrome, a neurological condition characterized by repetitive, involuntary vocal and motor tics that persist over time. Many parents don't recognize the symptoms and the kids often go misdiagnosed.

Produced in association with the Tourette Syndrome Association (TSA), “I Have Tourette’s, But Tourette’s Doesn’t Have Me” presents a candid, wide-ranging look at the lives of children growing up with this still-baffling condition when the HBO family special debuts Saturday, November 12 at 7:30 p.m. (ET/PT), exclusively on HBO. Directed and produced by Ellen Goosenberg Kent (the Emmy®-winning HBO specials “How Do You Spell God?” and “Happy to Be Nappy and Other Stories of Me”), the special demystifies and humanizes Tourette’s by giving voice to children ages eight to 13 who suffer from the disorder.

The documentary features the children in their daily lives doing all the things normal kids do. But they can also display frightening out-of-the-ordinary behaviors that characterize the disorder, the children also poignantly reveal the most debilitating effect: its emotional impact.

Children with Tourette’s are frequently subjected to the ridicule and scorn of other children, or even adults. The children speak of the devastating impact of being ostracized by their peers. They respond joyfully when a friend understands their condition and accepts them, because they just want to be like everyone else.

In response to bullying and teasing, school systems across the country are adopting curricula to teach acceptance of diversity, as well as the tools to bring about positive conflict resolution. Each year, a large number of prestigious organizations, including TSA, sponsor, “No Name Calling Week” nationwide in the schools. I Have Tourette’s, But Tourette’s Doesn’t Have Me” is an invaluable tool in this campaign of compassion. A time when children with disabilities are mainstreamed and no longer kept on the sidelines, it is vital for other children (and parents) to hear their voices. Through an open and honest discussion of their differences, these children show just how similar everyone is.

“I Have Tourette’s, But Tourette’s Doesn’t Have Me” is produced by executive producer, Ms. Victoria George, a parent of a fourth grade student in special education said, “The school my son was going to just gave me the run around and would not evaluate my son. He was having problems with his reading and began to fall behind in his other subjects. Things came to head when the school informed me that he would be left back. Another parent told me about Community Advocates and I made an appointment to see them. Once they took my case we went to an impartial hearing. At the hearing the hearing officer gave us all that we asked for including hundreds of hours of tutoring for my son at a special organization that has a proven method of success with children having reading problems, Lindamood Bell Learning Processes. I could not have accomplish this without the help of Community Advocates.”

Another parent, Ms. Skanda Newton, said, “Community Advocates have been very effective in helping me secure additional diagnostic testing for my son. We went to an impartial hearing and the hearing officer ordered the Department of Education to pay for a neuropsychological exam, which is very expensive. Also I was given the right to enroll my son in a specialized private school for which the Department of Education will pay. Community Advocates demonstrated at the impartial hearing how the Department of Education violated my son’s right to a free appropriate public education and won these concrete educational benefits for us.”

Another parent, Ms. Adrienne Daniels, said, “My child’s school was not providing the appropriate services he needed. When I went to Community Advocates they took my case and we began an impartial hearing. At the hearing CAEE secured hundreds of hours of tutoring for him, additional diagnostic testing, and the right for my son to go to a private school. My son will be attending The Community School, a private school that specializes in helping children with reading and language processing disorders. I am thrilled. Community Advocates saw this complex process all the way through from start to finish. We’re very grateful for their help.”

Mr. Bruce Ellis, President of Community Advocates for Educational Excellence, Inc. said, “Many parents of children in special education find the NYC Department of Education is unwilling to respond to their legitimate complaints and issues. When we get involved, DOE seems to become a little more reasonable. Parents have rights and we help them assert their right to a free appropriate public education for their children."
Group for ADHD is a private mental health clinic in Manhattan, founded by Lenore Ruben, LMSW, CHT, EMDR, and Orly Calderon, Psy. D., a NYS licensed psychologist. The mission of Group For ADHD is to help families find effective methods of coping with ADHD and LD by focusing on the individual’s strengths.

My daughter is diagnosed with Learning Disabilities and is dyslexic. I am dissatisfied with the services she is receiving in her public school. I have found some private programs that I believe would do well with the specific learning issues that she has. I can only afford private services if I use my insurance but they say they do not cover learning disabilities. Is there something I can do to compel the insurance company to cover the treatment?

The short answer is no. Insurance companies typically do not cover for treatment of Learning Disabilities. Such treatment is the responsibility of the Board of Education under the Special Education Law (Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004).

But you are not without recourse. If you feel that the school your child is attending is not providing appropriate services to remediate your child’s learning needs, then you are entitled to an impartial hearing. This is a meeting between you and representatives of the school district, during which you can express your concerns. You are allowed to bring to this hearing an outside specialist who supports your view. Such a specialist can advocate for your child’s needs and recommend, for example, that outside services be used to augment the services that your child receives in school. If the school is convinced that it is unable to provide your child with the necessary services and that outside services are needed, then the Board of Education must pay for such services to be provided outside the school. To learn more about your child’s rights, it may be useful to consult with a child advocacy group. Many of them provide pro-bono legal services.

I have been having an ongoing argument with my husband that maybe you could shed some light on. Is having a double set of schoolbooks for an ADHD child in middle school beneficial or is it reinforcing the child’s forgetfulness and lack of responsibility?

First of all it is important to acknowledge that the child is not leaving his books (markers, keys, pencils, etc.) behind. On purpose. Nor is the child being intentionally irresponsible. These are typical symptoms of ADHD and sometimes of Learning Disabilities. As such, these behaviors need to be addressed in a pragmatic fashion. To this end, having a double set of books can be helpful. The child can keep one set of books at home and one set at school so that he always has a set nearby when he needs to study or do homework. The disadvantage is that having a double set of books doesn’t necessarily mean that each location will retain one set. Having 2 sets of books doesn’t remedy the child’s forgetfulness. As a result, the child may end up with two books in the same location. Using two sets of books also means that the child needs to develop a new system for taking notes and highlighting. For example, it becomes imperative that all notes are written in a separate notebook and not in the margins of books. This way the student is left with one set of notes instead of notes being divided between the margins of two different sets of schoolbooks.

In short, having two sets of books may be helpful but it is not a cure-all. Supervision and reinforcing of self-organizational skills must take place.

My college-aged daughter is taking prescribed Adderall for ADHD and I am concerned about her yielding to peer pressure for inappropriate use and illegal sales of the medication. Do you have any ideas?

This is a valid concern. We know there has been a lot written in the press over the past few years, citing examples of such behaviors. You are not alone in being unable to control the behaviors of the people your child may come into contact with. However, you can help by educating your child about the medical and legal risks of selling or sharing her prescription. Talk openly to your daughter about the dangers of using controlled substances without medical supervision and about the legal ramifications of unauthorized sales of controlled substances.

The good news is, not every child who owns psycho-stimulants shares or sells them to his/her peers. It is important for you to self-reflect as to why you are concerned with this issue. Does your child hang out with peers that you don’t approve of or that you fear could lead your child down this road? If so, don’t be afraid to express your disapproval in a productive manner. Stand firm in your opinion by calmly sharing observations of the specific behaviors that worry you and setting appropriate boundaries in your home. For example, if your child socializes with peers that you fear may have a bad influence on her, then it is perfectly all right to say to your daughter, that she is welcomed home at any time but specific friends of hers are not permitted in your home. It is important to remember that standing your ground and setting loving limits can be difficult. Your child may resist you. The tensions in the house may create further conflict and contribute to your child’s negative behaviors. Seeking outside counsel can often help parents stay strong in their position and alleviate this cycle of tension. An experienced therapist can help you and your child to communicate productively.

Questions to be answered in this column should be emailed to: info@GroupForADHD.org.

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We have the answers!
Learning Leaders Support & Inspire
NYC Public School Students

By LIZA YOUNG

Learning Leaders, the organization aptly named for its volunteers who lead kids throughout New York City public schools towards optimal learning, recently held a kickoff event for the new school year at the Times Square Marriott, where there was a buzzing crowd of 2,400 of the nearly 15,000 learning leaders. Last year the volunteers helped nearly 239,000 students in 937 schools.

Mayor Bloomberg, in a surprise appearance at the event, personally thanked the volunteers stating, "You are making an enormous difference not just for kids who are in school today but on our society moving forward for decades to come."

Cindy Baniak of College Point, Queens, who last year worked daily as a volunteer with eight students from PS 129—ranging from the kindergarten to the sixth grade—related, in an interview before the audience with Dana Tyler of CBS, that she finds being a learning leader an incredibly gratifying experience. She is pleased when she meets students in the hallway who, since they are not allowed to speak there, "always find their little ways of saying 'hello Ms. Baniak' through a small wave or smile." Through her work she has discovered the importance of individually tailoring teaching towards the perspective of each student. She explained how "one student may learn through games, while another may benefit from using examples from real life situations."

Mayor Bloomberg

Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein

Cyndie has also brought home her experiences as a learning leader, helping her three sons with their education.

Keynote speaker, Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein, highlighted that "learning leaders make the greatest investment, as there is no greater one than working with children." He warmly stated to the volunteers, "You help kids who come from poor families, who see education as their only hope—kids like Joel Klein for whom education was the key." He called for each member of the audience to recruit one additional volunteer to add to the base of learning leaders.

Joseph Sanjaj, who recently signed on to be a learning leader is enthusiastic to join the team: "As I sit in the crowd among parent volunteers I see that mostly they are older—although some are younger—which shows their longstanding commitment to teaching and dedication to making a difference in kids' lives."

Learning leaders have in the past bravely faced harsh weather, such as snow storms, in their mission of helping kids succeed, and in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita the organization is making efforts to help kids on a national scale. They are currently raising funds for Park Ridge Elementary School in Louisiana, where evacuee students are being transferred to continue their education.

Toyota Provides Bridge to Japanese Culture for New York Teachers

Eight New York high school teachers were selected to travel to Japan recently as part of a delegation of 59 teachers participating in the Toyota International Teacher Program (TITP), an educational ambassador program that is in now in its 7th year. During two rigorous weeks through five cities from Tokyo to Nagasaki, the teachers learned about Japan’s past and present, and explored key global issues as well as visiting the 2005 World EXPO in Aichi, Japan.

TITP focuses on four themes—history, education, environment, and technology—and how these affect industry and society. The EXPO focused on how the global community is dealing with environmental issues, natural resources and energy. Other activities included visits to schools, shrines, conservation sites and factories to discussions with well-known authors, historians, educators and business leaders.

"Teaching is a unique mission to help broaden their students’ perspectives regarding the global community in which we live," said Jim Press, executive vice president and COO of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. "What better way to provide students with the tools they need to build cultural bridges than to allow teachers to expand their curriculum and enhance their teaching expertise through international study."

The eight New York teachers, who instruct students in a variety of subjects, are among 59 chosen from ten states where Toyota operates manufacturing, research and design facilities, and regional operational offices—Alabama, California, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Texas, West Virginia, New York and Washington, D.C. Teachers were chosen from New York and Washington D.C. for the first time this year.

Teachers selected to participate from New York were: Esther Hilsenrad Morris Academy High School, for Collaborative Studies, Bronx; Daniel Jerome, Banana Kelly High School, Bronx; Deborah Haar, Lillian Rushkin High School in Brooklyn; Nina Rosenblatt, Trevor Day School in Manhattan; Eric Walters, Marymount School in Manhattan; John Pontieri of E.J. Milliken Tech Center in Oakdale, NY; Brian Kohrt of Pittsford Sutherland High School in Pittsford, NY; Linda Maier of Emma Willard School in Troy, NY.

Teachers are selected to participate in the highly competitive program based on their professional and leadership qualifications, as well as their plans to incorporate their experiences and research into their curriculum. To be eligible teachers must be U.S. citizens, employed full-time as secondary classroom teachers (grades 9-12), and have a minimum of three years teaching experience.

Funded through an annual $825,000 grant from Toyota Motor Sales (TMS), U.S.A., Inc., the program is the only one of its kind sponsored by a major U.S. corporation. The Institute of International Education (IIE) in Washington, D.C., the nation’s most experienced non-profit educational exchange organization, administers the program. "The Toyota International Teacher Program provides teachers with experiences and tools they can use to strengthen their students’ abilities to think and act on a cooperative and global basis," said HE President and CEO Dr. Allan E. Goodman.

Toyota International Teacher Program provides teachers with experiences and tools they can use to strengthen their students’ abilities to think and act on a cooperative and global basis.

Our students have not discovered a cure for cancer...
But they’re working on it!

Rachel M., a recent graduate of Solomon Schechter High School of New York, has been conducting breast cancer research at Columbia University since the 10th grade. Her research project, "The Effect of Oral Contraceptive Use on Breast Cancer Occurrence: A Multi-Racial Case-Control Study,” earned her Regional Finalist honors in the Young Epidemiology Scholars competition.

Among her other interests, Rachel enjoys photography. She also volunteers as a cancer study recruiter at Columbia-associated community-work in Israel last summer. Rachel is now a freshman at the University of Pennsylvania, where she is studying public health. Schulich Scholar student Rachel M., has her own unique potentials within an intimate, caring environment that promotes intellectual inquiry, fosters academic success, and nurtures leadership skills.
SCHOLASTIC HOSTS SCHOOL REFORM INITIATIVE

By LIZA YOUNG

Opening at the Majestic Ballroom of the Westin Hotel before a crowd of scores of superintendents from around the country, Scholastic graciously hosted a two-day Superintendents’ Literacy Leadership Summit to address the national dilemma of adolescent literacy.

Luminaries in government and education highlighted the underpinnings of school reform. Guest speaker Governor Mark Warner of Virginia—describing the pressing issues of global competition and education as tied to national security—underscored the need to bring qualified teachers into poor areas to overcome the ironic trend of sending less qualified teachers to these areas. He stated his willingness to “give bonuses to teachers going into schools in poor areas.” Warner also stressed the need for defining educational standards and for remediation based on these benchmarks.

With his classically upbeat style, Schools Chancellor Joel Klein stated in his opening remarks that though “school reform is urgent it must not be joyless.” Klein cited that only two out of 10 students and one of 10 Latino and African American students earn regents diplomas. He indicated that students three to four years behind in reading cannot be expected to graduate high school and stated that early intervention is vital so that students enter high school prepared with the necessary skills. Klein espouses a pedagogical and instructional pattern of school reform. He stated that through the use of such instruction there was an 11-point increase in reading scores for grades three through eight. At the same time, it is essential that literacy programs be individually tailored to meet the needs of each student.

Scholastic Offers Solutions in the Face of National Reading Crisis

By MICHELLE DESARBO

With 68 percent of 8th graders failing to meet proficiency requirements in reading, schools are facing a staggering literacy crisis nationwide. Scholastic’s recent Superintendents’ Literacy Leadership Summit brought panels of experts together with the hope of arming superintendents and teachers with the tools to build and strengthen adolescent literacy in the classroom.

In a three-part presentation (moderated by Mr. Greg Worrell, Scholastic’s Senior Vice President and General Manager of Read To Learn) that both moved and informed the audience, summit attendees learned about the use of classroom technology as a way of teaching students how to become better readers—and utilize their own talents.
New Services Provided by Public Libraries

The Naperville (IL) Public Library significantly increased its 24/7 digital services recently. Included in the expanded set of service initiatives are the following new formats:

- **eAudiobooks**—unabridged books that may be enjoyed on PCs and hundreds of portable devices such as compatible MP3 players. They can also be burned to CD for use on any standard CD player, so you can listen to these downloadable books anywhere—car, home, while exercising!

- **eBooks**—digital versions of print books that include all the pictures, text and graphics. They can be downloaded onto PCs, Macs, laptops, supported PDAs, and other portable devices.

Titles include fiction, non-fiction, children’s and adult popular fiction. Authors include Jonathan Kellerman, Catherine Coulter, Douglas Adams, the “Frommer’s Guides” and “Nolo Press.” These services are available through the library’s website, www.naperville-lib.org.

The Naperville Public Library joins a distinguished group of libraries across America who are providing many new services to their users outside of the traditional four-walls of library buildings. New services, like downloaded eAudiobooks and eBooks, are available to residents wherever they are working or vacationing.

OverDrive, Inc., the leading vendor of downloadable audio books and eBooks for libraries, supplies the technology for the new service.

“Naperville has a large number of adults who travel extensively as part of their work,” explains Mark West, Deputy Library Director. “These expanded services give them 24/7 access to leisure reading materials as well as informational databases.”

Use of the Library’s website has exploded in recent months. In the first three months of the fiscal year almost a quarter million unique visitors clicked on the Naperville Public Library site, an increase of 36 percent from last year. (Actual number of unique visitor or user sessions was 234,632 for May, June and July).

The Naperville Public Library in Naperville, IL, located in suburban Chicago, serves 136,400 residents with a budget of $13.5 million dollars from three state-of-the-art facilities. In the last 12 months, almost 4 million items were checked out by 92,000 card holders.

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OT – THE “OTHER” THERAPY COMES INTO ITS OWN

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Although the need has become so “desperate” for occupational therapists that head hunters, working on behalf of nonprofits, for-profits and government agencies, are offering schools such as The New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) in Old Westbury a hefty bounty for referring graduates, the typical high school senior either knows nothing about the field, or—like most members of the general public—confuses Occupational Therapy (OT) with Physical Therapy (PT). And thus misses a wonderful opportunity to pursue what could be an increasingly complex field; and, Professor Plotnick is eager to add, a post 9/11 sense of wanting meaningful career, an interest, she notes, that is expressed by both 18-21 year-olds (many of whom were born abroad or whose parents are immigrants) and by a growing number of thirty and forty-somethings, some downsized, others who have moved OT far from being the “arts and crafts” line of work it was decades ago, to being a high-level health profession, whose licensed practitioners work closely with the medical and psychological community, and are also being sought out as teachers and administrators for new academic programs (particularly for Children With Disabilities, including learning difficulties, that will increase the need for occupational therapists in schools, particularly for special education); curricular enhancements that have moved OT far from being the “arts and crafts” line of work it was decades ago, to being a high-level health profession, whose licensed practitioners work closely with the medical and psychological community, and are also being sought out as teachers and administrators for an increasingly complex field; and, Professor Plotnick offers an anecdote: “Music is my passion, occupational therapy my passion and my job,” says Professor Plotnick, a choral singer, violinist, and pianist with perfect pitch, who could have had a professional career as a musician, but the example of an aunt, a social worker, who became the director of a children’s home in New Orleans—an unusual position for women then—inspired Hermine to take on the sciences and specialize in an area where she could work with her hands and mind, not to mention soul. OT requirements are rigorous—biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, anatomy. Professor Plotnick offers an anecdote: It was an OT student who, checking on a patient being catheterized in a hospital, noted that the urine bag was suspended above the bladder and knew instinctively from study of planes, angles, joints, that something was seriously wrong. Though hospitals are prime sites for OT graduates, the growing number of people in rehab (not all of them over 75) has meant that OT programs stress intervention—working with those who want to keep active in their homes and communities—see relatives, do shopping and banking, attend social activities, learn to use adaptive devices for driving. The need for skilled and emotionally sensitive OT professionals could not be greater. For further information go to www.aota.org or check the site of the American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. and www.nyit.edu.

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Travel & Tourism Careers

By BOB LEVY

In 1992 Lita Baldram was working as an intern for American Express as part of a program designed by the Academy of Travel and Tourism, a fledging organization representing the coming together of an industry-specific education. Now, 13 years later, Lita is a Marketing Manager at American Express having worked her way through an undergraduate degree at St. Johns University and a Master’s degree at New York University in tourism and travel management. And the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism is growing stronger than ever. These days there’s more of a focus on not only educating students but also preparing them for life, or in many cases, a career after school. And that’s why the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism was formed. Launched in 1987, the Academy operates as a school within a school offering industry-specific education. It is a two- to four-year program under the auspices of the NYC Department of Education and the National Academy Foundation. The Academy prepares high school students for careers in one of the world’s largest service industries through a curriculum that provides an in-depth look at all aspects of tourism and hospitality.

According to John Ferrandino, President of the National Academy Foundation, the students are better prepared to go into the business world once they complete the program. “We have a saying, how do you measure success. We measure the success by the fact that the power of choice at the completion of the program is in the hands of the kids and the parents,” said Mr. Ferrandino.

Regina Flannery, a former teacher since 1989 who took on the head job in 1992, directs the New York Academy. “One of the things we’re most proud of is that almost 100 percent of our students graduate from high school, which is significantly higher than the citywide graduation rate.” (The citywide graduation rate presently hovers around 53 percent at present). “And the percentage of Academy students that go on to college is 91 percent which is significantly higher than the national average.”

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CONFERENCE ON READING

Reading Reform Foundation of New York

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Author; Prof, Emeritus, University of Virginia; Chairman, Core Knowledge Foundation. TOPIC: “Fairness, Reading and the Knowledge Deficit.”

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The Salvation Army
$1 Million Broad Prize Awarded To Norfolk Public Schools, Four Finalist Districts

NYC WAS ONE OF THE FIVE FINALISTS.
The Broad Foundation announced recently that Norfolk Public Schools is the winner of the 2005 Broad Prize for Urban Education, the largest education prize in the country awarded to the most outstanding urban school districts. U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings joined founder Eli Broad at the Library of Congress to make the announcement.

The $1 million Broad Prize is an annual award that honors the country’s urban school districts that are making the greatest improvements in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between high- and low-income students. The money goes directly to graduating high school seniors for college scholarships.

As the winner of The Broad Prize, Norfolk Public Schools will receive $500,000, and the four finalists—Aldine Independent School District near Houston, Boston Public Schools, New York City Department of Education, and San Francisco Unified School District—will each receive $125,000. This year was the third time Norfolk was a finalist for The Broad Prize, bringing the district’s three-year winnings to $750,000.

“Norfolk Public Schools have made remarkable progress in the past four years, demonstrating not high achievement by all student groups but also improvement more similar than districts in the state,” Broad said. “Norfolk’s success can be attributed to the district’s strong leadership, and the solid partnership with the school board, unions and community. It is clear that they have made education a priority for all students, and that commitment is evident in their academic results.”

“We commend all of the finalists for their achievements and for demonstrating that despite challenges, success is possible,” Broad said.

The Broad Prize was started in 2002. The inaugural winner was Houston Independent School District, followed by Long Beach Unified School District in 2003 and Garden Grove Unified School District last year.

More than 80 urban school districts nationwide were eligible for The Broad Prize this year. The five finalists were selected based on a rigorous review of data compiled and analyzed by the National Center for Educational Accountability. A board of 17 prominent educational leaders then reviewed the data and selected the five finalist districts.

Teams of educational researchers and practitioners then conducted site visits at each of the finalist school districts to gather statistical and qualitative information, including interviews with district administrators, focus groups with teachers and principals and classroom observations.

The information was presented to a selection jury, comprised of eight prominent individuals from business and industry, education and public service, to choose the winning district.

The Selection Jury for the 2005 Broad Prize was Jeb Bush, governor of Florida; Georgia C. Cisneros, chairman and CEO of American CityVista; John M. Engler, former governor of Michigan; James B. Hunt, Jr., former governor of North Carolina; Rud Paige, former U.S. Secretary of Education; Hugh B. Price, former president and CEO of the National Urban League; Richard W. Riley, former U.S. Secretary of education; and Andrew L. Stern, president of the Service Employees International Union.

The Broad Foundation is a Los Angeles-based venture philanthropic organization established in 1999 by Eli and Edythe Broad. The Foundation’s mission is to dramatically improve K-12 urban public education through better governance, management, labor relations and competition.

Darrow School: Hands-on Education for More Than 70 Years

Darrow School, an independent, co-ed, boarding and day school in New Lebanon, NY, offers a comprehensive college-preparatory curriculum with a range of courses in writing and literature, history, languages, mathematics, sciences, and the arts. Strong critical thinking and writing skills are emphasized in all subject areas. Students learn within an atmosphere that supports the pursuit of intellectual curiosity, individual creativity, and the joy of learning. The School has been recognized as a pioneer in the field of “hands-on learning,” and Darrow teachers use real-world topics and a dynamic approach to capture the imagination and make the subject matter come alive.

The beautiful mountaintop campus is located on the site of the historic Mt. Lebanon Shaker Village, and Darrow continues to embrace the Shaker legacy of sustainability and stewardship. An important feature of the academic program is its focus on environmental, social, and economic resources, and students discover the value of finding balance within one’s self, the community, and global society.

The National Association of Independent Schools recognized the School’s Sustainability Program in February 2005 with a Leading Edge Honors Award for curriculum innovation.

Darrow’s small classes, averaging nine students, afford everyone the chance to participate. Head of School Nancy Wild says, “Because Darrow is a small boarding school, with a 4-to-1 student-teacher ratio, there is an opportunity for strong connections between students and teachers. Teachers get to know students well, and expectations are high. They push students to do their best in classes, athletics, and co-curricular activities.”

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The substantive nature and climate of Darrow School offer students a setting where their abilities can prosper, and the School’s distinctive educational philosophy is suited to all learning styles. At Darrow, students reach their full potential as motivated, thriving, college-bound learners with a greater understanding of themselves and the world.

To learn more about Darrow School, contact Sean Fagan, Director of Admission, at 518-794-6888 or visit www.darrowschool.org.

OPEN HOUSES
Poly Prep prepares students for college and for life by fostering learning, leadership, health, community responsibility, and, above all, character. An outstanding program of academics, physical education and athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities is guided by a strong, committed faculty in a diverse school community, on campuses with outstanding facilities. Our Middle and Upper Schools, serving boys and girls in Grades 5 through 12, are located on 25 acres in Dyker Heights.

Close relationships with faculty help students learn to question freely, develop powers of critical thinking, and accept differences. The academic program demands rigor but also seeks to teach a deep and abiding respect for the power of knowledge, the method of reason, and sound decision-making.

We believe this kind of education gives young people the best mode of access to the full promise of American life. We are committed to providing this access to all Poly Prep students.

To reserve a space for an Open House, please call (718) 836-9800, ext. 674.


**BUSINESS OF EDUCATION**

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**EVCI Career Colleges Completes Acquisition of TCI**

EVCI Career Colleges Holding Corp. (NASDAQ: EVCI) recently announced that it has completed its acquisition of Technical Career Institutes, Inc. for $16 million subject to adjustment.

Dr. John J. McGrath, President and Chief Executive Officer of EVCI, noted, “We are extremely excited about the acquisition of TCI. We believe TCI’s curriculum is highly complementary to that of our existing offerings and provides EVCI with a tremendous opportunity to expand its student population in New York. We have identified a number of operational synergies, cost savings and growth opportunities that we will begin to implement.”

Founded in 1909 and headquartered in New York City, TCI offers two-year associate degree and certificate programs. With an emphasis on technology, TCI offers programs within three major divisions: Business and New Media Technology; Climate Control and New Media Technology; Computer and Information Technology.

The acquisition of TCI is expected to add approximately 3,000 students and operate out of two facilities. The main campus is on 31st street diagonally across from Penn Station, and is supported by a nearby annex facility. TCI is accredited by the New York State Board of Regents. In addition, TCI was recently awarded regional accreditation by the Pennsylvania School of Business.

TCI offers degree programs leading to the Associate in Occupational Studies degree and Associate in Applied Sciences degree. It has a main campus in mid-town Manhattan and an extension center in each of Flushing, New York and in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan, New York. TCI also has a college site in Yonkers, New York. Each of Interboro’s four locations has an annex that became operational for the fall semester 2004.

EVCI acquired Interboro in January 2000. EVCI acquired PSB in January 2005. PSB is authorized to offer two Associate in Specialized Business degree programs and two diploma programs in information technology as well as three recently authorized business diploma programs. As permitted by the Pennsylvania State Education Department, after six months of teaching the three business diploma programs, PSB plans to seek authorization to award the Associate in Special Business degree for those programs. PSB recently relocated to downtown Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Dr. McGrath concluded, “During the past 96 years TCI has established a tremendous name recognition and we will continue to build upon its brand equity. TCI will operate as a wholly owned subsidiary of EVCI.”

About EVCI Career Colleges Holding Corp.

In addition to TCI, EVCI is the holding company for Interboro Institute and the Pennsylvania School of Business. TCI offers degree programs leading to the Associate in Occupational Studies degree and Associate in Applied Sciences degree. It has a main campus in mid-town Manhattan and an extension center in each of Flushing, New York and in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan, New York. TCI also has a college site in Yonkers, New York. Each of Interboro’s four locations has an annex that became operational for the fall semester 2004.

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**Answers.com Hires Veteran Linguis**

GuruNet Corporation (NASDAQ: ANSW), creators of Answers.com, an answer-based search engine, announced recently that it has hired Dr. Barbara Ann Kipfer to its Content Development team.

Dr. Barbara Ann Kipfer has been a lexicographer and linguist for 25 years and is the author of more than 30 books, including: The Order of Things and How It Happens (Random House), 14,000 Things to be Happy About (Workman) and “Page-a-Day” calendars based on it. Her other books are Roger’s 21st Century Thesaurus, 21st Century Manual of Style (Dell/Laurel), Roget’s International Thesaurus Sixth Edition and Dictionary of American Slang (HarpersCollins), Sisson’s Word and Expression Locator (Prentice Hall), Encyclopedic Dictionary of Archaeology (Kluwer Plenum), The Flip Dictionary: Roget’s Thesaurus of Phrases, and Roget’s Descriptive Word Finder (Writer’s Digest). She has also authored Instant Karma, The Wish List, 1,400 Things for Kids to be Happy About, and 8,789 Words of Wisdom for Workman.

She previously served as Managing Editor/Senior Lexicographer of Lexico (Dictionary.com) and has worked for such companies as Ask Jeeves, Idealab, Mindmaker, General Electric Research, IBM Research, Walt Disney, and Sage. She has extensive experience in the areas of reference content creation, question answering, reference publishing, natural language processing, artificial intelligence, information retrieval research, and the development of ontologies/hierarchies.

“For years, I have been a proponent of developing an all-in-one reference site,” explained Kipfer. “When I saw Answers.com in its current format, I was overjoyed. Answers.com is a true leader in this industry and responds to the huge need for presenting reference information in a pleasing, understandable format. I am excited to be a part of this dynamic team and to have the opportunity to create more offerings for every person who loves to learn.”

Barbara holds an M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Exeter (UK), a Ph.D. in Archaeology and Master of Philosophy in Buddhist Studies (Greenwich University), and a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education (Valparaiso University). Professor Terry Hoad of the University of Oxford is currently mentoring her in historical linguistics.


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**Atlantic Legal Foundation**

Atlantic Legal Foundation cordially invites you to join us as we launch our Charter School Advocacy Program with panels discussing “Solutions to Personnel Challenges for Charter School Leaders” and the presentation of Leveling the Playing Field: What New York Charter School Leaders Need to Know About Union Organizing followed by a luncheon honoring Dr. Roderick Raynor Paige U.S. Secretary of Education, 2001-2005 Monday, November 7, 2005 Harvard Club of New York City 8:00 am Continental Breakfast 9:00 am Panel Sessions 12:00 pm Luncheon and Remarks by Dr. Paige The $75 charge for this event will be waived for charter school staff members and administrators.

To register, email Bethany.Nichols@atlanticlegal.org or contact us at: Atlantic Legal Foundation 60 East 42nd Street, Suite 2101 New York, NY 10165 (212) 867.3322 phone (212) 867.1022 fax

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Hasselbring calls the “mental model theory of occasional practice session. Hold, and once it does, all that is required is the worksheets which force students to complete a mentally retrieving answers. The added benefit, progressively larger over time and estimating their there, the program practices the words with Kentucky, set out to take a more in-depth look with Technology (FASTT.) In it, students are before it becomes overloaded. It is imperative that the working memory be freed up so that fluency can take hold. According to Hasselbring, technology plays a larger role in helping solve the problem of illiteracy.

Hasselbring and his colleagues developed a computer-based learning system called Fluency and Automaticity through Systematic Teaching with Technology (FASTT.) In it, students are introduced to groups of words, some of which they know and some of which they do not. The program divides all the words that they do not know or understand into groups of five. From there, the program practices the words with the student making each word group successively larger over time and estimating their response time to measure how fast he or she is mentally retrieving answers. The added benefit, Hasselbring says, is that FASTT works to correct errors and mistakes immediately, unlike worksheets which force students to complete a series of problems with corrections coming back a day or two later. With FASTT, fluency takes hold, and once it does, all that is required is the occasional practice session. But augmenting students’ vocabulary to help them make sense of what they read is only half of the solution. The other half involves what Hasselbring calls the “mental model theory of comprehension.” When students read a chapter book, for instance, they are actually maintaining a complex model of the text that they update each time they finish a new section. The main reason why many students cannot form mental models is because they do not have enough background knowledge to make sense of what they read. This greatly interferes with comprehension. Infusing information with visual technology (i.e. videos) provides students with grounding and background knowledge for what they are reading. “This offers consistency and continuity,” Hasselbring comments. “It provides increased opportunities to respond, and it gives feedback and instruction.” The technique—known as “anchored instruction”—also gives teachers who are not reading specialists a form of support in their efforts to combat illiteracy in their classrooms. “The key is to get interaction between the teacher and the technology,” he emphasizes.

Given this information, what can teachers do? Mr. Patrick Daley, Vice President and Publishing Director of Intervention Curriculum at Scholastic, Inc., recommends Read 180, Scholastic’s reading intervention program, which uses technology to augment vocabulary and reading comprehension skills. Tailored to a student’s grade level and reading ability, the program is broken down into three “zones” that address students’ needs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

For a total of 90 minutes every day, students are divided into three groups: one group works on computers with Read 180 software; another reads quietly in a designated area and the last group spends time with their teacher. Each group rotates three times over the 90 minute period to receive personal attention and instruction. The technology behind Read 180 offers an alternative to worksheets. Students read passages from what are called rBooks, then respond and write according to what they’ve read. The reading material gets increasingly difficult over time and covers an array of subjects in literature, science, life skills, and cultural studies. Meanwhile, computer software enables students to hear passages read aloud. Then, they can read them aloud to themselves. There are various “zones” in which students can play games with vocabulary words with emphasis on speed, accuracy and comprehension. The games help students gain fluency as a result of the repetition and practice. Finally, DVDs accompany the rBooks and serve as effective mental models that supplement reading.

Indeed, Read 180 and the use of classroom technology has proven effective, but it is the teachers who ultimately make the biggest difference. Take Chunney Veatch, 2002 National Teacher of the Year. Veatch, an 8th grade teacher at Coachella Valley High School in Thermal, California, spoke on the importance of attitude and approach when increasing literacy in any subject. He did not know that when he applied for a substitute teacher position in Thermal, he would be working in a bankrupt school district in which 86 percent of the students were children of migrant workers. Feeling very unprepared, he called his brother, Greg, also a schoolteacher in CA, for insight. “It will be an experience,” was all he could say.

“I had the one pre-requisite to be hired that day: I was breathing,” Veatch recalled. “Soon, he was responsible for teaching everything from reading and writing to social studies. He learned of the working conditions that students’ families were forced to endure in the fields. It was not unusual, for example, to face oppressive temperatures of 125 degrees. Workers also had to wear extra layers of clothing everywhere except their eyes and hands to prevent bites from the flies that swarmed through every square inch of the stifling air. Veatch knew his mission was to help these students dream big and achieve. “You have to look for the gift in each kid, to see it and build on it,” he says. And that he did. A total of 29 out of the 34 students in his class went on to college—one was even accepted at Yale, and another at Stanford—while two went to the Navy and the remaining three became Marines. “It’s about their dreams and their choices…Truly, it has really nothing to do with me. My students and their parents gave me all the cues and clues to succeed. It’s about the community. You have riches in your community but you need to look at them again just to remind yourself that they’re there.” Veatch encourages teachers to make their jobs less curriculum-centered and more student and family-centered. “Yes, there are obstacles,” he says. “But there is a moral imperative to overcome them.”

**Scholastic Solutions continued from page 11**

**Scholastic Reform continued from page 11**

to the needs of students: “The days of using only one basal reader for all students are thankfully over.” he exclaimed.

Klein highlighted the human resource factor as a key dynamic for successful school reform. He cited the case of a student who performed poorly at one school and then phenomenally at another school where expectations for him were high. When asked why the sudden shift in his performance, the student responded that in the first school the teachers didn’t expect anything from him and so he met those expectations. Klein expressed the importance of coaching teachers—New York City Public teachers and staff are currently receiving training—and stated that it is crucial for principals to be “chief instructional leaders.”

On day two of the leadership summit a panel of superintendents at Scholastic headquarters—moderated by Ernie Fleishman, Senior Vice President Education and Corporate Relations—provided their views on school reform with respect to infrastructure. Panelist Dr. Clayton Wilcox, Superintendent of Pinellas County Public Schools in Florida, expressed that “while there may not be magic bullets there are magic bebes” for school reform. Among these “bebes” are “to create a sense of passion and urgency around the need for reform and then provide leadership.”

The general consensus among Warner, Klein, and Superintendent panelists is that leadership, literacy coaching, data accountability, and instrumental use of time using key instructional programs are all vital components for addressing the urgent need to raise literacy levels across the nation.

**The Dwight School**

The Dwight School is a coeducational, college preparatory school providing a traditional, individualized, and challenging course of study. Dwight offers the highly-regarded International Baccalaureate Program in Nursery - Grade Twelve.

The Dwight School is comprised of families from the Greater New York and international communities, and enjoys an excellent record of college placement.

**FALL 2005 OPEN HOUSES**

This is an opportunity to tour The Dwight School and to meet Chancellor Stephen H. Spahn and the Admissions Committee.

**Lower School Grades K - 4**

October 18, 2005

October 25, 2005

November 2, 2005

November 9, 2005

November 16, 2005

November 30, 2005

**Middle School Grades 5 - 8**

October 25, 2005

November 2, 2005

November 9, 2005

November 16, 2005

November 30, 2005

**Upper School Grades 9 - 12**

October 12, 2005

October 20, 2005

November 7, 2005

November 14, 2005

November 21, 2005

**Nursery School Open Houses**

October 18, 2005

November 2, 2005

November 9, 2005

November 16, 2005

November 30, 2005

A reservation is required. Please contact the Admissions Office at (212) 724-2146, ext. 1 or at admissions@dwick.edu to reserve your place.
Dr. Eric Kandel to Kick Off YIVO’s “Maimonides and Medicine” Conference

By EMILY SHERWOOD, Ph.D.

On November 6, Nobel Laureate Dr. Eric Kandel, the Fred Kavli Professor and Director of the Kavli Institute for Brain Sciences at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons, will provide the kick-off address at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research’s conference on “Jews and Medicine.”

No one could be more fitting to introduce a conference on the roles and responsibilities of Jews in the medical field. Dr. Kandel, an Austrian-born Jew who fled his country on the eve of World War II, was awarded the 2000 Nobel Prize for his seminal work in the field of neurobiology, most notably for his research on how the brain changes as a result of learning.

Kandel defined conventional wisdom in the 1960’s by working with the invertebrate sea snail Aplysia. Though “few self-respecting neurophysiologists ... would leave the study of learning on mammals to work with invertebrates,” Kandel's “reductionist” approach confirmed that “analyzing learning is simple in a single animal would reveal universal mechanisms that are also employed in more complex organisms.” Ultimately, Kandel discovered that learning leads to changes in the strength of synaptic connections, or distinct circuits of nerve cells, and that the synapses can be modulated in different ways as a result of learning processes, a finding that has become a building block for generations of biochemists.

Kandel’s path on the road to distinction was far from predictable. He was only eight years old when, in 1939, he and his family emigrated to the U.S. to escape Nazi occupation of his native Austria. Kandel attributes his last year in Vienna as a key factor in his later interest in the mechanisms of memory. In his Autobiography, he muses, “I am struck, as others have been, at how deeply these traumatic events of my childhood have been burned into my memory... For me, the frightening experiences of my last year in Vienna are certainly the most powerful of my ‘flashbulb memories’, the emotionally charged and vivid memory of significant events that came to fascinate me.”

Following his childhood in Brooklyn, Kandel was one of two students from Erasmus Hall High School accepted to Harvard, where he studied Jewish history under noted U.S. historian and author, Arthur Schlesinger. Jr. Kandel wrote his honors thesis on Maimonides, opining that “had intellectuals mobilized effectively and brought along segments of the general population, Hitler’s government might well have been toppled.”

It was his friendship with a Viennese woman in Cambridge, the daughter of two Freudian psychoanalysts that inspired Kandel’s interest in understanding how the brain worked. He attended N.Y.U. Medical School determined to become a psychoanalyst, until an association with famed neurobiologist Harry Grunbaum opened the door to a lifelong career in laboratory research that took him from the NIH to Paris, Harvard, NYU, and ultimately, in 1974, to Columbia, where his remarkable 30 year tenure has earned him nine honorary degrees and a sheaf of academic awards and honors. In his “spare time”, while organizing syllabi for a neural science course that he developed for Columbia students, Kandel wrote the seminal textbook for college and medical students, Principles of Neural Science.

Based on his lifelong study of learned behavior, Kandel, offers sound advice to the student: “There is good evidence that space learning — that is, not cramping the night before the exam but studying on a regular basis - is much more conducive for putting things into one’s long term memory.”

And for the lifelong learner, Kandel urges that “keeping intellectually active is a good way of keeping one’s mind energized.” But, he warns, “it’s important not just to do tasks with which one is familiar, but rather, “Do something that challenges you anew.” Kandel notes that “we become so good at what we do, that it is no longer a major challenge for the brain to learn higher order mathematics if you are a mathematician, or neurobiology if you’re a neurobiologist like myself.”

The advantage of the American liberal arts education is that later on in life, if people have been exposed to a wide range of interests, it will be easier for them to pick up other courses or study a new topic that once attracted their attention but dropped by the wayside in the hectar of one’s professional life. Kandel himself was introduced to the “magic of looking at pictures” as a young boy in Vienna, and he carries that passion for art appreciation and collecting to this day.

Does Kandel, an early risk-taker in his study of invertebrates, urge today’s young scientists to follow his lead? “In retrospect, my work was a bit of a gamble,” he concedes. “But it would probably be suicidal to do that today when funding is limited and the structure of science is more rigid.”

Summing up his incomparable career, Dr. Eric Kandel says modestly, “Everyone who has had a fortunate career, like myself, thinks that luck has played an amazing role in it.” Though some might quibble with his definition of “luck”, Nobel Laureate Eric Kandel has certainly paved the way for generations of scientists and every day learners.

Dr. Sherwin Nuland: Personal Responsibility & Humanitarianism in Medicine

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Wading in where others might fear to tread or never think to go, Dr. Sherwin Nuland, whose dazzling nine-book and prolific article-writing career reached best-sellerdom with Die: Reflections on Life’s Final Chapter, is clearly intended for anyone who appreciates Saul Bellows’ observation:

“We are always looking for the book it is necessary to read next.” A sense of moral or ethical imperative has always informed Sherwin Nuland’s writings and never more so than with his book on Maimonides that comes out in conjunction with a national conference at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research on November 6th - “Jews and Medicine: In the Footsteps of Maimonides”.

Nuland, whose articulate conversational manner is infused with humor and wit, is particularly delighted that Nextbook assigned Maimonides to him, a pairing that gives him an opportunity to make psychoanalysis and humanism the premier sage in Jewish intellectual history, an erudite 12th century philosopher, theologian, astronomer, community leader and psychoanalyst, and to surprise. He thought he’d find

... a stiff and rigid philosopher, but met instead a lively, inquisitive, and vivid memory of significant events that came to fascinate me.”

Dr. Sherwin Nuland
THE TIME IS RIGHT FOR ARTS IN EDUCATION

By SCOTT NOPPE-BRANDON

Education has always been and will always be a hot-button issue. Questions regarding local, state, and federal influence or control will always be debated, as will the curriculum: what and how students should be taught. It is difficult to imagine a time in the history of public education in the U.S. when the public debate over education has not been controversial, to put it mildly. Each era has had to deal with a unique blend of social, political, and economic realities that influenced its shaping of education. For us today, within this discussion, I can’t think of any element that has a greater role to play in education than the arts.

Let me highlight a few very positive facts that point in that direction.

The NYC Department of Education has just finished publishing its Blueprint for the Arts in dance and theater, rounding out its effort to develop curriculum guides in the four arts (blueprints in music and visual art were completed last year). This is good news for many reasons, not the least of which is the emphasis on the partnership between the DOE and the many cultural organizations in NYC.

The No Child Left Behind legislation requires that the arts be included as a core curriculum subject. The Education Commission of the States, under the leadership of Arkansas Governor Huckabee has selected the role of the arts within education as its top priority.

The Arts Education Partnership (I sit on the Steering Committee) has long pushed for the arts to be a vital and relevant part of education of our nation’s youth and has brilliantly served to help refine what we think of as the workforce within the nation’s youth and has brilliantly served to help refine what we think of as the workforce within the nation’s youth and has brilliantly served to help refine what we think of as the workforce within the nation’s youth.

The first Dollars and Sense report, published in 2002, summarized thirty years of education research showing that good small schools lead to better outcomes for students. That report debunked large schools’ economies of scale and calculated the societal costs that are attributable to students’ dropping out of large high schools.

This report deepens the argument for small schools in many important ways. First, analysis of more than three thousand construction projects shows that smaller schools are no more expensive to build than much larger schools. Second, the budgets of 25 good small schools throughout the United States demonstrates that, on average, they spend less per student on educational programs, maintenance and operations than the per-pupil expenditure in their districts, yet they achieve results that are equal to or better than schools in the same area. Third, these schools offer innovative and effective educational programs, facilities, and strategies for cost effectiveness that can serve as models and inspiration to people interested in cost-effective good small schools.

Dollars & Sense II was written for parents, students, school board members, school officials, teachers, policy-makers—and all other members of the community who have an interest in establishing and operating good small schools. It presents findings and offers cost-saving suggestions from 25 sample schools, information that can be used as a jumping-off point for discussions and planning for others in similar circumstances.

NEW STUDY FINDS SMALL SCHOOLS COST-EFFECTIVE

Small schools are opening all across the nation from Rhode Island to Seattle because they work for students. Yet, there still are questions about whether small schools have reasonable costs in comparison to larger schools. Today KnowledgeWorks Foundation released Dollars & Sense II: Lessons from Good Cost-Effective Small Schools (“Dollars & Sense II”) which not only shows that good small schools are a fiscally responsible investment, but also details positive strategies for building and operating good small schools cost-effectively.

“This report provides evidence from small schools across the country—in all different settings, from urban to rural—that good small schools are affordable and sustainable, and most importantly: they make sense,” said Chad P. Wick, president and CEO of KnowledgeWorks Foundation.

“Small schools can operate cost-effectively and achieve above-average results if administrators, staff, and communities are willing to put in the hard work to be creative and collaborative.”

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“This report provides evidence from small schools across the country—in all different settings, from urban to rural—that good small schools are affordable and sustainable, and most important: they make sense," said Chad P. Wick, president and CEO of KnowledgeWorks Foundation.

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New Study Finds Small Schools Cost-Effective

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A Lesson on Piano Lessons

By ANGELO RONDELLO

Finding a music teacher in New York is just about the easiest thing in the world. Stand in the lobby of Juilliard and proclaim: “My daughter needs a piano teacher!” and you will be accosted by scores of qualified musicians ready to come to your home that evening. Who would you choose? After all, the real goal is finding a teacher who has the gift to teach, not just an impressive résumé. Without a musical background, it’s tricky to assess a teacher’s ability. Being aware of this, I assembled these questions and comments to aid parents in interviewing a potential teacher.

1. What kind of expectations do you hold for your students and their parents? Match the level of the teacher's expectations with what both you and your child can handle. Most good teachers will expect parents to be present for the student’s lessons and practice. Students will typically be expected to practice 15 minutes per day in the beginning, and more as they progress.

2. How many pupils do you teach? Do they have the time and energy to develop a rapport with their students? If the teacher has 45 students, how much attention is each one getting? If the studio has 5 pupils, find out why. A reference can often be useful here.

3. Do you have any particular thoughts or philosophy on teaching? This question gives you the opportunity to hear what makes the teacher unique. It will give some insight as to whether you will “click” with the teacher.

4. Are you a performer as well? Know how involved and passionate about music they are. Most likely, that enthusiasm will follow into their teaching. Furthermore, a good teacher will have a complete knowledge of the instrument (a pianist, rather than someone who merely plays the piano).

5. How often do you hold student recitals? Performance is the consummation of studying an instrument. Student recitals give students goals to work towards and create a sense of community in the studio.

6. How much do you charge? Expect to pay $30-50 per half hour lesson in Manhattan for a good teacher.

7. Do you travel to student’s homes/where are you located? Several teachers will be willing to come to you. Psychologically, however, going to the teacher’s apartment often enhances a child’s focus.

A music teacher is a long-term investment. Over the years you will pay him or her thousands of dollars in tuition. You’ll see this person every week, and they will be a potential role model for your child. Needless to say, it’s important that you feel comfortable with the teacher on a personal level. The way the teacher answers your questions may sway you as much as what they say. The way the teacher answers your questions may sway you as much as what makes the teacher unique. It will give some insight as to whether you will “click” with the teacher.

PROFILE: RICHARD KESSLER

At the Center of The Center for Arts Education

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Though the name of this nine-year young arts advo- cacy organization doesn’t yet gel, students win awards for recognition, its new 46-year-old executive director, with his lively, down-to-earth enthusiasm, seems ideally positioned to “trumpet” the mission of The Center for Arts Education (CARE) not only because “trumpet”—his instrument—is not a very apt description, but because he is an accomplished trumpeter. Richard Kessler started playing the trumpet at the age of 13 and has been playing it ever since. He holds two degrees from The Juilliard School—his first major was in composition, his second was in music education. He is particularly pleased with his background in arts education?

He holds two degrees from The Juilliard School and was on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music, but it is the heritage of 180 that most claims his heart and soul. Yes, public schools suffered after the 76 budget crunch and ironically suffered even more when outside artists visiting the schools led some administrators to conclude that there was no point in teaching music. This could be remedied, the author suggests, if arts education was made an integral part of the “blueprint.”

Central to his effort is CARE’s four-pronged initiative; getting more supporting partnership grants, such as those the organization now enjoys from Annenberg and Tisch; extending the Parents as Partners program; working with schools to find additional funds and educational grants that document success and show how arts programs can be adapted nationally; and expanding Career Development, with substantial aid from state education requirements with state- ing and the recorder, and then, through Link Up, narrow the impact of shrinking student involvement in music,19  

For more information about the Center for Arts Education visit them on the web at www.cae-nyc.org.

PROFILE: HOLLIS HEADRICK

The Well-Tempered Arts Initiative

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Amazing but true: a New York City public high school student this summer is taking a virtual course on music theory and composition in which he is learning from Richard Headrick, a music teacher and composer of note.

Hollis Headrick

Hollis Headrick has the gift to teach, not just an impressive résumé. Hollis Headrick has made his mark on arts education. In his executive position at WMI, he is advancing music for arts education in the city. He holds two degrees from The Juilliard School, free Neighborhood Concerts in all boroughs, Professional Training Workshops for young musicians, led by internationally known artists, and, of course, arts education for the schools, an ever-increasing amount of which can be found online as well as in the Hall. He is the son of the First Lady of arts education, hono...

He is also the founder of Melodia, a community in the studio.

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Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced that a tentative contract settlement has been reached with the United Federation of Teachers on a contract largely based on the Recommendations of the Fact-Finding Panel appointed in the impasse between the United Federation of Teachers and the Department of Education. The agreement covers four years, four months and 12 days and includes a 15 percent raise in exchange for various reforms.

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Eight years in the United States Air Force as a doctor at the rank of major gave the much-decorated Dr. Wendy W. Tong an advantage, she believes, in carrying out her duties as Regional Medical Director of Disaster Relief operations in Louisiana, with particular administrative responsibilities for the Bossier Special Needs Shelter in Region VII (in the northwestern part of the state). She had signed up to be, as she modestly puts it, “a worker bee,” but six days after her arrival in the hurricane-torn area for a two-week tour of duty, found herself, unexpectedly, Regional Medical Director, after her predecessor, a nurse, had left. The military, she says, gave her training in leadership but also experience in how to follow and how to be a team player. And it gave her, as well, her solid grounding in disaster response by way of simulated exercises regularly conducted for various kinds of catastrophes, though, as everyone has noted, not for Katrina! The dynamic, take-charge major adds, however, that the military also provided her with an understanding of “the cultural environment” of the public health service and other government organizations. In fact, Dr. Wong’s new administrative position would prove even more complicated than she imagined because she would be overseeing both public and private efforts, employees and volunteers, even though she accepted the two-week assignment on behalf of Northwest Medical Teams International, a faith-based organization active in disaster relief. The group paid for her airfare, meals and lodging, but then Dr. Wong was on her own, with a 24/7 mission to support patients in the Bossier Special Needs Center—those who needed physician care as well as assistance from nurses and social service professionals.

A quick study and a forceful though sensitive administrator, Dr. Wong clearly sized up the advantages of arriving at a site that had suffered an “unprecedented” disaster. With no official job description on the books, no formal directive, she saw her “challenge” as an invitation to take the initiative and define her role and interpret her mandate generously. If such a reading of her responsibility meant that she would be “going out on a limb,” so be it. But clearly intuition as well as training kicked in, as she assessed resources and capabilities. She created a team of physicians and nurses, held daily discussions with staff, communicated constantly with headquarters in Baton Rouge. “Each day was different,” each participating support agency unique. But she also began to look at the wider situation. She soon determined that her mandate would extend beyond the Bossier special needs shelter (80 people) and embrace where she could the needs of general shelters (2000 people), and of private facilities set up by churches and schools (approximately 200-300 people).

Meaningful and extended service—“to have an impact, to make a long-lasting difference”—seems always to have guided Dr. Wong’s choice of career. She speaks of her emotional and intellectual heritage, first, from her “traditional Chinese family” (everyone is either a doctor or a lawyer) and then of responsibility that deepened when she attended Georgetown University, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in biology and a medical degree, and where she somehow also found time to be a teaching assistant in English, a classroom trainer and curriculum designer for volunteer efforts in less developed countries, and then a community liaison and leader for several states in their inner-city outreach programs on substance abuse, domestic violence, social services and health care.

The Oath of Hippocrates states “whatsoever house I enter there will I go for the benefit of the sick, refraining from all wrongdoing or corruption.” Clearly, for Wendy Tong, M.D. still in her 30s, there have been many houses in many countries where she has assumed the obligations of the Hippocratic ethical code. With a phenomenal record of overseeing medical services and supplies for thousands of people all over the world, Dr. Wendy Tong humbly says she feels “honored” at being privy to patient confidences and at being granted an opportunity to pursue a profession that brings her “joy.” She will be off soon to Sri Lanka for more mission-oriented work and then sometime later add another title to her name: she’ll be getting married. #
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**Education Technology Relief for Hurricane Katrina’s Displaced Students**

The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) announced today that Utah and Virginia have offered educational technology services to the displaced students from Hurricane Katrina. Utah is offering free access to the entire BananaSeat library through Utah’s Electronic High School (http://ehs.uen.org). Additionally, Utah is providing access for Louisiana displaced students to take online courses to their own students through the Electronic High School, should this help meet the needs of displaced students. Virginia is setting up four Fast Pass areas in Virginia by providing technology labs for education services delivery. The new labs will be up and running today and will allow Virginia officials to register and place students as well as providing courses and access to displaced students as needed.

These announcements come amidst SETDA’s efforts to support the states’ plans and leverage its members’ and corporate partners’ education technology infrastructure. SETDA is working with its members and partners across all fifty states to help students and teachers who are Katrina’s victims use educational technology to alleviate as little interruptions as possible in their studies. SETDA is also partnering with educators and education technology associations nationwide to form a coalition to organize donations to meet the needs of the affected states.

“I am pleased to see Utah and other states step up to the plate and offer this kind of support to the Hurricane victims. The educational technology infrastructure in Utah has been invaluable to our students—and it is powerful to see it benefiting others in need,” said Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah.

These are examples of how technology can be harnessed to help displaced students, as stated by the Hurricane,” said Melinda George, SETDA’s Executive Director. “As the states identify needs, SETDA is reaching out to the nation’s state level educators to address the specific needs of the Hurricane- ravaged states. This may include portable computer labs, Internet Access for displaced students, or virtual classes donated by other states, companies or Virtual High School organizations.”

SETDA partners and members are generously allowing access and tapping into the opportunities technology can provide to these students. This collaboration and use of technology underscores the need for support of these educational efforts from the federal government.

The Enhancing Education Through Technology Program (EETT - NCLB, Title II, Part D) was established as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. SETDA partners are using technology to develop a leadership infrastructure for the students in K-12 education. In the near future, more of these partnerships will be established, and these students will benefit.

**Product Review**

**ARS NOVA SOFTWARE’S PRACTICA MUSICA**

By MITCHELL LEVINE

Those familiar with the business of education in New York are probably aware that not long ago, funding for music education in this city was in a crisis. But fortunately for our students, politics was set aside and the budget that keeps the arts alive in our schools was spared. Why is that? In a country where reading, writing and ‘rithmetic are often submitted as the quintessence of curricular necessity, what could be more important to the teachers in the five boroughs were to fail to take that music would continue to be taught.

Well, among other things, studies have consistently demonstrated that, like art and drawing, the addition of music instruction to a student’s learning plan will inevitably add points to their testing scores and substance to their overall academic achievement. But gaining those benefits seems to be a simple matter. Teachers with the specialized knowledge and experience are often in short supply, and the arcane particulars of music theory and sight-reading aren’t always something most instructors feel conversant with.

Conveniently, however, Ars Nova Software has provided schools and homeschoolers alike with a solution in their release of Practica Musica 4.5. A masterpiece of interactive pedagogy, this suite offers not only a comprehensive introduction to theory, reading, and ear training in tutorial form, but over eighty activities as well. Although the software seems primarily oriented towards the curriculum, its MIDI capability and “vocals input voice” tech allow the student to use either vocals or any other instrument using a USB microphone.

With the coordinated text, Exploring Theory with Practica Musica, the beginner is led from rudiments like chords, tones, and notation to exercises in dictation, pitch detection, pitch and rhythm reading, and basic harmony. Introductory composition is taught as well, with a feature allowing the user to save and edit complex melodies and polyphonic pieces. User progress is tracked, with the ability to assess the mastery levels of entire classes, but, unfortunately, the program’s report capabilities are not as sophisticated as some tutorial software that’s been reviewed here. They are nonetheless more than adequate.

Some details are nice: all notations are inter-active, so you need only to click on a note to activate it; all of the activities are beyond customizable; and MIDI, while supported, is not required. Taken as a whole, it’s unlikely you’ll find a better and more practical music instruction available for secondary education or home students. Best of all, it’s available for online demo and purchase, or more information, just log on to www.ars-nova.com.

**Great Pyramid’s Passport Home Education Management System**

By MITCHELL LEVINE

It’s become increasingly clear that, for a variety of social and political reasons, home-schooling in New York has mushroomed since the start of the new millennium. While I won’t get into why, what’s important to note is the fact that it has. Of course, in a city of overcrowded public schools and under-accessible private ones, what’s really surprising, I think, is that it hasn’t grown larger than it has. Although the laws in New York State are not as favorable as they are in some other areas of the country, I believe the real problem is the difficulty parents find in maintaining an organized management system. True, homeschooling has economic requirements—typically it requires one parent to remain in the home—but the socioeconomic demographics skew way high in Manhattan and even elsewhere in the city. Primarily, the sheer mechanics of both schooling a child and maintaining documentation requirements for the state scare many potentially willing parents away from a rewarding experience with their child.

That’s why Great Pyramid created its Passport system to provide a high level of the above details. Essentially a turnkey education kit, after an extensive profile detailing a child’s age, grade level, learning style, and other key factors, Passport recommends a curriculum and finds resources for instruction and enrichment. (At press, only mathematics material was available, but Great Pyramid insists that a full line of subjects will soon be released.) Lesson plans are then formulated, and specific products recommended.

Once the lesson plans have been completed, Passport offers a comprehensive testing module with extensive reporting features, providing both statistical feedback and a report card with a simple summary of grades. Unfortunately, the progress report feature doesn’t automatically update lesson plans to pace with progress reports, but the online placement exams do offer a evaluation of whether the student should continue with new material. I have seen more detailed statistics, but for home use, I think most parents will be pleased.

Some of the most powerful features, however, are the program’s Internet tie-ins. The Passport Outreach segment of the program enables user parents to form communities, both through e-mail newsgroups and message boards. After accessing this feature, I discovered numerous public and private (require application and approval) clubs, covering topics like legislation, regions, curricula, technology and more. In fact, a quarterly newsletter is in circulation, adding to the benefits.

Homeschooling can be a complex and time-consuming endeavor even at its most ideal. Great Pyramid’s Passport System is the best educational tool I’ve yet encountered for taking the guesswork out of it. For more information and an excellent trial demo, log on to the company’s site at www.greatpyramid.com.

**Disney Gives Schools First-Class Treatment**

When you let your students discover the wonder and joy of Disney on Broadway, we’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 and The Lion King.

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Technology Profile: Bytes of Learning’s Ultrakey 5.0

By MITCHELL LEVINE

With the launch of UltraKey 5.0, software manufacturer Bytes of Learning now offers districts the ability to easily manage keyboarding instruction from a centralized location without matter where that instruction is taking place – at school or at home. Communicating with a server-based application called the UltraKey 5.0 Data Server, student progress data can be exchanged with the central server in real time through any network or Internet connection, whether students are learning at school or practicing at home.

The same benefit applies to teachers who can review student progress at school or at home, managing their classes’ learning wherever they have an Internet connection. “Our software has been very popular in schools, but districts have asked us for a solution whose data could be managed from a central location while providing teachers full customization capabilities within the classroom,” said company president Art Willer. “For the first time, districts, teachers, parents and students can use keyboarding instruction at school and at home while the learning is managed and reported through any network or Internet connection. Administrators can rely on the technical operation of the data server while each teacher directly manages her own classes,” he continued. They have also agreed to an expedited process for handling cases related to absence and lateness.

A Labor-Management Committee will be created to discuss the Fact-Finding Panel’s long-term recommendations subject to adequate CFE fund

pay pending the final outcome of a disciplinary proceeding. Another provision of this agreement affords flexibility to the Department of Education in two areas. Based on a recommendation of the Fact-Finding Panel, the parties have agreed to eliminate the practice by which transfers were based solely on seniority. Principals will now be able to interview all prospective candidates. Furthermore, teachers who are excessed from their school for being absent due to a school’s closing and are unable to secure a position in their former school or District. They will not, however, be able to displace other teachers.

The parties have agreed to eliminate certain grievances and arbitrations thereby streamlining the process. They have also agreed to an expedited process for handling cases related to absence and lateness.

A Labor-Management Committee will be created to discuss the Fact-Finding Panel’s long-term recommendations subject to adequate CFE fund

ing. These recommendations include: bonuses for shortage license areas; school-wide based performance bonuses; and reduction in class size.

The agreement comes after a year of record test scores for New York City students. Overall, in 2005, students in Grades 3-8 achieved the highest ever on the math and English Language Arts (ELA) on State and City tests combined since standards-based testing began. 52.9 percent of students in Grades 3-8 met or exceeded math standards, improving 6.2 percentage points from last year and improving 15.6 percentage points from 2002. 51.8 percent of students in Grades 3-8 met or exceeded ELA standards, improving 10.7 percentage points from last year and improving 12.5 percentage points from 2002.

Teachers Network, a non-profit education organization, with support from the Citigroup Foundation and the New Teacher Support Program in Manhattan while continuing to serve 500 new teachers in Brooklyn. This program, which launched in Region 8 last year and is now expanding to Region 9, aims to reduce New York City’s high teacher turnover rate by providing essential support and resources to 600 beginning teachers.

“Scores of beginning teachers—potentially great educators—are fleeing the classroom at alarmingly high rates, often leaving behind the most vulnerable students with insufficient certification programs such as NYC Teaching Fellows, it is crucial to offer teachers extensive system from any teaching environment,” said Ellen Dempsey, CEO and President of Teachers Network and former public school teacher. “Our program provides invaluable resources, support, and instruction in how to teach, but we also need to be in their shoes. Teachers Network will receive Teachers Network’s proven teaching materials that were designed by teachers, for teachers. Materials include Teachers Network’s best-selling publication, the New Teachers Handbook and the accompanying CD-ROM set, Successful Teaching Practices for New Teachers.”

As part of the New Teacher Support Program, teachers are enrolled in the New Teacher On-Line Survival Courses, a series of five courses, facilitated by veteran teachers. Pre-approved by the New York City DOE, educators can access them from any computer and walk through the classes at their pace on their own time, an important feature during the chaotic first years in teaching. Teachers can also log onto www.teachersnetwork.org and ask questions to experienced professionals as well as access over 600 lesson plans and instructional units.

Teachers Network and Citigroup will host welcome receptions in October for Region 8 and Region 9 to provide the 600 new teachers with the opportunity to network with other educators and learn about the many resources available through the DOE-supported New Teacher Support Program.

Teachers Network is a non-profit organization—by teachers, for teachers—with a 25-year track record of success, dedicated to improving student learning across the nation. Teachers Network is nationally and internationally. For more information about Teachers Network, go to www.teachersnetwork.org.

Technology Profile: Bytes of Learning’s Ultrakey 5.0

By MITCHELL LEVINE

With the launch of UltraKey 5.0, software manufacturer Bytes of Learning now offers districts the ability to easily manage keyboarding instruction from a centralized location without matter where that instruction is taking place – at school or at home. Communicating with a server-based application called the UltraKey 5.0 Data Server, student progress data can be exchanged with the central server in real time through any network or Internet connection, whether students are learning at school or practicing at home.

The same benefit applies to teachers who can review student progress at school or at home, managing their classes’ learning wherever they have an Internet connection. “Our software has been very popular in schools, but districts have asked us for a solution whose data could be managed from a central location while providing teachers full customization capabilities within the classroom,” said company president Art Willer. “For the first time, districts, teachers, parents and students can use keyboarding instruction at school and at home while the learning is managed and reported through any network or Internet connection. Administrators can rely on the technical operation of the data server while each teacher directly manages her own classes,” he continued. They have also agreed to an expedited process for handling cases related to absence and lateness.

A Labor-Management Committee will be created to discuss the Fact-Finding Panel’s long-term recommendations subject to adequate CFE fund
CHRIS WHITTLE’S CRASH COURSE

By JOAN BAUM Ph.D.

It’s often the case—terrible irony—that people in the communications field don’t communicate clearly. Enter Chris Whittle, formerly of Whittle Communications and Channel One [news in the schools] and, for the last 16 years, CEO of The Edison Schools, with Benno Schmidt as Chairman. Crash Course, Whittle’s impulsive, thought-provoking program for education reform (“my true life’s work”), could easily be a model for how to write a persuasive discourse.

First, he lays out his argument in brief; then he delivers a solid piece of reasoning, breaking down his proposal into manageable sections of rationale, supporting data, and challenging questions which he anticipates and answers honestly. Throughout, he keeps to a conversational tone that engages readers with everyday analogies to business practices. Common sense appeals to reason, and disarming personal statements about how he has educated himself over the years—admitting to failure and learning—evident.

Crash Course makes for easy reading because of the informal and energized style Whittle adopts to analyze an extremely complex and politically charged subject. He wants nothing less than a radical overhaul of the educational public school system (including large-scale restructuring of saccroanget sizers, such as classroom hours and days and teacher-student ratios and relationships), and he wants change immediately, beginning with congressional legislation. He wants a “vision”—apparent sense. Though Whittle tends to cite Republicans and to blame Democrats, he makes no distinction between parties (his letter to UFT president Randi Weingarten is a gem of partisanship). He wants change immediately, beginning with congressional legislation. Whittle adopts to analyze an extremely complex and politically charged subject.

He admires Leave No Child Behind (the right objective and direction) but notes that its only a wake-up call, not an R & D incentive (though it should be) to re-conceive an “operating culture,” redo the whole design. Throwing more money into bad investments makes no sense. Though Whittle tends to cite Republicans and corporate leaders for their support of charter schools (he does not particularly vouchers), he does so in a non-partisan spirit (his letter to UFT president Randi Weingarten is a gem of tact and ingenuity). He is proud of being at the head of a for-profit venture that has been invited to partner with a growing number of public schools (over 270,000 students) around the country and in the U.K. Though it seems strange to say so, the passion and the plan as evidenced in this book suggest that Chris Whittle is not in it for the money. He has a “vision”—apparent from the subtitle of the book “Imagining a Better Future for Public Education” —that he lays out with credible examples, finally inviting political and educational leaders to come together and get going. Now. This is an impressive work that should stimulate dialogue.... and action.

Crash Course by Chris Whittle, Riverhead Books, 269 pp., $24.95.

E-AUDIOBOOKS: FROM EMILY BRONTE TO DR. PHIL—NOW AVAILABLE FREE FROM THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

To the list of things you can do while stuck in traffic, climbing the Stairmaster, eating lunch at your desk or just relaxing at home, you can now add listening to a downloaded best-selling book, thanks to the new e-audiobook service from the Los Angeles Public Library. Debuting August 15, the service is available 24/7 on the library’s Web site, www.lapl.org.

With a library card and an Internet connection, patrons can select from hundreds of fiction and non-fiction titles, then download the complete work as an audio file to a PC or laptop, MP3 player, PDA (personal digital assistant), and smart phone. The file can even be burned to a CD for convenient play in a car, home, office, boat or other location. The library has long offered a large collection of audios in cassette and CD formats, but this marks its first foray into digital audio technology. “Audiobooks are in such high demand because it has been checked out, users can be returned to a waiting list and will be notified by e-mail when the title becomes available. E-audio books are loaned for 21 days, then automatically "returned” and available for other users.

The Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest urban population of any library in the country. Its Central library, 71 branch libraries, six million books and state-of-the-art technology provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning. For further information, visit the Library’s Web site at www.lapl.org.
Four-Year Scorecard Shows Improving Schools, Safer Streets and More Jobs

By MAYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG

Our Administration came into office less than four months after 9/11, when New York’s future looked uncertain. We were a city still deeply in mourning for more than 2,700 of our neighbors and loved ones. We were also mired in a recession, and facing an unprecedented budget deficit of nearly $6 billion. City government simply had to tighten its belt—and it did.

Last week, the Mayor’s Management Report—an annual scorecard on efficient and effective service delivery—proved just how far we’ve come. It showed that we’ve not only successfully managed the City’s most recent fiscal crisis, but have also continued to improve the education, health care, safety and quality of life for New Yorkers in need, dramatically improved public health, and created a growing economy over the last four years. Now, the City has doubled the number of homeless families finding permanent homes. And the number of children placed in foster care is lower than it has been since 1997. We’ve improved services to older New Yorkers. And because of the investments we’ve made in public health and public hospitals, today life expectancy is higher in New York City than it is in the rest of the nation for the first time since World War Two.

New York’s ongoing economic recovery has been equally dramatic. Recently, City Comptroller William Thompson, Jr. reported that the City’s economy has grown for seven consecutive years, and City revenues have increased by 54 percent since 2002. The number of New Yorkers employed has reached a record high and the City’s unemployment rate is now down 20 percent in elementary schools and 35 percent overall. In addition, the City has already hired 35,000 health care professionals and expanded health care for more than 500,000 uninsured New Yorkers. Public hospitals have improved services to older New Yorkers. And life expectancy is higher in New York City today than it is in the rest of the nation for the first time since World War Two.

Our Administration’s increased use of information technology has also played a big part in improving City services. Over the last two years, the 311 Citizen Service Hotline has received more than 20 million calls, helping us target resources more effectively. The City’s vastly improved web site also makes information and services more accessible to New Yorkers; in fact, you can read the Mayor’s Management Report on-line at www.nyc.gov. Over the last four years, innovation, dedication, and hard work by thousands of people in our City agencies have really paid off for all New Yorkers. We’ve not only put the City’s finances back on a firm footing; we’re also making New York a city of opportunity for all. And if we stay on the course we’ve set, the best days for New York are still to come.

Interreligious Understanding and Character Education Are Vital Parts Of Schools’ Mission

By ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN SANDERS

With the pressures of standards-based reform, and the demands of education are of such magnitude, I fell by the wayside. While we all agree that literacy and math are fundamental to education, subjects such as social studies, science, technology – and character education – are also essential.

New York State law requires that character education be a part of the school day. Still, statistics show that 55 percent of 8 to 11-year-olds say that bullying is a serious problem for them, and most juvenile hate crimes reflect racial and ethnic bias. It is clear that more needs to be done to better protect and educate our children.

Legislation I have sponsored along with Senate-Tom Duane, The Dignity for All Students Act, attempts to do more. That bill sets policies and procedures to help administrators and educators recognize and deal effectively with bias and discrimination, and to teach students to treat each other with respect. Such legislation is critical to assure action. To date, the State Senate’s leadership has been unwilling to endorse the legislation or offer an acceptable alternative.

Recently, I have joined with Assemblymen Richard Brodsky, Richard Brodsky, David Weprin, Carl Heastie and my colleague-Tom Duane, The Dignity for All Students Act, offers a program that I recently came across and feel is a program that I believe in. It is clear that more needs to be done to better protect and educate our children. Legislation I have sponsored along with Senate-Tom Duane, The Dignity for All Students Act, attempts to do more. That bill sets policies and procedures to help administrators and educators recognize and deal effectively with bias and discrimination, and to teach students to treat each other with respect. Such legislation is critical to assure action. To date, the State Senate’s leadership has been unwilling to endorse the legislation or offer an acceptable alternative.

I believe that the City must recognize the importance of programs like these in order to help children have a better future. If we do not act quickly, we may lose our children’s support for education and diversity. One such program that I recently came across is the Building Blocks Center for Interreligious Understanding—Building Blocks for Democracy: Children Celebrate Their Traditions. Building Blocks is a multicultural and multi-religious academic program for use in kindergarten through 6th grade. Lessons of respect, understanding and communication before they learn to hate. Schools are in a unique position to intervene and help prevent bullying.

Building Blocks is one way for the schools to be proactive. More now than ever, students need opportunities to help them thrive and to teach them how, as one Building Blocks graduate so simply put it: “to treat someone you want to be treated”.

Assemblyman Sanders is chairman of the Education Committee. E-mail him at sanders@assembly.state.ny.us or phone 212/789-8966. His mailing address is 201 East 18th Street, New York, NY 10003. To learn more about Building Blocks for Democracy: Children Celebrate Their Traditions, please send an email to buildingblocks@tenenbaumcenter.org or visit: www.tenenbaumcenter.org/programming/buildingblocks

“Union” Is Not A Four-Letter Word

By CSA PRESIDENT JILL LEVY

Labor in the United States faces a great challenge in this 21st century. During the AFL-CIO annual convention in July, three of the largest affiliates walked away from the parent union even after intensive talks. CSA is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO through our national union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. We have a seat on the Executive Council. Events like this happen when there is discord and a sense of powerlessness among members. Organizations that are split asunder have to respond to the challenges or become increasingly irrelevant. We remain loyal to the idea that together we stand, divided we fall.

While a teacher, I walked a picket line as the national union, the American Federation of School Administrators, which has a seat on the Executive Council. Events like this happen when there is discord and a sense of powerlessness among members. Organizations that are split asunder have to respond to the challenges or become increasingly irrelevant. We remain loyal to the idea that together we stand, divided we fall.

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I imagine they would be appalled if they could see how we seem to have lost our course. As we were fighting for the right to be represented by a union, we were blacklisted, we were beaten, jailed and, yes, killed because they believed in their cause.
Dr. Julianne Still Thrift, president of Salem Academy and College, has announced her retirement from Salem at the conclusion of the 2005-2006 academic year. Thrift, who was appointed the 18th president of Salem in 1991, will retire after 15 years of service to the nation’s oldest educational institution for women, a nationally recognized preparatory school and leading liberal arts college.

“I am forever changed and inspired by you and by my years at Salem,” said Thrift in her announcement to Salem students, faculty, alumni, and friends.

“Together with you, we have restored vibrancy to our historic and distinguished institution. With your continuing stewardship, generosity, and hard work, Salem forever will provide a shining light for talented students.”

The years of Thrift’s presidency have been a time of growth and advancement for the Academy and College. Since 1991, Salem’s endowment has nearly tripled from $20 million to $56.5 million, and the enrollment has increased by 53 percent. New academic and co-curricular offerings—such as the Salem Signature Program, preparation of women for leadership and service in a global world, teaching and learning technologies, and the introduction of several new graduate education programs—have enhanced the educational program. In 1999, a $150,000 Presidential Leadership Grant to Salem from the Knight Foundation recognized Thrift’s achievements on behalf of the institution.

Salem is currently completing a $50 million campaign, the largest in its history. In addition, Thrift has overseen a nearly 25 percent campus expansion in the past 10 years. A master campus plan, approved in 2001, has guided the renovation of numerous residence halls, class-rooms, laboratories and performance spaces at both the Academy and College. Restoration of Single Sisters House, an 18th century historic landmark building, is the centerpiece of current renovation efforts.

Thrift was previously the Executive Vice President of the National Association of Colleges and Universities, where she represented more than 900 private colleges and universities. During her tenure at Salem, she has served as board chair of the Women’s College Coalition and North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities as well as served on the executive committees of the boards of North Carolina Citizens for Business and Industry and the American Council of Education.

“Salem is deeply indebted to Julianne Still Thrift for her leadership, intellect, energy, and passion for Salem,” said Mary Davis Holt, A’68, C’72 and chair of the Salem Board of Trustees. “I feel that her commitment and leadership at a critical time in our history undoubtedly breathed new life into our beloved alma mater. Many alumnae will forever remember her tenure as one of an enrollment and financial revitalization that we so needed to ensure our future.”

A national search for a new president will begin immediately. Ms. Holt stated that the Salem Trustee Executive Committee had chosen Academic Search Consultation Service of Washington, D.C. to assist with the search. Gwynne S. Taylor, C’72, Trustee and immediately past president of the Alumnae Association, has been appointed by the Executive Committee to chair the Presidential Search Committee.

Salem Academy and College was founded by Moravian settlers in 1772. Today, Salem Academy is a day and boarding school for girls in grades 9-12, and Salem College is a four-year liberal arts college for women, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees and a continuing studies program for adults.

### Bank Street to Endow New Scholarship for African-American Students

**By SYBILL MAIMIN**

It was a love fest! Alums, faculty, and friends of Bank Street College of Education gathered at the June Kelly Gallery in Soho recently to honor Priscilla Elizabeth Pemberton (1918-2004) and inaugurate a new organization in her name that will help Bank Street students and alumni of color. The initial goal of The Priscilla E. Pemberton Society is raising funds for an endowed scholarship for African-American students in the graduate school, the first scholarship named for an Africa-American. The setting for the kick-off was appropriately—“She would have loved it,” exclaimed Bank Street president, Augusta Souza Kappner. “Pris loved art and was married to a musician.” A guitar and bass filled the room with jazz. Larger than life black and white drawings of African-Americans by artist Debra Priestly looked down on the crowd. “The portraits look very serious—like they are saying, ‘we have to get this done,’” mused Kappner. Priestly explained she explores ancestry and many of the subjects, depicted from photographs, have “amazing stories,” and “witnessed important events in our history.”

Pemberton, a 1966 graduate of Bank Street had a long list of accomplishments. She directed the Bank Street Early Childhood Center at its former home on 42nd Street and was on its faculty. At various times, she served as Registrar, director of admissions, and fundraising assistant to the college president. She headed the alumni association, worked on various committees, and understood the importance of fund-raising. According to Kappner, “No job titles, no awards can describe the roles she had at Bank Street...wherever there was a need she served, and she served, and she served.”

At the reception, accolades about Pemberton and stories of her devotion to her students and frequent acts of kindness were shared by those who knew her. Cynthia Wilson (’73) learned about commitment from Pemberton and the importance of educating and training community people for teacher certification. Suzanne Carothers (’73), who came to the college from North Carolina, called Pemberton “my New York mom” and marveled that she was the first African-American professional in the college and in the School for Children. Lucia Jack, a college friend, remembered that Pemberton often spoke about the small number of people of color at the school.

President Kappner explained, “We at Bank Street are committed to training more minority teachers and to seeing more minority teachers in our schools...Setting up a scholarship to increase the number of African-American students is the most fitting tribute to Pris...This is done with love.”

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He traveled on The Beagle when he was a young man. It was a five-year trip. He took detailed notes and was already thinking about issues related to evolution. His notebooks had been studied and been seen. He also corresponded for 20 years with every naturalist in the world who spoke English. And then he put it together in a 400-page book called *The Origin of the Species*. It’s one of the most brilliant syntheses a human being has ever done. You may know that Robert Wallace also came up with the Theory of Evolution about the same time, and they co-presented the theories in 1858. But the difference was, Darwin had all the necessary information to support him while Wallace had a great idea that just so happened to be correct. Darwin is an example of someone who is a great natural synthesizer.

Professor Howard Gardner, Project Zero Conference at Harvard University, 2005

### VERMONT COLLEGE

**By Ann Hageman Cardinal, National Marketing Director for Union Institute and University**

A businessman in India
An English teacher in Japan
A single mother who runs a small business in Montpelier
An animal trainer in California
A chaplain and published author in Texas

What do all these people have in common? They are all earning their bachelor’s degree in Union Institute & University’s new online program, Virtual Vermont. This innovative program is an online version of the progressive Vermont College Undergraduate Program, or VCU, which has served adults for over 40 years. Designed with the busy adult in mind, the VCU Program offers learners the freedom to design individualized studies based on their interests, goals, and schedules from wherever they live and work. The new online residency component allows even more flexibility to fit college into adult learners’ busy lives. Experienced faculty mentors help learners design a personalized plan of study in many areas, such as, psychology, writing and the arts, social sciences, or business.

Just to give you a little background on how this works, the virtual residency is a fourteen-day online entry experience that introduces learners to faculty, other learners and program requirements. The online virtual residency is asynchronous and requires about a two-hour commitment per day online any time of day or night. It’s at this “residency” that they create, with their faculty mentor, the individualized study plan which they’ll undertake for the semester. The learning community is established during the online residency through eCollege (a learning management system), threaded discussion groups and e-mail. Following the residency they will have regular contact with their faculty mentor as they submit their work and engage in vigorous dialogue around their academic subject. Learners in Virtual Vermont have access to all student services including financial aid, our Cary Library, the technology department and the academic support network, and attend virtual orientations to make the best of these services during the “residency.”

Virtual Vermont has start dates in February, May, August, and November. Virtual Vermont learners also have the option of attending on the Montpelier campus in our popular VCU Cycle and Weekend options.

University president Roger Sublett, Ph.D. said, “Throughout our 40-year history of innovative programs for adults, we have taken a prominent role in developing new options in undergraduate and graduate degree programs. ‘Virtual Vermont’ enhances our undergraduate academic offerings in ways we only imagined just a few years ago.”

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October 2005
Project HEDS-UP will be directed by Dr. Olga Romero as part of the larger federal program known as Demonstration Projects to Ensure that Students Receive a Higher Education. While the target audience for HEDS-UP professional development is teacher education faculty, because of the universality of the design and concepts, the modules will be applicable and usable by faculty and individuals across institutions and disciplines, says Romero. Bank Street College of Education offers degree programs in Dual Language/Bilingual Childhood Special Education that place a high degree of emphasis on the creation of democratic learning environments that value cultural heritage in dual-language development, as well as the educational, linguistic and emotional needs of dual-language students with learning disabilities. Project HEDS-UP, with the support of generous federal funding, will only help to grow and extend this vital mission.

For more information on Project HEDS-UP, contact Olga Romero at (212) 875-4466.
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Now we need your help so that future generations can join Generation Baruch and help keep the dream going.

For more information on how you can support future generations, please call 212.802.2900. Or visit www.baruch.cuny.edu/bcf/.
Study Reveals Americans Support Expanding Community College System to Serve More Students

By IVETTE ZAMORA

Community colleges are highly valued and integral in American society, a new national survey of more than 1,000 adults has revealed. When informed that there are more people who would like to attend community colleges than the colleges have space for, two-thirds (67 percent) of those surveyed would support “using tax dollars to expand the system of community colleges so more students can attend, even if this means raising state taxes.” With 81 percent of people having some relationship to the nation’s more than 1,200 community colleges, these schools receive high marks from a majority of the public for providing high quality education and the opportunity for career training and advancement.

Dr. Kay McClenny, a leading expert on community colleges and advisor to the Ford Foundation’s Bridges to Opportunity Initiative said, “The public understands that by offering the opportunity for everyone to access higher education and job training, community colleges are a gateway to realizing the American dream.” The survey illustrates how the public puts a high priority on supporting community colleges, even when faced with competing state funding issues. Seventy-nine percent said that “given the limited funding and the number of other demands on tax dollars” they would nonetheless “oppose cutting back spending on community colleges” in the short-term in order to balance the state budget.

At a time when some colleges are threatened with budget cuts or are actually turning people away, most favor expanding the system rather than curtailing access to these important institutions. Only 27 percent of those surveyed would support a solution to raise tuition and fees and become more selective in whom they admit versus 67 percent who support expanding the community college system. Respondents found much to praise in community colleges, describing them as conveniently located (93 percent who describe them very or somewhat well), providing high quality education (89 percent), providing good job training (85 percent), and affordable (82 percent). Serious challenges exist, however, because the public is largely unaware of the unprecedented demand community colleges face, with half (51 percent) believing there are enough spaces available for students who would like to attend, one-third (33 percent) saying they don’t know, and just 16 percent reporting the community colleges in their area have to turn away students.

“The big irony in this survey is the fact that the public is so supportive of community colleges, but is also very unaware about how big the challenges are that face them,” said Nancy Belden who directed the survey. While two-thirds (67 percent) of Americans are likely to agree with increasing financial support for community colleges if asked, they are yet unaware of the struggle these institutions face as they try to meet increasing demands with fewer resources. With only 40 percent of Americans aware that state taxes fund community colleges, and 15 percent having no information at all on how community colleges are funded, there is a critical need to inform the public. “Without more flexible policies and financial support from states and the federal government, community colleges will not be able to meet the growing demand for educational and career opportunity, particularly among low-income individuals for whom community colleges often offer a first entry point to higher education,” said Cyrus Driver of the Ford Foundation.

A national survey of young adults age 18 to 25 from the nonprofit, nonpartisan opinion research organization Public Agenda finds that the vast majority of today’s young adults, be they African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian American or white, strongly believe in the value of higher education. Most of the young adults surveyed in Life After High School: Young People Talk about Going to College and whether to go to college. Nearly half of young people who don’t continue their education after high school cite lack of money, the wish to earn money or having other responsibilities as reasons why they don’t go. Life After High School also shows that while money is not a factor in college selection for most young white Americans (60 percent), it is for most young African Americans and Hispanics. Six in 10 of both groups say that they would have attended a different college if money was not an issue. About half (51 percent) of young Asian Americans say this as well.

The survey raises troubling concerns about the prospects for young workers without college degrees. Of young people who have a 2- or 4-year degree, these less-educated workers fell into their jobs more by chance than by choice and fewer think of their job as a career. Young people with a 2- or 4-year degree are statistically less likely than those who have a degree to say their parents urged them to go to college.
FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT’S SEAT

PLAN AHEAD FOR FUTURE SCHOOL BREAKS

By Dr. CAROLE G. HANKIN WITH RANDI T. SACHS

The summer heat has abated and the children are back in school and settling into their routines. You’ve got a whole school year to look forward to in which your children will be busy learning and growing in every way. Before you feel too relaxed, we suggest you review this past summer and other school vacations and begin to plan for any changes you want to make.

How was your children’s summer? Were you fully satisfied with the activities or events that they participated in? Now that time has passed, you can sit down with your children and discuss how they perceived their own vacation experiences. Unfortunately, not every vacation or item that you packed up gets stored into your child’s four-color glossy brochure, and it is easy to assume that children are happy with a vacation if they don’t complain. Give them a chance to express how they felt and ask them what they would change if they could. You may be able to find a program that better suits your child. Keep in mind, also, that your children will be maturing over the school year.

A ten-year-old who was happy in a general recreation program may become an eleven-year-old who wants to focus on music, theater, science, computers, or competitive swimming. It may be too early to make vacation deposits for next year, but it’s not too early to talk to parents and to research what else is available. Talking to other parents is often the best way to learn about new programs.

Teachers are another great source of information, and of course, there’s the Internet. Now is also a good time to plan how you and your children will spend your school vacation time during the year. Most schools have weeklong breaks in December, February, and April. If you are able to take your own vacation at the same time, there are many opportunities to plan time to spend together to travel, visit family, or simply explore your own community. These are the times that will form the memories that will hold your family together. If you have any doubts about this, search your own cache of family memories. You are likely to recall times of family events together.

If you have a high school junior or senior, you will need time to talk to your college visitation trips and these may take priority over leisure trips. While these visits are important, they can also get to be very tiring and repetitive. Take out your travel books and look for an interesting side trip your family can take, especially if these college visits include bringing your younger children along.

We’re all so busy with life. Planning ahead is a great way to ensure we make the best use of the precious leisure time we have to spend with our children.

Dr. Hankin is superintendent of Syosset Central School District

MOVIE REVIEW

ROLL BOUNCE & HARD GOODBYES: MY FATHER

By JAN AARON

Set in the 1970s when the flashy art of jam skating was all the rage, Roll Bounce spins an engaging, imperfect coming of age tale about Xavier “X” (the charming teen hearthrob Bow-Wow), a nice kid from Chicago’s South Side, and his beleaguered stepdad Curtis (the terrrih! McLlBride). It’s a good family film, despite some plotting missteps.

Moody Xavier spends most of his time skating with his pals. When their favorite rink closed, they are forced to shift to Sweetwater, an awesome rink on the North Side, where the boys are ridiculed and snubbed. The rink also is home to the Afro styled Sweetness (Wesley Jonathan) flanked by his all-male entourage in irrede- cent garb.

Sweetness is such a dreamboat that he makes Xavier’s kid sister swoon. After a bit of first-date-flirt, the boys swear they’ll get even by targeting the rink’s annual skate-off dominated by the Afro boys.

At home, Xavier, who is having trouble coping with the death of his mother—she encouraged his skating—is also resentful of his dad who has his own secret. He’s been jobless for months, but dresses each morning in office attire and pretends to go to work. Xavier and Curtis have two heartbreaking exchanges. Here the picture goes off track, shifting focus from skating to sadness.

Director Malcolm D. Lee could have spent more time showing the kids practicing and learning their terrific competition routine. The actors astonish on skates.

Love interests also threat- en to derail the skating plot. Xavier befriends a cute neighborhood girl Tori (the adorable Jumee Smollett) and reconciles with Naomi (Meagan Good) and Tori’s single Mother becomes Curtis’s new flame.

On the wide screen, the skating routines (expertly choreo- graphed by Kishaya Dudley) are eye stopping and retro score is right-on (PG-13; 113 minutes)

Also recommended: Hard Goodbyes: My Father is an engrossing documen-tary. Here the theme is how a freak accident kills a father and the exceptionally bright 10-year- old son, who cherished his involved dad, is left to keep his him alive. Ironically, he admits the truth on the day Neil Armstrong sets foot on the moon—an event he planned to experience with his father. (Not rated; 113 minutes, in Greek with English subtitles).

Smart Gifts for Learning and Fun

By STEVANNE AUREBACH, PH.D (DR. TOY)

Lookng for unique gifts anytime, especially for use in classroom or home, or for the holidays, is easier with this guide to products offering fun and extra value. These carefully selected gifts offer diversity and skill building plus plenty of playtime for the young at heart to last well into New Year.

Manatees Scramble Squares® helps player learn about endangered, highly social warm water sea mammals with colorful, easy to play, hard to solve nine 4”x4” piece brainteasers. Puzzles teach patience, perseverance plus thinking while keeping everyone entertained.

100 different styles of art work available. Ages 4 and up. $7.95 b.dazzle 800-809-4242 b.dazzle.com

Teddy, an innovative toy, helps child learn colors, shapes, visual discrimination and counting. Teddy is a teaching bear with 24 two-sided cards that fit on Activity Pad. Place card on Activity Pad and turn color-coded dial to match the card. Look at question then place Teddy on answer square. If you are correct, Teddy lifts his flag. Complete with 200 questions and card inside card storage. Ages three to ten. $19.99 Educational Insights 800-995-4436 www.edukids.com

Sequoya Tree Wildlife a colorful plus tree stands 17 inches tall with six realistic wildlife fingers puppets who make it home. Included are an owl, bear, blue jay, squirrel, hare, and fox that can be poked in and out of a variety of holes throughout the branches and around the tree’s base. This unique Sierra Club sponsored interactive play set will expand communication skills while learning about nature and conservation. Ages three to adult. $40.00  Folkmanis 800-654-8922 www.folkmanis.com

Reading Roadway USA™ is an excellent road trip-themed game that teaches children map-reading skills. Travel around the USA discovering fascinating facts while building reading comprehension skills. Players take turns spinning and moving their cars across the country reading aloud fun-filled facts based on state they land on. The first person to comprehend and correctly answer trivia question collects a car. Watch out for the tornado; if that is what you get, you lose your car. The first player to complete their route wins the prize. This colorful board game of the United States includes spinner, trivia cards and car pieces. Ages eight to adult. $19.95 Learning Resources 800-222-3909 www.learn-resources.com

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Smart Coppers Enhance children’s problem solving and motor skills while having fun learning and building. Brightly colored heli- copter with real working propellers enriches children’s imagination while allowing them to become an imaginary pilot. This set includes 15 Maxi Mega Bloks® pieces to build a helicopter and one real lockable Block Buddies® figurine. Ages one to five years. $9.99 Mega Bloks 1800-465-MEGA (1800-465-6342) www.megabloks.com

Rescue Pets are battery-operated pets wait- ing to be adopted and nurtured. Children safely can play and take their new pets along wher- ever they go. Rescue Pets feature sounds and movement activated by motion sensor, so they respond when anyone is around. Each interac- tive pet comes with a collar, tag and adoption certificate. This dog is huggable with soulful eyes, wagging tail and moving head. Requires three “AA” batteries (not included). Ages three to adult. $19.99 MGA Entertainment 800-222-4685 www.rescue-pets.com

Toy Creator - Real Toy Maker is an inno- vative product to encourage creativity as child makes their own toy that really works. Invent new toys or modify existing toys with Flip Faze™ technology that allows the flexible molds to change shape and color by using warm tap water as child is amazed at magical transformations. Product comes with five ColorStrip twist strips and connectors, changing molding material in three colors, plastic mold for spinning forms, plastic mold for wheels, wooden rods, felt-tip marker and step-by-step workbook Ages six to twelve. $12.98. University Games 800-347-4818 www.unigames.com

V-Smile Pocket Learning System is a new learning system for language, math, vocabu- lary and problem solving skills. Hand-held video game system teaches skills like telling time and much more. It provides wireless play on a LCD screen. Game time turns into brain time with multi-curricular activities with exchangeable ‘Smarttridges’™ with three to four Learning Zone activities. Navigate each game by using a hand-held joystick with oversized buttons easily adapted for right and left-handed players. The pocket sized toy is easy to take along for on-the-go fun. Ages five to twelve. $89.99 Vtech Electronics 800-521-2010 www.vtechkids.com

Stevanee Aurebach is author of Dr. Toy’s Guide to Toys, Dr. Toy’s Smart Play/Smart Toys (www.educationalinsights.com).
**Children’s Museum of Manhattan Offers a Touch of Whimsey with “Alice’s Wonderland”**

By MICHELLE DESARBO

The Children’s Museum of Manhattan (CMOM) recently opened a brand new exhibit—and with it, a world of discovery and learning. Using Lewis Carroll’s tale of Alice in Wonderland as a model, the “Alice’s Wonderland” exhibit features everything from its own flamingo croquet game to an afternoon tea party. But the fun isn’t just meant to entertain. Each activity is centered around lessons in science, math, and spatial positioning. Even the Mad Tea Party appears 50 times larger than it actually are. “This is fun. We hope that when kids run into science and microscopes later on, they are excited about it,” says Snider. Meanwhile, a glance through a periscope down a hall of doors treats visitors to a view of the world from the eye level of a rabbit. The appearance, distance, and placement of objects in the hallway ties into the scientific aspects of optical illusions and spatial positioning. Even the Mad Tea Party teaches fractions when visitors divide slices of pie amongst themselves. There are also a mathematic memory game that requires users to discover a secret formula, interactive touch screen programs that encourage literacy by recording (and playing back) spoken words, and graphs.

“An exhibit like this excites the whole family about learning,” Snider says. “There really is something for everyone. Golf-playing dads can’t get enough of the Crazy Croquet game, and girls like that the main character is female. We hope that encourages them to have fun with science too.”

Alice’s Wonderland will travel to children’s museums and science centers throughout the nation for four years. An interactive story based on the exhibit can be found on www.cdm.org.

For more information on “Alice’s Wonderland” or any other programs at CMOM, visit www.cmom.org or call 212-721-1223.

**$6.9 Million in Federal Transportation Funds Secured for Brooklyn Children’s Museum**

Recently, President Bush signed the U.S. Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill, entitled the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The bill includes $6.9 million for transportation, access and safety improvements near the Children’s Museum in Crown Heights. SAFETEA-LU includes a total of $16.5 billion for New York State’s highway and transit systems, and research, safety, environment, transportation planning, and security projects that will benefit all New Yorkers.

The SAFETEA-LU funds were secured through the efforts of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, Senator Charles E. Schumer, and Congressman Major R. Owens. Congressman Jerrold Nadler, and Congressman Anthony Weiner also made important contributions.

The federal funds will support much-needed transportation improvements and streetscape enhancements aimed at making the museum more accessible for all users. These improvements will be implemented in conjunction with the museum’s $40 million capital expansion, which is now under construction and scheduled to be completed in 2007. Designed by world-renowned architect Rafael Vinoly, the new building is slated to become New York City’s first nationally certified “green” museum.

The goals of the Transportation, Access and Neighborhood Safety Improvement Project plan are to: increase public access to the Brooklyn Children’s Museum’s cultural and educational resources; provide off-street parking with ADA compliant wheelchair and convenient stroller access to the museum; create drop-off areas for school buses and reduce double parking; add directional signage for drivers and new way-finding signage to encourage pedestrian and bicycle activity in the area; provide trolley/shuttle service to connect visitors to mass transit and other cultural sites; introduce traffic calming and new safety features for school children and families at street crossings; and reduce traffic and congestion in the neighborhood, particularly during the museum’s expansion and projected increase in visitors.

“Making Brooklyn Children’s Museum more easily accessible for all will enable more families throughout Brooklyn and New York City to experience the wealth of educational opportunities that we offer every day,” said Brooklyn Children’s Museum President Carol Enseki.

Congressman Owens commented that, “As a strong advocate for children and community revitalization, I am pleased to have secured needed federal resources to the Brooklyn Children’s Museum, a national treasure in the 11th Congressional District.”

“I am pleased to have secured federal funding for children’s museums and science centers throughout the nation for four years. Children’s museums and science centers are an important economic development opportunity for the community,” Congresswoman E. Stephanie Morse said.

Brooklyn Children’s Museum is located at 145 Brooklyn Ave. (at St. Marks Ave.). Admission is $4; free for members and children under one year.

For information, hours and directions, call 718-735-4400 or visit http://www.brooklynkids.org

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**Do You Want Your Classroom To Have a Free Makeover? Enter the EXPO Contest**

It only takes a walk through a handful of America’s classrooms to notice an unfortunate trend—a desperate need for repairs. In fact, three-quarters of the nation’s public school buildings require repairs, renovations and modernizations to keep up with good condition. With this in mind, EXPO® dry erase markers and accessories, along with a new Dell® personal computer for their classroom, will offer new white boards, complete with colorful EXPO dry erase markers and accessories, along with a new Dell® personal computer for their classroom. Each contest winner will also receive a new Dell® personal computer for their classroom.

While You Were Out to offer students across the nation the chance to win a complete classroom overhaul. EXPO® dry erase markers and accessories, along with a new Dell® personal computer for their classroom. Each contest winner will also receive a new Dell® personal computer for their classroom.

Contest entries must be submitted online by December 15, 2005. Entries will be judged based on the effectiveness of the description, appropriateness to theme and entertainment value. Contest winners will be announced in January 2006.

For more information on “Alice’s Wonderland” or any other programs at CMOM, visit www.cmom.org or call 212-721-1223.

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NEWS FROM THE FRONT-LINE:
A LIFE IS SPARED BECAUSE OF A TEACHER’S SKILL AND SWIFT ACTION

By PHYLLIS C. MURRAY

When a choking victim can’t speak or breathe and needs your help immediately, the fine line between life and death is incalculable. Fortunately, because of swift and heroic action of Scott Dentz, a seasoned teacher and part time volunteer fireman, a young life was saved at PS 75, Bronx.

Recently, while Dentz was instructing a guided reading group (and the collaborating teacher was working with another group), Dentz observed Anthony Anderson, his fifth grade student, exhibiting unusual behavior in the classroom. Anderson was holding his neck to indicate that he was choking. The students were screaming, “Anthony is choking.” Assessing the situation, Dentz asked Anderson to the nurse’s office. Anderson was examined by the nurse and released back to class. The Anderson’s mother was contacted as well as the principal.

Fortunately, this story had a happy ending. Because of Scott Dentz’s prior training in CPR as well as Dentz’s willingness to get involved in a crisis in the classroom, a fatal and tragic accident was avoided: Anderson’s life was spared. In June of 2005 Anthony Anderson, an exceptionally gifted art student, graduated from PS 75, Bronx. He will go far.

We applaud Scott Dentz for his heroic actions. We were proud to have had him as a member of our staff. His dedication to the students and staff was exhibited, daily. And the School Safety Committee continued to benefit from the experience and value that he so selflessly shared with one and all on our staff. Scott Dentz, Educator/Firefighter continues to serve beyond the call of duty in his volunteer work at PS 75, Bronx is still remembered.

RE: RECRUITING EX-INNATES INTO SOCIETY

To the Editor:

Can you send me information about inmates getting grants in order for them to return to school? Do you have any websites that I can search in order to get information for someone?

Dayona
Columbus, OH

RE: ADAM KOPLEWICZ, BROWN ’08 RECEIVES HUBER AWARD

To the Editor:

More power to you as you go through your college life. I know you can reach whatever your goal is because you have always been a very determined child. Good luck! I’m very proud of what you have become!

Ada Cerna
Howard Beach, NY

RE: SEAS TURTLES: AMBASSADORS OF THE OCEAN TO YOUR CLASSROOM

To the Editor:

My daughter and I are “turtle ladies” who would like to do a series on pond turtles, lake and river wetlands turtles, and sea turtles. Let us know if you come to the east coast for any seminars or if I could arrange one through the New Jersey Audubon Society in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey.

Barbara Guest
Wayne, NJ

RE: NEW FOR TEACHERS! FUN WAYS TO TEACH MATH

To the Editor:

I enjoy challenging my sons with problems like this. Recently, I saw a comment by you relating to baseball stats, also very interesting. However, I’m hoping you can confirm my claim that when a person plays the lottery it is just as good to choose the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 and 6 as any others thereby showing how difficult it is to win big. Is this so?

William Bergmann
Hollywood, CA

Response:

Assuming that the lottery is run by a random-numbers generator, the digits 0-9 are all equally likely to appear. An example of a collection of numerals that might be considered randomly arranged is the digits making up the value of pi, the ratio of a circle’s circumference to its diameter. For more on this amazing number (pi), we refer you to the book Pi: A Biography of the World’s Most Mysterious Number (Prometheus Books, 2004).

Teacher Turnover Could Cost New York $363 Million Annually, According To Alliance For Excellent Education

When New York’s school year begins this fall, almost 24,000 of the teachers will not be returning to the schools in which they taught last year. Replacing them could cost the state more than $363 million, according to conservative estimates by the Alliance for Excellent Education.

Although some are changing jobs after many years in teaching, many of those abandoning the classroom altogether are new teachers—nationwide, almost 50 percent of teachers will leave the profession within the first five years of entering it. Of the total number of teachers not returning to their schools, almost 14,000 are leaving their profession altogether, costing the state about $210 million in replacement costs. Others are transferring to other schools, at an approximate cost of another $153 million.

The Alliance’s calculations are presented in a new brief, “Teacher Attrition: A Costly Loss to the Nation and to the States”, which examines the high price states could pay each year to recruit teachers to fill classroom vacancies. The brief can be found at http://www.all4ed.org/publications/TeacherAttrition.pdf.

“The price of losing so many teachers, particularly so many who have just begun their teaching careers, is enormous in terms of dollars,” said Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and the former governor of West Virginia, “but it’s also costly in terms of the quality of education we provide our students. Teachers who stay in the classroom gain experience and their students benefit.”

Added Wise, “Certainly, we need to attract additional talented individuals to our teaching ranks, but we must also concentrate on keeping them there by providing comprehensive support programs that help new teachers develop the practical skills they need for success and give veteran teachers opportunities to take on new challenges that will enhance their careers.”

The annual cost of teacher turnover was calculated by the Alliance for Excellent Education using data from the U.S. Department of Education, an analysis by Dr. Richard Ingersoll of the University of Pennsylvania for the National Commission on Teaching & America’s Future, and statistics from the National Education Association. The Alliance for Excellent Education is a Washington-based policy, research, and advocacy organization that works to make every child a graduate, prepare for postsecondary education and success in life. It is funded by the Leed’s Family, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Daniels Fund, and the New York Community Trust, as well as by concerned individuals.

For more information about the Alliance for Excellent Education, visit www.all4ed.org.

New Mothers: New Lives
The NYU Child Study Center is offering an Educational Support Group for New Mothers

Open to new mothers and their babies 0 to 9 months

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NYU Child Study Center
577 First Avenue
New York, NY 10016
(212) 263-6622
www.AboutOurKids.org

Alfred S. Posamentier, Ph.D.
New York, NY

Re: Zydeco Music & Jamming with Mama
To the Editor:

I really enjoyed that day pictured on the website. Joshua Richard and I were living in New Orleans at the time the photo was taken. If the person who took this photo could email me I would appreciate it.

Aaron Chesson
Port Arthur, TX

The publisher, Dr. Pola Rosen, took the photo when she was in Lafayette, Louisiana recently. She would be happy to email it to you.
The Bait and Switch of “Intelligent Design” Creationism

By KEITH LOCKITCH

Eighty years after the famous Scopes “Monkey” Trial, the anti-evolution forces have regrouped. Today, the battle in school districts from Kansas to Pennsylvania is over the teaching of “intelligent design,” the view that life is so complex it must be the product of a “higher intelligence.”

Advocates of “intelligent design” try to portray themselves as a modern-day Scopes, victims of a dogmatic pro-evolution establishment that will not allow their scientific view into the schools. But the central issue is whether “intelligent design” is, in fact, a genuine scientific theory or merely a diluted version of religious advocacy, creationism in camouflage.

Proponents of “intelligent design” aggressively market their ideas, insisting it is not religiously based. In 2004 the late Eugene Owaki, a Japanese Roman Catholic priest and owner of Owaki’s Scientific Research Laboratory, stood before a group of science teachers and gave a presentation on “Intelligent Design.”

Indeed, “intelligent design” apparently requires surprisingly little of the “designer’s” identity: “Inferences to design,” contends Behe, “do not require that we have a candidate for the role of designer.” According to its advocates, the “designer” responsible for “intelligent design” is not some kind of “creative intelligence” capable of engineering the basic elements of life. Some have even seriously nominated advanced space aliens for the role. The “designer” existing being able to carry out the experiment that would allow them to determine whether and then, this effort will be worthwhile.”

While all states have laws making it illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18, the new legislation Coday plans to introduce will make New Jersey just the fourth state in the nation, behind Alabama, Alaska and Utah, to raise the legal smoking age to 19. For additional information on youth smoking statistics and prevention and cessation programs, visit: http://www.state.nj.us/health/as/index.html.

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While all states have laws making it illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18, the new legislation Coday plans to introduce will make New Jersey just the fourth state in the nation, behind Alabama, Alaska and Utah, to raise the legal smoking age to 19. For additional information on youth smoking statistics and prevention and cessation programs, visit: http://www.state.nj.us/health/as/index.html.
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Wolves

By SYDNEY KONTOPIRAKIS

Dangerous predators, with Sharp teeth, hunting...
In search of prey. Live in packs, Leaders, Never Know, When they’re going to attack.

Sydney Kontopirakis is a fourth grader at PS 236, Brooklyn.

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