Nearing graduation from high school in 2007, Michael Suarez looked up some of the colleges his friends were applying to and felt nothing so much as alarm.

“Tense was apprehensive about college because I knew money was going to be an issue,” he says. “A lot of people I knew were going to private colleges in the Northeast, some out West. I had no idea how they were going to manage this. I knew I could never do it. People kept saying, ‘Just take out loans, just take out loans.’ But I didn’t want to be buried under debt by the time I graduated. So my counselor said, ‘Why don’t you apply to CUNY?’”

Suarez checked the tuition at LaGuardia Community College. “At first, I didn’t believe it,” he says. “I didn’t think...
Back to the Future

T MAY NO LONGER come with the smell of sharpened pencils and freshly copied syllabi, but the start of a new academic year still brings with it a stir of anticipation and possibility, especially at CUNY. I welcome you to the 2013-14 year with gratitude for the encouragement and warm wishes I’ve received from across the University. I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve an institution I’ve loved since I first arrived at Queens College. I assume the position of Interim Chancellor during a time of great strength for the University, evident in so many ways — in our robust enrollment and diverse student body, in our new programs and record number of degrees conferred, in our fiscal footing. CUNY has made remarkable progress across the last decade, and we are positioned to make even greater strides in the months and years ahead.

I thank all of you — students, faculty, staff, alumni — for enabling that progress. Your day-in, day-out commitment to teaching and learning has made all the difference. As joyful and inspiring as our recent commencement ceremonies were, they didn’t capture the marvelous, often unsung moments when learning happens: the long subway ride when an instructor’s patient explanation of a complicated theory suddenly becomes clear to a student; the random aside by a professor that sparks a new direction for a thesis. And it is the CUNY community — diligent, talented, inventive — that creates those moments of discovery. They come through the persistent work of researchers who solve longtime puzzles, such as Baruch chemistry professor Keith Ramig and chemistry student Olga Lavinda, of researchers who solve longtime puzzles, or in those moments that epitomize CUNY’s singular mission of true access, high standards, and realized dreams.

The Economist once referred to CUNY as “the American dream machine,” using alumni and former Intel chairman Andrew Grove’s apt phrase. It falls to us to realize that promise. That we will do so, I have no doubt. What spurs our anticipation are the countless moments of discovery yet to happen, moments that epitomize CUNY’s singular mission of true access, high standards, and realized dreams.

Continued from page 1

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In the spring, Suarez graduated from Hunter College with a degree in psychology, a minor in Italian — and just $1,000 in loans to repay. That’s a fraction of the more than $26,000 average debt that students nationwide graduate with and far less than the tens of thousands of dollars or more that burden many graduates of high-end private institutions in these times of runaway tuition bills.

Indeed, Suarez owes nothing at all for tuition. Like some 60 percent of CUNY’s full-time undergraduates, he qualified for need-based aid — grants from New York State’s Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and the federal Pell program — that made his tuition free. He borrowed only to pay for a semester he spent living on campus at Queens College. “I wanted to try dorming and had to take a loan for that,” he says.

Otherwise, I would be completely debt-free.” He transferred to Hunter after that one semester and managed to repay most of the $3,500 loan by the time he graduated. He expects to pay off the rest within a year. Suarez is far from unusual at CUNY, whose affordable tuition and availability of financial aid — close to $1 billion awarded in 2012-13 — allow nearly 60 percent of students to graduate free of student loan debt. He’s among the thousands of students who exemplify that compelling, long-term trend: In great numbers, CUNY students manage to emerge from college with little or no loan debt in an era when others’ peers on campuses across the country increasingly find themselves already deep in the hole as they enter the job market or move on to graduate school.

“People that think that taking loans is just part of going to college, worry about it later, and that sounds like a good idea at the time,” says Suarez, who is hoping to go to medical school. “But then you graduate and get this letter. ‘Your repayment starts in six months’ and the next thing you know you have to keep working and working and working to pay off this standard education. So graduating with very little debt with hopes of going to medical school is a big deal for me. It puts me way ahead of the game.”

Christina Terracino graduated from the College of Staten Island with a degree in English literature this spring and says she’s moving on to graduate school “debt free and worry free because I don’t have to tack- le a graduate degree while holding a full-time job.”

Terracino had a “small amount in a college fund” when she started college and that was enough to cover her first year at CSI. State TAP grants and an anonymous CSI scholar- ship covered her remaining three years of tuition. “The scholarships were a happy surprise, but even without them I knew I’d be okay.”

When Terracino was in high school and

CUNYMatters

Ith Help from the philanthropic organization Single Stop USA, the University put more than $73 million in the pockets of more than 32,000 low-income community college students and their families between 2009 and 2012.

The money came from government programs to which students didn’t know they were entitled. Single Stop campus counselors found that these students and their families qualified for health insurance (worth $25 million), free tax preparation ($13 million in refunds and services), legal counseling ($11 million in savings), food stamps (worth $7 million) and financial counseling ($5 million in savings), among other categories.

“More and more we’re seeing students leaving community college not for academic reasons, but because of financial difficulties,” said Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Frank Sanchez. “That’s a tragedy for them and a blow to the future of the city’s economy.”

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Single Stop USA aids low-income CUNY students

Continued from page 1

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Degree of Value

brought up the possibility of going to NYU, her father told her he could pay for maybe half of her first year. She wound up applying to many schools without high hopes of attending any of them. “I knew I wasn’t going to be able to go to many because of the cost,” she says. But she found CSI not a concession but a blessing — a high-quality education with affordable tuition near home. “I’ve had professors say it’s a great bang for your buck and that’s a great way to put it,” she says. “All my professors were great, especially in the English Department. They were brilliant professors, well-known, who did research.”

Terracino says her eventual goal of earning a Ph.D. and becoming an academic librarian specializing in Victorian medievalism would be “a nightmare” — virtually impossible — if she had to pay back anything close to what some of her friends do. “I have one friend who’s in a Ph.D. program and she has close to $100,000 debt just from her undergraduate education at NYU,” she says. “When I was handed my diploma it wasn’t a bitter-sweet feeling of, ‘Now I have to deal with all this debt.’”

Like Terracino, Starshema Casiano started out applying to many schools, most out of state, before deciding to stay close to home. “I was accepted to a lot of colleges that were a lot more expensive than CUNY colleges,” says Casiano, a spring graduate of John Jay College of Criminal Justice who studied economics and forensic accounting. “I researched the different options and found there were a lot of grants and tuition assistance at CUNY.”

As it turned out, Casiano didn’t qualify for TAP and Pell grants because her mother’s income was too high. But CUNY’s tuition was still affordable enough, and John Jay’s class schedules were flexible enough, for her to pay her own way by working full time and taking classes at night, on weekends and even online.

Hassel Diaz says she grew up thinking she would never be able to go to college, and if she had gone anywhere but a CUNY school, “I probably would have dropped out because of the high cost.” But she had “four peaceful years” at York College, unworried about paying her tuition. “The first year I got a scholarship, after that I had Pell and TAP. I took advantage of every grant, took summer and winter classes to graduate on time, and I worked part-time as a bank teller.”

Diaz graduated with an economics degree and plans to continue to a master’s and become a math teacher. Financial stability as a student was important for her, she says, because she was thinking ahead: “I wanted to build my credit so I can get an apartment that requires a credit check, or if I want to buy a home in the future. After so many applications I finally got my first credit card last year. Because CUNY is so affordable I could think long-term.”

Diaz has been unusually financially minded and forward-thinking since she was a teenager. Other students gain perspective with experience. Suarez took a brief detour into the workforce after that I had Pell and TAP. I took advantage of every grant, took summer and winter classes to graduate on time, and I worked part-time as a bank teller.”

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Diaz has been unusually financially minded and forward-thinking since she was a teenager. Other students gain perspective with experience. Suarez took a brief detour early in his college life, transferring from LaGuardia to a private college for its nursing program, but came down with a case of private-college sticker shock. “It was an awful experience,” he says. “I took two classes and it was more than the full-time tuition at LaGuardia, so I went back.”

There are many routes to graduation these days other than the traditional four years on the same campus. Students transfer, take breaks, sometimes graduate years after they started, often because of financial pressures.

Zenas Gallion began college at Long Island University, quickly took on a $4,000 loan for his first semester and saw how his debt could grow beyond his means to repay. So he quit school. “I thought, ‘I don’t think I want this. There are people working their whole lives to pay off loans. I don’t want to do that. I don’t think I can do that.”

Gallion got a job in a mailroom but always expected to find his way back to school. He did a few years later, enrolling at Borough of Manhattan College Community College in 2011. TAP and Pell covered his tuition and he graduated this spring debt-free. The grants will continue when he continues this fall at Hunter College and Gallion expects to graduate without taking on any loans.

If anyone has a long perspective, it’s Bryan Peterson. He graduated from high school in 2001 and “didn’t do a lot of research,” he says. “A lot of people said do what you want to do, don’t pay attention to cost. I was interested in engineering so I enrolled in a five-year program at the Rochester Institute of Technology. I got a [federal] Stafford loan, and after two semesters I did the math and realized I would be about $100,000 in debt by the end.” It was especially risky, he said, given the uncertainty of the job market in the post-9/11 economy.

He quit, got an associate’s degree at a trade school in Ontario, then came to New York and worked in a series of jobs in the audio industry. “But I saw my opportunities were limited with an associate’s degree,” he says. “I was self-taught in computers and I wanted to learn it for real.” In 2009 he enrolled part time in Baruch College’s computer information systems program, continuing to work full time in the technical support section of a city agency. Over the next four years he set aside a third of each paycheck for tuition and this spring he graduated with a 3.98 GPA and zero debt.

“I couldn’t have done it at a private college or even another public institution,” Peterson says. “It was really affordable. I’m on very strong financial footing now and consider myself very lucky to have avoided the debt trap.”

Beyond CUNY, Student Debt Swamping Other Graduates

STUDENT DEBT has emerged as one of the nation’s most sobering economic and societal problems, as college costs have drastically outpaced family incomes, education debt has mushroomed past $1.1 trillion, and graduates struggle to pay back their loans in a shifting and often disappointing job market.

Nationwide, about two-thirds of students earning baccalaureate degrees in 2011 graduated with loans averaging $26,600, according to Oakland, Calif.-based Project on Student Debt at the Institute for College Access & Success, which says the borrowing has increased about 5% annually in recent years. In New York State, the student-debt average was $25,651, 60% of 2011 graduates carried loans.

Approximately 17% of borrowers were more than 90 days past due on student debt payments in 2012, a 7% increase from less than 10% in 2004, according to a February 2013 report issued by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRB-NY), “Household Debt and Credit: Student Debt.”

More than 38 million student loan borrowers hold over $1.1 trillion in outstanding debt, most of it from federal loans and the remainder from private borrowing, according to the Federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. At the end of 2011, according to a bureau/U.S. Secretary of Education report to Congress, more than $8 billion in private student loans were in default, and even more were delinquent.

Students at the City University of New York, however, are far less likely to graduate with such debt burdens. The key is CUNY’s affordable tuition, which ranks among the nation’s lowest compared with other public and private institutions, according to figures compiled by the College Board.

Financial aid also keeps the indebtedness of CUNY students strikingly low. Six in 10 full-time CUNY undergraduates, the majority from low-income households, attend college tuition free, due to the combination of relatively low tuition, full coverage by need-based federal Pell Grants and New York State TAP, and Federal America Opportunity Tax Credits for which many middle-class families are eligible.

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~ Starshema Casiano
John Jay College

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~ Zenas Gallion
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**GRANTS & HONORS**

Continued from page 3.

Sorkin, who received a “Design Mind” Award that recognizes a visionary who has had a profound impact on design theory, practice or public awareness; and James Wines, the subject of the Spike Lee film’s exhibition this year “Line Around An Idea,” who was honored with a “Lifetime Achievement Award.”

Patricia Velasco of Queens College has received $497,597 in grant support from the N.Y. State Department of Education for a “Bilingual Common Core Initiative at Queens College.” The National Science Foundation has awarded a $249,992 grant to Frank Burbrink of the College of Staten Island for: “Collaborative Research: An Inclusive Phylogeny for the Pseudoxyrhophine Snakes in Madagascar: Understanding Causes of Species Diversification.”

Joshua Freidich of John Jay College has received a $113,485 grant from the Department of Homeland Security, via the University of Maryland, for the “Creation and Analysis of an Integrated U.S. Security Database.”

Borough of Manhattan Community College has received $1,721,911 from the N.Y. State Education Department for “Perkins IV Post-Secondary-Academic Support Services,” directed by Sandra Napier and Sadie Brayze. The National Institutes of Health has awarded a $141,300 grant to Ryan Murell of Brooklyn College for “Synthetic and Biological Studies of Understudied Uni-Tubercaulis.”

Marcia Jafari of Lehman College has received $215,737 from Hospital League, Local 1199, for “Health Care Careers Core Curriculum/Certificate in Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling.”

Anne Zissuk, chair of the business department at New York City College of Technology, was the lead expert on witness behalf of the plaintiffs in the recent landmark $500 million settlement of a class action suit against Countrywide Financial Corporation. The case, which was litigated for five years, resulted in the nation’s largest mortgage-backed securities class action settlement. The plaintiffs were given multiple retirement funds in Maine, Iowa, California and Oregon.

Simone Rodriguez-Dorestant of Medgar Evers College has received four collaborative grants, totaling $936,743, for the following projects: $50,000 for the “Liberty Partnership Program,” with Lisa Supervile-Jones; $79,681 for the “MEC Science Technology Entry Program,” with William Bailey; and $183,662 for the “Science, Math and Robotics Science Technology Entry Program,” with John Brown, all from the N.Y. State Education Department; and $125,000 from United Way for “Attendance Improvement/Dropout Prevention Program,” with Suzanne Hurley.

Queens College has received $333,334 in grant funding from the Office of DARS and the U.S. Air Force for research entitled: “SPIDER — Scalable Prosodic Anomaly and Relational Knowledge Exploration of Language with Enhanced Robustness,” directed by Andrew Rosenberg. Deborah Yess of the College of Staten Island has been awarded a $214,326 grant from the N.Y. State Education Department.

**NEWSWIRE**

HAY YOU HEARD? The media campaign CUNY Countdown is in high gear to boost voter registration and participation… The University’s Energy Institute has developed a battery with breakthrough technology that ultimately can be used to reduce greenhouse gases from vehicles… And a CUNY team in South Africa found baboons stick to a healthy diet no matter what the food temptation.

**Jamaica Bay Ecosystem**

The City University of New York will lead a consortium of top researchers in a $2 million grant for a research project in studying the interaction of storms, rising sea levels and the impact of urban development in a new Science and Resilience Institute centered on Jamaica Bay. “Together with our distinguished partners, we will engage in a groundbreaking effort to reinvigorate the Jamaica Bay ecosystem,” said CUNY Chancellor William P. Kelly in announcing creation of the institute at an Aug. 12 press conference. They also highlighted progress toward cooperative management of 10,000 acres of federal and city-owned parks in and around Jamaica Bay. The CUNY-led research consortium includes Columbia University’s Earth Institute and the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Cornell University, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, New York Sea Grant, Rutgers University’s Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences, Stevens Institute of Technology, Stanford University and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

President Rudolph Crew, former New York City schools chancellor and most recently Oregon’s chief education officer, becomes the new president of Medgar Evers College. At the CUNY School of Public Health in East Harlem, Dr. Ayman El-Mohandes, a pediatrician and internationally recognized researcher in infant mortality, takes the helm as new dean. The dean will be the subject of an interview in an upcoming issue of CUNY Matters. Dr. El-Mohandes, a native of Egypt, served as dean of the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center since 2009. And after nine years of service at Kingsborough Community College, President Regina Peruggi announced in April that she would retire. The news came shorty after Kingsborough was named among the four best community colleges in the U.S. by the Aspen Institute.

**Construction Fund Hosts Minority Women Business Conference**

In an effort to build more connections with diverse contractors and architects, CUNY and the City University Construction Fund recently hosted the fifth annual Minority Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) conference at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Last year, CUNY was responsible for 20 percent of all new construction in New York. The University’s facilities include 303 buildings throughout the five boroughs. Speaking at the conference, Iris Weinschall, vice chancellor for facilities planning, construction and management, said with so many new projects, this is a great chance to partner with more minority and women-owned businesses. Gov. Andrew Cuomo set a goal of 20 percent participation by MWBEs in New York State. Weinschall said CUNY has met that goal for the past two fiscal years. In 2013, CUNY spent $14.7 million on minority women’s business enterprises.

**Trustees Appoint Five New Distinguished Professors**

The Board of Trustees recently approved the appointment of five new Distinguished Professors. There are already members of the doctoral faculty: Joshua B. Freeman, a history professor at Queens College; Yuming Jiang, a mathematician professor also at Queens College; and Daniel M. Greenberger, longtime physics professor at City College. Two professors will join the CUNY Graduate Center as new faculty this fall; mathematics professor Jeremy Kahn comes from Brown University and history professor Megan Vaughan leaves Cambridge University for CUNY.

**‘CUNY Countdown’ to Boost Voter Registration, Turnout.** As election excitement builds across the city, the University launched a new “CUNY Countdown” social media campaign to increase voter registration levels and boost turnout at the polls. For 10 days leading to the Sept. 10 primary and Nov. 5 general election, CUNY will send University-wide email blasts and use...
It’s no secret that the water quality of the Hudson River stinks, but a new study by Queens College, Riverkeeper and Columbia University provided surprising raw fuel for a U.S. political agenda. The study, led by Queens College assistant professor Gregory O’Mullan, tapped sites from New York Harbor to the Tappan Zee Bridge and affirmed that illness-causing, antibiotic-resistant bacteria do indeed multiply when untreated sewage overflows pipes. Armed with these facts, U.S. Rep. Nita Lowey (D-Harrison) took congressional Republicans to task for cutting money for clean water. Irvington Mayor Brian Smith, who happens to be a Republican, placed the blame on both parties, but said the facts clearly warranted more spending in this area.

The baboon diet. If you want to eat healthy, ape the baboon. When Queens College associate professor Larissa Swedell and a trio of students spent a month studying the eating habits of a female baboon in the Tokai Forest of Table Mountain National Park in Cape Town, South Africa, they discovered that she was never tempted to overindulge. No matter what goodies they offered, she stuck mostly to her veggies.

Recharge. The Energy Institute has developed a highly efficient zinc-manganese rechargeable battery whose breakthrough technology ultimately can be used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, improve gas mileage and supply renewable energy farms. The $5-million project was funded by the Energy Department’s Advanced Research Projects Agency and will be manufactured by Urban Electric Power, which has a history of making eco-friendly batteries.

Ten teams of NYC college students used their brains to promote their business ideas at the 11th Annual SmartPitch Challenge, a partnership of the CUNY Institute for Virtual Enterprise, the Lawrence N. Field Center for Entrepreneurship at Baruch College and IBM. Baruch undergrad Dwight Peters, the top winner, took home $5,000 for CrowdCases.com, a B2B company that makes limited-edition iPhone and Samsung Galaxy cases for nonprofits’ fundraisers. The designs are voted on via social media, and $7 from each sale is funneled back to elementary-school children outdoor experiences.

The play’s the thing. Over the summer, a dozen master’s students took roles as “acting” teachers at the Kigali Institute of Education in Rwanda. The idea of bringing drama to the classroom was to help the institute’s students perfect their pedagogical skills so they can make lessons fun, participatory and thought provoking. At the end of the three-week training, the group acted out the principles in a play.

Facebook and Twitter to post daily reminders about registration deadlines and voting issues. Students will also be encouraged to serve as primary and Election Day poll workers or interpreters, positions that pay up to $575 for completing a training course, passing an exam, and working two election days.

The theme of the CUNY Countdown is “My City, Our Future, CUNY Votes.” More information is available at the CUNY Votes website (www.cuny.edu/vote) and a CUNY Votes Facebook page and Twitter account #cunyvotes.

During a meeting to launch the CUNY Countdown campaign, Senior Vice Chancellor Jay Hershenson reported that nearly 60 percent of CUNY students are registered to vote, exceeding the average voter registration rate for New York City college-age students by almost 10 percentage points.

Interim Chancellor William P. Kelly attributed the high rate of voter participation among students to the University’s historic public-service mission, coupled with more recent outreach efforts of the CUNY Votes campaign, civic partnerships, social media, and the scheduling of dozens of mayoral forums across CUNY’s 24 campuses.

The University struck partnerships with several civic organizations to increase city-wide voter participation including the New York Public Interest Group, the New York City Campaign Finance Board Voter Assistance Unit, Common Cause and Citizen’s Union.

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The other winners were:
• Baruch MBA student John Fout won $2,500 and the second-place place spot for Sodha Greek Yogurt, which is from a family recipe. He plans to add vegetables and other savory toppings to it as it is done in Mediterranean countries and bring it to the U.S. market.
• Baruch undergraduate finance student Morris Sued took the third-place $1,000 prize for Get Kosher.com, which makes it fast and easy to get delivery from kosher restaurants.
• Baruch undergraduate finance major Eli Attias was awarded fourth place, access to the virtual business incubator, for Coutsa, which will partner will shipping companies like FedEx and UPS to allow retailers to advertise and offer coupons to a targeted ZIP CODE audience on the blank spaces of the packages.
• Baruch undergraduate finance major Ronald Zorrilla’s fifth-place entry, Outdoor Project, is a nonprofit that will partner with the New York City school system, as well as religious and cultural institutions, to offer elementary-school children outdoor experiences. He will use the virtual business incubator to finalize the idea.

Look for Pepsi. The City University of New York has signed a $20.75 million agreement that gives the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company of New York, Inc., exclusive rights to provide most carbonated and noncarbonated drinks on campuses for the next 10 years. After the contract took effect on July 1, Pepsi distributed first-year royalties totaling more than $1.38 million above the previous contracts that individual colleges had signed with varying vendors.

Future royalties will vary with sales, which also will be the basis for dividing the revenue among campuses. The colleges will use the revenue to enhance programs. In addition, the CUNY Athletic Conference will receive $300,000 over 10 years; previously, it did not receive any income from “pouring rights.” Another $200,000 over the life of the contract will support CUNY-wide or campus-based sustainability initiatives.

In the spring of 2012, CUNY’s Board of Trustees voted to seek a University-wide beverage contract. The trustees acted after Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer Allan Dobrin identified a potentially higher stream of revenue by single University-wide contract instead of the varying beverage contracts that individual colleges had executed with different vendors. Following a standard procurement process, the University named a committee composed of five campus vice presidents for administration and chaired by Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Management Services Burt Sacks. The committee interviewed company representatives, who then submitted their best and final offers. The panel chose Pepsi because it offered more money and more forms of promotional support than competitors. The contract covers carbonated and noncarbonated natural and artificially flavored nonalcoholic beverages, including sodas, juices, cold teas, bottled water, sports drinks and cold packaged coffee drinks.

Get daily Newswire reports at cuny.edu/newswire. To download the free app for your mobile device, search The City University of New York at the Apple or Android online stores. Or snap the nearby box with your smartphone to subscribe to Newswire.
ROYAL PURPLE, the color of robes swathing the emperors of Rome, ancient kings and high priests, and prized for its richness of hue and a brightness that wouldn’t fade, has long carried its own molecular mystery.

For years, chemists tried but failed to crack the code for the dye used to create Tyrian purple, named for the ancient city of Tyre where it was found. Solving its molecular structure held out the promise of important information for the textile industry and could lead to use of the indigo dye for medical fluorescent probes.

The original source of the highly valued dye had long been known — predatory sea snails — but the crystal structure of the indigo pigment, monobromoindigo, or MBI, remained a puzzle.

Intrigued, Baruch College chemistry student Olga Lavinda teamed with Baruch chemistry professor Keith Ramig, and together they were able to crystallize MBI for the first time and solve its structure, publishing their findings last year in the prestigious journal of X-ray crystal structures, Acta Crystallographica C.

“I was amazed that this was possible and it inspired me a lot,” said Lavinda, who earned a bachelor’s degree from Baruch in 2011 and is currently a Ph.D. fellow at New York University.

But her remarkable research on MBI would likely never have been possible if not for the work of CUNY Nobel laureate Jerome Karle, who died in June at age 94. Karle shared the 1985 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for creating the method for determining the X-ray crystal structures of molecules.

Karle’s discovery revolutionized research into new drugs, paved the way for advances in medicine and other fields, and inspired countless young scientists including Lavinda.

“It’s an immeasurable contribution,” said Lavinda of Karle’s work. “Virtually, all drug development is heavily reliant on X-ray crystallography. When you think of how many lives have been saved and how much progress we have made in just a small amount of time, it’s hard to even quantify.”

Hunter College chemistry professor Lou Massa, a colleague and close friend of Karle, said the Nobel Prize crystallized Karle’s fame as one of the greatest scientists of his generation.

“Solving X-ray crystal structures … was for decades thought to be mathematically impossible,” Massa said. “There is now almost no field of science and technology wherein crystal structures are not important.”

Karle was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1918, and attended Abraham Lincoln High School. At 15, he graduated and enrolled in City College. His student commute was grueling, he recalled in his autobiography, traveling three hours a day on the subway from Coney Island to City College and back.

After earning his undergraduate degree from City College in 1937, Karle received a master’s degree in biology from Harvard University in 1938 and later a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Michigan, where he met his future wife and frequent laboratory partner, Isabella.

Near the end of World War II Karle worked at the University of Chicago on the Manhattan Project to develop the atomic bomb, focusing on the extraction and purification of plutonium.

In 1946, Karle and his wife moved to Washington, D.C., to work for the Naval Research Laboratory where he remained for more than 60 years, becoming the U.S. Navy’s highest-ranking scientist. The following year, CCNY classmate and mathematician Herbert A. Hauptman joined the laboratory and they began working with X-rays and crystal structures.

X-ray crystallography had been discovered in 1912 by physicist Max von Laue as an important technique for displaying the atomic structure of a crystallized molecule by analyzing X-rays. But it was impossible to calculate exact structure because the difference in positions of scattered X-rays was unknown.

Karle and Hauptman’s breakthrough was to devise a mathematical formula in X-ray crystallography for solving those unknown atomic positions. Their discovery, known as the “direct method,” is now used by scientists worldwide to discern the structures and shapes of complex molecules.

“One of the fundamental ideas in chem-

By Margaret Ramirez

Olga Lavinda worked with Baruch chemistry professor Keith Ramig to crystallize the structure of the indigo pigment.

“Karle had to have this whole imagination to see atoms and understand that every atom has its own charges and how they are influencing each other and how to calculate the prediction of where those atoms have to be. That to me is absolutely mind-boggling.”

— Olga Lavinda
Baruch graduate 2011
istry is atomic structure,” Massa said. “In medicine, when a drug is discovered the first question that is asked is: what is its structure? So, Karle’s legacy is in providing the mathematics to solve that structure. And that is an amazing discovery.”

When Karle and Hauptman published their discovery in the early 1950s, it was met with some opposition by scientists who weren’t sure it worked. In his autobiography on the Nobel website, Karle recalled with frustration “a large number of fellow scientists did not believe a single word we said.”

With increased use of computers in the 1970s, the “direct method” was confirmed and gained wide acceptance. The process of discerning the structure of three-dimensional molecules, which had sometimes taken months or years, could now be completed in a matter of days.

According to the Naval Research Laboratory, Karle’s work enabled the characterization of potent toxins, antitoxins, heart drugs, antibiotics, antitussive substances, anticancerous, anti-malarial, and explosives and propellants.

Today, scientists, like Ramig, stand in awe of Karle for his brilliance and perseverance. “When we say, here is the structure of a molecule, it has to be based on a certain method of analysis and X-ray crystallography is the only direct method where you can almost see the atoms,” Ramig explained.

“So, Karle wrote the mathematics for solving the crystal structures. In those days, back in the 50s, they did calculations by hand, and the mathematics is incredibly complex. But Karle was able to do it.”

In more recent research, Karle, along with Massa and CUNY Ph.D. graduate student Lulu Huang, created a new field known as quantum crystallography that combined X-ray diffraction data for crystals with quantum mechanics, according to the Naval laboratory.

Aside from his groundbreaking research, Karle was also known for encouraging young people to devote their lives to science. That interest in mentoring future scientists grew after he received the Nobel Prize, Massa said. “He loved talking about science to young people,” Massa said. “Youngsters wrote to him from faraway places. He not only wrote back, he wrote to their parents, too, with his best advice for supporting curiosity and freedom of thought in their children.”

Karle would have appreciated Lavinda’s intelligence and skill in solving the problem of the purple-dye molecule.

Massa said he met Lavinda when she came to Hunter to study physical chemistry. While they were having coffee one day, Massa told her about the difficulty in crystallizing the MBI molecule. During their conversation, Massa showed Lavinda a research paper related to MBI and explained how several professional synthetic chemists had failed to crystallize the molecule. Lavinda, a Ukrainian native, stared at the line drawing of the MBI molecule in the paper. She then said matter of factly: “Oh, that does not look too hard. Would you mind if I tried to crystallize the molecule for you?”

Within a few weeks, she and Ramig had made the crystals, using a method known as high-temperature recrystallization. Dr. David Szalda, a Baruch chemistry professor, used the crystals to solve the structure.

For Lavinda, the research with the indigo-like molecules formed an important part of her career because it allowed her to learn about crystallography, as well as origins of color, both fascinating branches of chemistry. But the research also made her realize the extraordinary nature of Karle’s work, she said. “It blew my mind that somebody could mathematically define or describe the positions of atoms in space,” Lavinda said. “He had to have this whole imagination to see atoms and understand that every atom has its own charges and how they are influencing each other and how to calculate the prediction of where those atoms have to be. That to me is absolutely mind-boggling.”

“Solving X-ray crystal structures … was for decades thought to be mathematically impossible. There is now almost no field of science and technology wherein crystal structures are not important.”

— Lou Massa

Hunter College chemistry professor and close friend of Karle

For the past several years, Massa spent summers working at the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D.C., to work directly with Karle.
HEN AN EAST HARLEM LAWYER named Oscar García, La Prensa covered the news as the story it was for its readers and the country: Rivera that day became the first Puerto Rican elected to public office in the United States.

Two decades later, La Prensa and its new competitor, El Diario, were covering not only news, momentous or mundane, but also events that changed the city’s cultural fabric: The struggle to organize the first Puerto Rican Day Parade in 1956. The assassination of Dominican Republic President Rafael Trujillo in 1961. The wave of immigration to Washington Heights.

By the late 1970s, a few years after they merged, New York’s Spanish-language papers formed a single institution so entrenched and influential that it sometimes made news itself. In 1978, after reporting on possible negotiations for the release of Cuban prisoners, its offices were bombed by a paramilitary group opposed to Fidel Castro.

The merged paper, now known as El Diario/La Prensa, is the nation’s oldest Spanish-language daily newspaper, and this year it celebrates its 100th anniversary. To commemorate the milestone, the Brooklyn-based paper has organized a number of projects and events, including an interactive centennial website and a photo exhibit tracing the growth and transformation of New York’s Latino community over the past century.

In gathering historic newspapers and photos for the centennial, El Diario editors and researchers worked closely with the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College and director of planning at Hunter College and director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, said El Diario’s centennial is significant because it commemorates detailed reporting on Latino historic events that received minimal coverage by mainstream English-language newspapers.

“El Diario is a window to the history of the community,” Meléndez said. “The newspaper reflects the vibrancy of the community.”

In a recent interview with the Spanish news agency Efe, El Diario publisher Rossana Rosado said: “During these years, we’ve been the voice of New York Latinos, especially during the times when we didn’t have a voice.”

Aside from its historical significance, El Diario editors and Latino leaders say the paper has served two additional roles: helping immigrants adjust to their new home and advocating for Latinos from the Prohibition era through today’s battle over immigration reform.

Through the decades, the city’s Hispanic population grew and diversified with the arrival of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans and Mexicans, and their political and economic struggles gave Spanish-language journalists much to cover — and advocate. El Diario de Nueva York came on the scene in 1948, and the two newspapers not only documented the history of New York City’s Latinos, but became their fiercest advocates on labor, education and immigration. The motto on the front page plainly states that mission: “El Campeón de los Latinos” or “The Champion of the Hispanics.”

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In a commemorative supplement, Pulitzer-Prize-winning author Oscar Hijuelos wrote about how his father always arrived home from work with a copy of El Diario in hand. Hijuelos, a City College graduate, is the son of Cuban immigrants who arrived in New York in 1943.

“Like a ray of sunlight, this newspaper surely made my father’s hard-working days more enjoyable and, I think, less culturally lonely,” Hijuelos wrote. “For in those times, long before the event of television stations like Univision and Telemundo — when Spanish-language publications were not so easily available as they are now, the newspaper he read faithfully in the evenings after work surely helped ease the pangs of homesickness that he and my mother — and so many others of their generation — felt for su patria.”

La Prensa was founded by Rafael Viera, a Spaniard, and in 1963, its 50th year, merged with El Diario, forming El Diario/La Prensa. In 2003, Canadian newspaper executive John Paton purchased the paper, merged it with the Los Angeles-based Spanish newspaper La Opinión and co-founded impreMedia, the largest news and information company for Hispanics in the United States.

Last year, the Argentinian newspaper company La Nación purchased impreMedia, with plans to boost readership of its online and digital operations. El Diario/La Prensa has an average daily paid circulation of about 40,000 readers.

Reflecting on the archives, El Diario executive editor Erica González said that in the early years there was more emphasis on Latin American and international news. Today, the paper still includes coverage of major Latin American events, but its main focus is local news.
vicemmen from New York prompted El Diario to publish stories and profiles of soldiers on the frontlines that families could read back home. The paper even began offering special gift subscriptions that families could purchase for Latino troops serving in Vietnam. The coupon read: “A special service for the men who defend democracy.”

The idea that this newspaper was a lifeline to hundreds of soldiers and that it provided comfort to young sons facing uncertainty and death is deeply moving,” Rosado said.

Indeed, in the 1960s the bond between El Diario and the Latino community was so strong — and trust of the police so weak — that criminal suspects were apt to turn themselves in at the newspaper offices instead of at the local police precinct.

In February 1961, for example, the paper reported that Julín Soto Maduro walked into La Prensa’s offices after stabbing his neighbor for making too much noise in his Brooklyn building. “She collapsed and I ran away without bothering to take out the knife, got on the subway and headed toward La Prensa,” Maduro told the police editor.

The news dominated the front page the next day, but Carlos Rodríguez Martorell, a freelance writer who researched 100 years of El Diario’s archives, said people turning themselves in became so common that it stopped being front-page news and was moved inside the paper. The phenomenon died out in the 1970s.

In addition to its advocacy, El Diario/La Prensa won acclaim for investigative journalism, which highlighted abuse toward Latinos. In 1961, the paper published a series of investigative stories that exposed the harsh conditions for Puerto Rican migrant workers in rural areas. The headlines read: “Esclavizan a Boricuas en NY” or “Enslaved Puerto Ricans in NY” and “Por $13 Venden a Boricuas” or “Puerto Ricans Sold for $13.”

In recent years, El Diario/La Prensa, like many other newspapers, has faced declining print circulation and began devoting more resources to improving its website, digital content, and mobile applications. According to 2010 census figures, the U.S. Latino population grew to more than 50 million, with most of the growth attributed to U.S. births, rather than the arrival of new immigrants. Latinos are also increasingly bilingual, which could signal trouble for the future of Spanish-language media. But a recent report by the Pew Research Center found that it is faring better than its mainstream English-language counterparts and remains “important to a changing, more acculturated, and more U.S.-born Hispanic population in the United States.”

While dozens of major English-language newspapers have been forced to shut down, the Pew report found the total number of Spanish-language newspapers has remained stable.

Rosado, of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter, said the print edition of El Diario still serves a purpose for the newly arrived immigrant without access to the Internet.

“The reality is that not everyone has access to those resources. Even if they have the access, El Diario is an easy way to keep in touch with what’s happening,” Meléndez said. “It is still a newspaper that is catering to that niche, the recent immigrant.”

While the Internet has fueled the rise of hundreds of Latino websites and blogs, González said El Diario’s unique brand of ethnic and advocacy journalism is still needed. “El Diario champions workers, tenants and others in ways that many other media don’t,” González said. “We bring perspectives and experiences to the table that others don’t or that others catch onto after the fact. We give voice to issues that are marginalized or invisible elsewhere.”
Continued from page 4
for the “Collegiate Science & Technology Entry Program (C-STEP).” Regina Miranda of Hunter College has received a $169,250 grant from PHS/NIH/National Institute of Mental Health for “Measurement of Social-Cognitive Risk Factors for Suicidal Ideation and Behavior.”

Christina Tortora of the Department of English at the College of Staten Island organized the 43rd Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages, held for the first time in New York City, which brought together the preeminent Romance linguists from all over Europe, Latin America, Canada and the United States. The symposium was sponsored by the college and held at the Graduate Center.

The American Physical Society has announced that Robert Altman, Distinguished Professor of Science and Engineering at City College, will receive the 2013 Arthur L. Schawlow Prize in Laser Science, which includes a $10,000 stipend, for “pioneering contributions to the field of ultrafast laser science, including the discovery of supercontinuum generation and new laser materials, as well as the study of pulse propagation in strongly scattering media.”

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Borough of Manhattan Community College a $575,000 grant for a project, directed by Erwin Wang, “A Learning Grant-Strengthening Academic Programs.” City College has received a $337,925 grant from the National Institutes of Health for research on the “Neurobehavioral Consequences of Adolescent Alcohol: Role of Individual and Environmental Factors,” directed by Ratna Sirsar. “Teacher Education for Advanced Science Preparation,” a project directed by Stefan Becker of Lehman College, has been awarded $236,312 in grant funding from the N.Y.C. Department of Education.

Ivonne Barreras of New York City College of Technology has received two grants from the N.Y. State Education Department. $300,000 for “Title II A – TLP;” and $164,189 for the “Science and Technology Entry Program.” Robert Abramovitz of Hunter College has received $300,000 in grant funding from Fordham University/Substance Abuse & Mental Health S.A. for “Creating and Sustaining the Next Generation of Trauma-Informed Practitioners.” The U.S. Department of Education has awarded a $132,514 grant to The U.S. Department of Education for research on the “Neurobehavioral Consequences of Adolescent Alcohol: Role of Individual and Environmental Factors,” directed by Ratna Sirsar. “Teacher Education for Advanced Science Preparation,” a project directed by Stefan Becker of Lehman College, has been awarded $236,312 in grant funding from the N.Y.C. Department of Education.

Queensborough Community College has received two grants from the N.Y. State Education Department. $290,067 for “CSTEP – Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program,” under the direction of Paul Jean-Pierre and Marie-Brancesc Berrouet; and $212,990 for “Justice Partnerships Program – Project PRIZE,” directed by Paul Jean-Pierre and Sherri Anne Simmons.

The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City has awarded $314,345 to Saul W. Katz of Kingsborough Community College for the project “Access to Success,” while the National Secretariat of Migrant Affairs (SENMI) has extended $200,000 in grant funding to George Contreras and Saul W. Katz for “Education and Training for Ecuadorian Nationals.” The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center has awarded a $588,463 grant to Richard Veit of the College of Staten Island for “Sunflora Surveys.”

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Learning to Speak Your Mind

D ARA BYRNE, an associate professor of communication and theatre arts at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, says her “favorite place is in a class with freshmen, because I enjoy helping them see what the higher-education environment can do for them.”

And she teaches just the course — the one they don’t want to take. “Most people hate the idea of public speaking,” says Byrne, who also directs the William E. Macaulay Honors College at John Jay. “They dread being in front of an audience. All your insecurities come up. You’re exposed, you’re vulnerable, your thoughts about competency are the elephant in the room. It’s a great class to have right out of high school.”

Public speaking is part of John Jay’s First Year Experience. Byrne grounds discussion and research in issues that directly affect students, giving them a forum to explore topics in front of their peers.

Byrne asks students to combine aspects of ancient Greek rhetorical practice – the Western standard – with contemporary communication techniques. Emphasizing public speaking as a means to civic engagement, she tells students that if their ideas can improve society, they have a responsibility to present them effectively to others, which takes practice and skill. “It isn’t what you say to people, it’s what they hear, so you need to think about your audience. I see this course as a learn-to-teach model,” she says.

Students write speeches, read famous speeches, watch TED Talks and study research on student engagement. They learn to rewrite and take a different approach if a rhetorical strategy isn’t working.

She has a clever way to help her students assess their own work. She gives them speeches from prior classes – some As, some Fs, some in between – for them to “grade” before they write their own. They discuss the mechanics of grading, her assessment rubric and college standards, so there won’t be surprises when they are evaluated. Afterward, she says, students are less likely to hand in subpar assignments. “They’ll say, ‘I didn’t get an A and won’t insult you with an excuse.’”

Freshmen need such an introduction to college-level learning to succeed socially and academically, she says. Junior psychology major Rathalisa Zarzuela says Byrne’s public-speaking course was far from easy. “When we’d give a speech, if we didn’t have enough eye contact, she’d tell us to calm down and relax, try to engage and have a conversation,” she says. “I’d look at her and learn how to look at others. She taught us how to get people’s attention.”

Preparing for doctoral studies via the federal Ronald E. McNair undergraduate program, Zarzuela conducts research with assistant professor Maureen Allwood on home violence relations to jealousy and aggression. She also tutors public-speaking students who are in the SEEK Program for high-potential, low-income students.

Byrne edited several books in Black Issues in Higher Education’s Landmarks in Civil Rights History series, including The Unfinished Agenda of Brown v. Board of Education. She looked at race, ethnicity and learning on social networking sites for the MacArthur Foundation’s book series on youth, digital media and learning.

She also recently co-authored a paper on cyberbullying with senior John Cusick, who intends to enter a J.D./Ph.D. program. Cusick says Byrne’s public-speaking course “played a major role in my intellectual development.” Calling Byrne “a support system,” he adds that she was readily available to help with work and consider graduate programs and fellowships. “Every time I speak with her, I learn something new about myself,” he says.

Great teaching is at the heart of a great university, and Dara Byrne is among The Princeton Review’s The Best 300 Professors (Random House 2012) selected from among 42,000 submissions and 1,000 semifinalists nationwide.
From Discovery to the Marketplace

NOT LONG AGO, assistant professor Sihong Wang and Zeynep Dereli Korkut, who earned her Ph.D. in Wang’s lab at City College’s Grove School of Engineering, would have rhapsodized about the dinner-mint-sized chip that simultaneously evaluates the effectiveness of dozens of cancer drugs on an individual patient’s tumor cells. Now, thanks to entrepreneurship training that CUNY leads with Columbia and New York Universities, they also discuss commercializing the device.

“If there’s one thing Dereli has learned, it’s ‘the importance of customers. If there’s no demand for your technology, there’s no reason to try to market it.’”

Understanding that a gee-whiz discovery doesn’t necessarily translate into a whiz-bang product is a key message in the program, which is available to college-based researchers nationwide.

“The National Science Foundation established commercialization training because potentially game-changing discoveries that it had funded were not being taken to the marketplace as often as they should,” said Vice Chancellor for Research Gillian Small. She also is the principal investigator for the training initiative, the New York City Regional Innovation Node (NYCRIN, pronounced ny-rin), which NSF designated in March 2013 and financed with $3.74 million over three years. NYCRIN includes 22 other universities in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut, including Princeton, Yale and SUNY.

“Our aim is to become a global leader in technology innovation and entrepreneurial business development by leveraging the innovation ecosystem in New York City, which meshes with other initiatives aimed toward building research and entrepreneurship at CUNY,” Small said. Those initiatives include the University’s technology transfer office, which licenses patented discoveries, and a forthcoming business incubator.

NSF designated similar centers at Georgia Tech; University of Michigan, University of Maryland; with George Washington University and Virginia Tech; and University of California—Berkeley, with Stanford and UC—San Francisco.

NYCRIN trains entrepreneurial teams to determine whether a discovery is commercially viable and, if so, whether licensing or starting a company makes more sense. More broadly, it intends to encourage entrepreneurship in the consortium through lectures, webinars, networking and other means.

Each three-person team consists of a professor, a doctoral or post-doctoral student and a business mentor. The student is the team leader on the theory — and this is a generalization — that he or she is more likely to take risks and have entrepreneurial drive, while professors are more likely to want to pursue basic research in academia.

John Blaho, who leads CUNY’s technology innovation/entrepreneurship teaching efforts, underlined the importance of mentors — and not only to facilitate the shift from an academic to a business mindset. “When inventors get into the real world and discover, say, that their remote-sensing discovery could be developed as a medical device, the mentor needs connections and a Rolodex in that sector.”

Universities generally own the patents to researchers’ discoveries and take equity positions in startups, although professors retain some rights. “If we don’t play in this arena, the most creative faculty will not come or stay here,” Small said. Other universities, particularly in California, have the research-commercialization loop down to well, a science.

NSF awards each team that it selects $50,000 for the training. The centers use the same seven-week, National Innovation Corps (I-Corps) curriculum, which mixes in-person instruction and webinars. Teams must interview 100 industry experts and present a business plan to get federal grants that can take startups from the “it’s-a-go” stage to “we’ve made it.”

At the event, Medgar Evers assistant chemistry professor Michele Vittadello said that under an Air Force contract, she seeks “a bottom-up reconstruction of the molecular components of photosynthesis to produce hydrogen.” In the process, he developed a resin that he says can purify proteins far better than existing products. “It’s predicted that in the next 10 years, seven to 10 of the most-sold drugs will be proteins isolated from natural resources,” he says.

Wang and Dereli of City College are in I-Corps training at Berkeley. Oncologists could use their device — which has 100 chambers, each less than a millimeter wide — to quickly find the best drug to treat each patient. Pharmaceutical companies could use a larger version to simultaneously test thousands of potentially therapeutic compounds.

Dereli is reaching out to regulators and to hospitals and insurance companies, which would pay for individuals’ tests.

Wang said the most useful information she heard from oncologists is “that the market doesn’t need a perfect product, as long as it functions.” Previously, she had worked to shrink the tubes that feed fluids to the device, which measures about 1 x ½ x ½ inches. “As engineers, we first want our baby to be perfect. It’s hard to say, ‘We’ve done enough.’”

CUNY MATTERS — Fall 2013
EHMAN COLLEGE’S new Science Hall has earned a prestigious LEED Platinum Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, making it the only teaching/research lab in New York City to receive the council’s highest award.

The hall, designed by Perkins+Will and built by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, is the first CUNY building to win the Platinum designation. It is one of only nine Platinum higher-education projects in the state and is the fourth Platinum lab in the state.

The eco-friendly hall is part of the overall sustainability plan. It joins the CUNY School of Law, which has a LEED Gold Certification, and the Bronx Community College North Hall and Library and Hunter College’s School of Social Work, which are LEED Silver.

The two science towers under construction at City College are applying for LEED Gold Certification, and a new building at New York City College of Technology is going for Silver.

The Science Hall, which hosted its first classes in Spring 2013, earned its certification for an array of environmentally sustainable technologies, including a rainwater/greywater system to clean and recirculate water for use in toilets, and rooftop solar panels to heat the building’s water. It is also equipped with a rooftop teaching and research greenhouse.

“Science Hall at Lehman College symbolizes CUNY’s commitment to creating state-of-the-art buildings that will enhance its educational mission while reducing the University’s carbon footprint and increasing energy efficiency dramatically,” Interim Chancellor William P. Kelly said.

The four-story building is the first of a three-phase complex that will create a “campus within a campus” at Lehman College dedicated to the sciences. It was constructed with $70 million in funding from New York State, through the CUNY Capital Program. Capital funding for the rooftop greenhouse of $1.5 million was provided by the New York City Council.

Iris Weinshall, vice chancellor for facilities planning, construction and management, noted that the University has set an ambitious goal to have as much as a quarter of its facilities portfolio, which includes many historic and landmark buildings, energy efficient by 2017. “This is a huge and important task that we are making great strides to achieve,” she said.

Lehman President Ricardo R. Fernández said that Science Hall “represents the college’s commitment to a culture of environmental responsibility and the creation and adoption of clean-energy innovations on campus and throughout New York City.”

LEED or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is an internationally recognized green building certification system that provides a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance. The non-profit council, based in Washington, D.C., is committed to achieving a sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings.

More than 18,000 projects have achieved LEED certification worldwide, yet fewer than 1,200 have been awarded the highest designation of Platinum. Sixty-seven of those are in New York State, including the Fifth Avenue headquarters of Tiffany and Co. and One Bryant Park, the New York headquarters of Bank of America and third tallest skyscraper in the city.

“With each new LEED-certified building, we get one step closer to our vision of a sustainable built environment within a generation,” said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO and founding chair of the U.S. Green Building Council. “As the newest member of the LEED family of green buildings, Lehman College is an important addition to the growing strength of the green building movement.”

According to the council, buildings are responsible for 39 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, 40 percent of energy consumption and 13 percent of water consumption nationwide.

The council estimates that greater building efficiency can meet 85 percent of future U.S. demand for energy, and a national commitment to green building could generate 2.5 million American jobs.
A Century of Immigrants
Nancy Foner has edited an absorbing anthology, One Out of Three: Immigrant New York in the Twenty-First Century, which features in-depth portraits of diverse ethnic populations, revealing surprising new realities of immigrant life in the 21st century. A Distinguished Professor at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, Foner’s contributors include experts, both in and outside the University, who have shown how nearly 80 years of massive inflows have transformed the city’s economic and cultural life, as well as the lives of immigrants themselves. In her introduction, Foner describes New York’s role as a special gateway to America, and subsequent essays focus on the Chinese, Dominicans, Jamaicans, Koreans, Liberians, Mexicans, and Jews from the former Soviet Union, among others.

My Life as a Monk
IN THE FIRST PUBLICATION in English of a major work by this popular Thai author, A Man in Saffron Robes: A Rainy Season as a Buddhist Monk at a Hilltop Temple in Northern Thailand, by Maitree Limpichart, is now available. This translation by Steven Landau, who is project manager for CUNY’s Office of Computer Information, offers a unique Thai perspective on the tradition of entering the monkhood for the rainy season—only to disrobe at the end and return to life as a layman. Limpichart’s memoir, which the Kirkus Review called a “remarkably candid, deeply fascinating account of Thailand and Buddhism,” documents his early preparation and ordination to monkhood.

Reflections of Vietnam Vets
Bringing It All Back Home: An Oral History of New York City’s Vietnam Veterans, by Philip F. Napoli, assistant professor of history at Brooklyn College. Although the war in Vietnam ended four decades ago, it still weighs heavily on the men and women who served there, as well as for those who, for one reason or another, did not. Napoli has worked with Vietnam veterans for years as directors of the College’s Veterans Oral History Project. With his book, he has created a powerful reminder of the lifelong sacrifices made by these individuals. Bringing It All Back Home is a moving collection of New York City veterans’ voices—in their transcribed words, as varied as the men and women who shared their experiences with him.

Hardhats and Hippies
IN THE POPULAR IMAGINATION, opposition to the Vietnam War was driven largely by college students and elite intellectuals, while supposedly reactionary blue-collar workers largely supported the war effort. In Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory, Penny Lewis challenges the collective memory of class polarization. Through close readings of archival documents, popular culture, and media accounts at the time, she offers a more accurate, “counter-memory” of a diverse, cross-class opposition to the war in Southeast Asia that included the labor movement, working-class students, soldiers and veterans, Black Power, civil rights and Chicano activists. Lewis, an assistant professor of labor studies at the Joseph P. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, investigates why the image of antiwar class division gained such traction at the time and has maintained such a hold on popular memory ever since.

Tale of Two Cities
THIS NEW LOOK at old rivals, New York and Los Angeles: The Uncertain Future, offers a fresh perspective on the similarities and dissimilarities, as well as functions and dysfunctions between the two cities. Co-edited by Andrew Beveridge, professor of sociology at Queens College and the Graduate Center, and David Halle, professor of sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles, the book provides in-depth comparative studies of the two largest metropolitan areas in the United States. Written by leading experts, the chapters discuss and compare a host of economic, social and political issues, while examining the achievements and challenges faced by both regions of the nation.

Coup for a Despot
IN AUGUST 1953, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency orchestrated the swift overthrow of Iran’s democratically elected leader and installed an unpopular Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, along with his secret police, in its place. In his new book, The Coup, 1953, The CIA and the Roots of Modern U.S.-Iranian Relations, Ervand Abrahamian, Distinguished Professor of Iranian and Middle Eastern History and Politics at the Graduate Center and Baruch College, reveals some of the key motivations behind the current Iranian hostility toward the U.S. and other Western governments, as well as the details behind the 1953 CIA-supported coup that ousted Iran’s prime minister, Muhammad Mossadegh, and backed the shah.

Jumping Generations
IN HIS FIRST NOVEL since the National Book Award-winning, Let the Great World Spin, Colum McCann once again places real-life historical figures in the foreground, while deftly weaving his own fictional creations around them as he spans continents and leaps three centuries. His latest, TransAtlantic, opens with two pioneers in aviation—Jack Alcock and Arthur Brown—the first to complete a nonstop flight across the Atlantic in 1919; the story then travels back to Dublin in 1849, as the former slave Frederick Douglass arrives in Ireland to raise funds for the abolitionist cause from a sympathetic people. The first part of the novel is set in New York in 1998, as former Sen. George Mitchell, backed by the CIA, tries to negotiate the peace agreement. And, through it all, beats the heart of the Irish housemaid Lily Duggan, a pivotal character, as well as her daughters and granddaughters. McKinnon, a Distinguished Lecturer in Hunter College’s MFA Creative Writing program, has garnered praise from the critics including a New York Times Book Review that called the novel “electric and profound.”

CUNY Matters welcomes information about new books that have been written or edited by faculty and members of the University community. Contact: Sheila McEneny at mceneny@mail.cuny.edu
When President Obama spoke about racial discrimination after the Trayvon Martin verdict, he said that most African-American men, including himself, have been unjustly followed in department stores. Or they have heard locks click as they walk by cars—or noticed women clutching their bags when they walk into an elevator.

His speech no doubt rang bells with CUNY employees who recently have been attending sessions to learn how to identify, deal with, and eradicable comparable “microaggressions” in the workplace. Microaggressions, as described by Kevin Nadal, a psychology professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, are aimed—in perhaps subtle and unconscious but nevertheless detrimental ways—in regard to race, as the president mentioned, as well as other attributes, including ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability.

Nadal, an associate professor and deputy director of the Forensic Mental Health Counseling Program at the college, has conducted educational sessions at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, are aimed—in perhaps subtle and unconscious but nevertheless detrimental ways—in regard to race, and gender and sexual orientation as part of the University’s diversity initiative. At these sessions, various types of microaggressions are identified and discussed, as are strategies to stop them from occurring.

What is a microaggression? It is a comment, an action, or a lack of action that is subtly hurtful. According to Nadal, quantitative research has found that microaggressions also have an influence on physical health.

Microaggressions are aimed—in perhaps subtle and unconscious but nevertheless detrimental ways—in regard to race as well as other attributes, including ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability.

Microaggressions are defined as “subtle, direct, or indirect power assertions that undermine self-esteem, self-efficacy, and [individual] experiences, the more likely they are to experience mental health issues, like depression and low self-esteem. One of my recent studies found that people of color who experience more microaggressions are more likely to have a negative view of the world, which parallels what President Obama was explaining about the context of why African-Americans are so upset by the verdict and mistrustful of the justice system.” According to Nadal, quantitative research has found that microaggressions also have an influence on physical health.

To this, Jennifer Rubain, University dean for recruitment and diversity adds, “It’s important to understand microaggressions because it gives people the framework and vocabulary to describe what has so often been experienced.”

An extensive University report on diversity was published last year and other CUNY faculty have served on panels on these and related issues as part of the University’s diversity initiative. At these sessions, various types of microaggressions are identified and discussed, as are strategies to stop them from occurring.

Participants are invited to confidentially discuss their own experiences. As did President Obama, in a far more public forum. Rubain notes that panelists at a recent CUNY Faculty Diversity and Inclusion Conference panel on how this issue relates to race, gender and sexual orientation included Virginia Valian, Distinguished Professor, at Hunter, and Ryan Smith, associate professor, at Baruch. About that panel, Rubain says: “I could relate to the example given of black professionals often being praised for being articulate by well-intentioned colleagues. I recall speaking to a faculty member who was the only person of...
Employee Status in Same-Sex Relationships

As must CURY employees now know, in June 20 the portion of the "Defense of Marriage Act" that limited the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" to opposite-sex couples was ruled unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court. If you are a CURY employee involved in a same-sex relationship, what this means depends a great deal on whether you and your partner are legally married and whether the marriage is recognized in the state where you live.

In short, it's complicated. But soon CURY will be there to help figure it out. The June ruling impacts the definition of marriage and spousal status regarding more than 1,000 laws and regulations. According to Leslie Williams, University executive director of Shared Services, "You and your partner may now have access to a myriad of new rights, responsibilities and benefits that may affect everything from your tax and immigration status to your eligibility for family leave and public housing assistance." She advises consulting a tax adviser and emphasizes that, "The implications to CURY's policies and benefit programs will need to be researched and will be announced shortly."

Kevin Nadal, psychology professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, conducts sessions on CURY campuses about "microaggressions."

"Microaggressions appear to be quite common in society, perhaps it would be best not to place all of the blame on George Zimmerman or the NYPD [Sean Bell case] or the faulty legal system but rather to look at the negative impact of our own unconscious biases. Nadal has also just published a book: That's So Gay! Microaggressions and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community. In explaining the title he has said: "An example of a verbal microagression is a person saying 'That's so gay' to convey that something is bad, weird, or different. An example of a behavioral microagression is a person inappropriately staring at same-sex couples showing public displays of affection."

He also notes other microaggressions such as assuming that an Asian-American would be good at mathematics or science, based on ethnicity not ability. Another would be repeatedly asking an individual of Asian or Latino descent what country they are from, when they were born or if they have any affiliation with the United States. In the disability community, it is considered a microagression not to first assume an individual's competence, rather than focusing on what he or she cannot do -- and then inquiring if any accommodations are needed to support successful endeavors.

Nadal points out that at the University some campuses have different cultures than others, and it cannot be assumed that all cultures are accepted on all campuses. "Even in a place like CUNY, where there are many diverse individuals, statements can be uttered by well-intentioned people that have the effect of demeaning or insulting others," says Gloriana B. Waters, vice chancellor for Human Resources Management.

"Because we are so diverse, it is all the more necessary for us to be aware of the microaggressions in which we may engage, and also to learn how to respond if we are the target of a microagression."

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ART/EXHIBITS

NEW LIGHT on Early Art Forms of the Indian Subcontinent
Queensborough Community College
Time varies, Free
Through Sept. 15

From the Bordertown Out Into the World: Jews in Memel
Queensborough Community College
Time varies, Free
Through Sept. 30

A Summer of Art: Student Art at QCC
Queensborough Community College
Time Varies, Free
Through Oct. 1

Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center and Archives, Permanent Exhibit
Queensborough Community College
Time varies, Free
Through Dec. 31

THEATER/FILM

Sept. 21
Tamar of the River by Prospect Theater Company
Baruch College
8 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Sept. 28
Maria The Korean Bride
Borough of Manhattan Community College
4 p.m. $15

Oct. 16
Auschwitz: The Great Escape
The Graduate Center
6:15 p.m.

Nov. 13
Hitler’s Children
The Graduate Center
6:15 p.m. Free

Nov. 17
Sleeping Beauty Narrated by David Gonzalez
Borough of Manhattan Community College
1:30 p.m. $25

MUSIC/DANCE

Sept. 4
Sing with the Queens College Choral Society
Queens College
6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Free

Sept. 9
THOKOZA: I Sing for Freedom
Baruch College
7 p.m. – 8:10 p.m.
$15 - $30

Sept. 28
Eddie Palmieri
Lehman College
8 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Oct. 4
Eduardo Fernandez, Guitar, by NYC Classical Guitar Society
Baruch College
8 p.m. – 10 p.m.
$22 – $99

Oct. 13
The Butterfly Lovers
Lehman College
4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Oct. 26
Big Apple Chorus
Borough of Manhattan Community College
7:30 p.m.
$25-$60

Nov. 10
NY Flute Club presents Gergely Ittzes
Baruch College
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 21
Marie de Medici’s Ballets at the Court of Henri IV
The Graduate Center
6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Free

Nov. 23
Deana Martin and Chris Gillespie Trio
Lehman College
8 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.
$40, $35, $25

SPECIAL EVENTS LECTURES/PANELS

September 16
CUNY SPH at IDEALIST Graduate Fair
The CUNY School of Public Health
5 p.m. – 8 p.m. Free

Oct. 5
Breast Cancer Walkathon
College of Staten Island
9 a.m. Free

Nov. 15
Aaron Neville
Borough of Manhattan Community College
8 p.m. $65, $55, $45

Rethinking Kahn’s Architectural Vision
City College, CUNY Lecture Series
In “Rethinking Kahn,” part of the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture spring lecture series, architectural historian William J.R. Curtis discusses the legacy of I. M. Pei and his influence on modern architecture. “I think the most remarkable contribution was the design of the National Gallery of Art, which...”

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Dershowitz-Beinart, Round 2
CUNY Graduate School of Journalism
In a follow-up discussion to their appearance last fall, jurist Alan Dershowitz and journalist Peter Beinart continued the debate, “The Crisis of Zionism,” as part of the Perspectives: Conversations on Policy and Place series at the Graduate Center. Beinart insists that with power comes responsibility.

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The Riddle of the Labyrinth: The Quest to Crack an Ancient Code
Margalit Fox chronicles the pursuit to decipher Linear B — an unknown script dating to the Bronze Age — and how key research by a Brooklyn College classics professor, Alice Elizabeth Kober, helped to crack its code.

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