Chancellor Offers Budget Testimony in Albany

Chancellor Matthew Goldstein opened his annual testimony on the 2004-05 Executive State Budget before the New York State Assembly Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees in Albany by marking the milestone completion of the City University’s Master Plan for institutional renewal.

Goldstein said, “has seen its enrollment grow to close to 40,000 high school students.” A $7 million grant from the Gates Foundation will also add to the University’s growing ranks of campus high schools, among them three new specialized schools, the first of their kind to be built in decades.

The Chancellor then turned to specific budgetary requests necessary to sustain this progress. He asked for funds to continue full-time faculty recruitment, “so that we meet our twin goals of having 70 percent of instruction provided by full-time professors and of bringing to CUNY faculty whose scholarship and artistic activity are of the highest quality.” He also asked for support to “extend to all of our students, including our many students with disabilities, the full range of educational opportunities and academic support services.”

While observing that the 2004-05

Continued on page 4

Faculty Mentors Nurture “Extreme Potential”

Hunter College senior Latoya Campbell expects to graduate in June in biological sciences and then go on to study cancer biology in graduate school. Her mentor, the award-winning cancer researcher Jill Bargonetti, expects she will feel right at home.

“Latoya—who is the only undergraduate working in my laboratory—fully understands the project the lab is carrying out. When she’s discussing the research with me, she asks all the right questions.”

“Latoya is self-motivated and works really hard at her experiments,” Prof. Bargonetti adds. “She has extreme potential.”

Bargonetti, the recipient of a Presidential Early Career Award from the White House, has distinguished herself with research on cell life and how it is regulated by the tumor suppressor protein p53. Campbell’s experiments in the lab involve growing cancer cells in tissue culture and putting recombinant DNA molecules in the cells to examine differences in cellular processes of regulation.

Campbell, whose studies have been supported by the NIH-funded Minority Access to Research Careers program, gained wide experience in many Hunter labs. “In each lab I learned something new,” she says, but she found a real home with Bargonetti’s team. “Dr. Bargonetti’s such an excellent teacher. She definitely wants you to do the best possible job, but she’s very patient.”

This notable example of educational symbiosis—to use a term from biology—will be one of several featured in the coming weeks in a city-wide informational outreach program, “Meeting of the Minds@City University,” to publicize CUNY’s wide array of academic programs opportunities for financial aid, student jobs and internships, and such unique initiatives as the CUNY Honors College.

A mong other remarkable student-faculty collaborations to be featured in the program and in CUNY M attainances are CSI Prof. of Chemistry Ruth Stark and her biochemistry major Toni Evensley, a future research pharmacist; Oscar-winning Lehman College composer John Corigliano and student Jeffrey Layton, a composer of media and ad music for 30 years Carnegie Foundation Outstanding Teacher Award-winner Prof. Paris Svoronos and his Queensborough Community College physician’s assistant major Nilda Montes; and former Pulitzer-winning New York City editor and Brooklyn College journalism teacher Paul Moses and his student Jego Armstrong, a budding newspaper entrepreneur.

Dr. Jill Bargonetti, right, and Latoya Campbell.

At a Glance

1 Caribbean Reformers Hostos and Martí Celebrated in Bronx

Hostos Community College last fall hosted a joint conference on its namesake, Eugenio Maria de Hostos, and Jose Martí, two celebrated Latin American libertarians. See page 6.

2 From High Finance to Yoga and Massage for new QCC Teacher

After many years in corporate finance, Columbia MBA Thomas Claire decided to turn long experience with yoga and other healing arts into a new career. His latest book, Yoga for Men, is discussed on page 9.

3 City Tech Student Conceives Design for Department Posters

Ad design student Darryl Menor and his mentor, John McVicker, N.Y.C. Technical College’s ad design guru, have developed a marketing idea that could spread throughout CUNY. See page 12.

4 Trove of Photographs at LaGuardia Tells City Housing History

Citizens in condemned apartments visited offices like this one to learn their City Housing Authority fate. For a spread of historic images taken by CUNY photographers Archives, see page 10.
The Calculus of Saturday Morning Teaching

By Chancellor Matthew Goldstein

last semester, I re-entered the classroom after an absence of many years. I taught theology for three hours each Saturday to a group of about 20 students at Hunter College. I will not deny that I enjoyed returning to the classroom for my own sake I love mathematics. The simple purity of elementary principles and their elegant applications are to me a profound intellectual joy. I also took great pleasure in sharing this joy with my students; it is marvelous every time you see a student have a "eureka!" moment, when the light dawned and a formula or concept hits home.

But spending time with students also gave me an opportunity to reflect on the work I do each day as chancellor. Working at the Central Office understandably limits my direct access to students; yet knowing what our students reflect on, aspire to, and dream about can only help us formulate future policy.

In writing my instructional efforts last semester by several CUNY college presidents and members of my Cabinet, each of whom taught a class on their own time. Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Louise M. Mirr, for example, taught writing to education students at Hunter. A lot of us pool our resources to help students transition from high school to college, so working with younger students—many of whom have just begun their journey toward secondary teaching careers—was an enlightening experience. Many of my students come from families in which education was not their first language or where traditional preparation for calculus was not available. Yet, through hard work and motivation, they excelled. This is the story of both CUNY and our great city.

CUNY's administration is charged with guiding policy development that directly affects students in the classrooms. When we allocate resources and formulate policy, we must have a sense of where true need lies. While my teaching was unquestionably rewarding in its own right, so was the chance to see policies in action and their effect on students. For example, I cannot emphasize enough the need for a working capital budget. Our students have no time to spare searching the halls for broken chairs or climbing several flights of stairs because of broken elevators. Seeing the frustrations of students firsthand has reinforced my desire to resolve the budget in a way that will bring services back to them. Considering how hard they work to be in the classroom, I think we need to work hard in City Hall, Albany, and Washington D.C., to bring them the facilities they deserve.

I also feel they deserve to be taught by dedicated, world-class faculty, and to that end we are implementing an ambitious hiring program for both senior and community colleges.

Helping students grasp basic concepts and their multitude of uses, furthering the learning process—that is what we do in the classroom. Some of my students embraced calculus; some were traumatized by it. Almost all of them weathered a challenging class well. While I know that the typical administrator's duties do not allow time for teaching, I think all of us can benefit from a periodic return to the classroom for our own kind of learning experience. I have regained my Saturday mornings, but I don't plan to lose the lessons that they taught me.

All Wet, and Happily—John Jay's Muse of Natation

Adapted and expanded here is a story from "Study With the Best," the 30-minute TV magazine now in its third season, that highlights CUNY's wide array of outstanding faculty, remarkable students and alumni, and major University academic initiatives. The lively, fast-paced series (CUNY-TV Channel 75, Sundays at 8) is aimed particularly at prospective CUNY students.

If you don't believe mermaids exist, you should meet John Jay College professor of physical education and head women's swimming coach Jane Katz. She has practically spent her life in the water—and more than four decades in the plumes of CUNY.

A City College alumna, Dr. Katz was a member of the U.S. synchronized swimming performance team in Tokyo in 1964 and helped pioneer its acceptance as a full-fledged Olympic competition event. The much-honored athlete is also the author of several books on swimming and fitness. At John Jay College, she teaches police officers, fire fighters, the fearless, and the fearful. When she is not at the poolside, "I was a first-rate aquatic loafer." She has never had the chance to swim for many seasons to come…Swimming is a social exercise, she says, "because I'm very klutzy on land. In the water I feel graceful and weightless—and that's fun. I started swimming at the age of three." She has fond memories of the Parks Department's Hamilton Fish Pool on the Lower East Side, where a boy named Matthew Goldstein also used to swim. Her life in the swim of things has included competition at the Maccabiah Games in Israel at age 14; honors from FINA, the international amateur swimming federation, at the 2000 Olympic Games at Sydney; and five championships at the World Senior Games in 2001.

"I began learning synchronized swimming at City College from my coach, a new hire named Ella Szabo," Katz recalls. "She taught me synchro, I taught her English"—they swam in competitions far and wide. "I was able to make the synchronized swimming performance team that traveled throughout the world and performed in Tokyo University during the 1964 Olympic games." Several years later, in 1979, Katz was injured in an auto accident caused by a drunk driver. "I had a Colles wrist fracture, a lot of the policies she has supported in the past year, and several fractured ribs. I was lucky to be in the water—and more than four decades in the plumes of CUNY."

Katz is delighted to serve new students who have never had the chance to swim before. "In the last decade, especially at John Jay, we've been able to make great strides in the City University with programs, videos, books, and simply telling the story, particularly for the police and fire fighters who train here."

No one is safe from a nuade by Katz to the poolside. "When very, very busy people—a college president or an executive—take a swim, it helps them solve the problems of the day. When they say, 'I don't have time to swim,' I tell them, 'Make the time! Make the priority of getting thee to water! You'll feel better, you'll think better, and you'll have fun!'" Right out of City College, Katz taught from 1965 at Bronx Community College and from 1989 at John Jay. "As I go into my fortieth year of teaching at CUNY, I've been blessed to be able to share my love of swimming—to bubble about bubbles and share the benefits of aquatic exercise and swimming." And Katz will not go gentle into the locker room. "I hope to be able to do this for many seasons to come…Swimming is a lifelong passion for me," Katz says, adding, "See you poolside."
Testing and assessment have also improved: “Valid, nationally-normed tests are used both to assess whether students need remediation and to assess whether remediation efforts have been successful.” Schmidt also praised College Now for helping to raise academic standards in public high schools and expressed pleasure that it has expanded to rapidly serve close to 40,000 students in more than 200 high schools. He also applauded the development—with help from the Gates Foundation—of college-affiliated high schools, saying he knew of “nothing like it in any other city.” Contrary to the predictions of pessimists that enrollment would decline, Schmidt noted it in fact rose every year since reforms were instituted and stands “a robust 10 percent above four years ago.”

“The most impressive transformation at the senior colleges has been the dramatic advances in academic standards,” Schmidt noted. “All the senior colleges have seen big gains” in SAT levels, increasing between 100 and 200 points in addition, retention and success rates are up significantly for freshmen and sophomores.

“The teacher education exam results, a bellwether of trouble before, is a bellwether of success today. Where five years ago only 62 percent of CUNY’s teacher candidates could pass the state tests, today more than 92 percent pass,” Schmidt said. “This is good news indeed for New York City’s public schools, where CUNY graduates provide roughly one-third of the teachers.”

“An Honors College population of 2,000 (it’s now 720).”

“Recognition for CUNY as a first-class research university. Schmidt wants more than a dozen graduate programs ranked in the national top 10 in their fields, another ten in the top 20.”

“The community colleges renowned as ‘engines of educational opportunity and social mobility,’ with two-thirds of their students coming to earn baccalaureate degrees.”

“Chairman Schmidt said. ‘It tends to be contagious. It is a great offensive weapon, and it helps on defense, as well.’ Clark Kerr, the great architect of the University of California, summed it up well when the Regents unceremoniously dumped him as Chancellor of the University. ‘I’m leaving just the way I arrived,’ Kerr remarked, ‘fired with enthusiasm.’”

Schmidt went on to describe, with enthusiasm, a University he feels has “almost completely transformed itself from the one described in the Trustees’ Task Force Report four and a half years ago that led to several major policy changes. He noted in particular the elevation of senior college remediation. ‘Vastly more remediation now takes place, with CUNY’s intervention, in our excellent community colleges, where it belongs.”

Two fundamental decisions emerged as the concept of the program was refined. “One, we decided that for this to be a useful degree, it had to be a hybrid program, involving the most rigorous technical side of computing as well as what’s called the contextual side, involving techniques of law enforcement and the laws of evidence. This was to assure that our M.S. graduates will know all the ins and outs of hardware, software, networks and the like, and be able to function effectively and comfortably in the law enforcement and corporate communities. The second fundamental decision was that the Forensic Computing program shouldn’t be easy. “Not for dabblers” Levine stressed. Applicants will be required to have taken a year of undergraduate calculus and a semester of introductory probability and statistics. Other prerequisites cover advanced data structures, computer algorithms, computer languages and operating systems.

Because computer crime evolves so rapidly, the program will concentrate on the deep principles underlying computing. “We want to train our students on the fundamental logic of computers, rather than the current platforms, software and search engines that are in vogue,” Levine said. It is already clear Levine will have no trouble finding students. “I don’t know where people get wind of this, because we haven’t advertised it,” he said. “But we get calls all the time. When are you starting? When are you starting?”

Chairman Schmidt speaking at the Harvard Club.
Queensborough Offers City's First Hands-On Degree (Literally)

By Jim Kenney

Many people think that massage is just about learning how to rub someone's back or shoulders. Thomas Claire—an Assistant Professor in the Health, Physical Education and Dance Department, and the Coordinator of Queensborough Community College's new Massage Therapy Program—knows otherwise.

"It is a much more intense educational experience than that. Massage therapists must also learn about the origin and nature of diseases, how to address specific health concerns, and much more," says Claire. "It is a holistic, integrative discipline that literally means 'finger pressure therapy.' It is derived from the principles of traditional Chinese medicine and works with energy that flows through a system of pathways called meridians. The practitioner uses pressure from the fingers, palms, heels of the hand, and other parts of the body—elevos, knees, and feet—to modulate the flow of energy along these channels to bring balance and harmony. These channels of energy are the same that an acupuncturist treats with needles.

The majority of massage therapy students are between the ages of 35 and 45, though they range from those just out of high school to those in or nearing retirement. Many are "career changers" who are leaving more traditional jobs for personal fulfillment, as Claire himself, for many years a corporate finance officer, did in the early 1990s. A number of students already have associate's or bachelor's degrees; some have doctorates and law degrees.

The students themselves offer a variety of reasons for being in the program, but agree that it has provided them with unique opportunities. Justine Pepell says, "I am a Fitness and Yoga instructor, and I was looking to expand my skill set. I was investigating Yoga Therapy, but saw an advertisement for Queensborough's program. I love everything about it."

Queensborough President Eduardo Marti says, "I am very proud that Queensborough is home to the first publicly-supported program of this kind in the city. Our interest in holistic health care issues is mirrored by the creation of this degree program and these wonderful labs for the students to train in."

As for the future, Thomas Claire has some ideas. "I would like to see new modules of study to train students in additional massage therapy techniques, new affiliations with other educational institutions, more outreach to the community, more tailoring of courses to meet the needs of specialized health care practitioners. The road ahead goes over the horizon."

Queensborough adjunct instructor Lynn Temenski, left, performing a shiatsu technique on Professor Alexandra Tarasko.

CUNY Chancellor Testifies on Proposed 2004-2005 State Budget

Continued from page 1

Executive State Budget's increase of $28.6 million in aid and added $8 million from enrollment growth "provides important stability for our senior colleges," Goldstein said that CUNY "must still contend with a funding deficiency for continued operations of $18.6 million." He also expressed concern for reduced funding for SEEK, College Discovery, Liberty Partnership, STEP, and CSTEP programs. He also noted the proposed $7.3 million reduction of FTE base aid to CUNY's community colleges would "diminish the significant quality improvements we are achieving through our Community College Investment Program."

Goldstein also asked for careful consideration of proposed changes to the Tuition Assistance Program, "a critical safety net that allows financially disadvantaged students to attend the University. . . Without adequate financial aid for students . . . our ability to provide educational opportunity and fulfill our historic mission will be limited."

The Chancellor then drew the legislature's attention to CUNY as a "sizable force in the economy of the city and state" noting that the University grants 9,000 associate degrees, 14,600 bachelor's degrees, and 6,400 master's degrees each year, and that in 2002 its direct expenditures totaled $2.2 billion, which created in turn another $1.7 billion in indirect earnings. "Each CUNY graduating class earns $618 million more in its first year after graduation than it would have earned with just a high school diploma," he noted.

Turning to the capital portion of the Executive Budget, Goldstein said he was "heartened" by the new $1.212 billion Five Year Plan for the senior colleges but "deeply concerned" that "for the last six years virtually no capital budget appropriations have been provided to CUNY's community colleges." Funds will also be used for health and safety and facilities preservation and to complete several major projects at John Jay, Brooklyn, and City Colleges.

The Capital Budget will also fund a state-of-the-art facility at the New York City College of Technology, as well as upstate science facilities at other CUNY senior colleges, including City, Lehman, Hunter, and Queens Colleges. Included also are funds for Academic Building #1 at Medgar Evers College, and renovations at CUNY's community colleges.

Chancellor Goldstein closed his testimony by asking the Assembly and Senate committee members to work with the Executive to produce a budget that "allows us to continue our tradition of helping students of every background participate fully in the economy of the City and State—starting businesses, developing new technologies, finding cures for disease, enhancing education and culture, and, of course, paying taxes."

The Chancellor's full budget message to the Legislature is available at www.cuny.edu/news

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Atila Turco, as Queensborough student, is seen demonstrating the practice of Western Massage. Photos, Carolyn Gaida.
CUNY Supports Study of Future Chinatown

In an effort to enhance the understanding of Asian American culture in the city, the University recently awarded the Asian American/Asian Research Institute a grant to conduct a 10-week workshop, “Chinatown in the 21st Century,” that will address the future of the district—and not only the famous one in Lower Manhattan.

“Chinatown” is a symbolic way of saying Asian-American communities in general, and comprises not only the historic downtown area of Manhattan, but also the newly developed neighborhoods of Flushing in Queens and Sunset Park in Brooklyn,” said the Institute’s Executive Director, Thomas Tam.

The weekly discussions and presentations will explore new directions for development, as well as issues like immigration, self-identity for new Asian Americans, and political leadership. The workshop will also produce a streaming video, CDs and publications for further use in public schools and colleges offering courses in cultural diversity and Asian studies. The video will be available for viewing at www.aaiinfo.info.

The workshop kicks off on March 26 with a reception at 25 West 43rd Street, 18th floor, that will feature the city’s first elected Asian-American, Councilman John Liu.

Jazz Doyenne Sojourns at Hunter for Spring

Over the last decade composer Maria Schneider has become a major jazz presence conducting her works with jazz and big band orchestras at Carnegie Hall and around the world. Time magazine has called her “the most important woman in jazz,” and three of her recordings—A Llegroessa, Evanescence, and C oming A bout—have been nominated for Grammys. “Schneider’s music is like no other jazz in the world,” the Los Angeles Times has said.

Schneider has her own group, the 17-piece Maria Schneider Orchestra, and they are making a return engagement to their base of operations for the spring term. She and several members will be teaching master classes, present guest lectures, and conduct rehearsals open to Hunter College and High School students. Hunter musicians will also join in workshops with the Maria Schneider Orchestra.

A highlight of these campus appearances is a series of four concerts at the Kaye Playhouse. The kick-off concert took place on February 13, and featured the world premiere of a Schneider composition commissioned by Hunter College. Other concerts (all Thursdays at 8) will be on March 18, April 29 (with Bob Brookmeyer, who mentored Schneider in her early New York City composition studies), and June 17 (in association with the JVC Jazz Festival).

Baruch College Hoop Community Salutes a Beagle Eye for Numbers

Even though Burt Beagle was A WOL for one Baruch men’s basketball game back in 1969, the Baruch College Athletic Department decided to go ahead and honor its own version of a “Burt Beagle Day” that took place January 31. That game he missed so long ago (because a business trip demanded it) was only the seventh in the College’s basketball history.

The Saturday afternoon event found Beagle precisely where he likes to be at the College’s new Athletic & Recreation Complex for a basketball triple-header: the Baruch-Hunter women’s face-off, then the annual Baruch alumni game, and finally the Baruch-Hunter men’s clash. A legendary New York City sports statistician, Beagle was working his 850th consecutive Baruch men’s game that day.

Just before that, though, Beagle was greeted by the crowd, 200 of them in Burt Beagle T-shirts, and a ceremony honoring his long history of devotion and service to the Baruch College athletic program.

“Burt has been a friend, student, coach, sports information director, statistician, and just about anything else asked of him here,” said Baruch’s Athletic Director and men’s basketball coach, Ray Rankis. “He is a walking institution.”

Now 70, Beagle is a Baruch College alumnus—would you be shocked to learn his day job was as an accountant?—and became its first Sports Information Director in 1968. He also helped to start the men’s baseball team in 1970 and still serves as an assistant coach. Beagle holds the record for most consecutive basketball games scored at any collegiate level, and he has been the official statistician for the annual CUNYAC tournament, not missing a game since 1970. In addition, he is in his 30th year as the Sports Information Director for the Catholic High School Athletic Association. Beagle estimates that, altogether, he has worked more than 6,000 high school and college football, basketball, and baseball games.

President Baruch, City Tech to Step Down

Baruch College President Edward V. Regan recently announced his retirement. The former New York State Comptroller from 1979 to 1993 and veteran of more than 30 years of public service, who assumed leadership of the College in 2000, said he will step down at the end of the 2004-5 academic year.

Regan, who as Comptroller was the sole trustee of the state pension fund, had many ties to the local business and financial community, notably as chair of the Municipal Assistance Corporation and as director, trustee, or member of O penheimer Funds, the Brookings Institute, and the Committee for Economic Development.

At New York City College of Technology’s convocation on February 5, President Fred W. Beaufait announced his resignation, saying that “when I accepted this job I promised five years—and believe it or not five years have passed.” Beaufait, a professor of civil engineering who arrived at City Tech from Vanderbilt University, will remain in office until his successor is chosen. After that, he will presumably have more time to devote to his other life as an artist. Beaufait’s brilliantly-colored acrylics on canvas were featured in the December 2001 C UN Y M atters.

Executive Leadership Program in Third Year

Early in March, the Executive Leadership Program begins its third year of expanding the leadership skills of talented CUNY executives in order to prepare them for future senior executive positions within the University. Jointly coordinated by the Office of Executive Search and Evaluation and the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations, the program presents a series of executive briefings and experiential workshops designed to familiarize participants with best practices in leadership and change management.

New this year to the program, which runs for ten Fridays over three months, will be a workshop on emotional intelligence, the management competency made famous by psychologist and author Daniel Goleman. Of the topics in this year’s program include motivation, team building, workplace diversity, ethics, technology and change, institutional assessment, and time management. Participants will also work in project groups to develop strategic plans for handling current challenges faced by a CUNY college.

The program is sponsored by all of the City University’s constituent campuses.

Baruch Athletic Director Bill Eng left, Burt Beagle, and Coach Ray Rankis.

CUNY college football, basketball, and baseball games.

CUNY MATTERS — M arch 2004 | 5
Hostos y Martí en Nueva York: Conference Honors Men of Ideas

By Daisy Coco De Filippis
Provost, Hostos Community College

The 19th century came to life last November 19-21 at Eugenio María de Hostos Community College, where scholars, students, faculty, staff and members of the community at large gathered to discuss the legacies of the Cuban patriot, essayist and poet, José Martí (1853-1895) and of the Puerto Rican educator and man of letters, Eugenio María de Hostos (1839-1905).

Though Martí and Hostos lived in New York City at the same time, they never met. Their writings and substantial legacies of political and educational freedom, however, constitute a historical conversation about the role of education, nationhood, and hemispheric balance in late 19th-century Caribbean and Caribbean-Latin American history and culture. Martí and Hostos were incredibly prolific, producing volumes of essays, treatises, poetry, and literature, including children’s stories, that continue to impact the political, social, and cultural development of nations in the Americas.

This, then, was the backdrop for discussions that engaged presenters and a lively audience for three days on the Hostos campus. Did these men of ideas and action ultimately fail? Was their ideal of a United Spanish-Caribbean-Islands Nation, based loosely on Simón Bolívar’s Latin American Nation, a utopia or a dystopia? Was Bolívar’s legacy a blessing or a curse? Did education women in the sciences and as full participants contribute to the viability of these nations’ formations? These and other questions came under discussion.

Sons of the two remaining colonies of Spain in the western hemisphere (Cuba and Puerto Rico), Hostos and Martí saw in the presence of their giant North American “sibling” and Puerto Rican community both a threat and an opportunity. It is from North American shores that an expedition was launched to liberate Cuba from Spain. The adventure cost Martí his life. And it is from Boston Harbor that a liberation attempt, ultimately unsuccessful, was organized by Hostos and fellow Puerto Rican patriots. But it is also from these same North American shores that an impending threat to the hegemony of emerging Latin American nations loomed larger each year.

José Martí lived as a Cuban exile and a correspondent writing in New York for Latin American journals from 1883-1895. During this sojourn here, Martí came to understand the challenge presented to young Latin American nations by a strong and at times aggressive U.S.A. His portrait of the nation, published in Spanish-language journals here as well as in Latin America, educated an emerging local Hispanic community. In particular, his much-studied essay “Our America,” a title that in fact refers to our wine be distilled from our own plantains, however bitter it might be.

He also warned his contemporaries of the impending threat of cultural, political, and possibly geographical annexation by the U.S.: “We can no longer be the people of leaves living in the air, our foliage heavy with blossoms and cracking or humming at the wind’s light’s caress, or buffeted and tossed by the storms. The trees must form ranks to keep the giant with the seven-league boots from passing.”

Images from nature frame much of Martí’s political discourse, reminding us of his beautiful and visual poetry, such as his Versos sencillos (Simple Verses), which are part of the cultural legacy most Latin American children are taught. Is this Verses reiterate his vision of America and his commitment to work for the common man: “Con los hombres que yo m’importa” (“I shall cast my lot with the common man”).

This theme of working for the improvement of the common man and woman’s lot bridged the world of Martí and the world of Hostos, the Puerto Rican educator and man of letters. Indeed, “Enseñad a la gente a pensar” (“Teach the people to reason”) was a guiding principle of Hostos’ career. In his long, lonely and often precarious pilgrimage throughout Latin America, as fore-shadowed in his youthful novel El periplo de Bayón, Hostos managed to implement educational reform in Chile, Venezuela, and—most profoundly—in the Dominican Republic. His seminal essays on “La educación científica de la mujer” (“The Scientific Education of the Woman”) appeal to the only moral imperative he understood: that of our obedience to reason and science.

Echoing the words of John Stuart Mill and others, Hostos cautioned his contemporaries about the fallacy of keeping women behind the veil of ignorance. He mentioned the establishment by the Dominican Salomé Ureña de Henríquez of the first Normal School for Girls. This school educated women in the hard sciences, as well as mathematics, languages, history, and philosophy. Unusual for its day, the school also emphasized the importance of exercise and sports, and it encouraged a regime of vigorous physical activities. The campus that carries his name now, fittingly, has a student body that is 75 percent women.

Hostos’ educational reforms were broad-based, and they encompassed the implementation of a system of lay education in the Dominican Republic. These reforms survived until the dictatorship of Trujillo in 1930, when they were superseeded by a religion-based curriculum. Eugenio María de Hostos’ legacy lives today in the South Bronx, where his words and those of Martí served as catalysts for discussions about an examined life for Latinos, Caribbean and Caribbean-Latinos, both students and scholars. Skits based on Hostos’ philosophy of education—written and performed by students under the guidance of Professors Lizette Colón and Tere Martínez—were particularly poignant and significant. The three-day encuentro owed much of its success to the tireless efforts of Hostos Professor Orlando Hernández and his Department of Humanities colleagues.

Hernández was joined by Mr. Wallace Edgecombe, director of the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture, and colleagues from other departments in the orchestration of a year-long commemoration.

Recognizing that Community College Number Eight was not exactly inspiring, the Board of Higher Education, at the suggestion of board member Luis Quiroo Chiesa, officially renamed it on September 29, 1969. A unanimous vote approved a resolution that registered grateful recognition of Eugenio María de Hostos’ contributions to the intellectual and spiritual wealth of the Americas and expressed the goal “to stimulate interest and pride from the large Puerto Rican community of the South Bronx.”

A tip exercising the College’s leadership in promoting Latino culture is the upcoming N'europa en el corazón, an international conference on the contributions of the Nobel laureate Chilean poet and peace activist Pablo Neruda (1904-1973).

Information on this event (September 22-25) may be found on the Hostos Community College website: www.hostos.cuny.edu
Fine Threads, Renaissance Style
Come to Graduate Center Gallery

By Janet Cox-Rearick, Distinguished Professor of Art History

For the rulers of the Renaissance in Italy—and everywhere in Europe—choosing what to wear was a political decision. Dress was an important aspect of life at court, vividly evoking the luxurious and costly attire of rulers who used the art of costume, together with the figurative arts of painting and sculpture, to proclaim their political power and magnificence.

Sumptuous Renaissance costumes are familiar from portraits of the period, but New Yorkers now have a rare opportunity to experience the heights of sartorial luxury in three dimensions. Fifteen carefully researched and executed reconstructions of Italian court costumes, dating mainly from the mid-16th to the early 17th centuries, will be on view in "Splendors of the Renaissance: Princely Attire in Italy," which opens in the Art Gallery of the Graduate Center on March 10 (it runs until April 24).

The exhibition is presented in collaboration with King Studio of Codisotto di Luzzara, near Mantua, and is the creation of its director, Fausto Fornasari. In 2002-03, Fornasari's exhibition toured museums in major cities in Italy and Spain, as well as being shown in five South American capitals and in Canada. The exhibition, which has been my pleasure to curate, makes its U.S. debut at the Graduate Center.

Explained and illustrated at the beginning are some of the exacting techniques that Fornasari's craftsmen used to make the reconstructions. The costumes themselves are dramatically presented on life-size mannequins. All the costumes are based on Renaissance portraits and other paintings, large color reproductions of which are displayed next to the mannequins.

The history of Italian Renaissance court attire is introduced by two mid-15th-century costumes from the North Italian city of Ferrara. These, which have never been previously exhibited, recreate an elegant doublet and white wimple over a houppelande. The dress is typical of Isabella d'Este, Federico's mother, Isabella d'Este, and the reconstruction of the dress she is wearing in it.

Federico's wife, Duchess Margherita Paleologa (Hampton Court). The portrait is traditionally identified as representing Federico's mother, Isabella d'Este, and was painted by great Florentine painter Jacopo da Empoli. It depicts the duchess in a magnificent white, black, and gold court dress, the reconstruction of which occupied Fornasari and his team for three years.

There were created for the celebration of marriages between the princely families of Italy and Europe. "The Marriage of Vincenzo Gonzaga and Eleonora de' Medici," also in the Uffizi, by the Florentine painter Jacopo da Empoli portrays a politically advantageous marriage of 1584 between the daughter of the Grand Duke of Florence and the future Duke of Mantua that linked the ruling dynasties of the Medici and the Gonzaga. Five costumes reconstruct the sumptuous attire of the bride, groom, and wedding guests as depicted by Jacopo, bringing into real life a late 16th-century court spectacle.

Another type of ceremonial costume is Vincenzo Gonzaga's attire for his 1587 coronation as Duke of Mantua. A great deal of research was necessary to recreate a costume which is described at length in contemporary chronicles and depicted in paintings by Giovanni Bahuet (private Collection, Mantua) and Rubens (Palazzo Ducale, Mantua). Made of white satin, embroidered gold, silver, and pearls and topped with an ermine cape, it is the most lavish and costly of all the costumes in the exhibition.

Fornasari also reconstructed costumes depicted in portraits of various members of the Gonzaga family such as Titian's portrait of Federico, 1st Duke of Mantua (Prado, Madrid). Perhaps the most famous of these is Giulio Romano's portrait of Federico's wife, Duchess Margherita Paleologa (Hampton Court). The portrait is traditionally identified as representing Federico's mother, Isabella d'Este, since the spectacular black and gold dress is typical of Isabella's attire, which was designed to display the female figure. The repeated curves of the low neck, shoulders, and the rounded sleeves are echoed in a dramatic head-dress invented by Isabella, who was the most famous fashion-plate of her day.

A last section of the exhibition presents the court dresses of two Euro-pean royal ladies. They are based on portraits showing them in costumes in the international court style of the late 16th to early 17th centuries, which was dominated by the highly severe and formal fashions of Spain. In this period attire became more than ever an essential part of the pageantry of rule, with opulent brocaded silk garments trimmed with lace and jewels functioning as outward signs of princely power, prestige, and wealth.

A 40-page catalogue with essays on the costumes and color illustrations of them has been produced to accompany the exhibition.

Associated with the exhibition is a pair of lectures that will be given at the Graduate Center: On March 17 I will speak on "The Fashioning of a Public Personas: Duchesses Eleonora of Toledo’s Ceremonial Dress and Her Portraits by Bronzino," and on March 20 the topic will be "Giulio Romano’s portrait, traditionally identified as Isabella d’Este, and the reconstruction of the dress she is wearing in it.

I have also been pleased to organize two sessions on Italian court costume at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, a resident affiliate of the Graduate Center. Sponsored by the Graduate Center's Renaissance Studies Certificate Program, these sessions will focus on late 15th-century to early 17th-century Florentine and Mantuan court costume, sumptuary laws, and the role of tailors in the design of court costumes, and on contrasts between the indigenous styles of dress of various Italian cities and those of other European countries.
Footprints of Visitors, Civilization Intersect at Lehman

E veryone is familiar with that stark binary choice you can either talk the talk or walk the walk. Those who do the former exasperate us; those who get ambulatory we applaud. Since last fall, however, members of the Lehman College community have been enjoying a third possibility: walk the talk. That is, they have been walking through the striking new main entrance to the College, which features the “talk” of human civilization—everything from 4,500-year-old mathematical hieroglyphics to the plaque put on the Jupiter probe Pioneer 10.

The essence of Holup’s design is the placement in the pavement of a variety of quotations, equations and visual symbols expressing profound thoughts or great achievements. Holup asked members of every part of the Lehman community for suggestions. “As the words and symbols came in,” she writes, “they seemed to cluster around six main themes: the Heavens, the Earth, We, Words, Time, and Opposition.” These six themes are presented in the plaza at the east end, in intersecting fashion. In the walkway connecting the main gate and the plaza Holup created a “Chronology of Writing” on horizontal strips of etched bluestone. Among the choices here are the first few measures of Stravinsky’s “Rite of Spring,” suggested by professor of music Gheorghe Costinescu, and the equation for the combustion of glucose sugar (the source of energy for most living organisms), suggested by chemistry professor Marc Lazarus.

Holup’s public art projects are to be seen in every borough but Staten Island. They include bas-relief murals in three Bronx subway stations, her “River that Flows Two Ways” in Battery Park, and the ongoing “Common Ground” project along the Brooklyn-Queens expressway, the largest work of public art ever commissioned by New York State.

The footprints of visitors, civilization and the interplay of old and new wisdom. A owl is an ancient symbol of wisdom. My owl sculpture...complements an older owl located high on Gillet Hall, to the left as you enter the gate. This old owl and a desire to combine the distinctive old and new styles of architecture provided the basic concepts for the Intersections project.

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In the “In the We” section are a passage from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I have a dream” speech and the first words of the U.S. Charter: “We the peoples...” – appropriately, given the College’s involvement in the creation of the U.N.

For the “Words” area, Lehman College President Ricardo Fernández suggested Caesar Augustus’ “festina lente” (Latin for “make haste slowly”), and social work professor Richard H. Oldy urged Beckett’s “You must say words, as long as there are any... must go on, I can’t go on. I’ll go on.”

Reiterating a premise of the Intersections guide, selected by the entire Lehman community, come from a lecture on King Lear by the College’s founding president, Leonard Lief: “What is significant is how we die, fulfilled or ignomiously, to know specifically how the Act meets or fails to meet the peoples…” –

Footprints of Visitors, Civilization Intersect at Lehman

The tension between freedom and national security has been felt in America since even before the founding of the United States. As early as 1759, Benjamin Franklin opined in his foundational speech to the College community, which features the “talk” of human civilization—everything from 4,500-year-old mathematical hieroglyphics to the plaque put on the Jupiter probe Pioneer 10...
Scratch the surface of a poet and you are likely to come face to face with blind ambition. The British poet Gavin Ewart was just such a poet, when he expressed the desire to write a poem “so moving that it leaves all other poems standing” (his title, “The Most Poetic Poem”). Shakespeare got lucky when he read that sonnet and had the hero of his “The Tempest” boast quoted above, that “powerful rhyme” would last till judgment Day. So far, he’s on track.

Surely one of the oldest and most daring erotic poems is also splendidly fulfilled to date—was made by the Roman poet Ovid (43 B.C.-A.D. 18) at the end of his 12,000-line epic poem in 15 books, Metamorphoses. His magnum opus will bear him “up to so sublime a life,” in the distant stars, immortal in the name I leave behind,” Ovid promised, adding for good measure, “my words will be upon the people’s lips and if there is truth in poets’ prophesies, then in my fame forever I will live.”

Ovid’s original language, Latin, may be dead, but Queensborough Community College’s Professor of English Charles Martin has done his epic part to keep Ovid’s prophecy alive with a full new translation of this collection of more than 250 stories of mythical transformations (W.W. Norton). A distinguished and often-published poet in his own right, Martin is also the author of a translation of the poetry of Ovid’s lively predecessor Catullus (John Hopkins) and a study of his poems (Yale).

Public Ovidius Naso—that last name apparently due to an ancestor with a large nose—was a colorful and rather subversive Roman poet. Of his works, the Art of Love, was a how-to on where to find women and how to seduce them. Eventually Ovid wrote out his welcome with “family values”-minded Augustus and was banished to the Roman version of Siberia, a town on the Black Sea.

But not before Ovid wrote the Metamorphoses, a brilliant collection of tales of people changed into animals, flowers, rivers, rocks, mountains; men changed into women and vice versa; and a statue famously changed into a woman. “Metamorphosis” is a Greek word for “change of shape,” and the epic’s “proem” begins with the line, “My mind leads me to speak now of forms changed/into new bodies.”

In a lengthy introduction, the eminent H avant classicist Bernard Knox notes that the stories of “this playboy of the Roman World” are told with “such graceful charm and wit, and sometimes with a terrifyingly worthy of Dante at his most infernal, that they have been appropriated by poets and artists ever since.” A mong countless authors inspired by them have been Boccaccio, Salmanticensis, Italo Calvino, and Ted Hughes. He was Shakespeare’s favorite poet. Shakespeare cribbed Prospero’s speech boasting of his magic powers in The Tempest from his 55th sonnet, and the most popular work of his career— if you judge by editions published while the playwright lived—was his poem Venus and Adonis, based on the tale of how the adorable young hunter was transformed into a blood-red aneme. Read between the lines, however, the Metamorphoses is also strikingly au courant in the 21st century, as was demonstrated by the successful Broadway run of Mary Zimmerman’s adaptation in 2002. Knox points out that many of the tales “speak directly to the modern reader”— dealing with such common or extreme forms of human behavior as sexual harassment, rape, sex-change, homosexual and heterosexual love, depression, suicide, torture, child and alcohol abuse, and depression.

In his “Note on the Translation,” Martin, whose project was supported by several PSC-CUNY grants, describes how trial and experimentation led him to render the Ovidian hexameter lines of Latin epic in the familiar blank verse of English: “In blank verse I found...a willing and patient workforce, infinitely adaptable and responsive to the demands placed upon it.” The choice appears to have been a good one, for Knox says the “splendid version of Ovid’s masterpiece will give it a fresh lease on life for a long time to come.”

“Skill in Action” Encouraging Men to Pose

Yoga first came into Thomas Claire’s life more than 30 years ago, when he was pursuing postgraduate studies in Paris on a Fulbright. A French colleague at the Sorbonne invited the Kenyon College student cum laude grad to a class in the living room of a suburban housewife, who was the yoga teacher. Although Claire recalls sleeping through much of the 90-minute session, something must have clicked. “I remember how relaxed and rejuvenated I felt.”

Claire’s career after Paris took “many turns and twists,” he says, resulting in an M.A., comparative literature from Brown University, then an M.B.A. from Columbia University. After that came more than a decade rising up the ladder in the world of corporate finance, working first for the Irving Trust Company, W.R. Grace & Co., and Harper/Collins, where he was Assistant Treasurer. All the while, Claire was becoming a more and more serious student of yoga and related health practices.

After four years in his last position, as treasurer for LVMH Inc. in New York, Claire became “one of those people who switch from a successful career in traditional business to pursue work more personally satisfying.” He stopped focusing on spreadsheets, financial reports, and bottom lines and started thinking—and writing—about such subjects as craniosacral therapy, myofacial release, visceral manipulation, reiki, reflexology, and, of course, yoga.

Claire soon became an expert in the field, and this expertise led to his arrival in 2001 as an adjunct lecturer at QCC to help develop CUNY’s first massage therapy curriculum (see story, page 4). Since 2003 he has been an assistant professor in the College’s Department of Health, Physical Education and Dance. He teaches Eastern anatomy and bodywork there, while also practicing Swedish massage, shiatsu and yoga.

Claire’s book Bodywork:What Type of Massage to Get—and How to Make the Most of It appeared in 1995, and this year New Page Books has published his Yoga for Men, a comprehensive introduction specially aimed at men of all ages and from the athletic to the sedentary. The epigraph he has chosen for the book is from the Bhagavad Gita: “Yoga is skill in action.”

The word “yoga,” Claire explains, is derived from the Sanskrit root “yuj,” which means “to yoke.” “Yoga is often described as meaning ‘union’...of the mind, body, and spirit,” as well as “union of the individual with the life force.” He also notes that yoga originated in India as one of the six classical schools of Hindu philosophy.

“The practice of yoga is frequently described as both a science and an art,” Claire writes in his Author’s Note. “It is, in fact, an entire approach to living that originated thousands of years ago. Yoga has grown, evolved, and branched in many directions in the centuries that have followed.” The various branches are briefly summarized in Part I, “Yoga as a Living Tree,” and Part II lays out “The Main Traditions” of hatha yoga, with chapters devoted to Himalayan Institute, Integral, Iyengar, Sivananda, Ashtanga, and Kundalini yoga.

Part III covers “Contemporary Adaptations of Yoga.” This is followed by a “Complete Yoga Practice Session for Men,” with illustrations and descriptions of numerous classic yoga poses and poses. Among these are Bhujangasana, or the Cobra pose, Trikonasana (Triangle pose), Vrkasana (Tree), Surya Namaskara (Sun Salutation), and, naturally for the end of a session, Savasana or the Corpse pose, which Claire calls “a posture of complete relaxation and abandon.” Part IV consists of chapters on yoga for the phases of a man’s life, for athletics, for men’s health, for enhancing sexual life, and partnered yoga. Other resources for further study of yoga are also presented.

Claire ends by summarizing the yogic diet, quoting Swami Rama’s assertion, “Regulation of food is the foundation of all other regulations,” and by repeating the central premise of yoga: “The ultimate goal of all yoga...is to make the body the most perfect vehicle possible so a man can realize his total being to the fullest—body, mind, and spirit...Yoga is a way of life.”
Housing for the City’s Huddled Masses—History Unfolds

By Gary Schmidgall

February 6, 1934 must be counted among the handful of red-letter days in New York City’s social and architectural history that changed the face of the city forever, right up there with the day the Brooklyn Bridge opened or the day the Empire State Building topped out or the very recent day the winning proposal for the World Trade Center site was unveiled.

The signal event of that day seventy years ago was not nearly so dramatic (lawyers poring over legal prose), but its portent for the future was to prove enormous: the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) was formally established as a public corporation. It was the first such authority in the nation.

Its board, populated by social activists who had tired of waiting for private enterprise to put an end to the slums, met for the first time two weeks later. A year later the courts handed the Authority power to condemn slum properties, and by the end of 1935 the city’s first low-rent housing development opened on the Lower East Side.

Mayor Fiorello La Guardia cheered when President Roosevelt’s New Deal Congress passed the national Housing Act (Wagner-Steagall) in 1937, and funds for public housing began pouring into the city. In 1949, funds further increased for Authority projects when President Truman signed the U.S. Housing Act. No one in New York City is better poised to recount the history of the Housing Authority than Dr. Richard Lieberman, the founder and director of the La Guardia and Wagner Archives at LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City. For the Archives is the repository of the NYCHA historical documents and other materials, as well as seven other major city history collections: papers of Mayors La Guardia, Wagner, Beame, and Koch; the Steinway & Sons piano makers; the New York City Council; and the local history of the Borough of Queens.

Arrayed here is a tiny sampling of vivid and illuminating images that tell the bittersweet story of the mid-century heyday of urban renewal. Bitter because so many distinctive neighborhoods and families’ lives were upset by “progress” sweet because the time had clearly come for many crumbling disease- and crime-ridden tenements.

“We are in continual contact with the Housing Authority,” says Lieberman. “A few years ago, we received a call from its storage depot here in Long Island City. They had two filing cabinets full of stuff... was the Archives interested?” A silly question to any archivist worth his salt. Staff from the Archives went over and discovered these cabinets were packed with negatives from the period spanning July 1939 to about 1990. “We were interested,” Lieberman says, putting it mildly.

The negatives from the first several decades were large-format (4 inches by 5 inches). Starting in the 1950s, 35-millimeter cameras began to be used, replacing the bulky single-frame 4x5 camera and the unwieldy set-ups it entailed. “As we reviewed the negatives we realized it was a treasure trove visually documenting the physical transformation of major parts of New York City in the 20th century,” Lieberman recalls.

The archivist’s first instinct is to gather. The second is to share, and it did not take long for Lieberman and his staff to decide that a well-established La Guardia and Wagner Archives tradition would serve the purpose well: an historical calendar.

Since 1979, the Archives has produced an annual calendar that is not your usual Monet, polar bear cubs, or Salvador Dalí. It is a history calendar designed to elucidate and educate while also showing off the unique resources of the Archives. Among past calendars have been “Patience and Fortitude: The Life and Times of Mayor Fiorello La Guardia,” “The Piano Makers: Working at Steinway,” “Caring for Others: A History of Queens,” “A History of the New York City Settlement House,” and “A Human Tapestry: Working at Con Edison.” Last year’s calendar was “Man Behind the Scenes: Julius C.C. Edelstein,” a civic leader who figured prominently in CUNY history.

The calendars—which have been happily used by this Editor of CUNY Matters to keep track of his production schedule—have been generously supported by the Mayor’s Office and the city’s Department of Cultural Affairs, the City Council, the borough presidents of Queens, LaGuardia Community College Presidents, Con Edison.

At left, out with the old—typified by the tenement at left—in with the new, one of the Baruch Houses in mid-construction in 1955. At right, children heading for their East Harlem tenement “playground” in 1952. Below, February 26, 1948, was moving day for this family into the Jacob Riis Houses. Bottom, Community centers were a part of the projects; here is a tap-dancing class at the Queensbridge Houses in 1941.
in a Photographic Trove

Muralist Marion Greenwood, left, shows her “Blueprint for Living” to Mary Simkovich, the NYCHA vice chair, at the 1940 dedication of the Red Hook Houses community center.

Robert Paaswell Engineering Change in 21st-Century Transport Planning

Fundamentally, smart growth is what residents of New York, and Americans, want in their cities,” says Robert Paaswell, Distinguished Professor of Civil Engineering at City College and Director of the University Transportation Research Center, which is based at CCNY. “They want quality of life and they know they have to address the three E issues: Environment, Energy and Equity.” He was interviewed on City Talk, CUNY-TV’s forum on politics and public affairs, by host Doug Muzzio, co-director of the Center for the Study of Leadership in Government at Baruch College. Edited excerpts follow.

Muzzio: Let’s focus on two issues, transportation and housing. Right now, New York City has on its agenda the World Trade Center transit hub, a possible extension of the 7 subway line, the Train-to-the-Plane, the Second Avenue subway and ferries. What are our transportation needs?

Paaswell: Twentieth-century planning was about transportation planning, water planning, housing planning, land-use planning, environmental planning. In the 21st century, we have to recognize that these are all parts of the same whole. So if we look at the 7 extension, to the far West Side and develop the far West Side for housing or put all our money in Lower Manhattan or forget all that and put transit money into bringing riders in from the outer boroughs?

Q: Do these proposals meet our needs?

A: The issue is not transportation by itself and not housing by itself. The conjunction of policies is what’s important. The future economy of New York isn’t all going to be financial. Everybody pooh-poohs manufacturing, but I think we need a certain level of modern, clean manufacturing activity in New York.

Q: Talk about the manufacturing.

A: Smart growth says people live somewhere, they work somewhere, you want affordable housing, you want to create jobs—it’s starting to take place in Jamaica. Queens, for example. But the question for Jamaica is: How can we have a mix of population, mix of incomes, and a mix of jobs in Jamaica as it grows? The transportation is in already.

Q: Does the city have any kind of comprehensive economic development strategy?

A: I don’t think cities in the United States—except perhaps a few—have any long-term strategic vision of what they want to be.

Q: Why doesn’t this happen?

A: Everybody is focused on the short-term; everybody is budget-focused. We have 20th-century policies when we need 21st-century ones. In fact, my new institute, the Community Institute, is about establishing policy change and creating new financing methods. The institutions that grew up after World War II, which are still in place, grew up around one thing only: economic growth. All of a sudden in the 21st century everyone says, Hey, now that we’ve grown, we must begin to manage with constraints. We don’t want our kids to grow up with asthma. We don’t like all the noise that surrounds us. We don’t like profligate commercial use of land. We have to address zoning issues. Then there’s my other E, the equity issue. Miracles are performed on large numbers of people. You can live wherever you want, provided you can afford it. How can we have mixed-use housing, with work nearby, with shopping within walking distance, with families not thinking of adding a first or second car? Nobody has considered how to put such packages together. We need institutional change and new ways of thinking regionally.

Q: How do you do it?

A: Real estate arbitrage is one way. In Hong Kong they paid for the subways by selling land to the Transit Authority at its undeveloped value. The authority was then able to lease or develop it at a higher value. This raised billions and paid for the most modern subway in the world. We also have to visit the word “taxes” again. Everybody’s afraid of it. California threw out a governor, in part, because he raised car taxes, and yet a large percentage of those car taxes went to pay firefighters, the same people who fought forest fires in California. So I think the politicians really have to step up to the plate.

Q: I understand you have done some case studies.

A: In Queens, a tremendous amount of money and a tremendous amount of attention is going to be invested in Jamaica because of the new rail connection to Kennedy Airport. This raises several questions. Can you create or enlarge a community where housing is mixed with commercial development, where you can build to higher densities than you normally would? How do you reconfigure the transit system? You have all these buses on the street; do you want to put them in terminals? We need to rethink Jamaica’s downtown so that it meets the needs of people there, so they don’t have to bring cars in to go shopping. Our study found that people in Jamaica now go to Roosevelt Field or to other places to shop. They should shop downtown Jamaica. It has the density.

Q: I lived in Queens and taught in Jamaica, which had a vibrant center—you had department stores there.

A: You could have it again. Zoning incentives are necessary; Jamaica’s citizens must say to the city’s leaders, “Instead of just focusing our attention elsewhere—on Lower Manhattan or the far West Side—focus your attention here.” These are quality-of-life issues for the people living in New York now.
Back in the spring of 2002, New York City College of Technology, then Dean for Technology and Design, Phyllis Sperling, was mulling ways to improve enrollment in some of the nine departments under her charge. It was not rocket science deciding where to go first to perk up the visibility of the nine fields: the College’s Department of Advertising Design & Graphic Arts.

Its chairman, Prof. Joel Mason, knew exactly where to point: Dean Sperling in the direction of City Tech’s distinguished specialist in conceptual advertising, John McVicker, who, prior to his arrival at the College in 1998, enjoyed a long career at top-ranking Madison Avenue firms as an art director and creator of posters, magazine ads, TV commercials, brochures and company logos. Before you could say “thirty-second spot,” the eighteen students in McVicker’s “Design Team” class were working tirelessly, doing research on departmental missions, interviewing chairs, and, in small teams, composing strategy statements. Then came “the fun part for advertising pros,” McVicker recalls, the creative brainstorming stage “where there are no stupid thoughts.”

Then a period of in-class critiquing followed. “The winner was Darryl Menor,” McVicker recalls, “a photograph of Bill Gates from Corbis was unusable, because Corbis didn’t have a model release from Gates.” This struck McVicker as odd, since “Gates just happens to own Corbis.”

McVicker has known the joy of seeing such projects through to completion for many years. He was hired out of his senior class at the School for Visual Arts by Dave Douthit of McCann Erickson. Douthit later founded “Deutsch Featuring,” McVicker. “A photograph of Bill Gates was unusable, because Corbis didn’t have a model release from Gates.” This struck McVicker as odd, since “Gates just happens to own Corbis.”

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McVicker — who has his own ad studio, AdPlus (operated within CUNY guidelines) — has also taught at City College. Feeling that even an old ad pro needed to upgrade his technological skills in the new age of QuarkExpress, Photoshop and Illustrator, he went back to school at CCNY’s Robinson Center, earning an MFA in advertising design in 1994. He also took courses in Premier and Director, courses which graphically showed how far the digital era had begun to transform the TV industry as he knew it. When the Center’s director, A nnette Weintraub, got wind of his expertise, she put him in the classroom teaching advertising design and related courses.

City Tech’s future Madison Avenue denizens have particularly benefitted from McVicker’s web of connections with major industry players. His Grand Masters Seminar Series brings them to campus every semester. Among those have been George Lois (“the greatest living ad man,” says McVicker), Roy Grace (“four of the 16 commercials in MOMA’s permanent collection are by Grace”), the brilliant illustrator of Pushpin Studio fame, Seymour Chwast; BBDO’s Phil Dusenberg, the famed Della Femina Travissano ad firm). This led to an offer to teach a portfolio class and a six-year run teaching his own classes during his lunch hour while working at Dancer.

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