

Academic Affairs Update

YORK COLLEGE

York Undergraduate Research Day



Students and professors during the poster exhibit of the Research Day

April 15th was not just “Tax Day.” It was also Undergraduate Research Day — at York College.

York has joined the Council on Undergraduate Research, the premier organization facilitating, studying and showcasing undergraduate research.

Provost Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith launched the program by establishing the Office of Undergraduate Research. He appointed Dr. Rishi Nath as director, and dozens of students and their fac-

ulty mentors showed off their research in the sciences, literature, the visual arts, and other areas. Even a casual glance at the parade of posters lining the hallways of the Academic Core Building was notification that indeed there is student scholarship at work at York.

Take for example, Benifer Gonzalez and Jody-Ann McLeggon, two seniors majoring in Biology. Gonzalez intends to study genetic counseling after graduating from York, while McLeggon wants to be a pediatrician. They now prepare for those careers by studying at York and by engaging in undergraduate research with their mentor, Dr. Gerard McNeil and other outstanding faculty.

Their project, Characterization of Potential RNA Targets of the Drosophila RNA-Binding Protein LARK, is guided by their mentor, Dr. McNeil; they describe LARK as an RNA binding protein that is maternally expressed during oogenesis. “It has three RNA binding domains that are essential for its function during oogenesis,” says McLeggon. “[It’s] a microarray ribonomics approach to identify thirty-seven potential in vivo RNA targets during oogenesis.”

The duo explains that the aim of their research project is to begin to evaluate the thirty-seven candidate targets identified in order to fully understand how the protein LARK functions during oogenesis.

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York & Construction Giant Sign Partnership

Wanting to enhance its offering to meet the continuing needs of the Queens community, York College has signed an agreement with a giant in the construction industry, to provide cer-

tification to qualified applicants.

Turner Construction Company (TCC), a leader in the industry, has been offering construction business education since 1969 and the agreement with York is

just the latest such endeavor.

According to a course blurb, the Construction Management Academy was designed to provide professional certification that incorporates York

cont.’d on p.7



Special points of interest:

- **More funding for York Researchers**
- **Student to Naval Academy Conference**
- **York Alumnus George Grasso**

Inside this issue:

Provost Lecture Series	2
Ivy League Scholarships	3
Research Funding for York	4
Provost Lecture Series	8
Extramural Learning	10
York Delegation in Albany	11
George Grasso Interview	12
Provost Lecture Series	13
York Student at Naval Academy Conference	14
Students at Social Science Conference	15
Assessment Showcase	16
Global Social Work	17
Band & Choir workshop	17
“First Class” Alumn	18
YC Star basketball player	19
Faculty Update	21
YC Track Star Haiti-bound	21

PROVOST LECTURE SERIES

“Teacher Identity and Math for Social Justice: Reflections on a Community of Practice”

George White, Jr.

(Asst. Professor, Dept. of History & Philosophy)



Provost Griffith congratulating Dr. Gonzalez after her lecture.

On February 24, 2010, Dr. Lidia Gonzalez, Assistant Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, presented the first Provost Lecture of the Spring 2010 semester.

Provost Ivelaw Griffith welcomed the group and Dr. Lou D’Alotto, chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, introduced Dr. Gonzalez, noting her consistently high achievement in her professional, college and departmental endeavors. It was especially heartwarming to note that Dr. Gonzalez’s mother attended the event.

Dr. Gonzalez opened her talk by explaining her motivation for the research and defining some of its critical components. She was intrigued by the wide and persistent gap between the stated goals of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the experiences of math teachers at schools in marginalized communities. Gonzalez was particularly struck by the way that math seemed to serve as a professional

and social gatekeeper and that, as a result, performance inequities across schools or groups of students mirrored social inequities. Through her own experiences, as well as through her reading of intellectuals like Paolo Freire, Gonzalez became convinced that teaching was a political act that either replicated or challenged the status quo. Gonzalez explained that “Math for Social Justice” (hereinafter “MFSJ”) is an approach that re-centers the curriculum around the lives of students as a means of helping them understand their world and encouraging them to change it.

Accordingly, Gonzalez resolved to situate math pedagogy within a social context in order to improve teaching and learning, as well as a means to remedy social disparities.

Dr. Gonzalez’s study was qualitative and ethnographic in nature. The objective of the study was to determine the impact of a professional development opportunity in MFSJ on teacher identity and development and to create a math unit that meets governmental stan-

dards for 9th grade math. Her group of study included seven self-selected New York City public high school math teachers; six of the seven were women of color and five of the seven described having life experiences similar to those of their high school students. The study relied heavily on “Communities of Practice” in which the study group shared and created knowledge. In addition, Gonzalez acknowledged the influence of ideas from the research in teacher development. The MFSJ group met weekly and Gonzalez relied on multiple data sources to draw conclusions.

Gonzalez concluded that self-awareness and identity were fundamental for success with MFSJ. The feedback from the study group revealed the tremendous value of MFSJ as a focus for professional development. The group averred that MFSJ was not only good for them but for their students as well. Even with such positive results, Gonzalez acknowledged possible limiting factors.

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Science Majors Racking Up Ivy League Scholarships

*Point of
Pride*

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The saying that it's nice to know people but nicer to have people know you, was proven at York recently when an alumnus of the College came home to recruit outstanding students for his institution's Ph.D. program in microbiology.

Dr. Andrew Campbell, York College Class of '81, a professor of Medical Science in Molecular Microbiology and Immunology at Brown University, has recruited three of his alma mater's brightest biology majors graduating this year.

Adeyola Adebayo and Anika Toorie are Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) Scholars and Sherida Rahaman, mentored by Dr. Emmanuel Chang, has also been recruited to the Ph.D. program in microbiology at Brown, starting this fall.

"It's really put York on Brown's radar, said Dr. Campbell, of the recruitment effort. "And it really bodes well for York. It's kind of like the closing of a circle."

Campbell, who was mentored at York by legendary biology professors such as Dr. Leslie Lewis and Dr. Jack Schlein, remarked on the opportu-

nity he is now providing York Scholars in the biological sciences.

"They are getting an Ivy League education — and it's fully funded," said Campbell who is director of the program. "I did not get Ivy League. I went to UCLA [for the Ph.D. in Microbiology]."

Dr. Margaret MacNeil, a neuroscience professor in the Biology Department at York, has already been responsible for several students going on to medical school and she is proud of her latest protégé, Anika Toorie, one of the MARC Scholars heading to Brown.

"Anika, oh she's an enthusiastic student who loves research," said Dr. MacNeil of her mentee. "She is driven by the need to answer questions. What impresses me most is that she can analyze data and lead to other questions she can ask. She can go beyond the problem."

Dr. MacNeil further explained Toorie's commitment to research.

"She was interested in neuroscience ... studying brain damage to the visual cortex and its impact on the retina," she explained. "What are the effects of these brain lesions?" Is there some

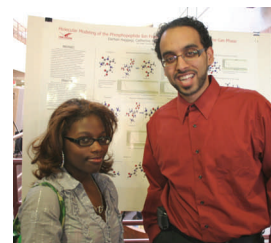
way to restore some of the vision?" She goes beyond the problem."

Chemistry professor, Dr. Emmanuel Chang who has been at York since 2006, is delighted with his student's acceptance into the program at Brown, too.

"She's very motivated," he says of Sherida Rahaman, a biology major. "She's a very good learner. She's quite meticulous and holds herself to a very high standard. She learnt a wide variety of chemistry and molecular biology. Her project involves Cyclin-dependent kinase — an enzyme that plays a central role in how cells divide. When they divide out of control you get tumors."

Rahaman, who already had a Bachelors degree in Accounting from Baruch College when she came to York, said she was motivated to give up her career as a CPA when her father died after a short battle with stomach cancer.

"The doctors couldn't tell us why my father got cancer and died," said Rahaman who is originally from Guyana. I wanted to understand why. [But] things happen to shape your life."



Students presenting their work on Undergraduate Research Day

cont.'d on p.22

More Funding for York's Researchers



Prof. Gerard McNeil

As York continues its research trajectory, three faculty members recently reported their latest grants to continue their projects.

Dr. Gerard McNeil, chair of the Department of Biology, was recently awarded a four-year grant totaling \$472,000 from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to study the function of an RNA-binding protein critical to the development of the female egg.

"Studying the details of how the egg develops in fruit flies can provide insights into how the human egg develops as well since many of the critical developmental mechanisms are conserved," he explained.

Dr. McNeil who came to York in 2001, has brought in nearly \$2 million in research funding thus far and uses the common fruit fly, *Drosophila Melanogaster*, as a model system for his studies.

"The goal of this research is to further understand how RNA-binding proteins regulate development, especially those that reside in the nucleus for which not much is known," says McNeil, who has mentored several of his students to acceptance into MD and Ph.D. programs. "Teaching

undergraduates in the research lab is an integral part of their education and an integral part of my teaching responsibilities at the college."

McNeil's students have also collaborated with their professor as co-authors on published articles based on their research findings. At least four have been accepted into MD and PhD programs:

Methuel Gordon, '04, received an "honorable mention" from the (CUNY) Salk Scholarship program and is now a physician who graduated with honors from Penn State College of Medicine; Fiona Smith, '05 won a Salk Scholarship into Penn State College of Medicine and is also a physician completing her residency; Sheryl Purrier, '06, a former McNeil mentee who was also mentored by Dr. Margaret MacNeil, also won a Salk Scholarship to Penn State Medical to study medicine and Manpreet Kaur, '07 is in a Ph.D. program at University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Since his arrival at York Dr. McNeil has distinguished himself as one of York's most outstanding biologists and this latest grant helps to

solidify that reputation.

Dr. Beth Rosenthal was recently awarded \$472,000 by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for her current research, "Adolescent Trauma, Psychopathology and Resilience: A Person-Focused Approach."

The funding which is to cover the period 2009-2013 is the latest of many such funding Dr. Rosenthal has received over the course of her career. Dr. Rosenthal, a professor in the Department of Social Sciences, focuses her research on stress in older adolescents.

"It is guided by the theoretical view that stress is the product of the interaction between an individual's adverse experiences and the individual's resiliency characteristics," says Rosenthal. "And that stress produces undesirable psychosocial outcomes."

Dr. Rosenthal added that the goal of the current research is to understand the processes that are involved in the development of psychopathology resulting from exposure to potentially traumatic events occurring in later adolescence in order to provide an expanded foundation for

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preventive and treatment strategies.

Specifically, she says, the goal of this current research is to identify who develops Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms and who does not; and to understand why one person does and another does not.

The research focuses on urban adolescents at the end of high school because older adolescents living in large cities are the group of people who are most exposed to potentially traumatic events. The basic idea underlying the research is that the level of post-traumatic stress symptoms that an individual exhibits depends upon the degree to which he or she has experienced traumatic events and the degree to which he or she possesses certain characteristics that protect her or him from stress.

Rosenthal's research proposes to identify four types of individuals: 1) those who have high trauma and high symptoms (people with PTSD symptoms); 2) those with high trauma and low symptoms (people who are Resilient); 3) those with low trauma and high symptoms (people who are stress prone); and 4)

individuals with low trauma and low symptoms (the Idealized Norm for people in our society). The research will estimate the relative frequency of older adolescents in each of the prototypical categories; and identify the protective/vulnerability factors that differentiate among the four prototypes. Dr. Rosenthal has mentored dozens of students both from York and from other public and private institutions around New York City.

Dr. Ruel Desamero, an assistant professor of Chemistry, was awarded a grant in the amount of \$468,223 from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of General Medical Sciences through the Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) program. This funding will be applied to the research project Dihydropteridine reductase: Mechanism of Enzyme Action.

"Enzyme-substrate interactions have long been recognized as representing an extreme expression of structural complementarities in biological chemistry," says Desamero. "Basic research geared towards understanding the inner work-

ings of an enzyme system, like dihydropteridine reductase (DHPR), is important if cures for the diseases caused by a malfunctioning or deficient enzyme are to be found."

Dr. Desamero further explains that an enzymatic reaction can be broken down into two main aspects. The first involves the diffusion-controlled formation of the encounter complex, and the second involves the appropriate structural and dynamical arrangements of the enzyme domains as dictated by the reaction chemistry.

"The aim of my research program is to understand, at the molecular level, the basis of how enzyme works," he says. "Enzymes are the work horses that keep us alive; enzymes play a role in the digestion of food, the processing of signals in the brain, the synthesis of DNA and many more. We are all too familiar with the results of a malfunctioning or deficient enzyme – diseases."

Desamero add that if one is therefore to find cures for the maladies that inflict humans then scientists must know how this enzymes work.

"In our laboratory we use advanced spectro-



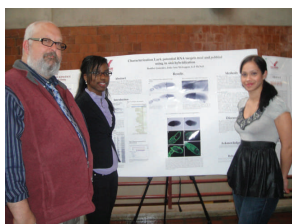
Prof. Beth Rosenthal



Prof. Ruel Desamero

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Prof. Gerard McNeil and students from the Biology department

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. Our Undergraduate Research Program is intended to facilitate the pursuit of ‘formalized curiosity’ across the disciplines.”



Dr. Rishi Nath (r.), Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research, commenting on one of the exhibited posters.

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Meanwhile, Temitope Ajala-Agbo, an FDA Scholar interning at the Northeast Regional Facility on York's campus took pride in her work. The lower senior presented on her research, “The Safety of Food Products,” which demonstrates the effects of food-borne diseases such as salmonella. Her presentation shows some of the means by which they can be prevented.

And then there's Ani Vigani, an Albanian-born Fine Arts major with a declared minor in Italian. His presentation was an eye-catching painting. Entitled, “Abstract Fish,” the piece dominated its space. But more than just the painting, Vigani also presented smaller versions of a set of sketches, which depict the process by which he arrived by the magnificent ready-for-the-wall end product.

Vigani reveals that his faculty mentor, painting professor Nina Buxenbaum, an influential painter herself, told him that it is important not just to show the completed work, but as in math and science, to show how one arrived at the finished work. Consequently, in addition to the early stages of the painting, he also presents in the secondary “frame,” photos of works by which

he is influenced. A Picasso is among them.

Dr. Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Provost and Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs, explained that research can, and ought to be, across the disciplines, rather than being the exclusive province of the sciences. Citing the author and anthropologist, Zora Neale Huston's observation that, “Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose,” Dr. Griffith notes in the program that “there is a tendency among undergraduate students to associate research with the natural and applied sciences.” “The reality is, he insists, that “there is, and can be, research in every field, and our Undergraduate Research Program is intended to facilitate the pursuit of ‘formalized curiosity’ across the disciplines.”

Dr. Nath, assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Sciences and the director of Undergraduate Research, promises that this first Student Research Day is only the beginning. “It will be held annually to reveal remarkable faculty-student collaborations,” says Nath, whose own scholarly expertise is in algebraic combinatorics; representations of finite groups,

and partition theory. “The program of this Office is to promote and facilitate opportunities for faculty-led student-research both within and beyond the classroom.”

Among the other students who rounded out the outstanding display of research outcomes were Magid S. Mohamed and Daniel L. Servino, who presented with the help of Dr. Shao-Ying Hua and Dr. Mandë Holford. Their research was the “Taxonomy and Phylogeny of Venomous Marine Snails of the Terebridae.”

The Department of Earth and Physical Sciences was also well-represented as students, along with mentors, Dr. Nazrul Khandaker and Dr. Stanley Schleifer showed off their field work.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Kenneth G. Furton, professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Florida International University (FIU). “FIU would have a hard time pulling off as many posters as York College has and we're known for research,” noted Furton, founder and now director emeritus of the International Forensic Research Institute (IFRI).

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College's School of Business and Information Systems, undergraduate instructional expertise and TCC's experience in the construction business.

The plan is that through this course, students will gain the knowledge to manage a construction project from conception to completion. Qualified applicants are contractors with a minimum of three years in the industry. The program will launch on June 1.

According to Cynthia Murphy, director of Continuing Education at York, participants who complete the full program of 11 courses will receive an Advanced Certificate in Construction Management and could be eligible to receive a small number of credits toward a baccalaureate degree in Business at York.

Dr. Harry Rosen, Dean of the School of Business and Information Systems Management, is enthusiastic about the opportunities made possible by the agreement.

"The new Turner Construction Management Academy at York College, is an opportunity for the School of Business & Information Systems to begin to fulfill an important part of our Strategic Mission: Community Service through Business Practice," says Rosen.

"We aim to assist individual citizens and businesses as they cope with the challenging economic environment."

According to Dr. Rosen, this new academy will meet people where they are.

"Most executive business education programs aim for the high end of large corporations that look to serve national and international markets," he says. "But our partnership with the Turner Construction Company allows us to address the needs of small, local businesses. Turner sought the partnership with us to do exactly that."

The educational plan for the program includes courses such as Introduction to Construction Management, Bankable Business Plans, Fundamentals of Estimating, Building Information Modeling and Mastering the Numbers: Finance for Growth, Project Management, Sustainable Building.

"You walk out of this program as an asset," says Stephanie Burns, community affairs director with TCC, who was at the signing. "This gives you a background in the business rather than just the trade."

Also at the signing of the agreement was Harry Wells, director of the Small Business Develop-

ment Center (SBDC) at York College. Wells played a crucial role in initiating the relationship with TCC. And his involvement will continue to be important to the partnership.

"The SBDC will be a continuing resource," said Wells who added that his office will play a role in helping graduates of the program with their business plans.

The York branch of the SBDC, a public program developed to assist small business growth, opened at the College in 1988; and has assisted over 12,000 businesses with marketable plans to start up or expand. According to reports, these small businesses have invested nearly \$80 million in the local economy.

Dr. Rosen, who is completing his first year as Dean of the School of Business and Information Systems, is pleased with the plan and its potential to branch into other areas.

"We are quite convinced that our experience with the Turner Company will position us to serve the needs of other local industries comprised of smaller, local market entities," he says.



L.-r.: Dean Harry Rosen, Cynthia Murphy, Stephanie Burns (Director of Community Affairs, TCC), President Marcia V. Keizs, and Harry Wells

"The new partnership is an opportunity for the School of Business & Information Systems to provide Community Service through Business Practice."

Dean Harry Rosen

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PROVOST LECTURE SERIES

“Recurrent Miscarriages: Can We Prevent Fetal Rejection?”

Lidia Gonzalez

(Asst. Professor, Dept. of Mathematics & Computers Science)



Provost Griffith congratulating Dr. Girardi after her lecture with a framed version of the lecture poster.

The second Provost Lecture of the semester at York College was held on March 22, 2010. It was there that Dr. Guillerma Girardi spoke to a room of attendees which included faculty, administration and students. Her talk, “Recurrent miscarriages: Can we prevent fetal rejection?”, described some very promising research she and her students have been conducting.

The event began with an introduction by Provost Griffith who noted that the academy is not just a “transmitter of knowledge” but also a “creator of knowledge through research.” Further, he explained that some research being undertaken at York College has very practical applications to real world problems and implications for policy and practice. He applied this characterization to Dr. Girardi’s research. As is the tradition at these events, the speaker was presented with a framed poster from the event which she seemed quite excited by.

The chair of the Biology Department, Dr.

Gerard McNeil introduced Dr. Girardi who joined the faculty of York College in the fall of 2009 after completing a Ph.D. at the University of Argentina and having extensive experience both in Argentina and in the United States working in the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City. Her research centers about understanding the role of the immune system as it relates to fetal injury and death. By understanding why fetuses are rejected, she hopes to develop interventions aimed at preventing such rejections.

Dr. Girardi set the context for her work explaining that 200,000 couples each year in the United States face fetal rejections and that in 50% of these cases there is no apparent cause as to why despite ample work in the field. Dr. Girardi noted the high presence of particular types of antibodies that may lead to miscarriages as they affect normal organs including the placenta. She then developed two models for studying the situation. One model involved iso-

lating these antibodies and injecting them into pregnant mice in order to see the effect on the mice and compare that to a control group of mice that receive antibodies from healthy humans instead. The fetuses of mice with the antibodies from sick humans die at alarming rates. Those that do survive are very small and encounter many problems in life.

These results led Dr. Girardi to consider pregnancy as a transplant. The embryo and later the fetus can be considered a transplanted organ in that it is different than the host body and the host body (the mother) needs to accept the fetus in order for the pregnancy to be successful. Immune reactions that happen when an organ transplant fails include the activation of a system that attacks the transplanted organ. Similarly, this system may be activated when a mother’s body rejects its fetus. The system then attacks the fetus and leads to fetal rejection.

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First, she was not an “objective” outside observer because she was part of the group. Second, the group of subjects was neither representative of a public school Mathematics Department in a large urban school nor the faculty of the particular department and high school where the teachers in the study worked. The teachers raised important issues that require further examination; for example, most suggested putting greater emphasis on implementation of MFSJ lessons/classroom activities while others wondered whether it was possible to use MFSJ activities as a fundamental part

of instruction, rather than as an “add-on” to “dominant math instruction.

An enthusiastic and wide-ranging discussion followed Dr. Gonzalez’s lecture. Questions and comments stressed the value of the topic, its significance for public education, generally, and for institutions of higher learning that train math teachers. Many in the audience were excited by the way in which she linked math instruction and student performance to issues of race, gender, and class. Others were enthused by the interdisciplinary nature of her research and its relevance

to other academic disciplines. Dr. Gonzalez received positive reinforcement from the Provost and her colleagues in attendance to continue her research as well as her stellar record of publishing her findings. To that end, Dr. Gonzalez will be presenting her findings at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association and publishing several articles regarding discreet aspects of the study in the near term. In the future, Dr. Gonzalez also hopes to develop a critical mathematics course at York.



YORK COLLEGE CUNY

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scopic techniques to address this very issue,” he says adding that the long-term goal of the PIs research program to investigate enzyme-small molecule (inhibitor, substrate, or cofactor) interactions in order to unravel the structural and dynamical aspects of its mechanism of action.

“DHPR catalyses the NADH-mediated reduc-

tion of quinonoid dihydrobiopterin (qBH2) to yield tetrahydrobiopterin (BH4). BH4 functions as an essential cofactor, and its absence leads to depletion in the brain of precursors of catecholamine and serotonin neurotransmitters, he says. “Regulation of DHPR became of interest when a new form of hyperphenylalaninemia

(atypical phenylketonuria) associated with a defect in BH4 recycling was discovered.”

According to the chemistry professor, who has brought in numerous grants to further his and his students’ research, “in the light of this and other new emerging functions, there is a growing need to completely understand how DHPR works.”

Learning beyond the Classroom



Children at the Health Expo



Prof. Shawn Williams (l.) with students and counselors

On April 23, 2010, the **School of Health & Behavioral Sciences** hosted a Wellness Expo at Public School 40 in Queens. Eighty-three York College students participated, serving children from grades three to six.

The Expo targeted the epidemic of childhood obesity. Faculty and students from a wide variety of disciplines designed activities that helped children learn various physical exercises; how to measure their heart rates before and after exercise; how to use video games

that promote movement; how to make food choices related to the major food groups, portion size, fat and sugar content; and, how to eat mindfully. Eight York Early College Academy 9th graders set up a demonstration on the perils of sugar in the body.

Health Science students conducted a Power Point presentation for parents in the teacher's conference room.

Special thanks to the faculty and staff leaders: Xin Bai (Teacher Education), Alex Costley

(Community Health), Jacqueline Grant (Nursing), Kathariya Mokrue (Psychology), Michele Neuhaus (York Early College Academy liaison), Maria Elena Pina Fonti (Nursing), Larry Preiser (Psychology), Ivy Tilson (Occupational Therapy), and Shawn Williams (Health Professions).

The Wellness Expo was made possible through the support of Youth Service America's United Health HEROS grant. All materials were donated to the elementary school.

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Prior work considered that inflammation or thrombosis was causing the rejection and so heparin, an anticoagulant with anti-inflammatory properties was administered. Dr. Girardi called this the "right cure but for the wrong reason." Her analysis caused her to consider statins, drugs presently used to reduce cholesterol levels, as a possible treatment to prevent fetal rejection. The exciting result is that fetal injury in mice was diminished when the statins were given to the mice. "We were smiling for weeks," Dr. Girardi explained.

A second model, considering the fetus as a

tumor (a good tumor) growing inside the body, also led to positive results when the use of statins was introduced.

Thus, Dr. Girardi's work has demonstrated that tissue factor increases inflammation that leads to fetal death and that the use of statins is beneficial in mice models of pregnancy loss. She is hopeful to begin trials in humans with the hopes that recurrent miscarriages can be prevented in women through the administration of statins. She is working with the FDA and other universities to develop clinical trials at this time.

The lecture was followed by a hearty ap-

plause from the crowd as well as a question and answer period. Dr. Laura Fishman, chair of the Provost Lecture Series Committee, noted that given March is women's history month, the lecture's topic was a timely one. Further, the questions and ideas generated showed the engagement of those in attendance with Dr. Girardi's work. Many noted the promise of Dr. Girardi's research.

If you missed the talk, you can see it and many other of the Provost Lecture Series talks on the Provost's website where videos of these talks have been and will continue to be uploaded.



Students presenting their work on Undergraduate Research Day

York College is On the Move in Albany

Selena T. Rodgers & Earl Simons

On March 9, 2010, twenty-four York students majoring in Social Work and Sociology, and two York College faculty members joined President Marcia V. Keizs and Earl Simons (Director of Government and Community Relations) in Albany, New York for the annual Legislative Action Day. The York College delegation was engaged in a full day of meetings with NYS Assembly and Senate members and their senior staff.

Dr. Selena Rodgers (York College Social Work Club Faculty Advisor), Andreau Charles (President of York College Social Work Club President), and Jaime Rivas-Williams (Vice President of York College Social Work Club) worked diligently with Earl Simons (Director of Government and Community Relations) to coordinate our meetings with legislators. Our day in Albany started with stu-



L.-r.: Assemblywoman Vivian Cook, Dr. Selena Rodgers, President Marcia V. Keizs, and Prof. Crystal George-Mosses

dents participating in a working brunch meeting hosted by Assemblywoman Vivian Cook. The discussion, which was productive and engaging, addressed the many issues that impact student learning, the Social Work Profession, and the college community.

York College Students were professional and succinct in their expression of sincere appreciation for President Keizs and legislators for their continued leadership and support. "It was validating to see students excited to integrate their knowledge and skills learned in the classroom with themes of public service,

economic empowerment, political activism, and community involvement," acknowledged Dr. Rodgers. Additionally, another legislative aide discussed several internship possibilities for York students in New York State government at the legislative level.

York College students thanked New York State Assemblywoman Vivian Cook for securing \$5 million, with the support of the state legislature, for the building of the *York College Child and Family Center*, which is now officially opened. The students also expressed gratitude to Assemblywoman Cook for securing \$11 million for enhancements and repairs to the Academic Core Building (for example, benches outside, student common space renovations) and as a down payment for the construction of the York College Academic Village (student union building).



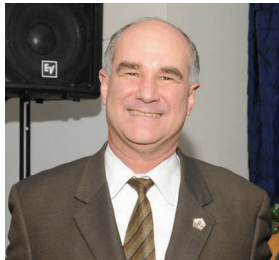
Assemblywoman Vivian Cook (center, seated), with President Keizs, Dr. Rodgers, Prof. George-Mosses, and York College students



May 8, 2010 Mary-Jo Kranacher (center) was honored as the recipient of the Distinguished Faculty Award from the York College Alumni Association. Alumnus Dr. Andrew Campbell (l.) received the Distinguished Alumnus award. In the picture both award recipients are joined by President Marcia V. Keizs

An Interview with York Alumnus George Grasso

Joe Grasso (Class of 2010)



George Grasso

On January 21st, 2010, George Grasso, my father, ended his accomplished 30-year career with the New York City Police Department retiring as one of the longest serving First Deputy Police Commissioners in history. On Jan. 22 he walked out of One Police Plaza through two long lines of saluting police officers to the sound of bagpipes and drums. My entire family and I accompanied him on an emotional stroll across the street to City Hall, waving good-bye to a place that has been like a home for my family since before I was born.

Once we got to City Hall, a kid who once roamed the streets of Jamaica in the same shoes as all of us students here at York signed his name to officially become a NYC Criminal Court Judge. And when I asked him about his life and career, here is what he said:

Q: When did you start York College?

A: Monday, September 15, 1975, and I had my last cigarette on September 12th. I have always coincided those two events as life changing. I

majored in Economics, with a minor in political science.

Q: What type of career did you want to pursue?

A: I wanted to be a lawyer. I wanted to be involved in some way, shape or form in public affairs. I wanted to use my law degree to make a positive change.

Q: When did you decide to go into the police department?

A: In 1979 I heard they were giving the police test and that I could get an application for the test at the 103 where I used to get on the bus. It was always something I had in the back of my mind to do in addition to being a lawyer. So I took the test in June of 1979 and they called me November 1979. Fortunately my teachers at York were flexible helping me finish my final semester at York even though I was in the police academy.

Q: How did you pursue obtaining a law degree as an NYPD officer?

A: First I started as a beat cop on Southeast Queens encompassing York College. And while I was on foot patrol working a steady day, I went to the night program at St. John's Law School. Then

in January of 1981 I was transferred to Flatbush, Brooklyn working steady midnight tours and still going to the St. Johns night program. It was funny being on foot patrol in Jamaica and seeing my former classmates and professors while I was in uniform.

Q: So Dad, how did you become the First Deputy Commissioner?

A: Well, I had worked for Police Commissioner Kelly when he was Police Commissioner the first time in 1992 and 1993 and I had assisted him in investigating a corruption investigation that led to the Mollen Commission in Brooklyn. I assisted him in investigating the corruption and I assisted him in the prosecution of officers involved in the corruption and in overhauling the NYPD's internal affairs investigation system. When Kelly became Police Commissioner for the second time in 2002 he asked me to become his First Deputy Police Commissioner. I served in the position for eight years and was one of the longest serving in the history of the department.

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PROVOST LECTURE SERIES

“Psychological Distress Among College Students”

Guillermina Girardi

(Associate Professor, Dept. of Biology)

During her elegant Provost Series Lecture on April 19, Dr. Beth Rosenthal described her NIH-funded research on psychological distress among freshman students at York College. Specifically, Dr. Rosenthal’s research focuses on the causes of psychological distress among students and the correlation with academic performance and physical illness. She evaluated three parameters of psychological distress: anger, anxiety and depression. She used standardized scales to measure these symptoms in students.

Dr. Rosenthal found that of the students that participated in these studies, 47% showed low levels, 40% showed moderate levels and 13% reported high levels of distress that interfere with daily functioning. She tested the hypothesis that race/ethnicity, gender and age have an impact on the degree of psychological distress but contrary to her hypothesis, she found that race/ethnicity did not have an impact on psychological distress. However, gender and age did influence the levels of psychological distress; women reported more

distress than men and older students showed to be less distressed than younger students.

Next, Dr. Rosenthal studied the educational outcomes in the students who report signs of high psychological distress. Academic performance was evaluated by measuring persistence and GPA values. A strong correlation between persistence and the level of psychological distress was observed. Among the students with high distress, 30% dropped out by the end of the third trimester. Despite the positive correlation between mental health and persistence, no correlation was observed between psychological distress and GPA values.

The associations between psychological distress and illness have been widely suggested. However, the evidence is not compelling. Dr. Rosenthal studied if upper respiratory tract infections (URI) were more frequent in students with high levels of psychological distress. According to her hypothesis, Dr. Rosenthal found a positive correlation between psychological distress and URI.

Dr. Rosenthal also stud-

ied the use of counseling in students; 90% declared they never used counseling, 5% only used it once and 5% more than once. No correlation was observed between gender, social class and race/ethnicity and counseling. Only 23% of the students with clinically significant distress considered counseling. According to Dr. Rosenthal’s observations, counseling, an extremely beneficial service provided at York College, is underutilized. Future measures should be implemented to make sure that all the students are aware of the counseling services at York.

Dr. Rosenthal also highlighted the considerable amount (although not different from other educational institutions) of psychological distress reported by freshman students at York College.

The academic performance of these students seems not to affect GPA, but retention appears to be a serious issue. Dr. Rosenthal ended her presentation emphasizing the importance of screening methods to identify individuals at risk of developing psychological distress and promote the use of mental health services.



Assistant Provost Henke congratulating Prof. Rosenthal following her lecture

YORKCOLLEGECUNY

My Experience at the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference

Trudy K. Rowe

"I was like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

-Sir Isaac Newton

This quote by Sir Isaac Newton captures the essence of my current state of mind. In early March, I was nominated by Grace Ann Prescod of the Admissions Office to attend the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference (NAFAC). I followed the instructions for application and after that I went along my normal schedule, even forgetting that I had applied to a conference. I was this boy playing on the sea shore. My sea shore included my daily classes and extra-curricular activities at York College.

In mid March I received an email from One to World (one of the organizing bodies for the conference) stating that I had been selected to attend the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference and represent my college at

the same time. At this moment I was totally excited but very humbled at the fact that I had been selected to represent York College at a conference of this caliber. I never imagined that on my sea shore I would be recognized, acknowledged, or even be selected by an international organization to attend a conference. A new experience was about to begin in my life and I was on my way to attending the Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference 2010 in Annapolis, Maryland from April 5-April 9th, 2010. I never knew what was ahead of me; but I was excited.

The theme of NAFAC 2010 was "National Security Beyond the Horizon: Changing Threats in a Changing World." To be completely honest, I am a Gerontology major and I was going to the conference wondering how this relates to my interests; moreover how does this relate to anything in my major. I was pleasantly surprised to learn how everything connects both directly and indirectly.

The conference was held on the Naval Academy, however, the delegation stayed at a beautiful hotel approximately two miles away from base. Upon arrival, I realized that for the next four days I was going to be among students from universities across the United States, both domestic and international. In addition to these students who made up the delegation for the conference, I was surrounded by over four thousand naval academy students all dressed in their uniforms at any given time of the day.

On the first day of conference, the keynote speaker was former Deputy Secretary of State, The Honorable Richard L. Armitage. He presented on the rising nations in Asia such as China and the matter of nuclear weapons in South Korea and North Korea. He addressed how these international issues affect the national interests of America. For the entire conference all delegates were assigned to different roundtables where we were given the

chance to work on policy solutions and have one on one interaction with each other, including students from the Naval Academy. The roundtable I was at was entitled "Africa: A national security challenge for America?"

At the end, my roundtable came up with three key points that the U.S. government should focus on when creating foreign policy in Africa. These included creating a policy that has Africa's national interest as its foundation and not just America's national interest (a cultural relativist approach); placing the focus on empowering African citizens through the use of education which would hopefully lead to a more secure Africa and; becoming culturally aware of the countries within Africa, not just having relations but knowing about the history and the way of life for the people of Africa.

Throughout the conference I had the great opportunity of hearing presentations from notable keynote speakers that included, The Honorable R. Nicholas

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Burns, former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, The Honorable Robert M. Gates, U.S. Secretary of Defense and R. James Woolsey, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). I also had the esteemed privilege of attending a parade done for Secretary of Defense Gates. This was truly an amazing experience.

Academically this conference was an eye opener but I would have to say the networking had a greater impact on me. In attending this conference, I got to see the world. There were so many individuals from places that I hear about in the news. In my own little world, I would never even dare think about them let alone

interact with them. This conference provided me with that opportunity. I was able to have a multi-country ticket and visit some great countries in the world and see their way of life and perspective without even going there. Furthermore, I was around future military officials and to me this was very humbling.

Going forward, I am still this boy playing on the seashore. NAFAC became this 'prettier shell than ordinary'; and it was a totally unexpected shell. I am fully aware that this great ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me. There are so many things in this world that I have no idea of their existence but there are there and it is my duty to discover. I

really wish that some of my fellow students at York College would become active participants in conferences and events such as these. I believe these opportunities are the keys to our discoveries and from these discoveries we never know where we will end up, who we will meet and what we will be exposed to. I am not sure when my next opportunity will be but I love knowing that there is a place that lies undiscovered before me, that carries with it a new experience and a plethora of memories. In writing from my sea shore, I cannot wait to see what the ocean has to offer. NAFAC 2010 was just the beginning.



Trudy K. Rowe

York Students Present at Social Science Conference

On April 24, 2010, nine York College students participated in the Northeast Undergraduate Research Organization for Neuroscience/Hunter Psychology Convention. The Convention was extremely well attended with individuals hailing from colleges and universities all over the NY metropolitan region.

The York students who participated under the mentorship of Dr. Beth Rosenthal spanned three

disciplines (Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work). Four of the students are research assistants in Dr. Rosenthal's lab; five were enrolled in a Sociology independent study course with Dr. Rosenthal. A number of additional York students attended the Conference – both to support their fellow students and to see their classroom knowledge applied to "real life" research.

The students made

three panel presentations:

- 1) The Relationship between Race/Ethnicity and Perceived Discrimination (Sheena Bradshaw, Karima Jenkins, Ayishetu Rahaman);
- 2) The Relationship between Perceived Discrimination and Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms (Tanisha Placide, Adrienne Vega);
- 3) The Relationship between Social Support and



L.-r.: Sheena Bradshaw, Ayishetu Rahaman, Prof. Rosenthal, and Karima Jenkins

cont.'d on p.17

Assessment Showcase

Assessing Student Learning of an Oral History Interview Assignment

George White, Jr. (Dept. of History & Philosophy)

Students who enroll in basic survey classes in the Humanities often do so in order to satisfy General Education requirements for graduation. In my experience, finding ways to motivate this type of students is critical to an effective classroom environment. I hoped to create an atmosphere in which students could contrast and compare their own lives and lived experiences with the phenomena we addressed in the readings and lectures.

At least one historian who does work in the field of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning asserts that the best teachers set a tone that helps students to develop both an inquisitiveness and healthy skepticism that allows them to draw connections and make comparisons (Estes 2007). My assessment project consisted of experimenting with oral history interviews for students in a 100-level World History course.

I began crafting the project plan under the assumption that students who engage in the oral history project

would gain a deeper understanding of historical themes and controversies if they transacted knowledge with a real person in a real-life setting. I determined that I would assess the results of the oral history project at various stages of the semester. Generally, the criteria for evaluating the interviews were relevance, clarity, thoroughness, and organization. These benchmarks grew from my reflections on early scholars who used oral history interviews in their class (Fonsino 1980).

The initial assessment was an evaluation of the questions which the student volunteers intended to ask their interview subjects. Each student volunteer had to submit a list of questions prior to the actual interview so that I could determine whether the questions were appropriate for the interview subject and whether the questions were crafted to elicit responses on the themes addressed in the History 108 course. A second assessment was my evaluation of the trajectory of the interview.

The final assessment was an examination of the student's post-interview essay.

Overall, the oral history project proved to be as exciting and thought-provoking as I had hoped. The six student volunteers were eager and needed little coaxing to complete their projects. Their enthusiasm led to great results in terms of the quality of the interviews and, for the most part, the post-interview reflection.

However, there were limits to the conclusions that I could draw from the results. Although I was convinced that students achieved a deeper level of learning as active participants, it was not clear whether students who conducted the oral history interviews achieved a stronger grasp of the course material as compared to their peers who did not conduct the interviews. I reached this conclusion at the end of the project when I realized, among other things, that I had failed to devise a means of measuring their depth of specific knowledge. For example, even

though the students showed a good grasp of the general intersection of immigration, religious tolerance and democracy, I did not assess their understanding of subject material such as Nazi Germany's reaction to the presence of French Colonial (African) soldiers in the Ruhr Valley or the Third Reich's "Final Solution" for its Jewish citizens.

I would use the oral history interview again; however, adding a component to the students' post-interview reflection that resembles an essay question on the course material. As a method of assessment, the oral interview is a good teaching tool and can provide an effective means of assessing student learning when more structured prompts are added to get at the types of knowledge I was seeking.

• Estes, Todd (2007). "Constructing the Syllabus: Devising a Framework for Helping Students Learn to Think Like Historians." *History Teacher*, 40 (2), 183-202.

• Fonsino, Frank J. (1980). "Criteria for Evaluating Oral History Interviews." *History Teacher*, 13(2), 239-243.

A Global Social Work Agenda in the Millennium

On March 29, 2010, Dr. Selena Rodgers and five York students were among 400 social workers, students and educators who participated in the 27th Annual United Nations Social Work Day.

The event was co-chaired by two main representatives to the United Nations in New York, Janice Wood Wetzel (International Association of Schools of Social Work) and Michael Cronin (International Federation of Social Workers). Helen Clark, the adminis-



Social Work Students: Teresa Orr, Andreau Charles, Can (John) Onaler, Serah Aminatabh, Jewel Dey (l. - r.)

trator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the third highest ranking official in the United Nations was among the presenters; she encouraged social

workers to become more involved in campaigning to challenge inequality and injustice, and to work towards a sustainable environment.

Dr. Rodgers' interest in global social work emerged from her grass-roots community-based experience coupled with extensive teaching in the classroom, but it was the mentoring relationship with Dr. Wetzel that sparked her interest to advocate for the voiceless global community.



L.-r.: Dr. Janice Wood Wetzel, Chair of the NGO Committee on Mental Health; Dr. Selena T. Rodgers (York College Social Work Program); Professor Gary Bailey (Simmons College School of Social Work)



Impressions from a choir and band clinic for the students of Northome and Kelliher High Schools, of Kelliher, Minnesota conducted on March 20th, by Professor Tom Zlabinger and Adjunct Instructor Jonathan Quash. About 45 students from the high schools were on a bus tour and had requested the opportunity to study at a college in New York, that had both a choral program and a band. Their first choice was York College.



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Comments from the student panelists and attendees reflect the positive impact of the experience on them. Many said that they truly treasured the opportunity, which not only boosts their self-confidence but also enables them to better understand social research in terms of its purposes, functions and practice. One student said it was

"one of the most nerve-wrecking (yet) exciting days" of her life. Another indicated that "... we met students from different schools. I thought students were not interested in research. I was wrong. Attending this conference changed my perception about research ..."

Some also expressed their gratitude to Dr. Rosenthal and their team-

mates. While all of them were proud of representing York College, one student stated, "I was happy to see that York was there. I do wish that we had more presenters. York is ... on the move, but we need more representation at functions like these."

Alum From First Class Visits York

York recently received a visit from a distinguished alumnus, a member of the College's very first graduating class.

New York State Supreme Court justice, Judge Jeremy Weinstein, of the Class of 1971, paid a springtime visit at the invitation of Provost Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, and a new partnership is now set to bloom.

Judge Weinstein who was a New York State Senator when the funding came through from the state legislature to build York, recalls holding the symbolic check for over \$100 million to build the Jamaica campus for his alma mater. The campus opened in 1986 and Weinstein was among the group of elected officials given the tour by then-President Milton Bassin.

A judge for the past 20 years, Weinstein says York College prepared him well for both his professional and private lives. To that end, he graduated with two very important accomplishments: a degree and a bride.

He married fellow-alum, the former Elaine Dicker, and the two built a successful union, which would eventually include



L-r: Dean Panayiotis Meleties, Prof. Robin Harper, President Marcia Keizs, Judge Jeremy Weinstein, Provost Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Prof. Donna Chirico, and Mondell Sealy, Director of Development

children and grandchildren, in whom the judge clearly delights.

Judge Weinstein also recalled early professors such as Dr. James Como of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts. He says the two became friends, staying in touch and played sports when they lived in the same Queens neighborhood.

"He's just a few years older than I am," said Weinstein of the still youthful Como who recalls he was often mistaken for a student when he first started teaching at the College in 1968.

After graduating from York, Weinstein earned his law degree from Brooklyn Law School and clearly enjoys where that training has taken him.

But the judge fondly recalled being a young student activist fighting for York's existence with fellow students such as Henry "Hank" Sheinkopf, (Class of '71), now an über-successful political strategist based in New York City.

Weinstein, who revealed [that] he once taught Political Science as an adjunct professor at York (How to Run a Political Campaign), will now help to identify opportunities for current and future students in the Pre-Law program at York.

It is an offer, which bodes well with Dr. Griffith.

"It's wonderful that we could reconnect with and reengage Judge Weinstein," says Griffith. "And [it is] a tribute to

Esonwune Named to D3hoops.com All-America Team

York College junior center, **Marcel Esonwune (Lagos, Nigeria/Marist Brothers)** received his second All-American honor this season, being named to the 2009-10 D3hoops.com All-America Second Team.

Esonwune was named to the National Association of Basketball Coaches All-America Team last week. He has already been named the NABC Atlantic Regional Player of the Year, ECAC Metro Region Player of the Year, D3hoops.com Atlantic Region Player of the Year and the CUNY Athletic Conference Player of the Year.

Esonwune had a break-

out year during the 2009-10 campaign. He finished the season as the nation's leading shot blocker, averaging 4.2 blocks per game. Esonwune also ranked second in the country in rebounding, averaging 14.8 boards per game, and was fifth in the CUNYAC in scoring, with 18.6 points per game. In addition, he recorded double-doubles in 26 games and triple-doubles in three games.

He led the Cardinals to the finals of both the CUNYAC Championship and the ECAC Championship. The Cardinals came up short in both title games but they finished with a school record of 23

wins.

"Marcel is one of the most exciting players I have ever coached," said York head coach Ronald St. John. "His work ethic has allowed him to reach great heights. To have him achieve such honors and still have him back for another season is a coach's dream."

Steve Djurickovic of Carthage College (WI) was named Player of the Year and Derek Raridon of North Central (ILL) was named Rookie of the Year. Bob Semling of UW-Stevens Point, who led his team to the national championships, was named Coach of the Year.



Marcel Esonwune in action

cont.'d from p.18

the wonderful educational foundation college, faculty and staff have long been known for."

In addition to the provost, Dr. Panayiotis Melietes, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Donna Chirico, a Psychology professor and chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences; Political Science professor, Dr. Robin Harper, Mondell Sealy, director of Development and Alumni Affairs; and a for a moment, President

Marcia V. Keizs, were among those in the room.

Weinstein recalled that despite York's nomadic first 20 years, a York education was of the highest quality and also provided sports opportunities as well. He played on the lacrosse team, which was part of York's early athletic repertoire.

Provost Griffith looks forward to working with faculty to pursue the opportunities Weinstein proffered.

"His offer to [identify] judicial internships for current students is a commendable and much appreciated contribution to broadening the educational horizons of current students," says Griffith. "That also enhances their competitiveness both in relation to graduate and professional school and the workforce."

Meanwhile, the College continues its efforts to strengthen relations with its broad alumni base.



Judge Grasso (l.), Mayor Bloomberg (r.) and Mr. Grasso's mother, Rosalie (c.) during the swearing-in ceremony.

(Photograph courtesy of the Grasso Family)



cont.'d from p.12

During that time, in addition to assisting Commissioner Kelly in driving crime down to record lows and continuing to protect the city of New York from further terrorist attacks, I take a lot of pride in initiating a program that caused police officers to be much safer in police department vehicles and initiated for the first time the widespread wearing of seat belts by officers while working. Due to the success of this program, there has not been a catastrophic injury to a police officer in a department vehicle for almost the last five years.

Q: When did you decide to make a career move and become a judge?

A: As I said earlier, from the time I was a student at York College, I always wanted to be a lawyer and had always loved the law. About 20 years ago a close friend of mine in the NYPD who was also an attorney left the department to become a criminal court judge. Through the years I stayed in contact with my friend and was always very interested in talking to him about his experience as a judge in New York City. And through the years I thought that this was something that I would like to do myself one day and I decided last

year that I should try to undertake the process to become a judge myself.

It proved to be a very intensive and competitive process. The more I became involved in it the more I thought that the time was right for me to take this next step in my career and really follow through with my desire to use my abilities as a lawyer to the maximum extent and to do my best to use my abilities as a lawyer to make our city a better place to live. And from that time I always thought that if I ever had the opportunity to become a judge.

Q: So, for the sake of our readers, how did it turn out?

A: I was extremely fortunate that day to have both of my parents participating in this ceremony with me along with my wife and two sons. The best part of the ceremony was being able to have my mother, Rosalie, hold our family bible to place my hand on as I took the oath of office for a five year term as a NYC criminal court judge.

Q: Do you have any regrets?

A: I have always been very fortunate in my career in the NYPD that I had been able to intertwine my abilities as an attorney with my respon-

sibilities in the police department. However, over the past few years, I had begun to feel that there was more that I should be doing as an attorney. And it was that thought process that played a very significant role in bringing me in the very place I am today.

Q: So dad any plans for the future?

A: My primary focus now is to learn as much as I possibly can so that I could do my job in a manner that is fair and effective and worthy of the oath of office that I have taken. Beyond that I'll just have to see what comes down the road and try to figure it out and handle it and deal with it the best I can.

Q: Any words of wisdom for us current York students in our own journeys?

A: Work hard, believe in yourself, stay open minded and be very flexible in dealing with the different challenges and opportunities that present themselves during the course of your lives and your professional careers. And never under any circumstances sell yourselves short.

This interview has been reprinted with permission from Pandora's Box.



York Faculty Update



- **Beth Rosenthal** gave a presentation at the Eastern Psychological Conference on March 5, 2010. The presentation was titled "Individual Trajectories of Change in PTSD Symptoms: Adolescence to Young Adulthood."
- On March 22, 2010, Prof. **John Drobnicki** (Chief Librarian) visited with the Internship class (GSLIS 795) at Queens College's Graduate School of Library and Information Studies. Invited by Dr. Marianne Cooper, Drobnicki was asked to speak about his career at York College, as well as his earlier work at Queens Borough Public Library.
- **Mokrue, K., O'Neill, P., Weiden, P., Friedman, S., & Cavaleri, M.** (in press). "Trauma Survivor's Emotional Distress and Barriers to Early Psychological Intervention in an Inner-city Acute Surgical Trauma Service." in: *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment and Trauma*.
- Dr. **Laura Fishman** was invited to speak on March 21, 2010, at the Queens Historical Society in Flushing. She spoke about "Abolition and the Women's Rights Movement: Connections and Controversies."
- On March 4, 2010, Dr. **Samuel Ghelli** was invited as a special guest at a sneak preview of a critically acclaimed new Italian film, "Pranzo Ferragosto" - "MID AUGUST LUNCH."
- **Timothy W. Kirk** published "Dying Tax Free: The Modern Advance Directive and Patients' Financial Values" in the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management* (Vol. 39, No. 3: 605-609).

York Track Star Returns Home After Haiti Earthquake

During the winter recess, York College student-athlete Joviette Frederick, a member of the track and field and softball team, decided to visit relatives in Haiti. Little did she know, she would end up in the middle of a deadly earthquake.

Frederick, who was born in New York but has family in Haiti, was there with her father, brother and sister to visit some relatives and work on a house they were building. On January 12, while on the porch of the house in the nearby town of Aux Cayes, the earthquake struck. Her fam-

ily all began to experience a major headache (which happens frequently before earthquakes) and realized something was wrong. They jumped from the porch onto the grass only to see the sight of bricks falling from the house they had come to build.

Meanwhile, her mother was home in New York, frantically waiting to hear from her family. "The earthquake happened around 4:30 pm and I wasn't able to get in touch with my mother until around 11:00 pm," said Frederick. "The news showed one of the

houses that fell. The house was six houses down from us and my mother recognized it. That made her a nervous wreck."

Frederick and her family were unable to get a flight home until January 21st, spending nine days in the aftermath of the earthquake. "It was a scary situation," said Frederick. "We were stressed and had trouble sleeping because we were worried about the aftershocks."

The house they were staying in was not damaged but her family decided to stay in a hotel. While they were in the

hotel, they experienced an aftershock and decided it was not safe to stay in the hotel either. They decided to sleep in the car where there was open space so they would be safe from falling debris. Seven of them squeezed into a small car with no air conditioning and tried to sleep through the night.

On the day they finally left, they arrived at Port-au-Prince Airport at 8 am and had to stand in a rescue line until 5 pm. They took off from a military plane with no chairs. Only U.S. citizens were allowed to board and

cont.'d from p.3

Now the former accountant will graduate summa cum laude from York with special honors in Biology.

Adeola Adebayo, a young Nigerian immigrant, has been studying pathology in the lab of her mentor, Dr. Ivica Arsov, a specialist in immunology. The soft-spoken scholar is both thrilled and surprised and she credits the dedicated mentors at York.

"I know I wanted to do research but never knew I'd be going to Brown," said a humbled Adebayo who has studied proteins essential to the development of lymphocytes. "At York it is very easy to get access to the professors. You get good mentoring [here]."

Dr. Arsov underscores the point.

"The aim is to understand the mechanism of the disease," he explained, "and Adebayo is a great student. She has a wide range of interests and a very optimistic outlook, which is what I like. She knows what she wants and is excellent in

class and in the lab."

And Arsov has high expectations of this first York cohort at Brown.

"It's your motivation ... the drive to do research ..." he notes. "But I think it is very important to leave a good trail behind them (at Brown) so Dr. Campbell will want to work with us again."

Dr. Campbell says as much.

"This is a legacy mindset," said Campbell who also sits on the York College Foundation Board. "When I [became director] there were five percent students of color, in the program. "Now it's 30 percent."

But the three students going on to Brown University this fall are far from being the only science majors moving on to impressive programs from York's great science departments.

Dex-Ann Brown, mentored by Dr. Jong-Il Lee, has also received a MARC Scholarship and will pursue a Ph.D. in molecular pharmacology at Stony Brook University while Nicholas Hunt-

Walker, mentored by Dr. Timothy Paglione, will pursue a Ph.D. in astrophysics at the University of Washington and several other graduating seniors are still fielding offers.

All this is great news but no surprise to Dr. Panayiotis Meleties, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at York.

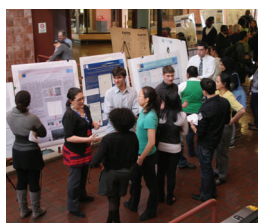
"The faculty and students of York College continue the tradition of excellence and success that they are noted for," said Dr. Meleties. "It is really a great pleasure to congratulate the students and their faculty mentors for their admission to the graduate programs at Brown University, the University of Washington [and Stony Brook.]"

According to the dean, it's all in the commitment.

"The mentorship and support of York College science alumni, which has been critical for this achievement, demonstrates the long time success of the faculty and their students," he concluded.



Students enjoying the poster presentations on Undergraduate Research Day



Students and faculty enjoying poster presentations on Undergraduate Research Day

cont.'d from p.21

they squeezed as many passengers as they could on the plane. All the passengers sat on the titanium floor for an uncomfortable flight to Orlando. From Orlando, they were able to get a regular flight back home to JFK Airport. "When we landed at JFK, I was so happy, added Frederick."

Since returning home, Frederick has helped lead the Women's Indoor Track and Field team to its first City University of New York Athletic Conference championship. She will also look to contribute to a successful season in softball as well.

President Marcia V. Keizs
and
Provost Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith
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All items should be submitted in MS Word

via email to:

AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu