ALUMNI PROFILE: CHERYLE LEVINE, Queensborough Community College ‘75

President, Queensborough Alumni Association; Founder, CHS Payroll LLC

As president of the Queensborough Alumni Association, Cheryl Levine is a model of leadership and philanthropic generosity. Since 2004, she has expanded the membership of the association by motivating board members to reach out to alumni, spearheaded alumni events and diversified the cabinet to include a younger generation. Today, 50 percent of the cabinet consists of alumni from the 2000- Cheryle Levine 2006 graduating classes.

Ms. Levine says that recalling her exceptional professors led to her involvement in the alumni association. She has contributed $100,000 to the college to date. Her family also has established three endowed scholarships, affording a new generation of students the same educational experience she once received. Ms. Levine and her husband, Steve, have co-chaired the journal committee for the college’s annual gala fundraiser, Partners for Progress, for the past four years and have been instrumental in helping the college raise and exceed its fundraising goals for this event.

Ms. Levine’s devotion to Queensborough is matched only by her passion for business, which led to an outstanding career in accounting and culminated in the launch of her payroll and human resources consulting firm, CHS Payroll LLC. Two of her employees are students from the college. “Both of my Queensborough employees possess dynamite technical knowledge and people skills,” she says. If I were in high school today, I would choose Queensborough again as the right place to get my start for success at a four-year college and beyond.”

Submitted by Queensborough Community College

CUNY HONORS ITS SUPPORTERS AT COMMENCEMENT

CUNY put the spotlight on philanthropy at commencement this year, honoring some of its key supporters and tapping several as keynote speakers.

Philanthropist, real estate developer and 1943 City College alumnus Bernard Spitzer, who recently established The Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at City College, was awarded the President’s Medal for Distinguished Service.

Sidney M. Harman, PhD, Baruch College class of ’39, delivered the college’s keynote address. Dr. Harman, executive chairman of Harman International Industries Inc. is the founder of the Harman Writers-in-Residence program at Baruch.

Brooklyn College awarded the Presidential Medal to Barry R. Feinstein, class of ’74, and Howard “Woody” Tangier. Mr. Feinstein is chair of the Brooklyn College Foundation and creator of the Barry R. Feinstein Presidential Scholarship. Mr. Tangier, whose father, Alexander Tangier, was a Brooklyn College alumnus, is a major supporter of the college’s Library Café and the benefactor of the Woody Tangier Auditorium.

Don Buchwald, class of ’59, chair of the Brooklyn College Foundation’s Performing Arts Center Committee, received the Distinguished Alumni Award “for his long and principled career as a talent agent ... and his steadfast loyalty to and support of his alma mater.”

Widely regarded as one of the best attorneys in the country, Hunter College aluma Sheila Birnbaum – BA, Phi Beta Kappa, class of ’60 and MA class of ’62 – received an honorary Doctorate of Laws.

Submitted by Brooklyn Community College

Jack Rudin

For more than three decades, the Rudin family has played a leading role in New York philanthropy. Jack Rudin and The Samuel and May Rudin Foundation have made a broad impact on CUNY through gifts to multiple colleges including $50,000” to the Macaulay Honors College this summer. Beneficiaries have included Brooklyn College, City College, Hunter College, John Jay College, Borough of Manhattan and Kingsborough Community Colleges. The gifts have supported scholarships, lecture series by visiting scholars and academic resource centers. Last spring, for example, Dan Rather delivered a talk titled “Democracy and the 24-Hour News Cycle” at City College as part of the Samuel Rudin Distinguished Visiting Scholars Lectures.

Jack Rudin has been an extraordinary supporter of CUNY personally and through the May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, named for his mother, May, and his father, Samuel, a 1918 graduate of City College. Mr. Rudin enrolled at City College in 1941. He was drafted the next spring and joined the family business when he returned. Rudin Management then went on to become one of the city’s leading real estate firms.

The Rudin family has donated to CUNY to multiple colleges through other foundations as well, including The Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation, which has been a generous supporter of nursing scholarships at Bronx Community College.

GIVING AT CUNY: BMCC Faculty and Staff Show Support

The commitment of CUNY’s faculty and staff to their colleges and students often extends far beyond the classroom. A great example is Borough of Manhattan Community College, where this commitment has culminated in generous financial support.

Dr. Fred Peskoff, chair of BMCC’s mathematics department, always has been inspired by his hard-working students. “Many of my students are going to school full-time and working full-time to make ends meet. Many are parents and are dealing with financial stress. Yet they excel, he says. “When our students go on to successful lives and careers, their education will be the foundation we helped create and nurture.”

Impressed by the impact of education on his students, Dr. Peskoff and his mother, Leila Peskoff, created the Simon Peskoff Memorial Scholarship Fund with an initial gift of $10,000. Dr. Peskoff has added to the fund and helped raise other contributions to increase its value to $90,000, which supports four scholarships each year. After Leila Peskoff’s death, the fund was renamed the Leila and Simon Peskoff Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The late Dennis Bonner, BMCC’s long time director of admissions, shared Dr. Peskoff’s commitment to its students. After a long career in administration, Mr. Bonner left a legacy gift of more than $200,000 to create the Bonner Memorial Scholarship Fund.

BMCC Registrar Gregory Wist and Bursar Steven Reis recall that “Dennis was an outstanding educator who always made a special connection with the students.” BMCC students have been awarded Bonner Scholarships each year for nearly a decade. “What we hope lives on is Dennis’ genuine belief in the potential of each student.”

SELECTED GIFT HIGHLIGHTS

- $25M from Bernard and Anne Spitzer to the School of Architecture at The City College of New York.
- $3.2M to the CUNY community colleges from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust to support ASAP students and expand the program.
- Two gifts totaling $1M from JFEW: one as a matching gift to the Helmsley gift to the CUNY community colleges and the other to the Macaulay Honors College.
- $500,000 to the Macaulay Honors College from Jack Rudin and the Samuel and May Rudin Foundation.
- $200,000 from New York Community Trust for Green Energy Training (GET@CUNY)