Board Approves Request For $1.3 Billion Budget

A t its Oct. 29 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the Chancellor’s 1997-98 Operating Budget Request. The $1.3 billion requested represents a 4.6% increase—the smallest hike, percentage-wise, the University has sought since the State assumed financing of CUNY senior colleges in 1983-84. The senior college request is for $896.2 million. For the community colleges, the total is $347.3 million. The Board also approved the Capital Budget request of $478 million. Those funds will support the University-wide Building Condition Assessment Program, now in its fifth year, and renovation and modernization of facilities at Baruch, City, Hostos, Lehman, and Queens Colleges. Capital funds are also targeted to a major new initiative, the Infrastructure Network Telecommunications Project. This multi-year plan allows for installation of infrastructure to support educational technology in all CUNY facilities.

“The proposed budget request of $1.3 billion is a prudent plan,” said Trustee Robert Price. Vice Chairperson of the Board Committee on Fiscal Affairs, Facilities and Contract Review. “It maximizes the benefits of recent retirement incentives, redistributes program savings to the colleges’ base budgets, restores full-time faculty, moves the University to a new level of technology and seeks modest enhancements to vital programs.”

As in the previous year’s operating budget request, the highest priority is funding ($6 million) to hire 140 new, full-time faculty members. Last year, New York State acknowledged the importance of replenishing CUNY’s faculty ranks in its adopted budget. Another $2.3 million in funding is sought for the Graduate School and University Center for 25 senior appointments to renew the doctoral faculty, which has diminished in recent times due to departures and retirements.

The New York Times praised Dr. Braun, its curator, for providing “a better handle on this incredibly slippery artist.” Susan Edwards, Hunter’s Curator of Art Galleries, was delighted, too, by the streams of visitors to the Gallery at 68th Street and Lexington: “We broke our previous attendance record spectacularly. The show has given morale on the College’s art scene an enormous boost.”

Two Campus Art Gallery Exhibitions

The long-lived and controversial Italian painter Giorgio De Chirico (1888-1978) visited the United States in the 1930s, but throughout his career he was an important art world presence in this country. Reproduced to the right is “The Nobles and the Shopkeepers” of 1933 from a private collection in Verona. A satirical commentary on the social pretensions of the bourgeoisie, it was a key work in the artist’s 1936 exhibition at the New York gallery of the surrealist dealer Julian Levy.

De Chirico borrowed the medieval dress of the nobles from his designs for a production of Bellini’s opera I Puritani at the 1933 Maggio Musicale in Florence. The painting exemplifies the view of Emily Braun, Hunter College art professor and a specialist in Italian art between the Wars, especially the Fascist period: “De Chirico’s images can be read as a continuous commentary on the demise of high culture and traditional erudition.”

“Giorgio De Chirico and America,” an exhibition of 30 paintings, drawings, and photographs at Hunter’s Leucksdorf Art Gallery that explored the artist’s American ties, completed a highly successful six-week run on Oct. 26. It received international attention, and the chief art critic of

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AMP Transforms Science Education

By Helena Leslie
Editor, New York City Alliance News

O nthy Williams received his masters degree from City College School of Engineering last spring. Asked about the New York City Alliance for Minority Participation (AMP), the new product engineer for the Ford Motor Co. says, “It made all the difference. I had to work to pay for my education, but when I was awarded an AMP Research Scholarship I was able to leave airport baggage-handling behind. I could spend my time in my City College lab, doing research in my field.”

Williams feels that his hands-on lab experience was crucial to the academic success that led to his job at Ford. “I could actually see the applications of what I was learning in the classroom, and that made the subject matter so much easier to absorb.”

By changing the way science, engineering, and mathematics (SEM) are taught at CUNY, the Alliance for Minority Participation is profoundly influencing the careers of students like Williams. This consortium of 16 CUNY senior and community colleges is a key element in the National Science Foundation’s current vigorous response to the critical need for a larger and more ethnically diverse scientific and technological work force.

The objective of the NSF’s five-year grant to AMP, which began in 1992, is to double the number of underrepresented minorities—blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans—who earn baccalaureate degrees in three SEM areas. The Alliance’s contractual target calls for CUNY to award nearly 600 undergraduate SEM degrees

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Gary Schmidgall kicks off an occasional CUNY•Matters feature on prominent CUNY benefactors with a visit to two of Borough of Manhattan Community College’s best friends.

To say Shirley and Miles Fiterman are avid, top-of-the-line collectors is to put it mildly. Walk into their 45th-floor aerie on Fifth Avenue and your eyes are immediately drawn to a grand, richly colored, and affectionate spoof of images from Picasso to David Hockney. Turn a corner and you find a major late Picasso commanding a wall by itself and gallantly accepting the homage: The effect is wry and playful, not unlike Miles Fiterman himself, who presides with his wife Shirley over their apartment-cum-gallery with a disarming combination of good humor and down-to-earth pride. “No big city braggadocio from these two life-long Minnesotans. And what a gallery it is: Imagine a view of most of Central Park being upstaged. A vintage Lichtenstein, “Painting Near Window,” is hung, well, near a window. Across the way a blazing white torso by George Segal juts from the wall. In a corner stands a Miró bronze as tall as Michael Jordan. It has shoes sprouting from it in odd places. Fail to watch your step and you can get one of the Fitermans’ Calder mobiles all upset, and in the TV room David Hockney and Chairman Mao, courtesy of Andy Warhol, look on.

Mr. Fiterman knows his paintings well and clearly enjoys talking about them—and not with curatorial solemnity, either. The visitor is cordially invited to notice the thumb Warhol has suggestively painted in his own self-portrait: “This is Miles Fiterman! He lived in Minneapolis, had no prior connections with CUNY, and 30 West Broadway was his only major holding, but he knew what he wanted!”

Shortly after graduating from the University of Minnesota and attending its law school, he became a major force in the new do-it-yourself housing construction business. His company, Miles Homes Inc., took off in the 1960s, and it was eventually responsible for construction in 41 states. But by 1993, with the company sold and more time to devote to the world of art, the do-it-yourself pioneer found appealing the idea of helping BMCC students achieve the ultimate do-it-yourself goal: a college education. “All they needed was a chance,” Fiterman says.

When the tantalizing dream appeared to be a serious possibility, Chancellor Rey-

nolds swung the Central Office into action. “Her efforts were crucial in giving me the confidence to go ahead,” Mr. Fiterman recalls, adding that “I also instantly establish- ed a sense of trust with her husband [Dr. Thomas Kirschbaum] when we discov- ered we had attended the same small high school back in Minnesota.” Mr. Fiterman was also impressed by how well BMCC stu- dents respected their clean facilities on the West Street campus.

Mrs. Fiterman also had good reason to like the idea of educational philanthropy, as she explains. “Our serious collecting really began on a trip to Mexico, when I found myself face-to-face with a pre-Columbian piece for the first time. My heart started to thump. I was overwhelmed.”

In no time, she and her husband were building a choice pre-Columbian col- lection, and she can remember going to the University of Minnesota, begin- ning years of steeping herself in art history courses that, she says, “opened my mind and my eyes.”

The dog days of summer 1993 sud- denly got very busy. The speed with which the building was turned to academic use spoke volumes for the need it filled. Occupancy com- menced on Aug. 23, and by opening day of the fall term on Sept. 10 the building— where hitherto nothing but stocks were transferred—had 12 classrooms and a computer lab in operation. A year later, 40 classrooms were available.

The Fitermans’ desire to share has not been limited to art and education. Two of their daughters suffered from a rare case of the disease. With Hubert Humphrey opening some doors, he helped to establish the American Digestive Disease Foundation. Nearly 40 years on, he is still hoping for a discovery of a cure for the elusive disease. In the meantime, Mr. Fiterman says, “I have never experienced as much satisfac- tion as I have had with BMCC. Giving that building, we have found, was only a begin- ning.” They have, for example, recently been providing funds to support the stellar BMCC chess team, which won the Pan American Intercollegiate Team Chess Tro- phy in 1998. “The fact that these commu- nity college students beat Harvard twice sparked me,” he adds.

The Fitermans were especially delight- ed—and completely surprised—when a grateful College announced during the gala inauguration in September 1993 the estab- lishment of the Shirley Fiterman Gallery in the hall. Early this year the first of a two-part exhibition of the Fitermans’ prints was on view there, and Gallery visitors can sample the second part from Dec. 5 to Jan. 22. Later, both parts will be joined for an exchange of exhi- bitions with the Tel Aviv Museum of Art.

Before tweaking the Calder one last time and leaving, I ask Mr. Fiterman what shared les- sons he might have learned from his dual pursuits in the construction and real estate business on one hand and the art world on the other. His three-pronged reply re- quired about two seconds of meditation: “You have to have a vision, you have to be willing to take a chance sometimes, and you have to keep within yourself.” Houses, in other words, are not the only things that should be do-it-yourself.

Miles Fiterman’s three desiderata perhaps tell us succinctly why Fiterman Hall came to BMCC. For they happen to summarize the desire to share, to see their work’s travel and be enjoyed in public venues. My visit, in fact, came just
CUNY’s Hibernian Links

By James P. Murphy
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

Dublin Castle, near the River Liffey, goes back to Anglo-Norman times, though only the Norman-era Record Tower remains to hint that a fortress once stood on the site. Now the Castle, where Knights of St. Patrick were installed, is a charming mixture of architectural styles—Georgian, rococo, and Adam.

Last June, I had the pleasure and honor of joining Chancellor Reynolds and speaking in Dublin Castle at the opening of an international conference on criminal justice. Fittingly, the statue atop one of the castle’s famous entrance arches is that of Justice.

The splendid site, the serious subject, and CUNY’s participation, I observed at the time, constituted a remarkable sesquicentennial coincidence. For last year was the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the catastrophic “great famine” that struck Ireland. It was also the 150th anniversary of the founding of the New York Police Department which, as everyone knows, proved to be an important avenue of professional advancement for countless Irish immigrants fleeing the famine. Following in no time will be the 150th anniversary of The City University of New York, founded in 1847 under the auspices of Townsend Harris, a former President of the City’s Board of Education.

Consider history for a moment, and the interrelation of these three anniversaries becomes quite clear. The famine caused the first of many waves of migration through which the United States—and New York City in particular—has renewed and re-invented itself over and over again. Most Irish emigrants came to America, and of them most came to New York. Here the heavy lifting of assimilation took place. Since the NYPD came into being just as the “great famine” started, it is gratifying to think that Irish-American history, especially history related to our culture, but of the historic role New York City continues to play as a welcoming gateway for new arrivals.

A continuing series of lectures began in the fall of 1995. To date, 11 CUNY professors have spoken in this series on a remarkable array of subjects and scholarly fields. Queens English Professor Edmund Epstein, for instance, spoke on “Joyce and Music.” Professor Bernadette McCallan of Hunter College, who has written about Catholic nuns and the care of the sick in the city, spoke last month on Irish contributions to health care in the 19th century.

Very soon these new arrivals became Americans, and in no time at all they developed, like all major ethnic groups, their own rich vein of “hyphenated history.” I am happy to report that American-Irish history, especially history related to our metropolitan area, has been attracting particular interest since June 1995, when The City University and the American Irish Historical Society (AIHS) commenced a formal program of collaboration. The goal of this initiative is to nurture a better understanding not only of American-Irish impact upon our culture, but of the historic role New York City continues to play as a welcoming gateway for new arrivals.

The history of CUNY has always been intimately entwined with the fortunes of immigrants. Townsend Harris foresaw the challenge they presented in education. He organized a plebiscite and campaigned to persuade voters to approve the foundation of a “City College” that would give the children of immigrants and the poor a first-rate higher education. Having ancestors from Ireland myself, it is gratifying to think that the Irish were substantially represented among the immigrants first served by The City University.

S E L L E R  Q U E E N S R E A D I N G S C O N T I N U E

Celebrating its 21st season of bringing distinguished literary visitors to the Queens College’s Rosenthal Library, this year’s Evening Readings series commenced with early Roaring Twenties appearances by Seamus Heaney and Arthur Miller. The remaining readings will be no anticlimax. Poet Derek Walcott, winner of the 1992 Nobel Prize, appeared on Nov. 19. On Dec. 10 comes poet and novelist Margaret Atwood, winner of Canada’s highest literary honor, the Governor General’s Award. Marilyn Hacker, who has been called America’s “latter-day Byron,” will read from her poetry on March 18. A.S. Byatt selected works familiar to us all—a cademnic rivalry and obsession—in her best-selling novel Possession; the Booker Prize winner will appear on May 19. Readings take place on the second floor of the Library. Admission is $4, free for students with ID. For further information, call 718-997-4646.

PIANO MAN” BILLY JOEL HONORS MOM, CITY COLLEGE

Last May, as part of his college tour, Billy Joel performed at Town Hall with a free “Eating of Croutons & Answers.” A Little Music.” More than 50 City College music students were on hand, and afterward they had special reason to be humming a medley of appropriate Joel songs—“Everybody Loves You Now,” “Keeping the Faith,” and “Surprises.”

Joel had a surprise announcement for the crowd: the establishment of the Rosalind Joel Scholarship for the Performing Arts. This scholarship, which will be given annually to a City College music student, honors Joel’s mother, who met his father at the CCNY campus on 23rd Street in 1942. The scholarship was made possible through a $75,000 gift to CCNY from Sony Music and WPLJ-FM (which broadcast the event) in celebration of the 25th anniversary of Joel’s recording career.

If there is a theme song for the Rosalind Joel Scholarship, it is surely Joel’s “The River of Dreams”—a perfect image for what gifts in the form of scholarships make possible.
students to become active participants in late forms of advocacy. They take minutes at meetings designed to simulate fundraising, and “active” listening. They have come to hone their skills in ponder welfare reform. Even more remarkably, they have established ties with the center for Radio-ecological Field Studies at the Ukraine Academy of Sciences to deal with the still unknown consequences of the Chernobyl meltdown.

For several months following the disaster, the fallout of radioactive aerosols was observed at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Strontium and cesium were among the most dangerous components of these mists. In this sadly ideal experimental site at Chernobyl, within the 30-kilometer “closed” zone, they have laid out two run-off plots for analysis. Our better understanding of how such radioactive compounds move through soil will contribute significantly to the protection of rivers, reservoirs, and agricultural lands. In addition to field experiments like artificial rainfalls, we will be developing computer models for simulating the migration of radionuclides during processes of sedimentation and episodic events like flooding.

Earthwatch, a nonprofit institution, has been funding a third area of ecological research in the Ukraine. Volunteers from around the world have been assembled for short-term summer field expeditions in which they assist scientists in confronting very specific challenges. For example, over the last two summers Earthwatchers have assisted our Center scientists and those from the Odessa Hydrometeorological Institute in a study of “Complex Anthropogenic Impacts” on small rivers and other water bodies of the Ukraine. This team also included volunteers from Canada, England, Ireland, Belgium, and Japan. Its work, notably at the Kuyalnik Liman site near Odessa, garnered considerable media coverage.

The Center draws on the talents of faculty members on all the CUNY campuses. Among those working on these projects are Professors Samir Ahmed, Vasilii Diyamandoglu, Leonid Roitman, Victor Goldsmith, Ali Sadeh, John Tietjen, and Dr. Vadim Khazin. In the last three years CWREK has attracted more than $1 million in internal funding for its projects, but this is only a beginning. It is difficult to imagine a more useful application of the Center’s expertise than the serious environmental problems facing the Ukraine.

HUNTER’S RIGHTS INITIATIVE

Mobilizing Student Welfare Recipients

By Melinda K. Lackey
Director, Welfare Rights Initiative, Center for the Study of Family Policy, Hunter College

In a 17th-floor conference room in Hunter College West, 15 determined women gather every Tuesday afternoon for three hours. At first glance there is nothing extraordinary about the group of full-time students, but this seminar in fact represents a ground-breaking educational initiative.

All of these students are receiving public assistance. They have come to study the history of welfare policy, share personal experiences with the current system, and ponder welfare reform. Even more remarkably, they have come to hone their skills in public speaking, coalition-building, fundraising, and “active” listening. They develop organizational skills by introducing themselves every week, and learning how to take minutes at meetings designed to simulate forms of advocacy.

Welcome to the Hunter College Welfare Rights Initiative (WRI), which requires its students to become active participants in off-campus venues for pursuing welfare reform that is both sensitive and sensible. A second-semester internship develops their potential as grassroots community leaders and organizers. WRI was spawned by three troubling aspects of national and local debate over welfare reform: an absence of the voice of welfare recipients themselves; the tendency to conflate stereotypes of welfare recipients to dominate the debate; and a failure to envision reforms that are humane, realistic, and constructive. By offering college credit to CUNY students who are current or former recipients and providing critical resources like subway tokens, the Leadership Seminar gives them the chance to shed the shame of being on welfare and add their articulate voices to the debate, and become informed, practiced advocates.

WRI was originally conceived by Dr. Janet E. Poppendieck, Director of the Hunter College Center for the Study of Family Policy, Dr. Mimi Abramovitz, Professor of Social Policy at the Hunter School of Social Work, and myself. Jan Poppendieck’s 20 years of teaching sociology and daily contact with dozens of public assistance recipients who contradicted old stereotypes led her to envision such a project. Mimi Abramovitz, through many years of research, writing, advocacy, and teaching on welfare policy, is also a seasoned public speaker on these issues and was concerned that the welfare debate was leaving out the voices of recipients.

While working on my masters in social research at Hunter, I undertook research for Dr. Marilyn Gittel at the Howard Samuels State Management and Policy Center to study the impact of higher education on college students supported by public assistance and college graduates achieving economic self-support. The needs, ideas, experiences and aspirations of women I interviewed for that study helped to inspire planning for WRI’s pilot program. Since then, we have strived to involve students in our decision-making, and Poppendieck and Abramovitz have continued to act in an advisory capacity. With support from the Child Welfare Fund and College student activity funds, WRI has been able to hire three student leadership trainees as part-time staff.

Twelve women students—no men have yet applied for this program—completed the pilot year, and 15 new students are now enrolled, ranging in age from 18 to mid-40s and representing a diversity of neighborhoods and home campuses. A long-range WRI goal is to assist in the development of student-driven welfare reform organizations on each CUNY campus and form a union of all of them.

The Initiative has recently developed an Advocacy Training Mobilization Project in concert with the CUNY Law School at Queens College. This, we hope, will result in an innovative legal seminar this com-
David Lavin has been a Professor of Sociology at the Graduate School and Lehman College since 1970. The most recent of his four books explores a subject of particular interest to CUNY faculty and staff: the long-term effects of the University’s open admissions policy on students’ lives. Co-authored with Dr. David Hylergard, Director of Institutional Research at Borough of Manhattan Community College, Changing the Odds: Open Admissions and the Life Chances of the Disadvantaged (Palgrave University Press) goes head-to-head with critics of the University’s admissions policy and graduation rates. It was featured on the front page of The New York Times under the headline, “Study Details successes From Open Admissions Policy.” The book demonstrates that the University’s graduate record since open admissions began is not only respectable, but substantial. CUNY has changed the odds for thousands of people who would not otherwise have had an opportunity to attend college.

Though critical educational policy questions were on his mind, Lavin was at ease in a recent interview. He deliberately and directly dismantled the rhetoric of detractors of open admissions, methodically peppering his views with supporting data. He also discussed his research methodology and plans for future work. Finally, he elaborated more speculatively about weighty social and economic issues surrounding accessibility to higher education.

Lavin’s personal reasons for desiring to study open admissions became evident. For one, he is not merely an academic sociologist but also an egalitarian philosopher with a personal investment in his subject matter that has served a 36-year career.

— Peter Tabach

PT: You have long been concerned with equity and access in higher education, and with Changing the Odds you have become our resident expert on the policy of open admissions and the value of a CUNY diploma since 1970. Can you take us through the University’s policy?

DL: Well, as a generic concept, the CUNY open admissions policy was not necessarily being an educational failure.

PT: And CUNY’s policy didn’t end up looking like that?

DL: No. CUNY’s model in 1970 was much more oriented toward creating better opportunities for students to attain bachelor’s degrees. CUNY took the top half rather than the top 12%. If you were in the top half of your class or had a B-minus average, you were guaranteed a seat in one of the senior colleges, and if you didn’t make either of those cuts, you went to a community college.

PT: What can CUNY faculty learn from our resident expert on the policy of open admissions together. CUNY has adopted the open admissions policy since 1970. Can you take us through your March 1996 study, “Leaving CUNY: Destinations of Students Who Depart from the University,” you demonstrate that students defined as “leavers” eventually completed their bachelor’s degrees in a window of time that correlates with disparities in household income, dependents, and other factors. Nearly 60% of 1990 entrants are projected to receive their degree in less than five years. What inspired you to conduct this study?

DL: CUNY has taken a terrible beating over its so-called low graduation rates. Now, this is a function of a number of things. First, all of us have a function of the time lens that you use to focus. If you use a four-year, or so-called “on time,” lens, or even a five- or six-year lens, particularly in the case of minority students, you will miss half of the eventual graduates. The public issue of graduation from CUNY is a function of how far down the educational time line you’re willing to look.

PT: So you went back to work?

DL: In the summer of 1995 we looked afresh at the attrition rates of the class of 1990. We surveyed missing students who had not earned a CUNY degree. Lo and behold, we found a number of astounding things. One is that half of the students who leave CUNY without graduating transfer to a non-CUNY college. Another stunning finding: There’s a stereotype of drop-outs as those who either have no motivation or are badly prepared that they either do poorly, get discouraged, or flunk out.

The fact of the matter is that half the students who leave CUNY do so in good academic standing. The stereotype of a dropout necessarily being an educational failure is not supported by our data. Of course, five years is not a sufficient time frame. If we go out eight years and take transfers into account, we begin to see graduation rates from bachelor’s programs that are at or above the national rates for public colleges and universities, which is to say well over 60%.

PT: How have the critics responded to this?

DL: They like to repeat the old myths, “the University is spending money on students who can’t cut it. There’s really no pay-off for the taxpayer.” It’s very clear from our follow-up research that this is not the case. The data show that CUNY degrees pay off in the labor market. Students with bachelor’s degrees are earning about $12,000 to $13,000 a year more than high school graduates. Students who go on to graduate degrees are making around $20,000 more. Educational credentials and earnings move in tandem up the very same ladder.

PT: Is it possible to calculate the revenues earned by these students?

DL: We aggregated all these open admissions students and looked at them, say 14 years after open admissions started. We considered, in one year of the mid-80s, how much more did these students earn than if they had not gone to college? The answer is that they earned in one year $87 million more than they would have earned in the absence of open admissions. If a work career is roughly 30 years in length and $67 million is accumulated year after year, at the end of their work careers the increase in their earnings should be more than $2 billion. That means a lot tax revenue for the City and the State and the

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New Window on Puerto Rican Migration

Reproduced here are two pictures from the Historical Archives of the Puerto Rican Migration, which have recently come to reside at Hunter College. They provide a glimpse into the continuing educational concerns of this community.

The picture above, taken by an unidentified photographer in the 1940s, shows a group of farm workers during an English class in a migrant camp. The Puerto Rican government sponsored a program of agricultural labor for seasonal farm work, and the archive contains a wealth of information about the experiences of these workers. Luis R. Diaz took the picture at right, which records a demonstration in the early 1960s by various Puerto Rican and other Latino organizations in New York City, pressing, as one of the placards demands, for “quality integrated education.”

This last May the President of Hunter College, David A. Caputo, and Juan Flores, the Director of Hunter’s Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, celebrated the formal transfer to Centro custody of the Migration archives, a valuable collection of Puerto Rican government records. Covering the years 1930 to 1989, these materials constitute the most extensive gathering of documents on the Puerto Rican migration in existence. Among its contents are more than 1,000 photographs, films, newspapers, and a wide range of miscellaneous documents. These archives testify to the Puerto Rican community’s continuous efforts in pressing for social and institutional progress and to the contributions Puerto Ricans have made wherever they have settled. For further information about the Migration archives or other collections at the Centro, which is housed in the Hunter Library, please contact me or Pedro Juan Hernandez. —Nelida Perez, Director of the Centro Library

(Continued from page 5)

IRS. This data clearly show that open admissions is an investment that pays big dividends. Judging from initial evidence, it appears to be better even than job training. Education, I think, is a better way to go. PT: Lately, especially during the final weeks of the Presidential campaign, we have heard a repeated chorus celebrating access.

DL: The question is access to what. The President celebrates access, but when you read between the lines, he thinks that everybody should at least have access to a vocational program in a community college. But the labor market is requiring more and more elevated credentials. The associate’s degree is not a big ticket to the American dream unless it is linked with a realistic vocational program in a community college. Everybody should at least have access to a more elevated credentials. The associate’s degree is not a big ticket to the American dream. But the labor market is requiring more and more elevated credentials. The associate’s degree is not a big ticket to the American dream unless it is linked with a realistic vocational program in a community college.

PT: What remains to be studied in open admissions, and what are you working on right now?

DL: One of the critical issues about the policy is whether it will enhance the lives of the children of the first generations of open admissions students. We’re now planning a study of the second generation because those original open admissions students are now in mid-life. We want to find out where those children are.

PT: What will be the barometers for that study?

DL: Educational attainments and the labor market. Basically we will examine if there is a kind of momentum or a trajectory to the educational careers of the offspring that seems more like what middle class or more advantaged people experience. We also want to look again at these former students at mid-life. Is there evidence that the benefits of the open admissions policy have continued to unfold? Not only in terms of their work experience but also in terms of how they feel about themselves and how they see their lives and how they see the role of education in their lives. These projects are now at an early stage.

PT: If, at the conclusion of this conversation, you were made Governor of New York State—and, while we are at it, Mayor of New York City—what would you do for CUNY apropos of our discussion of open admissions?

DL: At a loss for the first time in 90 minutes. Heh. I think that CUNY needs to—oh I never fantasized about this so much. One thing I would do is urge the attuning of financial aid to the realities of college-going. I wouldn’t have a TAP program that basically provides support under the idea that it takes in four years to get through school. We need to peg it to the realities. PT: Anything else, Mr. Governor-Mayor?

DL: I have mixed feelings on the issue of the rising proportion of adjuncts. The CUNY faculty is becoming a gerontology club. In my department at Lehman College, I was actually put on the block to be retrained last year because I am the most recently hired person!

PT: In 1970.

DL: Twenty-five years later I’m the newest hire. There were some others who didn’t get tenure along the way, but we’re talking here about an age structure. Governors and mayors should ask: What is going to happen to knowledge? There are new techniques that young scholars, young Turks know that older people don’t know. Younger scholars are more cutting edge in terms of what students are exposed to, but they also help to socialize older faculty. I think it is an extremely serious threat to the intellectual vitality and quality of a faculty that we have been unable to hire new blood. We need to support our educational institutions at their most fundamental, intellectual level, and this certainly is one of them.

PT: Thank you.

Computer Innovation from Baruch

Kiosk to Traveler: “Talk to Me”

The next time you find yourself in Penn Station, take a moment to stroll over to the track 21 entrance of the LIRR Terminal, and make the acquaintance of one of Baruch College’s newest “graduates.” You will find on display all of the qualities appropriate for a public servant: accessibility, talkativeness, and impressive knowledge. Not bad for a two-month-old... and it knows how to attract attention, too.

Just don’t try to shake hands. Go instead for the tactile map—its part of the “Talking Kiosk” or, to use its full name, Talking Directory Display System. The product of advanced multi-media technology, TDDS employs a raised-line map, large print, and speech to present carefully crafted way-finding information to help the visually impaired navigate complex spaces.

TDDS, the first station of its kind, was designed and developed by the Baruch College Computer Center for Visually Impaired People in concert with the American Foundation for the Blind and the Stein Partnership. Also helping to assure TDDS’s timely graduation was the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration, and Project ACTION of the Easter Seal Society. It was unveiled for a five-month test period on Sept. 9 by LIRR President Thomas Prendergast and Baruch President Matthew Goldstein.

The kiosk consists of computers, speakers, a touch tablet with a tactile map, and a touch-tone keypad. When not in use, the system remains in an “attract” mode, announcing its presence and inviting visitors to try it out. A proximity detector senses an approach and begins an interactive session. Information on all local transit system fares and schedules, Amtrak, lost-and-found, police services, and station amenities is accessed through a voice-mail menu or through a “touch and tell” mode that is activated by touching the map. All spoken messages are displayed in large print for those with some vision.

Karen Gourley, director of the Computer Center, reports, “I am very happy with the kiosk’s first few months in service. Our tracking indicates it is being used frequently, and many patrons have responded helpfully and enthusiastically to the verbal questionnaire we present them before they catch their train.”

Upgrade for CUNY Home Page

The City University home page on the World Wide Web—found at http://www.cuny.edu—has recently been re-designed to offer a vast array of CUNY-related information to students, faculty, staff, and interested visitors.

Information on tuition, admissions, financial aid/scholarships, counseling, and course-planning on the 20 campuses is accessible through the Web site and links to individual campus home pages. Links to job listings will be valuable to the two-thirds of CUNY students who work. Important news is posted on the home page, such as data on budget and enrollment, information about members of the Board of Trustees and its schedules of meetings, which are open to the public.

A section titled “News & Events” displays recent press releases, CUNY-TV listings, as well as the latest issue of CUNY•Matters. Pertinent new research is also occasionally featured, most recently the book Changing the Odds, a study of the open admissions policy at CUNY.

A “Resources & Projects” section links users to the CUNY+ library database and such sites as the American Social History Project, CETUS, and NetTech, which are collaborative academic networks. One such project is the award-winning New York Online Access to Health (NOAH), which offers information on a variety of health topics and on local care providers in both English and Spanish.

The CUNY Web site also contains links to other pertinent Web pages such as the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, the College Board, and state and federal educational offices. It is administered and maintained by the University Office of Computing and Information Services.
ON RECENT AMERICAN HISTORY WARS

Reconnaissance from the Battlefields of Memory

John Jay Professor of History Mike Wallace has just published a collection of essays Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory (Temple University Press), in which he examines "the way Americans have grappled with the preservation and presentation of history in public settings." Among the topics he addresses, mostly concerning events since World War II, are presentations on Ellis Island, several museum exhibition controversies, the history of the historic preservation movement, and, in the title essay, the Mickey Mouse-eye’s view of history. The following excerpt has been adapted, with Prof. Wallace’s kind permission, from his introduction, "Battlefields of Memory."

In the early 1990s, Serbian troops besieging cities in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina set their artillery to blowing up museums, monuments, libraries, archives, mosques, and churches. Not content to evict or eradicate their enemies, Serbian hyper-nationalists scoured away every evidence of long-standing Croat or Muslim occupation of coveted territories— an effort at historic cleansing. Fifty years later, when the Nazis had also tried to erase a people and their past, a group of guerrilla scholars managed to save memories, if not lives. In the doomed Warsaw Ghetto, historian Emmanuel Ringelstein led an underground effort to document life in the Jewish quarter. Several dozen writers, teachers, rabbis, and historians maintained a chronicle, recorded deportations, commissioned papers (on the effects of starvation), and collected posters, decrees, and copies of underground newspapers.

On the eve of destruction they placed this archive in milk cans and metal boxes and buried them deep beneath the city streets. In a posthumous triumph for these historians, one milk can was unearthed in 1946 and another surfaced in 1950; the exhumed work went on to inform the vast enterprise of Holocaust commemoration that blossomed in Israel, the United States, and Germany itself.

These are extreme examples of the interplay between power and memory, a major theme of Mickey Mouse History. Yes, they are so extreme they might seem extraneous to a book that explores the place of history in contemporary American culture. Fervent arguments over collective memory puzzle most Americans, who find it hard to get passionate about the past and to take it seriously. The past is not our favorite tense. It seems dead and done with. We often say History is a repository of names and dates. Few Americans, even the elite, had a stake in the past.

The impatience with the past had its attractive qualities. It fostered innovation: U.S. economist Joseph Schumpeter hailed capitalism’s capacity for “creative destruction.” It gave Americans an exhilarating feeling of freedom, a sense they were no longer bound to the crushing weight of history under which places like the Balkans seemed buried. Yet ultimately this feeling was and is illusory. It is not, in fact, possible to step outside of time. A culture that generates such fantasies might fairly be called “historical.”

Yet ahistoricism is only one way Americans relate to the past. It is a powerful tendency, but by no means all-embracing or determinative. Many people are deeply interested in specific histories—their own biographies (and the story of their generations), the lives of family forebears, the lore of their local communities, particular chapters from the national saga, notably the Civil War.

What is the balance between memory and forgetting? Arguably, we have been on a heritage binge and remain thoroughly obsessed with the past. We have preserved and restored old urban centers and historic landscapes. We have filled our museums and halls of fame with all kinds of artifacts and vestiges. We have engaged in a financial binge, and have bought our way through a treasure binge. We have consumed historical novels, taken in costume dramas, and devoured innumerable documentary films and documentaries on television.

The America the First World War made possible is still the dominant economy. Our Revolution, the Civil War, the space flights, the television and the movies... the country is a museum. And the movies are not the only museums. The United States, since World War II, have erected a whole series of monuments and memorials to their own pasts: the Korean War Monument in Washington, D.C.; the Vietnam Veterans Memorial across the Potomac; the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco; and the sunken.sql forests of Midshipmen’s Memorial on the campus of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. We have ...
HIGHLIGHTS FROM A SPRING LUNCHEON

New Faculty, Fascinating Careers

By Gary Schmidgall

I t can be jarring to hear the Chief Librarian at John Jay College of Criminal Justice refer casually to “the year I spent in prison.”

However, Larry Sullivan delivers the remark with a suspicious air, and he seems practiced at giving his listeners pause to imagine the cause of his incarceration. Shockingly overtime books? Breaking their spines? Perpetrating graf-fiti in the margins? Or, perhaps more fashionably, some larceous breaking-and-entering in cyberspace?

Sullivan divulged his past in small talk at a luncheon hosted by Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds last spring for 30 new City University faculty members of the “Class of ’96.” Over chocolate mousse in the Robert J. Khibbs Board Room at the Central Office, Sullivan put all suspicions to rest with a more benign but intriguing explanation.

In the late 1970s he applied for the position of director of the library at the Maryland State Penitentiary. The Ph.D. in medieval French history and brand-new M.L.S. from Johns Hopkins on his vita were all very nice, but what won him the job was the fact (not mentioned on the vita) that for four years he had tended bar at The Wigwam, a shoot-em-up Baltimore dive famed for its clientele of once and future felons.

The experience behind bars did succeed in giving much of his subsequent scholarship a felonious bent. He has published The Prison Reform Movement: Forlorn Hope (1990) and last summer traveled to Italy to give a paper on “Reading in American Prisons.” Though a “new” hire, Sullivan is an old CUNY hand, having been Chief Librarian at Lehman College before commencing a six-year tenure as the Chief of Rare Books and Special Collections at the Library of Congress.

Also present for the lively and wide-ranging discussion among CUNY’s newly arrived scholars was Jonathan Hill of the Kingsborough Community College Department of Travel and Tourism. Hill underlined the explosive growth in his field of expertise, tourism marketing, by noting that tourism now is the global economy’s largest employer and generates an astonishing $665 billion in tax revenues worldwide.

The tourism curriculum and enrollments, Hill reported, are mirroring the industry’s growth, and he believes that the field is finally gaining the respect it deserves. “Our students must have superior critical thinking and organizational skills for highly responsible upper-level positions in hotel and resort management, airlines, and tourist boards,” he noted.

Hill, a lifelong New Yorker, retains a special fondness for Russia as a result of working for Aeroflot during the crucial first four years of Glasnost. But, he says, the part of the world that currently tantalizes him most as a tourist is the southern part of Chile. Though Daniel Broe is a new member of Lehman College’s Department of Geology and Geography, his specialty is a far cry from the wide-open spaces that Hill yearns for. Broe is one of a new breed of urban geographers, and much of his analytic and research energies are focused on two of the great questions facing American business in the late 20th century: to mall or not to mall—-and where? A specialist in transportation planning, Broe has also developed expertise in retail site location, as well as the creation of models for the optimum siting and spacing of chains of stores.

Dina Dhabbay-Miraglia has more playful sites up her sleeves. As a new Queensborough Community College Speech Communications & Theater Arts professor, her particular excitement was over the development of a new Summer Theater Workshop that would run the gamut from stand-up comedy to children’s theater, where the three- to five-minute plays play the thing. She also lives her motto—“language and theater can’t be separated”—in her ESL and speech classes, which, she says, will soon span a theater-based ESL textbook.

Dhabbay-Miraglia’s remark, “Colorful is my middle name. Is no idle boast.” First, she goes back to Jack Kerouac: “I knew him, and I’m not proud of it!” He was awful...gross. He wanted women to sit at his feet!” To the countercultural performance space born, she had 200 modern dance/performance pieces nationwide to her credit by the age of 30. In her next decade, with exquisite schizophrenia, she led her own Yemenite Performance Art Company (numbering as many as 32 artists) while coolly earning a Columbia Ph.D. in linguistic anthropology. The specialty in which she publishes is Semitic linguistics, notably in Judeo-Yemeni.

Can an “old beatnik,” as Dhabbay-Miraglia styles herself, find happiness on a campus? Adept at speaking or reading nearly a dozen languages, she replies: “I’m loving it, mainly because my students come from all over the world. My openness to, my fascination with, their languages makes them comfortable, and of course they are always pushing me into new linguistic insights.”

A new member of Baruch College’s fledgling School of Public Affairs, Gregg Van Ryzin, brings several years of experience in Washington, D.C. research firms (notably, working for the Department of Housing and Urban Development) to his classes in research, statistics, and housing policy. As a specialist in low-income housing policy whose doctoral dissertation in psychology (from the CUNY Graduate School) focused on housing for the elderly, Van Ryzin’s pleasures on arriving at the School have centered on the excitement of being part of its founding and the anticipation of Baruch’s great leap forward into advanced information and data-gathering technology. On the other hand, he worries that heavier teaching loads in the future might hinder his research. One topic which he believes will flourish in the new publising, resident management of low-income housing, has become the focus of especially keen interest in recent years.

Following studies in Georgia, Ann Brown came north to earn her Ph.D. in anatomy at New York Medical College. After post-doctoral work she joined the Medgar Evers College Biology Department, where she is pursuing research in hematology, with special emphasis on leukemia and forms of anemia. When she comes home from her anatomy and embryology courses, Brown relies on her classical training as a flutist for relaxation. She has been im-

CUNY EXPANDS WEB ACCESS IN QUEENS

T he CUNY by-word, “access to excellence,” nowadays encompasses full electronic access to information. In its historic role of outreach to the community, the University has recently collaborated with the Queens Borough Public Library to provide just that for the residents of Queens.

The collaboration is historic, for the Library this summer became CUNY’s first major client as an Internet Service Provider (ISP). The collaboration also makes sense, putting the nation’s largest urban university system in tandem with the top circulating library in the nation for 10 consecutive years.

In August, users of computers at the Borough’s Central Library began to enjoy expanded and much faster access to the Internet and World Wide Web. Ultimately computers at all 62 of the Library’s branches will be fully linked to cyberspace with no charge to the public. The Library’s plan is to install from five to 25 computers (400 in all) in each branch by next summer.

The previous Internet connections had been sufficient, says Library Director Gary E. Strong, “using CUNY as our ISP is a pre-emptive step” to accommodate a projected huge increase in usage. “The advantages to the Library are more capacity, better service, and lower costs,” he adds.

This arrangement, supervised by CUNY’s Office of Budget, Finance and Information Services, cements the Library’s already strong ties with the University. Director Strong serves on CUNY’s task force on Libraries and Educational Technology, and Queens College offers a Library Science degree program attended by many Queens Library employees. As Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds observes, “This collaboration will benefit both our institutions and make Internet access available to many more of our mutual constituents.”
VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

Upholding Affirmative Action

By Vita C. Taus
University Affirmative Action Office; former UAAC Member

I imagine this scenario: You have been authorized to hire a new colleague for your department, but you must complete your search within three months. Your affirmative action officer likely calls you to set up an appointment and forwards to your office a set of forms that outline the process to be followed. The immensity of the task seems daunting, and you wonder: Why is the affirmative action officer involved? What about the current debate regarding affirmative action? What is the role of affirmative action at CUNY?

These and related policy considerations fall squarely in the lap of the University Affirmative Action Committee (UAAC). The Committee, composed of faculty and administrators from the campuses, studies extramural practices, recommends policy, and examines ways to increase institutional accountability.

Established in 1984, the Committee sets its agenda each year in consultation with Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations Brenda Richardson Malone. Its work has centered on two strategies. First, Committee members closely monitor the reporting procedures and other documentation required for campuses’ compliance with national and local affirmative action regulations. Second, the Committee advises the Vice Chancellor on matters of concern to the protected class groups in the University:

women, blacks, Hispanics, Asian-American/Pacific Islanders, Italian-Americans and American Indian/Alaska natives.

Dr. Ruth Lugo, UAAC Chair and Dean of Student Affairs at LaGuardia Community College, speaks with enthusiasm of the Committee’s role. “I am quite pleased with the skills and experience within the Committee and throughout CUNY,” she says. “UAAC is currently working on three areas: increasing awareness of the benefits of affirmative action to CUNY; developing recruitment and retention strategies for faculty and staff; and monitoring the affirmative action plans at each campus.”

Over the years, the Committee has implemented a number of recommendations that demonstrate its commitment to immediate concerns as well as to long-range planning. For example, UAAC has:

• reviewed the University workforce, developing procedures for auditing applicant pools and hiring patterns;
• conducted an in-depth survey of the responsibilities of Campus Affirmative Action Officers and recommended changes in their role in the affirmative action process;
• examined the roles, work and goals of Campus Affirmative Action Committees.

Committee generally presents its findings in the form of recommendations used to provide guidance to policymakers within the University.

Having served on the Committee since its inception, Dr. Don Watkins, Professor Emeritus of Baruch College, is something of a UAAC “elder statesperson.” He has the advantage of the long view of UAAC and has witnessed first-hand the positive contributions made by affirmative action. “Institutions have moved to eliminate irrelevant barriers to appointment, retention, and promotion . . . and have developed programs that expand opportunity and lead to more diverse and inclusive communities.” Firm in his belief that the Committee’s mission and procedures are strongly needed at CUNY, Watkins views the establishment of UAAC as a strong gesture in support of affirmative action and sees the Committee’s role as a positive force in the University.

The Committee currently consists of the following 12 members: Dr. Humberto Canate, Hostos Community College; Dr. Nancy Lay, City College of New York; Dr. Ruth Lugo, UAAC Chair, LaGuardia Community College; Ms. Gloria Medonne, City College; Dr. Pamela Trotman Reid, Graduate School & University Center; Prof. Joseph Gil Riley, Bronx Community College; Dr. Marlene Springer, President, College of Staten Island; Dr. Gloria Waldman, York College; Dr. Don Watkins, Baruch College; Dr. Clara Wink, Hostos Community College; Dr. Annette Schaefer, New York City Technical College; and Dean Gloriana Waters, University Affirmative Action Office.

If you are faced with the scenario outlined above, take heart. With the processes may seem complicated, with planning it can go very smoothly—as voices of experience will be pleased to demonstrate to you. For further information, contact Jean Chen in the University Office of Affirmative Action, (212) 794-5174.

During one of those productions, at Brooklyn College’s New Workshop Theater, the reason for my reservations became clear. The theater space is very small, very cozy, and we got tremendous audience response from our performances. So many wanted to see them that we had chairs right up to the stage. Singers were literally face to face with the audience. Suddenly the piece came into focus for me: I knew I had to do a Tender Land for the small screen.

It wasn’t easy. For a long time it seemed that few people thought it could be done. Even the Aaron Copland Foundation declined to become involved. However, with donations from corporations such as Union Pacific and Health Care Horizons, other private donors, and generous support and encouragement from Chancellor Reynolds, the project finally got off the ground.

The enthusiasm of Nancy Hager, Chair of the Conservatory, for the project was important. When so many kibitzers were saying “You can’t do this!” or “Why are you trying to do this?”, she made it a point to be encouraging. “It was ideal repertory for us,” Hager observes. “The Tender Land focuses on the courage, vision, and determination of American pioneers, and these qualities live on in the students and faculty of the Conservatory, which is appropriately the home of the Institute for Studies in American Music.”

The result of this teamwork was a remarkable opportunity for the College’s music and TV/Radio students, who had the chance to work with highly trained professionals on a major production as singers, instrumentalists, technical and camera crews. In the outside world, a venture of this size and complexity might have demanded a $1 million budget.

It was a learning experience, especially for the singers. Unlike a live opera, where everything comes together (one hopes) on opening night, a television performance must be accomplished in stages. First, the orchestra audio track was recorded separately—one of the most difficult parts of the project for me personally. As conductor, I had to anticipate how the singers would interpret their parts and then make sure the orchestra track accommodated them. The worst part was timing the a cappella passages.

Next, the singers went into the studio to record their parts on both audio and video. Skip Brunner, the Director of Conservatory Technologies, did a great job of providing us with the orchestra background during live on-stage taping of the action. Happily, the passion of our stage director, Stuart McClelland, for the piece equaled mine.

At first, it was a shock for the singers, who did not simply sing through their roles, take their curtain calls, and go home. Sometimes a scene would require 10 or 12 takes, which forced them to find ways to stay vocally fresh through a long day of shooting and ways to make the words they were singing mean something every single time.

Now that our Tender Land is in the can, the performers and production team are feeling truly vindicated by the way it has been received. Already the performance has won major awards, including being a finalist for the Telly Awards and winning the Crystal Award of Distinction from the Communicator Awards.

My personal reward, of course, is that now I no longer have to search for a way to make The Tender Land “work” for me. That our production succeeded by following Copland’s original intentions makes the experience all the more gratifying.

LAST WORDS

“Born 28 Nov 1757 in London & has died several times since. —William Blake, 16 Jan 1826”

Entry by Blake in the autograph album of his friend and patron, John Upcott. The visionary poet and artist died, presumably for the last time, in 1827. Friedrich Nietzsche described The Divine Comedy in 1888 he observed, “One pays dearly for immortality: one has to die several times while still alive.”
I n Luigi Pirandello’s classic play Six Characters in Search of an Author, the characters refuse to reside within the boundaries of the written play. Instead, they bound from the stage during rehearsal and petition the scribe to rewrite the piece from their perspective.

For my Developmental Reading course at New York City Technical College I usually assign 10 books from a range of genres. Last year I ventured to add my own non-fiction book, The Ville: Cops and Kids in Urban America, to the reading list for my classes. Of course, college teachers regularly assign their own works. But my book about life in a Brooklyn neighborhood happened to be very much about my students themselves. One aspect of the mime is to “play yourself,” and I think my students realized that the main character and the aspiring actor in the book is my high school student who is both a gang member and an aspiring actor. “I spent days with him,” I told her. “Everywhere he went, I went. I followed him on dates with his girlfriend and his girlfriend. I went to jail with him. I read his diaries.”

I was his girlfriend for six months,” she countered.

Certainly, it is usual for a writer to have his book reviewed. Sometimes the reviewers even seem to know what they are talking about. Sometimes they don’t. But nowadays I collect 25 expert reviews from four different classes every semester. It is like a Ph.D. candidate having his dissertation scrutinized by renowned scholars in his field on a regular basis. Not only are some of the students from Brownsville; they are friends and neighbors of the book’s protagonist. The result is a vigorous interaction, a reviewing of events in the text, some inclination to ease their insistence on such language as an identity badge. But the biggest positive effects have been trust—a narrowing of the gap between teacher and student, and a dissolution of the veil of mystery that can drape itself over writing in general and journalism in particular.

MASSIVE VOTER DRIVE

Prior to the recent Presidential election, CUNY mounted a mass non-partisan drive to increase voter registration. Chancellor Reynolds particularly urged students at CUNY’s 21 campuses to participate in the voting process. Voting forms were distributed to more than 200,000 students in their pre-registration packets at class registration and freshman orientations.

Posters urging turnout at the polls featured such publishing celebrities as Bill Moyers, Anne Rice, Amy Tan, and Alice Walker. “Voting is one way to say hello to your grandchildren” was Walker’s message.

The extensive initiative also included making it possible, in mid-fall, to request a voter registration form through the CUNY home page on the World Wide Web; the formation of a team of Voter Registration Coordinators for each of the campuses; and the distribution throughout the University of thousands of promotional, non-partisan buttons, pens, and brochures.

CUNY’s continuing efforts to increase the active electorate were supported this year by Barnes & Noble, Inc. and have had considerable impact.

According to Board of Election figures, the CUNY drive earlier this year accounted for 71% of newly registered New York City voters processed through city or educational agencies from November 1995 through June 1996.
Silver Anniversary for Social Change

The Feminist Press at the City University of New York recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. Florence Howe, one of its founders, casts a brief glance back over her long tenure as the Press’s only president.

When we began, there were no feminist books or bookstores, no Ms. Magazine, no women directors of film. You could not find Virginia Woolf’s volumes in paperback in any bookstore, nor other women writers. Even if you were a woman, you probably could not name more than two or three women writers, and your literature professor was unlikely to be a woman. If you were a woman student wanting to become a doctor or a lawyer, your chances were slim unless you were a New York Alice A. Stoudt could fit into the unofficial 6 percent quota for women.

When we began in the early 1970s, lawsuits were just in progress to change some of these inequities. But such legal changes, we knew, would not be effective without other, inner changes, those we called changes of consciousness. Women students and their elders needed to know that many thousands before them had written successfully, had worked for social change, and had been instrumental in gaining some rights for women, though much more remained to be done. When we began, Women’s Studies—the academic arm of student leaders with CUNY scholars, administrators, community advocates and activists for a series of open, relaxed “vision workshops” designed to encourage collaborative programs and policies to help our fellow New Yorkers to transcend poverty.

Finally, WRI is planning to convene its alumni project is aimed at forming an advocacy group of exemplary CUNY graduates who have become self-supporting. We hope, through them, to combat welfare stereotypes and heighten public awareness of our successes in making education an accessible route out of poverty. (If you have names of such alumni, please let us know.)

Images of Women: East and West

That’s the title of the 1996 Speakers’ Series sponsored by the Women’s Studies Certificate Program at the Graduate School and University Center. Among the programs this fall are a panel discussion, “Do Images of Women in the Media Harm Women?” that took place on Nov. 19; a talk by Prof. Ruth Abrams of the University of Massachusetts on “Jews in the Dutch East India Company,” a talk by Prof. Talia Greenberg of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a film discussion session, “Revisiting the Japanese Women’s Movement,” led by filmmaker Nanako Kurihara (Dec. 10, 1 to 3 p.m.; Room 4000, 43 W. 42nd St.).

Through our publications, access to the lost history and culture of women. We were intent on finding and publishing the “missing” books and making them available not only in classrooms but in libraries and homes. In doing this, we also took on the job of supporting the women’s studies curriculum, especially by making invisible or “lost” women writers not only “found” but also ready to move into the “mainstream.”

As the 1970s moved forward, we recovered major 19th- and 20th-century U.S. women writers now ubiquitous in such venues as the Norton anthologies. Among them were Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Rebecca Harding Davis, Zora Neale Hurston. As the 1980s began, we swerved into the present to restore fiction by African-Americans who are now household names: Paule Marshall, Dorothy West, Saramaka Wright, and Louise Meriwether. At the same time we looked across oceans toward Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Where were their women writers?

At first, I was reluctant, wanting to continue preserving our U.S. heritage. But on trips to India in 1977 and again in 1983, when I asked scholars, “Where are the women writers of India?” I was told (by both men and women), “There aren’t any. Some men added, “Even if you could find a few, they wouldn’t be any good.”

Ten years and 200 Indian feminists later, we published two huge volumes called Women Writing in India: 600 B.C. to the Present. It contains selections from 140 authors, almost all of whom had been acclaimed in their own day, then forgotten. Of course, it was gratifying to read Anita Desai writing about this venture in the New York Review of Books, as “revolutionary” in presenting “a view of India in life and history never coherently put together before.” For the first time, Indian women could see their history not only as writers but as intellectuals and active participants in the long struggle for women’s rights.

Even before the successful debut of the Indian volumes, we were urged to “begin on Africa.” What could that mean? India was one huge country, but Africa was one huge continent. How could a small non-profit, educational press take on Africa? Where would the resources come from? How many years?

Few of these questions have yet been answered, but with our co-directors, Prof. Tzuylene Jita Allan of Baruch College and Prof. Abena P.A. Busia of Rutgers University, as well as an aptly prestigious Advisory Board and Executive Committee, we have begun our work. Since we know that women’s oral histories and stories, as well as their published and unpublished work, will “write” Africa, we have called the project “Women Writing Africa.”

Of course, there are other parts of the world yet to explore. Nor have we abandoned our original mission. In addition to the African-American and working-class writers we have always been committed to, the Press has begun two new series, the Helen Rose Scheuver Jewish Women’s Studies series and another, not yet formally named, that will focus on Italian-American writers. We have also continued to publish outstanding children’s literature, Asian and Asian-American titles, as well as an original series of cross-cultural memoirs.

How do we manage all this? More personally, how do I manage all this? Some things have to be done at the press by our staff and dedicated Board of Directors. Other tasks are harder, given the volatile book business and the pressure to raise funds for the development of new projects. On the other hand, I continue to feel fortunate to have spent a quarter of a century not only working for social change, but watching it happen.

There are now more than a thousand women’s studies programs and centers for research on women. Some 70 feminist presses, hundreds of journals, magazines, newsletters, and bookstores—not only in the U.S. but around the world. I am writing this essay from Frankfurt, Germany, the site of the largest book fair in the world, where feminists publishers could meet to discuss co-publishing ventures and, over dinner, to begin planning an international feminist book fair that will look forward to the new century. I take special pleasure in such work, since I believe that the future of the women’s movement, like the future of feminist publishing, teaching, and writing will be international.

These book jackets for an anthology of Indian women and a selection of supernatural fiction suggest the range of The Feminist Press list. For further information, write for a Press catalogue to 311 East 94th Street, New York, NY 10128 (phone: 360-5790; fax: 348-1241).

(Continued from page 4)
in 1997. With 442 granted in 1994-95, AMP is well on the way toward meeting this goal. NSF is contributing up to $5 million, to be matched by the Alliance, toward implementing permanent systemic change in the SEM curriculum. While the Alliance targets minority students, the systemic instructional changes it has initiated have enhanced SEM instruction for all CUNY undergraduates. In addition, NSF has awarded the Alliance $130,000 for support of initiatives to foster better teacher preparation for science and mathematics courses at pre-college levels and to consider extending the AMP concept to the social and behavioral sciences.

Fostering a sense of shared purpose in CUNY’s SEM community has been a chief concern of AMP’s Governing Board, chaired by Chancellor Reynolds; its Steering Committee, Project Directors, and Activity Coordinators. According to Dean Erwin Fleissner, who is active with AMP on the Hunter campus, “The project is an example of wholehearted collaboration. Colleagues from CUNY campuses have been meeting in a very natural, unconstrained spirit of cooperation.” This spirit has led to significant restructuring. Under AMP auspices, the workshop approach to teaching calculus, chemistry, and physics is being integrated into the gateway courses which have so often proved stumbling blocks to advanced studies. These workshops, led by specially trained peer tutors on AMP-funded stipends, emphasize problem-solving and collaborative learning. They have helped to reduce SEM attrition among all CUNY undergraduates.

The Alliance is also committed to making individual research integral to the University’s undergraduate SEM curriculum. One hundred minority students are currently doing on- and off-campus research with the assistance of AMP stipends. This experience has proved crucial in motivating and empowering students to pursue advanced study. Queens College Professor of Chemistry William Hersh recalls of one of his students, “AMP provided funds for him to work full-time in the laboratory. In his last semester I watched him turn into a chemist before my very eyes.”

AMP has also initiated pre-research courses for freshmen and sophomores at the community colleges, research enrichment and career development activities, and funding to encourage faculty to generate AMP-related collaborations.

Science learning centers, staffed by a coordinator and trained peer mentors, have also been established on all campuses and serve as home base for Alliance students. These hubs offer tutoring sessions, diagnostic testing, computer-based instruction, career presentations, training in job interviewing and resume writing, and social functions. Increasing the number of trained faculty mentors is one of AMP’s important goals.

The Alliance has also helped to improve articulation between the community and senior colleges. Initiatives include the Research Articulation Program, or SEMRAP, which is developing a cadre of senior college research faculty who undertake projects with community college faculty, who in turn serve as mentors to AMP students on their campus. AMP has also stimulated major University-wide grant proposals such as the NSF-supported Workshop Chemistry Curriculum, which will radiate to 10 CUNY campuses and three other major universities. These initiatives have benefited from $1 million in direct funding from CUNY and $1.5 million in matching funds. As well, the Alliance has forged important extramural ties. Chief among these is a thriving partnership with NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies. For the past three years, the Institute on Climate and Planets, an innovative venture co-sponsored by NASA/Goddard and CUNY/AMP, has joined high school and college students and faculty with scientists in the field who are doing world-class climatological and space research. Other current collaborations involve Polytechnic University, Brookhaven National Laboratory, AT&T Bell Labs, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s laboratory in New York.

In just four years, the Alliance has created a new model for SEM education and, in the process, it has changed the lives of students. As Reggie Parker, an AMP Research Scholar, said recently at the fourth NSF-sponsored AMP national research conference, “When I was accepted into the AMP program, I was extremely excited. I knew AMP would put me one step closer to my goal of becoming a computer scientist. I was like a lump of clay. I was without form or definite shape, but I had infinite potential. AMP was the potter’s wheel, and the NSF and AMP directors and coordinators were the pottery makers. They helped shape and mold me into what you see today.”

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T he leading independent film producer in Hollywood for 35 years, Sam Goldwyn (1884-1974) was famous for his hilariously spacey malapropisms. Though his domain was the movie set, some of his more inspired asides and pontifications can still come in very handy on any college campus. Consider the following situations:

- You want to return a bad paper, but gently say: “I was very pleasantly disappointed.”
- When a paper was so bad you gave up: “I read part of it all the way through.”
- You came under fire in a faculty meeting: “It rolls off my back like a duck.”
- A perfect excuse for missing the next one: “I’m laid up with intentional flu.”
- You want to pay tribute to a longtime colleague you like—“He has warmth and charm.”—or don’t: “Plenty of water has passed between us.”
- You must inform your staff of an austerity budget: “Spare no expense to make everything as economical as possible.”
- The same old professional jargon is getting you down: “Let’s have some new clichés!”
- You want to greet a new colleague from the Midwest: “You’re from Iowa? Here we pronounce it Ohio.”
- You want to applaud a trend on campus: “It’s spreading like wildflowers!”
- You find yourself at a cocktail party speaking to a legislator responsible for cuts in education funds: “The sweetness of low budget never equals the bitterness of low quality.”

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