**Brooklyn College Scientists Take Aquatic Experiment To NASA Launchpad**

By Gary Schmidgall

The two half-inch flecks of iridescence are lolli- ing in your typical living-room size aquarium. If they seem to be preening, it’s because in January they went where fish have seldom gone before: into space on NASA’s shuttle Endeavour. (Some guppies, sent up by the Japa nese in 1949, got there first.) They look none the worse for wear in their Brooklyn College quarters, in spite of an intense period of debriefing. Taped on the glass is a sign that reads “We visited the Mir Space Station.” And thereby hangs a—swordtail—or to be quite accurate, Xiphophorus herelli.

Standing next to me, obviously in his element amid dozens of similar tanks, is Distinguished Professor of Biology Martin P. Schreibman, the Director of Brooklyn College’s recently established Aquatic Research and Environmental Center (AREAC). A voluble, congenial presence whose normal pace seems to be fast-forward, Schreibman is justly proud of his delicately-finned tropical aquariums and eager to talk about the years of planning that culminated in the January 22 launch, at which, of course, he and a College entourage were present. (A Brooklyn College pennant went aloft and, as of my visit to AREAC, had not yet arrived back at Ingersoll Hall.)

“It all began about ten years ago at a conference on fish physiology in Newfoundland. At a party after one of the sessions—and possibly, I thought, after a few too many drinks—a German scientist, Dr. Volker Blüm, began regaling me with the idea of sending fish into space.”  Blüm and Schreibman had met never met. Blüm’s specialty was known of each other’s work, but they space.”  Blüm and Schreibman had met never met. Blüm’s specialty was known of each other’s work, but they

At first, the CEBAS team entertained a plan for a 100-liter aqua-rack that would repose in the shuttle’s cargo bay, but this was deemed too bulky and expensive. Developed instead was a scaled-down 9-liter miniature CEBAS approximately 2′ x 2′ x 1′. It could be stored in one of the lockers underneath the flight deck that NASA found could be made available for the experiment. With each shuttle flight priced at about $400 million, NASA leaves nothing to chance. Schreibman describes a long period, subsequent to NASA approval, of constant evaluation, regular deadlines for development, and, finally, several bouts of PVT, or pre-verification testing. “PVTs are complete dress rehearsals, down at Cape Kennedy, with practically everything but the kitchen sink.”

**Final Approval Near For Promising State Budget**

As CUNY•Matters went to press, the New York State Assembly and Senate passed, on April 14, a budget for the fiscal year 1999 that included $127 million in additional operating and financial aid funding for higher education (above the Executive Budget proposal). The budget is under review by Governor George Pataki, who has the power to veto specific items approved by the State Legislature.

At press time, the budget provides The City University increased funding in several significant areas. At the senior colleges, $4.5 million is earmarked for 90 new faculty positions, $3.9 million in added funds for SEEK programs, and another $1.2 million for wider provision of child care. Full-time senior college students will receive a $65 stipend for the purchase of textbooks.

Community colleges stand to benefit in several ways, notably $8.45 million to raise base aid per Full Time Equivalency by $150 (from $1,900 to $2,050, an increase of nearly 8%). $3 million is allotted for 60 new faculty positions, and over $1 million will go to increased child care and College Discovery programs.

CUNY will also share in statewide increases in aid for part-time study ($5 million, a 33% increase to $19.6 million), freshman summer opportunity, STEP/CSTEP, and teacher opportunity programs ($8.9 million).

One major new feature of the Legislature’s budget is the first-ever approval of a five-year capital budget (1998/99 through 2002/03), originally recommended by Governor Pataki. A total of $1 billion will be distributed in yearly $200 million installments for such projects on CUNY campuses as Phase II at John Jay College (total cost, $352 million), a new West Quad Building at Brooklyn College ($76 million), renovation of Powdermaker Hall and a new Center for Molecular and Cellular Biology at Queens College ($70 million), as well as a total of $320 million for a variety of renovations to ensure health and safety, access for the disabled, preservation, and energy conservation.

Community colleges will receive $210 million for similar projects.

Kingsborough Community College will receive $18 million for its Academic Village Complex, and $20 million will be devoted to LaGuardia Community College’s Center III.

**FEATURE INTERVIEW—PART TWO**

**Chancellor Kimmich On the Challenges for CUNY**

In the Winter Issue, CUNY•Matters presented an introductory interview with the City University’s Interim Chancellor Christoph M. Kimmich, who was appointed to the position on November 24. The Chancellor described his early years spent in his native Germany and his experiences as a student, teacher, and administrator—primarily at Brooklyn College, where he was most recently Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Continuing the interview late in March, Elizabeth Rosen met with him in his office at 80th Street. Several important issues and initiatives currently being implemented or debated within the CUNY community are discussed.

ER: What is the biggest surprise you’ve had since taking over the Chancellorship?

CK: Surprise? I’m not sure that’s the right word. . . . though I would say that I hadn’t fully anticipated the scope and intensity of the Chancellor’s work outside the University—testimony at legislative hearings; conferences, panels, symposia; meetings with alumni and friends of the University, with public figures, with members of the City, State, and Federal governments. I marvel at how much time is invested in dealing with the political dimension of academic issues. There are so many constituencies—valid ones, too—of all who have a different take on academic proposals. All of them have to be listened to, considered, responded to. I wouldn’t say “surprised” because this was part of my experience at Brooklyn College too, but at this level it doubles, triples.

ER: How do you handle the increasingly public role and longer hours? Homesick for Brooklyn?

CK: I’m always homesick for Brooklyn! Our move to Manhattan, to the Chancellor’s residence, has cut down on the time I used to spend commuting— an hour and a half each way. I can walk to the office—a life-long ambition. The hours are still long, but that’s been a habit with me. I don’t resent it. Quite the contrary: having a chance to help shape CUNY’s future, if only for a little while, is exhilarating.

Continued on next page
ER: In a speech before the Association for a Better New York recently, you called the University as “one of the gems” of the U.S. educational system. Do you see it at the forefront of education?

CK: Very much so. The more the U.S. becomes urbanized, the more demand there will be for the kind of education we are pioneering. There is nothing like this university anywhere in the country or, for that matter, in the world. It reaches out to an extraordinarily diverse and highly distinctive student body in diverse and distinctive ways...is in the vanguard of where this country is going in educating urban populations.

ER: I want to move now into some of the problems that it has fallen to your Chancellorship to solve. One occurred close to home and centered around teacher certification. How do you view the low pass rate, and what changes should be made to remedy this?

CK: At the risk of slight exaggeration, I think the low pass rate is illusory. Not least because the State data are not always accurate. Students taking the exam indicate that they are affiliated, say, with Brooklyn or Queens, whereas in fact they are not and never have been. Once the data are cleaned up, the University record looks much better. Also, any standardized test has its flaws. The question arises: Are we preparing students for the teaching profession or for passing certification tests? For now, these tests are clearly part of the process, so we need to help our students get through them and into the profession.

The larger issue is improving what we do in the classroom for prospective teachers. Let me elaborate. First, it’s clearly on the local level—in the nine colleges with teacher programs—that we need to reconsider and rethink what we offer. Where this is not already being done, we should try to bring students into a wider framework of the liberal arts and sciences—exposure that will give them more confidence in the classroom. We should work harder to attract the best students to the teaching profession, not least by conveying our high expectations. I’ve always found that when you set high standards, students rise to meet them. We must consider what incentives we need to offer to persuade them to enter this career path.

There is simply no excuse for not putting the best trained, best qualified teacher in front of a 4th-grade or 7th-grade or 10th-grade class. The students they have will be ours in due course. The fact that CUNY supplies a substantial portion of the City’s teachers imposes a special obligation on us, and we have a responsibility to meet that obligation.

ER: That brings me to a related question. One of the goals of the Comprehensive Action Plan—the proposal to strengthen the preparation of students entering the University, now being considered by the Board of Trustees—is to build a stronger partnership with the Board of Education. Can you describe ways in which you want to expand this relationship?

CK: Largely by building on and strengthening activities already in place. The University and the Board of Education have a history of collaboration. The College Preparatory Initiative is probably the best-known instance. The CAP proposal proceeds from where we are now. Consider these examples. Our budget request this year includes funds to expand the College Now program at Baruch College, which has been notably successful in the 25 high schools in which it has run. It provides very effective early intervention into the lives of college-bound students. College Now provides them with basic skills instruction, college-level courses, counseling...and gives them a future to focus on.

Another program we hope to build on is Math-Now, which tests mathematics skills of juniors in high school and gives them a chance to address deficiencies and reduce the need for remediation later. Our hope is to extend that approach to writing and reading.

A third area of collaboration that could be expanded is the summer intensive English language program, which was piloted last year at two campuses for students entering college and could well be extended now to students enrolled in high school.

We’re talking now about these things with Chancellor Clegg and his staff. There’s no question that the University is in the forefront of the development of effective immersion and remediation strategies. We can and must build on these, and I know the Board’s Committee on the English language program, which was piloted...is in the vanguard of where this country is going in educating urban populations.

ER: Did the storm of protest that greeted the proposed Comprehensive Action Plan surprise you?

CK: Not entirely. Let me explain where I came in. I had two perspectives: first, that the University is very different from what it once was; it is no longer solely for the gifted students of the palmy days that everybody talks about. It now serves a much wider, more diverse constituency. There’s no going back to some mythical golden age prior to open admissions. In my ABNY speech I said we will never be “exclusive” again—we are going to be “inclusive.” I believe this strongly. We have crossed a watershed into a broader, wider constituency. Public institutions like ours and like government itself are now thought of in a different light. We live with very uneven preparation. We must focus on basic skills instruction, college-level courses, and demands of college work. Also, we must streamline our remediation offerings, refocus them where necessary. We want to be mindful of a student’s work and family obligations, but we must also bear in mind educational principles, the standards we set for our students and ourselves.

Clearly, the Plan has changed since I proposed it in mid-February. It has also become the focus of far-flung debate, partly, I think, because it’s become conflated with the matter of our commitment to open admissions. And it’s been battered because data have been thrown out for discussion that relate not to the CAP proposal but to more radical alternatives that have been proposed.

I don’t think a plan that addresses the issues I’ve raised would be all that controversial, were we not operating in a political context that has heightened the rhetoric. As at CUNY’s history at the University of Pennsylvania. Carol Zicklin is a Brooklyn College graduate who has spent most of her career as a consultant to teachers of students with learning disabilities.

Without Baruch, I wouldn’t have gone to college, met my wife, attended the Wharton School, or become a partner in Neuberger & Berman. In other words, I wouldn’t be where I am today,” Zicklin explained. “I thought that if I came forward with this type of gift, others who owe their success to Baruch might follow.”

The Zicklin gift will be used to create a top-tier 300-student full-time MBA program and to recruit exceptional students and top-rank faculty to the College.

On March 23, the CUNY Board of Trustees approved the naming of the Baruch School of Business in Zicklin’s honor, and subsequently the New York State Senate and Assembly passed a joint resolution acknowledging “the extraordinary and selfless generosity of Larry and Carol Zicklin.”

A RECORD-SETTING PLEDGE

Spectacular Gift Boosts Baruch School of Business

O n March 3 Baruch College President Matthew Goldstein announced that the College’s School of Business would be receiving the largest cash gift ever donated to a City University campus, $18 million, from Lawrence and Carol Zicklin. Zicklin, a Class of 1957 graduate of Baruch, is the managing principal of Neuberger & Berman, an investment firm with $55 billion in assets under management. Zicklin is also president of the Jewish Communal Fund and an adjunct professor at New York University’s Stern School of Business and the University of Pennsylvania. Carol Zicklin is a Brooklyn College graduate who has spent most of her career as a consultant to teachers of students with learning disabilities.

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Lawrence Zicklin. Photo, Michael Mella

I am not thinking in terms of ‘interim’ solutions...the University cannot afford that luxury.

And second...CUNY must be "there" for everyone, not but every college is there for everyone. One of my themes since arriving here has been that each college should be in a position to do its thing and its mission within its own limits. I don’t think the Board or the Chancellor can tell the President of Queens College, say, or the President of Queensborough Community College how best to run his institution. They and their faculties know their college better than anyone—the demography of their student body, the academic requirements for the degrees they offer, the expectations they have of incoming students. The individual campuses need that kind of autonomy—and responsibility.

ER: How does remediation fit into this picture?

CK: If you are interested in upholding autonomy on the campuses, as I am, then much of the decision-making on remediation must be done at the colleges. There are some very effective remediation practices there. For example, in my own local experience at Brooklyn, where some years ago we instituted a summer immersion program, an intensive five-week program for those who had failed one or more of the skills tests. The pass rate of students coming from this program was just last summer, I believe, the pass rate for writing was 75% and for math somewhere in the 90s. Pilot programs that succeed so well are the ones we should be taking as models.

For me the trouble is this: at the community colleges, of the entrants who fail the three skills assessment tests, 40% are gone within one year, lost to CUNY, lost to higher education. It’s very doubtful they transfer to other schools; they are lost; it is not a good experience—for us. I’m deeply affected by data like that. We need to reach out to students facing this challenge before they fall over the edge and into that 40%.

ER: What is an appropriate response at this threshold point in their careers?

CK: Expand our efforts at early intervention, especially, as the CAP proposal envisions, in the summer before college entrance, before students face the rigors of work harder to attract the best students...
Grandeur Restored—and Honored

The New York Landmarks Conservancy did not require a great leap of imagination in choosing an appropriate site for its 1998 Lucy G. Moses Preservation Awards ceremony. The Great Hall within Shepard Hall, on the Hamilton Heights campus of City College, offers a spectacular venue for special convocations and was also among the nine honorees of these Awards, the highest conferred by the Conservancy.

The Conservancy cited the “magnificent space that recalls the medieval castles of Ivanhoe,” which is a crucial element of the Collegiate Gothic academic complex designed by George B. Post and opened in 1907. The massive project, part of the entire renovation of Shepard Hall, was presided over by The Stein Partnership, Architects. It featured painstaking rehabilitation and replacement of decorative detail work using modern substitute materials, a new limestone floor (the original floor, it was discovered, was cost-cutting concrete), upgraded mechanical systems, and refinished woodwork.

Continued from previous page

The Great Hall was in celebrated company. Among our honorees were the Chryster Building, the 20-acre Ravine in Prospect Park laid out in 1866–73 by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, and the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at the New York Botanical Gardens, a massive glass greenhouse first opened in 1898.

John Morning, for several years a member of the Conservancy’s Awards Committee and this year its chair, was appointed last year to the Board of Trustees of the City University.

G O O D  N E W S  O N  A  S I L V E R  A N N I V E R S A R Y

Sophie Davis Student Wins $10,000 Fellowship

Succesfully competing with 126 other medical students, Michelle Soto, a fifth-year student at the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education at CCNY, was among this year’s 15 recipients of a $10,000 fellowship from the National Medical Fellowships and the W.K. Kellogg Community-Based Training Fellowship Program for Minority Medical Students.

Soto will spend part of her fellowship tenure at the Medical Center of Camden-on-Gauley, West Virginia, where she will study rural health problems. She will also complete the last two years of study leading to her M.D. at the SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn.

The Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education offers a unique B.S./M.D. program to selected top-ranked high school seniors. During their five years in the School, students complete both their undergraduate college work and the content of the first two years of medical school. Each student then transfers to one of seven New York State medical schools, where they pursue clinical studies for two additional years.

The School is celebrating its 25th anniversary and has more than 1,150 graduates. The School is celebrating its 25th anniversary and has more than 1,150 graduates.

Continued on page 12

A CONFERENCE AT THE GUARDIA

FACULTY DIVERSITY: THREAT OR CHALLENGE?

The CUNY Affirmative Action Committee invites faculty and administration involved in the hiring process to attend the conference Faculty Diversity: Threat or Challenge?, featuring nationally known scholar Dr. Troy Duster, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Institute for the Study of Social Change at the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Duster will lead an inquiry into this pivotal issue facing colleges and universities across the nation.

The conference will be held on Friday, May 8th, 1998 at 9 a.m. at The Little Theater of LaGuardia Community College. For more information or reservations, contact: (212) 794-5374.
**A FIRST FOR WORKER EDUCATION CENTER**

**Eloquence of Former Chancellor Sparks Major CCNY Bequest**

By Stephen Leberstein

Executive Director, the City College Center for Worker Education

Former Chancellor Joseph Murphy left behind many important legacies at The City University, and one of them became a reality, by sad coincidence, just a day after he was tragically killed in an automobile accident in Ethiopia on January 17.

For the November 18 Frances S. Patai, a City College alumnus, died of cancer, leaving a bequest estimated at about a half-million dollars to the City College Center for Worker Education. The central purpose of the bequest is to fund courses on the Holocaust and a prize for research and writing on the work of women volunteers in the anti-fascist struggles of the 1930s. The bequest is the first for the Center, which offers CCNY’s Bachelor’s degree program for working-class students.

The connection between Ms. Patai and the Center is a true New York (and CUNY) story. Last May, Patai attended the annual luncheon of Jewish Currents, the magazine of Jewsh secularism edited by Morris U. Schappes, CCNY class of 1928. Mr. Schappes also taught English at the College from 1928 until he was fired in 1941, along with more than 50 others, in the notorious purge conducted by the communist-hunting Rapp-Coudert State Legislative committee (one of the state versions of the Congressional House Unamerican Activities Committee). The 1993 luncheon marked the special occasion of Schappes’ 90th birthday, and several hundred supporters took part in a lively meeting at the Workmen’s Circle.

Among the featured speakers was Joe Murphy, who had met Schappes in the early 1970s, when Schappes first started teaching Jewish history at Queens College where Murphy was President. Joe greeted the group in his earthy Yiddish, wished Morris the traditional hundert un tsvanzig, and spoke about his own Irish-Polish immigrant background. He then recounted how his father crossed the Atlantic not once but twice before winning the right to enter the U.S. But in his talk he also reminded his audience, many in their 70s and 80s, that had it not been for City College, they wouldn’t have had the chance for an education and a better life than their immigrant parents and ancestors had had. During their own college days, he pointed out, public colleges, overcrowded and underfunded, were vilified in the Hearst press and investigated by a legislative committee for “poor management” and political radicalism. He asked his audience last May to raise their voices again in defense of the University, as it faces a new, politically motivated attack, one that would deny an education to large numbers of working-class students.

Patai was in the audience and must have been moved by Joe’s eloquent and impassioned challenge. Afterward, he reminisced later, she came up to him and asked for his advice. She wanted to endow a fund, she later wrote him, that would “support the studies of today’s students... the counterparts of earlier generations... [about] the epic tragedy of the Nazi Holocaust.” She hoped students would be able to learn to “analyze how bigotry can shape, reflect, promote, and legitimize genocide.”

She explained to him that she was a City College graduate (B.S. 1955 and M.A. 1957), adding that “the College gave me a free education that enabled me to work all day (often in factories), attend classes at night, and work my way out of poverty’s entrapment.” She also said she wanted “to give new students opportunities to realize their potential, too.”

Joe made a shideh, a match, directing her attention to the Worker Education Center: “like Patai at an earlier time, students at the Center work all day and go to classes at night, hoping for a better future with a college degree in hand.”

I arranged to meet Patai at the June benefit concert of the New York City Labor Chorus, in which she sang. During intermission I found her backstage, somewhat breathless, and we shared our amazement at the unflagging vitality of Pete Seeger, who had just performed on the program. Soon after, we had a short time to get acquainted, and she visited the Center in the evening to meet its students and teachers. She clearly wanted to make sure it was a “real” college where working people were serious students! We went on, very speedily, to negotiate the details of Patai’s proposed bequest, which seemed to me a little unreal, since she radiated such a vigorous, engaged presence. And she was about to go off to Spain to read a paper at an international historical conference.

Patai, who was a longtime instructor at John Jay and Borough of Manhattan Community Colleges, in fact had a very colorful life as an actress, a model, a writer deeply interested in the struggles against fascism in the 1930s, a member of the National Writers Union, and an activist. She told Joe that she looked forward “to our working together in the interests of a cause in which we both believe.”

We could not have imagined how soon— and simultaneously—the cause would lose two of its most dedicated supporters.

A reception in honor of Frances Patai and her generous gift is planned for May 21 at 6 p.m. at the Center for Worker Education, which is located in Tribeca at 99 Hudson Street (6th floor). A splendidly apt highlight of this celebration of her life will be a performance by the New York City Labor Chorus of songs from the Spanish Civil War.

**OTHER LIVES**

**A Plenty of Kente**

Luberta Mays has been an educator for more than 40 years. In fact, 25 of her years as a teacher were spent at Medgar Evers College. During Dr. Mays’ career she rose to be the College’s Acting Dean of Academic Affairs and Deputy to the President. She retired in 1992.

If you ask her, she will tell you teaching was always her first love—which easily explains why she continues to teach education courses at the College as an adjunct. In recent years, however, Mays has found a second love, which is just as rewarding and fulfilling: she has become an accomplished weaver.

Mays tells of graduating in 1948 from high school in Prospect Heights and going into advertising as a graphic artist. “One day my mother said to me, ‘$10 a week is not enough—you should go back to school.’ I did, and I put art away for a long time.”

Then, while teaching at Medgar Evers, Mays began casting about for ways to dust off her “art,” trying in the 1960s first, then taking a course from a Swedish weaver at Queens College. “The teacher found out I had no weaving experience and doubted I could take her course,” Mays remembers with a laugh, “and I just said, ‘Oh, I can take the course!’” She did and, to borrow a phrase from knitting, was hooked.

Mays’ Queens home boasts a hand-made loom from Ghana. It is 42 inches wide and has 16 heddles (strings the threads go through to determine the intricacy of the design), and it was a gift from a Ghanaian master teacher, Osei Antobe. He taught Mays to weave authentic Kente cloth when she visited Africa in 1990. The term Kente comes from the word “kenten,” which refers to basket-weaving.

The village she visited, Bonwire, is just outside Kumasi, the cultural capital of Ghana. The Ghanaian loom is a series of slats and poles mounted on a square base. When she returned to New York, the loom was disassembled, and she was able to transport it back in several boxes.

Mays has been weaving for more than 20 years. She has studied at the Philadelphia College of Textiles and at the Fashion Institute of Technology. Two years ago she was invited to demonstrate the weaving of Kente cloth at the Guggenheim Museum in conjunction with an African exhibition. “I was a little worried, because my Ghanaian loom was meant for out-of-doors weaving, preferably with a ditch and a rock handy, not the Museum’s polished floors,” she recalls. “But it worked beautifully.” Many of her own original creations were also on display.

Currently, Mays is attempting to computerize Kente weaving methods on the Compu-dobby loom, a computer capable of a programmed weaving pattern. If she succeeds, it will be the first time in the Kente weaving tradition. Kente design is a kind of inlay, meaning that it requires a hand manipulation to achieve a pattern. Mays’ challenge is to map on graph paper what threads the Compu-

Dobby must pick up to simulate the hand inlay. The breakthrough, she says, is imminent.

Know of a CUNY faculty member, staff person, or student with an interesting “other” vocation or avocation who might be featured in OTHER LIVES? Drop the Editor of CUNY•Matters a line.
BY THE NUMBERS

Investing in New York’s Future: The CUNY Portfolio

Following are highlights from a new report on the economic impact of The City University on New York City and State that has just been published by the Office of University Relations.

- The University’s direct impact on New York’s economy and tax base is $7.2 billion. The U.S. Department of Commerce uses a standard "multiplier" of 1.9 to calculate the impact of education expenditures. This yields a total impact of $13.7 billion, more than ten times the size of the CUNY budget.

- CUNY graduates and employees generate $778 million in State and City tax revenues yearly.

- Approximately a third of a billion dollars for construction and renovation was infused into New York’s economy this past year.

- In addition to tuition, CUNY’s students spend approximately $800 million each year ($81 million for books alone).

- Approximately 460,000 CUNY graduates from 1970 through 1997 reside and pay taxes in New York.

- Well over half of CUNY’s students come from households with total income of less than $25,000, while the mean annual earnings of the holder of a Bachelor's degree, nationwide, is $37,224.

- In fiscal year 1997, the CUNY Research Foundation coordinated the receipt of more than $95 million in federal and private grants, contracts, and awards.

- This year the largest cash gift ever received by a CUNY college, $18 million, was pledged by Baruch College alumnus Lawrence Zicklin and his wife Carol. The Baruch School of Business will be named in his honor.

- Ten years after graduation 80% of CUNY alumni continue to reside and work in New York.

- CUNY graduates from 1970 to 1997 spend $4.6 billion more in New York each year than they would if they had not earned their degrees.

- The 1998 CUNY Big Apple Job Fair attracted 117 major corporations, private institutions, and public agencies—a record number.

Copies of the full report, which includes sections on all CUNY colleges, may be obtained by writing to the Office of University Relations, The City University of New York, 535 East 80th Street, New York, NY 10021.

NEW PBS FILM FROM HUNTER

Retrospect on Turbulent Times

A documentary produced and directed by Tami Gold, of the Hunter College Film and Media Studies Department, will open this year’s “Reel New York” series on WNET/13 on June 14 and 11 p.m. and June 16 at 9 p.m. The film, Another Brother, marks the 30th anniversary of one of the most turbulent years in American history—the year of the King and Robert Kennedy assassinations, the Tet Offensive, and the chaotic Democratic Convention in Chicago—by focusing on the life, and afterlife, of Vietnam veteran Clarence Fitch. Another Brother addresses a wide range of issues, including racism, the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam war and its aftermath, the scourge of drugs, and the AIDS crisis.

The film has several CUNY connections, aside from those of Professor Gold. It was created in association with the CUNY-affiliated American Social History Project; one of its editors, Gisela Rosario, is a Hunter student, and it was funded in part by a PSC CUNY Research Grant.

Special preview screenings of Another Brother for the City University community are scheduled for 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. on May 20 at the Lang Recital Hall, Hunter College (entrance on 69th Street between Lexington and Park). Also to be screened is the short film History Lessons, by another member of the Hunter Film and Media Studies Department, Mick Hurbis-Cherrier. It takes a powerful combat photograph by Larry Burrows as a catalyst for exploring the recollections of Vietnam veterans.

New York City Tech Honors President Emerita

Ursula C. Schwerin, greatly admired President of New York City Technical College from 1978 to 1998, came to the United States as a refugee from Germany in the early 1940s. In 1958 she graduated from the College as a dental hygienist, and, after working at SUNY Farmingdale for 20 years, she returned to lead her alma mater. She died in 1996. In memory of her accomplished tenure, New York City Tech recently placed her name on the College’s library. Pictured here at a ceremony marking the occasion is Dr. Schwerin’s husband Ernest, left, and Thomas M. Carroll, who was her executive assistant for several years and is now the College’s Dean for Human Resources.
From “Negotiating Classroom Authority”

The best and worst thing that can be said about the CUNY undergraduates I have taught is that they revere their time in college. They are imaginative and industrious, and they appreciate a teacher’s interest in their studies. Every pedagogical effort is repaid in numerous ways throughout the semester. If they are frustrated or fail to understand something, I find myself doing nearly anything to make the material clearer. At the same time, these students are often terrified of the role they are asked to play in the learning process. Their veneration of classroom authority makes them reluctant to address you directly even to ask questions or disagree, for fear that this will be unwelcome or impolite.

It is a generalization, but a valuable one, that many CUNY students are recent arrivals from cultures where they have never been encouraged to open their mouths in a classroom. And here I am, demanding a supporting argument about why tolerance of families headed by lesbian couples falls within the confines of the First Amendment. For a new teacher in the CUNY system, this taciturnity can prove daunting at first. One must continually remind oneself that while students may be unwilling to contribute in class, they are not unable to. Whether you are lecturing or running a seminar, you must create an environment in which students are comfortable speaking from the first day.

Working out a level of authority comfortable for you will take time, but little things can take you far. What will your students call you? Next Tuesday at 8 a.m., I will begin again my semester-long appeal to call me by my first name. To no avail have I pleaded, tell them across the differences that they may be amongst the dullest or least sensitive people, provide a gem, but I didn’t know its value. After several years, I think I know what he meant. The moment learning takes place is an instant of recognition. Something in the student clicks. Finally, it makes sense; the puzzle young students are trying to solve (a puzzle you’ve set for them) comes into focus, He knows it. It makes sense. “Yes,” he thinks, “yes!” For each student the timing and the particular shape of that moment are different: you can only teach one person at a time. Yet we teach one person at a time. Yet we teach one person at a time.

Friend once told me you can only teach one person at a time. Yet we teach classes, and classes at CUNY are notoriously overcrowded. I knew he had given me a gem, but I didn’t know its value. After several years, I think I know what he meant. The moment learning takes place is an instant of recognition. Something in the student clicks. Finally, it makes sense; the puzzle young Bill has been trying to solve (a puzzle you’ve set for him) comes into focus, He knows it. It makes sense. “Yes,” he thinks, “yes!” For each student the timing and the particular shape of that moment are different: you can only teach one person at a time. It may be that five or fifteen students are getting it during that period, but each one according to his or her learning style and history.

What does this imply about the line you walk? It says to me that your main task is to study your students and find the different languages that establish a negotiation between you and them, so they can hear what you are saying and be moved toward that instant of “yes!” The question of “discipline” in your class depends, in large measure, on your students understanding that you are actively working to reach them across the differences that separate you. Such recognition is a crucial step toward the final recognition that constitutes the affirmation we call knowledge. The initial recognition on their part constructs their trust in you that not only allows them to take you seriously, but, in many cases, compels them to.

I once saw a cartoon in The New Yorker: we are looking at a lecture hall in which each student's desk is occupied by a tape recorder. On the lectern, where the teacher would stand is a tape recorder. This was a brilliant critique of the mechanistic notion that teaching is a form of information transmission and that learning is a passive process of reception. The emptiness of the cartoon's image epitomizes the emptiness of the concept; emptied of humans, it is emptied of human meaning. No discipline or decorum problems in that class.

Your recognition of the tension between the public and the personal in the classroom, is, I believe, the key to the problem of “discipline.” Except for egregious exceptions, most students are waiting for the reason to be involved, and a word is usually enough to alert them that more is needed than their mere physical presence; for those who feel the need to chat with their neighbors or read sociology in your English class, a word or two is almost always sufficient. The last thing students want is trouble.

In fact, most of them are both glad and scared about being in college. They are in need of guidance than anything else. In this situation, as in so many others, Samuel J ohnson is surely right when he declares that mankind requires more to be reminded than to be informed. Reminding with kindness, firmness, and humor is a large part of establishing who you are, especially to students just out of high school for whom the character of the teacher has been the most important issue for four years.

From “Discipline, Decorum, Community”

L
ike many first-time teachers, I overprepared for my lectures. Hours of preparation time and copious notes later, my students stared at me with glazed, uncomprehending eyes. Recognize that you can only present key, general concepts related to your field, and therefore you must omit from your lecture notes, I am presenting too much information—especially for students who are often new to the discipline...

Perhaps the most difficult obstacle I have had to overcome has been my propensity to internalize student reactions. Every pedagogical effort is repaid in numerous ways throughout the semester. If they are frustrated or fail to understand something, I find myself doing nearly anything to make the material clearer. At the same time, these students are often terrified of the role they are asked to play in the learning process. Their veneration of classroom authority makes them reluctant to address you directly even to ask questions or disagree, for fear that this will be unwelcome or impolite.

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— Ed Hack, Professor in the Department of English, Speech, and World Literature at the College of Staten Island
I am always worried that I am not a close reader; so I went back to the book to catch Holden “one toe over the line,” but I was stymied. No passage occurred. I put the matter to the student, and he was astonished. He pulled out his text and pointed me to a passage that I had never noticed that I need to tell you Salinger had in mind the boy putting on a New England reefer as he left his room. I now recognize this passage. In response to a question about Holden Caulfield, a student wrote about Holden for that class in a way I never did, and the question of Holden’s alienation, “dope,” was all about. In response to a question of Holden’s alienation, “dope,” Salinger in some ways a more powerful reader than I had been because of where he came from. He challenged or interrogated the text in a way I never did, and the question of Holden’s alienation, “dope,” and youth are now a part of the text of urban adolescence for that class in a way a raincoat will never be.

— Jon-Christen Suggs, Professor of English at John Jay College

CUNY families continue to be the success story of CUNY athletics. The CUNY system has seen tremendous success in the past year. Two CUNY schools produced All-Americans. CUNY’s Robin McCarthy jumped and dashed, leading her team to a third-place finish in the Division III NCAA tournament. Her long jump and 400 meter dash were both top ten finishes, and she finished third in the nation overall. Another outstanding athlete was Medgar Evers’ Tomika Robinson. Her two-sport triumph was not a first for her, she is a seven time All-American. She finished just behind McCarthy in the 400 meter, and also placed in the 200 meter. On the men’s side, Nigel Franklin, of Hunter College, finished second in the high jump in spite of a severely sprained ankle. CUNY students were once again in the forefront of Division III athletics. With coaches like Mike Brown and track and field coaches Lorry Solomon of CCNY, Alphonso Davis-WM, Ed Zarrow of Hunter College, and the consistent talent everywhere in the CUNYAC league, 1999 promises to be another fruitful year for CUNY athletics.
**T he Brooklyn College Ingersoll Hall AREAC facility consists of 15,000 square feet of saltwater tanks (the largest 8 feet in diameter) with complex filtration and temperature-control systems, rooms of freshwater tank racks, dry labs, archives, a dark room, and offices. It is in the final stages of installation and was funded in part by the New York State Division of Budget and the State's Higher Education Applied Technology program (HEAT).**

**The Schreibman team has an extensive knowledge of endocrine physiology—the study of the hormone-producing glands controlled by the nervous system—will open a wide range of research topics at AREAC. In the area of biomedical study alone its scientists will export the genetic control of physiological processes, reproduction, cancer, and the metabolism of minerals and water. Data on the aging process is also a topic of lively interest at AREAC, and one could detect just a touch of territorial jealousy when the news of Senator John Glenn's planned return to space was announced: "They should send up more fish and fewer old people up there!"

**Professor Schreibman says that sending these fish up on the space shuttle Endeavour—and again for a longer journey of nearly three weeks in April and on subsequent flights—will give multi-generational insight not only into the effects of space on reproduction, but also on such topics as aging, the feasibility of aquaculture in space, and cancer.**

"The swordtails were chosen for this experiment," he explains, "because they have good bone systems, their reproductive cycle is every 28 days, they have large broods, the male and female are easily distinguished, and it is generally a stable animal."

The CEBS consists of four chambers. The first contained four pregnant females; the second, 200 1-week-old juveniles (kept separate because adults are given to eating their young). The third compartment was packed with microalgae and the plant Ceratophyllum, its purpose being waste removal, notably ammonia, and the generation of oxygen for the system. In the fourth compartment was a microbial filtration system. Snails were included throughout as scavengers and as subjects for the study of the nervous system that controls them.

**Schreibman intends to employ his team's expertise at inducing what he calls "precocious puberty" in the cause of more productive fish-harvesting. One is tempted to make him promise never to introduce this frightening concept to the human populace.**

Schreibman envisions a vibrant urban aquaculture industry growing on many abandoned commercial sites in Brooklyn. The fishy commute to the Fulton market would certainly be much more fishy than the Xiphophorus record. And conversations have begun with entrepreneurs intrigued by the Center's resources, among them, for example, Mariculture Technologies of Long Island, which is exploring integrative aquaculture in open sea pen cages.

With its sophisticated new hardware in place, AREAC's tanks—which range from one to a thousand gallons—will now be able to create micro aquatic environments that precisely mimic a variety of real-world systems, not merely fresh and sea water, but also brackish water, tide pools, and sites where land and water interface. This takes the focus beyond a single species like the Xiphophorus to embrace the study of crustaceans, mollusks, amphipods, snails, aquatic plants, and such food-chain organisms as algae, rotifers, shrimp, and daphnia.

Sensing systems will make it possible to control temperature, pH, salinity, oxygen levels, turbidity, and periods of light and dark. Thus AREAC, for example, can recreate the exact living conditions for the Atlantic Tomcod at precise locations on the Hudson River, or it can study the effects of endocrine-disrupting chemicals and hormone-mimicking pollutants when they are introduced into aquatic ecosystems. As AREAC’s name implies, a main thrust of its research will be environmental evaluation, amelioration, and protection. A small selection of its recent or current grant-supported projects and proposals gives some idea of the range and the reach of its work. The New York Audubon Society funded a study of finned fishes in Jamaica Bay, and Con-Ed funded a study of the effects of temperature, salinity, and food availability on the Atlantic Tomcod, which displays a high incidence of liver cancer and abbreviated life span. The National Park Service supported study of the effects of xenobiotics, or pollutants, on winter flounder reproduction under controlled laboratory conditions. AREAC has also proposed the study of innovative and environmental aspects of aquaculture in the 21st century in conjunction with the Universities of Connecticut and New Brunswick. **AREAC facility consists of 15,000 square feet of saltwater tanks (the largest 8 feet in diameter) with complex filtration and temperature-control systems, rooms of freshwater tank racks, dry labs, archives, a dark room, and offices.**

**P assing the Research Torch**

Professor Schreibman, along with his colleague Dr. Klaus Kalman, have tracked the genetic make-up of some Xiphophorus for more than 80 generations, but here is a tale of the linking of scholarly generations on the Brooklyn campus. Such continuity has been crucial in producing the major scientific breakthroughs in Schreibman's 150-plus papers and several books and textbooks in the field of neuroendocrinology. Schreibman earned his B.S. at Brooklyn College in 1956 (his Ph.D. is from NYU) and he has taught at the College since 1962. One of AREAC's co-directors, Dr. Lucia Magliulo-Cepriano, was an outstanding student of Schreibman's and was a "complete" CUNY product: B.S. in biology, M.A. in Biology, and a GSUC Ph.D. in Physiology and Neuroscience. She speaks especially of the "intoxication" of taking part in the College's undergraduate research program and working on "real projects." Now her name is joined with Schreibman's on many papers, among them studies of genetic regulation of fish reproductive systems and of the brain-pituitary-gonad axis in fish.

**Schreibman envisions a vibrant urban aquaculture industry growing on many abandoned commercial sites in Brooklyn.**

**P ones with her Brooklyn college colleagues for the launch, in pitch darkness at a Cape Kennedy VIP viewing site, was CUNY's present Interim Deputy Chancellor Patricia Hassett. As CUNY Matters went to press, more AREAC swordtails were aloft on the Columba.**

**Professor Schreibman at the ecstatic moment of the Space Shuttle's rare right-time lift-off, snapped by CUNY's Interim Deputy Chancellor Patricia Hassett. As CUNY Matters went to press, more AREAC swordtails were aloft on the Columba.**

Professor Schreibman's face: "The glow there came in a close second to Endeavour's afterburn."

"Of course, everyone holds their breath until about a minute after the launch," Hassett adds, "and then what brokes the tension...Schreibman shouting loudly 'BRING BACK MY FISH!'"
NUTRITION SCIENTIST’S LIFELONG PASSION

A Chinese Food Maven
At Queens College

By E. Rosen

Most New Yorkers think they are specialists in Chinese food, but Jacqueline Newman truly is an expert—an internationally known scholar of Asian cooking, as well as Chair of the Department of Family, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences at Queens College, where she has taught since 1972. Dr. Newman’s collection of Chinese cookbooks, which date from the late nineteenth century, is reputed to be the largest in the English language.

Although Newman has served as a restaurant critic, menu translator and consultant to Chinese restaurants, she does not want to be characterized as a “foodie.” Her interests are more academic. She notes, “In Confucius’ time, all educated men—only men were educated at that time—had to be able to speak intelligently and philosophically about food.” Even in later times, she explains, “In China, you could not hold any admisterial position without passing a national exam, and the exam always contained several questions about food.”

Newman elaborates that Chinese culture is, “from a Western point of view, almost fixed” on food. “The Chinese spend more money per capita on what goes on their table and more money on eating out than Westerners do.” In this, Dr. Newman’s inclinations are more Eastern than Western. She devotes much of her professional and personal life to food and food-related study. She is Editor-in-Chief of Flavor and Fortune, a monthly magazine devoted to the scientific and artistic significance of Chinese and other Asian cuisines. She is also the author of scores of scholarly articles on nutrition, food history and cultural eating habits.

Among the many works she has authored are The Melting Pot: An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Food and Nutrition for Ethnic Groups in America; Chinese Cookbooks: An Annotated Bibliography of English Language Volumes Worldwide; and, with J.B. Harris, International Festival of Flavors in Queens, a study of the many ethnic cuisines of the borough. The Melting Pot began as a pamphlet and grew into a major resource intended to help nutritionists and dieticians, notably those working in hospitals, understand a variety of ethnic food cultures.

Newman is in some ways an unlikely candidate to have become one of the nation’s leading scholars on Asian cooking. A native New Yorker, she was raised in an orthodox Jewish home on Manhattan’s Lower East Side by a single mother who worked full-time and had little talent or inclination for cooking. “My mother would boil water and burn the pot,” she recalls.

However, the Newman family was close friends with a Chinese woman, Lily Chu, and Jackie spent much of her childhood in Lily’s Chinatown home. There she became beguiled by food—its flavors, textures and preparations, as well as the ritual food celebrations common in Chinese culture. These early experiences shaped Newman’s career. She received a Bachelor’s degree in Education, married, and began to raise a family. As an engagement gift, Lily gave her a Chinese cookbook. She quickly became an accomplished cook and eventually began teaching Chinese cooking in the Continuing Education Program at Queens College. She went on to teach as an adjunct lecturer in what was then the Department of Home Economics, and, at the urging of her chair, she enrolled in N.Y.U.’s Home Economics graduate program.

Her academic interests notwithstanding, Newman regularly prepares holiday feasts for thirty or more family and friends...and her repertoire is enormous. She is currently perfecting a recipe for quince soup with night-blooming cactus, a highly unusual and prized Chinese delicacy from the cactus family. She also maintains that a perfect tomato sauce to accompany sausage and peppers can be made by combining a can of tomato paste with a bottle of beer.

Despite her serious academic pursuits, Newman was willing to don her critic’s toque and name the city’s most authentic Chinese restaurants. CUNY•Matters editors, after earnest debate over the wisdom of letting the secret out, have decided to disclose their names. They are Full Ho (also known as Full House) in Flushing and Grand Szegzuan in Chinatown.

Chinese Food Lore

For more than 3000 years, the Chinese have used foods for special purposes. Here are a few examples of the special significance of various fruits and vegetables.

The orange is considered a prayer or a wish for good fortune and is the most common food offering. Confucius thought one should eat an orange a day. The mandarin plays a special role: after her wedding, the bride is given two mandarins by her in-laws. She is to peel them the evening of her nuptials and share them with her husband. They symbolize the couple’s hope to share a full and happy life.

Apples symbolize peace. The word for apple in Chinese is ping, and a homonym for ping is peace. The apple blossom is a sign for beauty. Illustrations with apples and blossoms symbolize a hope that one’s house will be honored and rich.

Garlic is considered a lucky plant. It has been used as an antidote to poisons and to prevent the common cold. The Chinese use this plant to keep the heart healthy and to relieve rheumatic aches and pains.

Pomegranates symbolize fertility. In Chinese, the word for seed is zi, which is also the word for sons. A picture of a pomegranate, sliced in half is often a wedding gift, symbolizing the wish for 100 sons.

The word for pear is identical to the word for separation. Many fruits are shared, but the pear is never divided between spouses or lovers, since this would symbolize the end of the relationship.

Soybeans are considered the “meat without the bone” of the Chinese diet. Soybeans especially complement whole grains as a source of essential amino acids. Soybeans are thought to cool sexual energies. Soybeans are also considered a prayer or a wish for good fortune and is the Chinese word for health.

Ginseng is a restorative beloved because its roots can resemble a human being. Of course, not all ginseng roots resemble man, though many are trimmed before drying to look human. In early Chinese history, garlic was thought to be an aphrodisiac. Some Chinese rulers prized it as a sexual tonic; this is why monastic kitchens forbad its use and why Buddhists abstain from garlic.

Ingredients: Both Usual and Unusual

Adapted from Jacqueline Newman’s Chinese Cooking. Ingredients: Both Usual and Unusual...
Adjusting to Oppression

Exploring whether radical dichotomies—agents/victims, liberation/oppression, “good girls”/“bad girls”—are furthering or hindering the narrative of the women’s movement, English Professor Nan Bauer Maglin of Borough of Manhattan Community College and her co-editor Donna Perry of William Paterson College recently published an anthology, “Bad Girls”/“Good Girls”: Women, Sex, & Power in the Nineties (Rutgers University Press). Maglin, who also directs the CUNY Baccalaureate Program at the Graduate School, writes in the introduction of concern that “second-wave feminism’s broad-based social agenda and political understanding of sexuality” are being forgotten and that many current generalizations about feminism “leave too many women out altogether.” The 24 essays—including ones by Anna Quindlen, Katha Pollitt, and CUNY’s Distinguished Professor bell hooks—explore these and other aspects of women’s empowerment in the light of such issues as AIDS, acquaintance rape, childhood sexual abuse, and pornography. Presented here is an excerpt from U.C. Berkeley’s Jillian Sandell on “Adjusting to Oppression: The Rise of Therapeutic Feminism in the U.S.”

The rise of therapy, the American attachment to individualism, and the increase of recovery programs reinforce each other in significant ways. They all bespeak a belief that individual acts of transformation can transcend the power and influence of institutions, institutions which often oppress groups and individuals because of their gender, class, and/or race.

It is particularly relevant to note here that built into the structure of therapy and recovery is a belief that society per se cannot be changed and it is futile for us to think that it can be. We have control over only our own individual acts of transformation. Therapy and recovery are inherently adjustment-oriented; they aim to help people who feel alienated, unhappy, or sick (in other words, those we now call dysfunctional) to cope with life in contemporary society.

There are certainly times when this individual approach is appropriate, useful, and necessary. Besides the benefits of processing problems, therapy can also involve a number of positive, personally transforming techniques. What it does not advocate, however, is changing the conditions of society that created the dysfunction in the first place. Now, since we have reached a point in the late 20th century where self-help and therapeutic culture is so widespread as to seem mundane, we need to consider the political ramifications of such an approach. This widespread acceptance of therapeutic culture has permeated and influenced the ways in which politics are defined and articulated. As Elayne Rapping has argued, while therapeutic culture in many ways transends the conventional political categories of conservative and progressive, it has nevertheless contributed to a shift in the ways political rhetoric is expressed.

What Rapping alludes to is an increasing tendency to view instances of institutionalized oppression as, instead, instances of victimization. As one writer put it, America has become “a nation of victims.”

The appropriation of the rhetoric of therapy is particularly noticeable within feminist politics. One reason for this is that since at least the second wave, the feminist community has had a significant overlap (in terms of ideas and methodology) with the therapeutic community. Most notably, the idea of the safe space, which was crucial to early consciousness-raising groups, was based in part on the talking cure of therapy and the recovery of 12-step programs. With the safe space of a consciousness-raising group, women shared personal stories and realized they were not alone. The idea that naming the problem with others was central to overcoming the problem gave rise to the slogan “the personal is political”...

While both the “victim” and “power” versions of therapeutic feminism are a phenomenon of white, middle-class, college-educated feminists and are, therefore, as much an expression of privilege as oppression, they nevertheless address issues many women experience and, as such, need to be taken seriously. Since they discourage direct political action, however, it is no coincidence that such therapeutic books have become popular at a time when the disparity between the rich and poor is growing wider, and when early feminist gains—such as affirmative action—are being rolled back. In the face of an increasingly conservative political climate, therefore, therapeutic texts seem to offer at least a temporary solution to the very real pain and suffering caused by sexism, racism, and economic hardship in America in the 1990s.

These books offer a solution, in other words, that seems possible and in reach because it depends only on individual change and commitment. Yet as Wendy Simonds argues, while therapeutic and self-help books tap into and acknowledge a desire for connection and societal change, they can ultimately only offer “reactorivistic solutions to social problems.” Capitalism, racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression reinforce each other in very real and concrete ways, and feminism must continue to find ways to transform not only individual women’s lives but social and economic structures.

Remaining within the safe space of feminism reinforces an oppressive, rather than a progressive, therapeutic model. It is not women who are dysfunctional but society. And it can be changed.
Baruch’s Computer Center For Visually Impaired People

By Karen Luxton Gourgey, Ed.D.
Director, Baruch College Computer Center for Visually Impaired People

Recently, some fifteen professionals whose job it is to discern the challenges of blindness and strategies for overcoming them visited Baruch College. They were surprised to discover that one can actually navigate successfully in the graphical user-interface environment of Windows—even when the mouse is stashed behind the computer.

These counselors and supervisors from the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped got this new “feel” for working in Windows at the College’s Computer Center for Visually Impaired People (CCVIP). Training specialist Vita Zavoli, herself totally blind, ordered her “students” not to use the mouse. “Listen and try to understand the concept behind what you’re doing, instead of simply pointing and clicking.” Mouseless and tentative, they followed instructions to cut and paste, navigate between programs, insert and delete text, and performed other calculator and word-processing functions.

Zavoli provided a mini-tour of the Internet to demonstrate that speech and large print-access products are robust enough to support that most graphical of environments, the World Wide Web. One counselor, a self-proclaimed computer-ophobe, was amazed at his own learning facility. Others appreciated the clarity and precision of the instruction and the pleasant but no-nonsense atmosphere.

The Center, or CCSVIP, is celebrating its 20th year of promoting computer access for people with severe visual impairments. It was the brain child of two professors from Baruch’s Department of Statistics and Computer Information Systems. Dr. Dina Bedi and Dr. Sam Ryan reasoned that the computer—whose informational currency is in bits, bytes, and 0s and 1s—could be a tremendous help to the vision-impaired, who historically had to contend with the barrier of the standard printed page.

They teamed up with Leslie Clark, a research scientist at the American Foundation for the Blind, to learn the state of the art. They quickly became aware of related challenges of blindness and strategies for exploiting the research of Warwick’s John Gill. He had employed large and cumbersome equipment “Rube Goldberged” together to prove a concept, but proved it he did. He produced sample tactile maps which could be copied hundreds of times and in which data could be stored, edited, and redrawn with relative ease. Prior to his work, tactile maps were created exclusively by hand.

Our wish was to import/develop a version of the Gill system that could reside on a personal computer and bring usable tactile maps and other graphic aids into the hands of blind and visually impaired people.

Similarly, people at MIT and elsewhere had developed software that allowed machine-readable data to be translated into Braille. This meant that Braille documents could be created from a non-Braille data source by people with little or no knowledge of the Braille code. Our hope was to take this invention and make it work for our target student population, young and old.

Both of these goals were realized, in large part, through two collaborations forged with major New York City community resources: Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Lincoln Center began in the mid ’80s to build its own Department of Programs and Services for People with Disabilities. When the accommodations that might be required to enhance the experience of blind and visually impaired patrons were considered, Braille and large-print concert programs topped the list. Lincoln Center retained CCSVIP to produce the Braille program and thus became one of the first mainstream organizations in the country to offer this service. Eventually, they found the service so important that they purchased the needed printer and software and brought the entire effort in-house.

The MTA joined CCSVIP’s Tactual Graphical Advisory Committee in 1987, and as our ability to design and create maps became apparent, the Authority worked with us to obtain Federal transit funding, first, to determine the usefulness of raised-line, large-print subway maps, second, to develop a training strategy for map reading, and, finally, to map the entire New York City Subway System. This work is just now being completed. Pocket-sized strip maps for each of the 26 subway lines are available, together with overview maps for each borough that depict these lines as they weave through the space that is New York City.

From these maps grew the Talking Directory System, or “Talking Kiosk” (CUNY+Matters reported on this in its Fall 1996 issue). This randomly accessible multi-media kiosk system was prototyped in Penn Station during 1996 and 1997. In 1998, a permanent kiosk is to be designed and installed in the Long Island Railroad’s Penn Station facility.

Outreach

We return to the counselors who came to CCSVIP recently to learn what it really means to operate a computer with access technology. For them it meant the ability to design and create maps became apparent, the Authority worked with us to obtain Federal transit funding, first, to determine the usefulness of raised-line, large-print subway maps, second, to develop a training strategy for map reading, and, finally, to map the entire New York City Subway System. This work is just now being completed. Pocket-sized strip maps for each of the 26 subway lines are available, together with overview maps for each borough that depict these lines as they weave through the space that is New York City.

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A MUSICAL LEXICON

(from actual elementary school students)

dual: “music sung by two people at the same time”

opera: “a song of bigy size”

opus: “my favorite composer”

pianissimo: “a spare word for when you cannot think of how to say shhhhh”

refrain: “that part you better not try to sing”

ritardando: “the warning way of saying look out for what’s ups ahead”

sextet: “I know what that means, but I’d rather not say”

tempo: “that is how fast people are playing when they no longer can be measured in miles per hour”

virtuoso: “a musician with real high morals”
Every November Professor Louise Hoffman, of the Hospitality Management Department at New York City Tech, prepares her Confectionary Arts team for competition in the International Salon of Culinary Arts. Here they compete against many talented schools, and they have been winning first prize ribbons for the past several years. This year both the Confectionary and Culinary teams garnered the Gold Medal of the French Culinary Academy.

Hoffman’s confectionary class begins in September and meets twice a week—usually from 4 to 9 p.m but sometimes starting as early as 9 a.m.—learning medium and working on their projects. Most students have never tried pastillage, and sugar paste. Gathered together amid the Salon’s well-wrought creations is Professor Hoffman, in the toque, and her students and the faculty are; that’s what makes us a university. It’s not in the Central Office, which coordinates and supports. If I can make some headway in restoring autonomy to the campuses, I’ll be well content.

That said, I hasten to add that I’m not working in a vacuum. Some very specific and concrete issues must be given priority. We’ve touched on several: teacher education, remediation, the need to address—in collaboration with the school system—the problem of an unevenly prepared applicant pool. There is the complex question of testing—when, how, where, how often—an answer to which the faculty is seeking through the University-wide discipline councils and with our Office of Academic Affairs. We have to respond to current criticism about “standards”—how should they be defined, how can they be demonstrated and validated. I want very much to rebuild the full-time faculty, to make good use of the capital funds that will be available. And we must work together. We have a Board of Trustees with many newly-appointed members who are interested in looking at things afresh. There is strong support from the presidents, who bring a campus perspective to shaping their institutions in ways consistent with their respective missions. Not least, I’m fortunate in having a talented and hardworking group of colleagues here at the Central Office. Working together, nothing can stop us from achieving for this University what it can do best.