

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

YORKCollege

York Professor Implements Grant To Benefit NYC High School Students

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**Professor
L e s l i e
Keiler**

After securing a \$10 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant last year as a Co-PI with CUNY colleagues at Hunter College, New York City Technical College and the [New York City] Department of Education (DOE), to be used over a five-year period for the Math and Science, Partnership in New York City (MSPinNYC), Dr. Leslie Keiler, is now seeing the fruit of that effort.

“The purpose of the

grant is to improve mathematics and science education in urban high schools and entering into college,” said Dr. Keiler, deputy chair of the Department of Teacher Education at York and director of Teacher Development for the grant. “It will also provide support to science and math teachers in the high schools and to help students in these schools [to] be more successful as they enter CUNY.”

The participating students, who came to York from Hillcrest High School, spent five weeks under Keiler’s guidance and honed their skills in preparation to take or retake the Regents Ex-

ams. However, Keiler’s role was not to teach the students per se. Rather, she taught the teachers and Teacher Assistant Scholars (TAS) (older high school students who in turn taught their junior counterparts). Keiler’s department colleague, Dr. Linda Gerena also helped in the training of the TAS participants focusing on literacy skills used to learn math and science. York’s Teacher Education candidates in the Mathematics and Science Teacher Scholars Program, funded by an NSF Noyce Grant, also supported the students, TAS and teachers, developing their

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Fall Convocation: Pomp, Circumstance and “Storytelling”

Fall Convocation at York on September 13 this year kicked off the 2012-2013 academic year with remarks from President Marcia V. Keizs, Provost Ivelaw L. Griffith, Vice President



President Marcia V. Keizs

Geneva Walker-Johnson, Student Government President Shirley Jackson and the 2012-13 Convocation Professor, Dr. Sonia Rivera-Valdés,

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Special points of interest:

- New First-Year Self-Study Launched
- ROTC program
- York Alum completes Physics Ph.D.
- Nurses travel to help community in Colombia

Provost Lecture Series

Fish Biodiversity in the Congo River

by Robin Harper



Assistant Provost Holger Henke congratulating Professor Elizabeth Alter (r.) following her lecture

Elizabeth Alter's lecture "Evolution in the Fast Lane: genetic studies of fish biodiversity in the Lower Congo River" was the first of the faculty lectures in the Provost Lecture Series for 2012-2013.

Elizabeth Alter, who came to York from the Natural Resources Defense Council and is now an Assistant Professor in the Biology department, provided a fascinating view of biodiversity in the Lower Congo River. Citing Theodosius Dobzhansky (1900–

1975), father of evolutionary biology, "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution," Alter urged the audience to think about context and change. She also implored us to think not just how something works but how it got that way.

Alter stressed that contemporary biodiversity is a direct result of neutral evolution and natural selection. She used the lecture to guide us through understanding biodiversity, the na-

ture of species, how species change, current challenges to biodiversity, and the importance of biodiversity. The lecture highlighted her findings on speciation among cichlids in the Lower Congo River.

What makes something a species, a being that is fundamentally different from another? Since the decision of what belongs in what category is socially constructed, this exercise is indeed a complicated one. It forces the scien-

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Provost Lecture Series

Playing the Field: Agricultural Games on *My American Farm*



Dr. Cynthia Haller

Dept. of English
School of Arts & Sciences

October 22, 2012

1:00–3:00 pm, Rm. 3D01



Industrialized agriculture has become a favored scapegoat of both environmentalists and food system critics, accused variously of depleting and polluting natural resources; perpetuating environmental injustice; and contributing to obesity, foodborne illness, and food security problems. Through case analysis of the website My American Farm, this presentation analyzes how U.S. farm organizations are responding to change public awareness of and attitudes toward food production.

Another York Alumnus completes Ph.D. in Physics

The York College/CUNY community extends congratulations to alumnus, Yisa Rumala, '06, who recently graduated from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, with a Ph.D. in Applied Physics.

Dr. Rumala, who majored in Physics and Mathematics at York, also earned the Master of Science (MS) in Electrical Engineering while at the University of Michigan, where he attended on a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, University of Michigan Rackham Merit Fellowship, and University of Michigan Applied Physics Fellowship.

In February 2012 Rumala also received the inaugural CUNY Decade of Science Award from Chancellor Matthew Goldstein at a CUNY Luncheon, during the Black, Hispanic and Asian Caucus of State Legislators Weekend – in Albany, New York (see picture).

Rumala, CUNY's luncheon keynote speaker, presented, "From

Brooklyn and the Farm to Optical Tornadoes: My Path Through the STEM Disciplines," which highlighted some of his dissertation work in optical and atomic physics.

"My dissertation research work is on Light Beams which possess orbital angular momentum," Rumala explained. "The reason wind tornadoes revolve around is because they have orbital angular momentum. By using light's orbital angular momentum that is the tornado-like properties of light, optical structures with different geometries and dynamic properties can be obtained."

York's Dr. Ivelaw L. Griffith, provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, expressed his delight at the news that Rumala had successfully defended the dissertation.

"Among other things, Yisa's doctoral completion is attributable to his innate intellectual capability and the outstanding academic preparation and mentoring provided by

his York College faculty," said Dr. Griffith. "Those two factors allowed him to rise to the occasion at the University of Michigan and perform superbly. He is a wonderful credit to himself, his family, and to York, CUNY and the University of Michigan. I expect him to soar to new heights. Look out world, Dr. Rumala will be challenging us and helping to improve things we do."

Among Rumala's outstanding mentors at York College were Dr. Farley Mawyer, one of York's leading Mathematics professors; as well as Physics professors, Dr. Gregory Boutis, Dr. Lawrence Johnson and Dr. Lynne Richards.

Over its 45-year history York College has earned an outstanding reputation for its exceptional strength in physics and in biotechnology among others. To this end, Rumala joins a stellar list of York graduates who are teachers and practitioners in these important fields.



Yisa Rumala (r.), here with CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein, and Liliete Lopez (Hostos Community College) during an award ceremony in Albany earlier this year



"To know what people really think, pay regard to what they do, rather than what they say."

George Santayana

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning



Thursday, Oct. 11	Presentations:	5th Annual Day of Assessment
	12 - 2 pm	Faculty Dining Room, AC 2D01
	<u>Presenters:</u>	Outcomes Assessment Committee
Thursday, Oct. 18	Panel:	Beyond Blackboard: Using Social Media In and Out of the 'Classroom'
	12 – 1:45 pm	CETL, AC 4EA1
	<u>Presenters:</u>	Rob Duncan, Behavioral Sciences Nicholas Grosskopf, Health & Physical Education Wenyng Huang-Stolte, Acad. Comp/Educ.Tech. Michael Smith, Performing & Fine Arts
Thursday, Oct. 25	Panel:	Implementing Student Independent Study and Research Programs
	12 – 1:45 pm	CETL, AC 4EA1
	<u>Presenters:</u>	Kathariya Mokruue, Behavioral Sciences Anne Simon, Biological Sciences
Thursday, Nov. 1	Workshop:	Assess, Mark, Comment, or Correct?: How to Respond Effectively to Student Writing
	12 – 1:45 pm	CETL, AC 4EA1
	<u>Facilitators:</u>	York College Writing Across the Curriculum Fellows



York Faculty Update



- **Charlene Lane**, (Department of Health and Physical Education & Gerontological Studies and Services, School of Health and Behavioral Sciences), “A Symbolic Interactionism Perspective and Ageing: Ageism,” *The International Journal of Aging in Society*, Volume 1, Issue 3 (2012), pp. 61-66.
- **Gila M. Acker**, (Department of Social Sciences, School of Health and Behavioral Sciences), “Burnout among mental health care providers,” *Journal of Social Work*, (Sept. 2012)12(5), 475-490.

New First-Year Self-Study Gets Under Way

Beginning this Fall semester, York College embarked on a comprehensive self-study and improvement initiative to foster retention and graduation rates. Together with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, a national leader in the improvement of first-year college experiences, and with significant support from CUNY Central, York and several other colleges have begun to engage in this process.

During the summer, President Keizs had appointed Dr. Thomas Gibson and Dr. Holger Henke to be the campus liaisons guiding this comprehensive exercise. Following preparatory conversations with the Gardner Institute, the process was recently launched with a meeting at John Jay College to set the process officially in motion. Apart from York, the College of Staten Island, the new Community College and LaGuardia Community College, are current participants from within the CUNY system.

During the meeting, and with Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Frank Sanchez in the

audience, John Gardner emphasized CUNY's role as the largest and oldest urban university system in the nation and the fact that other urban university's take note of what CUNY is doing.

The self-study process follows an established series of best practice guidelines and a self-study template developed by the Gardner Institute, which envisions a broad and deep campus-wide engagement of several constituencies among faculty, administration, and students. Thus, a Task Force comprising a Steering Committee and nine dimension sub-committees will provide a series of self-study and planning exercises towards a comprehensive report, which shall guide the College in the next years in its efforts to improve educational and co-curricular experiences for first-year and new students.

A number of faculty, administration and student development leaders have already agreed to serve as members of the dimensional sub-committees which are (co-)chaired by Dr. Thomas Jordan, Dr. Debra Swoboda, Dr.

Jean Phelps and Dr. Cynthia Haller, Dr. Margaret MacNeil, Dr. Cecily Horsham-Brathwaite, Ms. Paola Vera, Dr. Fenix Arias, Ms. Linda Chesney and Prof. Wayne Forrester, and Dr. Tania Levey. The committees have begun to constitute themselves and in the next weeks their chairs will reach out to faculty, student development staff, and administrators, as well as to student leadership for representation on the sub-committees.

In a memorandum to the college community, Vice-President of Student Development Dr. Geneva Walker-Johnson and Provost Dr. Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith urged the college community to actively participate in this campus-wide conversation. By the end of the self-study process in Spring 2013 a comprehensive self-study report and action plan shall be presented to guide the college over the next one to three years in its effort to envision new first-year goals and experiences that will better transition new students to the York experience, as well as to prepare them for their sopho-



Student Research Day 2012

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Math Professor's Busy Summer



Prof. Rishi Nath

Mathematics Professor Rishi Nath had a productive summer 2012. He received a writing interdisciplinary fellowship to write articles for the "Asian-American Resource Writing Workshop" and a partnership with a Queens College counterpart led to publication in a prestigious mathematics journal.

Dr. Nath was recently awarded an Open City Fellowship by the Asian American Writers Workshop (aaww.org). There were five Fellowships awarded, corresponding to writers who were interested in doing regular creative non-fiction pieces about the five Queens neighborhoods that house the largest Asian-American immigrant populations in New York City: Flushing, Jackson Heights, Chinatown/LES, Sunset Park, and Richmond Hill. Dr. Nath was awarded the fellowship for Richmond Hill, where he has lived for the past seven years, since moving to New York.

The award carries a stipend of \$5,000, and participation in several writing workshops hosted by AAWW. Nath will be publishing monthly pieces on AAWW's online magazine "Open City" (at opencitymag.com).

"My writing is an outgrowth of my interest in music, which started in college, when my friends and I had a small record label," said Nath. "Once we were not able to sustain the label financially, I began to write about music. I will be writing about the local food and music cultures in Richmond Hill and surrounding neighborhoods, with a look at what can be learned about the immigrant experiences nearby."

Dr. Nath wanted to diversify his intellectual experiences and this was a good opportunity.

"In the sciences people think you have your Ph.D. and that's the end of that," said Nath. "They think you'll cruise out your career. My ap-

plication to Open City is a consequence of my role as Director of Undergraduate Research [at York College]. While searching for possible speakers for Student Research Day last winter, I stumbled upon the AAWW website, and saw the call for applications. So, in some sense one could say I am living the interdisciplinary experience that I am promoting in my directorship."

That aside, math is still Nath's bread and butter and where his scholarship is well-established as evidenced by a recent partnership.

"Over the summer I was informed that my joint paper 'The number of self-conjugate core partitions' with [Dr.] Chris Hanusa, Assistant Professor in Mathematics at Queens College, was accepted at the *Journal of Number Theory*," he said. "[It's] one of the most prestigious number theory journals in mathematics."

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more year and study towards graduation in their respective major.

As Dr. Henke and Dr. Gibson emphasize, the process, the self-study

insights and conclusions, and the resulting action plan "will have to be owned by the entire College community in order to make a real differ-

ence, and we look forward to wide and deep participation, as we are about to unfold and implement this initiative."

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own teaching skills.

"We used the Peer-Enabled Restructured Classroom (PERC)" Keiler explained. "It is the model used for the research (upon which the grant was written). The students work in groups of four led by a Teacher Assistant Scholar (TAS)."

TAS, according to Keiler, are typically one year older than the students with whom they work. The TASes must already have passed their Regents Exams the year before they participate as TAS instructors; but they are not honors students so they spend a year "building their skills and content knowledge; that way they enter the next grade closer to their honors counterparts," according to Keiler.

Dr. Lynne Clark, dean of the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences at York under which the Teacher Education program falls, is proud of the promise of the program and of the scholarship of its director.

"We are so proud that York College and its School of Health and Behavioral Sciences have such a distinguished researcher, teacher, and scholar as Dr. Leslie Keiler," said Dr. Clark. "The ini-

tial student learning results of Dr. Keiler's and her Hunter [and New York City Tech] colleagues' innovative, peer learning program are very impressive. Thus, their student learning model will serve to effectively prepare future New York City high school students for college and employment."

Keiler says it is also helpful that the participants feel the York spirit.

"The program at York has been incredibly successful," said Keiler. "One hundred percent of the students passed the Integrated Algebra. Two thirds of them passed at a level for to qualify for a four-year CUNY College. The traditional summer school stats are that only 30 percent pass altogether. Many of the participating students now want to come to York because of their positive experience here."

Students agree with Professor Keiler.

"I've learned leadership," said TAS student Amais Ward. "I am more patient and organized and I grasp information faster now and I have learned note-taking [skills] and annotating passages."

TAS Asia Boodoo and Kevin Singh concurred.

"When you become a role model you change," said Boodoo. "You become a better person. You don't skip as many classes."

"I learned how to have patience with people," said Singh. "And I got more comfortable with the subject so the students were learning but I was learning as well."

Keiler expressed pride in York's role in helping local high school students to develop fruitful academic habits.

"We've helped over 50 high school students [to] find academic success and spend their summer in a positive way," said Keiler. "I'm proud to see York playing such a meaningful role in supporting local high school students and developing an education model that could revolutionize urban schools across the country."

Ninth-grader Serafina Ramnarine offered proof of Keiler's assessment.

"This program should be throughout all the schools," she said. "Because it helped me a lot and the TAS make sure you know everything. And they know whether you 'get it' or not. It takes a student to understand a student. Students may lie to the teacher so that the teach-

"Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one."

— Malcolm S. Forbes



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Dr. Christopher Hanusa (Queens College)

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Professor Nath who says the fruit of his collaboration with Hanusa will be published 2013, explained that “the genesis of the paper” goes back to a trip he took last year.

“While in Paris in 2011, I was discussing a famous unsolved problem of Dennis Stanton’s, and what was known – with my host, mathematician J.B. Gramain,” he said. “I was inspired by Stanton; I formulated a similar question about a different set of objects, so-called self-conjugate core partitions.”

Following his conversation with Gramain, who in turn recently visited York and lectured at “Quantum Day,” sponsored by the Tensor

Scholars Program at York, Nath came back to New York fired up about the exchange with Gramain.

“When I arrived back in New York, I explained my idea to Dr. Hanusa,” he said. “Together we refined the question to be as precise as possible, and then answered it in special cases. We also posited a number of new conjectures (questions that seem true but we could not answer). We are hopeful other mathematicians will join in and help find answers to some of the unsolved patterns we observed. I believe this is the first time a collaboration between a mathematician from Queens College

and York College has resulted in a publication. Dr. Hanusa and I plan to continue our collaborative research after we complete the independent projects we both have going on now.”

Dr. Frank L. Pritchard, chairperson of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department praised the collaboration.

“It is always good to see members of various CUNY campuses collaborating and in particular it is good to see faculty at York collaborating with Queens College as they are so close,” he said. “[And] it is also good to see our faculty remain research active.”

Inaugural Provost Conversation about Research & Scholarship

A Conversation with Linda Gerena about her Fulbright Experience

November 1, 12:00 to 2:00 pm
President’s Conference Room

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er doesn’t think they’re stupid, but they can’t lie to the TAS because they’re students too. It takes a student to understand a student.”

Dr. Keiler’s expertise is underpinned by her training in the sciences and in teaching. She

holds a B.S. in Human Biology and M.S. in Biological Sciences (both) from Stanford University; M.S. in Secondary Science Education from Teachers College, Columbia University; and her doctorate in Educational Studies from Uni-

versity of Oxford, England.

Among her many publications are “An Effective Urban Summer School: Students Perspectives on their Success” published in *The Urban Review*.



Rodent Infestation in Washington Heights

Summer Public Health Scholars Program (SPHSP)

Columbia University Medical Center (Summer 2012 Internship)

by Ezazul Haque (York College Environmental Science Major)

Rodents are capable of transferring over 60 diseases to both humans and domestic animals. Increase in rodent infestation brings issues of public health, health disparities, and environmental racism to the minority, immigrant community of color of Washington Heights.

High reproductive rates, highly adaptive ecology, and opportunistic behavior allows rodents to become the largest infestation issue in Washington Heights. Thus, an increase in infestation means it is time to take intervention measures.

Despite several attempts by other countries to control the rat infestation, literature on studies of the effectiveness of the mitigation and the sustainability of the plans are scarce. Based on available literature on rodent infestation management and potential sustainable intervention plans the following can be said in relation to the socioeconomic demographics of Washington Heights.

Rodents often enter

human environments in search of food and shelter. The most common rodents in New York City are commensal rats and mice. These Old World rodents have adapted to live with humans. These include the Roof Rat, the Norway Rat, and the House Mouse. They have been carried to every corner of the planet by humans. Rats and mice easily consume and contaminate large amounts of food and damage structures, stored clothing and documents. In addition, they function as reservoirs or vectors for several diseases such as Rat-bite fever, Leptospirosis (Well's Disease), Murine Typhus, Rickettsial pox, Plague, Trichinosis, Typhoid, Dysentery, Salmonellosis, Hymenolepsis, tapeworms, Lymphocytic choriomeningitis, and Hanta Virus.

Rats are some of the most damaging and troublesome rodents in the United States. They thrive in a wide variety of climate conditions and are often found in and around homes, buildings, farms, gardens, and open fields.

The Norway rat (*Rattus Norvegicus*), also known as brown or sewer rat, are stocky burrowing rodents that are larger than roof rats. They form burrows along buildings, foundations, beneath trash or woodpiles, and moist areas in and around fields and gardens. They create nests with shredded paper, cloth or other fibrous material.

When Norway rats invade buildings, they tend to remain in the basement or ground floor. Norway rats can be found throughout the contiguous 48 United States. Although they are generally found in lower elevations, they can be seen wherever people live.

Roof rats (*R. rattus*), also known as black rats, are smaller than Norway rats. Unlike Norway rats, their tails are longer than their head and body combined. Roof rats are good climbers, typically live and nest above ground in trees, and shrubs. They are frequently found in elevated spaces such as attics, walls, false ceilings, or



Haque and his York mentor, Dr. Ratan Dhar (l.)

“The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself.”

Edward G. Bulwer-Lytton

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York Nursing Faculty Volunteering in Colombia



Prof. McFarquhar (l.) and Prof. Lilly Mathew (r.) with patients in the Suba district of Bogotá, Colombia

Understanding that we are all members of a global community, the nursing faculty at York College track health care issues and disparities and incorporate this information into the nursing curriculum. In summer 2012 two York Nursing Professors, Prof. Claudette McFarquhar and Prof. Lilly Mathew spent a week in Bogotá; Colombia, volunteering their nursing services to the community in Suba.

They conducted a medical camp from August 20-23, 2012, at the "Light of the World Foundation," in Suba, Bogotá, along with a team of other nurses from the United States. The people of the inner-city Suba are among the poorest in Bogotá. The foundation was built for children who are poor and from broken homes. Their families cannot afford education or meals. The foundation is a safe haven for the children and it keeps them away from the streets of Suba, which are known for narcotic trade and violence. "Light of the World" provides them with edu-

cation and meals. Around 200 children attend the foundation 6 days per week. Some parents also work as cooks and bakers without salary so that meals can be provided to their families. The children and their family members cannot afford health care and are usually treated with home remedies.

The camp was opened to the foundation staff, children and the community. The facility designated specific areas for registration, patient interviews, patient assessment/screening, consultation and a distribution center. Around 275 patients, including older adults, young adults, children and infants were seen. The nurses were able to do health assessments on all patients that attended the camp.

The Suba community has only minimal access to health care providers and little knowledge of healthy lifestyles. The common health concerns of the community are headaches, back-aches, joint pain and skin rashes. Many are hypertensive and have elevated

glucose levels. The nurses provided instructions with assistance from the assigned translators. Some specifics included: nutritious meals, diets for hypertension and diabetes, management of lice infestations, breast self examination, treatment for wounds/injuries, and pain management.

The children were taught about maintaining personal hygiene, with emphasis on hand-washing. Also, eye check ups were performed and reading glasses were given to the elderly. Over-the-counter medications and vitamins for adults and children were distributed; referrals for further care were made.

This camp was possible with the partnership of charitable organizations and individual contributions and donations. The team created "goody bags" for adults and children with donated items to ease the process of distribution. Many donated items like toothbrushes, vitamins, band-Aids, coloring books, crayons, t-shirts were distributed.

The team had a valua-



A bird-eye view of Suba

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York's Summer Researchers Find Rewarding Answers

For the third consecutive year, Dr. Panayiotis Meleties, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at York, provided research opportunities for interested high school students across the city.

The research projects included work ranging from economics, social and psychological sciences, to biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. In addition to their daily research work, students participated in seminars and workshops that included safety training, library orientation, research integrity, and seminars by faculty, on current topics of interest and ongoing research projects.

More than 25 York College faculty members served as mentors for the program, which recruits York College students and regional high school students. Thirty seven high school students and 27 college students participated. The high schools included Queens High School for the Sciences at York College, Thomas Edison, Stuyvesant, John Bowne Francis Lewis, Bryant, Health Opportu-

nities, Martin Van Buren, Newtown, Townsend Harris and others.

All were engaged in cutting-edge research through working with various outstanding faculty participants. Some of the high school students were the children of York professors and administrators; but most came on the advice of teachers and guidance counselors from their respective schools.

Jorge Villegas and Mary Bergtraum, a high school junior, presented "Alternative Jet Fuel: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," under the guidance of Dr. Chun-Pin Hsu, a Business and Economics professor, and are optimistic about the future.

"We looked back at what we used to use," said Villegas. "We used to use petroleum (crude oil), but bio-fuel was approved for use last year. It's a fuel developed from plants and is a renewable source, but it is expensive."

The duo explained that by 2018 the United States would like to have one billion gallons of alternative fuel for use by the Federal Aviation Administration

(FAA) and may be able "to achieve energy security," which would in turn reduce the cost of air travel. Bergtraum who also participated in the program last year, had high praises for the program. "It is significantly better this year," she said. "I got a lot more this year."

Ashley Simons with her mentor, Dr. Charlene Lane, looked at sleep quality and how it affects older adults (65 and above) as they age and how that impacts their health.

"Older adults wake up more easily and sleep less hours," said Simons. "Health quality is affected by sleep quality. They have less posture control. Positive sleep helps them have better posture control ... they are more stabilized when they have a healthy amount of sleep."

Dr. Lane was impressed with Simons' interest. "Ashley is a dedicated student, said Dr. Lane. "She's hard-working and a pleasure to work with. We will build on this. Gerontology is a passion for her."

Rashida Rahman and Kareem Stanley who are



Students set up their posters in the Atrium



Faculty (here Dr. Anne Simon, ctr.) and students enjoyed the opportunity to talk about their research

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Many of the posters stimulated discussion ...



... and many external presenters quite simply begin to "see themselves" at York College after high school



L. to r.: Dr. Charlene Lane and her mentee, Ashley Simons

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students at the Queens High School of Science at York College also appreciated the opportunity to do research on the college level, learning about chemotherapy, from their mentor, Dr. Jong-Ill Lee, resulting in their presentation, "Synthesis of New Photo Trigger for Drug Delivery."

"Chemo is not selective," said Stanley. "It harms both the harmful and useful cells in the body. Rahman concurred. "It defeats the purpose," she explained. "[But] eventually the medicine and the photo-trigger will reach the area of affliction together and impact only that."

According to the duo, Dr. Lee has been working on the research for some time. "I just thought it was fascinating that we're working on something that could [possibly] cure cancer," said Stanley.

"It has increased my interest in science," said Rahman, who expressed interest in working with Dr. Lee again next year. "I want to be a researcher and this is really good experience. It helps you understand what kind of scientist you want to be. And it looks good on your application (for college).

Steven Williamson, a

junior at St. Francis Prep, was mentored by Dr. Ratan Dhar to use a hand-held X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) as a "rapid and reliable" tool for environmental monitoring of soils and sands.

"I used sand from a beach in Cancun, Mexico and compared it with soil in Flushing, Queens," said Williamson. The sand from the marine area had nothing unusual in it. But the soil from Flushing had a lot of iron. It comes from garbage, acid rain and basic pollution. I had rocky, finer and finest soil. The finer it is the more elements you find in it."

Some of the other participants included York student Bianca Brown, a Biology major mentored by Dr. Susan Alter. She used fish species donated by the American Museum of Natural History. These species came "straight from the Congo River," as Brown studied the "Effects of the Lower Congo River Rapids on the Diversification of *Mastacembelus Brichardi* (blind spiny eel)."

She found that there was not much difference between the species between upstream and downstream.

Other York student

presenters were Mikhail Khaitov, and Marat Nurilov, both Russian immigrants, and Rita Henry, then an incoming freshman at York, all mentored by Dr. Simon in her specialty of the socio-behavioral response to genetic or pharmacological depletion of Dopamine in *Drosophila Melanogaster* (fruit flies).

"When I came here to check out the college I saw a pamphlet for the summer research program and I wanted to be involved," said Henry. "I thought I wouldn't know anything but I was surprised to find out I did. I knew *Drosophila*."

Dean Meleties, was pleased with the outcome of the students' research experiences.

"The program aims to introduce students in high school and college to the exciting world of research," said Dr. Meleties. "During the summer program they participate in training workshops and seminars, and become part of research groups working together to explore, to record and to report their accomplishments. The more than 50 posters that were presented on August 9 were just one of the

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York Mourns Another Member of the College Community

The York College community was rocked again by the passing of yet another member of “the family.”

Dr. Michael Flynn, a Psychology professor and deputy chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences, died on September 25 of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), better known as Lou Gehrig’s Disease, after the legendary baseball player who died from the malady in 1941.

The degenerative brain and spinal disease, struck Dr. Flynn last spring, devastating his body in short order and resulted in his death at the age of 49.

Arriving at York in 1994, Professor Flynn quickly established himself as an important part of the faculty and the college community. He was beloved by students for his knack for encouraging independent thinking on social issues as

well as “collaborative inquiry” in their education.

Flynn worked his way up the faculty food chain from part-time faculty to full-time assistant professor to associate professor by 2007.

“I am heart-broken to have to pass along the unbelievable news that Michael Flynn died yesterday,” said Dr. Donna Chirico, chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences in her announcement to the college community, the morning after his death. “Michael was diagnosed with ALS in the late spring, [and] began to suffer its effects, and in the last few days deteriorating rapidly.”

Professor Flynn, once a life-affirming member of the college community, was also engaged in numerous activities outside of York. He served on the Citizens Committee on Bosnia-Herzegovina and served as director for the Pitts-

burgh Alliance for Peace. As a psychologist, he was also a clinician in private practice. His numerous volunteer activities included service to a homeless shelter for women and children.

The late professor was married to Yolanda Rivera and was the proud father of two young daughters, Olivia and Antonia Rivera-Flynn. He was widely published in his field and recently co-wrote the book, *Screening Torture: Media Representations of State Terrorism and Political Domination*, with Dr. Fabiola Fernandez Salek, chair of the Department of Foreign Languages at York. The book is scheduled for publication by Columbia University Press later in the Fall of 2012.

Dr. Flynn’s scholarly expertise also included political violence, youth studies and clinical psychology.



Prof. Michael Flynn

cont.’d from p.10

ble experience with the culture of Colombia. The people of Colombia were found to be very friendly, open, hospitable and kind with great big smiles. The York



Prof. Mathew (r.) at the health camp in Suba

team members reported increased cultural sensitivity in caring for a community that is culturally diverse.



cont.'d from p.2

As I listened to her lecture, I was reminded of Justice Stewart in a very different context in *Jacobellis v. Ohio* famously noting that some things may be difficult to define but “I know it when I see it.” And, indeed, Dr. Alter stated that eyeballing something was one of the methods, although not a very good one. Rather, she presented alternative methods to think about how we generate categories: Typological/phenotypic species; biological species; lineage-based species.

creased speciation.

Dr. Alter's research centers on the cichlids in Lower Congo River, asking whether water itself can be a barrier to fish, resulting in reproductive isolation and diversified speciation. Although, she observed, that cichlids are extremely well documented in the literature, there is little research on cichlids in rivers. Her work, in conjunction with Drs. Melanie Stiassny of the American Museum of Natural History and Jeff Markert of Providence College, fills this void.

Dr. Alter has been investigating genetic structure of the fish of the Lower Congo River. She has discovered that indeed there is a great deal of speciation. What accounts for this? Dr. Alter posits that there are rheophilic features, such as a reduced swim bladder that may limit movement and thus ability to

reproduce with similar cichlids, relative size, habitat speciation and the life history (i.e., mouth brooders vs. substrate spawners.) Dr. Alter and her research partners are documenting the types and variation among cichlids. This data will be especially useful in trying to understand the impact of dams and hydroelectric power development on the environment.

Dr. Alter is actively incorporating her students into her research. One of Dr. Alter's York students, Bianca Brown, performed preliminary work on the spiny blind eel and discovered the genetic data mapping this as a distinct species.

For those students interested in studying more about this topic, Professor Alter will be teaching Biology 477, Evolution, in the spring of 2013.

[illegible]

York Launches ROTC Program

by Andy Talbert (ROTC)

The Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) was recently launched at York College/CUNY in time for the fall 2012 semester. It marks the first time since 1960 that ROTC has been offered at any member college of the City University of New York (CUNY). Students interested in Army ROTC classes can learn what it takes to be a leader in the armed forces as well as in private and public sector careers and life. The newly implemented program provides students with leadership training and tuition assistance.

Lt. Colonel Juan Howe, the CUNY Army ROTC director, describes ROTC as a strong enrichment opportunity for York Students.

"This is the only approved 24-credit course sequence within the CUNY system," said Howie. "The program will teach students leadership skills, help establish critical and creative thinking, and helps them reach obtainable career goals."

The inaugural three-credit course, Military Science (MSci 101) being offered in the fall 2012 semester, will be

followed by MSci 102 in spring 2013. Both are in the 24-credit sequence.

These courses include Military Custom and Courtesies, Warrior Ethos, Army Values, Rank Structure and Introduction to Army Writing. All courses are offered through York's School of Health and Behavioral Sciences and taught by Sergeant First Class Charles Gray. Currently, there are 17 students enrolled in the ROTC program for the fall 2012 semester.

The ROTC program was reintroduced to CUNY in response to an inquiry from General Colin Powell, a graduate of City College/CUNY and former Secretary of State under President George W. Bush. According to the Colin C. Powell Center for Leadership and Service, housed on the CCNY campus, Powell entered the City College to study geology; however he found his calling when he joined the ROTC program at the college. He became commander of his unit and graduated in 1958 at the top of his ROTC class with the rank of Cadet Colonel.

Powell came back to City College in 2003 as a guest to promote his book, *The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell*, and was dismayed to find out ROTC no longer existed at CUNY. He subsequently spoke to key people at CUNY about reconsidering ROTC.

Some York College students already see potential in ROTC.

"I would take ROTC classes since I now know that they are offered here", said Gerard Jones, a Physical Education major. "I have thought about joining the armed forces in the past, ROTC classes will be a great stepping-stone."

Freshman and "undecided" major, Jermaine Brown, was pleased to know ROTC exists on campus.

"I did not know about the ROTC program," says Brown. "But now that I know, it seems like something I will be interested in. When I was in high school I was tempted to join ROTC, but now that I know it is offered at York, I just might take some of those ROTC courses."



cont.'d on p.17

York's New Faculty Members

Claudette V. McFarquhar



Prof. Claudette V. McFarquhar

In Spring 2012 Dr. Claudette V. McFarquhar became a member of the team in the School of Health & Behavioral Sciences – Department of Health Professions at York College, Jamaica, Queens. She now works with students in the Associate to BSN program and students in the Generic BSN programs. Prior to coming to York, she served as a Nurse Educator, Manager, and Staff nurse at Brookdale University Hospital; Professor at Medgar Evers College; Kingsborough Community College, and Helene Fuld School of Nursing.

Dr. McFarquhar helps to prepare nursing students for the NCLEX-RN examination.

With a passion for disease prevention, teaching, and service, Dr. McFarquhar helps in her church community to teach prevention and management of high blood pressure. In the Summer of 2008, Dr. McFarquhar participated in a medical mission to Jamaica, West Indies; and in summer 2012, she volunteered with a team of nurses to the community of Suba, Bogota, Colombia where health related teachings and services were also pro-

vided (see article on p.10).

Dr. McFarquhar attended the Kingston School of Nursing (Jamaica, W.I.) from which she graduated as an RN; she also spent time at the Paisley Maternity Hospital, Scotland where she studied Midwifery and the Hammersmith Hospital, London where she learned about Neonatology. In addition, she holds a BSN from Medgar Evers College (CUNY), an MSN & MPH from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from Walden University, Minneapolis.

YORK COLLEGE CUNY

cont.'d from p.12

many indicators of the success and the impact the program has.”

Dr. Meleties added that the program also

supports faculty research and scholarship even as it supports students. In addition, he said, the program supports faculty

research and promotes college recruitment and retention.

cont.'d from p.9

cabinets. Compared to the Norway Rat the roof rat has a limited geographical range, preferring ocean influenced,

warmer climate.

A young rat is typically confused with being a common house mouse. In general, very

young rats have very large heads and feet in proportion to their bodies, whereas those of adults are much smaller.



Dean Panayiotis Meleties

Provost Distinguished Scholars Lecture Series



“Mirar Adentro/Looking Within”

Nancy Morejón
Thursday, November 1, 2012
6-8 PM • Room: Tbd

Nancy Morejón is one of the most outstanding living poets of the Spanish language. Born in 1944, in Havana, to working class parents, Morejón graduated from Havana University. She was the first black woman poet to publish widely and be accepted as a professional writer, critic, and translator. Morejón has published more than twelve collections of poetry highlighting the Afro-Caribbean experience. She is the recipient, among many other prestigious national and international Literary prizes, of the Critic's Prize (1986) and Cuba's National Prize for Literature (2001), the Golden Wreath (Macedonia, 2006) and the Rafael Alberti Literary Prize (Spain 2007). Currently, she is the President of the Association of Writers of UNEAC (Unión Nacional de Escritores y Artistas Cubanos).



cont.'d from p.15

Dr. Marcia V. Keizs, president of York College is delighted with the leadership role York has taken in the reinstatement of ROTC in the university.

“I am glad that York is leading the way with

the re-introduction of ROTC in CUNY,” said President Keizs. “ROTC is not necessarily about joining the Army; rather it is about developing strong leadership skills for life. With this preparation,

our participating students are enhancing their abilities as leaders while in college and upon graduation, will be ready to establish careers in numerous fields of interest, including the military if they so choose.”

cont.'d from p.1

the keynote speaker.

Resplendent in academic regalia to coordinate with faculty and senior administrators, President Keizs touted the accomplishments of the last academic year with an update on accreditations such as in Clinical Lab Science, Generic Nursing, Teacher Education and Physician Assistant. Both the president and the provost also welcomed a small but vital cohort of new faculty to the nursing program: Professors Margaret Alexandre, Professor Heather Gibson and Professor Claudette McFarquhar were acknowledged and welcomed to the York family. Faculty were also hired in several other departments.

The president was also thankful for successful site visits for academic program reviews, including Mathematics and Computer Sciences, Foreign Languages, Humanities and ESL, Earth and Physical Sciences, Biology and the Library.

"These academic program achievements position York College for expansion, growth and rebranding," said President Keizs. "And se-

cond on our list of top achievements at York, was the Third Annual Undergraduate Research Day, and the vibrant student engagement we saw in undergraduate research. Envisioned by Provost Griffith and executed by Dr. [Rishi] Nath and a large number of York College faculty, we continue to develop our intentional co-curricular activities building on the hallmark of the early York College science student experience."

Dr. Rivera-Valdés as Convocation Professor wowed the audience with her compelling address, "Story Telling Can Shape Your Life."

Dr. Rivera-Valdés' story-telling skills were fostered by her parents' love of the oral tradition and enviable home library, and led her to the publication of a number of books, and a reputation as one of the leading female voices in Latin American Literature.

"My parents' devotion to storytelling redeems them, in my feelings, from many unquestionable faults in my upbringing," said Rivera-Valdés, daughter of a cigar maker father and reluctant homemaker

mother. "We had a lot of books in our home. One Friday, the day that my father received his weekly salary, he came home with a book that he bought especially for me: *Corazón*, in Spanish, *Heart*, in English, *Cuore* in Italian, written by Edmondo De Amicis. The book not only captivated me, but it took me to another dimension. Reading it, I felt that by getting involved in those characters' problems I could forget mine for a while. Edmondo De Amicis' book was the first one I read in which the protagonist was a child. Reading *Heart*, I realized that I was not the only child in the world who suffered because of economic and family problems and that was of great consolation..."

Dr. Rivera-Valdés, who is an invaluable professor in the Department of Foreign Languages, is the third Convocation Professor since the title was launched by Provost Griffith three years ago. She succeeds Professor Samuel Hux as Convocation Professor, who succeeded Professor Howard Ruttenberg.



Sonia Rivera-Valdés



The faculty came out in strong numbers

York Scholar-Athlete Alum Receives ECAC Award of Valor

Former York College student-athlete alum Vanessa Rivera has been named one of three recipients for the prestigious Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) Award of Valor. She was honored at the ECAC Fall Convention & Trade Show at the Mystic, CT Marriot Hotel & Spa on Sunday, September 30.

The recipients of the ECAC Award of Valor exemplify strength of character and perseverance.

Rivera competed in three sports during the 2011-2012 school year, playing soccer, basketball and softball, and she was a key part of all three teams. But that is not what makes her story notable. Rivera has been forced to take a lot on her plate because of a difficult family situation. Her mother worked for a cleaning company and was called in to do clean-up work a few days after the 9/11 tragedy. Not given the proper equipment, her mother along with the other workers, became very sick over the years. Her mother is now on permanent disability and because of that, Rivera is responsible for caring for her.

Because of her mother's condition, Rivera, who is the oldest of four children, must care of her 12-year-old brother and six-year-old sister. On top of all this, Rivera took part in a demanding student-teaching internship during the Spring 2012 semester at the Scholar Academy in Queens, NY. She graduated in May with a 3.4 GPA and a degree in Physical Education, K-12. Last season, she was honored by the City University of New York Athletic Conference (CUNYAC) on two occasions. She was named the Burt Beagle Sportsmanship Winner for Women's Basketball and was also named a CUNYAC Scholar-Athlete Honorable Mention. She is currently attending graduate school at Brooklyn College.

Despite having all these obstacles in her life, she still managed to compete in three sports during the season. Her best sport was basketball, where she started 14 games and averaged 3.5 points, 1.3 assists and 1.1 steals per game. In soccer, she was the team's starting midfielder and also served as a backup goalie. In softball, she

was the team's starting right fielder.

"Vanessa is a great person and student-athlete and she deserves to be honored," said York Athletic Director Ronald St. John. "She is a true representation of what York student-athletes are about. I hope she continues to do great things."

When asked why she chooses to play college sports, despite having so many issues in her life, she says "Many people tell me that they don't understand why I kill myself by playing college sports on top of everything I have going on with my family, but they just don't understand how much it means to me to be part of a team. I decided to play sports because sports are what give me the strength to cope with everything. My teammates mean a lot to me. Each teammate is like a sister to me and I enjoy being with them on and off the court. Through sports, I forget about the real world. For the couple of hours I am participating in practice or games, I am able to laugh and forget about what I have to go back to."



Student athlete alum
Vanessa Rivera

YORKCOLLEGE CUNY

YORK COLLEGE THEATRE
presents

FALL 2012

La Luz De Un Cigarrillo

A PLAY BY MARCO ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ

Directed by Timothy J. Amrhein



In English

Oct. 26 at 4pm*

Oct. 27 at 2pm

Oct. 30 at 12pm

In Spanish

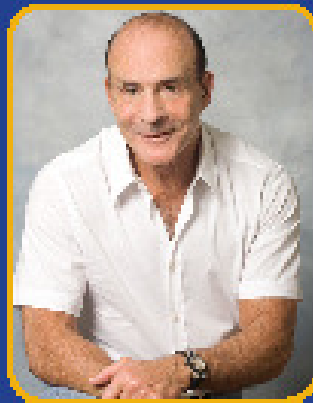
Oct. 27 at 8pm*

Oct. 28 at 3pm

Nov. 1 at 12pm

*Talkback with Marco Antonio Rodriguez to follow the performance

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Cordially invites you to the
Executive Leadership Breakfast
Featuring, Zane Tankel**



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Romney vs. Obama:

“Determining The Future Of America And The World”

A conversation with

York College Distinguished Lecturer, Dr Ronald Daniels

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

Thursday, October 11, 2012 - 5:30 P.M.

York College Atrium, 94-20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Jamaica NY 11451

*Sponsored by WWRL, The Office of the Provost,
The York College Male Initiative Program & Y.C. Radio*

Contact: 718.262.3772 or visit: www.york.cuny.edu/menscenter



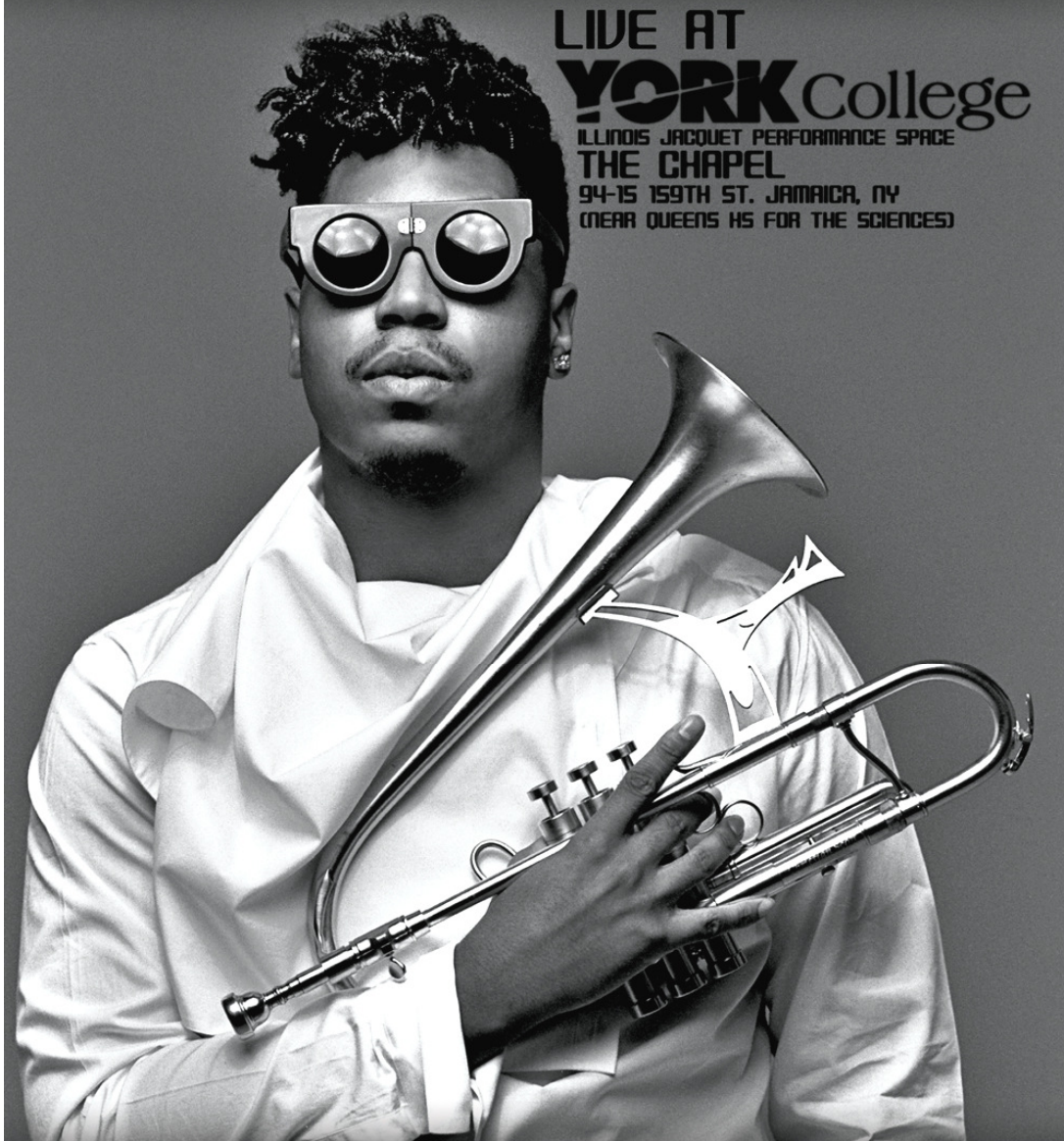
CHRISTIAN SCOTT

LIVE AT
YORK College

ILLINOIS JACQUET PERFORMANCE SPACE

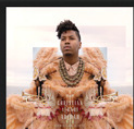
THE CHAPEL

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(NEAR QUEENS HS FOR THE SCIENCES)



OCTOBER 2 @ 7 PM

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The deadline for submissions to the November issue of Academic Affairs Update is October 26, 2012.

All items should be submitted in MS Word

via email to:

AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu