“The experiment is to be tried… whether the children of the people, the children of the whole people, can be educated; and whether an institution of learning, of the highest grade, can be successfully controlled by the popular will, not by the privileged few, but by the privileged many.”

— Founding Principal Horace Webster
The Free Academy

GRANTS & HONORS

Recognizing Faculty Achievement

The University’s renowned faculty members continually win professional achievement awards from prestigious organizations as well as research grants from an array of government agencies, farsighted foundations and leading corporations. The eight professors pictured at left are just a few of the most recent honorees. Brief summaries of many ongoing faculty research projects—which include exploring new ways to improve public health, energy conservation and teaching—start here and continue inside.

Lehman College received a $7.6 million Teacher Quality Partnership grant from the U.S. Department of Education to create a new MATH-UP program initiative to prepare elementary teachers to teach English language learners and students with special needs and to improve the mathematical understanding and performance of all students. Deborah Eldridge, dean of the division of education, will direct it.

Medgar Evers College’s School of Business received a $900,000 grant from the Department of Health and Human Services for the Empowering Youth to Excel and Succeed (EYES) initiative. The program will be managed by John L. Graham, dean of the School of Business, in conjunction with partners from the School of Liberal Arts and Education, the Crown Heights Beacon Youth Center, the Children’s Aid Society Youth Center and Interstate Urban Consortium Inc.

Winning Graduates!

Already nationally recognized as leaders, they’re the University’s...

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION grant winner who develops “intelligent” robots. A Fulbright recipient researching women entrepreneurs in Bahrain. A Jonas Salk Scholar who pursues groundbreaking immunological research. These and other high-achieving winners of prestigious national awards are among the latest crop of CUNY graduates—who this academic year will be awarded an estimated 447 doctorates, 7,734 master’s degrees and more than 18,000 baccalaureates. Many hope to follow the paths of 2010 commencement speakers such as Nobel Laureate Leon Lederman (presiding at his alma mater, City College) and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor (addressing Hostos graduates).

Zoie Blackwood, selected this year for the highly competitive Colin Powell Fellowship in International Diplomacy, will be a State Department intern this summer, working in the Bureau of Public Liaison and Intergovernmental Affairs in Washington.
Public Colleges Must Keep Thriving

You've seen the headlines about California this year. The University of California system saw its state support reduced by nearly 20 percent in 2000. Since 1980, state funding per student for education at UC has dropped from 78 percent of the total cost of education to 58 percent.

But California is not an isolated case. Without the contributions that have come from the federal stimulus package, the total state support for public higher education across the country would have dropped 3.5 percent this year (2009-2010) and 6.8 percent over the last two years.

Of course, there is variation among states. Some, like California, Montana and North Dakota, but also larger states like Texas, showed increases. But 11 states had significant one-year declines of more than 1 percent — even when we include the federal stimulus funds. These include California, Michigan, Ohio, Washington and Virginia. And at home to celebrated public research universities. At UC Berkeley alone, research has led to almost 2,000 inventions, and its alumni have founded 250 companies. The University of Michigan has licensed close to 50 startup companies in just the last five years.

As James Duderstadt, the former president of the University of Michigan, has said about state funding, public universities have gone from being “state-supported” to being “state-assisted,” then “state-related,” and now “state-located.” I would suggest that we are sometimes “state-assaulted.”

Complicating the decline in state support are two factors. One is unprecedented enrollment growth, largely spurred by the country’s recession, and the other is a growing need to prepare more students to a higher skill level.

The recession is largely the cause of the most recent growth. But CUNY’s decade-long increases are the result of our long-term focus on rigorous academic standards and burnishing our academic reputation. With that comes more students, and better-prepared students, who are retained in higher numbers.

At the same time, I hope students across the country are recognizing that they live in a world in which a college education is more important than ever. We’ve all talked about the country’s evolution from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge economy, one in which advanced skills are increasingly necessary. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has pointed out that 30 of the fastest-growing fields require a minimum of a bachelor’s degree. In this economic environment, going to college cannot be a privilege for the fortunate few. We need more highly skilled graduates.

So, our situation is clear. Public higher education must find a way to do more with less. As University of California President Mark Yudof and I — and so many others — continue to say, we cannot simply fill in revenue gaps with tuition. Keeping college accessible is critical to higher education’s core mission. The Morrill Act of 1862, which provided land to states for colleges, codified the importance of accessible public higher education for Americans.

It enabled the development of the University of California, Pennsylvania State University, The Ohio State University, the University of Wisconsin, and so many other stellar public institutions. That is a tradition we cannot abandon.

Public higher education simply can’t compromise on access or on academic quality. So we must be creative and entrepreneurial. Public institutions must take responsibility for ever-escalating and legitimately incurred costs; they cannot ask students and government to foot the bill. Whether through reorganization, an expansion of revenue sources, or improved efficiency and productivity generated by sometimes difficult and unpopular decisions, state universities must step up to the plate. We need to emulate some of the approaches long embodied by private institutions: building endowments, finding entrepreneurial opportunities, monetizing the use of physical assets.

In my view, the decline of support for public higher education, and the stagnation that results from neglect, is nothing less than a national security crisis. Our economic and social well-being, and our scientific and technological leadership, rely on our country’s universities.

Our future will be defined by the public investment we make in higher education and, at the same time, by our institutional ability to innovate and stay nimble. This is a critical moment for public higher education, one that requires new approaches. We simply must not squander the truly remarkable power and potential at our public universities.

This column is adapted from the May 2010 issue of National Crosstalk, a publication of the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education. Visit highereducation.org for the complete report.

A
ticipating a 3 percent enrollment increase this fall, the University is taking new steps — including a waiting list, quicker evaluation and placement, and a new “immersion” initiative for community college applicants in need of remedial coursework — to better manage the surge of students and make CUNY more selective in the process.

With enrollment expected to climb to nearly 267,000 this fall, the University has instituted a waiting list for available seats for the first time in CUNY history. In doing so, said Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, the University “joins the mainstream of highly regarded universities that routinely employ waiting lists in order to manage the available space.”

In past years, late applicants were accepted into the community colleges through the first day of class. But with two-year college enrollment growth by more than 40 percent since 2000, the University is experiencing unprecedented growth while seeking new ways to maintain rigorous academic standards and enhancing its historic mission. Starting in fall 2009, high school guidance counselors and prospective students, especially in the city’s public schools, were advised of a Feb. 1, 2010, application deadline; thereafter admissions to the colleges were to be reviewed on a space-available basis. By late April 2010, the University had received more than 70,000 applications for fall 2010 — more than the number received during the entire fall 2000 application period — and announced that applications received after May 7 would go to a waiting list.

By early summer, more than 2,000 students had submitted their applications after the May 7 deadline. Some wait-listed students will be permitted to enrolled in Fall 2010, according to Alexandra W. Logue, executive vice chancellor and University provost. Late applicants who need to further prepare for college-level work will be able to burnish their skills in CUNY Start, a special immersion program for associate degree students that will be offered during the months preceding their formal enrollment in January 2011.

Chancellor Goldstein, in Board of Trustees committee proceedings that were podcast to the University community, explained the goal of the new initiative. “We want to further the progress of these students and avoid any slowdown of their academic momentum,” he said.

Remedial course work will be offered in mathematics, writing or reading comprehension using the highly successful CUNY Language Immersion Program model. Also known as CLIP, the program offers intensive English as a Second Language immen
dece of Change

In 20 YEARS, the City University of New York’s enrollment surged by nearly one-third, the number of transfer students from outside more than doubled, senior-college students’ SAT scores jumped by more than 200, adult and continuing education registrations soared and successful fundraising became a CUNY fact of life, with $1.7 billion in cash and pledges raised over the last decade.

These figures comparing fall of 1989, 1999 and 2009, issued by CUNY’s Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, illuminate significant upward trends in seven key measures of the University’s quality, attractiveness to students and financial stability. In most of the categories, the sharpest increases came during the last decade, as CUNY raised its profile as a high-value institution with raised academic standards, accomplished faculty and a
Reflects Surging Enrollment, Scores

dynamic, more efficient administration. Total headcount enrollment, 195,615 in 1989 and 194,994 in 1999, increased to 259,515 in fall 2009, a nearly 33 percent jump over the two-decade period.

The number of first-time freshmen entering CUNY colleges was 28,445 in 1989 and had jumped to 24,174 ten years later; the figures show. But from 1999 to 2009, the number of first-time freshmen soared by more than 50 percent, to 37,405.

Total transfers into CUNY schools from outside the University more than doubled over the 20-year period, from 1989’s 5,326, to 7,036 in 1999, to 2009’s 11,154. Registrations in adult and continuing education classes have surged since 1989, with the largest increase taking place over the last decade. In 1989 there were 109,180 such registrations; in 1999, 161,645 and in 2009, 275,563.

Mean SAT scores of students entering five senior colleges — Baruch, Brooklyn, City, Hunter and Queens Colleges — showed marked improvement: The mean total SAT score was 907 in 1989, 1008 in 1999 and 1109 in fall of 2009.

The number of full-time faculty members dropped from 6,645 in 1969 to 5,594 in fall of 1999, but over the next decade rose significantly, to 7,186.

One of the most striking reflections of the changed CUNY is in the University’s deliberate embrace of fundraising. Fundraising figures for 1989 were unavailable. But in fiscal year 1999, $42.4 million was raised by the University. Ten years later, in fiscal year 2009, the figure was $322 million. The University raised $344 million in cash and pledges for the 10-year period from 1992 to 2001, and $1.7 billion in cash and pledges for the 10 years from 2001 to 2010.

More Than 200 Macaulay Honors College students, Class of 2010, march to Lincoln Center for convocation.

Path for New Applicants

created a waiting list and installed new evaluation programs.

ed on the John Jay College campus on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, would receive $9 million under the proposed 2010-2011 City Executive Budget for lease and faculty costs; significant private support is expected soon, according to the Chancellor. A search for the new college’s founding president is under way.

For academic year 2009-2010, CUNY students received about $950 million in total aid — grants, loans and work-study — from federal, state, city and institutional sources. That included an estimated $472.1 million in federal Pell grants and $185 million in New York State Tuition Assistance Program funds, all earmarked for the lowest-income students and continuing to make a CUNY education remarkably accessible. Pell aid has nearly doubled for CUNY students since 2006-2007.

To meet the needs of its burgeoning enrollment with quality academics and to continue to attract accomplished faculty and high achieving students, the University has been upgrading and expanding campus facilities — about half of them science-related — across the city. CUNY has 11 major projects — about 1.8 square million feet of space expected to open by 2013 — including the Advanced Science Research Center on the City College campus; the Hunter College School of Social Work building in Harlem; and a new classroom building at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn. The University is likely to spend about $420 million on capital projects in 2011, down from $600 million this year, and some $2 billion worth of construction is in the pipeline and $1.2 billion in planning stages.

Though some planned construction may be delayed due to city and state budgetary constraints, the University’s public projects are bolstering the economy, providing work to a local construction industry hard hit by a sharp drop in private projects. CUNY projects are also benefiting from a 10 percent to 20 percent drop in construction costs.

Continued from page 1

Two CUNY faculty have won Fulbright awards. Marie C. Razon, a counselor in the City College SEEK program, has received a Fulbright to the African Regional Research Program. She will conduct research in Dakar on “Women Helping Women: Understanding the Role of Empowerment in Women Self Help Groups in Senegal.” Queens College Distiguished Professor Fred Gardaphe has been awarded a Fulbright to teach American cultural studies to students at the University of Salerno in Italy. Gardaphe, a scholar of English literature and Italian-American culture, will teach courses on how American humor in film, short stories and stand-up comedy reflects the nation and its people.

Dean of Academic Affairs Paul Arcario of LaGuardia Community College has received $1,289,684 from Vaughn College for “Mechatronics/ Engineering.” He also received grants totaling $978,514 and $374,895, respectively, from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education (Title V) for “Project Promesa” and “Project Rise: Re-Inventing Second-Year Education.”

The Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University/RH has awarded two grants to Hunter College for support of a “Clinical & Translational Science Center”:

- $606,645 to Robert Dutlin, and $300,000 to Kristine Gebbie.

Brooklyn College has received a $377,270 grant from the NYS Department of Education for “Workforce Investment Act,” directed by Framie Rosenson. The NYS Department of Education also has awarded $159,932 to Gail Simmons and Debra Evans-Greene of the College of Staten Island for “A Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program.”

Three widely published University faculty have won 2010 Guggenheim Fellowships. They are Colum McCann, Distinguished Lecturer in the Hunter College MFA program, who won the 2003 National Book Award for his novel; Let the Great World Spin; Joshua Brown, executive director of the American Social History Project /Center for Media and Learning at the Graduate Center, who also holds two teaching positions; and Gina Hahn, a Distinguished Professor in the English Department.

Department of Juvenile Justice grant of $9,660 to Dr. Jane Katz, Professor of Health and Physical Education at John Jay College of Criminal Justice supports the KARE Swim Program for Youth in Group Homes.

City College has received $4,044,335 from the NYC Department of Environmental Protection for “Process Performance and Optimization (R&D) Projects for BNR Upgrades at the Water Pollution Control Plants,” under the direction of professor John Fillos, chair of civil engineering.

Hunter College has received $1,150,000 from the Health & Human Services Administration for Children and Families for a “National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections: A Service of the HHS/HHS/
GRANTS & HONORS

Continued from page 3

Children’s Bureau,” under the direction of Gary Mahon.

A grant of $640,000 has been awarded to Nancy Jacobs of John Jay College from the NYC Department of Juvenile Justice for a “Collaborative Family Initiative.”

Catherine Alicia Georges, associate professor and chair of nursing at Lehman College, received a grant of $154,150 from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for “Nursing Skills Upgrade Training.”

A research project on “Protein Kinase C Substrates in Human Breast Cancer,” directed by Susan A. Rotenberg of Queens College, has received grant support totaling $232,500 from the National Institutes of Health.

The NYC Department of Youth and Community Development awarded a $101,250 grant to assistant professor David Fletcher of Lehman College for the “Lehman College 9th Grade Transitions Program.”

Ervand Abrahamian, Distinguished Professor of History at Baruch College, has been elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a prestigious center for independent policy research. Established in 1780 by John Adams and other Founding “thinkers and doers” from each generation, the Academy has awarded him the honorary degree of Distinguished Fellow.

Associate professor Gerard McNeil, chair of biology at York College, has received a $472,895 grant from the National Institutes of Health for “Workforce Investment Act” and $153,848 from the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene for “Creative Exchange.”

Associate professor Hugo J. Kijne of the College of Staten Island has received a $2,006,172 grant from the National Institutes of Health/HealthCare for Disease Control for a project entitled “WTC Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program” led by Steven Markowitz.

The college’s research laboratories have produced a variety of important findings, including George Washington and Benjamin Franklin in the 18th century, Daniel Webster and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the 19th, and Albert Einstein and Winston Churchill in the 20th.

Queens College received $2,006,172 from the National Institutes of Health/Center for Disease Control for a project entitled “NYC Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program” led by Steven Markowitz.

Hugo J. Kijne of the College of Staten Island has received two grants from the National Institutes of Health for “Characterization of RNA Targets for the Drosophila Protein Lark during Oogenesis.”

The U.S. Department of Transportation has awarded a $2,006,172 grant to Camille Kanga of City College, associate director, administration, of the CUNY Institute for Urban Systems, for the “University Transportation Research Center.”

Queens College recently received a $232,500 grant from the National Institutes of Health for “Combined Cognitive Remediation and Behavioral Intervention for Treatment of ADHD”; and $184,213 from the National Institutes of Health/Center for Disease Control for a project entitled “Enhancing Fathers’ Ability to Support Their Preschool Child.” Beth grants are under the direction of Ani Chacko.

The NYS Health Foundation has awarded $232,500 to Lehman College for a “Building on an Iconic Past

Building on an Iconic Past

ONE DAY late last summer, Fran Leadon and two dozen architecture students gathered outside a three-story brick townhouse in Manhattan’s West Village, cameras hanging from their necks. They began snapping pictures of the exterior of the 210-year-old building with a “for sale” sign in its ground-level storefront window. The awning of the townhouse — at 555 Hudson St. — bore the name of its most recently departed occupant, City Cricket.

“A restaurant, I think,” Leadon said.

It was actually a children’s clothing boutique, but Leadon could be forgiven. The building, after all, was the last of more than 6,000 he and his City College architecture students had photographed over the course of a year. The occasion called for a round of doughnuts at a nearby bakery. But the real celebration came in June, when Oxford University Press published the fruits of their labors: the fifth edition of the iconic AIA Guide to New York City — a collaboration with the equally iconic Norval White, co-creator of the AIA Guide to New York City — and the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture.

White and colleague Elliot Willenksy originally published the AIA Guide for fellow architects — 416 pages of photographs and snappy commentary for those attending the American Institute of Architects’ national convention in New York in 1967. A trade version was published a year later and subsequent revised editions appeared in 1978, 1988 and 2000, by which time the guide had grown to 1,056 pages.

White produced the 2000 edition solo after Willenksy’s death in 1990. But when the time came for a fifth edition, an update made necessary in good part because of the many changes in the city’s architecture in the years since 9/11, White needed a partner. He was past 80 and living in France. Stephanie Smith, a friend and former colleague at City College, recommended Leadon, a young assistant professor who happened to be a talented writer looking for a book project. Leadon leaped at the chance.

“When I came here, all the older, tenured faculty had been his students,” Leadon says. “So to be the young, untrained assistant professor and work with Norval — it was a dream come true.”

White grew up in Manhattan, lived for decades in Brooklyn Heights and was a teacher, writer, passionate preservationist and devoted father of the buildings himself. But his buildings and his project became a long-distance collaboration. The two met face-to-face only three times. Leadon visited White and his wife, Camilla, at their villa in France twice; White came to New York for four weeks in January 2009. “Mostly we worked on Skype,” Leadon says.

Leadon gently advocated for more attention to the architecture of lesser-known neighborhoods in the outer boroughs and a return to the bodegas and community gardens that were lost to make way for the modernist building boom. “The guide has always had striking examples of either really good buildings or really bad buildings,” Leadon says. “To damn with faint praise was his method, and I kind of got into that.” It was really White’s guide, Leadon thought; indeed, he ultimately chose an author credit that is nothing if not deferential: “Norval White & Elliot Willenksy with Fran Leadon.”

One thing White insisted was every building in previous editions be visited before it was included in the new one — to verify that it was still there. (Likewise, a church couldn’t be listed as a church if it had become a nightclub.)

To help accomplish his daunting mission, Leadon enlisted about two dozen of his students, each of whom would get a list of 20 or so buildings a week to photograph, catalog and write about. The result is a new edition of the guide that is kind of a throwback to White and Willenksy’s original, which had a more personal, diary-like tone than later editions. “When they were younger, you could tell it was written from the street, walking around together … It was very fresh. I brought that back, putting in descriptions of movie theaters, places to get good cheap Italian food.”

Although Leadon considered the guide the true domain of White and Willenksy, he wound up taking on an unexpected authority. In December, barely a week after they finished the first draft of the fifth edition, White died of a heart attack. “After that, I really had to make a lot of decisions,” Leadon says. He spent the next few months refining tone and content: the delicate mix of the new, the old — and the missing.

“I tried to balance all the new buildings since 2000 with discussions of what they replaced — the bodegas and community gardens that were lost to make way for the modernist building boom,” Leadon says.

Still, though Leadon took three-quarters of the new edition’s photographs and wrote much of the guide’s text, he is quick to credit White and Willenksy, whose words still echo throughout the book.

“I’m fine with being credited as ‘with Fran Leadon’ for this edition,” he says. “At first, people buying the new guide won’t know who I am, but I think they’ll get to know me as they read it.”
CSI New Master Plan Is a Group Effort

THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND, the city’s largest college campus, has a new master plan calling for an estimated $257 million in building projects including a new Interdisciplinary High Performance Computational Center, library expansion, new housing, mixed-use research and academic buildings and other enhancements. The plan, approved by the Board of Trustees April 20, is the first major CSI revision in more than 20 years, designed to address anticipated growth over the next decade. Led by New York architectural and urban design firm Cooper, Robertson & Partners, it was developed during a three-year process involving University facilities planning offices as well as CSI faculty, students and staff. The campus — comprising 204 acres, 25 buildings, athletic fields, a tennis structure and park-like open space — serves nearly 14,000 degree students, a number expected to rise to 18,000 by 2019.

University Newsmagazine, TV series Win Awards

C UNY Matters, the University’s newsmagazine, and two CUNY-developed television series — “Nueva York” and “We Are New York” — garnered prestigious awards in May recognizing their outstanding quality. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) awarded CUNY Matters a Silver 2010 Circle of Excellence Award in its Print Internal Audience Tabloids and Newsletters category. CASE is an international professional association serving educational institutions and their communications, marketing and development professionals. “We Are New York” and CUNY TV’s “Nueva York” each won two 2010 Emmy Awards, which were presented by the New York Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences at the 53rd Annual New York Emmy Awards.

Citizenship Now! Does it Again

T HE CUNY-New York Daily News Citizenship Now! weeklong call-in did it again in April, fielding more than 14,000 calls from people with immigration questions and helping 377 of them resolve their immigration status. For the seventh year, CUNY teamed up with the Daily News to provide thousands of New Yorkers and other callers with expert immigration advice. The University’s Citizenship Now! Project, which has carved out a unique role providing immigration information and legal services to New Yorkers and others year-round, provided 422 trained volunteers — including 154 from CUNY — speaking 48 languages from Creole to Urdu, to staff the phones at the News’ West 33rd Street headquarters.

Many city and state leaders, including Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, U.S. Sens. Charles Schumer and Al Franken, and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, stopped by during the call-in to discuss and support the project. The popular immigration hotline has fielded calls from more than 84,000 people since its inception seven years ago. As in past years, the phones rang non-stop with callers seeking explanations, technical information and guidance about visa rules, green cards, procedures and other matters.

Among them was a caller from Ireland who had a green card but had been out of the United States for three years, which is considered abandonment of permanent resident status. Based on the fact that his mail had been received by his daughter, a U.S. citizen, lawyer Allan Wornick, the Baruch College professor who directs Citizenship Now!, advised him to apply for a Special Immigrant Returning Resident Visa, and to contact CUNY Immigration center at Medgar Evers College for further help.

Lehman College Launches All-Digital Multimedia Center

L EHMAN COLLEGE’s $16 million Multimedia Center — which will provide a new home for New York City filmmakers, digital artists, producers and musicians — is officially open for business.

“Inside these facilities, our borough’s future journalists, audiovisual creators and digital-media producers will develop the skills required to become leaders in these fields,” said Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. during the center’s dedication ceremony last month.

Among the features of the state-of-the-art center: an all-digital newsroom where students will produce an online, Bronx-focused newspaper; an eight-room editing suite for sound, graphic and audio productions; graphic workstations and classrooms for Lehman’s digital-art program; and a music recording control room with a multi-track Euphonics digital soundboard and separate isolation booth for overdubbing.

In the fall, Emmy award-winning composer Michael Bacon, who has scored dozens of film and television productions, will join the faculty to teach film composition in a specially designed classroom. Courses are already offered in television production, newswriting and digital animation.

The center is located on two floors in the college’s main classroom building. All-digital and tapeless, the 22,000-square-foot facility was designed by FXFOWLE Architects. A broadcasting studio occupies the largest part of the space.
City College’s baseball team used to play its home games on a field in East River Park. And at the College of Staten Island. And out at SUNY Farmingdale on Long Island. And sometimes even in New Jersey. “Any place we could find a field,” says coach Dave Yorke. Don’t even ask about practice fields. The college’s baseball team was like virtually all the outdoor athletic teams at the University’s urban campuses: a team of nomads. Some would travel for hours to play on a decent field, only to be kicked off — by a high school team. But that’s all changed in the last couple of years. Both City College and Baruch College now play all their home baseball games in an actual stadium, albeit a small one: MCU Park on Coney Island, the former Keyspan Park, home of the Brooklyn Cyclones, a Mets’ minor-league team whose schedule doesn’t begin until after the college season ends. The seaside stadium, with all the amenities of a congested Manhattan, no longer have to do without — or constantly because they didn’t have a permit ... the public high schools had priority for the best fields.”

Ivkovic knows from personal experience. He played soccer at Hunter in the 1980s and recalled that the team would jog up to 125th Street, cross the bridge and practice on Wards Island. Teams would often settle upon “a patch of grass somewhere and get chased off constantly because they didn’t have a permit ... the public high schools had priority for the best fields.” Not much changed over the next two decades. While some teams soldiered on, often traveling hours to bleak fields for love of the game, a few colleges were forced to disband programs altogether. One bright exception was tennis and the National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in Queens which became home court a decade ago for Baruch, Hunter and John Jay Colleges as well as the site for CUNYAC men’s and women’s championships. In the years since he became head of the conference in 2004, Ivkovic began investigating better venues for softball and track as well as baseball and soccer. He engaged the presidents of the colleges most affected, and together they went to Allan Dobrin, executive vice chancellor and chief operating officer, a Queens College graduate and amateur boxer in his youth. Dobrin and his deputy for management services, Burton Sacks, initiated discussions with the proprietors of major facilities around the city — including MCU Park, the Randall’s Island Sports Foundation fields and its centerpiece, Icahn Stadium, and the Armory Track and Field Center.

“Manhattan is very limited, so we looked at Randall’s Island, Roosevelt Island, the Armory,” said Dobrin. “We came up with a lot of options and leveraged the power of the integrated university. We said, ‘We’ll bring you five schools,’ and worked out very nice reduced rates.” “They opened a lot of doors,” Ivkovic says of Dobrin and Sacks. For instance, MCU — New York’s Municipal Credit Union — became a sponsor of CUNY baseball, while the stadium that now bears its name was made available by the Mets for $600 a game, a very reasonable rate considering the costs of maintaining the field and

Sharing the Wealth

**1. The Armory Track and Field Center**

**2. East River Park**

**3. MCU Park (formerly Keyspan Park)**

**4. Aviator Sports and Events Center**

**5. Metropolitan Oval, Maspeth**

**6. National Tennis Center at Flushing Meadows**

**7. Randall’s Island Icahn Stadium, Randall’s Island Sports Foundation Fields**
The upgrade in facilities has done more than improve conditions for current athletes. “It helps recruitment, it helps retention and increases the visibility of the conference,” Ivkovic says. “It costs about $15,000 per school to use MCU, the National Tennis Center and the Met Oval and solve all your problems. You can talk to people around the country and they say, ‘You play at the National Tennis Center?’ ”

“That’s a small investment for what we’re getting,” agrees Dan Palumbo, athletic director and head baseball coach at John Jay College. “We’re the only city athletic conference in the United States, and over the last few years we’ve made this conference a viable place for kids to come. What we’re giving the kids is credibility.”
Baruch College — $500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for a study entitled “GENIES: Gender Differences,” under the direction of Amanda Dood.

City College has received $214,109 from the University of California/Davis for “Colloquial Interactive Multimedia Computer Programs (IMCP),” under the direction of Nancy Solier of the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education.

John Jay College has received a $281,652 grant from the National Institute of Justice for a project under the direction of Cynthia Mercado entitled “Identifying Situational and Individual Risk Factors for Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings.”

Jay Mancini of Kingsborough Community College has received a $599,935 grant from the National Science Foundation for a project entitled “Community College Students Paving Future Careers in Biotechnology.”

Barbara Ann Naddeo, associate professor of history at City College, is a winner of the 114th Rome Prize of The American Academy in Rome. She received the award in the 114th Rome Prize of The American Academy in Rome. The Rome Prize honors prominent and emerging scholars in the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

Nancy Sohler for “Colorectal Interactive Multimedia Computer System” directed by Joshua Freilich.

Open City and the Social Sciences of Naples, has received a $311,055 grant from the National Science Foundation for “Community College Students Paving Future Careers in Biotechnology.”

The Cognitive Neuroscience of Visual Awareness,” a City College research project under the direction of professor Tony Ro, has received grant support totaling $176,567 from the National Science Foundation.

Hunter College Creative Writing MFA Program director and senior poet Tom Steigh has received a fellowship from the American Academy in Berlin. The fellowships are

For Top Players, Mets Count on Him

Growing up in Massachusetts, Benjamin Baumer, a boy with “a pretty strong feel for quantitative stuff,” collected baseball cards. He still watches ball players by the numbers.

As baseball season swings into summer, the data analyst and Hunter College statistics instructor speaks much of his time confer- ring with New York Mets General Manager Omar Minaya and his management team, analyzing and evaluating players.

“I try to verify independently what people are seeing — what appears to be true,” says Baumer, the team’s full-time statistician.

Baumer — a teacher of elementary statistics and probability whose interests include graph theory, combinatorics (the study of counting), discrete geometry and graph algorithms — is a player in an emerging field that uses statistical methods to give a fuller picture of ball players’ skills and performance.

“It’s actually two jobs,” he says of his Mets position. First, he serves as an analyst and advisor on player evaluation. His second job involves building a website, as well as a database of player statistics from feeds he gets from major league baseball sources and proprietary database providers.

Baumer, who grew up in Northampton, Mass. — amid Red Sox Nation — played ball in high school, as an infielder and pitcher.

He majored in economics at Wesleyan, then earned a master’s degree in applied math from the University of California, San Diego. In 2003, that summer, with the release of Moneyball, the best-selling book by Michael Lewis, the baseball establishment was turned on its head by statistics.

The book chronicled the unconventional approach of Oakland A’s general manager Billy Beane, who touted advanced statistical analyses of player performances over the collective (but often subjective) wisdom of managers, coaches and scouts.

Beane’s strategy was to identify and scoop up undervalued players in order to compete with high-market clubs with more financial resources. Such tactics came to exemplify a burgeoning movement in base- ball, known as the “sabermetrics,” which attempted to create more objective mea- sures of a player’s ability to help his team win, giving rise to a new generation of sta- tistical acronyms like WHIP (walks plus hits per inning pitched).

When Baumer returned home to Massachusetts, a sports economist introduced him to the Mets general manager and in 2004 he was hired as the team’s statistician.

A year later, he entered the Ph.D. program in mathematics at the CUNY Graduate Center. At last year’s CUNY Statistics Seminar, Baumer presented a research paper that analyzed several sophis- ticated methods being proposed by researchers to evaluate players’ sometimes- elusive defensive skills.

Traditionally, a player’s defensive ability has been cal- culated by fielding percentage — the number of assists and putouts a player records, divided by the total chances a player had to make these plays. But this only tells you how players handled the balls they were able to put a glove on; it gives little credit to a fielder who can run down a ball that is out of range for most players.

Baumer examined two basic mathematic- al models — “discrete” and “continuous” — being developed by researchers to better assess fielding ability. The discrete model divides the field into zones and calculates the probability that an average player will catch balls hit in a particular zone, compared to how a player actually played. The contin- uous model, however, treats the field as a continuous playing surface. Using existing data that describe all the balls a player has fielded, the model then calculates the probability that a player would catch other balls across a con- tinuous plane. While all these methods work to varying degrees, the metrics still credit players in different ways, so statisticians have not agreed on any “gold standard” yet.

Baumer has now teamed up with another CUNY researcher, Dana Draghicescu of Hunter College’s Department of Mathematics and Statistics, to develop better statistical models to assess batters’ skills.

Draghicescu, who grew up in Romania, earned a Ph.D. at the Federal Institute of Technology in Switzerland and then did a postdoctoral stint at the University of Chicago. Although she was trained as a theo- retical statistician, she was interested in adapting her methodology to real-world applications, such as environmental and medical research. When she met Baumer, she says she knew little about baseball, but she didn’t know one thing: Her expertise in analyzing and predicting environmental data, like precipitation patterns, through space, could also be useful in mapping “hot zones” — the areas in or around the strike zone in which baseball batters are likely to hit the ball.

Draghicescu and Baumer recently dis- cussed some of their hot-zone mapping tech- niques at the CUNY Statistics Seminar and in August will present a joint paper on their research at a major conference in Vancouver.

While predicting outcomes in sporting events is always tricky, Baumer points out that baseball is “a very good game to do this kind of analysis.” Not only are there hundreds of statistics, but given the rules and structure of the game, “data sets” are easier to assign to specific players than in some other sports. Nevertheless, “plenty of teams are drifting in that direction [of statistical analysis],” Baumer says. “You’re seeing it a lot more in basketball, football and hockey.”

If there’s one thing that’s certain, says Draghicescu, it’s that Baumer will leave his mark as a statistician on America’s pastime. “I predict that he will become an expert in this area,” she says.
The Bard Scores on Broadway

By Gary Schmidgall

Shakespeare’s Cleopatra calls music “the bawdy food of us that trade in love.” Broadway is famous for trading in love and that moody food, and creators of Broadway musicals have, not surprisingly, naturally turned for inspiration to the Bard, whose plays feast on the subject of love. The word occurs nearly 2,000 times in his plays.

Broadway’s affinity for Shakespeare is richly explored by Irene Dash in her new study, Shakespeare and the American Musical (Indiana University Press), which focuses on five musicals based on his plays that premiered between 1938 and 1971.

By the end, she has made a convincing case for seeing Bard-inspired works as vital in the development of the 20th century’s “organic” or integrated musical. The book explains how music, dance, and multimedia drove the plot. It is no coincidence that Dash—who taught at Hunter College for 30 years and is now emerita—is particularly attuned to how Shakespeare’s female characters fare on Broadway. Her previous books are Women’s Worlds in Shakespeare’s Plays and Woosting, Wedding, and Woman in Shakespeare’s Plays.

Served up first is “The Boys from Syracuse,” an adaptation of Shakespeare’s shortest and zaniest play, “The Comedy of Errors” (identical-twin suitors with identical-twin servants). Composer Richard Rodgers and lyricist Lorenz Hart brought in the legendary George Abbott to write the book. It was Abbott who enticed George Balanchine to create dances for the show, notably the first of several memorable “dream” ballets on Broadway. His credit as “choreographer” was a Broadway first.

Dash is quick to admit that the “complexity and intensity” of Shakespeare’s probing of society’s ideas about women’s rights and the relationship of husband and wife don’t survive in the musical, though she admires how the famous song “Falling in Love with Love” probes the blinding effects of love—a theme Shakespeare would return to often. But Dash is most impressed when the “Boys” team replaced Shakespeare’s “insight” into a spurned wife with “Sing for Your Supper,” a “sexist song” advising tolerance “was all the more resonant. When瞿, with his team, nestled this play in the era of the Kent State murders, the Kent State papers, antiracist activism, and Roe v. Wade (one of the heroine’s gets pregnant and a debate ensues). Ming Cho Lee came up with a superb three-tiered scaffold set, and Raul Julia’s Proteus proved the breakout role of his career. Dash notes how Papp’s famously aggressive minimalist casting aided the production, which toured open-air venues in all the outer boroughs. She also observes how successfully the musical employs the ballet style of rock songs.

With all five musicals, Dash is able to find the nubs of genuine sympathy for the genre, “Hair,” took it from there. Thus it’s hard to complain about how Papp’s team managed this play in the era of the Kent State murders, the Kent State papers, antiracist activism, and Roe v. Wade (one of the heroine’s gets pregnant and a debate ensues). Ming Cho Lee came up with a superb three-tiered scaffold set, and Raul Julia’s Proteus proved the breakout role of his career. Dash notes how Papp’s famously aggressive minimalist casting aided the production, which toured open-air venues in all the outer boroughs. She also observes how successfully the musical employs the ballet style of rock songs.

With all five musicals, Dash is able to find the nubs of genuine sympathy for the musical’s tragic hero. When Dod in the musical tells the gang, “You make this world lousy!” a gang member responds, “That’s the way we found it.”

Dash says the creators’ vivid focus on more earnest matters: the antiwar activism, and Roe v. Wade (one of the heroine’s gets pregnant and a debate ensues). Ming Cho Lee came up with a superb three-tiered scaffold set, and Raul Julia’s Proteus proved the breakout role of his career. Dash notes how Papp’s famously aggressive minimalist casting aided the production, which toured open-air venues in all the outer boroughs. She also observes how successfully the musical employs the ballet style of rock songs.

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Continued from page 1

Offered to outstanding Baruch College students who survive a rigorous selection process, the fellowship is the latest addition to an already impressive resume accumulated by Blackwood, 22, who immigrated to the U.S. from Jamaica with her family when she was a child.

She will graduate in the fall with a B.A. in political science.

“I wanted to be part of the solution to the issues we see in the nation and the world,” she said.

“I want to have a career where I’m not just making money but also making a difference.” One possibility for her might be a United States embassy, “an ambassador,” or an executive director of a nonprofit organization, she said.

In the 2008 spring semester, she interned with the legislative staff of Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-NY) under the CUNY-sponsored Edward T. Rogowsky Internship Program in Government and Public Affairs. In 2009, she participated in the Charles B. Rangel (D-NY) summer internship program at Howard University.

Having an avid interest in working overseas, Blackwood obtained an internship in 2007 through AISEC, an international exchange program with a chapter at Baruch. Trained with a student from the Netherlands, she spent that summer with a nonprofit organization in Jaipur, India, that developed schools and irrigation projects.

Igor Labutov says that the first “Terminator” movie changed his life. “I was 4 or 5 the first time I watched it back in Russia [his family emigrated when he was 12], and I was rewinding the videotape over and over again,” recalls Labutov (B.E. 2010, Macaulay Honors College at City College). “Every day I thought, ‘If I had just one more part I could build the thing,’ but I didn’t know how to do it.”

Now he creates functional practical devices. As a freshman at the Center for Perceptual Robotics, Intelligent Sensors and Machines at CCNY’s Grove School of Engineering, he studied with associate professor of electrical engineering Jihong Yu to design a wearable glove that would remotely control a robotic hand Xiaoli lab had previously developed.

With a National Science Foundation STEP grant and the help of CCNY professor Norman Scheinberg, during his sophomore year Labutov developed a better design using fiber-optic sensors, and won the award for best student paper at a 2007 international engineering conference.

He then teamed up with Distinguished Professor Theodore Raphan of the Brooklyn College Department of Computer and Information Science. While researching how motion, visual perception and balance play out in Parkinson’s disease, Raphan wanted to test his neurological model with a two-footed robot that mimicked human movement. He asked Labutov to figure out how to replicate the involuntary eye movements that stabilize images as the head and body move. Labutov’s bridge between the languages of anatomy and electrical circuits lay in the research of Swiss roboticist Auke Ijspeert, with whom he will study this summer under a ThinkSwiss Research Scholarship.

Over two years, he developed a robotic vestibular system — like the inner ear, which maintains balance. Meanwhile, Labutov was part of the CCNY Robotics Club and led a team that helped CCNY leap from 222nd place in the 2008 Intelligent Ground Vehicle Competition to fourth place in 2009 by improving the vehicle’s vision system.

That experience, and his father’s death in the 2010 earthquake, said Boursiquot, who spoke only French five years ago when she moved here with her mother and a younger sister. This fall, she will enter Queens College.

Taking risks doesn’t always pay off. But it has for Andrea Balbas. Balbas, a geology major and spring graduate of Queens College, won a National Science Foundation fellowship for her challenging graduate research proposal on testing volcanic eruption sequences.

“I’ve always been passionate about unanswered scientific records,” said Balbas, who will be heading to Oregon State University to pursue a Ph.D. She wants to track the sun’s behavior by using the terrestrial rock record on Earth. “My hope is that understanding the cycles of the sun will help us understand how or if the solar variability affects global climate,” she said.

She has studied sediment samples from the rise of Long Island Sound, which led to a fellowship from Minorities Striving and Pursuing Higher Degrees that included attendance at the Independent Ocean Drilling Program in Busan, South Korea. In 2008, she joined Queens College geology professor Stephen Pekar on a National Science Foundation-funded two-month expedition to Antarctica.

Previously, Balbas participated in a NASA Academy at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., where she assisted with a group project and conducted her own research on physical processes in the solar system and the universe that have influenced the Earth’s biosphere and may do so in the future. For her work, she was awarded the John Mather Nobel

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In the fall, Labutov heads into a doctoral program at Cornell University with a $30,000 NSF graduate research fellowship. His work will again focus on autonomous driving. “Now cars are isolated from their environment, and drivers can only communicate with turn signals,” he said.

“Accidents happen because people don’t know what others are doing or are distracted, such as by texting. But you’ll have no distractions if you aren’t doing the driving, with an intelligent transportation system figuring out the best traffic flows and performance.”

If gasping for air and the tightness in my chest didn’t wake me, the incessant drone of a taxihorn pump never failed to do the trick,” Maurice Selby (City College, B.A., 2010), wrote about his asthma. While those early mornings were some of the most fearful and challenging times of his life, he says, “I never wish to forget them.”

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Graduates!

Scholarship by The Henry Foundation Inc.

“The work I did at NASA is more similar to the work I’m going to do at Oregon State,” said Balbas, who has the option of going back to NASA each summer. Balbas, whose ancestors are from Mexico and Spain, also won a Ford Fellowship from the Ford Foundation, which “seeks to increase the diversity of the nation’s college and university faculties.”

Lauren Vriens always knew generally what she wanted to do when she grew up. “I was a little bit of a political science nerd,” said Vriens, a Manhattan native who’s graduating from Macaulay Honors College at Hunter College this semester with a B.S. in political science.

After the 2001 terrorist attacks, Vriens, just 13 at the time, became especially interested in the Middle East and its relations with the United States. “Everyone was telling me that this culture is so anti-Semitic to ours and I’ve since learned that it isn’t,” she said.

Now 22, Vriens received a Fulbright grant to do research for 10 months beginning in September in Bahrain. She will study how the development of Bahrain affects youth and women entrepreneurs within the country. She also received a Critical Language Award and will spend this summer in Cairo, Egypt, taking advanced Arabic classes.

Last summer, Vriens interned in the public affairs office at the U.S. State Department’s Embassy in Bahrain, assisting with high-level events and creating a guide for undergraduate study in the U.S. in Arabic and English. This time she plans to develop a mentor program for high school students.

Most people she socialized with there, she said, “are not in favor of U.S. policies in Iraq and Afghanistan, but they like Obama and they hope he will change that. They are in awe that a black man can become a President in the U.S. Their society is stagnant in terms of social classes.”

After completing her Fulbright, Vriens plans to get a dual master’s degree in international affairs and business administration. She hopes to work in the field of economic development in the Middle East.

From her childhood on an Iowa farm, Heidi Etline knew that how people grow, buy and consume food is a worldwide issue.

In August, two months after receiving a Hunter College master’s in urban planning, she heads to India on a Fulbright fellowship to research the food system there. “The goal is to help empower the residents to make some changes,” she said.

After getting her undergraduate degree in social work at the University of Iowa, Etline eventually became lead project manager of a program that connected excess local farm produce to community food programs working with struggling regional farmers.

In 2009, she began interning at City Council Speaker Christine Quinn’s Policy Division, working on food-policy issues. At the moment, there’s one major thing left to tackle. “I’m learning Hindi,” said Etline.
SUMMER IN THE CITY

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

SUMMER SKIES

For more events, visit www.cuny.edu and click 'events'.

Details of calendar events can change without notice, so always call in advance.