The University plans proactive steps to manage financial strains and maintain hard-fought academic gains.

**Critical Challenges Ahead**

**MILLLIONS OF DOLLARS in state budget cuts, reductions in state Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) awards and a murky economy pose critical challenges to the University this fall as rising enrollments continue to set records and a revitalized CUNY soars as an attractive higher education destination for students.**

With the state budget enacted for Fiscal Year (FY)2011, the University has sustained up to $205 million in cuts since FY2009, forcing budget tightening across the campuses and further straining resources needed to match enrollments that are rising again this year.

As per Gov. David Paterson’s vetoes of all legislative restorations, all TAP awards are reduced by $75; TAP will no longer be available to graduate students. Effective Spring 2011, students will have to accumulate credits at a faster pace in order to remain eligible. CUNY officials worked with the New York State Education Department to soften some of the new restrictions and are continuing to seek ways to ameliorate the impact. At the same time, a $290 increase in the maximum federal Pell Grant award for 2010-2011 is available for eligible students.

**CHANCELLOR MATTHEW GOLDFSTEIN said at the Aug. 30 meeting of the Board of Trustees’ Committee on Fiscal Affairs that the University would take proactive steps to manage the financial strains wrought by the state cuts, in order to maintain CUNY’s hard-fought academic gains, programs and services, and to protect students. “It will get worse before it gets better,” Chancellor Goldstein said of the fiscal situation. He asserted tuition increases might be in the offing. “We are facing today in terms of our resources to manage the University, and the University,” he added. “We cannot stay where we are because of the economic crunch.”

The budget enacted by the Legislature for FY2011 provides CUNY senior colleges with $1.86 billion, and includes $84.4 million in operating budget reductions: $63.6 million in reduced state support and $20 million to be achieved from workforce actions, according to Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance Matthew Sapienza, who made a presentation at the committee meeting detailing the cuts and their impact.

The “acute strain” wrought by the reductions means “colleges will not be able to make planned investments, including critical hires that are needed to keep pace with growing enrollments,” his report said. The community colleges, which have seen a 43 percent enrollment surge since 1999, will sustain a $20 million loss to their operating budgets in 2011. This follows a $14 million mid-year combined state-city cut, including $7 million from college base budgets. As a result, the FY2011 community college allocation model is funded at only 80 percent, compared to the FY2010 allocation which covered 99 percent of proposed expenditures.

State base aid per Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) student will continue to decline at the community colleges; for FY2011 it has been lowered by $285 to $2,260, and since 2009 has come down by $415, Sapienza noted. Another concern: The community colleges’ $186.8 million in state support includes $32.8 million in federal stimulus funds, which are non-recurring. State base aid per FTE dropped by 28 percent from fiscal year 2007, which included $7 million in stimulus funds.

**WHILE FEELING THE PINCH, CUNY’s community colleges are seeing much of this fall’s nearly 1 percent enrollment growth, according to early reports. Preliminary figures show University enrollment increasing from 260,000 to 262,000, compared with last year’s record 6 percent jump. This includes increases in CUNY’s online programs, the Online Baccalaureate program and 902 students enrolled as of Sept. 1, up from 729 last fall, and the Online M.S. in Business, launched last fall with 35 students, had 86 new students enrolled so far with a total of 143 in the program.

The early figures also show the senior colleges becoming more competitive. Mean SAT scores of admitted students at the top-tier senior colleges have increased by up to 53 points, to as high as 1216 this year. Retention is stronger, too; more CUNY students than last year are choosing to stay in their colleges rather than transfer, the early figures show.

As student applications flooded in last spring, the chancellor instituted a wait list for the first time in CUNY history, slowing admissions and redirecting wait-listed students to other programs, as a way to preserve academic quality amid tightening resources. “If we admitted all of these students they would not get an experience that was real,” he said.

Two-thirds of the 5,000 students on the wait list, approximately 3,300, were admitted to community colleges from the list this fall. Some 1,700 remaining students took up the University’s new offer of low-cost remedial classes — including the new CUNY Start skills immersion program and CUNY CLIP language immersion, to prepare for entry to community colleges in January 2011.

Other budget cuts taking effect include the city’s reduction for the Vallone Scholarships program at CUNY, from $9.5 million to $6 million; the state budget’s reduction of some $750,000 from CUNY Child Care centers and its elimination of the CUNY LEADS program for disabled students. The state and city budgets contain virtually no new funding for CUNY capital projects, Sapienza reported to the fiscal affairs committee.

“At the end of the day,” the chancellor said, “we must increase revenue. Action is going to have to be taken in some way to sustain us.”

“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
The Chancellor's Desk

Supreme Praise for CUNY Power

In June, U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor addressed graduates at Hostos Community College, her mother’s alma mater, saying that a Hostos education “gave me and my brother a powerful example of the value of education and of family.” She is in a tradition of contributions that community colleges make to our society.

Looking to the future, she told graduates, “You will breathe life into the dreams of the next generation. Together we’re going to make this a better world.”

As a new academic year begins, Justice Sotomayor’s words are a timely reminder of just how powerful a college education is. A rigorous education transforms lives and can transform our collective future.

More and more students understand the power of a CUNY education. In fact, our record enrollments are projected to climb even higher this fall. Our students know that studying with the University’s world-class faculty in innovative academic programs, in all ten CUNY campuses, is making the difference in their personal and professional advancement.

Serving a projected 267,000 degree-seeking students is not without its challenges, however. This year, CUNY sustained $84 million in state budget cuts to its senior colleges, which have experienced more than $205 million in reductions since 2009, while adding thousands more students. The enrollment of undergraduates at Hostos Community College, her mother’s alma mater, says that a Hostos education “gave me and my brother a powerful example of the value of education and of family.” She is in a tradition of contributions that community colleges make to our society.

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The University is not alone in trying to manage the perilous combination of declining state budgets and rising student tuition. Like public colleges and universities across the country, CUNY is in a tenuous position to manage the perilous combination of declining state budgets and rising student tuition. Like public colleges and universities across the country, CUNY is in a tenuous position to manage the perilous combination of declining state budgets and rising student tuition. Like public colleges and universities across the country, CUNY is in a tenuous position to manage the perilous combination of declining state budgets and rising student tuition.

Managing for the University’s new community college, opening in 2012, has kicked into high gear with the hiring of a founding president. Six core faculty members and a registrar, the leasing of classroom space near Manhattan’s Bryant Park and the appointment of a vice chancellor charged with enhancing associate-degree education across the city.

Work on the University’s seventh community college began in fall 2007, when Chancellor Matthew Goldstein envisaged a differently structured school that would significantly increase graduation rates. The evolving plan captured the support of the Delinda Gates Foundation, the Josiah Macy Jr., Foundation and the Carnegie Corp., as well as Mayor Michael Bloomberg, whose Gateway to the Middle

‘Citizen CUNY’ Offers

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promoting voter participation. Coordinators at CUNY campuses organize voter registration and awareness activities throughout the year, but this year’s statewide elections give impetus to the drive. With more than 267,000 degree-seeking students, 260,000 adult and continuing education registrations and 35,000 faculty and staff, the University community constitutes a potentially significant voting presence.

Scores of events at all campuses are planned to encourage participation in the electoral process. Special Facebook and Twitter social media sites have been created to build an online community to encourage students to register and vote, said Senior Vice Chancellor for University Relations Jay Hershenson. “The CUNY Votes initiative will encourage students to go to the polls on Election Day — and to wear their CUNY college colors proudly and prominently when they vote, fostering greater voter participation throughout the CUNY community and New York City.”

College Is Now on the Midtown Launchpad

A national backdrop where community colleges are both overwhelmed by demand for training and retraining and by lagging graduation rates that fail to prepare enough students with associate degrees to meet the country’s needs. President Obama has set major goals for increasing community college capacity and graduation rates.

“The new community college employs an innovative model for improving student performance and graduation rates,” Chancellor Goldstein said. “Over the next year, the new college’s team will flesh out the concept developed during more than two years of intensive work by faculty and staff from 15 of CUNY’s undergraduate and graduate institutions and the central administration. Excitement is building.”

The appointment of Queensborough Community College president Eduardo Marti as the first vice chancellor for community colleges will further “invigorate capacity and graduation rates that fail to prepare enough students with associate degrees to meet the country’s needs. President Obama has set major goals for increasing community college capacity and graduation rates.”

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The appointment of Queensborough Community College president Eduardo Marti as the first vice chancellor for community colleges will further “invigorate community-college education, the fastest-growing segment of higher education,” the chancellor said.

The new college will be headed by Founding President Scott E. Evenbbeck, a psychology professor and founding dean of University College at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. Since 1997, University College has served all beginning students in 18 undergraduate schools in that urban public university system, from orientation through entry into a degree program. Evenbbeck, who was chosen in a national search, officially takes office in January.

CUNY leased the former Katharine Gibbs School at 50 W. 40th St. for the new community college. Already built for classroom use, it needs little renovation. The 10-year lease gives the University time to build a permanent home for the new college that will replace an old building at John Jay College of Criminal Justice on the northeast corner of Ninth Avenue and 59th Street.

The new college will start with 500 students from the general entering student population; reflecting its experimental role, it will grow to only 3,000 students. Since many community college students need remedial help, the new college builds in developmental coursework for those who need it while immediately starting academic work. The program features full-time enrollment for at least the first year; a common first-year curriculum that provides twice the normal time for math; a professional studies component with worksite experience; and just 10 to 12 majors in fields with available jobs and pathways toward bachelor’s degrees.

The signature City Seminar will plumb “the complex physical, social, environmental and political realities of New York,” said John Mogulescu, senior University dean for academic affairs and dean of the School of Professional Studies who, along with Tracy Meade, director of the New Community College Initiative, led the two-year planning effort to create the school.

The new college arose when Mogulescu suggested piloting a differently structured community college. “Before I could even begin describing... [it] in any detail, the chancellor interrupted and said he was not really interested in a pilot program, but was interested in creating a new community college,” Mogulescu said. And whether a new model, like nothing presently at CUNY, would deliver better results.

Part of the model is requiring full-time study during the first year. That appears to pay off in higher graduation rates — and proof is as close as the University’s Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) initiative. Some 1,000 students at CUNY’s six community colleges now enroll in ASAP, which was created for students who do not need significant remedial work. Many are entering the new community college are likely to need remedial help, some of which will be offered in the summer before enrollment.

When ASAP started in 2007, Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Goldstein set the ambitious goal of graduating at least half the students within three years — more than three times the national average for urban community colleges. By last June, 53 percent had earned an associate degree and, by September, the rate was expected to rise to 56 percent. Also as of June, 64 percent of ASAP graduates had transferred into CUNY four-year colleges.
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Island Development Corporation for the “Coney Island Hospitality Project,” directed by professor Stuart Schuman of the department of tourism and hospitality. The Robin Hood Foundation has awarded a grant of $225,000 to the College of Staten Island’s Staten Island Hospitality Project,” directed by professor Maria Conto of Brooklyn College for research on “Organophosphorus-Containing Compounds as Antitumor Agents.”

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection has awarded $11,100,218 for “Characterization and Study of Granular Activated Carbon,” directed by professor Teresa Bundang of City College’s department of chemistry. Professor Peter N. Lipke, chair of the Brooklyn College biology department, has received a $53,250 grant from the National Institutes of Health for research on “Amyloid-like Interactions in Yeast Cell Adhesion.”

Jeffrey Parsons of Hunter College’s psychology department recently received two grants: $653,415 from PHS/NH/National Institute of Mental Health for a research project on “Compulsive Behaviors, Mental Health and HIV Risk,” and $474,159 from PHS/NH/National Institute of Drug Abuse for “Risk Reduction Intervention for Highly Vulnerable Emerging Adult Males.”

The Department of Homeland Security has awarded $596,657 to Dennis Gianforo and Bethany Brown of John Jay College of Criminal Justice for a project that aims to develop a “Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, Support Homeland Security-Related Curricula in HS-Related STEM areas, and Assist Students from Underrepresented Groups in the Transition from Undergraduate to Graduate Training.”

Rachel Singer of Kingsborough Community College has received two grants, $305,000 and $200,000, from the Robin Hood Foundation for “Opening Doors Learning Communities.” City College has received $300,000 from the Office of Naval Research for “Exploring Techniques for Improving Retrievals of Bio-Optical Properties of Coastal Waters,” under the direction of Samir Ahmed, the Herbert Kayser Professor of Electrical Engineering, associate professor Alex Gilsenas, associate professor Barry Gross, and professor Fred Moshary.

“Acrobatic Exercises and Spinal Stimulation after Spinal Cord Injury,” directed by the College of Staten Island’s Zaghloul Ahmed of the department of physical therapy, and Andrzej Wiercicki, of the biology department and the Center for Developmental Neuroscience, has received $132,399 in grant support from the New York State Department of Health. Assistant professor Michele Vittadello of Medgar Evers College has received an award of $150,072 from

Students Help Create A Key University Policy

Concerned over national statistics that one in four college women, one in three men and one in six boys will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime — student activists Elischia Fludd and Jerin Alam two years ago decided that CUNY needed a University-wide plan to prevent sexual violence and help victims of such assaults.

Their efforts helped bring about the policy approved June 28 by the CUNY Board of Trustees — to the cheers of those who had worked for it. The plan includes new and comprehensive guidelines for students and counselors, establishes disciplinary procedures, creates on-campus advocates for victims, provides education and training for faculty and staff, and ensures assistance for students in obtaining medical care and counseling, among other initiatives.

In approving the new policy, the Trustees noted that in order to maintain a safe environment “it is critical to provide an appropriate prevention-education program and have trained professionals to provide vital supportive services.”

Chancellor Matthew Goldstein said “We want all victims of sexual assault, stalking and domestic and intimate partner violence to know that the University has professionals and law-enforcement officers who are trained in the field to assist student victims in obtaining help, including immediate medical care, counseling and other essential services.”

When Fludd, a John Jay College of Criminal Justice member of Students Active for Ending Rape, and Alam, president of the Women’s Rights Coalition at Hunter College, joined forces two years ago to present a proposal to Senior Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs Frederick Schaffer they discovered he was in the process of reviewing University policies and was coming to the same conclusion.

“The students played a significant role in getting me to look at the need for such a policy,” he said. “Since we are not essentially residential campuses, we don’t appear to have many incidents.”

A task force assembled by Schaffer — composed of students, faculty, representa-

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Projects Taking Shape to Aid Haiti’s Recovery

Though last January’s earthquake in Haiti has largely faded from the headlines, 1.3 million Haitians remain displaced, living in some 1,300 tent camps. And for the University’s campuses, the catastrophe is still front and center.

CUNY Colleges have offered more than $200,000 in tuition waivers, scholarships and emergency assistance to students from Haiti and now discussions are underway to establish long-term assistance in rebuilding the impoverished Caribbean nation.

Kingsborough Community College President Regina Peruggi and University Dean for Health and Human Services Bill Ebenstein have been meeting with faculty, alumni and students involved in Haiti projects to discuss ways to engage CUNY.

A proposed Haiti Volunteer Corps would provide opportunities for teams of faculty, students and staff to work on various relief projects in Haiti. Meanwhile, colleges have developed a number of ongoing academic programs.

• City College is sponsoring two Haitian students in its M.S. program in Sustainability in the Urban Environment and is considering a certificate program in construction management to train technicians to help rebuild Haiti’s infrastructure.

• Jean Pierre-Louis, who received a master’s in public health from Brooklyn College, founded a nonprofit that provides health services including mental health counseling and physical therapy to children and their families through schools in Haiti’s rural areas.

• Hunter College School of Nursing is exploring ways CUNY could assist Haiti’s public university with curriculum and faculty development.

• New York City College of Technology professor Jean Claude has discussed the development of a program to train Haitians to work in hotel and hospitality management.

In addition, CUNY’s Citizenship Now! volunteers and staff, directed by Baruch College professor Allan Wernick, have helped more than 1,000 Haitians living in New York City to apply for Temporary Protective Status (TPS) and other immigration benefits.

CUNY Prep’s Innovative Director is Moving On

Berrick Griffith, founding director and principal of CUNY Prep Transitional High School, is leaving to become executive director of Groundwork, a social service agency in Brooklyn. Griffith led CUNY Prep for seven years, building it into one of the city’s most successful programs that helps dropouts back onto an academic track.

“We offer a second chance for otherwise talented young people who, for a variety of reasons, left school…,” Griffith said. “CUNY Prep gives them time to consider the reasons they left school and plan a new course for themselves.”

Trustee Schmidt Honored for ‘Academic Renaissance’

CUNY BOARD OF TRUSTEES Chairman Benno Schmidt has won the prestigious Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education from the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. The council cited the distinguished, nationally prominent educator for leading an “academic renaissance” at CUNY.

Chancellor Matthew Goldstein praised Schmidt for his leadership in developing three University Master Plans and his work “for the advancement of a robust liberal arts education for all students.”

Daniel Kim, a former Marine who recently completed two tours of duty in Iraq, said: “I looked at all the CUNY schools and felt that Brooklyn College was the best for me. I want to study anthropolo­gy and pre-med …”

It was also a perfect fit for Alkistis Karatzis, a transfer student from Greece who heard about the jazz program and will study classical piano at the Conservatory of Music. “So not only do I have the benefit of a great program, but I also get to stay in a res­idence with great views,” she said, gazing toward the tall windows revealing the distant Empire State Building.

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Sara built the six-story townhouse as a gift to her only child, Franklin, and his bride and distant cousin, Eleanor, in 1908, three years after their marriage.

No president’s mother did more for civil rights than Sara Delano Roosevelt, who arrived in 1915 and shared the residence with her son, his wife and their first child. But the Roosevelt family was not the only one to take residence there. When Franklin was elected governor of New York in 1928, he decided to move into the townhouse. Their second child, Anna, was born there in 1932. Eleanor also lived there from 1930 to 1932, when Franklin was vice president. She died in their home in 1948, and the family remained there until Franklin’s death in 1945. It was, in fact, Franklin’s mother who named the townhouse Roosevelt House.

No president save Lincoln faced more criticism than FDR. “If I were to consider,” he wrote in 1943, “my political birthday, it would be the date of my first speech as a candidate for governor of New York in 1924. I have been regarded as a pariah, traitor, and traitor to my class. The criticism has continued from a landslide.”

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FDR with his mother, Sara, left, and wife, Eleanor, in 1928, when he was Democratic nominee for vice president.

Actually, Sara gave them the half-townhouse, for she lived in the other half — and felt free to walk through connections on several floors. She had easy access to her grandchildren, but, Eleanor wrote, “You were never quite sure when she would appear, day or night.”

The living arrangements strained relations between mother-and-daughter-in-law. Eleanor recalled telling Franklin that she “did not like to live in a house which was not in any way mine, one that I had done nothing about and which did not represent the way I wanted to live.”

The houses at 47 (Sara) and 49 (Franklin and Eleanor) E. 65th St., between Madison and Park Avenues, share a stately façade and a single entrance. Inside, steps lead to separate doors of the mirror-image houses. This was Franklin’s New York City base, birthplace of some of their six children and scene of illness, defeat and victory.

In 1912, Franklin, then a state senator from Dutchess County, and Eleanor recovered from typhoid fever in the house. Franklin returned after his failed 1920 run for vice president. In 1921, in a third-floor room overlooking the rear garden, he recuperated from polio, which paralyzed his legs.

But at 49 he also engineered his return to public life, starting with a riveting speech nominating Al Smith for president at the 1924 Democratic convention at Madison Square Garden. He won two terms as New York governor, in 1928 and 1930. And early in the morning of Nov. 9, 1932, he accepted President Herbert Hoover’s concession telegram after crushing him in an electoral landslide.

Later that day in his drawing room, Roosevelt thanked a national radio audience for “this great vote of confidence and their approval of a well conceived and

Extraordinary accomplishments of FDR's presidency

inspire students at Hunter College's Public Policy Institute.

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inspire students at Hunter College's Public Policy Institute.

Actually, Sara gave them the half-townhouse, for she lived in the other half — and felt free to walk through connections on several floors. She had easy access to her grandchildren, but, Eleanor wrote, “You were never quite sure when she would appear, day or night.”

The living arrangements strained relations between mother-and-daughter-in-law. Eleanor recalled telling Franklin that she “did not like to live in a house which was not in any way mine, one that I had done nothing about and which did not represent the way I wanted to live.”

The houses at 47 (Sara) and 49 (Franklin and Eleanor) E. 65th St., between Madison and Park Avenues, share a stately façade and a single entrance. Inside, steps lead to separate doors of the mirror-image houses. This was Franklin’s New York City base, birthplace of some of their six children and scene of illness, defeat and victory.

In 1912, Franklin, then a state senator from Dutchess County, and Eleanor recovered from typhoid fever in the house. Franklin returned after his failed 1920 run for vice president. In 1921, in a third-floor room overlooking the rear garden, he recuperated from polio, which paralyzed his legs.

But at 49 he also engineered his return to public life, starting with a riveting speech nominating Al Smith for president at the 1924 Democratic convention at Madison Square Garden. He won two terms as New York governor, in 1928 and 1930. And early in the morning of Nov. 9, 1932, he accepted President Herbert Hoover’s concession telegram after crushing him in an electoral landslide.

Later that day in his drawing room, Roosevelt thanked a national radio audience for “this great vote of confidence and their approval of a well conceived and
Restoring Roosevelt House was complicated because its exterior and parts of the interior were landmarked. “Elements could be cleaned, but had to go back into the house,” which was gutted, vice chancellor Weinshall said.

Another reason was that it was landlocked, hemmed in by other buildings and backyards, making it impossible to use heavy construction equipment. And because the house fronts on a through street that doesn’t allow parking, the University could not store material or a dumpster on the roadway. So shovelful by shovelful, workers carried dirt and debris out the front door and around the corner, where trucks could briefly park on high-traffic Park Avenue. There was a great deal of dirt, for architect James Polshek had designed a ground-floor, 115-seat auditorium that extends into what had been the backyard.

With the graceful banisters now once again agleam, Hunter’s Public Policy Institute began its work in mid-2010, when two visiting scholars took up residence in apartments carved out of former servants’ quarters on the sixth floor.

John McDonough, the inaugural Joan H. Tisch Distinguished Fellow in Public Health, played a key role in shaping health-care reform both in Massachusetts and nationally as Sen. Ted Kennedy’s senior health care adviser. At Roosevelt House, he has taught a health policy class to 40 master’s students in public health and nursing and conducted an interdisciplinary seminar for faculty from nursing, public health and social work programs, as well as the CUNY Graduate Center.

“We’re also organizing public engagement that connects the legacy of FDR with health reform, and we’re thinking about the new federal law and the opportunities it presents,” he said.

Jonathan Fanton, the inaugural Franklin Delano Roosevelt Visiting Fellow, was president of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and is a board member of Human Rights Watch. Besides helping to develop Hunter’s human rights program, he has invited speakers to meet with faculty and students, including two U.N. war crimes prosecutors, a presidential special envoy to Sudan, the co-chair of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, a U.N. assistant secretary-general focusing on the emerging concept of a “responsibility to protect” communities from genocide and war crimes, and the U.N.’s special advisor for the prevention of genocide.

Fanton said his guests invariably want to tour Roosevelt House, for “every room has a piece of history that’s inspiring, which I hope will call forth all who work here to think about the high ideals that the Roosevelts set for us and for the world.”
For Two Years Now, International Teams of Scientists Have Been Combining the Land and Waters of the French Polynesian Island of Moorea, Working to Create the World’s First Complete DNA Inventory of a Complex Tropical Ecosystem. The Biologists and Ecologists Have Studied the Island’s Jagged Mountains, Hiked Its Tropical Forests, and Dived to Its Abundant Coral Reefs, Accumulating Samples of Every Species of Plant, Animal and Fungi on the 1.2 Million-Year-Old Volcanic Island.

But when CUNY assistant professor of biology Michael Hickerson and three of his students from Queens College and the Graduate Center spent two weeks on Moorea this summer, they did their hunting in some less-than-exotic places. Searching for sea creatures, they spent days underwater near manmade habitats — wood docks and pilings, stone sea walls and, as Hickerson put it, “sneakily snorkeling” under expensive hotel bungalows suspended over the water.

“We spent several hours underwater with our knives and bags in hand, scraping off ascidians, sponges and bryozoans — as well as a giant oyster that we think had 20 or 30 ascidians, sponges and bryozoans — as well as a giant oyster that we think had 20 or 30 as well as a giant oyster that we think had 20 or 30 as well as a giant oyster that we think had 20 or 30 ascidians, sponges and bryozoans — as well as a giant oyster that we think had 20 or 30 ascidians, sponges and bryozoans,” wrote one day in his blog on the University’s Decade of Science website.

But the mother lode may have been what he and his team found clinging to tires tied to docks and used as bumpers for boats. Unlike fixed structures, the tires rise and fall with the tide and their treacherous become encrusted with countless species, while the inside scoops up everything from butterfly fish to peanut worms to sea cucumbers to a candy cane-patterned coral-banded shrimp. Even a small octopus.

Hickerson and his team — Graduate Center student J.T. Boehm and Queens College undergraduates Francois Desinor and Chris Ludvik — were part of an ongoing international effort called the Moorea Biocode Project that is using a technique known as DNA “barcoding” to identify species and perhaps even discover some new ones. The process involves taking samples of all non-microbial life found on and around the island and extracting mitochondrial DNA, which varies significantly between species.

The project began in 2008, and thus far more than 100 evolutionary biologists and ecologists from many institutions have taken part.

Hickerson and his CUNY team is focused especially on building the database for “invasive” or “colonial” species — those that are not native to Moorea and presumably arrived at some point in history in the ballast water of cargo boats. “Many very small creatures, including larvae, can be very difficult if not impossible to identify at the species level,” Hickerson says. “But we can use the DNA barcodes to identify them and measure the exact level of biodiversity. Most important, we can use it to detect invasive species that may have gone undetected.”

The data could be critical to investigating how climate and oceanographic changes are altering the food chain and the species pool itself. Hickerson and his team are focused on kelp pipefish, a species commonly found in Moorea’s abundant coral reefs.

Why Moorea?

- It’s considered a natural laboratory, a complex ecosystem ready-made for biological and ecological study.
- Moorea was formed by volcanoes 1.2 million years ago and has high mountains, lush forests and a well-developed coral reef and lagoon system.
- The biocode project is centered at a well-equipped lab, called the Gump Research Station, run by the University of California, Berkeley.

“All told, we processed nearly 400 different species,” Hickerson said upon his return to New York, “and we suspect that several of them are non-native.”

The sequencing will be done closer to home — at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. Grad student Boehm brought the samples with him in his luggage and delivered them personally to the DNA lab at the Smithsonian.

All of this leads to the core of Hickerson’s expertise. He is developing computational tools to help understand how Moorea — or any other island with a complex ecosystem — becomes occupied by all its species, whether native or invasive. A moving volcanic hotspot formed all the Society Islands, nearby Tahiti emerging some 600,000 years later than Moorea. Thus, says Hickerson, “We can use all the biocode data to reconstruct how species from Moorea colonized Tahiti.”

But the implications go far beyond these islands in the South Pacific. “Ultimately, the aim is to collect this type of genetic data from every species on the planet,” Hickerson said. “This will be extremely useful for all sorts of applications, ranging from the identification of species to the discovery of new ones — by estimating levels of biodiversity — restoring evolutionary history, and understanding the dynamics of species invasions.”

For more photos and Michael Hickerson’s blog, go to CUNY.edu/decadeofscience.
Spotting the Bozos of Science
By Gary Schmidgall

T
hey laughed at Columbus, they laughed at Fulton, they laughed at the Wright brothers," said famed atmospheric scientist Carl Sagan. But then he added, "They also laughed at Bozo the Clown."

He is one of the choice epigrams with which Massimo Pigliucci begins each chapter of Nononsense on Stills: How to Tell Science from Bunk (University of Chicago Press), a spirited attempt to "map the complex territory dividing science from pseudoscience,"

Pigliucci, a Lehman College professor of philosophy also trained in biology and the author of several books (most pertinently, Making Sense of Evolution, with Jonathan Kaplan), and he addresses a serious problem, especially in this age of that splendid playpen for bozos called the Web, because scientific bozos can do a lot of harm when they get the last laugh. AIDS denialism, for example, has cost countless lives in sub-Saharan Africa.

We begin on an aptly somber note, with Huxley, on our moral duty to "give up pretending to believe that for which there is no evidence." Distinguishing sense from nonsense is not an easy or lighthearted task, but Pigliucci's expository style is ingratiating; he is often dly witty about the arrogance of scientists and pseudoskies; and he is generous with left layman-friendly explanations of some of the necessary analytical jargon. His farewell sentences are: "But never, ever forget to turn on your baloney detector. Most of the time you will need to set it at least to yellow alert."

Pigliucci sums up in his final pages: "What all scientific inquiry has in common...are the fundamental aspects of being an investigation of nature, based on the construction of verifiable hypotheses and theories. These elements, naturality, theory, and empiricism, are what make science different from any other human activity. All pseudosense faiults on at least one of these three tests. Intelligent Design introduces naturalism, while the "theory of astrology is "hopelessly flawed" because constellations do not exist. Early on, Pigliucci declines to rate the latest cosmological bright idea, string theory (with not four but 11 dimensions), as scientific because it cannot be empirically verified. Pigliucci cites Yogi Berra on verification: "You can observe a lot by just watching."

Chapters are devoted to the tussles between "hard" or histological sciences (like physics and chemistry) or "soft" historical sciences (like paleontology or astronomy). "Almost" sciences like the search for extraterrestrial intelligence and evolutionary psychology are also discussed. Among the telltable signs that pseudoscience is anachronistic thinking, glorification of mysteries, appeal to myths, cavalier treatment of evidence, explanation by scenario ("story-telling") and -- my favorite! -- extreme resistance to revising one’s positions. One logical fallacy prominent among ufologists and creationists particularly frosts Pigliucci: the "tendency to shift the burden of proof from the person making the extraordinary claim...to the person who simply asks for the evidence." If he had to pick one logical fallacy "we could magically erase from the repertoire of humankind, this would be the one."

Another chapter chides our media for how "positively dangerous" it is for our media to allow celebrities with no scientific background to spout off on scientific matters. Richard Gore on crystal therapy, say, or Tom Cruise scorning psychiatry. Pigliucci does praise John Stewart’s "Evolution, Schneevolution" coverage of the evolution trial in Dover, Pa., in 2005 for getting "the science of evolution and intelligent-design proponents exactly right." A fascinating chapter on "Science in the Courtroom" is devoted to the trial and the judge’s brilliant decision.

Another full chapter is devoted to the global warming Sergio, with Pigliucci gaily deconstructing the "science of The Skeptical Environmentalist by Bjorn Lomborg, a noted skeptic. Pigliucci points out Lomborg’s "dubious" claim that there was a "climate warming" in the 1930s and "negligible warming" in the 1990s. Here he says "encapsulates the intellectual arrogance of some scientists who think that, given enough time and especially financial resources, science will be able to answer whatever meaningful questions we may wish to pose." Those afflicted with "scientism" can be a pain, thinking they have what Pigliucci calls "a God’s-eye view of things." Then he cites some famous scientific banana peel moments: Einstein opinioning that "There is not the slightest indication that energy will ever be obtainable from the atom." Also Lord William Kelvin’s prediction, "X-rays will prove to be a hoax" and the British Astronomer Royal saying in 1856, "This talk of space travel is utter bilge."

But Pigliucci says the Pdhown Man hoax, a famous scientific screwup, should be taught as a spinoff in biology Science, and it is hard to argue the problem, and this shows "how the nature of science is not that of a steady linear progression toward the Truth, but rather a tortuous road, often characterized by dead ends and U-turns." Scientists, Pigliucci concludes, should not be entirely trusted because they are "not always successful in being detached, rational agents interested only in the pursuit of truth."

The next chapter asks, alternatively, "Do we trust science too little?" Here Pigliucci rousingly sallies forth against "the postmodern assault on science." He recounts the wicked practical joke of physicist Alan Sokal, who wrote a gibberish-filled article attacking science and got it accepted by a prestigious postmodern journal, "Social Text." And with undisguised glee he ridicules the controversial Berkeley philosopher of science Paul Feyerabend, who cheekely called for "a formal separation between science and state."

Pigliucci saves the most important question for last: "Who’s an expert?" He sums up recent research on expertise, how to acquire it and judge it, then draws from Alvin Golden a list of five questions to ask about a would-be expert: How do his arguments and those of rivals compare? Do other experts agree with him? What is the evidence for his expertise? What biases might he bring to the subject? And what is his track record? (For more on experts and other topics this book raises, visit the author’s blog: www.virtuallyrational.org.) Pigliucci’s big final point about doing science is that it requires getting used to being wrong: "every scientific theory ever proposed...has been proven wrong and has given way to new theories." The chief virtue of genuine science is in "its humble self-evaluation, self-criticism, and self-correction." Progress in science is just "one partially wrong theory after another."

CUNY Matters welcomes information about new books that have been written or edited by faculty and members of the University community.
Contact Sheila McKenna at cuny.edu.

Protecting Human Guinea Pigs
In The Professional Guinea Pig: Big Pharma and the Risky World of Human Subjects (Duke University Press), Roberto I. Abadie, a visiting scholar at the health-sciences program at the CUNY Graduate Center, examines experiences of healthy volunteers who every year are literally serving as the first humans on whom new drugs are tested. Abadie contends that hazards presented by continuous participation, such as exposure to potentially dangerous drug interactions, are discounted or ignored by research subjects in need of money and by a pharmaceutical industry dependent on them. He argues for the need to reform policies regulating participation of paid subjects in so-called Phase I trials.

Imagine If He’d Tweeted
In 1927, a 25-year-old Air Mail pilot from rural Minnesota stunned the world by making the first nonstop coast to coast flight. Charles Lindbergh’s flight from New York to Paris ushered in America’s age of commercial aviation. In The Flight of the Century (Oxford University Press), Thomas Kessner explains how what was essentially a publicity stunt became a turning point in history, Kessner, a Distinguished Professor of History at the CUNY Graduate Center, vividly re-creates the flight and explains the euphoria reaction to it at a time when the world desperately needed a hero to restore a sense of optimism and innocence after World War I. Kessner also shows how new forms of mass media made Lindbergh into the most famous international celebrity of his time.

Where’s the Nutrition?
How did our children end up having nachos, pizza and soda for lunch? Taking us on an eye-opening journey through the nation’s school kitchens, Hunter College sociology professor Janet Poppendieck explores the politics of food provision from perspectives of history, policy, nutrition, and environmental sustainability, taste and more — in Free for All: Fixing School Food in America (University of California Press). Explaining how we got into the absurd situation in which nutritionally regulated meals compete with fast food items and snack foods loaded with sugar, salt and fat, she concludes with a sweeping vision for change.

Flights of Hubris
In The Icarus Syndrome (HarperCollins), Peter Beinart — an associate professor at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism — tells a story about the seductions of success. He describes Washington on the eve of three wars — World War I, Vietnam and Iraq — three moments when American leaders decided they could remake the world in their image. Yet each time, a war comes to an end, bringing untold tragedy.

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Topics from Martian meteorites to planet formation were discussed at a recent international science conclave organized by two Kingsborough Community College geologists, whose research keeps their eyes on the sky and on Earth.

STARDUST MYSTERIES

By Neill S. Rosenfeld

They flash across the sky, shooting stars that have fired the imagination ever since there were people. Meteorites, rocks that fall from the heavens — messengers of the gods, portents of good fortune or cataclysms to come, depending on the culture. But in reality, they’re so much more — the very stuff the Solar System is made of.

“You can’t have life until you have a planet, so to hold a meteorite — something that was around before there was a planet — is totally awesome,” says Harold C. Connolly Jr., one of two petrologists, or geologists who specialize in rocks, at Kingsborough Community College’s Department of Physical Sciences.

Colleague Michael K. Weisberg says cradling the most primitive type of meteorite, a chondrite, “is like holding the sun, minus the gases, and they also have organics, which are the building blocks of life.”

Each meteorite tells an extraterrestrial story, and many emerged in July at the 73rd annual meeting of the Meteoritical Society in Manhattan, which Connolly and Weisberg organized under the auspices of the City University of New York and the American Museum of Natural History. The meeting drew some 500 scientists from around the world.

Presentations delved into Martian meteorites, planet formation, the origin of organic molecules on meteoroids, the structure of craters and the relation between asteroids and meteors, among other topics.

Sean Solomon of the Carnegie Institution of Washington delivered the keynote lecture. As principal investigator of Messenger, NASA’s current mission to Mercury, he described how the first craft to visit the innermost planet since the 1970s whipped by Mercury three times since its launch in August 2004, it goes into orbit in March 2011. Messenger has already detected ion emissions from Mercury’s atmosphere, expanded knowledge about the planet’s magnetic field and proved that, at least in the past, Mercury had volcanic activity.

Connolly and Weisberg, colleagues for 30 years, work not only with meteorites found on Earth, but also with materials plucked from the cosmos. Weisberg was on the international team that analyzed dust from NASA’s Stardust Mission; launched in 1999, Stardust returned with samples of the comet Wild 2 in 2006. “We’ve had particles to study in our laboratories for four years. It turns out that a lot of the particles in the comet are similar to what we find in chondrites, including the chondrules and calcium-aluminum-rich inclusions,” Weisberg says.

In other words, the dust and rock formed near our sun, traveled to the deep freeze beyond Neptune, and then mated with ice to become comets. This was a stunning finding, since scientists had thought that the dust and rocks of comets came from other stars and predated our own solar system. (Stardust did retrieve...
**Definitions**

- **Asteroids** are big rocks, up to almost 600 miles across, found mainly between Mars and Jupiter.
- **Meteoroids** are smaller rocks in space.
- **Meteors** are meteoroids that plunge through Earth’s atmosphere, which produces a very thin melt layer on their outside.
- **Meteorites** are meteors that hit Earth’s surface.
- **Chondrites** are the most primitive meteorites.
- **Calcium-Aluminum-Rich Inclusions** (CAls) are among the solar system’s earliest solids and other components, including pre-solar mineral grains produced by other stars in the universe.
- **Chondrules** and calcium-aluminum-rich inclusions were the first rocks formed in the **protoplanetary disk** (also known as the **solar nebula**), the gas-dust cloud that condensed to form the sun and planets.

**ICY SOLUTION FOR TWO PUZZLES?**

**The First Mystery:** Where is our moon? Our moon came from the second. The second is how Earth got its water. Those mysteries may well share a single solution, according to CUNY doctoral candidate John Wolbeck. Wolbeck is working with associate professor Harold C. Connolly Jr., of Queensborough Community College and the Graduate Center. Wolbeck advanced his hypothesis at this summer’s Meteoritical Society meeting.

But first, some background. When Earth was a mere 45 or 50 million years old, more than 4.5 billion years ago, it’s believed to have collided with a Mars-sized object, ejecting massive amounts of rock into space — which eventually formed the moon. This explains why the rocks that Apollo astronauts brought back from the moon some 40 years ago so closely match those on Earth. But then Wolbeck had a problem. A comet or asteroid studied by Wolbeck, a licensed professional engineer and an associate professor and interim chair of the Department of Science, Engineering and Architecture at SUNY’s Orange County Community College, “An object the size of Mars would have had its own unique signature, so lunar rocks should not be identical to Earth’s,” he says.

So here’s his hypothesis: If what hit Earth was half the size, then heat from the collision would have vaporized the water into superhot steam. The solar wind would have blown away most of the vapor, removing the impactor’s unique signature. The collision also would have liquefied the rock and iron at the impactor’s core, with the rock becoming part of Earth’s geology and the heavier iron sinking to become part of Earth’s iron core.

This hypothesis allows the impact theory to explain the moon’s origin, too, Wolbeck says. It also explains the source of Earth’s water.

“While scientists hear the idea, they’re skeptical at first,” Wolbeck says. “But as they walk away, they say, it might be right and I hope it’s right, because it’s so cool.”

**Internet Security Tips From Our Top Expert**

**Q:** Can you offer some general advice about how people at CUNY can protect themselves from electronic threats or risks from the Internet?

**A:** Always keep your software and antivirus programs up-to-date, and only install software that you have legitimately purchased and that is authorized to be installed on your computer. Never install software that is provided in a manner which avoided the purchase requirements. Those software programs often contain malicious code that will attempt to steal personal information.

**Q:** How do we protect our computers from being damaged or hijacked by malicious code?

**A:** Always keep your software and antivirus programs up-to-date, and only install software that you have legitimately purchased and that is authorized to be installed on your computer. Never install software that is provided in a manner which avoided the purchase requirements. Those software programs often contain malicious code that will attempt to steal personal information.

**Q:** What should students do to keep their personal computers up-to-date?

**A:** As with any end user or home user, including myself, students should continually follow the software update process that comes with their computers. Always keep your software update processes enabled, and make sure your software is updated regularly.

**Q:** What are the risks associated with social networking sites that are frequently used by students?

**A:** Yes. From time to time, laws emerge that may expose your personal information. So there is a small risk that some information may be compromised. There are also risks related to the information another person sees on your page. That individual might be able to use the information to guess your passwords or private information.

**Q:** Can e-mail be dangerous?

**A:** Yes, depending on how we use it. For example, we’ve all received e-mail purporting to be from someone we know that didn’t contain a message from that person. This technique, called phishing, attempts to get you to reply to an e-mail and disclose personal information. Don’t respond to such e-mail. You will never receive an e-mail from your bank or financial institution asking for personal information. So if you have any doubts, contact your bank directly. Never give away personal information via e-mail.

**Q:** How are spam filters used in e-mail?

**A:** Spam filters reduce the risks associated with phishing attempts and other e-mail that you didn’t request. In some cases, however, spam filters will quarantine e-mail from legitimate sources. Be sure to flag such e-mail as not being spam and add it to your e-mail system whitelist.

**Q:** Would the University or a CUNY college ever send an e-mail asking for personal data from a student, faculty or staff member?

**A:** No. CUNY has strict policies that prohibit University officials from asking for personal information via e-mail, such as your Social Security number, date of birth, financial account information, etc. If you receive such a request, do not respond to it via e-mail. Instead, call the college or the appropriate office to verify the legitimacy of the request.

**Q:** What is the key to protecting personal information over the Internet?

**A:** Don’t give it away! If you receive such a request, call or visit the appropriate office or financial institution, or contact it by regular mail.

**Q:** Does CUNY provide resources for people who want to learn more about safeguarding themselves online?

**A:** Yes. The website security.cuny.edu contains CUNY’s IT security policies and procedures as well as user advisories on how to protect yourself from e-mail scams and phishing. We also have a 30-minute IT security-awareness video that we encourage everyone to view. In addition, CUNY provides free Symantec antivirus protection for Windows and Mac devices for faculty, staff and students. They can be downloaded off the CUNY portal. Just sign on using your user ID and password, go to the e-mail, and click on software for a selection of products.
**OCTOBER**

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<td><strong>BMCC</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe&lt;br&gt;3 p.m.; $14; “10 Club” members, $25&lt;br&gt;Brooklyn College&lt;br&gt;Tom Chapin&lt;br&gt;2 p.m.; $6</td>
<td><strong>Queensborough Community College</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Capitol Steps&lt;br&gt;3 p.m.; $30-$39</td>
<td><strong>City College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Life Before the Pilgrims: A Peruvian Tells the History of “La Florida”&lt;br&gt;6 p.m.; Free&lt;br&gt;John Jay College&lt;br&gt;First Throes Playwright Salon&lt;br&gt;1 p.m.; Free</td>
<td><strong>Queensborough Community College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Community College&lt;br&gt;Fateless 1 p.m.; Free&lt;br&gt;City College&lt;br&gt;Infinity of Nations: Art, History and the National Museum of the American Indian&lt;br&gt;1 p.m.; Free</td>
<td><strong>Hunter College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Lollipops Concert, The Orchestra&lt;br&gt;– A Happy Family&lt;br&gt;Oct. 15: 6:30 p.m.; (school performance), Oct. 16: 10:30 a.m. &amp; noon&lt;br&gt;Oct. 17: 1 and 2:30 p.m.&lt;br&gt;$12, $40</td>
<td><strong>Lehman College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Saliva Palenca&lt;br&gt;3 p.m.; $40-$55</td>
<td><strong>Baruch College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Boardroom Secrets&lt;br&gt;10:30 p.m.; Free&lt;br&gt;Queensborough Community College&lt;br&gt;Like Father, Like Son&lt;br&gt;3 p.m.; $25, $40</td>
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<td><strong>City College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Community College&lt;br&gt;A Tale of the American Indian&lt;br&gt;11 a.m.; Free&lt;br&gt;the National Museum of the American Indian&lt;br&gt;3 p.m.; Free&lt;br&gt;Queensborough Community College&lt;br&gt;Camp Singrind&lt;br&gt;7 p.m.; Free</td>
<td><strong>John Jay College</strong>&lt;br&gt;John Jay’s Got Talent!&lt;br&gt;7 p.m.; Free&lt;br&gt;John Jay College&lt;br&gt;First Throes Playwright Salon&lt;br&gt;1 p.m.; Free</td>
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<td><strong>Queensborough Community College</strong>&lt;br&gt;Community College&lt;br&gt;5 Wonderful! The New Gershwin Musical&lt;br&gt;3 p.m.; $35&lt;br&gt;Queensborough Community College&lt;br&gt;Camp Singrind&lt;br&gt;7 p.m.; Free</td>
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**NOVEMBER**

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