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GUEST EDITORIALS

The Path of Education Reform

By DAVID STEINER, Ph.D.

In their important work “Tinkering Toward Utopia,” authors Tyack and Cuban pointed out a persistent historical pattern in American education reform — our tendency to swing from one polar position to its opposite. The result, they pointed out, was often the worst of both worlds: one reform movement would just be getting underway on the ground when it would encounter the arrival on the policy stage of its opposite, with predictable chaos too often the consequence.

Let us try to learn from this history so as not to repeat it. Today there is an important reform movement underway with the support of unprecedented federal dollars. The entirely sound premise of this wave of reform is that unless we know how students are doing as measured against a high standard of learning, and unless we hold ourselves accountable for bringing ever more students to that standard, we will continue to be building educational policy on guesswork. Thus the unprecedented emphasis on developing national academic standards, on building the databases for analyzing student performance, and the push for new policies that hold teachers and principals accountable for students’ academic growth based on annual assessments.

But there is a strong “counter” movement, supported by many teachers, the schools of education that support them, and a sizable group of parents. Skeptical that multiple choice tests can capture the rich skills and knowledge that children should encounter, persuaded that the most effective learning often occurs in project and team-based environments, and doubtful that mathematical equations based on tests can ever be an adequate way to measure teacher performance, there is a profound belief that we are on the wrong track. What we need is to focus on critical thinking, metacognitive skills, and get away from test-prep.

Often these two positions become further polarized and politicized. At its extreme, the current national reform agenda can sound as if it believes that measuring something is, in itself, the answer to making education reform happen. But that is to mistake a thermometer for both a diagnosis and a treatment. Likewise, the anti-testing anti-data viewpoint risks embodying the view that children can teach themselves, and that any form of standardized evaluation is, by definition, “inauthentic.”

For the sake of our P-12 students, we need strongly to resist the temptation to reify these distortions. What is wrong is surely not testing per se, but narrow tests in only a couple of subjects that do not probe for real understanding. Building on the pioneering work done by Chancellor Klein in New York City, we should surely give our teachers, parents and students accurate information about their academic progress, yet be equally sure that we define that progress against chal-



lenging intellectual standards based on a demanding, rich, and engaging curriculum that teachers will be excited to teach. Teachers are given an extraordinary responsibility: we should honor that responsibility by recognizing our best teachers with professional advancement and, after appropriate efforts to support them, not retain our weakest teachers in the classroom. Finally, we should wherever possible embrace common sense: the time we provide in this country for learning is simply too short and the length of the summer break is especially destructive for underprivileged students.

I am naturally very pleased that, thanks to funding from the Race to the Top program, New York state will have important new resources to devote to education reform. The Board of Regents and I are determined to use these resources in ways that will have the most impact. We will not choose between a Scylla or a Charybdis, but rather work with parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, college faculty and our communities to build an outstanding curriculum, to provide both the clinical skills and the content knowledge our teachers need to be effective, to create better assessments grounded on the curriculum and linked directly to national standards, and to encourage districts to adopt new models of schooling that better serve their diverse populations. We will create the data systems we need to tell us how we are doing, data designed to measure real academic achievement. We will broaden the range of subjects that are given equal support through the K-12 years. We know that opening the door of learning for each and every child in our state is an extraordinary responsibility — worthy only of our best thinking and most determined efforts. #

Dr. David Steiner is the New York State Commissioner of Education.

Education’s Transformative Power

By MATTHEW
GOLDSTEIN, Ph.D.

In June, Sonia Sotomayor, the newly appointed U.S. Supreme Court associate justice, addressed graduates at Hostos Community College, her mother’s alma mater, saying that a Hostos education “gave me and my brother a powerful example of the value of education and of family. My family is a testament to the contributions that community colleges make to our society.” Looking to the future, she told graduates, “You will breathe life into the dreams of the next generation. Together we’re going to make this a better world.”

As a new academic year begins, Justice Sotomayor’s words are a timely reminder of just how powerful a college education is. A rigorous education transforms lives and can transform our collective future.

More and more students understand the power of a CUNY education. In fact, our record enrollments are projected to climb even higher this fall. Our students know that studying with the university’s world-class faculty in innovative academic programs can make all the difference to their personal and professional advancement.

Serving a projected 267,000 degree-seeking students is not without its challenges, however. This year, CUNY sustained \$84 million in state budget cuts to its senior colleges, which have experienced more than \$205 million in reductions since 2009, while adding thousands more students. At our community colleges, where enrollment has increased by more than 20 percent since 2005, base aid per FTE has been cut by \$285, resulting in an operating budget loss of about \$20 million. In addition, the state did not reach any resolution on the proposed Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act, which recommended a number of tuition and regulatory adjustments, including differential tuition rates by campus and program.

CUNY is not alone in trying to manage the perilous combination of declining state budgets and increasing enrollments. Like public colleges and universities across the country, the university is deeply committed to its historic mission of access and quality but faces difficult questions about maintaining that mission in tough economic times. That’s why this fall CUNY will host a national summit of seasoned public higher education leaders to discuss the pressing issues we share: shrinking state support for operating budgets and financial aid programs; growing dependence on tuition, paid by students of limited means; and increased pressure to develop other funding opportunities. This is clearly a time for bold new approaches to postsecondary education.

This kind of enterprising approach is exemplified by the continuing development of our new community college in Manhattan. The college will open in 2012 as an innovative model for



improving student performance and graduation rates. The university recently appointed Scott Evenbeck, professor of psychology and dean of University College at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, as the college’s founding president. Evenbeck will lead the implementation of the college’s design, which includes full-time enrollment in the first year, a common first-year curriculum, intensive advisement, a limited number of majors, and a professional studies component. And to further the university’s efforts to reinvigorate community-college education — the fastest-growing segment of higher education — Eduardo Martí, who has served with great distinction as president of Queensborough Community College, has been appointed CUNY’s vice chancellor for community colleges.

Over the coming year, CUNY will also celebrate two significant milestones: the 40th anniversary of Medgar Evers College and the 10th anniversary of Macaulay Honors College. Having grown from an enrollment of 1,000 students in 1970 to more than 7,000 students today, and boasting an acclaimed faculty and a host of new degree programs and facilities, Medgar Evers will fete the college’s rich history and its graduates’ promising futures. Macaulay will also salute the achievements of its graduates as it marks 10 years of building a creative curriculum that offers students an individual academic program and global learning opportunities.

Two of the seven CUNY colleges in which Macaulay students enroll are joined by new leaders this fall: President Lisa Staiano-Coico at City College and President Mitchel Wallerstein at Baruch College. We welcome them to a community of educators passionately engaged in shaping graduates ready to “make this a better world.” #

Matthew Goldstein is chancellor of the City University of New York.

Education Update

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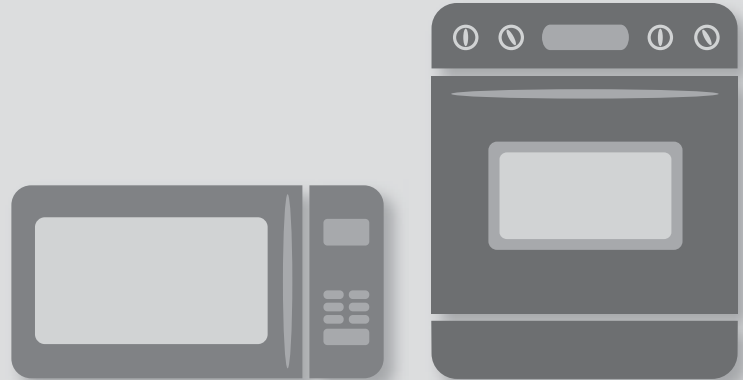
- A. in the summer
- B. in the winter
- C. in both summer and winter



answer: C

Which statement is true?

- A. microwaves use less than half the power of traditional ovens
- B. traditional ovens use less than half the power of microwaves



answer: A

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- C. call **1-800-75-CONED** if you see steam on New York City streets
- D. all of the above



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

So You Want To Be A Film Major

To the Editor:

I'm a Media, Culture, and Communications major at NYU and I have been thinking about switching over to film. I have a dream about making documentaries but I got stuck in my present major. This article has inspired me to change and experience the very thing I love doing. Thanks, Sarah!

Eddie

LOVELAND, COLORADO

Peggy Williams

To the Editor:

Peggy is my second cousin. When I was a little girl, and rather afraid of the world, Peggy came to town and brought the circus with her, or so I thought at 8 years old. I remember being so young and so little in the midst of the entire big top. We went early when no one was there yet, and got to stand in one of the rings and look around and see just how big it all was. Peggy came out, with her huge beaming smile and took my hand. Knowing my love for animals she took me back stage and allowed me to meet the animals and watch them be prepared for the show. Then it was time to watch the show for real. My dad and I took our seats and watched. "Where's Peggy?" I remember thinking, "which one is she?" But by this point Peggy was more of a director of sorts and soon made a secret appearance walking next to the largest elephant I had ever seen. She was so poised and had no fear in her face whatsoever. She led that enormous animal with grace and trust, and from then on I knew I wanted to be as strong a woman as Peggy! As I grew up, I learned of all the amazing things my cousin has done in her life, and again found myself encouraged that, as a woman, there were no locked doors! Thanks for your piece on Peggy.

While I haven't seen her in years, she's in my heart always and I know she truly is a wonderful lady!

Tonya

FREMONT, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Dr. Martha Bridge Denckla: An Expert Voice from Johns Hopkins

To the Editor:

Those of us who understand child development and work with children have been feeling like voices in the wilderness for the last few years. Thank you to Dr. Denckla for speaking out and helping to bring some sense back into how we approach early childhood education.

Di Karpman

FLOSSMOOR, ILLINOIS

Closing the Opportunity Gap

To the Editor:

Dr. Moss-Lee hits the nail right on the head! Opportunity, and not achievement, is at the crux of the gap between many of our disenfranchised youth and their colleagues in more advantaged areas. Oftentimes, education workshops, forums, articles and such, refer to yet another "new" formulation, curriculum, pedagogy to throw the way of these populations, in hopes of "fixing" a problem. In doing so, they often ignore what works, disbanding with the theories and best practices that were quite successful in the first place, as well as the history that went with it. At times, we have to go Back to the Basics and Back to the Classics (those things that we did that worked consistently, time and time again, regardless of the population) in order to create the environment of high expectations and excellence that Dr. Moss Lee speaks of. H.E.A.F. is clearly a glowing example of this success model.

Avril Somerville

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Here's a sample of afternoon programs from this year's conference. For a complete listing, visit www.92Y.org/Conference

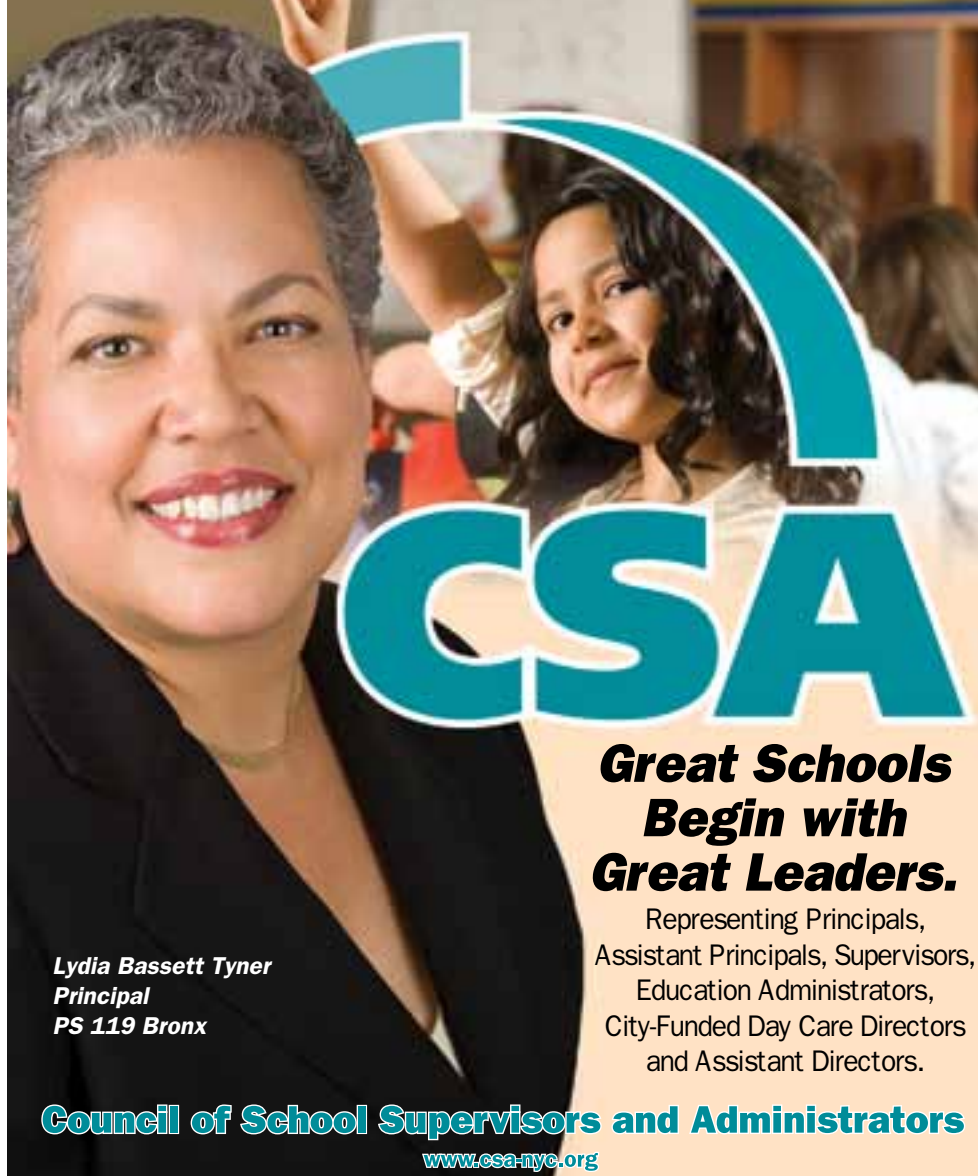
- How 21st Century Living Impacts Sensory Development in Young Children
- Teaching Digital Natives: Using Technology in the Early Childhood Classroom
- The Importance of Play
- Technology and Brain Development in the Young Child
- When Anxious Parents Make Anxious Children: Developing a Healthy Perspective
- Understanding the Millennial Mind: Communicating with the New Generation of Parents
- Accountability and Purposeful Play: A Panel Discussion
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WHAT LEAVING NO CHILD BEHIND REALLY MEANS

By LYNDA KATZ, Ph.D.

As our government seeks input on reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, educators need to emphasize the critical importance of arming teachers with not only the freedom to support each child's learning style, but also the knowledge to properly educate students in America with learning disabilities.

There is logic in the new Common Core Standards for English and math, which were created by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. Such standards can and should be applicable to students with LD, and we need to most of all support teachers in helping these students succeed.

The National Center for Learning Disabilities has developed core principles for the reauthorization to guide discussions related to students with learning disabilities. The new law will, I hope, support these students and help improve graduation rates by fostering early intervention and effective teaching.

As an educator who leads a college devoted to students with learning disabilities and who has spent a career studying and following other research in this area, I know that learning disabilities are neurologically based and do not go away.

While our country has made progress in improving educational outcomes for these students in recent years, more can and must be done. Of the 13.5 percent of students with LD in America's public schools, nearly half perform more than three grades below their enrolled grade in math and reading. Tragically, one quarter drop out of high school, compared with less than 10 percent of the general student population.

Contrary to what the public might think, improving success for these students does not mean relaxing standards. The same standards must apply to all students, including those with learning disabilities. No Child Left Behind allowed states, districts and schools to hide hundreds of thousands of students' scores.

We need to end test accommodations and alternate assessment policies for students with disabilities by creating tests that present the material based on the concept of universal design. This is not "dumbing down" the material; it is a scientifically proven method that allows several types



of learners to understand the material and demonstrate their knowledge. This would not only benefit students with LD, but also many male students, minority students and students from low socio-economic backgrounds who, research has shown, learn differently.

We need to identify struggling learners as early as preschool, which means the new law should include support for professional development for teachers so they can improve literacy instruction. We need to embrace universal design to ensure that all students who struggle have better access to grade-level instruction, materials, appropriate assistive technologies, and appropriate teaching methods and assessments.

No Child Left Behind did open the way for improvement by requiring an understanding of a student's current performance in relationship to educational standards. Including students with disabilities in state assessments was a critical first step toward improving student achievement, and there was an increase in the number of students with LD in general education classrooms in some states.

But No Child Left Behind essentially crippled good teachers, forcing them to teach to tests rather than addressing individual student needs. We cannot make that same mistake again.

We need national benchmarks for all students. High school graduation with a standard diploma and college readiness should be goals for ALL students, not just those who are easiest to teach. #

Dr. Lynda Katz is president of Landmark College, the nation's premier college for high-potential students with learning disabilities and ADHD. Originally published by Education Week.

A Kafkaesque Proposal

By JOHN J. RUSSELL, Ed.D.

In an article titled "For City Schools, A Mainstreaming on Special Needs," that appeared in the April 29 edition of *The New York Times*, Jennifer Medina reported that in New York City approximately 17 percent of the students are classified as needing special education services and that only 25 percent of these students received a regular diploma last year. The Bloomberg administration's response to these abysmal results is to propose placing these



special-needs students in regular education classrooms, where an equally appalling 50 percent of the general education students graduate. While paying lip service to increasing accountability and educational opportunity, the Department of Education's real motivation is to cut funding to special education. In the end, the Department of Education would like to dramatically accelerate the integration of special education with general education to save money.

This proposal could have been written by Kafka himself. The twisted logic of the city's education department goes something like this. In order to help special-needs students, we will return them to the general education program that failed them in the first place. This, it is alleged, will give principals and local districts more flexibility in how to educate these special-needs students. In

yet another Kafka-like twist, the proposal does not provide any professional development for the teachers who will have these special-needs students in their classes. It is difficult to imagine how anyone could consider this a recipe to improve educational outcomes; in fact it sounds like a formula for disaster. The net effect of these recommendations is to give local districts and principals a great deal of discretion in providing special-education services, much as districts had 30 years ago before the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). As deplorable as the current results are for special-education students, the situation was far worse prior to the passage of IDEA in 1975. With increasing pressure to reduce budgets, it is reasonable to assume that these recommendations will result in far fewer funds being available for educating classified students who need additional support to succeed or for training the regular-education teachers who will have them in their classrooms.

These proposals should be of grave concern to every parent and educator committed to having each student reach his or her full potential. #

John J. Russell, Ed.D., is head of the Windward School.

CHILD MIND INSTITUTE CAN BE DESTINATION FOR KIDS, PARENTS, EDUCATORS

By HAROLD S. KOPLEWICZ, M.D.



It's always challenging for children to navigate through the first several weeks of a new school year. It's even harder for kids with learning and psychiatric disorders. The Child Mind Institute is a new organization dedicated to giving those children the proper diagnosis, treatment, educational resources, and accommodations they need to fulfill their potential. I'm very pleased to announce the opening of our New York City-based clinical program.

We know our children's future is shaped by their mental health and ability to learn. And we know that children with learning or psychiatric disorders need both a caring team as well as a treatment plan supported by science. The institute's mission is to transform mental health care to enable all children to fulfill their potential. We're building an integrated, multidisciplinary clinical program that facilitates teamwork among parents, clinicians, and teachers. Our team of nationally renowned child and adolescent psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, neuropsychologists, and learning specialists are providing innovative, evidence-based assessments and treatments. Their areas of expertise include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and disruptive behavior disorders; anxiety and mood disorders, including selective mutism and obsessive-compulsive disorder; autism spectrum disorders; eating disorders; and learning disorders.

Among the Child Mind Institute's founding clinical staff is Dr. Steven Kurtz, one of the nation's leading clinicians in the treatment of

ADHD and other disruptive behavior disorders. Dr. Kurtz is one of only nine master trainers in parent-child interaction therapy, which provides parents with behavior management skills and techniques for interacting more effectively with a child to decrease disruptive behaviors.

As senior director of the institute's Center for ADHD and Disruptive Behavior Disorders, Dr. Kurtz is working with a team of clinical psychologists, which includes Drs. Melanie Fernandez and Samantha Miller, to provide parent-child interaction therapy and behavioral therapy for children and teens. Dr. Kurtz is also director of the institute's Selective Mutism Program. Selective mutism is a social anxiety disorder that impairs a child's functioning in school and social situations.

In August, the Child Mind Institute opened its Pediatric Obsessive-Compulsive Spectrum Disorders Program under the direction of Dr. Jerome Bublick, a cognitive and behavioral psychologist known for implementing one of the most effective treatment programs in the United States for children with obsessive-compulsive disorder. In September, Dr. Roy Boorady also joined the institute; he is one of the most respected pediatric psychopharmacologists in the nation. Dr. Alan Ravitz will join Dr. Boorady as a senior pediatric psychopharmacologist in October.

The Child Mind Institute is also home to the Learning and Diagnostics Center, which has one of the best pediatric neuropsychology and learning assessment teams in the nation. Susan

continued on page 16

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A Bright IDEA: Improving Special Education in New York City Schools

By MICHAEL BEST

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that students with disabilities have access to public schools, so that they can be educated with and receive the same educational opportunities as their non-disabled peers. Until the 1970s, when Congress passed the first version of what is now IDEA, students with disabilities were excluded from public schools or sat idly in classrooms, learning little or nothing. Today, school districts across the country devote substantial resources to providing education and services to disabled children — and none more than New York City, which last year spent roughly \$4.8 billion on special education.

But we're nowhere near where we need to be, in part because of the way schools and courts have approached IDEA. The law's mandates pertain solely to educational inputs (what services a child should receive), encouraging schools to focus on compliance with legal requirements rather than on how best to educate an individual child. Furthermore, the courts have tended to favor the aspects of the law that allow parents to sue school districts rather than those that promote cooperation between parents and schools. Last year, in a case called *Forest Grove*, the Supreme Court ruled that parents can sue school districts for private school tuition even if the parents have not tried a public school placement.

The consequences have little to do with IDEA's goals. Schools often treat children as categories or classifications, instead of making adjustments that will improve their students' achievement. And the number of parents who sue to force the public to pay for their children to attend private schools for children with disabilities has increased dramatically, draining resources from public schools.

Under Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Chancellor Joel Klein, New York City has emphasized student achievement, resulting in more children with disabilities meeting standards on state math and reading tests and in more of them graduating. And, in contrast to lawsuits over private school tuition, the number of placements in inclusion settings is at an all-time high. Despite



our progress, however, achievement levels for students with disabilities are nowhere near where anyone wants them to be.

So over the next two years, beginning with roughly 200 schools this fall, we will phase in a plan that will allow the overwhelming majority of children with disabilities to attend their zoned schools like other children; give schools scheduling and instructional flexibility to design programs to meet the needs of these students; create more collaboration with parents; and hold schools more accountable for helping children meet long-term goals such as high school graduation, college, or employment.

Despite the trends in IDEA law, New York City will make special education about helping students learn and succeed in the public schools. #

Michael Best is the general counsel of the New York City Department of Education.

Designed With The Best of Intentions: The Fault Line in Support For Special Education

By JEAN JOHNSON

Over the past 35 years, the United States has attempted to close a callous gap in its education system by requiring public schools to teach children with special needs, just as they must teach all other students. Current special education policies are widely viewed as a major step forward in closing that gap.

Still, there is a worrisome fault line in the perspectives of the two groups most closely associated with special education: the public school superintendents and principals who administer it, and the parents of special needs children who rely on it.

The frustration with special education among school leaders is palpable. Public Agenda's surveys show that 8 in 10 superintendents and principals believe the "volume and complexity" of special education law has gotten worse, 8 in 10 superintendents believe special education absorbs a disproportionate amount of resources, and nearly 9 in 10 say the law encourages a "sense of entitlement" among parents, making them quick to threaten to sue.

Not surprisingly, parents have a different perspective: that of individuals who are deeply worried about their child's future. Thankfully, most parents give the special education provided



Fixing Special Education — 12 Steps to Transform a Broken System

By MIRIAM K. FREEDMAN

The special education law has outlived its purpose. It has accomplished its mission. We are now well into the quagmire of its unintended consequences. Let us celebrate what works and fix what doesn't. How do we start? Here's an approach.

What Works: Let us honor the success of this landmark 1975 law, now called the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). A product of the 20th century civil rights era, it ended the exclusion of children with mental, physical and other disabilities from appropriate education services. That was then.

Now, across America, more than six million students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education — some 14 percent of all students. The law's dramatic success is worth celebrating.

What Needs a Fix: Beyond its success, let us acknowledge that this powerful law — the only entitlement program in our schools — spawned



to be. Rather than fomenting distrust, we need to build trust among parents, students, and schools, especially as most parents are satisfied with their children's education (see accompanying piece). After years of costly and damaging case-by-case litigation, we need child-centered, not adult-centered, resolution innovations, like using an ombudsman, independent consultant, etc.

• Minimize paperwork that does not directly improve educational outcomes. Educators and parents focus too much

effort on documentation, a corrosive, unsustainable system. Let's do the right thing for students, not just "do the thing right."

• Follow research, not dogma. For example: (a) Treat inclusion as a means to a good education, not a "right." (b) Focus on the whole child: strengths and weaknesses, not just weaknesses. (c) End the (over)use of "accommodations." They inflate scores, are unfair, and, sadly, let students and teachers off the hook. (d) Educate children without diagnostic labels. As eligibility gatekeepers, labels are often imprecise, inequitable, and unfair. (e) Teach reading. Instead of spending millions to diagnose learning disabilities, teach children how to read. Lack of reading skills fuels the growth of learning disabilities, the IDEA's largest disability category.

• Confront the law's impact on other students (at risk, average, advanced) and school budgets. This one-entitlement system cannot long endure and serve our nation well.

Having succeeded in providing access for all students with disabilities to a free appropriate public education, we need mission-change. Stop tinkering around the edges of this input- and rights-driven law and replace it with a 21st century outcome-driven approach. Focus on teaching and learning for all students, not on bureaucracy, procedures, and lawsuits. Finally, allow open and honest discussion to enact systemic reform. Our students and nation deserve no less. #

Here's How! Let us tackle challenges that are familiar to anyone with experience in America's public schools by refocusing on the prize: improved outcomes for all students. "Fixing Special Education" presents 12 concrete, creative, and, yes, controversial proposals, including:

• Change the parents' role and end the right to litigate a student's services. Educators, not lawyers and judges, should manage educational programming. Parents should be partners, not law enforcers, as this adversarial law requires them

an adversarial system that often focuses on procedures and rights, not educational outcomes. It has become ever more complex and burdensome for schools and parents. Its due process requirements pit parents against educators — without any evidence that such conflict and angst improves student achievement. Compliance costs often overwhelm school budgets. The law's incentives are backward, focusing on rights, not education; inputs, not outcomes; the needs of the one, not the many; conflict, not collaboration.

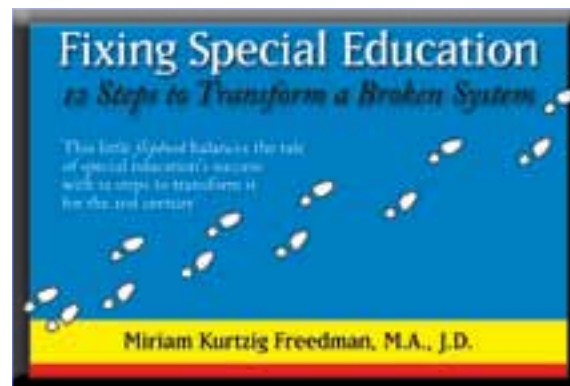
Miriam Kurtzig Freedman, M.A., J.D., is an attorney, author, speaker, and reformer. She is of counsel to the Boston law firm of Stoneman, Chandler & Miller, where she represents public schools. Her latest book, "Fixing Special Education — 12 Steps to Transform a Broken System," is available through Amazon or <http://www.parkplacepubs.com> and <http://www.school-lawpro.com>. Contact Miriam at Miriam@school-lawpro.com.

by public schools quite good reviews once their child has been evaluated and placed. More than 8 in 10 say their child's special education teachers really care about their child "as a person," and 7 in 10 say the teachers know a lot about their child's disability and how to work with it. Two-thirds give their school good or excellent marks for giving their child the help he or she needs. Unfortunately, many parents also feel that getting their children into the right programs can be a battle. Over half say parents need to find out what help is available on their own: "The school is not going to volunteer the information." And 7 in 10 believe "too many special needs children lose out" because their parents don't know what they are entitled to. One mother reported what seemed to be a fairly typical exchange with a school psychologist. "You know what he told me? He said,

"If you weren't so persistent, I wouldn't give you these services."

Right now, the two groups seem enveloped in a cloud of suspicion: School leaders are on guard fearing unreasonable demands and lawsuits. Parents are primed for battle, fearing schools won't help their child unless forced to. There's no question that we expect school officials to follow the law, however their criticism of special education as it currently operates is so intense and broad that it probably warrants more serious attention than it now gets. The question is whether there are reforms that could address educators' frustrations while easing parents' anxieties about obtaining the services their children deserve. #

Jean Johnson is an executive vice president at Public Agenda, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and citizen engagement organization.





Charley's Fund: The Power to Change



Rachel Gellert and Charley Seckler

By RACHEL GELLERT

In 2004, Tracy and Benjamin Seckler were faced with the most frightening news two parents can hear. Their 4-year-old son Charley was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), a degenerative muscle disease that could put him in a wheelchair by ten years of age and take his life by twenty. There is no cure.

One can only imagine how the Secklers felt when they received that devastating news. Heartache, despair, grief, fear — these words can only begin to describe what it must be like to learn that your child has a fatal diagnosis. However, the Secklers are not your average family. Tracy and Benjy saw hope where most would have seen only pain. They saw an opportunity to make a difference, a chance to fight.

When Charley was diagnosed there were a few organizations raising money to help families pay for the immense medical costs of supporting a child with DMD, but there was no funding in pursuit of a cure. Within four months of Charley's diagnosis, the Seckler family had founded Charley's Fund, a nonprofit organization whose sole mission is to fund research for DMD in order to find a cure or treatment in time to save Charley's life and the lives of thousands of boys like him. DMD affects one in every 3,500 boys, meaning that even though it is gender-specific, DMD is still the most common genetic killer of children. In the past six years, Charley's Fund has raised an astounding \$18 million in medical research, funded two human clinical trials and, for the first time in the history of this disease, given DMD families true hope for a cure.

I have known Charley and his family for about four years and I am still inspired daily by what they have accomplished. This summer we opened a retail store in the front of the new, larger Charley's Fund office. The store raises money by selling t-shirts, jewelry and other merchandise adorned with the smiley face logo and the words "I believe..." embodying the foundation's mission of spreading happiness and hope in the fight against this deadly disease. Charley's Fund recently had the store's grand opening. The

two-hour event, publicized through e-mail and facebook, raised more than \$2,000 for the organization. The colorful store and brand new office is an excellent example of how hard Tracy and Benjy have worked and how far the organization has come.

When I first started working for Charley's Fund, it was as the official "high school intern" (also known as the babysitter who is around so much we might as well make her do some filing). I remember sitting on the floor in the Secklers' home office with Charley's little sister Maisy on my lap, scribbling file names onto manila folders and organizing them in one small box. Now, still the babysitter, but now a "college intern," I sit in a real office chair cross-indexing the now-immense filing system and stumbling across the same files I had made four long years ago. Every day that I work in the office or sit in the front of the store, I am overwhelmed with how much I love what I do.

Working for Charley's Fund is certainly emotional, but the organization's heartfelt mission does not make me want to cry, it makes me want to fight. Charley's Fund and the Seckler family radiate the kind of passion and determination that are powerfully contagious. Tracy and Benjy's ability to turn a deadly diagnosis into an \$18 million nonprofit organization that will find a cure should be motivation to all people who encounter something they want to change. With dedication and zeal comes immeasurable opportunity. We live in a world where change is possible and often necessary. It should not be easy, but if the Secklers and Charley's Fund can teach us anything, it is that your situation is what you make it. If you do not like the cards you are dealt, then it is up to you to restack the deck. Both science and my own faith say that a cure for this disease will be found. The question is how soon, but the race is on. I believe... #

Visit us at <http://www.charleysfund.org>. Donations can be made online or sent to our store/office at 35 Main Street 'The Mews', PO box 83, Stockbridge, MA 01262.

Rachel Gellert is a sophomore at NYU and a reporter for Education Update.

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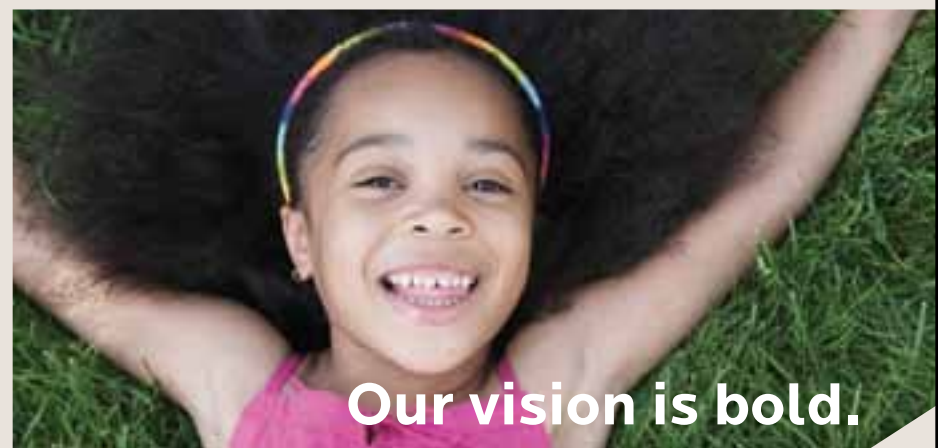
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Current Issues in Special Education on College Campuses

Compiled BY MARISSA SCHAIN

This column will be a regular feature in Education Update as well as on our Web site. Visit <http://www.EducationUpdate.com> to see weekly postings of issues in special education on college campuses around the nation.

Disabled Students in Secondary Higher Education [DSSHE] is the name of an online thread where contributing professors and other educators discuss various concerns and questions about students with disabilities. Independent skills, social skills and academics are all part of an everyday college student's complex life. Students with disabilities struggle day by day to maintain busy work schedules and compete with the rest of the student body. This thread offers an outlet for educators to clarify their disabled students' needs and help them get a normal college experience. The teachers' goals are to "empower faculty members to level the playing field for all students by opening up the accommodation to everyone in the class."

The following topics were recently discussed by various educators:

- Service dogs are a big part of student life when living in college independently. Many of the service dog policies concern college educators. One teacher wrote, "I would like some input regarding "helper dogs" for the paralyzed. If a quadriplegic student, who doesn't currently have one now, but goes through the training and receives one during the summer months and would like to bring the dog onto campus into the dorms (where pets are not allowed) is this an accommodation which the institution need extend?" he asked.

- Other faculty members are concerned with time issues for tests for students with disabilities. One student with a bone and organ condition called Vater Syndrome and scoliosis needed room accommodations. The professor wrote that she has been in a nursing program for two years and she needs help lifting her patients as part of a clinical requirement. The student is 21 and she was unable to stand for long amounts of time. She wants to be a pediatric nurse but is concerned she cannot complete the program.

- Other educators responded that they don't know why such a requirement was issued. One

teacher replied, "The focus should be on WHAT must be accomplished, not HOW it is accomplished." One teacher wrote, "When developing standards/criteria, whenever possible the focus should be on achieving the goal of the activity, rather than the conduct of the activity," she said.

- The director of a college in Pennsylvania wrote, "I just confirmed that one of our incoming students has been using a smart pen in high school and is very pleased with it. He comes with accommodation requests for notes and approval to record lectures. He said that he still would like to have notes taken for him but is perceiving that if he can take his own notes while recording with the pen, he can replay the audio and fill in the gaps himself." The director said they will be coaching for ADHD and the coach will monitor his success levels with this device. "It should be interesting to see how that goes," he wrote.

- A blind college student wrote, "I learned to swing on monkey bars - which I could not see well - over asphalt. I learned that if you fall it hurts, so you try not to fall. But it's still worth swinging."

- The director of a college in Texas shared helpful hints for assisting deaf students in the classroom. She wrote that she has many deaf/hard hearing students and they began using CART, a large screen hung above the stage. This screen helps sign language and captioning.

- The manager of disabilities services at a Florida college wrote that there is always an interpreter at the graduations. "During the diploma presentation, she only finger spells the student's name if the student or a family member of the student is a sign language user," she said.

- The director of academic support at a college in Massachusetts wrote, "A faculty member who has a visual impairment approached me about the need for an electronic text of the instructor's addition of a text she is using for the fall." The faculty member wants to get in touch with the publisher for the 2010 book. Other contributors in following posts provided suggestions. "Equality is a misnomer. Equivalency is the goal," added an educator. #

Marissa Schain is a senior at Brooklyn College and an intern at Education Update.



Sammy and Stevie Goe are 5-year-old twins and are starting kindergarten this September in Croton-On-Hudson. Good luck to Stevie and Sammy!



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Mayor Michael Bloomberg Gives Awards to Education Update's Outstanding Educators



Mayor Michael Bloomberg bestows the Distinguished Leader in Education 2010 award to Chancellor Joel Klein of the NYC Dept. of Education



Mayor Michael Bloomberg presents the Distinguished Leader in Education award to Ann Tisch, Founder, Young Women's Leadership Network



Dr. Maritza MacDonald, AMNH & Dr. David Steiner, NYS Ed. Commissioner



Landmark College (L-R) Michael Luciani, Dean & Paul Petritis, Director



CUNY Deputy COO Burt Sacks and Chancellor Joel Klein

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

It was hardly awards as usual this June at Education Update's Eighth Annual Outstanding Educators of the Year breakfast ceremony at the Harvard Club. For one, the lineup of Distinguished Leaders in Education receiving plaques this year was particularly stellar: New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg presented awards to New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein and Ann Tisch, founder and president of the Young Women's Leadership Network, and District of Columbia Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee. For another, the ceremony this year was dedicated by the Education Update publisher and awards-founder, Dr. Pola Rosen, to her father, Abraham Auerbach, a "great and much loved teacher" who died just two days prior to the event and was her lifelong mentor. The event also boasted an unusual number of outstanding guests, among them Dr. David Steiner, the New York State Education Commissioner. While Commissioner Steiner recently praised Dr. Rosen for "galvanizing the education, corporate and philanthropic communities" to come together and pay homage to excellent educators, the mayor applauded Education Update for providing over a decade of excellent cutting edge news in education. "If you want to know what's happening in education, read Education Update," he stated.

The 2010 awards, given to 12 outstanding administrators and 11 outstanding teachers, took place against what Chancellor Klein acknowledged as a "time of tough economic challenge." All the more reason, he said, to celebrate the achievements of New York City's 1.1 million public school youngsters and to continue to lobby for making education a "priority." He made a special point of saluting not just the honorees, but "the profession" itself. The product of Astoria public schools himself, the chancellor said he was testifying personally to "the power of education to transform lives." As a symbol of putting education above politics, Ernest Logan, president of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators, shared the podium and presented awards to several outstanding administrators.

Let the numbers speak, Chancellor Klein said. The progress made in the last few years, especially in English and math, was impressive, data the mayor cited in his keynote address, but not before he paid memorial tribute to the 100-year-old Abraham Auerbach and mentioned that his own mother, whom he speaks to every day, is 101. A keen Scrabble player, he noted that she recently advised him to play so he could learn to spell better.

Despite the doomsayers, the mayor pointed out that graduation rates improved 27 percent over the last five years. Yes, figures can be slippery, but the New York City rate stands in sharp contrast to the 3 percent rate for the state, and "all the kids take the same test." To those who ask how the city did against other large cities in the state, the mayor

smiled: the city's 27 percent held against the state's 5 percent. "We're going in the right direction," he said; "the parents know," though, "we can do better." To those who bring up the slower progress of the urban poor, largely minorities, the mayor cited Joel Klein's remark that "that may be the way it is but that's not the way it's going to be!"

Ann Tisch dedicated her award to her husband and professional partner, Andrew Tisch, and to all the women in all the Young Women's Leadership Network schools they established nine years ago, starting with the flagship school in East Harlem, a project for single-sex public education that now can be found in over 90 schools around the country. An outstanding statistic: their graduation and college-bound rate is 100 percent.

Chancellor Rhee, also the founder of the innovative New Teacher Project in 1997, was regrettably unable to attend the ceremony because of jury service.

The Outstanding Administrators who received certificates included Rose Fairweather-Clunie (IN-Tech Academy, Bronx, District 10); Martin Fiasconaro (Brooklyn Studio Secondary School, District 21); Barbara Freeman (P.S./I.S. 161, Manhattan, District 5); Betty Gonzalez-Soto (P.S./M.S. 211, Bronx, District 12); Robert Marchi (P.S. 17, Brooklyn, District 14); Shirley Matthews (H.S. for Environmental Studies, Manhattan, District 2); Dr. Peter McFarlane (P.S./I.S. 180, Manhattan, District 3); Dr. Ramon Nannun (H.S. of World Cultures, Bronx, District 12); Mary Padilla (P.S. 5, Bronx, District 7); Nancy Sing-Bock (P.S. 51, Manhattan, District 2); John Quattrochi (P.S./I.S. 43, Queens, District 2); and Louise Verdemare-Alfano (P.S. 112, Brooklyn, District 20).

The Outstanding Teacher honorees were: Sarah Benko (Democracy Prep Charter School, Manhattan, District 5); Suzette Dyer (Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice, Brooklyn, District 13); Courtney Fenner (The Young Women's Leadership School of East Harlem, Manhattan, District 4) Roberto Garcia (H.S. for Media and Communications, Manhattan, District 6); Melissa Giannone (51st Ave. Academy, Elmhurst, District 24/Region CFN3); Matt R. Greenawalt (William W. Niles, Bronx, District 10); Frances Losardo (P.S. 11, Staten Island, District 31); Siobhan McNulty (Robert Kennedy P.S. 169, Manhattan, District 75); Marie Montvilo (Hungerford/P721R, Staten Island, District 75R721); Geraldine Riley (Sheepshead Bay H.S., Brooklyn, District 22); and Soon Young Kwon (Queens H.S. for the Sciences at York College, Queens, District 28).

Sponsors of this much-anticipated annual included Lands' End, Con Edison, Landmark College, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Grace Outreach, The City University of New York, the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, The New York Times, and a host of academic and business organizations and individuals whose extended congratulations appear in the attractive program journal. #



Adam Weil, Dir., Lands' End & Joannie Danielides, Pres., Danielides Comms.



William Dinger, President, William H. Sadlier, Inc. & Chancellor Joel Klein



(L-R) Dr. Alan Kadish, Pres., Touro College; Chancellor Klein; Dr. Anthony Polemeni, Dean, Touro College



LOWERING THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE

By SYBIL MAIMIN

As high school dropout rates reach 50 percent in low-income communities and the global economy becomes increasingly competitive, College Summit, a national nonprofit that strives to reverse dropout trends by empowering high school students in poorer areas to aspire to college, is showing success in dramatically improving graduation numbers. Its program in New York City has spread from two schools in 2005 to 46 schools and 6,000 students currently. It strives to create a college-going culture in high schools through a required year-long course on college/postsecondary planning for all seniors, professional development of college-going expertise for all teachers and counselors, the training of a select group of influential seniors to encourage peers to “think college,” and monthly data tracking of progress indicators such as completed applications and financial aid forms and higher education enrollments. The argument that the program’s premise is unrealistic because some students are “not college material” is countered by studies that show that the same level of skills in reading and math is needed for entry-level jobs as for college. The college-ready culture appears to encourage more students to remain in school and graduate by conveying to students that the purpose of high school is to prepare for college and career.

Changing a school’s culture is critical. All students, not just high-performers, must be included, and teacher expectations of students must be raised. College counselors, together with teachers trained to be college-positive and college-savvy, must engage all students. A cohort of college-thinking influential peers, called “Peer Leaders,” must be trained as models for their classmates. Skills in the college application process must be taught, monitored, and measured with a detailed

classroom-based college-planning curriculum. Graduating students must be “college-ready.”

At a gala celebration of the program, “A Night of Visionaries,” Miriam Nightengale, principal of New York’s High School for Law, Advocacy & Community Justice, was given an award for transforming her school and achieving dramatic results through implementation of the College Summit strategy. Assigned to a failing high school (“two-thirds of the children were still in ninth grade”) as the third principal in three years, she created a very strong support system starting in ninth grade that included heavy personalized teacher and guidance counselor involvement, a full academic program, and high expectations. College was the goal for all students, and work ranged from establishing relationships in ninth grade that would culminate in college recommendations to writing applications in twelfth grade. The graduation rate has jumped from 30 percent when she arrived to 74.6 percent this year. Still, some students accepted into college do not enroll. “We are working on this,” explains this can-do principal. Nightengale wants her students who enroll in college to complete their higher education and urges them to keep in touch. Some come back and encourage and advise current high school students.

New York City’s Department of Education supports College Summit aspirations. In remarks at the celebration, Gregg Betheil, executive director of the new Office of Post Secondary Pathways & Planning, spoke of doubling the number of young adults who graduate with employment potential. “Our job is to make sure that when current eighth-graders graduate, the question is not whether they go to college. We must help get them there.” He spoke of the “scary numbers” in city colleges where only 28 percent graduate in four years. “We must make sure we look at things



(L-R) Miriam Nightengale, Principal, High School for Law, Advocacy & Community Justice, with Nicholas M. Florio, Principal, Deloitte Financial Advisory Services, and Christie Mitchell, Program Manager, College Summit New York

all the way through ... The goal isn’t just getting kids to college. The goal is college success and completion for kids so they can lead productive lives in a rapidly changing world.”

Deloitte & Touche, the global accounting firm, is a major supporter of College Summit, reflecting a corporate culture that supports and encourages volunteerism and service. Several hundred employees participate in four-day College Summit summer workshops, often on college campuses, where they help students write college essays, prepare applications, and develop job-readiness skills. Irene Kiraithe, a volunteer and Deloitte manager of ethics and compliance, spoke of intense twelve-hour days and “one of the best experiences I’ve ever had ... Kids tell you really personal stuff. For the first time someone tells them they have the potential to go to

college ... At the end, you realize you’ve really had an impact.” Deloitte’s Jo Ann Hernandez did a volunteer workshop at West Virginia State University, where local students “were in shock that a New Yorker would come down to help them.” She reports, “It is intense and emotional. It is not about writing a check, but about hands-on action that will make a difference in young people’s futures ... It’s not so much your writing skills, but the chance to connect with someone who wants to help.” The positive impact of Deloitte volunteers who helped her with college choices and applications was expressed by Jelissa Thomas, a senior at Brooklyn Preparatory High School in Williamsburg. “I was unsure, but they gave me support and pushed me so I now plan to attend college.” She will be the first in her family to do so. #

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THE IMPORTANCE OF MARINE EDUCATION

By MEGHAN MARRERO

This summer's disastrous oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has brought the ocean and ocean-related issues to the forefront of our collective consciousness. Unfortunately, most Americans do not know much about our blue planet's most significant feature or adequately understand its complex processes. As a nation we are ocean illiterate, and in the 21st century ocean illiteracy is problematic. As voters, we are asked to make decisions about offshore drilling, alternative energy resources, coastal development, climate change and more. But how can we make good decisions without adequate background knowledge?

The ocean covers over 70 percent of Earth's surface, is home to a wide diversity of living things, provides most of our oxygen, and is a major influence on weather and climate. Earth is habitable due to the ocean's tremendous heat-holding capacity. Without it, our planet would be subject to enormous temperature fluctuations, with which humans could not cope.

In addition to its critical role in the functioning of the Earth System, the ocean has been a crucial component in the development of human civilizations. We have relied upon its waters for food and medicine, transportation and trade. The ocean is a place for relaxation and inspiration. We vacation at the beach and read books and buy paintings that tell tales of its moods and depths.

These and other ideas underscore the importance of the ocean in our everyday lives, yet it is largely ignored in our schools. Most teachers are unprepared to teach about marine science topics, and administrators do not view the ocean, which is not particularly prevalent on state exams, as worthy subject matter. Besides its central role in many of today's societal issues, students are inherently interested in the ocean. They are excited about studying its inhabitants and exploring the mysteries of its depths. Even in 2010, scientists estimate that only 5 percent of the ocean has been explored. This statistic means that for today's students, the career possibilities related to the ocean are endless.

Here are some ways to get started on incorporating the ocean into your school's curriculum, and ultimately improving the ocean literacy of students:

- Join the New York State Marine Education Association. NYSMEA works to bring the wonders of the ocean into our classrooms and everyday experiences. Join now, visit our Web site, and follow us on Facebook or Twitter to learn more about this amazing network of people and to gain access to lesson plans, field trip destinations, job, grant and internship opportunities, and much more. NYSMEA holds monthly enrichment activities (e.g., behind-the-scenes tours at local aquaria, build-your-own ROV workshops, seal-watching cruises, and more) throughout the tri-state area, as well as an annual conference that focuses on ocean-based instruction. Visit us at <http://www.nysmea.org>.

- Get professional development. A simple Internet search will lead you to hundreds of opportunities, including hands-on and online workshops, online webinars, data sets, ocean-based literature,



marine careers and more. Today's students are counting on our inspiration and information.

- "Marinate" your curriculum. The ocean is a naturally interdisciplinary context for learning. How about a unit on maritime history or stories from the sea? In science, consider marine food webs, light penetration to the depths, or an engineering design challenge to solve today's societal problems.

- Take it outside. We are all part of a watershed, and almost all watersheds on Earth lead to the ocean. Involve students in water quality monitoring, watershed assessments, and debris surveys, helping them to understand their own impacts on the ocean.

Most importantly, remember that the ocean affects us every day, probably more than we know. #

Meghan Marrero, Ed.D. is president of the New York State Marine Education Association and the

Poster Session Marks End of 2010 Summer Science Outreach Program For High School Students

For some high school students, summer is a time for travel, camping and lying on the beach. But for others, it's the perfect opportunity to study an HIV coreceptor or a nuclear pore protein. The 55 students in this summer's Rockefeller University Science Outreach Program, worked side-by-side with faculty members, postdocs and grad students in the effort to unravel some of the most challenging problems in biology today.

At a poster presentation, the students presented their findings on everything from particle physics to how testosterone affects early song learning in zebra finches.

Among some of their notable accomplishments:

- Conducting a chemical synthesis and biological analysis of an inhibitor of Staphylococcal virulence
- Performing an analysis of "The Odyssey" based on high-frequency and high-entropy words
- Studying the effects of acute progesterone application on currents of hypothalamic neurons
- Investigating how the thorax color of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes relates to host-seeking behavior
- Analyzing whether water in a leaf is drawn to the entire leaf or only to parts of it where light is shining
- Conducting a study of what happens to inflammation linked to obesity when a person goes on a diet

Rockefeller's Science Outreach Program introduces academically promising high school stu-

dents, as well as K-12 teachers, to the rigors of basic research by matching them with laboratories and mentors for two summers.

"It's like a taste of what it's like to be a research scientist," says Ted Scovell, the program's director. "It's an intense program — you're doing this seven hours a day, surrounded by scientists, and it becomes your life. It's also a very different experience from high school lab science in that you're not just answering a question you probably already know the answer to, or reinforcing some idea. You're looking into something that nobody has ever looked into before."

"Most people go their whole lives without discovering anything new about the world, but these students have done so before they are able to rent a car," Scovell says.

Founded in 1992, the program has graduated 761 students and 101 teachers, and an estimated 10 percent of students go on to place in the Intel Science Talent Search and other prestigious science fairs. Scovell, himself an Outreach alumnus, is a former science teacher from Friends Seminary in Manhattan. In addition to selecting students and teachers for the program each year, he teaches a number of classes and helps guide the students as they work to complete their research projects and prepare their findings for presentation.

Applications to the university's Summer Science Outreach Program are accepted each fall until mid-January. For more information, visit [#](http://www.rockefeller.edu/outreach)

director of curriculum at U.S. Satellite Laboratory Inc., and is co-author of a new high school marine science textbook. After studying biology and marine science at Cornell University, she pursued her master's and doctoral degrees in science edu-

cation at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she now teaches methods and oceanography courses to pre- and in-service teachers. Her research interests include improving ocean literacy of teachers and students.



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answer: D

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- A. only when charging
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answer: B

How much more efficient are compact fluorescent bulbs than regular incandescent bulbs?

- A. they last twice as long and use half as much energy
- B. they last five times as long and use 60% less energy
- C. they last ten times as long and use 75% less energy



answer: C

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- A. leave the area immediately, then call **Con Edison** at **1-800-75-CONED**
- B. do not use electrical devices, including flashlights
- C. all of the above



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answer: C



Closing the Opportunity Gap

By DR. DANIELLE MOSS-LEE

I hate the term “achievement gap.” Words have power, and I think “achievement gap” fails to provide the context necessary for transformation for all our children. The educational disparities we see are the result of our inability to create the context within which children can realize their potential. The so-called “achievement gap” is not about the pervasive failure of young people. It is a result of institutional, systemic, and collective community failure; it’s about declining community engagement; it’s about our looking for new things and not looking to what is already working. The educational disparities facing so many of our young people today are the result of an *opportunity gap*.

Professor Theresa Perry of Simmons College tells the story of a rural grandmother who sums up the so-called “achievement gap” this way: “If the corn doesn’t grow, nobody asks what’s wrong with the corn.” If the corn does not grow, we wonder about the weather conditions. If the corn does not grow, we wonder about the soil. If the corn does not grow, we wonder if the pesticides we sprayed inhibited crops’ growth. If the corn does not grow, we look at the farmer. However, if we subscribe to the existence of an “achievement gap”, we are saying that our children do not achieve because there is something fundamentally wrong with them. The language we choose needs to reflect the heart of the disparity — a disparity that has everything to do with access, opportunity, and the lack of public and community will to transform outcomes for all our children.

The truth is that student achievement and the things that drive it are more complex than the business models of some social entrepreneurs would have us believe. Here is what the research says that we choose to ignore:

- Achievement gaps are widest in segregated school systems.
- Family and community stability — driven by the availability of adequate employment opportunities, housing, quality health care, municipal services, strength of local institutions — matters.
- Experienced, well-trained, committed school and classroom leaders who feel supported and valued matter.
- One size does not fit all. Teacher accountability, charter schools, and community-based college success programs, like HEAF, are a proven strategy for ensuring students are adequately prepared for college graduation, not The Answer.
- Our individual and collective biases around race, class and culture matter. Pervasive cultural stereotypes that reinforce images of low achievement and low aspirations not only impact our children and their motivation, but these images also impact the people and institutions charged with their education.

None of this is new. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs says that before you can truly address higher-level education, you must address basic physical needs and the social and emotional need to feel competent and included. Sadly, we rarely organize our schools and institutions that way.



Let me talk about the Harlem Educational Activities Fund for a moment. 100 percent of our high school students graduate on time. 98 to 100 percent of those students — depending on the cohort — will matriculate at a four-year college or university in the fall immediately following high school graduation. 95 percent of those students will graduate with an undergraduate degree within six years. And, here’s the magic: while only 9 percent of the American population has a master’s degree or more, 35 percent of HEAF college graduates have gone on to obtain a graduate or professional degree. They are predominantly low-income students who attend non-charter public schools in neighborhoods across New York City.

The opportunity gaps experienced by many of our disenfranchised youth hinge on one basic question. What is our national will to overcome the educational disparities that we have systemically worked to recreate after nearly closing the so-called “achievement gap” in 1986? We know how to educate young people. We do it at HEAF — right in the center of Harlem — every day. We don’t need more studies. We don’t need more new curriculum guides. We don’t need a self-aggrandizing political agenda where some seek to be stars in the liberation stories of others. We need the will to take what we know and invest our energy, expertise, focus, and human and financial resources in what works.

The most important thing we do is frame the discourse on achievement for our students. HEAF says: This is your community, and this is the world, and there is value in both. You have a right to choose your own path — to reject the society’s fractured view of what it means to be young, black, Latino, gay, poor, etc. — and to create a reality for yourself that reflects your spirit, your values, and your interests. We tell them that education is a tool of personal transformation. It will deepen your understanding of yourself and the world around you. It will set you free. And, they achieve. #

Dr. Danielle Moss-Lee is the president and CEO of the Harlem Educational Activities Fund.

Pearson Launches New Curriculum Material Purchasing System

Pearson, the education services and technology company, announced recently that it has worked with Newark Public Schools to integrated their respective purchasing systems, making it one of the first joint ventures of this kind in the nation. The new set up links Newark’s 75 schools straight to Pearson’s online ordering platform. Through this innovative collaboration, Newark’s educators can order learning products and programs utilizing the district’s contracted prices to reduce costs.

The new cost-efficient, paperless feature went online in April and is the equivalent of a person ordering books via the Internet, but with school budget limits and purchasing codes in place to prevent mistakes. Pearson anticipates additional system-to-system connections will be made with other school districts to achieve similar savings throughout the country.

Peter Cohen, Pearson’s CEO of K-12 Curriculum, said, “By joining forces with one of the leading school districts in the nation, we have streamlined processes to lower schools’ costs of doing business in an era of tight budgets. Through this system, we’re harnessing technology to ensure Newark’s learners have their materials in a timely, cost-effective manner. And, we’re confident that other districts throughout the nation can benefit from a similar system-to-system connection.”

“As New Jersey’s largest school district, Newark Public Schools is saving time and money by embark-

ing on this new purchasing feature,” said Valerie V. Wilson, Newark Public Schools’ chief financial officer/school business administrator. “We thank Pearson for believing in us and our joint venture. Their staff has worked well with our team to achieve our goal of having the new feature up and running within a year.”

Explaining the differences between the old and new systems, Joyce Lee, Newark Public Schools’ director of purchasing, said: “By teaming up with Pearson’s capabilities, ordering becomes easier, and we are expediting delivery and reducing costs by eliminating the need for the district to maintain online catalogues and mail out price lists. In addition, the system eliminates typing errors, eliminates the time involved for a buyer or school staff to obtain quotes. It eliminates postage and mail handling because purchase orders are transmitted to the vendor’s ordering system the same day they are approved. Schools can see item availability at the time the order is created, and they automatically receive e-mail confirmations from Pearson when orders are received and shipped. This reduces the amount of time spent on the phone following up on deliveries.”

The Newark Public Schools District is the largest and one of the oldest school systems in New Jersey. The district serves approximately 40,000 students in 75 schools ranging from Pre-K to twelfth grade, and employs approximately 7,500 staff within the schools and central office. #

Child Mind Inst.

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Schwartz, senior director of the center, has over 30 years’ experience working with the independent school system, public school system, and special education providers. Senior pediatric neuropsychologists at the center also include Drs. Matthew Cruger and Dominic Auciello.

The institute is currently rebuilding its Web site in order to provide parents and teachers across the nation with a content-rich, interactive destination for information and resources on child mental health. The new site will launch in November.

I hope that all caring adults — and especially parents and teachers — will embrace the mission

of the Child Mind Institute and join us in building our organization, the first global institution dedicated exclusively to child mental health. We can unite to spread a very positive, hopeful message — that kids with psychiatric and learning disorders are just as gifted, intelligent, and capable as anyone else — and we can truly transform child mental health care. Many of our kids desperately need tools (early, effective treatments) to overcome their challenges. Together we can give them and their families hope, help, and answers. #

Dr. Harold Koplewicz is the president of the Child Mind Institute.

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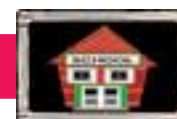
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Students at the Kennedy School Celebrate Their Own Newspaper

By MARISSA SCHAIN

Getting published in a newspaper isn't easy, but don't ask the students of Robert Kennedy School, who have been publishing their work since the sixth grade. Eight students at P.S. 169M got to celebrate their publishing and personal achievements, which were displayed in the latest issue of Education Update, at a launch ceremony held recently at the school.

Parents, teachers, and other local members of the community came out in support of the students, who received awards for their achievements in journalism. Included were psychologists and psychiatrists from the Counseling Center, housed in the school and affiliated with Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center. Several sponsors at the ceremony included Barnes & Noble, Best Buy, Citibank, Le Pain Quotidien, Staples, and Starbucks. The manager of Best Buy offered gift cards, while Citibank provided gift bags with school supplies for all the students. Le Pain Quotidien provided delicious food for the event.

Students were awarded with certificates for completing one year of the Middle School Journalism Initiative, which gave students the opportunity to gain invaluable experience outside of their classroom on 88th Street and Lexington Avenue.

Education Update's publishers, Dr. Pola Rosen and Adam Sugerman, who founded the journalism initiative, worked closely with the charismatic class to give them a greater insight of New York City and the journalism field.

Siobhan McNulty, the class's teacher, made a few remarks during the ceremony. "These students really worked hard to improve their writing and really did their best for Education Update," McNulty said.

"Perhaps most importantly, the journalism initiative has cultivated a sense of pride in their writing from the moment they saw their own writing in print," added McNulty in a piece she wrote in the last issue of Education Update.



Principal Susan Finn also spoke at the ceremony. "As a principal, you always want to raise the bar for your kids, and they really put their heart into it." Marsha Steinberg, assistant principal of P.S. 169M, delivered opening remarks.

Over the course of the journalism initiative, the students took several trips to destinations around New York City, including the Animal Medical Center, a visit with Chancellor Joel Klein at the Tweed Courthouse, and an education publisher, the McGraw-Hill Companies, to learn about the trajectory of a book from the time it is created to its arrival on a school desk.

Felipe Pau, a student in the class who wrote an article for their completed newspaper, which they named Kennedy Kids News, was very grateful for the opportunity to participate. "I got to express myself in the newspaper articles. It made me a better writer. Thank you, Dr. Rosen," Pau said.

Zain Adams, another student, wrote, "When I opened that newspaper and saw my face, I felt famous. My class and I loved being in the newspaper."

Richard Henkin, the school's guidance counselor, said he is very proud to see his students improve so much over one year, and communicated yet another grateful comment from a student. "I just spoke to Felipe. He said today was the best day of his life." #

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Letting the Small Things Go

By DR. CAROLE G. HANKIN
With BRIAN SUTCH

The start of a new school year presents a variety of exciting opportunities for your child. As with any new situation, however, there are also challenges to be met, and these can be stressful for the child if he or she doesn't receive support and guidance along the way. It's important for parents to distinguish between real obstacles and the "small stuff," the little things that your child can learn to manage easily with your help. How do we know the difference? A good guideline is to ask yourself whether the challenge your child is facing is likely to produce long-term problems if the situation continues, or whether it's simply a matter of short-term disappointment that may resolve itself in time. Significant struggles with academic or social issues are among the "big things" that may require intervention.

If you're concerned about your child's ability to handle a situation, make an appointment with your child's teacher and be prepared with a list of issues you think may be causing your child tension. On the other hand, when children are disappointed because they didn't get the teacher they wanted, the lunch period of their choice, or the same bus stop as their friends, these are matters that, with a little encouragement, they can learn to accept. Your child may not be in the same class with his or her friends, but that can provide an opportunity to meet new people and make some new friends. In fact, little obstacles often present excellent opportunities to help your children take an optimistic outlook and become more resilient.

As parents, we all want our children to be



happy, and we care deeply about every issue that affects their emotional well-being. When they're upset, it's natural for us to want to "fix" things. But our frustration or anxiety over these smaller matters can actually have the exact opposite effect. When a parent reacts with negativity, the child will be more inclined to experience the situation as a problem rather than an obstacle to overcome. When these issues arise, talk with your child and point out as many good things as you can about the situation. Set the example in your own behavior by not allowing insignificant matters to become more important than they really are. Disappointments are a fact of life, but letting go of the little things will help make the big issues more manageable. #

Dr. Carole Hankin is the superintendent of Syosset schools, Long Island, N.Y.

CAREERS

CESAR PARRA: EQUESTRIAN PROFESSIONAL



Horses being groomed



Cesar Parra rides dressage champion Olympia



Wendy Simons rides her horse 3-4 times a week and truly loves him



Ken Simons rides his horse frequently

By ADAM SUGERMAN

What is the fastest growing sport in the world? If you answered soccer, you would have been incorrect. Ditto for basketball, rugby, cricket, wrestling, ice hockey, baseball, and football. Here's a clue: It is one of the three equestrian events at the Summer Olympics. The answer: dressage. Never heard of it? Emanating from the French language, the word dressage translates to "training" in English. But training is only one part of dressage. Dressage is a sport that is similar to ballet, with the rider and the horse working together, showing off the horse's training, athletic ability, obedience and balance in performing masterful maneuvers, such as a pirouette.

Dressage dates back to ancient Greece. Until World War I, Europe's most powerful militaries relied on highly trained horses and riders to form the backbone of the cavalry. A strong cavalry was similar to superior materiel, and armies allocated vast resources to their horses and riders. Numerically inferior forces equipped with expert horses and riders could overwhelm a larger army of foot soldiers. New technology has rendered troops and horseback obsolete, but the art of expert riders lives on. Today, the sport of dressage enjoys particular popularity in Europe, specifically Germany, Denmark, England, Holland and Sweden.

In America, dressage is quickly gaining riders and fans. A pioneer in the U.S. is Colombian-born dentist Dr. Cesar Parra. Parra has been riding most of his life. While many teenagers learn to drive a car at 16 years of age, Parra's grandfather gave him a thoroughbred. After having left his dentistry practices in the Andean city of Tolima and in Boston, Parra now concentrates on dressage. To help finance his team, Parra maintains facilities in New Jersey and Florida where he and his team take care of and train other people's horses. As a businessman, his primary challenges are to keep his clients (horses and humans alike) happy, providing a superior customer service, and keeping the horses healthy. Not only does he employ veterinarians, he also hires riders, groomers and other experts. Present employees come from Germany, Sweden, Holland, Japan, Israel, Argentina, Colombia and the U.S. Many employees are college graduates. In the U.S. a few colleges, such as Centenary College in New Jersey and

Stephens College in Missouri, have equestrian programs. The top programs, though, according to Parra, are in Germany at the world-renowned equestrian academies in Cologne and Warendorf. In Germany, the first level of professional rider is called a "bereiter." But after 3 to 4 more years of training, the student becomes a Master Rider. An accomplished rider can make about \$35,000-40,000 per year, but the big money is in sales and in the training of horses.

Parra and members of his team compete at different locations around the world, and assistant coaches, groomers, caretakers, babysitters and others must also travel. The team's horse travels with a passport and documentation with proof of vaccinations. A staff member provides comfort for the horses, brushes them twice daily, and rides with them every day. Tendons have to be bound for protection, and the protection is removed during the show. Parra stresses that a winning team may not have the most talented horse and rider, but that a well-organized team can make all the difference. Even the most detail-oriented team can encounter challenges. For example, on the day of the actual competition, the trainer might notice that the horse is in a dour mood or is having an off day (as can occur with any athlete). The trainer deals with the problem by comforting the horse.

In dressage, a rider's attire is traditional. It even looks like it's from a previous century, from a different continent, and from a very high social class (like the medieval fox hunts). But each piece of uniform, saddlery, and equipment has its specific use. Similar to the martial arts, riders are classified, and this determines a few articles of clothing. In lower-level competitions, riders wear a jacket. At the upper level, a rider's attire includes top hat and tails.

Parra works with many breeds of horses, but geldings are easiest to ride. He buys 3-year-old horses and trains them for 5 to 6 years. By then, he knows if he has a champion-caliber horse. He also sometimes sells horses that he raises to loving families.

At the next Summer Olympics, watch for the equestrian events. Who knows? Perhaps representing the U.S. team will be Dr. Cesar Parra! #

Adam Sugerman is co-publisher of Education Update and publisher of his own imprint, Palmiche Press.

PRES. JAMES L. MUYSKENS QUEENS COLLEGE

Queens College — with more than 20,000 students who come to our campus from over 160 nations — is committed to making sure our students graduate with an understanding of cultures and nationalities other than their own. As part of this commitment, we have been expanding our global education initiatives by revising our curriculum and offering an Education Abroad program that allows students to take credit-bearing courses almost anywhere in the world.

Starting this semester, Queens College will focus each year on the history, art, and contributions of a different nation. This fall we will begin with our celebration of the Year of China. We invite you to take part in the festivities when we offer a full day of Year of China events on October 5, which will include lectures, art exhibits, and concerts by the Shanghai String Quartet and our Aaron Copland School of Music faculty. Both concerts will feature our MacArthur “Genius” Award-winning graduate Bright Sheng. China-themed performances, lectures, workshops, art exhibitions, and more will continue



throughout the fall and spring semesters.

This year also marks the 35th anniversary of the college’s Evening Readings program, which will include a centennial celebration on March 22 of the work of Czeslaw Milosz, who is considered one of the greatest writers of the 20th century. Other international writers who

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PRES. LISA STAIANO-COICO THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

I came to City College because of its unique history and special mission — to provide a world-class education for what President Webster called “the children of the whole people.” In the few short weeks that I have been here, I am enormously energized by the talented students and faculty that I have found, all dedicated to this core value.

I believe very strongly that diversity at CCNY is not an accident of our history or our location: there is no true excellence without diversity. More than other students, ours are truly prepared to succeed in a global society, because they have taken classes with and learned from men and women from every corner of the world. We are what the world looks like — and the challenges of the 21st century will be met by the men and women who have the knowledge, the sympathy, and the confidence to operate in that world.

While we continue to attract outstanding students from across the country and across the globe, we will not forget that we stand right here in historic Harlem. One of my strategic priorities



for this year is to expand our many partnerships with the institutions of this vibrant and diverse community.

In this context I am pleased to announce a new initiative, The President’s Community Scholars, a program benefiting outstanding high school graduates residing in the Harlem/Northern

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PRES. JEREMY TRAVIS JOHN JAY COL. OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

John Jay College of Criminal Justice welcomed its first ever all-baccalaureate freshman class. Of the more than 2,000 enrolled freshmen, a record 85 percent attended the two-day orientation program along with 433 of their parents. Preliminary data indicates a record-breaking increase of 24 percent in baccalaureate freshmen enrollment over 2009. Since the 2006 decision to phase out associate degree admissions, the college has aggressively recruited baccalaureate students and strengthened its academic programs.

At the same time, almost 1,200 transfer students enrolled at the college representing a projected 5 percent increase in transfer students. Four hundred eighty new graduate students enrolled at the college. Our transfer orientation — with 376 students — and our graduate orientation — with 217 students — also set new records.

“This is a historic moment for the college. With the enrollment of the first ever all-baccalaureate class, the college has reached a pivotal milestone in its transformation into a senior college in the



City University of New York system. These new students, whether they be freshmen, transfer students or graduate students, all will benefit from our improved student services, renowned faculty scholars and re-imagined academic programs,” said President Jeremy Travis.

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PRES. MARCIA V. KEIZS YORK COLLEGE

The Freshman Experience is becoming a brand new experience at York College. This fall the college’s freshman year initiative will include WOW Week (Week of Welcome) to give new students a positive slice of college life as they integrate into the college community.

According to Michel Hodge, acting assistant vice president for enrollment management, WOW Week was born of “Spirit Day,” launched last spring to promote a stronger sense of college spirit among students.

“WOW Week is about a sense of tradition and college culture in the community,” says Hodge. “Students get a chance to meet their peers and people across the campus. The question was, ‘how can we get people together so we’ve expanded it to WOW in fall and Spirit in spring.’”

Bracketed by the annual York Fest celebration (September 11) and Fall Convocation, WOW Week celebrations will also include a



comedy concert in the college’s Performing Arts Center, featuring college-circuit comedian Reese Waters and a social mixer.

There is also the shared experience of the assigned freshman reader, “Outcasts United,” by Warren St. John. It is the story of a group of refugees and their coach who help to create a town where everyone is somehow different but yet the same in all the ways that matter. #

PRES. MITCHEL WALLERSTEIN BARUCH COLLEGE

The School of Public Affairs at Baruch College recently announced its receipt of a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) that will enable student and faculty exchanges among the School of Public Affairs and seven partnering institutions in Canada, Mexico and the U.S.

The grant was awarded as part of FIPSE’s North American Mobility Program and will provide approximately \$159,000 to the School of Public Affairs over a three-year period. The unifying theme of the grant is the role of civil society organizations in sustainable community development. The award is designed to help participating institutions align their curricula on civil society and support the exchange of students and faculty interested in the role of non-governmental organizations in civic culture. Baruch College is the U.S. lead, with the University of South Florida as the second U.S. partner. Canada’s Carleton University is the overall lead.

Commenting on the FIPSE grant, Dean David S. Birdsell termed it “a splendid opportunity



to internationalize our curricula, something the School of Public Affairs is committed to doing.” Varying levels of civic engagement in the U.S., Canada and Mexico will allow both students and faculty to study and compare “what policy environments look like in other nations,” he added.

Under the terms of the FIPSE grant, a total of

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DEAN JERROLD ROSS ST. JOHN’S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Since higher education institutions are, and will continue to be, the major source of teachers and school leaders it is incumbent upon us to create new initiatives that lead to change (for the better). At St. John’s University we consistently respond to the needs of the field, guided not only by principals, superintendents and great teachers, but by our efforts in the field to address the compelling issues of our time.

This year we have introduced internships for undergraduates based in leading not-for-profit organizations that serve children and their families. This, in addition to placements in schools early in their freshman year, will produce a cadre of teachers knowledgeable about the influence and impact of social, cultural, judicial and medical agencies devoted to children and their families’ special needs. The students’ work in some of the city’s finest organizations will also result in a truly “richer” curriculum adaptable to whatever change the times require.



In response to the unparalleled difficulties facing young people and their families, St. John’s has set out to forge a national curriculum on financial literacy, collecting and systematizing

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LANDMARK COLLEGE HONORS U.S. UNDER SECRETARY OF EDUCATION MARTHA KANTER



President Lynda Katz



Steve Moschetta



David Cole

There's a famous phrase found on the desks of teachers everywhere — a simple summation of their daily purpose. It says, simply, "To teach is to touch a life forever." Landmark College President Lynda Katz exemplifies this axiom, as does her choice to honor Dr. Martha Kanter, who recently received a Doctor of Humane Letters at the 25th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of Landmark College. A haven and model education for learning disabled students, Landmark has helped many students find self-confidence, fulfilling careers and enriched lives.

Dr. Kanter, the U.S. Under Secretary of

Education, has put education in reach of a nation with increasingly diverse needs. Her top priority is to expand availability of higher education, stating that, "The truest measure of society's worth is whether it offers [all] Americans the opportunity to fulfill their dreams. We hope their dreams will include a college education."

Two Landmark alumni, Steve Moschetta, an attorney specializing in maritime law, and David Cole, the founder of Project Eye to Eye, who completed his studies post Landmark at Brown University and is now a successful sculptor, both exemplify the success of the college, receiving Landmark Laureate honors at the convocation. #

PRESIDENT JENNIFER RAAB HUNTER COLLEGE

The upcoming year at Hunter College will be defined by the growth of our health and public service fields — no small challenge given Hunter's unparalleled history as New York's leading producer of nurses, social workers, educators, and others dedicated to the well-being of our city and community. But we are more than up for the task, and in fact are already at the start of a new era that will surpass even our own previous heights.

Just last month, we celebrated the "topping out" of the new Hunter College Complex in East Harlem, which will house the Lois V. and Samuel J. Silberman School of Social Work, the CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College, and the library of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. The building, which will open next fall, will allow us to expand the reach of these institutions and have a tremendous positive impact on the vulnerable, rapidly changing East Harlem community. The School of Social Work has already launched innovative partnerships with local social service organizations, and the new Ph.D. granting School of Public Health is set to tackle the urban health crises (such as diabetes, obesity and asthma) that disproportionately threaten minority populations like that in East Harlem.

In the meantime, perhaps nothing has so rapidly accelerated Hunter's role in the public sphere as the recent re-opening of Roosevelt House, the New York home of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt that has been part of Hunter College since 1942. In the short few months since we completed its restoration, the House, now the site of the new Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College, has hosted talks by President Bill Clinton, the Dalai Lama, and other



leading national and world figures. Many more public programs are in the works; please check the Web site (<http://www.roosevelthouseinstitute.org>) for updates.

The institute serves primarily, however, as a center for faculty research and, best of all, for student learning. Our new undergraduate programs in public policy and human rights are exceedingly popular, and collaborative, interdisciplinary projects with the School of Public Health, the School of Social Work, and many other departments and schools have already made Roosevelt House an irreplaceable part of Hunter's academic landscape.

Path-breaking initiatives like these are taking place all across Hunter College, from new programs at our Schools of Nursing and Education to a major physical and technological library renovation. It was no surprise, therefore, when The Princeton Review ranked Hunter #2 among "Best Value" public colleges nationwide. We are committed to continuing to set the standard for public higher education — and to making the 2010-11 school year our best yet. #

A TALK WITH UNDER SECRETARY OF EDUCATION MARTHA KANTER

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

It was serendipitous that Education Update caught up with the incredibly busy Dr. Martha Kanter, the U.S. Under Secretary of Education, on the very day last month that front-page news announced the winners of the second round of federal Race to the Top funds. In this second phase of the national competition (a third round is awaiting Congressional approval), New York is one of 11 winning states, receiving \$696 million in federal aid. Most of the winning states are on the Eastern Seaboard and have large urban school systems. Of course, Kanter is delighted that what the media is calling President Obama's signature education initiative has received strong legislative support at a tough economic time. That the quality of the applications, set by the Race to the Top review panel, was so high and that the focus of the competition — updating policies and processes for improving teacher evaluations and student data tracking systems and turning around or eliminating failing schools — also brought out some fine responses from the under secretary. "It's all about achievement."

For Kanter, who brings to her new position a rich and varied career in education as both teacher and administrator, the competition challenged states to commit to ways of addressing diverse student populations and learning styles while also committing to build and enhance policies that all states should have in common, particularly those having to do with standards for teacher preparation and student achievement in English and math.

Though winning states such as New York are still holding conversations with teachers' unions and management organizations to reconcile different, even polarizing, ways of addressing common concerns, Dr. Kanter is hopeful that new emphases already apparent in some professional development programs, for example, will receive wider distribution and appreciation as each state disburses the winning monies to various locales. She is especially eager to see theory brought more into the classroom and to have more teachers motivated to share and adopt effective



individual strategies and widely regarded best methodological practices.

Kanter, who attended Brandeis, went on to earn a master's in education from Harvard and to concentrate on special education, starting the first learning disabilities program at San Jose City College in 1977. In 1988 she received a doctorate in education from the University of San Francisco and moved into community college work, doing policy analysis and research. She eventually became president of De Anza College in Cupertino, Calif., then served as chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District in Los Altos Hills. When she first started teaching, she recalls, students were a pretty homogeneous group. Now there is "enormous diversity" in preparation and language acquisition. Teacher preparation, including certification and evaluation, must reflect different and alternative ways of trying to reach all students. Most teachers, she says, will improve after they've been in the system for a few years. "We must close the achievement gap."

It is imperative to get out the word about what evidence-based research already indicates are promising ideas, such as those publicized by the American Education Research Association. She sees her role as under secretary as a "convening" one. Let's indeed race to the top, but publish and publicize everything. #

DEAN MARY BRABECK NYU STEINHARDT SCHOOL OF CULTURE, ED. & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The academic year 2010-11 is going to be a busy one for the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at NYU. Our holistic education model — coupled with our commitment to preparing high quality teachers, principals, and allied professionals in occupational therapy, physical therapy, nutrition, and counseling — leads us to develop strong and diverse partnerships. We collaborate with colleagues in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences to prepare teachers with deep content knowledge; in K-12 schools to provide a clinically based teacher education program; in our health professions to remove the "out-of-classroom" barriers to learning and development; and in the arts to cultivate the aesthetic development of all students. Through our Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, we continue to build the systems that allow us to study the "value added" our professional preparation programs offer our students.

This year we are deliberately focusing on



enhancing our capacity for excellent STEM education. The work in the Dr. Charlotte K. Frank Science Education Resource Room links teachers to scientists and conducts research on teaching and learning science and mathematics. We received a major gift from Cisco Systems to use

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SCHOOL NURSES KEEPING STUDENTS READY TO LEARN

By KENNY LULL

Does your school have a school nurse? If not, would you know what to do in case of an emergency?

Most schools (75.1 percent) have a school nurse working either full- or part-time. That leaves 24.9 percent of schools with none. Who is administering medications, meeting immunization compliance, assessing health needs and handling emergencies in your school?

The National Association of School Nurses recommends a full-time school nurse RN in every building per 750 well children; only 12 states and the District of Columbia meet that recommended ratio, according to the NASN 2009 Ratio Ruler (available at <http://www.nasn.org>). Disparities exist even within states due to budget constraints, enrollment and priorities. The average school nurse serves 1,121 students over 2.2 schools. Are your students fortunate enough to have a full-time school nurse in your school?

The school nurse's role includes assessing student health status and making referrals, identifying vision/hearing problems which impact learning, delivering emergency care, administering medication and vaccines, performing and educating on health care procedures, disaster preparedness and containing epidemics, health counseling and wellness programs for students and staff, mental health of students, and much more. As children today face more complex and life-threatening health problems requiring care in school, including multiple disabilities requiring ventilators, central lines and IVs, the role of the school nurse

has expanded to help keep our nation's students healthy, in school, and ready to learn. It is difficult for teachers to focus on their lesson plans when health needs arise without a school nurse present.

NASN believes every child deserves a school nurse every day, all day. As children head back to school, school nurses are hard at work ensuring students are current on required and recommended vaccinations, performing risk assessments for obesity, mental health and substance abuse, and crafting health and emergency plans for chronic conditions such as asthma, seizures, diabetes and anaphylaxis to reduce absenteeism and 9-1-1 calls. Secretaries, teachers or paraeducators put themselves and students at risk when trying to administer care to students.

Both children and school staff benefit from the expertise of a school nurse. A significant proportion of health care in the United States is provided daily in schools. Many of the children school nurses see are not served by the traditional health care system. School nurses connect students and families to their state CHIP programs. Almost half of school districts bill Medicaid for services provided. School nurses help many of the school children who live every day in the margins of society to connect to a medical home. The school nurse provides the only health care accessible to some school age children.

Acting as a safety net for our nation's most fragile children, school nurses promote mechanisms to assist families in locating resources for medical home, health insurance, and case management for chronically ill children, such as free prescription



drug discount cards for uninsured or underinsured children and their families (available at <http://www.nasn.org>).

NASN believes every teacher deserves a school nurse every day, all day. Having a full-time school nurse is a sound investment in school health, positively influencing student attendance, which influences achievement, graduation and school funding. Having a full-time school nurse RN in every building, every day allows teachers to spend their time teaching rather than disrupting lesson

plans to care for students with chronic needs or in the case of an emergency.

Every child deserves a school nurse, and every teacher deserves a school nurse all day, every day. #

Kenny Lull is the Manager of Communications at the National Association of School Nurses. NASN has more than 15,000 members dedicated to advancing school nursing practice. For more information about school nursing, visit <http://www.nasn.org>.

Pres. Wallerstein

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58 students from the eight participating universities will embark on semester-long internships abroad. In addition, the consortium partners will create a new course on sustainable community development and the role of civil society. The course will combine research, training, and curriculum development, using shared resources, tools and reading lists. The course will be multi-disciplinary and open to students at all participating institutions whether or not they are selected as program interns.

Additionally, according to Professor John Casey of the School of Public Affairs, author of the project proposal, sustainable community development is "a key issue in supporting the integration of

immigrants who move between NAFTA countries, in particular Mexican immigrants to the U.S. and Canada."

The FIPSE grant will create a tri-lateral partnership with the long-term goal of fostering an international team of trained professionals able to develop and teach sustainable community development in a way that is responsive to local social conditions and needs while also maintaining a broader cross-cultural perspective. The FIPSE collaborative includes the following North American colleges and universities: Carleton University, University of Victoria, and Cape Breton University (Canada); Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla, Universidad Autonoma de Tamaulipas, Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (Mexico); and Baruch College and the University of South Florida (USA). #

Dean Jerrold Ross

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the best approaches recommended by banks, investment houses, and state and national departments responsible for creating education and finance policies and practices.

At the doctoral level we have created what may well be the first cohort of students who are producing research, each focusing on one aspect of high national need. The initial studies are examining problems of black males from the perspective of teachers and administrators from elementary school through college, a unique

contribution to the amelioration of this volatile issue.

Finally, our highest priority is to expand the program of collecting and analyzing data based upon the measurable outcomes of the research and practice upon which all our registered programs are based, and which best describe the successes of exemplary teachers.

These are but a few examples of achievable change that can help to raise standards of teacher and student performance across all grade levels, and in all disciplines, especially at this juncture when the traditional quantitative measures we employ are being subjected to intense criticism. #

Pres. Jeremy Travis

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Through the CUNY Justice Academy, John Jay has also expanded access to its programs for students who complete an associate degree at another CUNY community college. The joint degree programs in criminal justice, forensic science and forensic financial analysis that the college created in the six CUNY community colleges registered 1,611 freshmen this fall. The Justice Academy ensures that students who complete associate degrees in criminal justice-related majors are guaranteed admission to John Jay's

baccalaureate programs. To learn more about the CUNY Justice Academy, visit <http://www.cuny.edu/academics/programs/notable/justice-academy.html>.

Over the last three years, John Jay has introduced many new liberal arts undergraduate majors including Economics, English, Global History and Gender Studies with additional majors under consideration. In addition, the significant increase in full-time faculty, student research opportunities, and the overall commitment to provide a high quality education, has made John Jay an attractive choice for students and their families. #

Dean Mary Brabeck

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technology to connect our work with schools and colleagues to study the preparation of STEM teachers. This year our Education Policy Series will focus on STEM education and will bring together experts on the relationship between STEM learning and economic success; we will discuss programs successfully improving STEM education.

Finally, as NYU takes a leadership role in developing our Global Network University, witnessed by the impressive inaugural class entering NYU Abu Dhabi this September, we are exploring ways for our aspiring professionals in education, the arts, and health to become global citizens and to learn to work effectively with diverse communities in New York and our increasingly organically connected world. #

Pres. Staiano-Coico

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Manhattan community. Each scholar will receive a merit-based \$5,000 scholarship, renewable each year for five years, and will be required to perform community service.

The five President's Community Scholars in our first cohort have just begun their freshman year. Four of them, from Frederick Douglass Academy and the Manhattan Center for Science

and Mathematics, are very interested in science and engineering. One scholar spent four years on the City College campus at the High School for Math, Science and Engineering, and has entered our unique seven-year B.S./M.D. program at the Sophie Davis School for Biomedical Education. We believe that our investment in them will be returned many times over, both to the college and to the community. #

Pres. James Muyskens

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will be featured this season include Peter Carey (Australia), Edwidge Danticat (Haiti), and Ian McEwan (England).

Queens College has always attracted excellent faculty from the U.S. and around the globe. Indeed, this year we were honored that six of our young faculty received National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development Awards. All of these exceptionally promising scientists were hired in the last five years. We also strive to make our campus a home-away-from-home for all of our students, no matter where they

come from. And now it literally is home to 500 of them, thanks to our first residence hall, The Summit. Last year when it first opened its doors, The Summit was an instant hit — and this year it is filled to capacity.

As we place great emphasis on student satisfaction, we are proud that once again Queens College was named one of the country's best undergraduate institutions in The Princeton Review's 2011 guide, The Best 373 Colleges. Among the words of praise we received from students were: "Great education at an affordable price," "personable, intelligent professors," and "amazing diversity." It's gratifying to know that our students have such positive things to say about their experience with us. #



Posamentier Sets the Bar High for Mercy College School of Education

By MERRI ROSENBERG

Second place doesn't cut it for Mercy College's Alfred S. Posamentier. The newly appointed dean of Mercy's School of Education — so new, in fact, that he was still setting up his bookshelves and organizing his office this past Monday when I stopped in to interview him — is unapologetic about his ambitions for the department.

"I'm leaving a position where I did everything we could do there," said Posamentier, who spent 41 years at City College, including 10 years as the dean for the school of education. During his tenure, The City College School of Education was first in New York state's ranking of education schools, an impressive improvement from its position in the cellar when Posamentier came on board.

And he's just as confident that he can achieve the same results at Mercy, where he's responsible for 1,900 graduate and undergraduate students. "I had so much fun doing this at City," said Posamentier. "I want to make [Mercy College] the top school of education in the area. The faculty I've met so far is very impressive, with great qualifications."

So what does it mean, at least to Dr. Posamentier, to raise the bar as high as possible at Mercy? "It obviously means producing first rate teachers and supervisors," he said. "It means providing the immediate community, in the Bronx and Westchester, with the services we can provide. They provide our teacher candidates with a real setting in which to prepare for their careers."

There are other ways he'd like to engage the community with Mercy's education school. For example, at City College, Posamentier offered a high school math program on Saturdays, that involved several hundred students. "I'd like to do that here as well," he said.

There are other goals Posamentier has for the school. He'd like to add "an international dimension to the school — there's a tremendous interest in Europe in American education — and draw much closer ties with other Mercy College departments," he said. "That's absolutely essential." Faculty development is also something Posamentier would like to enhance, possibly with a "seminar series for staff."



While Posamentier is nationally recognized for his scholarship and leadership in mathematics education, he's also well aware of the broader issues in education, recognizing the global need for teachers — no matter what their subject — to engage with their students' parents. "It's not rocket science," he said. "Kids who get support at home do better; teachers have to learn how to work with parents."

Posamentier believes his experience helps him see the long view about educational issues and trends.

Regarding his specific area of expertise, mathematics education, he said, "The problems in math stem back as far as you can see. There's always a shortage of math teachers."

Still, he cautioned that: "You can't make math teachers overnight. One of the things I've learned over lots of years is that the fast track to education [certification] needs to be done with tender, loving care. Whenever compromises are made, there are long-term implications."

And after all these years, Posamentier himself, a born and bred Manhattanite who now lives in northern New Jersey, hasn't lost any of that first-day-of-school enthusiasm. "I'm very excited about the prospect of making change," he said. #

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MERCY COLLEGE PRESIDENT DISCUSSES NEW SCHOOL YEAR

By SYBIL MAIMIN

To speak to Kimberly R. Cline, the president of Mercy College, at the end of summer is to feel the excitement and anticipation associated with "back to school" and the beginning of a new academic year. Repeating a favorite saying (of an unknown author), "You can do anything you want, as long as you care enough," she speaks of the challenges always expected at colleges ("very complex institutions") and the need to be constantly prepared. The economic downturn has not hurt the college's enrollment; the incoming full-time freshman class is more than 1,100 students, up from 832 last year.

In response to the challenging employment market, Mercy College has restructured its career services department so that students learn job-seeking skills early on. Freshmen begin building resumes, practice interviewing techniques, and engage with PACT (Personalized Achievement Contract) mentors throughout their four years at the college. "Companies look for candid, smart, articulate people who know more than others," advised the wise president. "We integrate work skills from the freshman to the senior years so that they are ready." She also notes that challenging employment prospects might signal an opportunity to "receive more education and earn a master's."

Cline has been at Mercy College for over two years and is very proud of her institution. A private, not-for-profit college based in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. with branches in the Bronx, Manhattan, White Plains and Yorktown Heights, the college boasts 10,000 students and hopes to grow to 11,600. Of particular pride to the president is the college's demographic mix, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. "I would say we are the most diverse college in the country," she exclaims. Mercy College is ranked among the top colleges for Hispanics by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and is a federally designated Hispanic Serving Institution.

PACT, a program begun in 2009 with 50 students and set to reach well over 1,000 this year, is another source of great pride. PACT assigns participants a designated mentor for the four-year college period. Mentors serve as a student's champion if issues arise, a figure who helps a student navigate the college years. Cline sees PACT as a unique and powerful concept she hopes to spread to other colleges.

Building on the success of PACT, Mercy College is opening a center this year that will help parents of high school students (including those not planning to attend Mercy College) understand the complicated college application landscape, including financial aid. It is part of the Mercy College mission. "We want to be engaged in the community to solve the issue of acces-



sibility to higher education and college attainment," states Cline. Mercy College students will also be involved with the community through tutoring and mentoring local high school youth. Additional new programs include a graduate PACT funded by the Department of Education, a leadership center, and a boot camp for new teachers. Exciting new academic plans include a degree program in international relations and diplomacy that is being developed in collaboration with the United Nations. Ambassadors, past and present, will review curricula and, together with other experts, teach about world affairs. Technology is an area for growth and innovation and is constantly being upgraded. Cline explains Mercy College was a pioneer in online learning, an option that "can be terrific or awful. It's about the quality of education the student is receiving." Programs are being brought online with quality in mind.

Mercy College offers liberal arts and professional education within its schools of Business, Education, Health and Natural Sciences, Liberal Arts, and Social and Behavioral Sciences. It has more than 90 graduate and undergraduate programs including the Corporate and Homeland Security degree, the first in the nation. It boasts an honors program as well as supplemental academic programs and support services for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It offers gifted and talented students advanced work in math, science, and health science research to enhance prospects for M.D. and Ph.D. programs.

To successfully preside over the complex world of Mercy College, top leadership skills are needed. President Cline makes no secret of her penchant for books about leadership, including Collins' "Good to Great." Her reading habits seem to have served her well. #

COLLEGE STUDENTS WORK ON COMMUNITY PROJECTS

By REBECCA MUSHTARE

With the overwhelming nature of going to college in New York City, the financial burdens they bear and constant digital signals buzzing in their pockets, it's no wonder student focus on education is often weak.

It's disheartening to find students emphasizing memorization, regurgitation and technical skills. With so many responsibilities, many students zero in on short-term goals, like passing a test, rather than on long-term goals, like using what they learn outside of the classroom.

I am determined to encourage my students to value deeper learning. I want abstract concepts to come alive for them. For example, in my introductory Web design class, I ask students to implement concepts like usability, information hierarchy and design elements to reinforce the mission and goals of a Web site. In the traditional classroom, students tend to "shift" what the mission and goals of their projects are to force their aesthetic and organizational choices to align.

To make such assignments "real," I began experimenting with community-based learning, a pedagogical model in which faculty and students work with community organizations to address a community need while meeting the learning goals of a course.

My students recently designed a Web site for an organization that did not have funds or staff to create one. In this model students worked



throughout the semester with the organization to define concrete goals. By the end of the semester, the organization had three design choices, and my students developed skills in collaboration, oral communication, compromise, professionalism, and dealing with all of the unexpected things that arise in "real" projects, like miscommunication, time, clarity and complexity of ideas, revisions, and changing priorities and needs. Students collectively recognized the importance of each of their strengths and the room each of them had for improvement.

Community-based learning raises the stakes of learning because it has an impact on the community. It shifts the educational experience from "I"

to "we." Students discover that their choices have an effect beyond themselves.

This approach is not for every project or every faculty member or every course, but when a good match is found, the results are fruitful. Aligning the goals of a course with the mission of an organization is key to a successful project. For example, engineering students could collaborate on playground designs, video students could collaborate on PSAs, accounting students could contribute to tax services for low income people, or students could learn about the aging process by working in nursing homes. With funding decreasing for community-based organizations that provide many of the services local communities need and depend on, colleges can fill the void.

Getting started on a community project is always the hardest part. Below are a few things to consider:

- Does the project make sense? You must be willing to collaborate to develop a project that equally supports your educational mission and fills a community need, and you must be flexible

and adapt to unexpected "real-life" complications.

- Start with existing relationships. Check with the service learning, community outreach or volunteer office on campus first for strong relationships that already exist and have been built on mutual trust.

- Help students negotiate unstructured problems. Many students see the world in dichotomies; help them negotiate the nuance and complexity that fills the world outside the bounds of a textbook.

- Scaffold larger projects. Break large projects into steps. Overwhelming students will not help to engage them. Project management and time management become important issues to discuss.

- Help students identify, accept, learn from, and act on constructive criticism. Understand that these are projects the students are passionate about and have committed themselves to. #

Rebecca Mushtare is an assistant professor of communication arts at Marymount Manhattan College.



TEACHERS COLLEGE: CAHN FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Cahn Fellows Program recently celebrated the outgoing cohort with its annual Leadership Conference at Teachers College, Columbia University. The experienced and aspiring principals who participated in the 15-month fellowship shared findings from their year-long challenge projects with an audience of more than 225 people. Principals presented in hour-long concurrent sessions on topics ranging from using technology to engage students and teachers to addressing the needs of SIFE (students with interrupted formal education). The objectives of the event are to share best practices and celebrate exemplary principals. The program encourages educators to attend and make connections that they can apply to their own school settings.

Technology and Art Enrichment Converging Together



Brian O'Connell



Mitch Pinsky

By RICH MONETTI

Brian O'Connell of Scholars' Academy, 27Q323 in Queens, and Mitch Pinsky of P.S. 115 in Brooklyn were recently recognized by the Cahn Fellows Program for exemplary performance in challenges that would seem to be situated at opposite ends of the educational spectrum (and the brain): technology and art. But there's a lot more convergence than one would think in raising the level of student achievement through the use of technology and an immersion in art enrichment.

"How do you use technology today to get smarter tomorrow," asks O'Connell as part of his Cahn challenge. At the opening of school, Scholars' Academy organized a team of student reps to podcast the morning announcements in the diverse native languages of its students. "We post it on the Internet," he says, where parents, students and teachers can all view it.

That beginning can tie quite nicely to the instruction that a theater teacher like Annie Sugarman engages in. "Making theater part of their everyday lives, the poise of being on stage can easily translate to their future professional lives in any field. Otherwise, when making a speech or doing a podcast, they'll be able to say with confidence, 'Here's what I have, I own it, and that's what is,'" says the P.S. 115 faculty member.

Of course, if that speech details the proven link between composing music notes and differentiating your calculus, it would be a shame if the math whizzes missed it. Using Google Docs, says O'Connell, is an efficient way to communicate in the building without overloading limited computer resources.

Similarly, Edline.net allows parents to stay in the loop and make sure kids keep up with a curriculum that, hopefully, stimulates them across their corpus callosum. "Parents can follow their children's progress throughout the year and keep abreast of events and necessary information," she says.

At the same time, keeping the kids creative helps when teachers don't have to sacrifice their own imagination to the time-consuming process of calculating grades, charts and trends. Easy Grade Pro makes grade processing simpler without a hassle.

But the most important timesaving tool and creativity-enhancing technology is the Smartboard, which Scholars' Academy has implemented throughout the building. Teachers train in groups

and create interactive presentations that they later utilize in the classroom.

Streamlining teacher efficiency, it doesn't hurt either when students can pick up some of the load as they are put into a teaching mindset through the instruction of dance teachers like Staci Ciarletta. "Providing the basic steps and giving them the tools to think, move and create, they take ownership of what they've learned and then reteach it to the class," says the P.S. 115 faculty member.

Again, that ability can follow them through the building, as does the chance to make the crossover from art to other subjects. For instance studying artwork from various periods, it becomes an extension and reinforcement of what they are learning down the hall in history class.

That plays directly into Pinsky's premise on art enrichment and the challenge his school took on to prove it. "It's my firm belief that enrichment activities promote student growth," he says.

Much less invested in the infrastructure of educational theory but with more at stake in practice, Robin, a P.S. 115 parent, has seen the change in her sons. Involved in music, dance and playwriting, they are much more willing to go the extra mile and take the learning to a higher level outside the classroom.

Another P.S. 115 teacher, Pat Gill, also sees similar stretching that exceeds the limits of a classroom. "They become inventive problem solvers and develop a more global perspective that leaps out and off the pages of the textbook."

As for comprehensive data-driven results, Pinsky says that's still in the works, but in the interim he points to the evidence that is already accessible. "There's a ton of data out there," he says, "and P.S. 115 is part of the collecting process that the Department of Education is undertaking."

Shifting back one last time, O'Connell takes both a direct approach and a delegated one in his efforts to bring the future to Scholars' Academy. "You don't have to know everything, but you have to develop an awareness of what's out there that focuses and empowers your staff to initiate implementation," he says. On the other hand, he defers on the same autonomy to make sure he doesn't become an island of his own authority. "You have to get out, go to meetings and interface with other schools to learn about how they are using different tools," he says. And that completed the circle of this discussion. #

Addressing Teacher Retention at The Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science



Rooney Vizcaino

By RICH MONETTI

Anyone involved in the hiring of teachers knows full well how much time and effort is put in to recruiting and attracting promising young teachers. In New York City, the same people are also aware of the possibility of being hit with a statistic such as the following: "We lost 33 percent of our hires last year," says Rooney Vizcaino, dean of the Urban Assembly School for Applied Math and Science. Presenting on behalf of Ken Baum, a 2009 Cahn Fellow, the administration realized that effective recruiting means little if resources are not intelligently allocated to retain that same potential as the school year unfolds.

AMS, as the school is known, began with the structure of teacher meetings. Cutting out all the conversation on, "what that kid did today," lesson plans took front and center this year. What worked today, what didn't, and what are we going to do tomorrow, said Mr. Vizcaino of their new baseline.

Of course, when lesson plans only get their final touches on the Q-train, new teachers can easily wilt under the demands they face as student teachers. You get out of work, go to school, finally get home and now you have to come up with a lesson, he says. In response, AMS put a veteran teacher in charge of team meetings, where lessons could be discussed and developed during the school day. Additionally, the team leader sat in on student teacher classrooms so later meetings consisted of discourse that was appropriately relevant to coming up with plans. As for the larger grade-level meetings, AMS cut them back to once a month. These meetings now consist less of raising problems than of bringing solutions. Having the agenda laid out a week in advance, their Rapid Solution Response had teachers doing just that rather than waiting to be assigned modification strategies.

But no matter how well teachers adapt to their new environment, they likely carry a large gap in regard to the politics of education. "There are numerous things they don't understand so we not only explain the things happening in the school, but it helps develop a good deal of collegiality among staff," he says.

Sticking with that sentiment, Mr. Vizcaino recognized the importance of formally upping the ante on letting all the work-related stress hang loose. "It's important to just get together and throw down with a camping trip or a friendly square off at the bowling alley," he says.

Fun and games aside, the real work began with a closer look at the special education department, where the majority of changeover was occurring. It was arrived upon that the collaborative team-teaching approach of putting 10 special education students in classes of 28 was not the appropriate ratio. Furthermore, the synergy was also wrong — even with two teachers in each room. "First of all," Mr. Vizcaino says, "you have to have two teachers that get along, and in New York City, that itself is a challenge." Additionally, the workload usually got divided along the lines of instructional and behavioral. "It wasn't equal," he says, "and coupling that with high turnover, the curriculum could more easily be lost to the lack of continuity."

Taking into account over 100 significant incidents, AMS instituted Reduced Class Staff and Support, a policy that distributed the special-ed students more thinly throughout each grade, while still providing the one-on-one attention that is needed. As a by-product, the special-ed student saw less of his peers in the classroom, and the competition for attention among them naturally diminished. Resultantly, he believes this help will translate into fewer incidents.

Ultimately, the actual results on teacher retention have obviously not revealed themselves yet, but Mr. Vizcaino credits advice he took from Cahn Fellows with giving him the ability to put aside the old model of generating solutions and attaining the necessary focus to implement it. "One can lead with no more than a questioning hand," he relayed.

Sitting today with a set of answers from those queries, Mr. Vizcaino believes teacher surveys indicate that this September will be different, but he'd rather point elsewhere for what's in store. "With a whole lot of smiles in our building, I feel we are going to retain most of our teachers," he concludes. #



TEACHERS COLLEGE: CAHN FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Habits of the Mind at PS 152

By RICH MONETTI

Cahn Fellow Dr. Rhonda Farkas of P.S. 152 in Brooklyn would not be the first to suggest that arriving at an answer is not as important as the questions that got you there, but it's definitely something that can get lost in the infrastructure of any learning institution. With that in mind, her staff begins where it ends in asking the most important question of all in implementing its new initiative, Habits of the Mind. "What is next?" she says. "That's our mantra."

The principal's office at P.S. 152, the School of Science and Technology, does not serve as an autocratic entity; decision-making comes from shared ideas with people in mind. From this model, leadership emerges at all levels.

Defining the challenge, Habits of the Mind first acknowledges the importance of problem-posing. "Modeling a questioning attitude and posing complex questions in hopes of unearthing the necessary data," she says, "a good habit of the mind is knowing how to act intelligently when the answer is not readily apparent."

In addition, P.S. 152 contends that if students can make sense of their source material and then reinforce what they've just learned, the effects will be pronounced. "They become deeper, more reflective thinkers," she says, which will keep them well ahead of any curveballs that the state tests may throw at them.

The second key challenge is engendering creativity, imagination and innovation. "Taking someone else's original idea, deconstructing it, and then reconstructing a new idea is the basis for innovative knowledge building," says Farkas of the teacher leader role. The impact on creativity is apparent when teachers see students voluntarily employing strategies that generate ideas for a new task. Additionally, students innovate when



(L-R) Dr. Rhonda Farkas & Theresa Modica

they produce a tool or method to solve an existing situation, she says.

Accelerating the cycle, P.S. 152 aspires to leave students free to let go and take risks. "We have equipped our teachers with the linguistic skills and meta-cognitive maps for modeling questions that intentionally challenge students' intellect and imagination."

In keeping up with the challenge themselves, teachers must look both inward and out. "Believe you are creative, but don't stop there. Seek out new experiences and be open to new sources of information." It follows then to break old habits and create a bridge between interests that seem unrelated. As a result, Farkas says, there's a greater chance of cross-fertilization in combining two or more things that have not been combined before.

Finally, returning to the beginning provides the only path to the future you are looking for as a professional. "Forget about how much you know because if you believe you know it, you're not going to grow," she concludes. #

2010 CAHN FELLOWS GETTYSBURG EXPERIENCE



By BILL FIORELLI

The 2010 Cahn Fellows reported for duty this summer to embark on their mission to Gettysburg, Pa. under the charge of "General" Krista Dunbar, director of the Cahn Fellows Program, and "Colonel" Robin Walker. After a few minutes on the bus it became apparent that the three missing fellows were not "deserters" but would join the troop in Gettysburg. A portion of Maxwell's 1993 film "Gettysburg" viewed during the bus ride served as an introduction to the great battle of 1863 and set the stage for our experience.

Upon arrival at Gettysburg we met our guides John Zervas and Sue Boardman. Throughout our visit they proved to be most informative and provided insight to the three-day battle and the individual leadership styles of the commanding officers. The three principle factors of communication, initiative, and empowerment proved to be crucial to the battle's outcome. In addition to the museum we viewed Philippoteaux's awesome cyclorama, which depicted in great detail Pickett's charge. A highlight of the evening's

dinner was Professor Allen Guelzo's presentation, "Lincoln and Leadership — the Road to the Emancipation Proclamation." Professor Guelzo, an excellent speaker, framed for us in great detail the role of Lincoln's leadership in the writing of this powerful document.

The high point of our trip was reliving the events of July 1, 2, and 3 through visits to the battlefield. The oppressive July heat we experienced was nothing compared to that of the soldiers who marched numerous miles in full uniform, often without sufficient water. In addition to lining up in troop formation and receiving hands-on instruction in shooting a cannon, we were all given confederate soldier identities in our reenactment of the final battle. It was unanimously agreed that we all require additional fence climbing practice. How fascinating it was to learn the fate of each of the soldiers we portrayed. Visits to the Evergreen and National Cemeteries coupled with tales of the citizens of Gettysburg concluded our visit to this historic shrine. The personal lessons we carry from our Gettysburg experience are as unique as the school communities we lead. #

READER'S DIGEST

By David J. Kahn (Kibbe3@aol.com)

David J. Kahn has been dazzling crossword puzzle fans with his creations for many years. Almost 150 of his puzzles have appeared in the *New York Times*, with many others in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Sun* and other newspapers and magazines. His books include *Baseball Crosswords*, *Sit & Solve Hard Crosswords* and *Sit & Solve Movie Crosswords*.

ACROSS

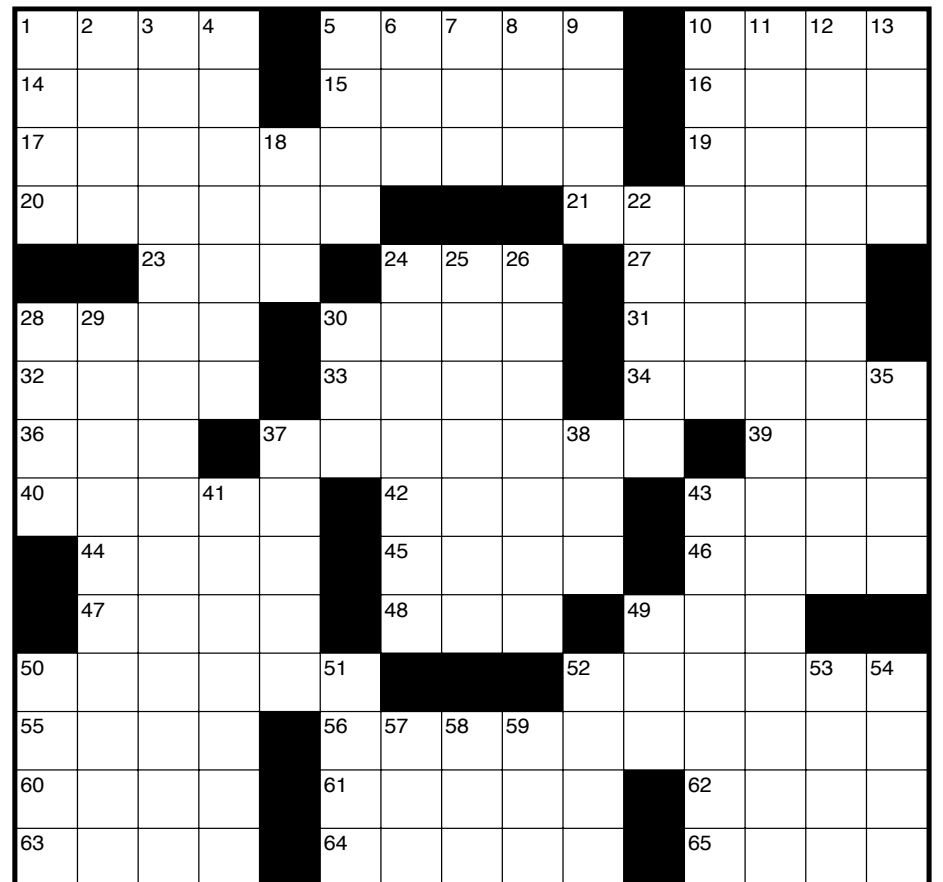
- 1 Unimportant workers
- 5 Get the ball rolling
- 10 The Crimson Tide, to fans
- 14 Instrument similar to a heckelphone
- 15 International court site, with "The"
- 16 From some distance
- 17 Story about an adventurer in armor
- 19 Secular
- 20 Poirot, for one
- 21 Sneers at
- 23 Little
- 24 Yale student
- 27 See 59-Down
- 28 Playwright Simon
- 30 "Let's go"
- 31 Colorful salamander
- 32 Jazz devotees
- 33 "___ Times" (Dickens novel)
- 34 Those who change locks?
- 36 Smoking tip?
- 37 Tale inspired in part by the 1755 Lisbon earthquake

39 2007 Presidential Medal of Freedom winner Harper

- 40 Perfume from petals
- 42 Not quite closed
- 43 Bend
- 44 "I can't believe it!"
- 45 Like Albee's Alice
- 46 ___-bitty
- 47 T-men
- 48 Middle of summer?
- 49 "Shall We Dance?" actress, familiarly
- 50 Emulate Lady Macbeth?
- 52 Mexican snack
- 55 Court call after deuce
- 56 Saga revolving around a birthday present
- 60 Musical with the song "Over the Moon"
- 61 Like Kate in act V
- 62 All: Prefix
- 63 German author noted for his children's books
- 64 Bogus
- 65 U.S.A.F. N.C.O.

DOWN

- 1 New England food fishes
- 2 Old Greek coin
- 3 Epic that won a Pulitzer in 1937
- 4 Melville's "Omoo" and others
- 5 ___ Tzu (small dog)
- 6 Levy
- 7 Before now
- 8 Dead end, metaphorically
- 9 They help you drive better
- 10 Nonsense
- 11 Narrative set in World War I
- 12 Satire about the folks of Gopher Prairie, Minnesota
- 13 Circle parts
- 18 Western Native American
- 22 ___ Nast Publications
- 24 Give off
- 25 Yarn narrated mostly by the sea captain Marlow
- 26 "Gandhi" extras



- 28 March Madness org.
- 29 Allegory inspired by the Book of Genesis
- 30 When repeated, a lively dance
- 35 Hot
- 37 Word with talk or hairs
- 38 Like some humor
- 41 Moderately slow, to Toscanini
- 43 The silver screen

- 49 Mo. M.L.K. Jr. was born
- 50 Not widely seen
- 51 World Wide Web protocol: Abbr.
- 52 Shipshape
- 53 Breather
- 54 Give off
- 57 "So there!"
- 58 Comic Philips
- 59 With 27-Across, change for a sawbuck

FOR PUZZLE ANSWERS VISIT

www.EducationUpdate.com/puzzle



Scott Noppe-Brandon Creates, Inspires, Encourages Teachers at Lincoln Center



Scott Noppe-Brandon



By **MARISSA SCHAIN**

Vicki Angel, teaching artist and education mentor, is spending her summer in New York City teaching arts-based seminars and curricula to teachers from around the country. Angel is educating other teachers about music and Abraham Lincoln in ways they have never seen before. Her seminar is part of "Imaginative Learning: Across Lessons, Semesters, and Years," a series of programs presented by the Lincoln Center Institute this summer at the Juilliard School, which brings together hundreds of teachers of all different grades and levels.

In one classroom, six small groups of teachers worked together in order to deconstruct a performance by Bill T. Jones. Then they will create classroom lessons for their students during the year using tools they learn through creative and artistic means.

The Lincoln Center Institute sponsored these weeklong workshops, which will conclude with the performance of Bill T. Jones' work, called "Fondly Do We Hope, Fervently Do We Pray."

Before attending the performance, which is based around Abraham Lincoln's era, Angel presented the groups of teachers with images,

songs, and poems to coincide with their theme. For example, Angel provided lyrics to Mozart. "This research shows how [the teachers] can juxtapose two ideas," she said. "We try to juxtapose the two elements, which is kind of something that Bill T. Jones did," she said.

Prior to choreographing the show, Jones distributed questions to his cast of dancers. He included questions about what they thought of Abraham Lincoln. He then took the text and incorporated it into his dance pieces.

Angel had Jones' piece in mind while constructing her curriculum, including the teaching theories of John Dewey: teaching by doing. "One resonant theme throughout Bill T. Jones' work is building up and tearing down," which Angel also incorporated into her curriculum. "It was about building up inspiration," she said.

Teachers worked with music of the time period, interviews, as well as resonant themes throughout the seminar. Angel chose some of Lincoln's favorite songs for the teachers to listen to as well as poetry inspired by Abraham Lincoln. "They embody creative meaning by making connections," Angel said.

The teachers also learned how to activate contextual information. They worked on movement

THE MULLER TECHNIQUE INTRODUCES EAST TO WEST

By **JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.**

Jennifer Muller, the award-winning artistic director of a world-renowned dance company, The Works, has the distinction of having a signature style named after her. The eponymous Muller Technique, informed by early reading in Asian philosophy, is central to her 12-member company's mission — multidisciplinary performances and education programs — and it continues to influence her direction as an original choreographer. The 1's have it — Muller is innovative, imaginative, impassioned.

The company's studio on West 24th Street may not be large, but its accomplishments are. Just recently, Muller Technique was designated by Tanzplan Berlin as one of only seven unique contemporary dance teaching styles in the world. To date, Muller has led workshops and performance demonstrations in over 30 states, 40 countries on four continents, and is a familiar presence on the New York dance scene. Theaters in the city where the company regularly appears include The Joyce, New Victory, City Center, Citigroup, Roundabout Theatre and Kaye Playhouse, as well as numerous community outreach venues such as botanical gardens, museums, bookstores and tourist areas.

A poised, highly articulate woman of enthusiasm and focus, Muller began dancing professionally at 15 with the Pearl Lang Dance Company, then went on to become Principal Dancer with the José Limon Company — a time coincident with her graduation from The Juilliard School. After nine years with Limon, she became associate artistic director of the Louis Falco Dance Company for seven years and, after founding her company in 1974, she started collaborating with well-known artists in various disciplines (including opera), among them Keith Haring, Keith Jarrett and Yoko Ono. She founded The Works 36 years ago, eager to apply and promote what she felt was essential to dance that was being ignored or undervalued.

Typically, dancers study "vertical" technique, but when Muller toured the Far East with Limon at the age of 18 she started reading Asian philosophy and soon became "ravenous" to know more about ways to incorporate its concepts and lore into the discipline of dance. Specifically, Eastern philosophy applied to dance, for her, came to mean "relaxing" tension in the legs for a plié, for example, rather than sustaining that tension by way of muscular control. The relaxing would come largely from visualization, an important part of Eastern philosophy that would become an important part of Muller Technique. In regard to the plié, the technique asks students to imagine their legs as roots that extend under the floor. This "deeper grounding" generates new energy, which in turn generates "higher ups" — "polarities of energy." Energy is now concentrated in the abdomen, not the legs, and, only after, flows to the extremities.

Muller acknowledges that the technique after all these years is still considered "unusual" in the dance world, difficult to master and taking years to perfect, as members of her own company well know. She believes, however, that the rewards of staying with the training are worth the effort personally and professionally. Those who study in the Scholarship/Apprentice Program say that

vocabulary and other teaching core concepts.

In other active classrooms, the pedagogy discussions included the term co-learning. "It's not about only teaching but also learning together," Angel explained.

"These imagination conversations are taking off in certain states and in all different countries," said Scott Noppe-Brandon, director of Lincoln Center Institute. "Businesses want thinkers and doers; it can be taught and developed in our classrooms," he said.

"There is plenty of room for imagination in education," he continued, "It's needed in youth



Jennifer Muller

they leave as "better dancers," having a stronger technique, more range and control, and being more energetic, better able to visualize energy flow and its effect on body structure and alignment. They feel, they report, a more "intimate" relationship with their bodies, down to the most "miniscule" parts, and they sense that what they have learned and experienced could be applied to any dance style.

The Scholarship/Apprentice Program is just one of several education ventures associated with The Works. Developed primarily, though not exclusively, for professionally oriented young adults, many participants stay on for years, and every member of The Works (mostly women, but some men) has gone through the program. The Works also runs "HATCH," fall and spring mentoring sessions designed mainly for emerging choreographers who receive audience feedback from drop-in visitors. "HATCHED," the next level, similarly conceived, accommodates longer works.

In addition to Muller's busy schedule, she superintends two arts awareness programs for school children. The 18-year-old "Faces of Wonder," for grades K through 6, introduces Bronx and Manhattan youngsters to expressive contemporary dance, often for the first time, and culminates with a full performance (lights and costumes) at Hostos Community College. The 9-year-old "Imagine That!" consists of multiple sessions in classrooms, most recently for fourth-graders (a different school each year) that teaches nonverbal communication skills, encourages youngsters to express themselves more clearly through body language and the delight in exploring their imaginations. Toward the end of the year students take situations from their own lives and construct nonverbal movies. The confidence-building effects of both arts awareness programs, Muller says, get youngsters to believe in themselves and learn how to work with others in teams. Too much instruction in schools is still rote, she observes, engendering in students "ennui and distrust." How wonderful for children to recognize that they each have "validity." #

development for business leadership."

Noppe-Brandon said he is trying to find the bridge between accountability and sustainability. "Constructivists say accountability has been the demise. This is what is wrong with the city and school system," he said. "We've been doing great work but it was not reaching people. Now we're starting to stay by having these imagination conversations."

One participating teacher concluded, "Ever since you showed me that piece of information, I can't wait to search for interesting arts-based things for my students." #



Lincoln Center Institute Expands Initiatives for Imagination, Creativity and Innovation in Schools



A teacher, Jean, and other educators take part in an arts-based seminar at the Juilliard School

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

It was just a year ago that PBS engaged Scott Noppe-Brandon, executive director of the Lincoln Center Institute, in conversation about the institute's desire to bring more imagination, creativity and innovation into public school curricula and into the pedagogy of schools of education. Since then, Noppe-Brandon reports continuing evidence that Lincoln Center Institute programs are effective in enhancing the value of the arts and in generating a new appreciation of creativity in curricular content and methodology — a move that is “essential for the future of the American workplace.”

Though the schools with which the institute has been partnering have basically been public schools in the metropolitan area, all within a 30-mile radius of each other (over 100 schools, including 11 “focus” schools that involve the entire institution), this fall, the institute will be working with New Visions in creating 18 charter schools in the city over the next five years. Acknowledging that charter schools do not enjoy universal support, Noppe-Brandon nonetheless says, “We need to be part of a discussion” with all kinds of schools. Only then will “we be able to push education forward.” He notes that one of the institute's more successful partnerships is with Scarsdale, NY, where it's assumed that a high-level, creative curriculum already exists. But in point of fact Scarsdale educators think that the “capacity for imaginative learning” still has a way to go.

Also this fall, Lincoln Center Institute is broadening its series of Imagination Conversations — talks with leaders from all walks of life across the U.S., professionals who have themselves changed their thinking and work processes by opening up to imagination, creativity, and innovation. Too much talk about imagination has remained in the abstract. Noppe-Brandon would “demystify” it, show, for example, 28-and-a-half practical ways imagination, creativity and innovation can be introduced, whether to students K-12, dancers trying out for a Broadway show, or a Marine drill sergeant. Anyone can be imaginative. (Why 28-and-a-half? Well, why not — it's a catchy phrase.) Noppe-Brandon cites the example of an oncologist, grief stricken over the loss of his young child, who decided to experiment

with suspended animation in trauma patients. In leaving his “comfort zone” for a totally new field, he yielded to risk. Now, with the aid of a MacArthur grant, he is exploring further. Next year Imagination Conversations will hold a summit in the city, with the goal of issuing a public policy statement.

Implicit in linking innovation and creativity with the empirical world of fact and reason is a desire to bridge the tension typically between them and to recognize that the workplace needs both. That means that the arts aren't added onto a curriculum, but offer imaginative modes that can be adopted by any discipline on the premise that an entire school and all children can benefit. These ideas, Noppe-Brandon, points out, owe much to the work of John Dewey and to Noppe-Brandon's own mentor and “soul mate,” Maxine Greene, who since 1975 has been Lincoln Center Institute's “philosopher in residence.”

Noppe-Brandon himself underwent a transformation several years ago, if by accident. He recalls that he had never seen an arts performance until he was 16 and that his early academic interests — entomology and horticulture, improving the environment to make a better world — did not include content or methodology from the arts. By chance, however, he found himself in an expanded art course taught by a professor of theater, dance and the visual arts. Would he join the Renaissance and Baroque Dance Co.? Could anything have been further from his education and experience? But could anything be so intuitively right?! Shortly after, he was asked to interview for Lincoln Center Institute (funded by the Carnegie Corporation in the mid 1970s), a position he has “proudly” held for the past 14 years.

But isn't the institute's concept just another way to describe thinking outside the box? No. “We want students and teachers to think inside the box as well.” Lincoln Center Institute does not look to replace one concept with another, but to value them equally. Standard assessments are important. There are multiple layers in learning, complexities of answers. Students should see that even mistakes can teach, an idea that is known as the “fail well concept.” The arts can go a long way to ensuring that imagination, creativity and innovation belong to the scientist and the sculptor alike. #

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF MINT THEATER UNEARTHES THEATRICAL GEMS TO WIDE ACCLAIM



Jonathan Bank

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

The sentiment, “I haven't heard of it, so it can't be good,” too often a judgment by the academic community, upsets Jonathan Bank, who says he's “battling successfully” against it, and counters with, “Not everything that is good is known.” Bank trusts his own judgment, however, and, to gauge from audience and media response to the forgotten or unknown works he puts on at Mint — not to mention Drama Desk nominations — he's been hitting the mark. Often the reason a play has been obscure, he says, has nothing to do with its intrinsic merit.

In his 14th year at the 100-seat theater on West 43rd Street, Bank, who has an MFA from Case Western Reserve University and directs many of the plays he discovers, would seem to have impeccable taste in selecting “well made plays that tell a good story.” The current production, Irish playwright Teresa Deevy's (1894-1963) “Wife To James Whelan,” is, he says, particularly fine. He also notes this past spring's production of Jules Romain's “Doctor Knock,” or “The Triumph of Medicine,” as indicative of the kind of unknown plays in a language other than English he'd also like to put on.

The stated mission of Mint (the origin of name, when the theater had another purpose, is unknown) is to resurrect plays that have “lain on the shelf more than 41 years”: lost or little-known works by known authors not readily associated with the theater — A.A. Milne, Hemingway, Edith Wharton, Thomas Wolfe, Harley Granville-Barker, J.M. Barrie, Susan Glaspell, for example — and also unknown works by unknown authors. This mission makes Mint unique. Mint “commits to bringing new vitality to worthy but neglected plays” by way of excavating “buried theatrical treasures, reclaiming them for our time through research, dramaturgy, production, publication and a variety of enrichment programs.” Mint's Web site also notes the company's “keen interest in timeless but timely plays that make us feel and think about the moral quality of our lives and the world in which we live.” The aim is “to use the engaging power of the theater to excite, provoke, influence and inspire audiences and artist alike.”

Bank says his selections have strong plot-driven lines and, unlike most revivals, pique audience interest because no one knows how the dramas will end.

A writer, translator, editor, actor and articulate scholar, with a finely honed sense of irony, Bank gets a bit upset also when people keep asking him where he finds his lost or forgotten plays. Finding a forgotten play is not the challenge, he says — it's there on someone's shelf, just pull it down. Rather, the challenge is “recognizing” a fine theater piece.

Bank modestly explains his interest in Mint's mission as an understanding of his own strategic limits as a director. Much of what now constitutes theater off as well as on Broadway has little to do with mounting revivals of well-known plays. To be effective, a director has to find an unusual angle to distinguish his or her work from predecessors', a goal that often leads to gimmickry or clever flash. This de facto requirement is neither Bank's expertise nor concern.

Surprisingly, it might seem, Mint does not (yet?) attract educators or college teachers. College students would seem to be the ideal audience, Bank reflects, but they don't have the background or experience of most of the theatergoers who show up at Mint. Mint plays are not on the syllabus. Schools, meanwhile, have to make plans well into the future, and Mint, which puts on three plays a year, keeps its announcements close to the chest. In one of his not untypical ironic asides, Bank lets on as to why. He often has to field what he calls the deadly theater-lobby question, “What's next?” If he says what it is, what does that mean? No one has heard of it. Silence. But silence not necessarily before or after a performance. Bank notes that Mint offers “enrichment events” — explanatory talks, Q-and-As, whereby an invited expert will give a brief talk about the current production. The talks not uncommonly spark interest in Mint audiences to come back to see the play again. At a special discount, no less. #

Mint Theater Company is at 311 West 43rd Street. <http://www.minttheater.org>. Note: Tickets cost only \$25 to all those under 30!

LAW & EDUCATION

Searches of Government Employees' Electronic Devices

By MARTHA MCCARTHY, Ph.D.

The United States Supreme Court recently delivered a significant decision in *Ontario v. Quon*, holding that a public employer could read employees' text messages on a government-issued pager. In this case, the city of Ontario, Calif. issued pagers to police officers, including Quon. The contract with the provider included a character limit on text messages, and the city had to pay a surcharge if any employee exceeded the monthly character allowance. The city alerted employees that it reserved the right to monitor their text messages, similar to e-mail on city computers, and that employees have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality when using city equipment.

Quon exceeded the character limit for several months, and he agreed to pay the extra fees himself. After he continued to exceed the limit for additional months, city officials decided to investigate whether the character limits should be raised to avoid employees incurring expenses for work-related text messages. The city thus contacted the pager provider and obtained transcripts of Quon's and another employee's text messages for two months in which each of them had exceeded the character limit. This revealed that most of the text messages sent and received on Quon's pager during work hours were not work-related, and some were sexually explicit. Following an investigation by the internal affairs unit, Quon was disciplined for violating the police department's rules.

Quon alleged that the city's action abridged the Fourth Amendment's prohibition against unreasonable searches. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with Quon, but the Supreme Court reversed, holding that the city's review of employees' text messages on a city-issued pager was constitutionally reasonable. The Court concluded that the city had a legitimate interest in assessing whether the contractual character limitation was too low. Moreover, all employees had been warned that their pagers were to be used for work purposes and that the transcripts could



be reviewed. The Court concluded that the city's actions were reasonable and did not violate the Fourth Amendment.

The Supreme Court's holding is not surprising, given the circumstances of this case. However, it is noteworthy that the Court declined to establish general principles governing electronic privacy issues beyond the narrow facts of this case, voicing reluctance to set a precedent that might be difficult to apply. The Court recognized that rapid changes in the technological landscape have created uncertainty in workplace norms as well as in the law's treatment of such norms. Thus, the Court concluded that it would not be prudent to articulate broad standards to apply to government-supplied communication devices. This decision disappointed those who were hoping the Court would illuminate constitutional principles relating to electronic privacy in the workplace. It left employers and employees in government agencies, including school districts, without clear guidance regarding the law governing electronic expression, which means more litigation can be expected. #

Martha McCarthy is Chancellor's Professor and Chair of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies at Indiana University.

BILL ELIMINATING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS INTRODUCED IN HOUSE

Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) recently introduced the Ending Corporal Punishment in Schools Act, a bill that would eliminate the use of corporal punishment in public and private schools that serve students receiving federal services. The American Civil Liberties Union strongly supports the bill, and urges Congress to swiftly pass the legislation.

"Children have the right to learn in a safe, supportive environment that allows them to reach their full academic potential; the Ending Corporal Punishment in Schools Act will help create the kind of classrooms they need," said Laura W. Murphy, Director of the ACLU Washington Legislative Office. "The American Civil Liberties Union has fought long and hard to make corporal punishment in schools a thing of the past, and we urge Congress to finally put an end to this cruel and outdated form of punishment and swiftly act to pass this bill."

Corporal punishment is a legal form of discipline in 20 states, and according to U.S. Department of Education data, it is disproportionately used against African-American students and students with disabilities. There is currently

no federal ban on the use of corporal punishment against students, despite evidence that the practice injures students and hinders achievement in the classroom. The ACLU, along with dozens of coalition partners, sent a letter to Rep. McCarthy voicing strong support for the bill.

In addition to banning corporal punishment in public and private schools that receive federal funds, the bill also establishes a grant program for school-wide positive behavior supports, an evidence-based approach to school discipline which allows schools to proactively target potentially problematic behavior and develop approaches that can improve school climate and academic outcomes by reducing school discipline referrals.

"By adopting positive behavior supports and abandoning ineffective and brutal discipline, schools can create environments that encourage academic success rather than hinder it," said Deborah J. Vagins, ACLU Legislative Counsel. "It's time that Congress step in to end this arcane and destructive practice so that our schools can be places where students and educators interact in positive ways that foster students' growth and dignity." #

BAR ADOPTS POLICY TO HELP JUVENILE OFFENDERS

The American Bar Association recently passed a resolution urging federal, state, territorial and local governments to limit the collateral consequences imposed on citizens as a result of contact with the juvenile justice system.

Americans across the country find themselves being denied opportunities to progress in society after they have been involved with the juvenile justice system. The ABA has singled out employment and education opportunities as two areas that have the greatest impact relative to integrating and succeeding in society. The policy, adopted recently at the association's Midyear Meeting in Orlando, Fla., urges lawmakers to prevent schools and employers from denying opportunities based solely on a mistake that was made as a juvenile.

The chair of the ABA's Juvenile Justice Committee, Lawrence Wojcik, commented on the resolution, stating, "Court-involved children face numerous obstacles imposed by law that adversely impact their attempts to successfully return to their communities. In adopting this policy, the ABA is urging the business, education and government sectors to refrain from placing additional barriers that are not mandated by law in the path of these children. The policy embraces the idea that the best way to help such children is to encourage their return to the community by offering them every opportunity to succeed."

The policy is available on the ABA's Criminal Justice Web site at <http://new.abanet.org/sections/criminaljustice/Pages/default.aspx#>

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Mailing Address:

695 Park Avenue, Ste. E1509
New York, NY 10065
Email: ednews1@aol.com
www.EducationUpdate.com
Tel: 212-650-3552 Fax: 212-410-0591

PUBLISHERS:

Pola Rosen, Ed.D., Adam Sugerman, M.A.

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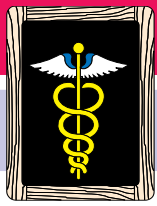
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MEDICAL UPDATE



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DR. JOSEPH FINS: A LEADER IN BRAIN RESEARCH

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Dr. Joseph J. Fins, newly elected president of the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities (he assumes the position in 2011), is in the forefront of one of the most timely and controversial emerging medical fields. An internationally known, award-winning scholar, author, researcher, who is also on the board of many prestigious institutions, research centers and leading medical and philosophical journals, Dr. Fins notes that the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities, which was founded only a dozen years ago, represents a significant interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary trend in medical education.

For him, personally — as chief of the Division of Medical Ethics in the Department of Public Health and Medicine (incorporating medicine, public health and psychiatry) at Weill Cornell Medical College and director of medical ethics at New York-Presbyterian Hospital / Weill Cornell Medical Center — the new appointment offers a rich opportunity to broaden and deepen his exploration of ethical policy issues involved especially in brain injury and disorders of consciousness cases, his specialty. It also allows him to refine his work in palliative care. The goal remains: to “improve patient care, enrich medical education and inform health policy.”

The consolidation by the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities of the interests of three existing associations (the Society for Health and Human Values, the Society for Bioethics Consultation, and the American Association of Bioethics) suggests that the 12-year-old organization has the potential to educate new professionals on a wider number of issues and concerns at the juncture of biology, medicine, technology and the humanities, among them abortion, organ donation, euthanasia, health care rationing and the allocation of scarce health care resources.

Dedicated to promoting an exchange of ideas and fostering professional policy development and “collegiality among people engaged in all of the endeavors related to clinical and academic bioethics and the health-related humanities,” the society’s activities include education, research, and discussion among professionals (“healthy dialogue”) and between them and the general public. In considering bioethics and humanities together, an area that has traditionally been associated with philosophy, Dr. Fins hopes that disciplines typically perceived as “dichotomous” will be perceived in new, creative ways that will enhance policy issues while avoiding “dumbing down” and “platitudes” in published research.

Interdisciplinary approaches are hardly new for Dr. Fins, who praises his own broad-based undergraduate liberal arts education at Wesleyan University with providing him with a strong appreciation of the benefits of cross-disciplinary pollination. The author of a forthcoming book on C.P. Snow, the father of the two cultures of science and humanities, Dr. Fins suggests that bioethics may be “a third culture,” a bridge that would ensure the continuation of democratic society by constituting a kind of policy platform for patients’ civil rights. To participate as intelligent citizens, he says, we must be literate in the sciences and the humanities, and bioethics could be the “vector” for “multiple” questions about how we live, how we die. Bioethics and humanities could “coalesce” a vast number of interests and talents to address proposed treatments for brain disease, like, for example, “deep brain



stimulation” for Parkinson’s, an area of psychosurgery that many fear could create part-human, part-mechanical “cyborgs.”

Much of the excitement of the work Dr. Fins and his colleagues are doing centers on evaluating mental states. Take people who are thought to be in a coma. Behavioral evidence suggests that they are in a “minimally conscious state,” but neurological treatment might bring about a response — even speech (Dr. Fins has been quoted on such cases as recently as in a major piece in a February issue of *The New York Times*). What if such patients are living in nursing homes, “misdiagnosed,” having been declared to be in a “vegetative” state when they’re not? Such cases raise not only ethical issues, but are “game-changers” for states and the country, politically and economically. To those who say that deep brain stimulation is expensive, Dr. Fins replies yes, but it may well prove less expensive than nursing home costs, emotional costs to families, and the cost of technological interventions that don’t work.

Of course, others will and do disagree, just as they do about physician-assisted suicide, but Dr. Fins points out that patients sometimes don’t receive proper palliative care. He hopes that “pluralism,” a diversity of opinion, will win over flat-out ideological determination that denies other possibilities (as the final decision in the Terri Schiavo case proved, “rebuking,” finally, those who for seven years kept the issue going through a hierarchy of courts). Full, informed and courteous debate is, Dr. Fins believes, the most practical as well as the most desirable direction bioethics and the humanities can take. #

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Medical School Deans in NYC

Harvard Bioscience Novel Bioreactor Helps Grow First Functional Lung for Successful Transplant

Harvard Bioscience, a global developer, manufacturer and marketer of a broad range of specialized products used to advance life science research and regenerative medicine, announced recently that its Harvard Apparatus / Hugo Sachs Elektronik business has collaborated with Dr. Harald Ott and Massachusetts General Hospital to design and manufacture a novel bioreactor that was used to grow a functional lung. The lung was subsequently transplanted into a rat. The paper, titled “Regeneration and orthotopic transplantation of a bioartificial lung,” was published online in *Nature Medicine*.

“We congratulate Dr. Harald Ott and Massachusetts General Hospital for achieving this major advance in the field of regenerative medicine,” said David Green, president of Harvard Bioscience. He continued, “For nearly two years we have been collaborating with Dr. Ott and Massachusetts General Hospital to develop the sophisticated and novel bioreactor

he needed to regenerate the lung. We believe Dr. Ott was the first doctor to achieve transplantation of a regenerated lung and that this achievement marks a milestone in the development of the field of regenerative medicine.”

Mr. Green continued, “Our Harvard Apparatus business was founded at Harvard Medical School over 100 years ago to develop tools to advance life science research. We are now building on our technologies in cell, tissue and organ research to create new tools that will be needed by researchers and clinicians in the new field of regenerative medicine.

We believe these new tools will play a crucial enabling role as regenerative medicine continues to advance.”

In addition to the lung regeneration bioreactor, Harvard Bioscience also makes and sells what it believes is the world’s first commercially available bioreactor for tubular organ regeneration that has been used for a human transplant of a bronchus. #

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Learning From Grandparents: Award-Winning Author Sharon Lovejoy Points a Way



Toad Cottages & Shooting Stars

by Sharon Lovejoy
(Workman Publishing, \$14.95)

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

It seems odd, maybe even unsettling, to note that a not-insignificant number of grandparents today never knew their own grandparents. Children of first- or second-generation immigrants, many of today's grandparents know about their parents' parents only by word of mouth or from old photos of strangers they've never met. Perhaps that's why many of today's grandparents are so fiercely devoted to their grandchildren, wanting to give them what they themselves never had. Ironically, though, many grandparents these days are finding themselves in parental roles, doing out of necessity what they would otherwise have provided out of love alone.

Many parents today, especially single, low-income mothers, are overwhelmed by demands of work or life's challenges. If they are fortunate, grandparents live nearby and are able to assume parental roles, or if they don't live nearby, are nonetheless willing to do what they can long-distance to close geographical gaps by way of constant assertions of affection and support. In short, mothers and fathers, particularly in urban America, rely increasingly on, or default to, grandparents, particularly grandmothers, to guide children through childhood into a world of learning filled with wonder and love. Teachers know how important grandparents can be. It is a pleasure, therefore, to recommend a new book about "grandma's bag of tricks," a collection of 130 activities that can engage young minds outdoors and in and provide the bonding so necessary for the generations.

Award-winning author Sharon Lovejoy's new paperback, *Toad Cottages & Shooting Stars*, is a delight to look at as well as read. Drawing on her early training and college studies in art as well as on a life-long love of botany and natural science, Lovejoy moved, well, naturally into docent work for museums and botanical institutions. She also started a unique herb and garden shop in California. Soon, her texts and illustrations were featured in books and national magazines, and she found herself a frequent guest on radio and television shows (a full list of publications, appearances and awards can be found at <http://www.sharonlovejoy.com>). At the heart of all she did — and still does — is a deeply touching and impassioned desire to honor her grandparents,

one of whom was a botanist and educator, and to pass on to her own grandchildren (she has four) and to mentors of children everywhere lore that was imparted to her with a sense of wonder, magic and joy.

All well and good, city sophisticates might say, but what's in it for urban kids, especially immigrants, and what does playing in the natural world have to do with the acquisition of basic skills — and education in general — especially in areas where ethnic and minority populations predominate and children have limited exposure to the natural world? Page 96, Sharon Lovejoy says with a laugh. And there, in one of her book's many boxed-up items, "The Power of the Table," readers learn of a study done by researchers at Harvard and Vanderbilt on why some children are able to read at an early age and others fall behind. It was found that "shared mealtimes, where actual give-and-take conversations occur," were crucial as a "strong predictor of how a child's language skills and literacy will develop." (The particular starters Lovejoy suggests are superb.) Inference? Adults should talk to children at the dinner table about their day, keep a dictionary nearby and savor, with them, words as well as food. Which is not to slight the joys of quiet: "I have learned that silence can be as deep and instructive as conversation," Lovejoy writes, a valuable observation for today's over-programmed, media-bombarded youngsters, many of whom have a hard time learning how to evoke their own thoughts and trust their imagination.

City grannies — and other adults — take heart: "Bringing the Outdoors In" is an important part of the book. Children can grow plants from kitchen leftovers, make and decorate food, and create ethnic dinners, replete with flag decorations, menus and definitions of ingredients. There's nothing like food to teach about other cultures. Many inside activities also turn on a passion children have for the miniature world. Lilliput rules, Lovejoy points out, for both boys and girls — small villages, little constructs, insect kingdoms.

Lovejoy is the recipient of the Key to the City of Indianapolis and the Gold Leaf Award from the Santa Clara Department of Education for her contributions to education, and her publications have been reprinted in English and Spanish. Her book proves the truth of an old Chinese proverb that she quotes (two of her grandchildren are Asian): "Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand." Schoolteachers, school librarians and those who home school their kids will find in *Toad Cottages & Shooting Stars* an age-appropriate treasure trove. #

Logos Bookstore's Recommendations



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President, LOGOS BOOKSTORE
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As summer winds down and many people come back to either school, college or back to the regular work routine, a good book to read on the go from place to place is *The Professor's House* by Willa Cather. Focusing for most of the novel on Professor Godfrey St. Peter, his reactions to his daughters and their husbands, his wife and others, Cather creates for the reader the life and thoughts of a university professor as he lives his life and pursues his scholarship as well as bringing to life his family and others, like the servant, Augusta, who cross his path. Yet there is a surprise turn in the novel through one of Professor St. Peter's students, Tom Outland, who, though not present at the time of the narrative of the book, has left the professor a memoir of his, Outland's, time in New Mexico, living on a mesa there. Willa Cather has created a complex atmospheric novel making real two very different environments and how this coupled with Professor St. Peter's admiration for Tom Outland and contemplation of his, St. Peter's, own childhood cause an awakening in the professor to new thoughts in his middle age and eventual resolution of his thoughts and feelings to his present life.

This wonderful book will be discussed by the Kill Your TV Reading Group (KYTV) on Wednesday, September 1, 2010 at the store. KYTV Reading Group will discuss *The Island At The Center Of The World* by Russell Shorto on Wednesday, October 6, 2010. As KYTV celebrates 12 years in October, we will be learning about New Amsterdam 401 years after its founding.

The Professor's House

by Willa Cather
(Vintage Books, \$14)

Literary agent Richard Curtis returns to Logos to lead the Sacred Texts Group in its study of the Book of Acts and the Talmud, Monday, September 13, 2010. Children's Story Time with Lilly begins again, Monday, September 13, at 11 a.m. and will continue every Monday.

September and October are the time of year for celebration of Rosh Hashanah and Halloween. Come to Logos Bookstore for greeting cards, books and gift items for those celebrations. See you in September.

Upcoming Events At Logos

- Wednesday, September 1, 2010 at 7 p.m., KYTV Reading Group will discuss *The Professor's House* By Willa Cather.
- Monday, September 13, 2010 at 7 p.m., The Sacred Texts Group led by literary agent Richard Curtis will start its discussion of the Book of Acts and continue its discussion of The Talmud.
- Wednesday, October 6, 2010 at 7 p.m., KYTV Reading Group will discuss *The Island At The Center Of The World* by Russell Shorto.
- Children's Story Time led by Lilly is every Monday at 11 a.m. starting September 13, 2010. Transit: 4, 5, 6 Subways to Lexington Ave. and 86 St., M86 Bus (86th St.), M79 Bus (79th St.), M31 Bus (York Ave.), M15 Bus (1st and 2nd Aves.)

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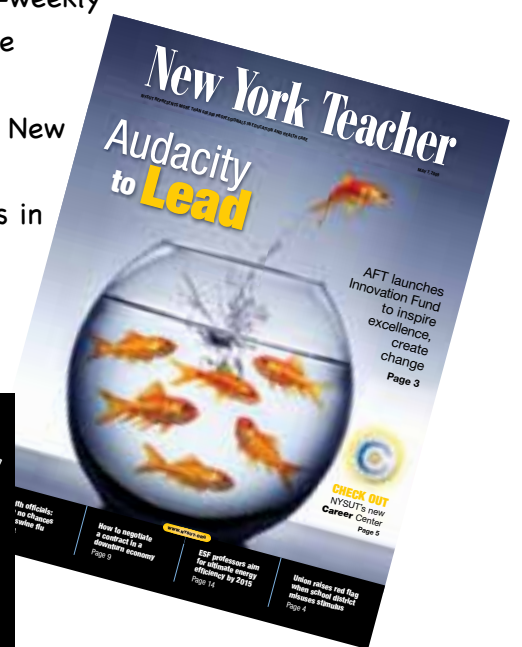
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Review of *UNEQUAL FORTUNES: Snapshots from the South Bronx*

UNEQUAL FORTUNES:

Snapshots from the South Bronx

by Arthur Levine and Laura Scheiber

Published by Teachers College Press, New York, 2010: 170 pp.

By **MERRI ROSENBERG**

Many of us (especially, I suspect, those of us who grew up in the somewhat grittier neighborhoods of New York City), are tempted to return to our childhood homes to see what's remained the same, what's changed, and measure the distance we've traveled.

Arthur Levine, former president of Teachers College, did just that. Working with Laura Scheiber, a Ph.D. student at Teachers College, the two of them returned to Levine's apartment building and block in the South Bronx to understand how the neighborhood of his childhood and teenage years enabled him to achieve his version of the American Dream — and how, in the 40 years since he lived there, it failed so miserably for the young residents living there now.

When Levine grew up in the South Bronx, mostly among the offspring of other Jewish immigrants and Catholics, there was a clear sense that education offered the best way to escape poverty and deprivation and land squarely in the middle class. As he writes, "The few Jewish kids who failed to complete high school or attend college were known to everyone. ... The parents of these children were universally pitied." Further, he explains, "Despite the differences among the people living on Creston Avenue,

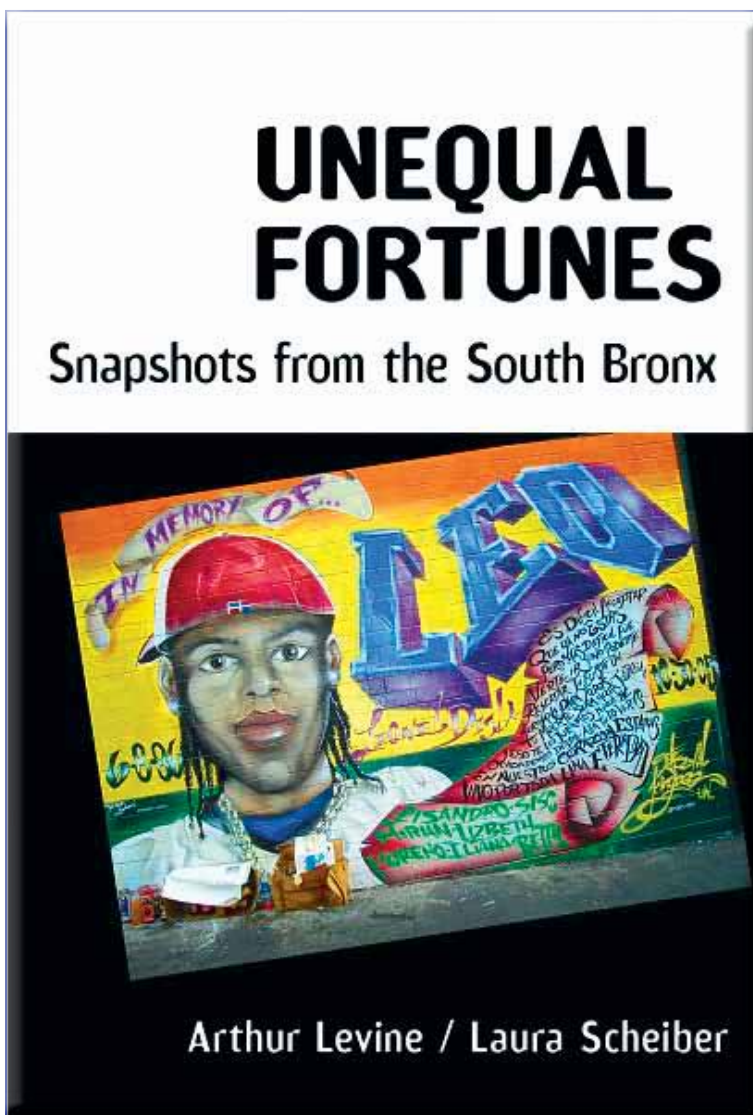
there was at least one fundamental commonality — a belief in the power of education and a commitment to the American Dream."

For Levine, who went on to the Bronx High School of Science, Brandeis, and graduate school, education was the foundation of his success, and his career. Currently president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, Levine has also taught on the faculty of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, been president of Bradford College and a senior fellow at the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education and Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The power of education to transform people's lives is a bedrock belief for Levine.

Unfortunately, the South Bronx "village" that nurtured Levine and his friends and propelled them onwards and upwards into the American middle class had vanished by the time the young men that Levine and Scheiber profile in this book emerge on the scene. What had been an aspirational, working-class (or even lower-middle-class) neighborhood in Levine's day had become a symbol as the residence of a permanent underclass.

When Levine was a child, only 6 percent of the children in his neighborhood lived in single-parent families. For the Dominican young men — Leonel Disla, Juan Carlos Reyes and Carlos Pilarte — whose stories contrast so sharply with Levine, 46 percent of the households in their South Bronx "village" were headed by single women. In Levine's era, doctors, dentists, accountants and schoolteachers also lived in the community, serving as unofficial mentors and role models. For these Dominican young men, their streets were absent of any role models aside from gang members or drug dealers. It's a world of no jobs, no ambitions, and no sense of a future that could in any way be different from an intolerable present. Social mobility is stunted.

For Leo, whose tragic story is the counterpoint



Arthur Levine / Laura Scheiber

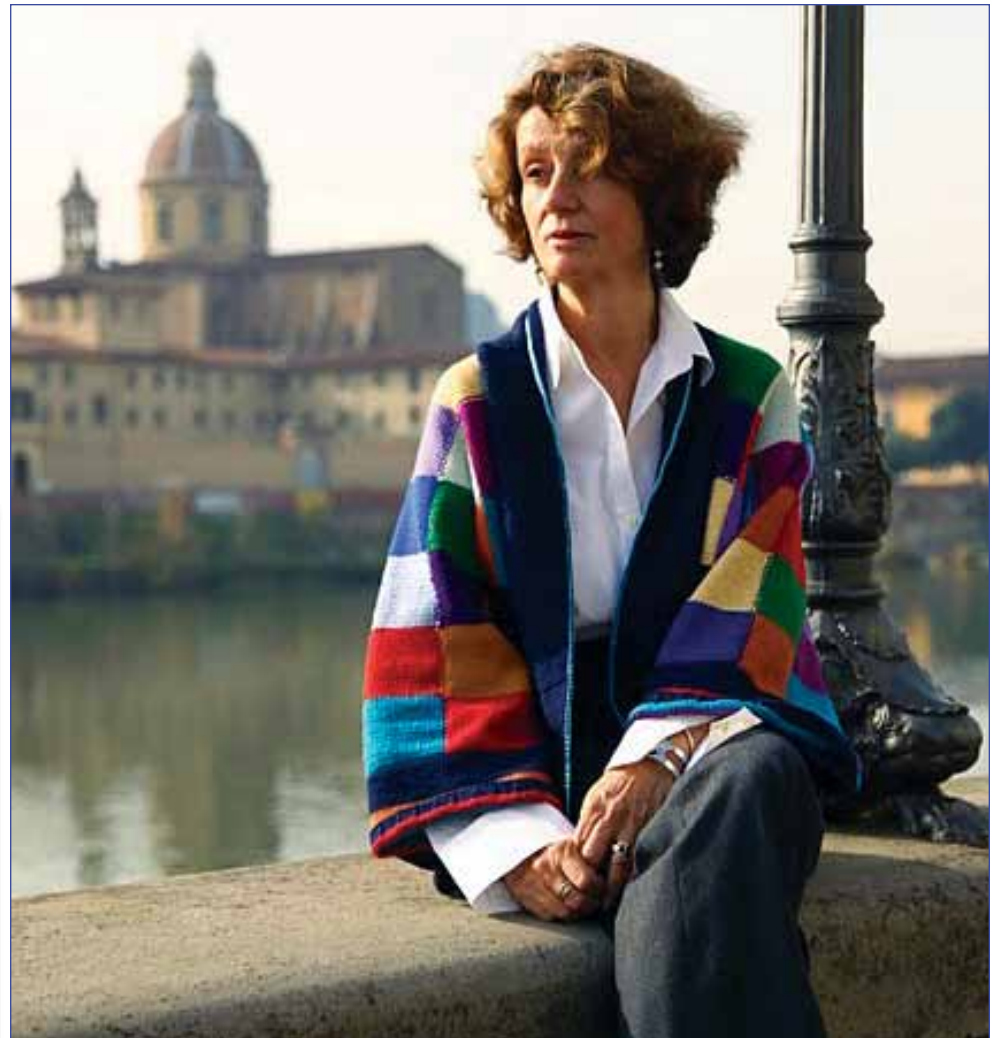
to Levine's, the bleak narrative of poor schooling (not helped by attending four schools in as many years), a lack of adult guidance and role models, and an inability to see school as anything other than a boring warehouse, predictably leads to what one would expect: gang involvement, dangerous encounters with the police, and premature sexual relationships that trap both parties.

In this South Bronx, which is isolated linguistically, racially, economically and educationally, Levine and Scheiber observe that "what would still be missing from the boys' lives is the belief Arthur and his friends shared that all things were possible and they had in their hands the means to achieve them."

Despite the mostly grim narrative that Leo's story exemplifies, there are glimmers of hope. Both Juan Carlos and Carlos manage to find a way out of the South Bronx to a larger world. The essential question for Levine and Scheiber is how to provide similar experiences and opportunities for more youngsters to emulate Juan Carlos and Carlos.

This is a compelling and worthwhile book, especially for those who teach in inner-city schools. #

CAMILLA TRINCHIERI TALKS ABOUT HER LATEST BOOK AND THE IMPORTANCE OF READING



By **JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.**

"Ciao!" Camilla Trinchieri thanks readers for stopping by her Web site. She hopes they're book lovers. She's not pushing, though she wouldn't mind if there were interest in her own work. She wants people to read more, young people in particular, and especially if they think they'd like to be writers: "Books are precious things that enrich our lives." Schools present too little in the way of engaging reading or inspiring assignments to prompt writing. Kids are self-absorbed, so what! Build on that fact and get them to access their emotions. Who in your family is important to you, and why? "Writing is something that makes you feel better." She thinks Kindle will help — "it's a gadget."

Love of reading and writing should begin in grammar school, if not at home. College is too late. Trinchieri teaches at a college in Florence that attracts American college juniors on their year abroad. Flaubert? Henry James? Silence. "Surely, you've got to have heard of Jane Austen." One hand, only one hand, goes up.

She likes to read authors who write beautifully — who evidence good prose and psychological depth. Good books "excite" her, make her a better writer. Trinchieri is an advocate of MFA programs that turn on discussions of the craft of other writers: "how did he/she pull it off?" Such programs can "open your eyes." The drawback is for the novelist. Most workshops are designed for the short story. No program, however, can teach someone how to write. And no writing conference can get you "in." Agents are critical, and you might meet some at a conference, but the main benefit is mingling with peers. Writing is a lonely activity; it's nice to know you're not alone.

Born in Prague, the child of an Italian diplomat and a Czech mother, Camilla Trinchieri, who came to this country when she was 12, returned to Italy, after having been graduated from Barnard. She worked on some high-profile films as a dubber, producer and director in the Italian movie industry, but she came back to the states in 1980, wanting to write. She sold De Cecco pasta in Little Italy, did some translating, and worked in

advertising. Of her "tightwad" boss in advertising, who wouldn't give her a raise, she remarks that she was tempted to put aside the research she was doing on a book loosely based on her mother's life, and "kill" him. On paper, of course.

Sharp, direct, with a dry sense of humor, Trinchieri does not offer up expected or anticipated answers — about her own work, the work of others or the writing life. Over the years she has been writing two kinds of books: mystery novels under the name Camilla T. Crespini and biographical fiction based on family history. She describes "Finding Alice," which takes place in Prague and Rome, as a "love letter to the mother I never had" (her mother succumbed to mental illness during the war). It was published earlier this year in Italy to fine reviews.

The genres reinforce one another. "Finding Alice" was rewarding but difficult to write. The mysteries, which were a lot of fun, also engaged her in research and drew on her clear-eyed assessment of the field. Though she believes that the heart of a good mystery is its exploration of emotions, she knows the industry is "market oriented" — how much money will this book make? Kids are already tainted. She recalls speaking to a 5th-grade class — a good idea, most kids don't know what writers look like — and was horrified when one 5th-grader asked: How much money do you make? (Her answer was that such a consideration doesn't motivate her, or most writers.)

Mysteries have resolutions, a not-inconsequential thing in our scary, ambiguous world, but the well-written traditional mystery is hard to get published because grit and gore, sex and sadism rule, not just in the print world (usually the province of male authors) but on TV, where reality shows have set a standard for violence. Publishers want brutality along with something topical and exotica. She's given the protagonist of her mystery series a rest now "because she and I have settled into our new lives." In writing "Finding Alice," however, she shows how new life grows out of reconciliation with the old. Her personal essay on writing is well worth a visit: [#">http://www.camillatrinchieri.com. #](http://www.camillatrinchieri.com)

MOVIES

VICKI ABELES: PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR COMBATING STUDENT STRESS AND TRANSFORMING OUR SCHOOLS

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

After observing her own children straining over study, and hearing how some youngsters, so driven and pressure cooked to achieve, made themselves ill — one even committed suicide — corporate attorney and loving mom Vicki Abeles decided she had to do something to bring more awareness of this “national epidemic” to the fore and, through wide discussion, generate action at a policy level. She began from her base in California, but her efforts at reform are now going global in the form of an impressive education documentary, which she produced and directed. It’s called, cleverly enough, “Race to Nowhere.”

The terrible irony, her research showed, was that the more kids stayed up all hours doing homework and exhausting themselves with after-school programs designed for resumes; the more they and their parents and teachers obsessed over tests, and the more competitive high-stakes learning, with its inevitable concomitant — cheating — came to define school systems, the less likely it was that many of these very same youngsters would succeed in college — and life. By succeed, she means being happy and creative individuals, imaginative and critically intelligent professionals able to work independently and collaboratively.

2010, Ms. Abeles notes, is the “year of the education documentary,” and one of the distinguishing features of “Race to Nowhere,” a production of the company she founded, Reel Link Films, is that it was made without a massive budget. Nicely timed for the start of the school year, the 85-minute film will be shown for one week starting September 10 at the Independent Film Center in New York City and at Laemmie’s Sunset 5 in



Los Angeles, and then, starting September 30, for another week in hundreds of theaters, schools and institutions across the country in time for National Child Health Day.

The goal is to bring large groups of people together to watch the film, to build a community of interested and affected students and adults, and ask: “How do we define achievement? How can we make choices that support the healthy development of young people? How can we end the race to nowhere?” How can we preserve the love of learning kids once had, one teacher asks dismayingly in the film. Youngsters tend to say things are fine, when in fact they’re not, and parents, anxious that relaxed homework or study standards in their children’s schools might mean falling behind in the competition, may be unwilling to speak up, to make the first move. Abeles reports, however, that at a typical screening, the number of parents showing up is phenomenal.

Why use film for getting out the message?

For the very reason that it can — and should — be shown in a setting where large numbers of people come together, Abeles says. It matters if students and adults see that they are not alone in being disturbed at and frustrated by the degree to which academic pressure can adversely affect student performance. Thus, “Race to Nowhere” is not a DVD; the presence of community is essential. The best venues are theaters, school auditoriums, gyms, and institutions open to the public.

Though Abeles says she has always been interested in issues facing children, women and families, “Race to Nowhere” was clearly motivated by concern for her own children, 13, 11 and 8 at the time. They appear in the film for approximately five minutes because they inspired it. Now, three years after beginning work on production, and with the premiere of the film having taken place last fall at the Mill Valley Film Festival in Marin County, Calif., calls for screening are streaming in. Nine states have already had over 70 screenings, and she’s already received over 1,000 requests for this fall. The inquiries come from both urban and suburban school districts, including inner-city schools. To date, 25 countries have also asked to show it. Student stress “is a global issue.”

Though Q-and-A is not a formal part of screenings, facilitators are on hand to lead discussions. She herself still tries to attend most events. A concise FAQ distributed at events has been augmented by a 200-page facilitators’ training guide for use by school counselors, psychologists, parents and educators.

For information on the future of “Race to Nowhere,” go to <http://www.racetonowhere.com> for a trailer and screening schedule. As for Abeles’ own future, she says that while she is still concentrating on “changing the mind set” of those who view school success as a “race” to the top, she is also investigating related issues, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the promising therapies being offered to address it. #

Laughter And Tears: ‘The Concert’

By JAN AARON

Amid the clutter of summer special effects films, director Radu Mihaileanu’s “The Concert” offers the movie-goer a witty and genuinely touching story. The film makes fun of old-style communists, Yiddish ingenuity, and the Russian underworld.

Thirty years ago Andrei Filipov (Alexei Guskov) was the conductor of the famous Bolshoi Orchestra, until he was dismissed for refusing to fire the Jewish musicians as part of Brezhnev’s anti-Semitic decrees. (The real-life Bolshoi conductor, Evgeny Svetlanov, was forced out during the early ’60s for failing to fire Jewish musicians in the Bolshoi orchestra.) A recovering alcoholic, Andrei now works in a deeply degrading job as a janitor at the Bolshoi while his wife runs a business of providing extras for the vulgar lavish weddings and funerals of the Russian rich and powerful.

When he accidentally intercepts a fax inviting the orchestra to perform in Paris at the Theatre du Chatelet, he hatches a plan to fulfill his dream. He will unite his old musicians (now all working at menial jobs) and they’ll pretend to be the famed orchestra to play Tchaikovsky’s “Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.” His one odd demand is that the famous French violinist Anne-Marie Jacquet (Melanie Laurent) accompany them, for mysterious reasons.

There is funny banter between the clashing personalities of Andre and his best friend, and first cellist, Sacha (Dmitry Nazarov), and Ivan Gavrillov (Valeri Barinov), the party official responsible for their downfall. He immediately accepts the job as their fake manager because of



Actress Melanie Laurent plays a violin virtuoso in “The Concert.”

his secret longing to see Paris, despite his continuous quoting of Party beliefs.

Mihaileanu uses two styles to depict the East and West. A fixed camera shows the French chic, but reserved; the Russians, shot mainly with a handheld camera, are animated but in outdated attire and rundown surroundings.

“The Concert” loses some of its charm with too many subplots. But a key scene between Andre and Anne-Marie hits just the right note and captures the difference between the long lost dreams of the Eastern bloc and the freer, more flexible West.

The film’s emotional ending is beautiful and is accompanied by the Tchaikovsky concerto, evoking both tears and laughter. So go! Enjoy! (In Russian and French with English subtitles). #

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CITY WRESTLERS COMPETE IN MAYOR'S CUP TOURNAMENT

By RICHARD KAGAN

An outstanding citywide wrestling event took place recently at the 369th Regiment Armory in Harlem. Upon entering the main floor, you could hear the yelps, claps, and clamor of hundreds of young wrestlers who were in qualifying rounds of the Mayor's Cup, an important meet for those interested in the sport of wrestling. This meet had the feel of a wrestling fair, with coaches, wrestlers, teams of wrestlers, and parents milling about. In one corner a vendor was selling T-shirts, and another setup had training sessions where you could improve your wrestling techniques.

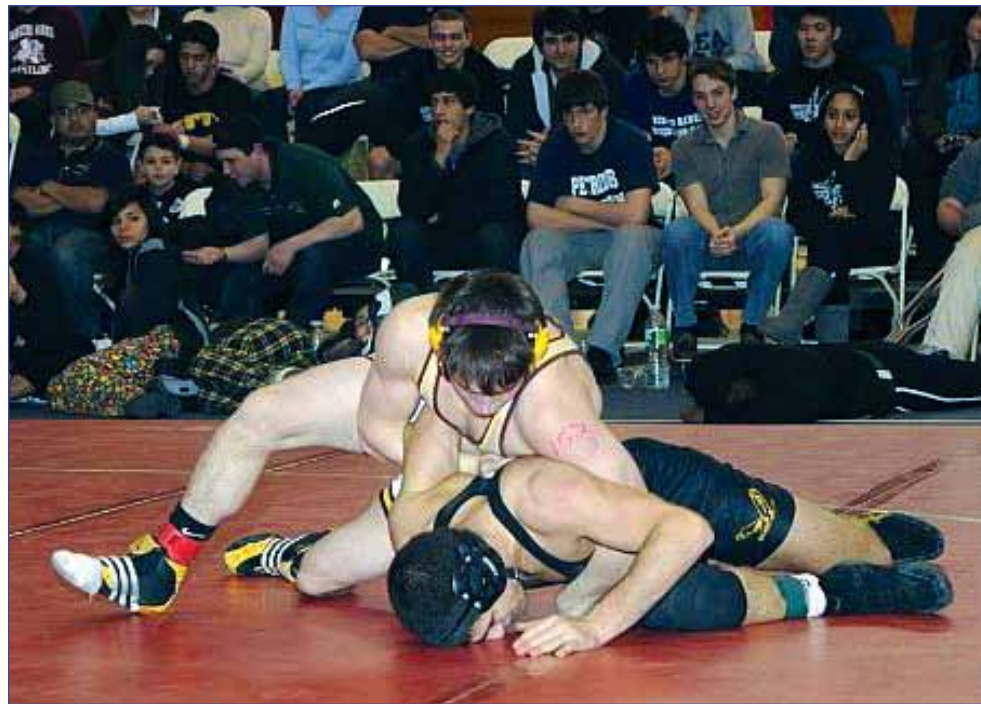
The Mayor's Cup has become an annual intra-city event in which top wrestlers from all across the city can compete against each other. The tournament is the result of the efforts of a number of groups who make up the growing wrestling community in the city. The New York City Sports Commission, the Metropolitan Wrestling Association, the Beat the Streets program, and the Public School Athletic League are among the sponsoring participants.

What makes this event so special is to see the

hundreds of youngsters from middle school to high school competing in the event. "Every kid here is a winner, every single kid, whether they win or lose today," said coach Eddie McColgan of the Petrides team from Staten Island.

The competition on this day was to whittle down the large number of wrestlers vying for a title match, which was scheduled to be held the next day. New York City wrestlers and coaches look forward to the Mayor's Cup all season. "I think this meet is doing better things every year," said wrestling coach Ned Campbell of James Madison High School. "This is a big weekend every year. This is a weekend my wrestlers have to put on their calendar right away." Campbell stressed that just to pick the wrestlers to come to the tournament is an acknowledgment. "[It] means I think you can place in the top 8," said Campbell.

The day really belongs to the wrestlers, some of whom are new to the sport and are learning the ropes. One wrestler, Michael Williams of the Frederick Douglass Academy in Harlem, is a middle-school student. He said a gym teacher



Ben Villaret of Monsignor Farrell High School gains the upper hand on Joe Halkius of Townsend Harris High School in the finals of the 152-pound weight class.

Sonia Galarza, Champion of Juvenile Justice

By GIOVANNY PINTO

Sonia Galarza is one of those people so adept and dedicated to her job that even when she isn't at work her mind and heart are always nearby. Like the time she lost her clothes at her local laundromat: On a trek downstairs to reclaim what was hers among a heap of clothes, she found tons of men's white dress shirts piled in one corner, this being one of the staples of menswear in her Jewish community of Midwood. She asked the clerk what was to become of them. They were either to be discarded or donated. She came back the following Sunday with a truck to cart away more than 500 clean dress shirts.

And the shirts? They were to be given to the people she helps in her life's work as director of programs for the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice. She gave the shirts to young men going to

court. The look contributed to some kids' favorable decisions, keeping them out of detention. Galarza says this is her ultimate goal: to get the kids out and keep them out. "I tell these kids, 'I don't want to see you back here, I don't want you to graduate to Riker's (Island), and I don't want to see you six feet under,'" says Galarza of her message to kids. "The reality is we have lost kids. Kids in gangs."

Galarza was honored for her work earlier this year as the recipient of a 2010 Sloan Public Service Award. The award was presented by the Fund for the City of New York and recognizes outstanding civil servants.

Galarza has been with the Department of Juvenile Justice for over 25 years. She is in charge of recreation, programming, religion, and life transitions. Before that she was a case manager and also worked in aftercare. She has found that the main keys to success are creative programming that keeps the kids engaged, and bringing in outside guests who come to encourage the kids. She then ties in a program in the community that the kids live in so that when they are released they will have something to do. For example, she had someone from Bike New York, an organization whose mission is to promote and encourage bicycling and bicycle safety through education, public events, and collaboration with community and government organizations, come in and give a lesson on bike safety and maintenance. Afterward, she gave the kids information on bike trails and tours around the city. "I'm in the business of planting seeds, to give them



Sonia Galarza

options when they leave," said Galarza.

Galarza has pursued and succeeded in getting the New York Knicks, the New York Red Bulls, the New York Giants, professional wrestlers, the screenwriter for the film "Moulin Rouge," and the Puerto Rican Travel Theater, among others, to come in and speak to the kids. She has also worked with the department of education to bring physical education and basketball tournaments, with John Jay College to partner with Olympic swimmer Jane Katz to give swimming lessons, and with the Summer Youth Program to come in and sign kids up so that when they are released they are enrolled for a job.

Another important aspect of Galarza's work is with the families. By getting them involved they can make all the difference. She holds fairs that inform them about all the programs in communities that can both benefit

kids and the parents. She also encourages them to show up to the kids' hearings, which can make the difference between the child being held in detention or being released. Galarza's own family played a major role in her upbringing: her mother, sisters, but more importantly her grandmother, Arroyo Roman. Galarza grew up on the Lower East Side when drugs were rampant among people her age, and her grandmother taught her right from wrong. "I was from the ghetto, I hung out with those kids. I didn't do what they did, but we played pool, handball, we hung out. And I lost a lot of those friends to drugs," emphasized Galarza.

Scott Trent, one of Galarza's colleagues, believes this is part of her success. "The kids resonate with her because they see she really cares about them and she is real."

In Galarza's line of work, the kids she helps go through a revolving door, one which she hopes to never see them go through again. And, after being noted in several New York City news outlets for the Sloan Award, someone came back.

Anthony McFadden, now 40, for whom Galarza had been case manager in 1986, wrote her an e-mail. "As a 16-year-old kid I never forgot the encouraging words you told me. Although I did not escape the system right away, I am now the criminal court justice coordinator for The Doe Fund and will be graduating New York Technical College later this year."

Her mind always at work, Galarza has plans for McFadden to come in and speak at some of the detention centers. #

recently started the wrestling program at his school and that he joined this past year. He said he was getting used to it and wanted to see how he matched up against opponents in his 120-pound weight class.

Williams brought a 7-1 record into the meet. "I'm hoping I'll get first place and do my best," he said. "I think I'm ready."

John Welch, the president of the Metropolitan Wrestling Association, has been around the mats for many years. He was a member of the 1964 U.S. Olympic men's wrestling team. "That's where you either win or learn a lot. I learned a lot." Welch worked on the New Jersey Executive Committee in wrestling for 12 years. He was also involved with the 1992 U.S. Olympic wrestling team. Last year at the Mayor's Cup, a parent came up to him and said, "This is the best thing my kid ever did." He said that for him to hear

that, after having been involved in the sport for about 50 years, was "heartwarming."

Beat the Streets, a nonprofit program, is making a difference in this year's meet. Brian Griffin, the program's president and executive director, said his program is structured to have kids use wrestling as a way to go to college. "The lessons you learn on the mat carry over to the classroom," said Griffin. Beat the Streets stresses good academics, proper health, and nutrition. "Active children is what we are looking for," said Griffin. His program now reaches 150 schools and involves over 5,000 students. Griffin said his group works closely with the PSAL. "We work hand in hand. It's a great partnership."

Michael Polo, 17, a junior at Aviation High School in Queens, won his match and felt pretty good about the outcome. "It's a pride and privilege to be at an event like this," said Polo. #

Secular Jewish Education Option

By DAVID MAIMIN

It's an ongoing debate! Can a child be given a meaningful Jewish education without reference to a deity? To those who know The City Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, a vibrant, New York-based community of secular Jews, the answer is a resounding "yes." Youngsters in the congregation's biweekly Sunday KidSchool develop strong bonds to their heritage as they study its history, culture, traditions, values, and symbols. Jewish literature, ancient and modern, is examined, with critical thinking encouraged. Holiday preparations, music, art, and story-telling contribute joy and fun. The City Congregation's highly regarded two-year Bar/Bat Mitzvah program takes young teens through a mentored, personal journey of research, learning, and self-discovery. Investigation of family history reveals Jewish roots and connections. Understanding tzedakah (charity) helps shape personal values. Role models are identified and community service performed. In-depth research papers on Jewish-related subjects are written and presented at Bar/Bat Mitzvah services. Topics have included: Noah and the Flood Myths, Children's Art and Poetry at Terezin, Development of Hebrew as a Modern Language, and New York Jewish Delis. The proud Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and celebration is a testament to the power of a secular, cultural Jewish education.

Adults also have educational opportunities at The City Congregation. Held concurrently with children's Sunday classes, Adult Perspectives offers lectures, panels, and discussions. Upcoming programs include "Talking About the Holocaust to Our Children," "Jews and Journalism," "Secular Jews and Spirituality," "Global Hunger and Our Responsibility," and a

performance by the City Congregation chorus of show tunes by Jewish composers and lyricists. Friday night Shabbat services also offer intellectual enrichment. Coming up: "Perspectives in Jewish Humor and Folklore," "The Meaning of the Sabbath to Secular and Cultural Jews," "Jews and Rock and Roll," and "The Three Moses: Maimonides, Mendelssohn, and Montefiore." The very beautiful High Holiday Services include moving reflections and commentary by members as well as readings and music.

Established almost 20 years ago, The City Congregation is part of an older national and international movement (communities on five continents including ones in Israel and the former Soviet Union). While most members live in Manhattan and Brooklyn, others come from throughout the metropolitan area, including New Jersey, Westchester, and Long Island. Diverse in their backgrounds, they embrace a human-centered philosophy that celebrates Jewish culture and identity as well as humanistic values. Reason rather than faith is seen as the source of truth. Critical thinking is encouraged.

As a young, growing congregation, The City Congregation relies on rented space for its programs. Guests are always welcome. Sunday School and Adult Perspectives are at SAJ, 15 West 86th St., Shabbat Services at the 14th St. Y, 344 East 14th St., and High Holidays at the majestic Desmond Tutu Center, 180 10th Ave (20th St.). Visit Fall Open Houses (15 West 86th St.) Sept. 12, Sept. 26, Oct. 3 at 1:30 pm for program overview and class visitation (child-care available). Learn more about Humanistic Judaism and The City Congregation and see full calendar at www.citycongregation.org. Phone: 212-213-1002. #

A Call for Alternate Paths to Teacher Certification

By DR. JOHN J. RUSSELL

In May 2008, Mark McQuillan, the Connecticut Commissioner of Education, issued a memorandum outlining the requirements for early childhood and elementary education certification that the State Board of Education had recently enacted. As of July 1, 2009, in order to obtain certification in either of these critical areas, teachers in Connecticut have to demonstrate their knowledge of foundations of reading development, development of reading comprehension, and reading assessment and instruction.

Teachers applying for these certifications in Connecticut are now required to pass tests in each of these disciplines. In order to pass the test of reading development, teachers have to demonstrate their understanding of phonological and phonemic awareness, concepts of print and the alphabetic principle, the role of phonics in promoting reading development, and word analysis skills and strategies. For the section on development of reading comprehension, teachers must display their understanding of vocabulary development, how to apply reading comprehension skills and strategies to imaginative/literary texts and informational/expository texts. For the test on reading assessment and instruction, teachers need to show that they understand formal and informal methods of assessing reading development and multiple approaches to reading instruction.

Connecticut's actions were newsworthy even though these instructional competencies were contained in the recommendations of the National Reading Panel (2000) that were published years earlier. The reason that the change to Connecticut's certification was still noteworthy is depressingly simple. Despite the preponderance of scientific evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of instruction delivered by teachers well-informed in these areas, few states have made significant changes to their certification requirements in response to the recommendations of the National Reading Panel. As a result of the failure of states and schools to require teachers to be knowledgeable of evidence-based reading instruction practices, up to 40 percent of students in the United States are struggling or failing readers (Lyon, 1998). To the casual observer, the root causes of this disastrous disconnect between scientific knowledge and actual practice are not at all obvious, but the very troubling results are: 8 million American students in grades 4 to 12 are not fluent readers (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), and 3,000 students drop out of high school every day because of poor reading and writing skills (Partnership for Reading, 2003).

Inadequate certification requirements are only part of the problem. Teacher preparation programs simply do not sufficiently prepare new teachers. In the *Journal of Learning Disabilities* (2009), Louisa Moats cites research by Walsh, Glaser and Dunne-Wilcox (2006) in which they found that: "Courses provided in teacher licensing programs are often insufficient in content and design to enable the students to learn the subject matter and apply it to the teaching of reading." Moats' observations are confirmed by an analysis of the results of the Connecticut certification test in which "about one in three test-takers in teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities across the state have failed the exam since the state began using it last year as a licensing requirement" (The Connecticut Mirror, February 10, 2010), and failure rates exceeded 40 percent at some of the state's largest teacher preparation programs.

Joshi et al. writing in the *Journal of Learning Disabilities* (September, 2009) confirmed the deficiencies in teacher education programs, stating: "The National Council on Teacher Quality (Walsh, Glaser and Wilcox, 2006) concluded that many schools of education may not be teaching their pre-service teachers the basic knowledge required to teach literacy skills." An earlier study (Moats and Lyon, 1996) also demonstrated that teachers have "insufficiently developed concepts



about language and pervasive conceptual weaknesses in the very skills that are needed for direct, systematic, language-focused reading instruction, such as the abilities to count phonemes and to identify phonic relationships." In what can only be considered an understatement, Joshi (September, 2009) summarized his findings: "It would seem ... that we need to turn our attention to improving teacher education and teacher development at the early grade levels by providing intensive instruction on the linguistic features of the English language."

Based on these studies and the poor performance on the Connecticut certification test, it is clear pre-service teachers are not getting the content they need to be effective teachers of reading. Unfortunately, that is only part of the problem. Remarkably, Joshi and his colleagues also found that many instructors who teach reading are not themselves equipped to teach pre-service teachers about the structure of language. In Joshi's study the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition was administered to 78 college and university instructors who were responsible for teaching reading education classes to prospective reading teachers. Of the instructors, 68 had doctoral degrees and 10 were working on their doctoral degrees; all had previously taught in elementary schools. They came from 30 different colleges from the southwest United States. Their scores on the various domains tested were: phonology 78.97 percent, phonics 56.47 percent, morphology 34.36 percent, and comprehension 57.5 percent.

Given this worrisome condition of traditional teacher preparation programs, states are now turning to alternate paths to master's degrees and certification. The New York State Board of Regents recently approved a pilot program that will allow alternative organizations to create their own master's degree programs (New York Times, May 14, 2010). Organizations like Windward School applaud this initiative. At Windward, we have long recognized the deficits that smart, conscientious teachers bring with them simply because they did not receive proper training at their colleges and universities. To address this problem, Windward created the Teacher Training Institute (WTI) in 1988. The WTI is dedicated to providing the type of training that enables professionals to have the expertise needed to teach children of all abilities in both mainstream and remedial classrooms. It offers professional development based on the most current, scientifically validated research in child development, learning theory and pedagogy. WTI courses, workshops and lectures translate this research into practical classroom applications. In spring 2007, Windward Teacher Training Institute became an accredited IMSLEC training center, enabling the WTI to offer national certification in Multisensory Structured Language Education.

Before a teacher is given full teaching responsibility at Windward, the teacher must complete courses in scientifically validated strategies for teaching reading, writing and language that are offered by the WTI. In addition to completing

School of One: A More Active Approach to Learning



(L-R) Joel Rose, CEO, School of One; Joel Klein, New York City Schools Chancellor; Dominick D'Angelo, Principal, I.S. 228; Jeb Bush, former governor of Florida; and Christian Lazado, I.S. 228 6th-grade student

By YURIDIA PEÑA

At I.S. 228 in Brooklyn, a large classroom is filled with boisterous middle-schoolers, some sitting, others standing, huddled by tables and desks, busily working in groups independently or with a tutor. This is how students participating in the School of One pilot program are learning math.

This spring, the school received a special visit from Jeb Bush, the former governor of Florida, who was eager to see the new 21st-century classroom, designed by the New York City Department of Education, in action. "Do you like this more than regular school?" asked Schools Chancellor Joel Klein as he roamed around the room with the former governor. While some students nodded yes, others were too engaged to answer.

School of One transforms the traditional teaching model — one teacher instructing a group of students — into each student experiencing multiple modalities, including a variation of teacher-led lessons, one-on-one tutoring, virtual tutors, and independent learning. "To see kids excited is phenomenal," said Klein.

The architect of this innovative model is Joel Rose, who joined the department of education in 2006 and has been involved in education for more than 14 years. "We thought the middle school grades were the most appropriate grades to begin to pilot this," he said. The initiative was named one of Time magazine's "50 Best Inventions for 2009."

Technology plays an imperative role in this model. Students receive "play lists" that shows them their lesson schedules. Students have profiles set up where they and their teachers can track their progress. Virtual instruction on laptops offer students math games specifically designed to their level.

While students have a fun learning experience with a subject that might have been challenging before, teachers are then able to follow students'

these courses, teachers new to Windward are typically required to work under the direct supervision of a master teacher for two years. This commitment to professional development continues throughout a teacher's career at Windward where each Friday afternoon is devoted to professional development. Windward's program for professional development is consistent with the recommendations of the National Reading Panel (2000) and produces results that are in stark contrast to national data. At Windward, students who come to the school as struggling readers and writ-



Thomas Ingram, teacher, leads a math lesson to a small group of 6th-graders at I.S. 228 in Brooklyn

progress. "It shows you how each kid is doing," said Blair Heiser, math coach at I.S. 339 in the Bronx. I.S. 339 was one of three schools chosen for the pilot program, which started in January 2010, along with I.S. 228 and M.S. 131 in Manhattan (which hosted the pilot in 2009 as a summer program). Next fall these schools will be experiencing the School of One model throughout their school day.

So what's next for the School of One? Rose said there is a possibility the model will be offered in other subjects in the future. "We really want to make sure we get math right and study it and make sure we get the right results; once we feel like we have the right infrastructure and results we will begin to explore other subjects."

Students participating in the pilot program have seen academic improvements, including those with special needs. "I think we are getting some of the best results from students who have IEPs, because we are individualizing instruction for their particular learning styles and on their particular level," said Rose.

Rose hopes to add this program to about 10 schools by the fall of 2011 and hopes to one day see this initiative nationwide. "The most important thing to think about is how innovation has become synonymous with educational improvement in this city," said Klein. #

Dr. John J. Russell is head of Windward School.

THE DEAN'S COLUMN

A Power Loop

By ALFRED POSAMENTIER, Ph.D.

Can you imagine that a number is equal to the sum of the cubes of its digits? Take the time to explain exactly what this means. This should begin to “set them up” for this most unusual phenomenon. By the way, this is true for only five numbers. Below are these five most unusual numbers.

$$1 \rightarrow 1^3 = 1$$

$$153 \rightarrow 1^3 + 5^3 + 3^3 = 1 + 125 + 27 = 153$$

$$370 \rightarrow 3^3 + 7^3 + 0^3 = 27 + 343 + 0 = 370$$

$$371 \rightarrow 3^3 + 7^3 + 1^3 = 27 + 343 + 1 = 371$$

$$407 \rightarrow 4^3 + 0^3 + 7^3 = 64 + 0 + 343 = 407$$

Students should take a moment to appreciate these spectacular results and take note that these are the *only* such numbers for which this is true.

Taking sums of the powers of the digits of a number leads to interesting results. We can extend this procedure to get a lovely (and not to mention, surprising) technique you can use to have students familiarize themselves with powers of numbers and at the same time try to get to a startling conclusion.

Have them select any number and then find the sum of the cubes of the digits, just as we did above. Of course, for any other number than those above, they will have reached a new number. They should then repeat this process with each succeeding sum until they get into a “loop.” A loop can be easily recognized. When they reach a number that they already reached earlier, then they are in a loop. This will become clearer with an example.

Let's begin with the number **352** and find the sum of the cubes of the digits.

$$\text{The sum of the cubes of the digits of } 352 \text{ is:}$$

$$3^3 + 5^3 + 2^3 = 27 + 125 + 8 = 160.$$

Now we use this sum, 160, and repeat the process:

$$\text{The sum of the cubes of the digits of } 160 \text{ is:}$$

$$1^3 + 6^3 + 0^3 = 1 + 216 + 0 = 217.$$

Again repeat the process with 217:

$$\text{The sum of the cubes of the digits of } 217 \text{ is:}$$

$$2^3 + 1^3 + 7^3 = 8 + 1 + 343 = 352.$$

Surprise! This is the same number (**352**) we started with.

You might think it would have been easier to begin by taking squares. You are in for a surprise. Let's try this with the number 123.

Beginning with 123, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $1^2 + 2^2 + 3^2 = 1 + 4 + 9 = 14$.

1. Now using 14, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $1^2 + 4^2 = 1 + 16 = 17$.

2. Now using 17, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $1^2 + 7^2 = 1 + 49 = 50$.

3. Now using 50, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $5^2 + 0^2 = 25$.

4. Now using 25, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $2^2 + 5^2 = 4 + 25 = 29$.

5. Now using 29, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $2^2 + 9^2 = 85$.

6. Now using 85, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $8^2 + 5^2 = 64 + 25 = 89$.

7. Now using 89, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $8^2 + 9^2 = 64 + 81 = 145$.

8. Now using 145, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $1^2 + 4^2 + 5^2 = 1 + 16 + 25 = 42$.

9. Now using 42, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $4^2 + 2^2 = 16 + 4 = 20$.

10. Now using 20, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $2^2 + 0^2 = 4$.

11. Now using 4, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $4^2 = 16$.

12. Now using 16, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $1^2 + 6^2 = 1 + 36 = 37$.

13. Now using 37, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $3^2 + 7^2 = 9 + 49 = 58$.

14. Now using 58, the sum of the squares of the digits is: $5^2 + 8^2 = 25 + 64 = 89$.

Notice that the sum, 89, that we just got in step 14 is the same as in step 6, and so a repetition will now begin after step 14. This indicates that we would continue in a loop.

Students may want to experiment with the sums of the powers of the digits of any number and see what interesting results it may lead to. They should be encouraged to look for patterns of loops, and perhaps determine the extent of a loop based on the nature of the original number.

In any case, this intriguing unit can be fun just as it is presented here or it can be a source for further investigation by interested students. We need to bring more of these “spectacular” math wonders to our students! #

Dr. Alfred Posamentier is dean of the School of Education and professor of mathematics education at Mercy College. He is also author of over 45 Mathematics books, including: Mathematical Amazements and Surprises (Prometheus, 2009) Math Wonders to Inspire Teachers and Students (ASCD, 2003), and The Fabulous Fibonacci Numbers (Prometheus, 2007), and member of the New York State Mathematics Standards Committee.

**THE PLAY'S THE THING**

By JERROLD ROSS, Ph.D.

*“The play's the thing
In which to catch the conscience of the King.”*
— Hamlet

In a few short words Shakespeare captures the power of drama over mere words. Rather than confrontation with the man who murdered his father, Hamlet uses the symbols of drama to illustrate his emotions and conflicts.

The implications for classrooms today, including those that are designed to prepare teachers, is enormous. Those who promulgate “cooperative learning” as a successful strategy to produce learning forget that such learning should really become a form of “play” — that it is this attribute which transforms learning beyond dull routine. If teachers really understood cooperative learning at its best, they would see the clear resemblance of children's responses within the group to the interaction of theatrical ensembles. The actions they create take the players beyond the dull routine of factual acquisition to a truly higher order of thinking and of sharing thought. They have at their heart the planned lesson of providing children with the opportunity to work things out, each in his or her own style, emotionally and cognitively.

Moreover, play is the best way to guide children to connecting their thoughts. At its best it is the acting out of formal and informal interpersonal games wherein each move creates new relationships critical to thinking about relationships in every discipline and field. “Acting out,” when allowed to flourish, enables children to probe deeper meanings as another way of acquiring the skill of searching for understandings well below the surface of just mechanical problem-solving.

Nothing is worse than seeing children sitting together without teachers creating within them the excitement of such groups working at the transformation of facts into ideas and ideas into tangible outcomes.

Play can bring to life the drama of learning about different historical periods. Play can create imaginative responses to mathematics, as in the kindergarten activity of guessing what shape or form is in a sealed box by the way it reacts to being held and shaken. Play can bridge the gap between cultures, societies, and languages as children explore with one another the many ways they react to different stimuli. Play can transform learning language beyond chalkboard word-recognition or repetition, or to merely the dull recitation of duller stories.

Perhaps most important, play can change behavior and is the only way to receive and initiate the new child into the social group called a class. Games and imaginative ways to engage the child with the rest of the class can do more to help set the stage not just for acceptance, but for learning, than any other strategy.

Play is the best way to free the imagination of the child and to keep that imagination alive while he or she progresses through the grades. In the latest education craze to focus (almost to the exclusion of everything else) on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, we



have already been admonished by the great practitioners of these fields that “we don't need more engineers, we need those who can think.” And we are at the mercy of those who have already forgotten the pointed and poignant words included in the national committee report on 9/11, which referred to that event as “a failure of imagination.”

Need we be reminded that play as one of the most important ingredients in the classroom needs to be reinforced by play in children's theater, in moving to music, in physical education, and in dance as it spells out a story. As just one example, introduction to the song is best accomplished as children come to understand, through the lyrics — the story — what the music itself is all about. At the height of musical performance, professional artists, too, learn this in the Master Classes of Maria Callas, illustrating the aria, and Barbara Cook, the great songs of musical theater. Their message to students has been to forget the mere production of sound and work toward telling the story — the great drama of the text. Their charge is to lead the audience to imagine the story, each in his or her own way. It is the same as teachers must sustain the interest and the imagination of children. Authentic play in the regular classroom achieves its ultimate outcome as children are enabled to enliven their learning within experiences in the free, but developmentally appropriate, learning environment achieved by structured ways to use play.

The complexity of play in too many of today's schools has moved teachers further and further away from understanding its utility, and school leaders further still from being able to articulate how the overall education of our children is genuinely affected by enabling our children to profit from freeing their minds to absorb new ideas in a manner authentic to children. Play is viewed as a diversion from real learning. When our educational leaders wake up to the fact that children are children and need to behave as children while learning, we will no longer need to worry about this nation's educational achievement among the other nations of the world. #

Dr. Jerrold Ross is Dean of The School of Education at St. John's University.

**PREPPING FOR THE SAT:
PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

By FRANCES KWELLER, J.D.

Though the SAT may seem intimidating at first, the test is absolutely learnable. There are thousands of students who do well enough to get into the school of their dreams. How do these students do it? It all comes down to practice.

Given the basic skills necessary for doing well on the SAT, it is clear that early practice truly does make perfect. Studies show that students who begin studying for the SAT early are more likely to get a top score. This makes sense as well, since the ins and outs of the SAT are relatively easy to learn. It is a test designed to trick students from start to finish. With more practice, kids have a greater chance at learning those little tricks that most students fall for year after year. As students get more comfortable with the timing and challenges of the SAT, they begin to see patterns in the questions that they failed to realize at first glance. Taking untimed practice tests to learn the question types is always a good idea. Drilling with various problems will teach a student to recognize mistakes and correct them. Recognizing patterns in the types of mistakes you are making is an essential step toward allowing yourself to see what you are getting wrong and why. This

helps you determine what kind of material you should focus your efforts on in order to minimize the amount of questions you get wrong on the real exam. From there, students can move on to taking full, timed practice tests to simulate the testing environment.

Over time, smart students will build up stamina and get used to the grind of the SAT. This will lead to prolonged elite performance throughout the test. Students who practice efficiently rarely feel the “crash” of energy toward the middle or latter end of the exam. Take the initiative and practice a little bit every day (yes, it is manageable!). There are many ways to prepare for the SAT, from vocabulary study to math practice. No matter what strategy your child employs, he or she will benefit from consistent practice. Starting early and building long-term familiarity with the material is the secret to high scores. Research shows this is the best way to unlock all potential and open doors to elite universities. #

Frances Kweller, J.D. is the founder of Kweller Prep Tutoring and Educational Services, Intense Prep for Intense Kids. Please visit <http://www.KwellerPrep.com> for more or e-mail info@KwellerPrep.com



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The New York Botanical Garden Launches Online Tool for Students

The New York Botanical Garden recently launched a new online educational resource that brings the wonder of the Botanical Garden's Enid A. Haupt Conservatory — the largest Victorian-style glasshouse in America, which displays plants in diverse natural habitats from tropical rain forests to arid deserts — into homes and classrooms around the world. Plant Hunters is a new, Web-based tool that provides a virtual exploration of the Haupt Conservatory and serves as a dynamic online educational resource in plant science. Created with support from the Verizon Foundation, this free tool is now accessible for family and classroom learning on the Botanical Garden's Web site at: <http://www.nybg.org/planthunters> and on Verizon Thinkfinity, <http://www.thinkfinity.org>, a comprehensive educational Web site that provides thousands of free educational resources for teachers, parents and students. In this United Nations-declared "Year of Biodiversity," Plant Hunters provides an important new resource for K-8 science education.

"The New York Botanical Garden developed Plant Hunters as a way to extend the reach of its Children's Education programs and resources to a global audience," said Gregory Long, president of The New York Botanical Garden. "This engaging new tool will help students and families everywhere discover the beauty and importance of the world's biodiversity by making the rich collections and wealth of information contained in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory available across the country and around the world."

"Through the use of online technology children from across the country can virtually experience the wonders of The New York Botanical Garden," said Verizon Foundation President Patrick Gaston. "We are proud to partner with the Botanical Garden on this valuable project and add it to the ever growing number of resources available on Verizon Thinkfinity."

Through Plant Hunters, families can supple-

ment their visits to the Haupt Conservatory by exploring 64 of the plants showcased there in more detail at home. The site is also intended to provide families unable to visit the conservatory with a rewarding educational experience. Plant Hunters enables users to experience the diverse plant life displayed in the conservatory, such as: the Palms of the Americas Gallery, which includes the largest collection of New World palms under glass; the Lowland Tropical Rain Forest Gallery and the Upland Tropical Rain Forest Gallery, which feature plant specimens used to treat human illnesses and illustrate the ethno-botanical study of how plants and people relate; the Deserts of the Americas and Deserts of Africa Galleries, which house plants such as cacti, agave, boojum trees and aloes that have adapted to dry and challenging climates; as well as plants adapted to life in the water in the Aquatic Plants and Vines Gallery.

Plant Hunters combines digital illustrations and interactive games with expert-developed plant science content as an engaging way to teach users about the world's plants. The site allows users to navigate the diverse desert and tropical galleries of the conservatory, watch videos with Botanical Garden scientists, listen to descriptions about each gallery in the conservatory, discover each plant's origin and biome, and play seven different Plant Challenges. Children can advance from a "Beginning Biologist" to a "Cool Conservationist," and finally to a "Professional Plant Hunter" as they navigate the site. Kids can record their success by printing an official scorecard. Both teachers and parents can integrate the Plant Hunters site into classroom and home-based learning by visiting the Classroom Resources page, which features downloadable classroom materials and activities that align with New York State and National Science Standards. #

More information about the Garden's Children Education programs can be found online at: www.nybg.org/edu/.

Interested in Starting a School Garden?

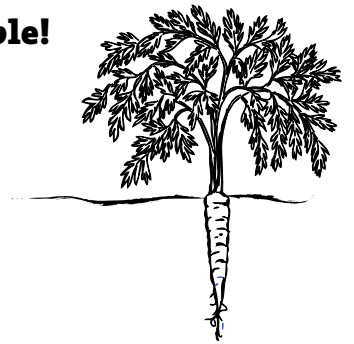
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Keeping the Fire In Children's Eyes Burning Brightly

By ELLEN GALINSKY

Years ago, as the first step in a study we were planning on children and learning, I travelled around the country talking to children. I interviewed groups of children from the sixth through the twelfth grades, asking them about their experiences in learning — at home, in their neighborhoods, in school, in church, anywhere. Despite the fact that these children came from very different backgrounds and communities, they told me very similar stories.

Most of the children described learning as “learning stuff,” as the acquisition of facts, figures, and concepts. The learning experiences they described were primarily imposed, and their motivation was primarily extrinsic rather than also being intrinsic. I heard little connection to learning in the children I interviewed. Even worse, I found that there was little, if any, fire in their eyes when they talked about learning.

There is no question that there are learning problems in this country. We are all too familiar with the problem of dropout rates, but I was seeing a different but equally disturbing kind of dropout. It is clear that children don't have to drop out of school to drop out of learning, which is the case for far too many of them as evidenced by a study conducted



by the University of Indiana of more than 81,000 high school students. “Learning” was far down on the list of reasons they go to school, with the most frequently cited reasons being to get a degree, because it is the law, and to see friends. This lack of engagement in learning is a huge problem for young people themselves, for their future employers, and for our society as a whole.

The second image I had was a very different kind of image. It was an image of babies and young children. They are voracious learners, absolutely unrelenting, in their attempts to see, to touch, to

understand, and to master everything. The fire in their eyes is burning brightly.

I have spent years to try to reconcile these two images: of too many older children turned off to learning and of young children who can't stop learning. My question was: “What happens to that fire in children's eyes, and what can we do to rekindle that fire if it has dimmed?”

Almost 10 years ago, my colleagues at New Screen Concepts and I began interviewing and filming more than 85 leading researchers who focus on early childhood development and neuroscience, and I have read more than a thousand studies.

From my immersion in child development and workforce research, I could see that a primary focus on educational content and information neglects the development of skills. I could also see that certain skills have the most powerful short-term and long-term effects on children's development. This became the focus of my inquiry: determining which skills studies have found have the most positive effects on children now and in the future. Based on empirical evidence, I identified seven skills, which I call life skills because of their powerful potential to help children thrive socially, emotionally, and intellectually over their lives. They include such skills as “focus and self control” and “taking

on challenges.”

All of these life skills are based, in one way or another, in the prefrontal cortex of the brain and involve what child development researchers call executive functions of the brain. It has become clear to me that we won't be able to effectively address the achievement gap in this country unless we help all children gain life skills.

What, then, can we do to keep the fire in children's eyes burning brightly, to keep them engaged in learning? There are many ways that I detail in my book, “Mind in the Making,” but if I had to choose just one, I would wish that all of us — teachers, principals, parents, grandparents, other family members, friends and neighbors — search for and find what really interests the children in our lives and to do one thing every day to promote and extend this interest, keeping them engaged in learning more about it. If we all did this, just think of what a difference it would make! #

Ellen Galinsky is president and co-founder of the Families and Work Institute, and author of “Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs.” For more information about the seven essential life skills and the national Mind in the Making initiative, please visit <http://www.mindinthemaking.org>.

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