Historic Highs, Driven By Value
High Achieving Freshmen, Transfers Flock to Colleges

Driven by value-seeking students, including surging numbers of high academic achievers and community college applicants, enrollment at The City University of New York will reach its all-time high this fall, according to preliminary figures.

Based on late summer data, the University projected record-breaking enrollment for the 2009-10 academic year, surpassing the 252,956 high point reached in 1974, 35 years ago.

Nearly 250,000 were enrolled at CUNY colleges as the start of the semester approached, with enrollments running 10 percent ahead compared with the same period last year. While this fall’s final headcount is not expected to jump by quite that much due to changes in campus registration practices, a significant surge is expected over last fall’s total enrollment of 243,819. Final figures will be available in mid-October.

The University’s strong enrollment gains make a powerful statement,” said Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. “Students transferring to CUNY schools was also up, by 11 percent. Applications from suburban students jumped by almost 20 percent and those from non-New York State residents by more than 12 percent. Approximately 5,000 out-of-state, U.S. students were admitted for fall.

High-achieving students are increasingly drawn to CUNY on the graduate level, as well. CUNY School of Law’s first-year fall enrollment jumped by 23 percent over last year. The LSAT scores and GPAs of this law school class are the highest in the school’s 25-year history.

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The number of applicants with strong academic preparation continues its upward trajectory, underscoring the University’s growing reputation as a high-quality higher education option for value-conscious families. College applications from students with averages of greater than 85 percent increased by close to 2,000, compared with last year. College applications from students with average SAT scores above 1200 increased by almost 60 percent in the number of applying students who have chosen a CUNY community college as their first-choice school.

The stepped-up demand for a CUNY education, spurred by the University’s spreading reputation for quality academics as well as families’ tight budgets, has also prompted the University to make its high-value programs more accessible to a wider range of students.

To make it easier for students to fulfill their degree requirements on time, CUNY has expanded and promoted its summer and winter sessions. And students are responding: Enrollment this summer was 73,202, reflecting a 3 percent increase since 2008 and an 8.7 percent increase since summer 2005, when 67,318 were enrolled and the University boosted promotion of its summer offerings. According to a survey of 2,500 of the 2009 summer enrollees, 93 percent were full- or part-time CUNY students looking to move ahead with their coursework.

The availability of more on-campus housing is also a big draw for CUNY’s new students. The new Queens College student housing is also a big draw for CUNY’s new students. The new Queens College student housing, The Summit, which filled to capacity at the start of the semester.
The funded projects span groundbreaking scientific inquiry and research with a timely edge.

Mayor Bloomberg Pledges

AYOR MICHAEL BLOOMBERG boosted the University’s community college system by pledging $50 million over the next four years in an effort to increase the city’s skilled labor force and bring more residents into the middle class.

Bloomberg’s Gateway to the Middle Class aims to graduate 120,000 New Yorkers by 2020 who will be trained in middle class.

A portion of the money will go to a model community college — the first new two-year college in New York City in the 1960s.

The new college is moving ahead three years after Chancellor Matthew Goldstein approached Bloomberg to support an innovative plan to increase the graduation rate of community college students.

That plan, Accelerated Study in Associate Program (ASAP), is now in place at all of the University’s six community colleges and is expected to graduate more than 50 percent of its students within three years. The national rate is 20 to 23 percent after three years.

“We are going to exceed well over 50 percent in three years,” Goldstein said. “And we are going to take those ideas that we could have implemented were it not for this mayor, and hope to extrapolate that experience into a new community college that will get national attention.”
Aid Is Stimulating CUNY Programs

College of Staten Island’s Teacher Academy, an honors program for incoming freshmen wishing to major in mathematics, biology or chemistry, received $839,000 from the NSF for scholarships to train 29 mathematics and science teachers for grades 7-12. York College received a similar NSF grant of nearly $900,000 for a similar teacher training program.

Overall, funds requested for research exceed $90 million, including 64 submissions for $39 million in new NIH “challenge grants” for health and science research, said Vice Chancellor Small. Included are funds NIH and NSF may approve to renovate science facilities and provide instrumentation necessary to the funded research.

“Clearly, the stimulus has stimulated many of our faculty to write grant proposals,” she said. “We understand they might not all be funded, but we’d like to keep the momentum going.”

Small noted that much of the stimulus money awarded to University researchers thus far is for existing or ongoing proposals and projects. The ARRA opportunities — at least $26 billion is expected to go to research nationwide — are “a good thing for CUNY” at a time when the University has been “ramping up” research efforts amid a generally grim funding climate, she noted. While much of the stimulus money is targeted to research, funds also are going to job creation and “green” projects — sectors where CUNY is attaining prominence.

Borough of Manhattan Community College received $11 million in federal stimulus funds for an extensive environmental upgrade — 10 projects to boost the energy efficiency of mechanical and electrical systems at its main building at 190 Chambers St., for an annual cost savings of more than $1 million. When completed, the upgrade, funded through the Mayor’s New York City Department of Energy Management, is expected to reduce BMCC’s annual electrical energy consumption by more than 4 million kilowatts, and shrink its carbon footprint by approximately 5,400 metric tons of CO2.

Some $15 million in stimulus funds have been allocated by the New York City Department of Small Business Services for new health care programs at LaGuardia Community College and for expansion of nursing, radiology, EMT and other health care training at New York City College of Technology, Kingsborough and Queensborough Community Colleges and College of Staten Island.

“Federal workforce funds are being invested in intensive, long-term education and training programs in a way that they haven’t been before,” noted Suri Dutsch, University director of adult and continuing education. “The city is paying for people to get degrees in nursing. There’s no better investment. It’s a very big deal.”

Recovery monies may also partially fund projects that touch CUNY. For example, $5 million in ARRA funds are part of an $11.8 million U.S. Department of Energy investment, announced July 29, in five solar energy grid integration systems aimed at lowering energy consumption and Americans’ utility bills. LaGuardia Community College is partnering with Princeton Power of Princeton, NJ, on one of the DOE-funded projects, focusing on lowering manufacturing costs through integrated controls for energy storage.

Some at CUNY viewed the stimulus funds’ availability as a positive reflection of changing federal priorities.

“It’s led to a real renewal,” said professor Greenbaum of Hunter. “There is going to be an improved emphasis on research … which not only makes it possible to do our science, but enables us to educate students, training young people for the next generation of researchers.

“The money is being offered and spread out in such a way, as to enhance the entire climate,” she added. “May it continue.”

$50 Million to University’s Community Colleges

The strengthened commitment to community college education is in keeping with the initiative of President Obama, who on July 14 set a goal of graduating 5 million Americans from two-year colleges by 2020.

“Like we do in so many other areas from green jobs to community service, New York City can and will lead the way,” said the mayor at a press conference last month. “Sixty percent of CUNY’s community college students come from households that earn less than $30,000 a year and 66 percent of them work at least part time while taking classes. We owe it to them to make our community colleges more accessible, accountable and effective at preparing New Yorkers for high demand and higher paying jobs.”

Among the highlights of the plan are:

- Expand the ASAP program, which helps high-risk students complete community college within three years.
- Doubling the capacity of community colleges’ on-campus child care so students have a safe place to leave their children while attending classes.
- Help students start their own businesses by providing training in planning, marketing and financial management.
- Help students save for school through SaveNYC, a consumer-friendly savings account that will offer students matching funds if they maintain their initial deposit for one year and use the money for tuition and expenses.
- Make capital investments to expand the capacity of the community colleges.
STUDENT HONORS

Teamwork Equals Victory
Baruch College’s chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants has won the KPMG National Chapter of the Year Competition over teams from nine colleges and universities nationwide. Baruch earned an automatic berth in next year’s competition and a $500 prize for each team member: Chanee D. Bridgewater, Charlene S. Fessal, Barbara Gelin, Nyla Samuel and Janelle A. Shillingford. Their advisers included Baruch ’02 alumna Antony Murriithi, a senior manager at the accounting firm KPMG.

Salk Scholars Announced
Eight premedical students have received prestigious Jonas E. Salk Scholarships to study medicine, for their academic achievement and research excellence. They are: Jason Abramowicz, Queens College, who will attend SUNY Downstate Medical Center; Mikhail Bekarev, Hunter College, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; Chantal Bruno, Macaulay Honors College at Queens College, New York College of Osteopathic Medicine; Martin Detchkov, Macaulay Honors College at City College, SUNY Downstate Medical Center; Michael Ignat, Hunter College, New York College of Osteopathic Medicine; Dalandra Jalilah, Brooklyn College, SUNY Upstate Medical University; Mario Pinto, City College, A.T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine; and Sheryl Burrier, York College, Penn State College of Medicine. Dr. Jonas E. Salk (CCNY, 1934), who developed the polio vaccine in 1955, turned down a ticker-tape parade and asked that the money be used for scholarships. Each Salk Scholar receives a stipend of $8,000.

Seven Kaplan Leaders Selected
LaGuardia Community College students Jonathan Chavez and Kaire Colwell, who were once high school dropouts, have received 2009 Kaplan Educational Foundations Scholarships for outstanding academic achievements. They are among seven CUNY students to receive the highly competitive awards. The scholarships — aimed at students pursuing the associate degree who have high academic and leadership potential — provide winners with financial and academic support, including mentoring and tutoring, through completion of their bachelor’s degrees. The other winners are: Komi Attisso, Bronx Community College; Valerie Alverio, Hostos Community College; Ebony Childs, Borough of Manhattan Community College; Alma Osorio, John Jay College of Criminal Justice; Gary Waiyaki, Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Senior Wins Research Spot
College of Staten Island senior Eric Rios-Doria, a chemistry/math double-major, was accepted to the University of Iowa’s prestigious Summer Undergraduate Medical Scientist Training Program and its research program. He was exposed to M.D./Ph.D. training that included performing biomedical research and shadowing a physician-scientist during the intensive eight-week summer program.

Adjusting to a Life on Hold
Two years after being injured by a devastating blast, a determined student struggles to reclaim his dreams.

TWO YEARS AGO, filled with passion and drive, Gregory McCullough enjoyed the challenges and rewards of his daily life: classes at New York City College of Technology, mentoring kids, attending church, mastering martial arts, towing cars to save money for school and his own car.

The greatest challenge was yet to come. On July 18, 2007, McCullough, then just 21, was at the wheel of a red tow truck during rush hour in Manhattan when suddenly he was engulfed in the horrific Consolidated Edison steam pipe explosion that scoured third-degree burns over 80 percent of his body.

Today, buttressed by faith, family and friends, McCullough struggles to recover from his devastating injuries, and to begin to reclaim his dreams. Remarkably, despite his medical condition and persistent pain, he is trying to keep up with his studies through CUNY’s new School of Professional Studies online, though, “Sometimes I’m just too tired.”

Had the accident not happened, he says, “I’d definitely be in school.” City Tech “was a great learning environment. I would do my homework; I developed the discipline.”

“The courage and determination that Gregory has shown ... reflects the remarkable strength of his character and his faith. Gregory is a valued member of the City Tech family and we are all supportive and confident he will attain his goals,” said City Tech President Russell K. Hotzler. Before the explosion, McCullough was living with his mother and father in Canarsie, walking with a cane to support his halting steps. City Tech “was a great learning environment. I would do my homework; I developed the discipline.”

He dreamed of becoming a Marine, then joining the FBI or U.S. Department of Homeland Security. He enrolled at City Tech in 2006 and took classes in the legal studies department before switching to liberal arts in 2007. He planned to transfer to John Jay College of Criminal Justice to study business management and criminal justice.

Those dreams are not dashed, although they are less certain now because of his extensive injuries, scarred body and the likelihood of a long road to recovery. McCullough was at the New York Presbyterian-Weill Cornell Medical Center burn unit in a medically induced coma for more than two months to control his pain while doctors worked to save his life. He has undergone a dozen operations and multiple skin grafts. There will be more surgeries and years of physical therapy, said his lawyer, Ken Thompson, of Thompson, Wigdor & Gilly.

In the boardroom at Thompson’s Manhattan office on Aug. 12, in the presence of his mother, Tanya McCullough-Stewart, and father, Frank, McCullough talked about how he is coping with the rigors of his day-to-day life.

He wore sneakers and jeans with a short-sleeved blue shirt, revealing deeply scarred arms and hands mottled where the skin peeled off but camouflage the extensive damage to the rest of his body. He used a cane to support his halting steps.

McCullough spoke softly, a broad smile on his handsome features — miraculously unmarred — from time to time. “I still get pains throughout my body,” he said. “Some days I’m really tired. I have to have help;” to button shoes, to put on socks. Even eating is difficult because “opening a soda can is a task in itself.” Right-handed, “I had to teach myself how to write with my left hand,” he said. Being in the sun can be hazardous. “That bothers me, the heat... It could be the middle of winter and I’ll be hot, summer and I’ll be cold. My body is still adjusting,” he said.

McKullough’s tow truck at scene of steam pipe explosion in July, 2007.

There are things that he misses. “I want to drive so bad,” McCullough said. “I haven’t been able to do sports — weight lifting and football.” And the First Marine Cadet Corps kids are “always asking me, ‘How’re you doing, Sergeant Major, when are you coming back?’ It feels good I’m very humble, but I was the first black sergeant major in that program.”

That fateful Wednesday evening, McCullough was on his way to Brooklyn, taking home a customer, Judith Bailey, whose disabled car he had towed to a Bronx repair shop. As they waited for a light to change at Lexington Avenue and 41st Street, a geyser of hot steam from a broken underground pipe sent his truck soaring into the air. It crashed back into a 15-foot-deep crater created by the explosion.

As the cab filled with scalding water, he and Bailey staggered out to the street. A woman bleeding the mud and debris suffered a fatal heart attack. Forty people were injured.

“I knew I was burned because my skin was a different color,” McCullough recalled. “When I woke up [from the coma] I think I cried. I couldn’t have gone through that alone. That was divine intervention.”

Bailey, a single mother of two school-age girls, was buried over 30 percent of her body and hospitalized for three weeks. Derek Sells of the Cochran firm, co-counsel with Thompson, is her lawyer. “Judith is still struggling to overcome her injuries,” he said.

For McCullough, faith, family and friends give him the will to keep going. “We try to stay strong for him, keep him motivated... I’m thankful that he’s still here,” Tanya McCullough-Stewart said.

Gregory McCullough’s mottled hands are visible result of his explosion injuries.
Baruch Interim President Named

BARUCH COLLEGE President Kathleen Waldron has stepped down after five years of service to become a University professor and Stan Altman has been named interim president by the Board of Trustees Executive Committee, on the recommendation of the chancellor. Altman served with distinction as dean of the School of Public Affairs at Baruch College from 1999 to 2005 and has continued to serve as a professor at the school. “Interim President Altman has extensive academic and administrative experience in higher education and we are fortunate that he is available to serve the college in this interim capacity,” Chancellor Goldstein said. A national search for a permanent president is under way, the chancellor noted, adding, “We are grateful to Dr. Waldron for her presidential service during the past five years and join with all members of the Baruch College community in expressing our very best wishes.”

CreATIVE ENERGIES Among the outstanding teams of professors and students who represent the spectrum of graduate education at the University are the following: at right in photo left, Sanjoy Banerjee, City College distinguished professor of chemical engineering, explores the boundaries of battery technology with Lorraine Leon (Ph.D. 2010) and senior and Ph.D. applicant Jude Phillip. In photo right, poet and distinguished professor Kimiko Hahn, center, has worked with novelist La Forrest Cope (2009) and memoirist John McLaughlin (2010) in Queens College M.F.A. program. Their stories and those of many other outstanding students and faculty are featured this fall on www.cuny.edu and other venues.

Business Leaders Praise CUNY’s Key Role In Developing Top Workforce Talent

IN THIS GLOBAL RECESSION, how do you create jobs today that will help New Yorkers compete in the economy of tomorrow? It’s as easy as business + government + universities. This seemingly simple equation was the focus of “New York’s Human Capital: The Next Generation,” a summer conference held at Baruch College and organized by the Center for an Urban Future and the Community Service Society. The panel discussion, moderated by Greg David, editorial director of Crain’s New York Business, explored the current and future workplace needs of the city’s employers and how policy-makers, educational institutions and the business community are addressing the challenges. Chancellor Matthew Goldstein gave the keynote address. The panelists — Cristobal Conde, president and CEO of SunGard; Calvin Grannum, president and CEO of Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp.; Tim Nitti, principal of KLG Advisers, Herbert Parades, president and CEO of New York-Presbyterian Hospital; Frank Sciame, CEO of the construction company that bears his name; and Kathryn Wylde, president and CEO of Partnership for NYC — agreed that for New York City to remain the intellectual capital of the world, higher education must continue to play a leading role. “I went to City College and have had a chance to witness firsthand what Matt Golden did for the University,” Sciame said. “And when you see the students that come from all over the world and the talent, it is so important to this town, because the future leaders are there, the Rhodes Scholars are back there, they’re at CUNY.” Chancellor Goldstein has done a “phenomenal job…” Kathryn Wylde, president and CEO of Partnership for NYC

“Increasingly, employers are positioning themselves in locales to leverage the university and college systems that are natural feeders…” Tim Nitti, principal of KLG Advisers

Pride of New York

A merica’s newest Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, right, the first Latina to sit on the high court, celebrated her elevation with her mother and brother at her ceremonial induction on Aug. 8, 2009 in Washington, D.C. Following the ceremony, they proudly displayed a commemorative “Pride of New York” poster created by CUNY’s Office of University Relations in honor of their family’s achievements. The justice’s mother, Celina Sotomayor, left, was a widow with two young children when she began evening studies at Hostos Community College. She received her degree in nursing in 1973, a year after her daughter graduated from a Bronx high school. The justice’s brother, Juan Sotomayor, center, who graduated from the prestigious Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education at City College in 1979, is an assistant professor of medicine at University Hospital in Syracuse, a clinical researcher and a physician who specializes in allergy, asthma and immunology pediatric care.

Presidential Honors

COLLEGE of Staten Island President Tomás D. Morales was one of eight members appointed by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg to the Panel for Educational Policy, which was re-established when Gov. David A. Paterson signed the New York City school governance legislation into law Aug. 11. In July, President Morales received the honorary degree of Doctor of Human Letters from the American College of Thessaloniki (ACT), a long-time CSI study-abroad partner, at ACT’s commencement in Greece. Lehman College President Ricardo R. Fernandez was to travel in late August to Sungshan Women’s University in Seoul, South Korea — which has a dual degree program with Lehman — to receive an honorary degree in late August. Medgar Evers College President William L. Pollard was featured by the Daily News in a Spotlight on Great People column that detailed the new president’s rise from humble beginnings to the heights of academia.

CUNy MATTERS — Fall 2009
Join the Paths of Discovery

DAVID GRUBER went to the depths of two of the world’s great seas in a quest to unlock the mysteries of the deep coral reef.

Marco Tedesco went to Greenland to take measure of the melting polar ice cap.

Will Harcourt-Smith went to Africa — and back 18 million years — in a search for bones of the oldest apes.

For these CUNY scientists, the summer of 2009 was a time to get out of the lab, out of the classroom, out of their New York enclosures — and into the field. Far afield. Their expeditions were each something to write home about — and so they did. The scientists helped launch the University’s new Decade of Science website with blogs chronicling their adventures in words, pictures and video. For their blogs and more, go to www.cuny.edu/decadeofscience.

Here’s a look at what three University researchers did on their summer vacations.

Investigating Deep Coral Reefs

DAVID GRUBER, assistant professor of biology and environmental science at Baruch College and the Graduate Center, is a rare scientist who combines talent in the laboratory with an adventurous spirit. In his ongoing research into the physiology and evolution of the world’s deepest coral reefs, the specimens he studies in the lab are corals he’s collected himself.

In June, Gruber climbed into his scuba gear on Little Cayman Island and spent a week collecting coral from the warm waters of the Caribbean. Back in New York, he put the specimens in cryogenic storage for study under a grant from the National Science Foundation that also includes corals he collected on Australia’s Great Barrier Reef. A few weeks later, Gruber was in Israel, diving for coral in the Red Sea.

Gruber’s area of interest is the little-studied deep coral reefs — some as far down as 300 feet — and their relationship to those in shallower waters whose precarious status has gotten a lot of attention in recent years. He is most focused on fluorescent proteins, substances found in coral that could shed light on the physiology of the deep reef and lead to better understanding of its connection to the shallow reef. “The shallow reef is under quite a bit of stress right now,” says Gruber, “and if they are genetically connected it might mean the deep reef is just as vulnerable.”

The reason there’s been virtually no study of the deep reef — some as far down as 300 feet or more — is that getting to it is so difficult. “If you’re diving with just compressed air, the limit is about 130 feet and you can’t stay down longer than a few minutes,” Gruber says. On Little Cayman, he was joined by two top research divers from South Florida who used an advanced method for deep dives — a mixture of oxygen, helium and nitrogen known as “trimix.” The divers descended to 300 feet and returned with some of the deepest coral ever recovered from that area of the Caribbean.

In that way alone, the expedition was cutting-edge research. The deep-dive technique hasn’t been readily available to marine scientists because it’s expensive and requires a team of highly skilled technical divers. Ever the scientific adventurer, Gruber is training to make those deep dives himself when he returns to Little Cayman next summer. In the meantime, he’ll be back there in January — this time with a contingent of CUNY students — teaching a course in tropical reef ecology.

Measuring a Melting Ice Sheet

MARCO TEDESCO, assistant professor of earth and atmospheric sciences at City College, went in the opposite direction from Gruber — and to decidedly less tropical waters.

Tedesco studies the melting of polar ice sheets and how it is contributing to the world’s rising sea levels. It’s well-known in his field that the Greenland “ice sheet” has been melting at an increasing rate in recent years, and that some of the water accumulates in large ponds called supraglacial lakes. Accompanied by graduate student Nick Steiner and several hundred pounds of equipment, Tedesco flew to Greenland to take measurements that he would later compare to those taken by satellites. There was a spectrometer, a microcomputer and an underwater video camera, all to be transported around the lakes by a miniature remote-controlled boat equipped with GPS.

The boat turned out to be a little star-crossed. Tedesco tested it in the lake in Central Park a few weeks before departure, then shipped it to Greenland in a wooden crate. Six other crates of technical gear arrived as scheduled. The one containing the boat did not. It was missing for a week, threatening Tedesco’s entire venture, for which he had planned nine months. Finally, it showed up, and the mission proceeded.

“Everything worked fine and the boat exceeded our expectations,” Tedesco reports. “The remotely controlled boat reached up to half a mile from the lake edge and we were able to collect all the data we wanted to and even more.” But on the last day of the expedition, Tedesco pressed the limits. He tied the little research vessel to a colleague’s inflatable boat. Off it went. In the middle of the lake, it submerged. “He came back with our boat 3 feet below the surface. Everything was soaked — computers, instruments,” Tedesco was philosophical. “There’s no experiment without sacrifice.” Of course, he said this after he knew the sacrifice was minimal. “We lost a four-hundred-buck computer, but we were able to recover the hard disk, and the GPS and spectrometer and it’s amazing but all the instruments worked fine.”

Besides taking their measure of the melting ice sheet, Tedesco and Steiner found something interesting in the ice itself. “People imagine the ice sheet being very bright, but it appears a little dark. There’s this fine black powder called cryoconite, which we called kryptonite, of course. We collected samples to analyze.
In Search of the Oldest Apes

THERE’S NO SHORTAGE of paleontologists searching Africa for the remains of our closest fossil ancestors. Most are after primates such as Lucy, who gained modern fame for walking upright three million years ago. Then there’s Will Harcourt-Smith, a hunter-gatherer of much older fossils — those of apes that lived 18 million years ago. Harcourt-Smith, a paleoanthropologist at the American Museum of Natural History who began a faculty appointment at Lehman College this fall, spent several weeks this summer scouring Rusinga Island, in Kenya’s Lake Victoria. It’s been a hallowed place in paleontological circles since the 1930s, when a fossil ape called Proconsul — a genus considered to be between 14 and 23 million years old — was discovered there.

“I’m fascinated by the factors and conditions that led to the emergence of these creatures, and why they proliferated into so many different lineages,” Harcourt-Smith blogged from his camp on Rusinga, where he was accompanied by a number of colleagues from other universities and three CUNY graduate students. “The wonderful thing about these islands is that they are still packed with fossils. And not just fossil apes. We have fossil plants and seeds, miniature insects, the remains of giant lumbering mammals, birds, reptiles, bats — you name it.”

As they collected fossils, Harcourt-Smith and his colleagues conducted a series of geological analyses that they hope will allow them to accurately reproduce both the evolutionary events and environmental and ecological conditions on the island 18 million years ago. From this they can then explore how the changes in these conditions may have influenced the emergence of Proconsul and its cousins. “This year we’re doing things with much greater precision,” Harcourt-Smith said. “We’ve brought out a sophisticated piece of GPS equipment that tells you the exact geographical position of every single piece of fossilized bone you find on the ground. This will help us build up a more accurate picture of how the site was formed, what got preserved and what did not.”

After three weeks in camp, Harcourt-Smith declared it “a terrific season.” The team had found more than 1,000 identifiable fossils by then, along with thousands more “scrappy pieces.” He gave a lot of credit to his CUNY students — Julia Zichello, Scott Blumenthal and Jenn Hodgson — who contributed to the excavation as well as to the blog.

“I can see why looking for fossils can be addictive,” wrote Zichello, a doctoral student in biological anthropology on her first field work experience. “It’s a lot like gambling. There is so much chance involved, 17 million years of possibilities. But unlike gambling, there’s nothing to lose.”

We found a lot of interesting things: meteorite, soot from burned forests, gold, titanium. We even found radioactive material. So now we wonder how much this changes the melting.”

Whatever his data ultimately reveal, Harcourt-Smith’s work is a crucial step in answering one immediate discovery: He’s no fan of the cold. Just a slight problem with his next steps to Greenland, Norway and northern Canada already in the works. “Maybe I have to change my field,” he jokes. “I’ll study coral and go to the Cayman Islands.”

Dive beneath the warm waters of the Caribbean and Red Seas, explore Greenland’s polar ice sheet and hunt for fossils millions of years old via three globe-trotting University scientists’ summer blogs.

Employees at a ceramics class, one of many personal and professional summer workshops offered via Bravo!

Bravo! Encore!

John Jay College employees applaud varied enrichment opportunities closer to home.

IN MOST corporate and educational cultures, summer is a time of slower pace and time off — a season to recharge the batteries. But there are different ways to rev up the institutional energy, and John Jay College of Criminal Justice seems to have found one that works.

In July, the college held its second annual Bravo! Summer Employee Institute, a midweek symposium open to all employees, both full-time and part-time, who wanted to take a break from their workday routines in favor of two days of “personal and professional enrichment and development.” The 300 employees who took part had a choice of more than 40 seminars — from managing personal debt to dealing with difficult people, from meditation to team-building, from “Learn to podcast” to “So you want to be a crime scene investigator.”

The Bravo! Institute idea is part of a broader attempt by the college to improve how employees feel about their jobs and their lives. More than 200 employees responded to an “Employee Engagement Survey” conducted last year under the direction of Senior Vice President Robert M. Pignatello. The survey was meant as a starting point for addressing a dismal reality of modern life: A study of 90,000 people worldwide by Towers Perrin, a firm that helps organizations improve performance, found that just 21 percent were engaged by their work.

As a result of last year’s survey, John Jay’s administrators took a number of steps to address what seemed to be the areas of most pressing concern. They increased the college’s training budget, offered more professional development opportunities and embraced the new CUNY Work/Life program, a University-wide initiative to help employees balance their work and personal lives.

Judging by the results of the same survey this year, some attitudes seem to have changed for the better. For instance, the respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “Doing my job well gives me a sense of personal satisfaction.” In 2008, only 69 percent agreed; this year, virtually everyone did — 98 percent. Other areas changed less — 21 percent were engaged by their work.

“The Bravo! Institute alone doesn’t account for the improvement, but it’s a start, and one that Pignatello hopes will be a model for other CUNY colleges.
The Chemistry of Art

ONE DAY a few years ago, City College chemistry professor John Lombardi got a phone call from a peer with an unusual specialty. Marco Leona was calling from the Department of Scientific Research at the Metropolitan Museum of Art — a subterranean lab that even the most avid patron of the museum might be surprised to know exists.

The museum scientists’ primary mission has been to develop better ways of preserving works of art — everything from determining the optimal interior climate for a Botticelli to discovering that a display case made of plywood produces organic vapors that can corrode a silver vessel from the time and place of Alexander the Great. But Leona, a chemist who heads a staff of eight, has a personal interest that veers down a different avenue of art history. He’s made a specialty of identifying the materials — down to the molecular level — used by the artists whose works fill the Met and the world’s other preeminent museums. It’s less about conservation than about history and authenticity. “The brushwork of a painting could look like a Rembrandt, but we’re interested in seeing if the trace elements match,” says Leona. “So there’s an element of forensic science.”

The problem for Leona was that even the best available techniques made it nearly impossible to identify the molecular compounds in centuries-old pigments and dyes without damaging the artwork. “You can’t return a painting to the collection full of holes,” he notes.

That’s where John Lombardi came in. The City College chemist is a leading light in the field of Raman spectroscopy, a technique that uses laser beams to scatter and then identify the molecules of a substance. Leona thought the technology could put his work on a fast track, perhaps leading to dramatic developments in his field. In 2005 he met with Lombardi and the two decided to collaborate.

They sought a grant from the National Science Foundation but were turned down because the work was judged less basic science than practical application. They found another source of funding in an unlikely place. “It was a solicitation from the Department of Justice,” Lombardi says. “They were interested in forensic applications for identifying trace materials. We said, ‘You know, that’s what we do, after all.’”

With a three-year, $300,000 grant (renewable this year), the chemists have gone on to accomplish what they hoped, and then some. They’ve used Raman spectroscopy to positively identify so many different substances in so many disparate works of art that they’ve produced more than two dozen scientific papers.

The key from the beginning, Lombardi and Leona agree, was not just the technology or their own expertise. “We both saw that a way to make this go forward was to include City College students,” Leona says. “They could work on the problem, go back and work with John on more in-depth approaches so we could really make progress.”

That they did. Lombardi’s students — two post-doctoral chemists, two graduate students and four undergraduates — have helped Leona and Lombardi identify and catalogue some 50 compounds in dyes from all over the world and many centuries. “It’s painstaking work,” says Lombardi. “One molecule at a time.” He and Leona have established a database that they and their colleagues at other museums can use to find matches in works that are being examined for practical reasons — authentication — or historical analysis. “A whole group of materials is now within reach,” says Leona. “Before, we could say, ‘I think this was painted with this material, but I can’t tell you because I can’t remove enough of it to study with available techniques and without destroying it. Now we can take an essentially invisible piece of a work of art and say it was dyed with carminic acid, which comes from cochineal bugs, which are used in lipsticks and pink sodas.”

Leona at one point used the Raman spectrometer to examine an object the museum was considering for acquisition: a rug of 16th-century Romanian weave. The laser generated an analysis that showed that the dye in the rug wasn’t available until three centuries later — right around the time a famous forger of these rugs was known to be active. It was the first time one of the suspected forgeries had been scientifically proven. “It’s like the difference between a police lineup and DNA,” says Leona.

The Leona-Lombardi team’s work has caught the attention of museum and research chemists alike, many of whom came to hear Leona discuss it at a recent meeting at the National Science Foundation. Though the research was considered outside the NSF’s formal criteria for funding when Lombardi and Leona began, the results have apparently expanded the foundation’s horizons. “My conversations with them continued,” says Leona, “to the point that they got interested in the general topic of fundamental scientific research on cultural heritage.”
‘Floating Pandemonium’ in War-Torn New York

By Gary Schmidgall

Climbing the Hill in Ft. Greene — Brooklyn’s first park, laid out by Olmsted and Vaux after their design for Central Park, began to encroach on in 1806. On these dismal prison ships gathered together in Wallabout Bay, which the Brooklyn Navy Yard began to encroach on in 1806. On these dismal prison ships suffered, as one survivor later recalled “every inconvenience but death,” or, as Burrows lists them, “overcrowding, hunger, sickness, appalling squalor, and petty, capricious cruelties.” And there was plenty of death, too. Burrows and others have arrived at a figure of 11,000 prison-ship fatalities, plus another thousand so or in such notorious Lower Manhattan prisons.

And there was plenty of death, too: Burrows and others have arrived at a figure of 11,000 prison-ship fatalities, plus another thousand so in such notorious Lower Manhattan prisons.

Burrows ends with a chapter (also titled “Forgotten Patriots”) telling the fascinating read-it-and-Weep tale of plans to memorialize the victims of Wallabout. The pro-British Federalists wanted to sink the prison-ships in 1783 to celebrate the birthday of the city. Congress stayed stingy, but the idea simply refused to die. Around 1808 the “Wallabout Dead March” became about as popular at public festivities as “Yankee Doodle.”

Several schemes were proposed, but all failed. An 8-by-8-by-10 “antechamber” to a crypt for some martyr’s bones was built about 1840 and tumbled down by 1897. An editorial writer for The Brooklyn Daily Eagle named Walt Whitman urged the memorial in 1846 to no effect. (Surprisingly, Burrows never quotes Whitman’s fine short 1888 poem, “The Wallabout Martyrs.”) Finally, with the 30-acre Washington Park (later changed to Ft. Greene) becoming the center of a fancy neighborhood, the Brooklyn City Council funded a mau-soleum for the martyrs. Designed by Olmsted and Vaux and completed in 1873, it still lacked a proper monument.

After wandering in the mists of oblivion for decades, the martyrs’ ghosts finally received their due largely. Burrows says, because the Daughters of the Revolution and their rival Daughters of the American Revolution joined hands for once and put their minds to it. They spearheaded a con-sortium of societies that at last broke open the Congressional bank. It helped that another 100 skeletons had just been uncovered at the Navy Yard.

New Yorkers are currently restless about all the dithering and delay over the 9/11 memorial after 10 years. They may be chafed to learn that from 1801, when a young Democratic-Republican orator named Jonathan Russell proposed a “Colonial Column” to remember 11,000 “willing martyrs,” to the day President-elect Barack Obama spoke at the unveiling of the spec-tacular Stanford White-designed column, it lasted a lifetime.

Music at War

Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War, by Jonathan Pieslak, studies how popular music has shaped contemporary U.S. military culture. Pieslak, an associate professor of music at the University of Texas at Austin and the Graduate Center, interviewed veterans about the place of music in the Iraq War and American military culture. The book, from Indiana University Press, studies how soldiers hear, share, use, and produce music and studies its role as a popular music campaign and basic training to wartime missions.
Reshaping Research — From
Faculty ideas helped mold the University’s unique Advanced Science Research Center, so

Walking to her office in the morning, Ruth Stark often stops to observe a large construction site on the South Campus of City College. To many passersby, the site is just a yawning pit of earth and rocks. But to Stark, a distinguished professor of chemistry, it represents something much more — a groundbreaking vision for 21st century science to which she has contributed many ideas.

After years of planning, the University’s Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC) has emerged as a bold, much-anticipated initiative that will link scientists in radically innovative ways — mixing disciplines like chemistry and biology, as well as promoting interaction among five exploding interdisciplinary areas, such as nanotechnology. The building itself will provide an unusual design to encourage formal and informal collaboration, with features like an open central stairway connecting research areas on separate floors — literally, a “vertical” integration of the “horizontal” blend of many disciplines. The center also will house a critical core of state-of-the-art facilities never before available at CUNY, including a “clean room” for the fabrication of tiny, sensitive scientific devices. Ultimately, the ASRC reflects an unprecedented University-wide effort to create a facility that not only serves the needs of cutting-edge research today, but envisages the demands and direction of scientific exploration for the next few decades.

By all accounts, the planning process itself stressed a high level of collaboration across the University. Led by Vice Chancellor for Research Gillian Small, a diverse advisory group of faculty, University officials and consultants took on the task of establishing “flagship” areas of scientific research. Stark, along with many of her colleagues from various fields of science, played a major role in refining the vision and design of the center.

“We had a whole series of meetings with people who would be using the building,” says David Salmon, assistant director for CUNY’s department of design, construction and management. “All the players were in the room. A lot of questions were asked of the scientists, in terms of making sure this facility was properly designed to support their work. Gillian was such a force in this effort,” Salmon says.

“We talked about what our strengths should be to build national and international recognition,” Small recalls. “We wanted to take advantage of strengths we already had,” she notes, such as the neurosciences, which already had a network of 55 laboratories throughout CUNY campuses. “But we also wanted to consider what areas were important to the future of the country.”

The areas that emerged were more thematic than discipline-based — nanotechnology, for example, often involves a complex integration of chemistry, physics, biology and engineering. It was also important that these research areas not become “distinct silos,” says Small. The faculty focus groups questioned how could a center be most useful to faculty across the University? How could they encourage ways for scientists to interact? And if they wanted to support these areas, what would CUNY faculty need?

Among those eager to test the clean room is Queens College assistant professor Vinoel Menon, whose specialty is photonics, the science and technology of manipulating light. Menon, who is also a focus group member, says he expects to collaborate with nanoscientists in creating devices with new applications in areas like telecommunications, data processing, biology and medicine. “I see great advantages in bringing people together from different campuses,” he says. “You can get much better ideas than working individually.”

“It’s opening up a new dialogue, mixing the social and physical sciences together,” says Charles Vorosmarti, the newly appointed director of the CUNY Environmental Crossroads Initiative, one of the program areas to be housed at the center. In tackling complex problems, Vorosmarti’s team will mingle interdisciplinary science experts, from environmental chemists to nanotechnologists, with economists and social policy experts, he says. “You put these teams together and they incubate,” he says. “I don’t know what’s going to come out of it — but it’s going to be wonderful.”

The defining principles behind ASRC began germinating several years ago, says Small, when Chancellor Matthew Goldstein “understood that in order to be a great university, we needed great sciences.” And to support all the sciences the University needed a substantial, state-of-the-art science facility.

With about 200,000 square feet, the five-story science center will provide flexible space for laboratories, meeting rooms and offices for 75 professionals, including 20 new faculty members. Each floor will essentially be devoted to one of the five program areas — which, besides nanotechnology and environmental crossroads, include neurosciences, photonics, and structural biology. There will be a rooftop observatory for measuring and analyzing environmental data, electron microscopes and other sophisticated imaging equipment; a high-tech “visualization room”; a 100-seat auditorium for scientific symposia; a public education center where visitors can learn what’s going on at the center, and a café.

“It’s really creating a science park,” says Small.

One of the center’s high-impact facilities will be its clean room, a large, highly controlled, filtered environment located in the basement, which can be used to fabricate tiny “nanostructures” for a host of complex research problems. When completed, this clean room will likely be the only one in New York City with “this level of refinement,” Small says.

Stark envisions working with nanotechnology experts at the ASRC to help advance her research in molecular biophysics at City College. For example, by examining how scientists engineer nanostructures for the delivery of drugs into patients, Stark says she could discover techniques that could help “get a molecular view” of how melanin pigments develop — and under what conditions they become malignant. “A lot of times it’s a matter of making connections, just getting people in a room and asking how they attacked similar research problems,” says Stark, who is also director of the CUNY Institute for Macromolecular Assemblies, which includes faculty across several campuses.

“Nothing really substitutes for face-to-face contact,” Stark says.

Indeed, the science center was designed specifically to promote collaboration while preserving privacy and flexibility for unanticipated changes in research needs, says David Halpern, a senior associate at Flad Architects, a Wisconsin-based firm recognized for its planning and design of high-tech buildings. The center offers an abundance of space conducive to informal collaboration . . .
soon starting construction uptown.

Vorosmarty, the environmental corridors director, has already embraced the collaborative philosophy of the science center — even while housed at his temporary quarters at City College.

“What I’m excited about is moving into that new building where I will have on other floors experts on nanotechnology, photonics, chemistry, structural biochemistry," he says. "I would love to have a dialogue about how their technologies can be brought to bear on some of the big environmental questions. I could walk down the stairs and pose them a challenge of how we could produce miniaturized sensing systems that would allow us to better understand the chemistry and quantities of water distributed in many parts of the developing world."

When completed, the ASRC will be a ‘LEED-certified’ building — meeting high environmental standards set by the U.S. Green Building Council. The center’s design also had to meet a demanding set of requirements for maintaining its high-end equipment and instrumentation, notes Halpern. Such facilities, like the clean end equipment and instrumentation, notes Salmon. (A second advanced science facility, ASRC II is still in the planning stage.)

Mingling the science — and the scientists — among the five research areas "has a lot of potential," says Small, who is also an expert in molecular and cellular biology. "I see it [the center] enabling CUNY scientists to take their work experiences to a different level and form partnerships with other facilities and New York institutions."

Vorosmarty and Stark see the center as nothing less than "an intellectual crossroad" for science in the coming years. Pointing to New York City as one of the world’s great cultural and financial crossroads, Vorosmarty says he plans to bring "this notion of crossroads dialogue" to environmental research at the Advanced Science Research Center.

By their very nature, problems like hunger alleviation and environmental sustainability are questions that cross many disciplinary boundaries, Vorosmarty says, so decisions made in one arena, like the use of agricultural nutrients to grow crops, can no longer be viewed through a narrow local lens. "These questions are not just agronomy issues," he says. "They reverberate in the chemistry of the earth, the hydrology of the earth, its atmosphere and coastal zones," he says. "That’s the kind of dialogue we're trying to catalyze."

Retiring Students’ Advocate Recalls Rewards, Achievements

HAVING SUBSTANTIALLY improved essential services for students, Garrick W. Moore, University vice chancellor for student development, has announced his retirement, effective Sept. 30. Moore and his wife, LaVonne, will pursue "a spiritual calling" — helping North Carolina high school students and dropouts who 'need extra help preparing for the next phase of life,' he said. Before joining the University three years ago, Moore taught in East Carolina University’s School of Allied Health in Greenville, N.C., after serving as its vice chancellor for student life. He holds a doctorate in adult education and served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during the Vietnam War. "Vice Chancellor Moore has garnered the trust and respect of students across the University," said Chancellor Matthew Goldstein. "He has been their strongest advocate, and we are deeply indebted to him."

Moore recently discussed University initiatives for students with the CUNY Channel at http://web.cuny.edu/administration/sa/video.html. Here are edited excerpts:

Q: How does CUNY help returning veterans?
A: CUNY Chancellor: There are 27,000 veterans at CUNY and we expect 10,000 more. We have a veterans’ resource office on every campus where they can meet with counselors, get advice and obtain resources to assist with mental health problems, domestic issues, academics and employment concerns. Veterans who are called back to active duty are encouraged to return when their service is completed, and our distance learning programs let them use laptops to continue course work while in the service.

Q: What is CUNY’s approach to health counseling?
A: We established counseling centers at every campus to address all student health issues, not just mental health, but also wellness. Many students do not have family physicians, so we provide access and referrals and offer reasonably priced health insurance. We developed a medical withdrawal policy so students who are having difficulty coping in or out of the classroom can withdraw from school in order to obtain the help they need and re-enter without penalty.

Q: You believe in leadership training.
A: We're not just educating students in the classroom; we’re educating them to become future leaders. The Leadership Academy engages our students in service learning activities, leadership seminars and national leadership programs. We developed an official cocurricular transcript that documents their cocurricular activities, which they can provide to an employer or graduate school along with their academic transcript.

Q: What does the Office of Student Advocacy and Referral do?
A: It gives students the chance to contact a professional when they are having difficulty coping in or out of the classroom. Advocates can provide to an employer or graduate school along with their academic transcript.

Q: Tell us about the Black Male Initiative, which helps African-American men graduate.
A: The initiative addresses the need to increase the number and success of black males in higher education. But there is a diverse group, including women and men of all races. They are taught leadership skills, coping skills and are provided with counselors and advisers. It's successful and is impacting the entire CUNY community.

Q: What about career services?
A: We have career centers throughout the University where they can receive help with curriculum and career planning from the freshman year onward.

Q: How is CUNY meeting the needs of its students with disabilities?
A: While 8,000 students have self-identified as disabled, there are probably many more. We have a Disability Support Service Office on every campus, and Dr. Chris Rosa, our director of disability support, received a $7 million grant to address the needs of these students.

Q: What is your greatest satisfaction?
A: Meeting and working with people from so many different countries and backgrounds and interacting with talented students who are deeply committed to their education. I’m proud of our accomplishments with health care generally and mental health in particular. I’m also proud of my talented staff and the wonderful administration that is so focused on student success and well-being. There is no other place where you can gain the rewards that come from working at CUNY.
### SEPTEMBER

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- **Monday, September 1st**
  - Queens College: Queens County Folk Fest 23 - 6 p.m. Free
  - Brooklyn College: I Love a Piano 3 - 5 p.m. $25

- **Tuesday, September 2nd**
  - City College Book Talk: Lecture Series: John Matteson, Pulitzer Prize winner 6 - 8 p.m. Free

- **Wednesday, September 3rd**
  - Queens College: Queens County Folk Fest 23 - 6 p.m. Free
  - Brooklyn College: I Love a Piano 3 - 5 p.m. $25

- **Thursday, September 4th**
  - Lehman College: Community College Practical Nurse Pinning & Capping Ceremony 5 - 9 p.m. Free

- **Friday, September 5th**
  - John Jay College: Great Music for a Great City Concert Series: Dvorak and the American Spirit 7:30 p.m. Free

- **Saturday, September 6th**
  - Queens College: Queens County Folk Fest 23 - 6 p.m. Free
  - Brooklyn College: I Love a Piano 3 - 5 p.m. $25

### OCTOBER

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- **Monday, October 1st**
  - Queensborough Community College: Harold and the Purple Crayon 2 - 3 p.m. $6

- **Tuesday, October 2nd**
  - Lehman College: Community College Open House — Informational Session 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. Free

- **Wednesday, October 3rd**
  - Lehman College: Community College Gala and Dinner 6 - 9 p.m. Free

- **Thursday, October 4th**
  - Lehman College: Community College Gala and Dinner 6 - 9 p.m. Free

- **Friday, October 5th**
  - Lehman College: Community College Gala and Dinner 6 - 9 p.m. Free

- **Saturday, October 6th**
  - Lehman College: Community College Gala and Dinner 6 - 9 p.m. Free

### More Events

For more events, visit [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu) and click "For more events."

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