SPOTLIGHT on the Legislature can tee, discusses the Senate’s higher education, Committee on Higher Education, Committeee of the Senate. Here are some stories.

For some answers, see page 8.

Three CUNY students who’ll be working as interns in legislators’ district offices are from left, Andre Harding (Queens College), Stephanie Rosario (Brooklyn College) and Kathleen Burke (Baruch College).

Extending the Tenure Clock

section 6212 of the New York State Education Law governs tenure at CUNY. The section requires that tenure become effective on the first day of September following reappointment for the sixth full year. As such, the deadline for completing any tenure must be during the fifth year to be in compliance with the terms of the statute. Since the deadline for notification of reappointment with tenure is December 1st of the fifth year, the period of assessment prior to consideration for tenure is in fact shorter. Over the past several years, CUNY faculty have expressed many concerns about the current tenure clock. The following comments from a CUNY department chair is a case in point:

"...many times encountered the situation in which the candidate simply needs more time than five years (four, in actual practice) to complete sufficient research and writing leading to publication worthy of tenure. Also, a seven-year span appears to be the norm on campuses around the nation. Therefore, I hope that CUNY will extend its tenure period, so that we do not lose candidates who are good instructors and who perform needed service to the department, college and university and who with sufficient time, would prove to be successful scholars in their respective fields."

The University has proposed a modification to current statutory language that would lengthen the tenure clock to seven years in response to faculty concerns. We have scheduled a town meeting to clarify and help shape implementation of the proposed new tenure clock, consistent with proposed legislative reform. We welcome the ideas and comments of all full-time faculty at the meeting or by e-mail to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Louise M. Mirrer, at Louise.Mirrer@mail.cuny.edu.

In anticipation of some questions that may arise, we have prepared the following questions and answers.

Q: Why does CUNY want to change the tenure clock?

A: The issue is fundamentally about fairness — fairness to the candidate and fairness to his or her evaluators. The five-year tenure clock actually provides a faculty member with only three-and-one-half to four years to develop a body of work to be evaluated. In the sciences, this is a short period of time to establish a lab and show promising results. In the humanities, it is a short period of time to publish a book or articles in refereed journals. These problems are underscored by external

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New Program Offers Politics 101

Stephanie Rosario is intrigued by what makes politics tick. There is she says, the fascination of giving and taking, the back and forth of things, the manner in which individuals reach out to their representatives and subsequently these representatives can discuss and lobby for their concerns on everything from health and safety to justice and equality.” The Brooklyn College student, who is majoring in political science and minoring in sociology, is learning about the under-pinnings of politics firsthand by working in the office of Assemblymember Felix Ortiz of Brooklyn, thanks to the Black, Puerto Rican & Hispanic Legislative Caucus/CUNY Scholars Program, which awards high-achieving students internships with members of the New York State Legislature. Rosario, who wants to become a public-interest attorney or a law clerk for a federal judge, says that the CUNY internship is vital to her career plans. “My aim is to improve the lives of working-class citizens,” she says.

This year, a dozen students, including Rosario, are serving communities throughout New York City as interns in district offices of state legislators through the new program, created by Assemblymember Adriano Espaliú and Darryl Down. The internship allows undergraduates to earn 12 to 15 college credits and receive a $5,000 stipend. Through the leadership and initiative of Caucus Chairman Adriano Espaliú and Assemblyman Darryl Down, the program has provided high-achieving students with the opportunity to learn first-hand about the inner workings of state legislators. The participating student scholars will help research issues and work with constituents and assist in the delivery of services,” said chancellor Matthew Goldstein.

Legislators who are participating in the Black, Puerto Rican & Hispanic Legislative Caucus/CUNY Scholars Program are: Senator Minority Leader David A. Paterson, Senator Kevin S. Parker, Senator Malcolm Smith; Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Assemblyman and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Herman D. Farrell Jr., Assembly members Michael Benjamin, Espaliú, Down, Jose Rivera, Adem Clanton Powell IV and Assemblywoman Michele R. Titus.

Like Rosario, Rosanna Thomas, a political science and history major at York College, says that the CUNY internship will give her a valuable introduction to the field of politics. "I always knew that I was going to work in the world of politics," she says. "Now, I am here for the hard part: I want to have a family at the same time." While Andre Harding, a history major at Queens College, says that seeing the world may be not within his power, he does hope that his internship in the office of Assemblymember Farrell will help him make a career choice that will benefit the world, even if in a small way. "Faculty members have told me that they see me as a politician, but as yet I do not know whether I want to enter politics, but I would like to find out," he says. "I’m doing the internship so I can work in a policy area." For Kathleen Burke, the CUNY internship with Assemblyman Down represents yet another step in her involvement in politics. Burke, a Baruch College student who is majoring in finance and who plans a career in public-interest law, has taken an active role in campus matters, participating in a 2003 protest against planned tuition hikes. "A concerned group of students and I went to Albany to participate in a rally," she says. "In addition, we encouraged others to get involved by calling their representatives and mailing letters, explaining our opposition to the tuition hikes.”

The internship, she says, will give her valuable insight into serving the needs of the community. "I will be able to experience firsthand the ways in which politicians make decisions to serve their constituents," she says. "The internship will also educate me on many of the problems faced by members of the minority community. Most of my adult life has been spent in these communities, which has impassioned me toward a career defending civil rights."

1 Senator Seymour G. Lachen has a long relationship with two CUNY colleges. Many of his colleagues in Albany have studied or taught at more than one institution. See page 4.

2 Senator LaValle: Students Need Help; Financial Aid is a Big Component

Senator Kenneth LaValle, chair of the Senate’s Higher Education Committee, discusses the needs of public colleges and how the Legislature can and must help. See page 10.

3 AAssemblyman Canestrari: Enhance Qulify of Faculty and Programs

A Assemblyman Ronald Canestrari, chairman of the Assembly’s Committee on Higher Education, says state support should be enhanced to improve services on campus. See page 12.

4 Brooklyn College Sends Many Alumni to Serve in Albany

What is it about Brooklyn? Why have so many Brooklyn College graduates gone on to serve with distinction in the state Legislature? For some answers, see page 8.
Education Yields Social and Economic Riches

The vast majority of our alumni remain in the City of New York after graduation, contributing to the local economy and to their communities.

31,000 people, who pay taxes and use local goods and services. Of that number, nearly 63 percent are instructional staff. At a time when nationally there is a 5 percent decline in the number of tenured professors, CUNY is deeply committed to increasing the number of full-time professors in the classroom. Faculty tend to remain at the college at which they teach for many years, and all that time they are taxpayers and contribute to local economic activity, in addition to the cultural contribution they make to our neighborhood communities.

All of these statistics fall short of describing the personal and powerful effect CUNY has on individual lives. One of the most engaging demonstrations of that impact can be found on CUNY TV’s program “Study With the Best,” which frequently features segments highlighting the development and outcome of one-on-one relationships and mentoring between professors and students. Sundays at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Channel 75. It’s those kinds of relationships that are formed every day at CUNY, and they make up the backbone of our special brand of education.

I know that the Legislature strongly supports the very best education possible, as do I. With your continued and enhanced support, CUNY will have the resources to make an enormous difference in the lives of New Yorkers locally, statewide, and globally for many years to come.
The University has produced many distinguished members of the New York State Legislature. They played leading roles in advancing progressive agendas in New York State.
C UNY MATTERS — Spring 2004

President Gregory H. Williams

and CCNY Alumni

New York State Legislators

salute

Joel M. Miller

Steven Sanders

Legislature’s “Two-fers” Drink

C all them “two-fers” — legislators who, having sipped from the well of knowledge at one campus of the City University, returned to take the waters of wisdom at another. A assemblyman Dov Hikind is one. He earned his bachelor’s degree in political science from Queens College, then went on to achieve a master’s degree in urban administration from Brooklyn College. Hikind’s father had a fruit and vegetable store where he worked long hours and six days a week. The family struggled to make ends meet, and the low cost at Queens and Brooklyn Colleges made it possible for him to obtain a higher education.

The first member of his family to attend college, he credits CUNY with offering him “the opportunity to get a high-quality education in an atmosphere that was conducive to learning.”

State Sen. Ada L. Smith is another two-fer. She tried the world of work for six years before entering college. “I saw myself doing lots of work and not getting promoted,” she recalls.

Smith began taking evening courses at CUNY’s New York City Technical College and, like many CUNY students, continued working full-time. “I took a full course load at night and finished up in 1971, after two and a half years.”

After receiving an associate degree in marketing, she quit her job to continue her studies in that field full-time at Baruch College, earning her bachelor’s degree in 1973. “My college studies taught me how to read, understand and prepare budgets and business plans, all of which is essential in my work in the Legislature.”

Pretlow, like many other CUNY students, turned to Queensborough because of its low cost. He had begun his studies at a private college, but it proved to be too expensive.

“I am one of the biggest touters of community colleges,” Pretlow says, also noting that “I would never have gone to Baruch if it weren’t for Queensborough Community College.”

For A assemblyman Jeffrey Klein, CUNY provided bookends to the Master of Public Administration degree he earned at Columbia University. His bachelor’s degree, in history, came from Queens College; he went on to get his law degree from the CUNY School of Law.

“Our public higher education system is the only route to improved opportunities for people in our state who are not wealthy,” Klein says. “I paid a small tuition — my [CUNY] college education wasn’t free - but that made a huge difference for me. That’s true for many people.”

Assemblyman Ruben Diaz Jr. also started in a CUNY community college and moved on to one of the senior colleges. In enrolling at Lehman College Community College, he was following the advice and example of his father, State Sen. Ruben Diaz Jr., a Lehman College alumnus who recommended CUNY to his son.

The younger Diaz, whose assembly district in the South Bronx coincides in part with his father’s senate district, now

Immigrants

Carmen E. Arroyo was born in the beautiful mountainous town of Corozal, Puerto Rico...
Deep from CUNY’s Well of Knowledge

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Find Open Door Leads to Albany

Toby Stavisky had to carry a heavy credit load to finish her studies at Queens before the birth of her son, Evan, in 1968. Evan Stavisky has carried on the family’s CUNY tradition; he was student body president at Queens College.

Not everyone returned to a CUNY school as a student: State Sen. Seymour P. Lachman, a Brooklyn College graduate, returned to Baruch as a professor, and to the university as a whole as its dean for community development.

And although State Sen. Kevin S. Parker has only studied at one CUNY institution — the Graduate Center, where he is pursuing a doctorate in political science — few can match the breadth of his contact with the university as a whole.

He was, in a sense, born into the CUNY family: His mother, Georgie E. Parker, was assistant registrar at Brooklyn College for 36 years before her retirement. Parker himself has taught American studies and political science at Baruch, Brooklyn, John Jay and Medgar Evers College and City College’s Center for Worker Education.

And, fittingly, his CUNY link carries over into his work in the Legislature: His district includes Brooklyn College.

“In fact,” he notes, “Brooklyn College is the largest institution in my district.”

SEPTEMBER 2003

SPOTLIGHT on ALUMNI

Legislators

ASSEMBLYWOMAN CARMEN ARROYO

I t’s hard to imagine any top-level executive juggling the kind of schedule Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo handled back when she supported — and raised — her seven children on public assistance, attended CUNY’s Hostos Community College and worked full-time. But she did it.

Arroyo, the first Puerto Rican woman elected to any state assembly in the nation, and the only Puerto Rican/Hispanic woman in New York State’s Assembly, represents the 84th district in the South Bronx.

“She taught the community to get an education to make their lives better,” she said. “I know of a lot of people who started out in poverty and who are now doctors, nurses, teachers or hold other kinds of good jobs.”

One of the most important things about Hostos, she said, is that it “was where the people who needed it live. People who work long hours while raising families would find it very difficult to go to school if it weren’t nearby. That is true of most CUNY colleges. CUNY gives poor people an opportunity to get an education.”

She earned her associate degree in 1978, and her bachelor’s degree in 1980, at age 44, from the College of New Rochelle. She is a three-generation Hostos family. “My daughter, Omi, graduated from Hostos and went to Lehman College. My grandson, Richard Izquierdo, is a Hostos student now.”

ASSEMBLYMAN DANIEL J. O’DONNELL

Ever since I can remember, I was drawn to public service,” says Assemblyman Edward J. O’Donnell of Bayside, Queens, who represents the 69th Assembly District on Manhattan’s Upper East Side.

So CUNY Law School was perfect for O’Donnell, who earned his bachelor’s degree in public affairs at Columbia University in Washington, D.C. in 1982. “I worked all through college and law school, doing a variety of things,” he says.

At CUNY Law School, O’Donnell recalled that, “They often used role playing and videotaped us as we presented arguments in class and did our work, and I was constantly amazed at how much you learn when you actually see your own actions — the good things and the flaws.”

After he graduated in 1987, O’Donnell worked for Legal Aid until 1994. He opened his own public interest law firm on the Upper West Side.

He has high respect for thezar’s efforts to hold law (continued on page 6)

ALUMNI

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ASPEN PROGRAM

Graduates of the Aspen Program in Developmental Economics and Money Markets, conducted at the New School for Social Research, show the way to a new vision of the economy, one based on the idea that the public interest should be the primary driver of public policy. In a recent session, the program’s director, Daniel J. O’Donnell, spoke to an audience of CUNY students and faculty about the challenges facing the nation’s cities.

In his keynote address, O’Donnell said that he had been working on a book about the need for a new economic model that would focus on social justice and the common good. He also discussed the importance of public policy in shaping the economy, and he urged the students to think critically about the role of government in the economy.

The Aspen Program in Developmental Economics and Money Markets is a joint program of the New School for Social Research and the New School for Public Engagement. It is designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to analyze and address complex economic issues.

The program’s curriculum includes courses in economics, political science, law, and public administration. Students also have the opportunity to work on real-world projects and to engage in community service.

For more information, visit the Aspen Program website at www.aspenprogram.org.
For State Sen. Ruben Diaz Sr. and his son, Assemblyman Ruben Diaz Jr., CUNY is as much a family tradition as politics. The Senator graduated from Herbert H. Lehman College in 1976 with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a minor in education. The Assemblyman graduated from LaGuardia Community College in 1997 and is taking classes at his father’s alma mater. The father and son are Democrats whose South Bronx districts overlap.

The experiences of the two chronicle the evolution of CUNY. Diaz Sr. had come to New York from Puerto Rico, and became the first person in his family’s history to earn a college degree. “We were all high school dropouts in my family, and I joined the Army,” he says. “Later, I got my GED, and when I was at Lehman, which at that time was tuition-free, I saw heaven’s doors open. Lehman’s reputation was tremendous. To be a student at Lehman in the Seventies was like being a student at Harvard or Yale.”

Those were tumultuous years, not only for CUNY but also for colleges across the country: Protesting against the Vietnam War was almost a required course on all U.S. campuses.

Diaz, a conservative Democrat amidst leftist activists, found himself thrust into the middle of all the friction when students chained themselves inside Shuster Hall to protest the policies of the college administration.

“Those days were crazy,” Diaz says, adding that he never got involved in the demonstrations. “I used to take them food while they were chained up.” It was during his college years that he decided to pursue a career in politics. “I call upon my CUNY education every day. It helps me better understand urban planning in my assembly district.”

The list of distinguished immigrants who have passed through CUNY on their way to the Legislature includes Assemblyman N. Nick Perry, who was born in Jamaica, where he completed his secondary education before migrating to the United States in the summer of 1971. Perry is a graduate of Brooklyn College, where he earned a B.A. in Political Science, and later studied for an M.A. in Public Policy and Administration. While at Brooklyn College, Assemblyman Perry co-founded the United Students League, and was the graduate student delegate to the University Student Senate.

State Sen. Senator Martin Malave Dilan grew up in the community of Bushwick, where his parents, Esther and Gilberto, had settled after migrating from Puerto Rico in 1947. In 1965, he first involved himself in electoral politics when he worked as a volunteer in a mayoral campaign before graduating from high school. He went on to Brooklyn College where he participated in the Special Baccalaureate Degree Program.

Assemblywoman Arroyo speaks of her own experience when she says that “The Puerto Rican community had no voice early on. Now we have many outstanding public servants That is the same route earlier groups took.” But her sentiments apply equally well to those immigrants and children of immigrants whom CUNY has helped prepare for public service.
Junior, Politics is Family Affair for the Diaz’

Carrying On the Stavisky Tradition

I t has been four decades since State Sen. Toby Ann Stavisky attended evening graduate classes at CUNY’s Hunter College, but she will never forget the impact Dr. Dorothy Garfield Fowler had on her life. 

In 1969, Fowler was the chair of the history department, Stavisky says, “and it was unusual to have a woman on the faculty, much less in such a position of power. I was working on a master’s degree in American history, and she was teaching 20th Century American history. Her specialty was the Progressive Era. I can still remember her face. She wore her hair in a bun. She was interesting, and she made me think, and she helped me improve my research and writing skills, which is handy because I write my own newsletters. She also taught me how to properly allocate my time, and I had never been able to do that before.”

Budgeting her time was important for Stavisky, a graduate of Yeshiva University who had worked in an insurance office and was teaching full-time at a boys’ high school in Manhattan when she decided to go to Hunter. Although Fowler asked her to become her graduate assistant, Stavisky interrupted her education in 1964 to marry university professor Leonard Price Stavisky, a City College grad who also taught at Kingsborough and Queensborough Community Colleges and at CCNY. He went on to serve in the New York State Assembly and the New York State Senate until his death in 1966.

“My husband was the real CUNY star,” Stavisky says, adding that he always wanted her to earn a doctorate, too. “If it weren’t for the free tuition at CUNY, he could not have gone to college.”

She remembers going to pick him up at the Kingsborough campus. “In those days, the 1960s, they had recess bells instead of classrooms,” she says.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in history at City College, Leonard Stavisky earned a master’s and doctorate in history from Columbia. “He always used to say that City College gave him the foundation and all the intellectual community of my community’s not going to go to college and it’s a lot more common on campus. ‘I wish there was as much activity in the student body as there was in my 1970s’,” he says, noting that recent tuition hikes didn’t stop any major campus demonstrations or bring many students to lobby in Albany.

“It also wish there were as many programs to help pay for tuition,” he adds. “While I can afford the tuition on my salary, many of the folks sitting next to me in classes can’t. We need more need as in the days of my father. When it comes to the CUNY budget, nobody knows more than me because I’m living with the faces, the stories, right there in class with me. Ninety-eight percent of my audience when I talk in all, all I wouldn’t mind the boys carrying on the Davis tradition at CUNY.

As the Assemblyman, Stavisky says, “I would recommend to anyone – old and young – to go to CUNY, especially Lehman College, my alma mater.”

As the Assemblyman, Stavisky says: “CUNY is the vehicle to allow this city, in the words of former New York City Mayor David Dinkins, to be the ‘gorgeous mosaic it is.’”

Ruben Diaz Jr. started taking classes at LaGuardia Community College in 1991 and plans to graduate from Lehman in spring 2005. “I started my family early, so I really knew the value of a college education,” he says. “I’m very thankful I was able to go to school here and there.” He has 100 credits and needs 20 more.

“He chose CUNY,” says Stavisky, “because his father’s college stories got him all fired up, he says, and he knew the diversity of the students, particularly those at LaGuardia, would help him better understand and serve his constituents.

The biggest difference in their experiences, the Assemblyman says, is the fact that he has to pay tuition and it’s a lot more common on campus. “I wish there was as much activity in the student body as there was in my 1970s,” he says, noting that it continues to give opportunities to those who otherwise would not have access to a good college education.”
Brooklyn College proudly salutes its graduates who now represent the people of New York State:

SENATE
Toby A. Stavisky

ASSEMBLY
Adriano Espaillat
Deborah J. Glick
Audrey Pheffer
Jeffrey Klein
Nettie Mayerson
José R. Peralta
Audrey Pheffer
William Scarborough

QUEENS COLLEGE

Brooklyn College: Brooklyn Scores Far from Flatbush

Brooklyn College's impact on politics hasn't been limited to New York State. Barbara Boxer, (Class of 1962) studied economics and worked as a Wall Street stockbroker after graduation. Later she and her husband moved to California, where she was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992, after ten years in the U.S. House of Representatives and earlier service on the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

In 1976, voters in Portland, Oregon elected Vera (Weintraub) Katz, (Class of 1955) to the state legislature. Known as “Portland’s Bella Abzug” for her reformist views, she became house speaker in 1985 — only the fifth woman in U.S. history to lead a state assembly. Katz, who has served a Portland’s mayor since 1992, announced this year she wouldn’t seek a fourth term.

Back here in the East, Brooklyn native William Scarborough, President
ED Her primary goal of academic excellence, New York State, so Brooklyn College has the largest population of any county in the Legislature, had so large a contingent in the Legislature, for all of us struggling, college-bound of my era a free education.

While teaching at the City University, he was tapped by the Brooklyn borough president to serve on the New York City Board of Education. He and his wife, Dr. Susan Lachman (who teaches sociology at Kingsborough Community College), served as CUNY's dean for community development, and was a professor of the University's Student Senate, where he was an active participant in student government. He became the first Latino elected student body vice president, and later the first Latino student body president.

He also represented over 200,000 students in the CUNY system as a member of the University's Student Senate, where he was vice chair of legislative affairs and fiscal matters. Were it not for Queens' low tuition he might not have been able to afford college. "Queens allowed me to get a high quality education for a bargain price and I will fight hard to ensure that those who come after me will have the same opportunity."

"Queens and CUNY are the welcoming icon of higher education, just as the Statue of Liberty is to America, CUNY is to low-income, minority and immigrant students.

As to CUNY's social benefit, Jacobs said, "Affordable college tuition is the key to educational opportunity in the CUNY system, to make sure everybody gets a shot at higher education," He paused, then said with a chuckle, "Things sometimes got so intense there — perhaps the best reason for its dominance of the Legislature at the age of 30, Perry, an immigrant who heard about the CUNY system, to make sure everybody gets a shot at higher education, an environment where the inability to pay for college is not the obstacle which prevents a student from attending."
Senator Kenneth LaValle: I was born in Brooklyn. I lived in an Italian neighborhood with relatives nearby, and my mother was probably one of the strongest influences. We always talked politics at a very, very early age. I had a teacher in the seventh grade that just set on fire for me this whole thing about government and what government was all about. I believe that I’ve been involved in political campaigns all the way from seventh or eighth grade into my adult life.

Believe it or not, my parents wanted me to go to medical school so I entered college as a premed student. And then I got into teaching. I met a boyhood friend of my dad’s, Leon Giuffrida, who was Chairman of the Education Committee in the Senate for many years, and became his education adviser. I then became the Executive Director of the Senate Education Committee, having left a job as a principal. … But there was really a burning desire to serve people, serve my community, and try to make changes that would better both the communities and the people that live in those communities.

Q: You are a professor of intergovernmental relations at Stony Brook. What drew you to do that?
A: One of the things that’s important to me is to be relevant. And every day when I wake up I say how can I be relevant? Well, by teaching and being around young people.

Q: Teaching must help inform the good work that you do every day as Chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee. Talk about that.
A: We have a diverse group of thirteen people from all over the state: the senators come from New York City, from upstate, and from the Island, so it’s a good representation of the state. Most everyone outside of the city has a state university college, community college, or private university in his or her district. So they know firsthand what it is that the needs are because it’s part of their district responsibilities.

First, we deal with issues of institutional aid. How can we provide money for the systems? For City University, for the State University, for the independent colleges, how do we provide what is needed?

The second component is the issue of how the students pay for their higher education, and that’s through tuition. Many students need help and support…. So student financial aid is a big, big component.

Q: Any sense of future challenges for financing public higher education in the State of New York?
A: In order to comment on that you have to put it in the context of the high-ticket items in the budget. Elementary and secondary education are real hot-button issues. In a $90 billion budget, elementary and secondary education accounts for approximately $15 billion. Higher education, believe it or not, is also there. Sometimes we feel we don’t have enough money to do what we need to do in higher education, but that has been identified throughout the years as an important priority.

Q: I remember reading in the CUNY newsletter that there is still an issue of tuition remittance for doctoral students. What are we doing to attract them to stay within the CUNY system?
A: When we have budgetary problems, we do all that we can to maintain our programs at the undergraduate level. I know when we’ve talked about waivers or tuition assistance or other kinds of financial support for graduate programs, we have, without any doubt, fallen short. We need, in times of plenty, to address those problems for graduates. Because we want to make sure that we’re getting people to go through, get their Ph.D.s, and become leaders in the academic setting, in teaching, in research and so forth. So I know we need to do more and there’s no doubt we’ve fallen short.
One Year that Shaped My Life

It seemed like a simple college assignment: Write a paper that discusses your place in life. It wasn’t until Darryl C. Towns, a freshman honors student at CUNY’s Medgar Evers College in the 1970-80 academic year, began putting down his thoughts that he realized that something was terribly, terribly wrong.

“I realized that I couldn’t do it, because I didn’t know my place in life,” he says. “I came from a family where getting a degree was considered something you were expected to do. Everyone in my family had at least a master’s degree. I was at Medgar Evers because it was convenient to where I was working as a bank teller, but I needed to know why I was going to school. I was a very skilled writer, so I wrote a piece of fluff to fulfill the assignment.”

But his teacher, Dr. Mary Umolu, wouldn’t accept that, and the fact that she made him confront his role in life changed the course of his life. “She talked to me about it, and she made me rewrite the paper a couple of times, but she kept saying, ‘It still doesn’t tell me anything.’ And I realized that I needed to find out what I wanted my place in life to be before I could continue working on a degree. That episode was the impetus for my changing my life.”

Since his first classes at Medgar Evers, Towns, a Democrat who now is the assemblyman for Brooklyn’s 54th district in East New York, and who is the son of U.S. Rep. Edolphus Towns, had been rethinking his life. “I was going to school with people from countries like Belize and Guyana that I had never heard of,” he says. “And I wanted to broaden my thinking and mindset about the world. I wanted a more global mindset. I started talking to my professors and classmates about what I should do. This experience with Dr. Umolu at CUNY led me to join the military, and the military gave me the wherewithal to see the world.”

Although he never did get to Belize and Guyana during his 3 1/2-year tour of duty, he did visit Asia, Germany, Korea, Egypt and the Philippines, among other places. He attained the rank of staff sergeant in the Air Force before returning to school.

In 1990, Towns graduated with honors with a bachelor’s degree in economics from North Carolina A&T State University, which was his parents’ alma mater. (His family was very familiar with the CUNY system: His mother has a master’s degree in education from Brooklyn College, and her father taught at Medgar Evers but not at the time Towns attended.)

In 1993, he was elected to the Assembly to represent the district where he had been raised. “I attended classes at CUNY for only one year, but they shaped my life,” he says. “It was an extremely good situation for me. It was eye-opening.”

Towns’s words are the impetus for his ongoing work to make CUNY better. “I was going to school with people from all over the world. It made me consider my role in life changed,” he said. “It made me examine issues critically. They gave me a well-rounded outlook. They gave me the wherewithal to see the world.”

Any College (As Long As It’s CC NY)

Long before Assemblyman Joel M. Miller began his career as a dentist in Poughkeepsie, in the Dutchess County area (102nd AD) he has represented since 1995, he lived in a low-cost housing project near Boston and Gun Hill Roads in the Bronx.

Miller recalled that his father, a New York City firefighter, told him, “You can go to any college you want as long as it’s City College.”

Needless to say, City College was it. As a former ranking minority member of the Higher Education Committee, Miller is well aware that many New Yorkers face variants of that same “choice” he did for the same reason—modest family income.

He started out at City as an engineering student but switched along the way to pre-dentistry. That meant he was required to take an extensive core of liberal arts courses, including public speaking, political science, history and English. Miller feels that those courses “gave me a well-rounded outlook. They gave me a set of ideas and of ideals and they taught me to examine issues critically.” He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and graduated from CCNY with honors.

“In today’s complex world, a person can’t advance without a college degree,” Miller observed. “With the cost of private colleges being what it is, it’s more important than ever before that we support our public colleges.

“I believe the state has violated its responsibility to fund both CUNY and SUNY by having the colleges within these systems rely more and more on tuition. Keeping our public colleges affordable makes the difference for many students between going to college and not going. That affects their entire future which in turn affects our communities.”

Responsibility and service to community have been key focuses of Miller’s life. He became active in politics when massive road closures in the Bronx closed many businesses and jobs out of the state I felt I had to get involved.”

He began to actively work for State Senator Stephen M. Saldan and later decided to run for the Assembly. Miller is particularly proud of the comeback he sees in the economy of the area he represents.

Miller served on active duty in the United States Air Force after his graduation from Columbia University’s School of Dental and Oral Surgery. He remained in the Air Force Reserve as a captain for eight years.

Miller is a major in the New York State Guard, serving as senior dentist at Camp Smith. His interest in education and in health has at times overlapped, when, for instance, he has actively supported legislation to remedy the nursing shortage through education programs.

“Education is the solution to many problems. We have to support it in order to build our future,” he said.

Even though he never did get to Belize and Guyana during his 3 1/2-year tour of duty, he did visit Asia, Germany, Korea, Egypt and the Philippines, among other places. He attained the rank of staff sergeant in the Air Force before returning to school.

In 1990, Towns graduated with honors with a bachelor’s degree in economics from North Carolina A&T State University, which was his parents’ alma mater. (His family was very familiar with the CUNY system: His mother has a master’s degree in education from Brooklyn College, and his father taught at Medgar Evers but not at the time Towns attended.)

In 1993, he was elected to the Assembly to represent the district where he had been raised.

“Attended classes at CUNY for only one year, but they shaped my life,” he says. “It was an extremely good situation for me. It was eye-opening.”

Assemblyman Darryl C. Towns
Assemblyman Ronald Canestrari is Chair of the New York State Assembly Committee on Higher Education. He is the Deputy Majority Leader of the New York State Assembly, representing the 106th Assembly District, which consists of parts of Albany, Rensselaer, and Saratoga Counties, and serves on several other Assembly committees. Canestrari’s distinguished career includes 13 years as Mayor of his hometown, Cohoes, New York. On September 11, 2003, Assemblyman Canestrari spoke with Chancellor Matthew Goldstein and Honors College students on the CUNY-TV show CUNY Honors.

Q: What is it about public service that drew you to do this work?

Assemblyman Canestrari: I can recall even in grammar school, being interested in government, in politics, and it took a turn when I went to high school. And one teacher in particular stood out in terms of energizing us on political issues of the day. So early on I felt I wanted to change the world and make things better. It’s something I always wanted to do.

Q: CUNY and SUNY at this point don’t have a capital budget. What is your sense of why that still has not been resolved?

A: The outlines of the capital program were very good, but there was no detail. And we, as legislators, insist upon having the information in front of us. We have a constitutional duty as well. And do not want to write a blank check for the executive, for the Governor, for projects that we have no involvement in…. Not that we want to micromanage, but certainly, there must be lined-out projects, with some money held in abeyance for emergencies and other purposes. So the fight and the dispute is over information, and our involvement, as legislators, to know what the detail is in the plan.

Q: Are there thoughts at the Assembly level about a different way of approaching future challenges with respect to tuition?

A: Yes, there are, and of course, they’re all over the ballpark as to what to do. And our position has been to fight tuition increases, but also not deny the campuses the operating money that they need. But let me just state first that as Chancellor, you’ve done an excellent job with that tuition issue in how you’ve managed to absorb some of that and to enable the students to pay a lot less than at SUNY. We wish SUNY had followed your lead. But you have done an exceptional job in that regard, and that’s been noticed, certainly, in the capital, in Albany, and that’s to your credit.

... A very bad trend in the last ten years or so is having the campuses rely on the tuition money more and more as a greater percent of operating money, and allotting less operating dollars in the state budget. We should get to the point where tuition plays a role in the operating revenues for campuses, but the state dollars should be going up incrementally as opposed to placing so much of the burden on the funds raised by tuition. It’s important to maintain quality and enhance quality in terms of teaching faculty and an entire range of academic programs. We want quality. That’s essential for the future generations of New Yorkers that we are educating.

Q: What do you see as challenges ahead for the next fiscal year?

A: We know we face some serious fiscal problems with the deficit looming at six to seven billion dollars. The difficulty, once again, is that last year we raised some taxes income taxes, some sales taxes, some other fees, and tuition as well. We also spent down some reserves that we had to bridge the $11 to 12 billion gap last year. So we do not have those reserves. We certainly can’t do some of the things that we did last year to bridge the gap financially.

Q: Two years after the devastating attacks on New York and in Washington, are we moving in the right way in rebuilding downtown New York?

A: Yes. And I think we have to be. It’s too important, not only for this wonderful city, but also really, to our country. And we cannot lose this opportunity to rebuild something that’s magnificent, that symbolizes the freedom of this nation, the diversity of its people, and the beacon that serves as hope for people around the world. It was a devastating attack, but we must do it right. I think there can be more involvement, as a matter of fact, by the legislature. I think we could be doing even more. But we must have more direct help from the federal government. This is not a city/state issue, as you well know. It affects all of us as a nation, and our standing around the world. So it must be done right.
S en. Marty Golden says that he might have ended up as an accountant, but that’s getting a little ahead of the story.

Golden, a Republican, was the son of Irish immigrants who settled in Bay Ridge, which is part of the 22nd district that he now represents. He says his siblings were too poor to think about getting college degrees. So when he graduated from high school in the 1970s, he considered himself lucky to get in a couple of semesters at CUNY’s College of Staten Island. “We had to work to stay in the city,” he says of his family, adding that he was the first generation to go to college. “I chose CUNY because, at the time, it was less expensive; it was a good system and it had high standards.” He may have liked math, but at Staten Island he found writing that grabbed his attention. “I was not a great writer,” he admits, “but the essay-writing course opened doors for me, and it’s helped me become a better speechwriter.”

Golden went straight from Staten Island into the police force, where his street smarts helped him “fight the good fight.” It was at this time that he had a second opportunity to go to college: He enrolled in the New York School of Printing and took summer courses at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, where he earned a dozen credits. His brothers Patrick, a sergeant on the city police force, and Vinnie, also attended John Jay. His college education, he says, stood him in good stead. He earned 49 credits in “the greatest job I’ve ever had,” before an injury suffered in a drug raid forced him to retire in 1983 after a decade on the police force. It was only then that he completed his college education by earning an associate’s degree in criminal justice from St. John’s University. “I got my degree late in life,” he says, adding that that helped him with his change in career because it “gave me a better sense of what people are going through.”

In 1997, he was elected to the New York City Council, where as a member of the Higher Education Committee he championed funding for CUNY. He also secured funding for computers in every classroom in his council district. As a council member, Golden established a model program in conjunction with the Kings County district attorney’s office, through which people sentenced to community service maintained parks in the district. He also worked to find solutions to school crowding and backed the idea of giving the mayor control of the school system.

“CUNY has been such a positive force in Golden’s life that he’s hoping his own children will follow in his footsteps when it comes time for them to choose a college. “The CUNY system started me off in the right direction,” Golden says, adding that at times his political work takes him “to John Jay for receptions and meetings with the president. “The CUNY system is one of the finest in the country. It is important to fund CUNY because it’s the future of the country. The students, these are the young men and women who will lead this country.”

Senator Looks to CUNY for Expertise

C UNY has been part of State Sen. Kevin S. Parker’s life ever since he can remember.

His mother, George E. Parker, was an associate registrar at Brooklyn College for 36 years before her retirement. The college is in his neighborhood. Flatbush, part of the area she now represents, is the 21st Senatorial district.

“In fact, Brooklyn College is the largest institution in my district,” he points out. Parker, a member of the Higher Education Committee, believes that bringing more resources to the higher education budget is central to his mission as a legislator.

“I often turn to CUNY faculty members as a resource for information on many issues,” he notes. “They are an incredible source of expertise. I asked my staff to take a course Brooklyn College offered on immigration law for that reason.”

The faculty is what drew him to CUNY’s Graduate Center when he decided to pursue a Ph.D. in political science. Parker completed most of his doctoral coursework before taking a leave when he was elected in 2002, and intends to resume his studies soon. “The Graduate Center’s political science faculty includes nationally known urban policy experts,” he explains. Parker himself has been a CUNY faculty member in several settings: He was special assistant to former New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall, Parker taught African American Studies at Brooklyn College, City College’s Center for Worker Education, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Baruch College and Medgar Evers College at various times. He has served as an adjunct professor at Brooklyn College and taught a graduate course on “Blacks in the Labor Movement” at Brooklyn’s Center for Worker Education. He has also taught at SUNY- Old Westbury and at Long Island University.

“I was only 26 when I started teaching,” he recalls. “I was the youngest professor and in many cases the first black professor the students had seen. I think it was important for the students to realize that if I could do it they could.” He hopes to return to college teaching.

Parker lets his constituents know that his earliest schooling took place at PS 193, JHS 240 and Midwood HS in his district. “There are many immi-grants living in the nearby neighborhoods. It’s good for people to know I’ve grown up there and that it’s possible to build lifelong roots in the area.”

He also mentions his schooling because he believes education is the key to individuals’ improving their lives. Several CUNY students have served as interns in Parker’s office.

“Economic development and immigration issues are major interests of mine,” he says. “And economic development and education go together. Education is the key to establishing our state as a world-class economy. It is unfortunate that tuition was raised last year because it’s hard for college students to find jobs. We have to think about creating jobs in growing areas like biotechnology and allowing our students to acquire the skills for those jobs.”

He earned his bachelor’s degree in public service at Pennsylvania State University and a master’s degree in urban policy at the New School for Social Research in New York City. Parker decided to earn his Ph.D. because he felt it would “give me the skills to think more broadly about the issues I would face in a career in public service. I decided to run for the State Senate to put into practice many things I learned in the graduate program.”

Parker has served on the staffs of former M Unhathan Borough President Ruth Messinger, a试探her Nick Perry, former New York City Council Member Una Clarke, the New York State Urban Development Corporation and in government affairs for UBS Paine Webber.

He is proud of his ties to the labor movement, noting that his father was a union organizer and that he and his parents have been union members.

All of which brings him back to the topic of economic development, one of his passions. “I’m working with Brooklyn College to establish a business development center there to serve students and local businesses.”

For Parker, “It all comes back to providing opportunities for education. That’s our responsibility and our future.”

AUDREY I. PHEFFER

Q ueens College means a great deal to me,” said Assemblywoman Audrey I. Pheffer, “It gave me the opportunity, through the ACE program, to complete my college education with the flexibility I needed as a single parent of two children and a full-time employee.”

She graduated cum laude from Queens College in 1982.

The first member of her family to attend college, she wouldn’t have been able to afford college were it not for Queens’ low cost, “which was essential to my ability to attend school and still meet my other responsibilities,” she noted. “I utilize the knowledge and resources I obtained at Queens College on a daily basis.”

Pheffer has lived in Queens for more than 45 years, has represented the 23rd Assembly District for over 16 years and has been re-elected re-elected each term.

A strong supporter of public higher education and The City University, she said she is looking forward to giving today’s students, particularly members of low-income groups, minorities and immigrants, the opportunity to attend college.
CUNY and SUNY students cut and the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) well supported. I paid a small tuition fee in my college education wasn’t free — but that made a huge difference for me. That’s true for many people.

ALUMNI-legislators

MICHAEL A. BENJAMIN

Although Assemblyman Michael A. Benjamin attended Hunter College nearly two decades ago, the lessons he learned have stayed with him every day of his career. It was three instructors in the graduate program in urban affairs in the 1987-89 academic years — Stanley Moses, Peter Salins, who represented the students, and Hans Speigel, the chaplain of Hunter’s urban affairs planning department — who really made him think, not only about urban affairs but also about his role in effecting political change. “I saw a real affinity and love for people in urban affairs before entering politics. In 1980, Hans Speigel became executive director of the Westchester Minority Contractors Association, and served in that capacity until June 1987. She became well-versed in economic development issues that impact women and people of color, and became a strong advocate of their cause, persuading members of both the public and private sectors to increase economic participation with minority and women-owned businesses. Before leading the WMC, she worked for the Westchester Community Opportunity Program for 10 years in a number of management positions, from director of a day-care center to executive assistant to the executive director.

ALUMNI-legislators

EFFREY KLEIN

Assemblyman Jeffrey Klein of the 80th Assembly District in the Bronx graduated from Queens College in 1983 and from CUNY Law School in 1994. In between his two stints as a CUNY student, Klein earned master of public administration degree in 1985 from Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs.

“I always had a strong interest in public service and CUNY Law School was the only school completely dedicated to that goal,” he said.

Klein said that in today’s world a college education is a must for many occupations, equivalent in terms of its entry level value to what a high school diploma once meant.

“Our public higher education system is the only route to improved opportunities for people in our state who are not wealthy,” he said. “I would like to see the tuition hikes which were imposed on better than a rarified atmosphere can -- and that can be an educational advantage in many ways.”

Sander’s is proud of major increases in state school funding during his years as chairman, which he attributes to the fact that especially the revision of state education formulas to make them more equitable for districts with higher needs. “I think our public higher education systems are one of our most vital resources,” he said.

ASSEMBLYMAN

DOV HIKIND

Assemblian Doi Hikind earned his bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Queens College and his master’s in Urban Administration from Brooklyn College. He recently marked his 22nd year in the New York State Legislature as the representative for the 48th Assembly District, an area that encompasses Borough Park, Dyker Heights, Kensington and sections of Flatbush.

The first member of his family to attend college, he credits CUNY with offering him “the opportunity to get a high quality education at an atmosphere that was conducive to learning.”

In 1996, Hikind founded the United New York Democratic Club, a political action group designed to help bipartisanship support of candidates in major city and state races who are committed to quality of life concerns and promoting greater unity and understanding within New York’s diverse communities.

Hikind believes “education is the foundation of life’s filantropic society. I had great teachers and a wonderful experience at The City University,” he said, “and my education gave me the skills and the tools needed for a successful career in public service.”

That is why he is committed to “making sure that CUNY receives the funding it needs so that today’s students can have the same chance to receive a high quality, affordable education that I did at Queens and Brooklyn Colleges.”

ALUMNI-legislators

RUTH HASSELL-THOMPSON

Assemblywoman Ruth Hassell-Thompson, a longtime representative of Brooklyn Community College, was elected in 2000 to represent the 36th Senatorial District, comprising parts of Westchester and the Bronx. She was active in both business and community service before being elected to the Mount Vernon City Council in 1993, where she served as council president and acting mayor. She was also chair of the city’s Capital Projects Board, vice chair of its Urban Renewal and Real Estate Boards, and a member of the Board of Estimate.

A retired nurse-convener who specialized in helping women with substance abuse issues, she was also president and CEO of What Development Company, a real-estate development company and a consultant to small and developing businesses before entering politics.

In 1980, Hassell-Thompson became executive director of the Westchester Minority Contractors Association, and served in that capacity until June 1987. She became well-versed in economic development issues that impact women and people of color, and became a strong advocate of their cause, persuading members of both the public and private sectors to increase economic participation with minority and women-owned businesses. Before leading the WMC, she worked for the Westchester Community Opportunity Program for 10 years in a number of management positions, from director of a day-care center to executive assistant to the executive director.

ALUMNI-legislators

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Klein said that in today’s world a college education is a must for many occupations, equivalent in terms of its entry level value to what a high school diploma once meant.

“Our public higher education system is the only route to improved opportunities for people in our state who are not wealthy,” he said. “I would like to see the tuition hikes which were imposed on
race and ethnicity at John Jay College.

Benjamin credits current Chancellor Matthew Goldstein with increasing enrollment while raising academic standards. "I encourage all of my constituents to attend college, and at CUNY, it's still a lot cheaper than at any other school in the area," he said. "I call upon my CUNY education every day. It helps me better understand urban planning in my assembly district."

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DIANE GORDON

There is no such thing as failure. That is the life lesson that Assemblywoman Diane Gordon carried away with her when she earned her business administration degree from CUNY's New York City College of Technology in 1985. "At CUNY, there was no such word as 'failure,'" she says. "It was not an option, and there were no excuses for failure because the teachers were always there to help. They were there to walk you through everything from coursework to financial aid."

Gordon, the Democrat who represents Brooklyn's 40th Assembly District, enrolled in the college because of its advanced business courses. "At that time, the college was offering word processing classes, which were new," she says. "It had all the courses I was looking for."

She was also attracted to the enrichment classes, specifically the drama course in black theatre. "This was a new idea at the time," she says. "We studied African-American poems to enhance our reading and writing skills. That was well attended, and we didn't even get credit for it."

She credits the teachers with making her business courses not only easy to understand but also relevant to her life. "In our writing and reading class, the professor was really dynamic. She used newspapers to make her point, and she kept everything very simple. I was able to pass my classes because of the extra time the teachers were willing to spend with me. For them, it wasn't all about earning a lot of money, it was about making sure that we were learning. They were willing to work with the students; they were willing to go the extra mile."

Then there were some other courses, particularly English, that Gordon wasn't prepared to like. "I thought it was going to be boring," she says, "but the teacher challenged my interest. I was pleased with all the courses. Some were very difficult, and CUNY teachers really did outstanding work on all of them."

The fact that CUNY had affordable tuition when she attended also was a great help, she says, adding that that was a major factor in her decision to enroll at New York City College of Technology. Gordon credits CUNY with expanding her horizons - she also is certified by the American Business Institute in Business Mathematics - by getting her interested in a variety of subjects that have marked her political career.

She is on several standing committees in the Assembly, including ones on alcoholism and drug abuse; social services; and corporations, authorities and commissions. "I would like everyone to pick one CUNY college to attend," Gordon says. "It is the way to go. It gives you that extra step, that extra plus to success."

meeting of minds

Faculty
Dr. Jill Bargonetti
Hunter College
Winner: U.S. Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers

Student
Latoya Campbell
Hunter College Senior Biology Major
Goal: Cancer Research Ph.D.

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BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF JUSTICE

CUNY Matters
Extending the Tenure Clock

continued from front

The University is making an unprecedented investment through a $25 million Community College Investment Program. Through this initiative, the community colleges are hiring 450 full-time faculty members this year, as well as substantially enhancing libraries and other academic and student support services. "CUNY’s six community colleges are contributing mightily to New York City’s renaissance, providing training and retraining opportunities for the City’s workforce and a strong foundation for future students to continue their education at the baccalaureate level," stated Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. He further stated, "Our record student enrollment—the highest in CUNY’s history—is a testament to the dedication and ambition of our student body and the devotion and expertise of the University’s faculty and staff. CUNY students will repay many times over the taxes they pay for decades to come and their numerous contributions to the City and State.”

Borough of Manhattan Community College is located in the heart of New York City, and it reflects the best of downtown Manhattan: the culture of Tribeca, the vibrancy of Wall Street, and the promise of the Statue of Liberty. Bronx Community College, situated on a 53-acre campus that is home to the prestigious Hall of Fame for Great Americans, offers a diverse student body of students in the arts and sciences, business, and public service occupations. Hostos Community College, nationally known for its bilingual approach to education, offers a rich variety of career and liberal arts programs, ranging from accounting, business, and data processing to nursing, public administration and public inter-}

CUNY MATTERS
300 East 40th St.
New York, NY 10016

The University plans to communicate this to all of the college presidents and to submit an amendment to the Board’s Bylaws to make clearer that early tenure consideration is particularly appropriate where faculty have prior teaching experience and/or have developed a substantial record of scholarship in less than seven years.

Q. How will the change in the tenure clock affect the timing of promotion to associate professor (and the attendant salary increase)?

A. It has always been the case that faculty may be promoted to associate professor prior to tenure. Indeed, sometimes untenured faculty are recruited to CUNY as associate professors at the outset. That will remain the case. In addition, the University will propose an amendment to the Board’s Bylaws making promotion to associate professor automatic upon the granting of tenure.

Q. Would the proposed modification of the tenure clock apply to any current faculty?

A. At the direction of the Chancellor and as a result of faculty comments, the modification has been made prospective only. The seven-year tenure clock will apply to any faculty hired on or after September 1, 2004 and to faculty hired before that date only if they voluntarily opt for the longer probationary period in writing by the end of their third year of employment.

CUNY MATTERS
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