

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

YORK College

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Dean's List Reception



L-r.: Dr. Deb Chakravarti, the event emcee, keynote speaker Dr. Vanessa Crevecoeur-Ducas, and President Keizs

On March 20th, the Health and Physical Education complex was joyfully filled to capacity with more than 300

students, guests, faculty and staff for the annual Dean's List Reception. Each spring, matriculated students with exceptional academic records are recognized for having satisfied the established academic criteria that includes achieving a grade-point average of 3.50 or higher. For Spring and Fall 2013, more than 700 students made the list for one or both semesters.

President Marcia Keizs acknowledged the outstanding work and dedication of the Dean's List students, the support of their families and the guidance provided by

faculty and staff members. Provost Panayiotis Meleties offered congratulations in his role as the chief academic officer of the college. Dr. Deb Chakravarti, Professor of Chemistry and York's liaison to the FDA, was the emcee for the formal program.

The highlight of the presentations was the keynote address by Dr. Vanessa Crevecoeur-Ducas who successfully completed her doctorate in Chemistry at Yale University only six years after graduating from York as a Chemistry ma-

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Career Center hosts Success Seminar

by Bryan White, York student journalist

The York College Career Service Center recently held its leadership conference led by graduating senior, Stephane Labossiere.

Labossiere, a Community Health major, spoke about his experi-

ence as a Thurgood Marshall College Fund Scholar. The event, held in Room 3M01, was showcased by Randy Punter, the Senior Career Opportunity Specialist at the Career Services Center.

"I learned so many things here at York, but being balanced academically and participating in any club is the best way to excel in and outside of college," said Labossiere as he clicked

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Special points of interest:

- **New Book on Caribbean Literature**
- **York Students at Psychology Conference**
- **Lobbying for Social Work in Albany**

In the Field ... at Social Work Legislative Day

The journey to Social Work Legislative Day in Albany (NY) began much earlier than the bus departing York College at 6:30 a.m. It began with learning in the classroom!

For York's social work students, preparation for Legislative Day begins with a liberal arts education and core competencies embedded in the social work curriculum (accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education, 2014-2021). York College faculty members teach undergraduate social work classes – policy, practice, research, human behavior and social environment, and field education.

These courses help students prepare for lobby day by examining the Foster Care Independence Act (FICA) of 1999 effect on youth. Students are able to identify theories to understand adolescent development, identify evidence based practice models, as well as discover social policy and strategies for establishing coalitions among nonprofits within communities.

Preparation for lobby

day continued with the collective efforts of faculty, students and staff who volunteer their time outside the classroom. In mid-February 2014, Professor Crystal George-Moses engaged social work club officers – President LaChanda Moor and Vice President Amir Khan – engaged in initial conversations about their policy interests. Professor George-Moses also helped the officers identify relevant policy such as FICA, which outlines services available to adolescents. Professor George-Moses' mentoring was also a major contribution towards helping social work students pinpoint specific aspects of the Act that warrant nuanced attention and additional funding.

Ms. Moor used this helpful information to coordinate phone conferences with parent advocates and case planners who provide foster care services to youth aging out of care. Ms. Moor also spoke with a representative from *Represent Magazine*, a quarterly publication founded in 1993 to provide a voice for youth in foster care. In addition, Ms. Moor, alongside Mr. Khan,

conducted fundraising efforts to supplement the delegation's travel to lobby day in Albany, NY.

Subsequent trainings for students planning to attend lobby day were facilitated by Dr. Rodgers (via video conferencing), Mr. Amir Khan (Vice President, York College Social Work Club), Ms. Isabelle Hubert, and Mr. Earl Simons (York College Director of Government and Community Relations). Trainings provided an opportunity for students to frame their advocacy agenda and practice lobbying skills for their visits with NYS legislators.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Advocacy Toolkit was especially helpful with these efforts. The journey to Social Work Legislative Day in Albany every March ends with preparation for the next year. Social work faculty members use post-lobby day discussions during scheduled classes to assist students plan for another year of advocacy. York College social work courses enact poli-

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Dr. Selena Rodgers on the bus to Albany

YORKCOLLEGE CUNY

Social Work Students Lobby Day in Albany



R. to L.: New York State Senator James Sanders, Jr., President Dr. Marcia Keizs, York College Social Work Club Vice President Amir Khan, and York College Director of Government and Community Relations Earl Simons

In 1984, the White House officially recognized March as National Professional Social Work Month. This year's Social Work Month theme was, "All People Matter." Aligned with this year's theme and social work's *respect for the dignity and worth of the person*, a diverse York student delegation lobbied for youth who age out of foster care, without achieving adoption or independent living at the time of their discharge.

On March 4, Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, Faculty Advisor for the York College Social Work Club, Amir Khan (Vice President, York College Social Work Club), and Isabelle Hubert (Stony Brook MSW student) led 17 social work students to Social Work Annual Legislative Day in Albany, NY. Social work students alongside York College President Dr. Marcia Keizs and Mr. Earl Simons, Director of Government and Community Relations, engaged in a productive day of meetings with NYS Assembly and Senate members and their senior staff. It was especially rewarding for students to meet with legis-

lators who chair and/or hold memberships with standing committees invested in addressing youth who age out of care – New York State (NYS) Assemblywomen Vivian Cook (Housing, Ways and Means), Assemblywoman Michele Titus (Foster Care, Children and Families, Social Services), and Senator James Sanders, Jr. (Social Services, Economic Development).

Youth who have aged out of foster care endure challenges in obtaining housing and employment. The student delegation lobbied to enhance resources in this area.

Students also lobbied for additional funding. Students also urged elected officials to support the CUNY 2014-2015 State Budget Priorities. In particular, they advocated for funding to support the York College Academic Village & Conference Center to support state-of-the-art space for students.

Child care and the Black Male Initiative were also strong advocacy points. Students thanked legislators for their continued support.

Amir Khan, Vice

President of the Club, said, "This was the best experience I ever had meeting local legislators. It was a great learning experience to advocate for youth in foster care who age out of care and to lobby for York's new academic building. I was also very pleased with the positive response we received from the legislators." Mr. Khan plans to recruit political science students to participate in future lobbying experiences.

The York College Social Work Club wishes to extend a special thanks to York College Student Government Association (SGA) President Shaikh A. Amin and members for their support in helping secure sponsorship to travel to Albany, York College Office of Marketing and Communications for preparing materials that promote the institution, and York College Director of Government and Community Relations Earl Simons for helping to schedule appointments and coordinate a successful day in Albany, NY.



Group picture of the student delegation in Assemblywoman Vivian Cook's office

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through the slides he showed about the Thurgood Marshall College Fund.

Labossiere spoke about his experience when he visited Washington D.C. as a Thurgood Marshall College Fund ambassador and the vast amount of knowledge that he gained in the seminar.

“You have to apply for as many scholarships you can,” said Labossiere. “Make sure you have 3.0 GPA or better and apply for scholarships.”

Labossiere also spoke about his recent acceptance to the master’s program in Community

Health Education at Teachers College, Columbia University and scholarships he hopes to get.

“I will be applying for two scholarships from the National Society of Leadership and Success,” said Labossiere. “You cannot attend college for four years and don’t participate in clubs do research papers and have a solid resume. I update my resume monthly.”

Labossiere also stressed the importance of mentorship.

“I would not accomplish anything without my mentor here at York,” said Labossiere.

“Every student should have a mentor in their respected area of study.”

Punter agreed and was pleased with the presentation.

“This young man is a leader,” he said as he listened to Labossiere from the back of the room. “Everyone should aspire to be a leader, a person that can command attention when he speaks. And can articulate the way this young man can. The career center has helped many students in the past and we are here to help many more students that come for assistance.”



Stephane Labossiere

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cy frameworks throughout its intentional connection with the Council on Social Work Education Core Competencies.

In reflecting on her *scholarly service* as a Faculty Advisory for the York College Social Work club, Professor Rodgers affirms, “I hope

to inspire the next generation of emerging social work leaders to embrace macro-level advocacy. For me, Social Work Legislative Day is a lifetime of sustainable learning, political justice and social movements at local and global levels!”

Dr. Rodgers and social work students are gearing up to attend the International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools 31st Social Work Day at the United Nations in April 2014.

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reverse transcriptase stage in the HIV life cycle. One more highlight worth mentioning is the discovery that the reverse transcriptase, the phosphorylation of the protein, is site-specific. It suggests that in the

reverse transcriptase sequence, only the Threonine 216 site is strongly phosphorylated and highly conserved, which can be the potential target for drug treatment. As a next step, the team will continue

their project by further exploring how CDK phosphorylation of RT interface with other aspects of HIV biochemistry and what are therapeutic possibilities to control RT phosphorylation.

