

Academic Affairs Update

Volume III, Number 2

March 2009

Special points of interest:

- Nobel Peace Prize Co-Winner at York
- Reflections on Research
- Report on Gen Ed Reform
- York Marketing Ranks First

Inside this issue:

Reflections on Research	2
Point of Pride	3
Haitian Women in the Global Economy	5
Outcomes Assessment Workshop	7
General Education Reform	9–10
Students at Physics Confab	10
Alumna News	11
Prospect Cemetery Secret	12
CETL Workshops	13
York Faculty Update	13
Students visit NY Historical Society	14
Impressions from the Convocation	14
Provost Lecture Application Form	16

Spring Convocation Highlights “Change and Quality”

On February 17 President Marcia V. Keizs convened the annual Spring Convocation in the Performing Arts Center. The capacity crowd of faculty, students, administrators and staff, was informed of plans to continue to build on York’s academic excellence with the full support of the Office of the President and the Office of the Provost.

Billed as “Leading Change, Expanding Quality,” the event featured welcome and closing remarks by President Marcia V. Keizs and gave an update on General Education Reform. Leading the update discussion were Provost Griffith, Dr. Debra

Swoboda of the Behavioral Sciences department, who is one of the three Co-chairs of the General Education Task Force, and Stefan Kishore, one of the student members of the Task Force.



(L.-r.): Profs. Laura Fishman, Mark Schuller, Linda Gerena, and Mandë Holford during the Convocation

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York Marketing Ranks First by Paul Salisbury

Please join me in congratulating the York College Marketing team – winners of the 2009 *CUNYfirst* Marketing Competition. Our team edged out Baruch College for first place. The winning team is Aisha Niang, L. Jonathan Hubbard, Thelma Suarez-Ortega and Vimmy Seajatan.

The judges were “blown away” by

the quality of the York team’s research. As you know, Baruch College is the CUNY business school and one of the star four-year colleges. Matching up well with the Baruch teams (they had two), and edging them out (we beat both of them!) in the competition made for a marvelous day for our team.

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Reflections

Reflections on Research

by Lou Levinger

I was recruited to York almost 20 years ago by Drs. McGee, Spergel, Lewis and Johnson to develop the Biotechnology major at York College. I appreciate their persistent efforts to teach me civility appropriate for an academician until they retired or gave up. I am also grateful to York College for providing a professional home, an academic setting for willing students, and for the recognition implied by the request for this research profile.



Prof. Louis Levinger (Dept. of Biology)

Below I am reflecting on some of my ongoing research projects, the people involved with, and the process of publication and funding.

Projects. An enzyme is a biological catalyst – it increases the rate of a biochemical reaction. We study tRNase Z, an enzyme that removes an unneeded piece of tRNA. tRNA is central to protein synthesis and the tRNase Z reaction is central to tRNA maturation. Like the proverbial blind man handling an elephant – sometimes a leg, the trunk, the tail ... - we study this enzyme by making one small change at a time and testing its effect on reaction kinetics. Our latest effort concerns the Flexible Arm of tRNase Z, which we characterized more thoroughly than other investigators (see Figure on p.6).

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Provost Lecture

Online HIV Prevention and Education: Attitudes, Beliefs, and Behaviors of Men Who Have Sex with Men in New York City – An Internet Study



Prof. Nicholas Grosskopf

Assistant Professor of Community Health Education

Monday, March 23, 2009

Room AC-4M07 1:00-3:00pm



Has the popularity of social networking websites on the Internet in recent years affected the ways in which we identify and define ourselves, communicate with one another, and forge interpersonal relationships? Do these virtual outlets provide a new venue through which sexual risk taking is exacerbated? This lecture will focus on the role of health promotion and HIV prevention education on internet-based social networking websites, specifically highlighting data on men who have sex with men (MSM) in New York City.

Inaugural Lecture of the
Provost Distinguished Scholars Lectures
2007 Nobel Peace Prize Co-Winner
at York



On February 17, 2009, Nobel Peace Prize Co-Winner Dr. Balgis Osman-Elasha visited York College to deliver a lecture entitled “Climate Change: Challenges and Opportunities for Africa.” In the lecture Dr. Osman-Elasha discussed her research which is focused on the development of climate change adaptation strategies for drought-prone regions in Sudan and Africa. She reported findings from her involvement in the AIACC Initiative entitled: Environmental Strategies for Increasing Human Resilience to Climate Change Impacts in Sudan, lessons for Northern and Eastern Africa.



Dr. Osman-Elasha addressing the audience at York College



Dr. Osman-Elasha at the ceremony in Stockholm, presenting her Nobel Peace Prize and certificate.

Dr. Osman-Elasha, who won the Peace prize together with former U.S. Vice-President Al Gore, had been invited to the College by one of our new faculty members, Dr. Mandë Holford (Dept. of Chemistry).



Students, faculty and administrators following the lecture.



Following her lecture, numerous questions were asked of Dr. Osman-Elasha.



Dr. Mandë Holford introducing Dr. Osman-Elasha.

York tops Baruch

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Background

- Both Baruch and York have collegiate chapters of the *American Marketing Association* (AMA). The third CUNY AMA chapter is at Medgar Evers College, but their team withdrew at the last minute.



Front (l.-r.): Thelma Suarez and Aisha Niang.
Back row: (l.-r.): Vimmy Seajatan, Prof. Paul Salisbury, and L. Jonathan Hubbard.

- All CUNY undergraduate schools were invited to participate in the competition.
- The judges for the marketing competition included students from the two vanguard or test schools, Queens College and Queensborough Community College, as well as CUNYfirst staff.
- This was a team victory. The participation of *all* the team members was essential to prepare their winning presentation.

- The York AMA chapter is in its first year, in start-up mode, and totally committed to preparing for competitions and careers.
- The first place prize was a gift certificate for each member of the team. The more important benefits, from a long term perspective, are:
 - ◊ An ongoing relationship with the CUNY-first staff, (e.g., summer internships with CUNYfirst, lunch meetings to discuss marketing with the CUNYfirst senior management);
 - ◊ Networking with the Baruch students. All of the students will be competitors or colleagues later this year as they begin their careers;
 - ◊ Job recommendations for York students from CUNYfirst management;
 - ◊ Business competition experience. The CUNYfirst staff did everything possible to simulate a *new business pitch* environment and limit the tension for the students;
 - ◊ Project development experience. Our students developed a strategy *after* reviewing market research focused on college students' communication behavior (using recent representative, national samples of college students), as well as qualitative research at the two vanguard schools;
 - ◊ The team worked on the project for about seven weeks. Good marketing takes time – building on solid research and analysis.

Congratulations to the team!



PROVOST LECTURE SERIES

February 2009 Lecture

“Poto Mitan: Haitian Women, Pillars of the Global Economy”

Dr. Helen R. Andretta

On February 25, 2009, Prof. Mark Schuller of the Social Sciences Department, an anthropologist, awed the York College community with the documentary “Poto Mitan: Haitian Women, Pillars of the Global Economy.” Prof. Schuller spent two years in Haiti researching the plight of women. His studies were prompted by his desire to raise awareness of the country, which has suffered a history of bad press. He found the women he interviewed very persistent as they urged him to do a documentary whose visual impact would move others. He followed through with their encouragement, and nine grassroots organizations in Haiti will benefit from proceeds of the film.



Provost Griffith (l.) and Prof. Schuller (r.)

The Haitian women were correct in their belief that having others hear and see their stories would have an effect. The packed lecture hall echoed with exclamations of disbelief at the

startling accounts by five Haitian women of the deplorable conditions in their country. The film’s personal lives depiction of these heroic women, struggling to challenge the economic stress, exploitation of women, and violence in Haiti, was vivid and influential in raising the consciousness of the York College audience.

The women of Haiti often live in quarters below standard, work long hours at very low wages in filthy factory environments, educate their children at great sacrifice, and agitate for improved conditions at risk of losing their jobs--but they hope. The recurring image in the film of a Haitian mother, braiding her daughter’s hair, is a sign of hope for change by women who are respected as the “pillars of the global economy.”

The discussion that followed the film included comments that its presentation is eloquent in its depiction of the current crisis in Haiti. There were questions and answers about the film’s availability (being produced now on DVD), the motivation behind the production of the documentary (urged by the women of Haiti as “a labor of love . . . to inspire change”), and particular aspects of Haiti’s economic situation.

Prof. Schuller’s lecture was enlightening, inspiring, and engaging, evidenced by the numerous comments after the presentation. Prof. Schuller urged the audience to check the web site www.potomitan.net for additional information.

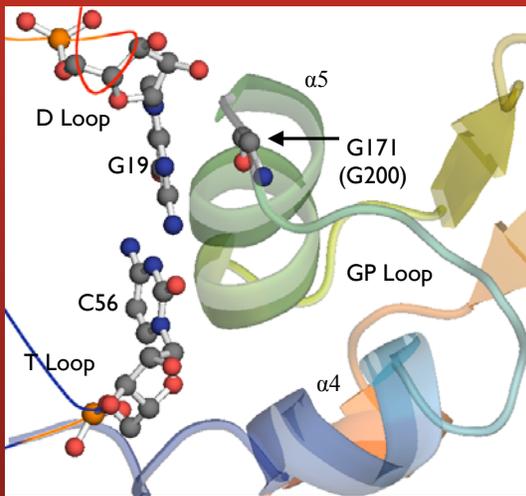
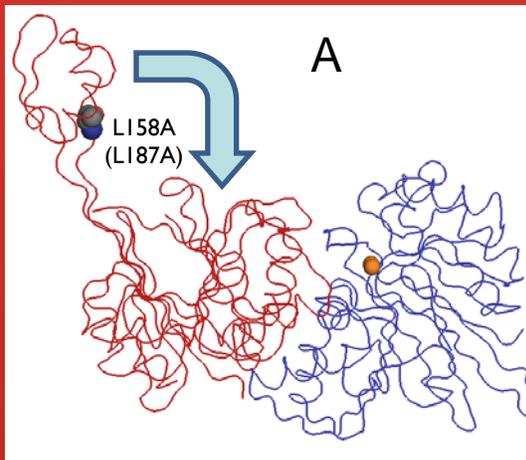
**The deadline for submissions to the April issue of
Academic Affairs Update is March 23, 2009.**

**All items should be submitted in MS Word
via email to:**

AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu

Reflections on Research

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Structure views of the FA of tRNase Z in an interpretation of experimental results prepared by Christopher Wilson, a student co-author on our submitted manuscript (from the structures by Li de la Sierra-Gallay et al., *Nature* **433**, 657, 2005; IBID, *Nat. Struct. Mol. Biol.* **13**, 376, 2006; PDB# 1Y44, 2FK6). A) *B. subtilis* LI58 (LI87 in *Dme* tRNase Z) and possible effects of the LI87A substitution on tRNase Z structure. Curved arrows indicate possible movement of the FA arising from hypothesized increased flexibility at the ascending stalk/hand boundary and a new interaction between the FA hand and the body of tRNase Z. LI58 is displayed with space-filling and the rest of tRNase Z in ribbon. B) G170 (G200 in *Dme* tRNase Z). The backbone in this part of the GP loop is within contact distance of the G19-C56 tertiary base pair in the tRNA.

To be effective in this type of work, one needs to be a good technician and accountant. Careful writing and editing are more important in biomedical research, and imagination and invention play less of a part, than most people expect.

People. Students and technicians between undergraduate work and matriculation in biomedical PhD programs are central to the success of these projects. Angela Hopkinson, a 2007 Salk scholarship winner who is now a Microbiology PhD student at U Michigan School of Medicine, was a star. Angela was trained by two good, already established technicians, Neela Zareen and Hua Yan, who also both matriculated in biomedical PhD programs. Their papers were published between 2005 – 2008 and Angela is a co-author on a just-submitted manuscript. This record of biomedical research accomplishment by alumni of the Lvinger lab goes back to the early- to mid-'90s, to Vikram Vashisht, a technician who went on to a PhD at NYU, and Vilma Greene, Srinivas Kolla, Rae Bourne and Alex Birk, all York undergraduate research trainees who went on to the MD (Srinivas, Rae) or PhD (Vilma, Alex).

There is an ebb and flow to research lab training that doesn't always coincide with funding. When the lab is bustling with well-trained, motivated young people, I spend my time listening to them and looking at their results. When Neela, Hua and Angela moved on, there was a stream of technicians who were insufficiently committed to research careers. During such ebb times, I have to drive the bus myself and there may be no passengers. The recent ebb is probably now ending. Two outstanding students are now in the lab, Chris Wilson and Sabina Paul; May Sabry, a promising technician, started in December and another technician is expected to arrive in mid-February. There is room for one more exceptional student. It's exhilarating to invite such clever, ambitious young people to take their turns at the wheel.

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Peer review, publication and extramural funding. Anonymous peer review is the great leveler of scientific research. Sometimes I get stomped and sometimes I have to do the stomping. Peer review can be harsh; perseverance requires drive and a thick skin. Good things happen often enough to make the research life tolerable, but not every completed research product has a positive outcome.

Good writing and editing are important! Most first drafts are poor. Resistance to quality editing is caused by the conviction that if I wrote it, it must be perfect, which is wrong. Changing a phrase or the placement of a paragraph has far-reaching effects; editing is the most difficult and time-consuming part of a writing project. It's time to stop editing when the most recent changes make the manuscript the same as an earlier draft.

Publication is the coin of the realm although the cash comes from grants. Reviewers count papers. If you didn't publish anything for the last few years it will be hard to get funded. It can even be hard if you publish a lot. Both pub-

lications and proposals should be about something, hopefully related to each other.

I have had positive experiences with federal grants including MBRS, MARC, AREA (NIH programs) and RUI (an NSF program) in various combinations. Biomedical research laboratory training of under-represented minority undergraduates was part of all these programs. Money and projects are nice, but the enterprise isn't worth much without people.

I give back to the community by working with trainees and doing research, which is contractual for a funded research project. I am always available to help less experienced colleagues, which is also a form of giving back. In this spirit, if anyone wants details and expansion on the opinions presented here, feel free to contact me.



Outcomes Assessment Committee focuses on Student Learning by Dana Fusco

As York College continues on its path of General Education reform, it is important to move the curricular conversation to one of student learning. With that in mind, on January 22nd, the Outcomes Assessment Committee conducted a workshop entitled "Building Assessment into General Education Curricular Reform."

Numerous faculty members who have served in Faculty Inquiry Groups attended. A presentation on Learning Objectives, by Dean Dana Fusco and Dr. Leslie Keiler, was followed by four breakout sessions. Faculty had opportunities to discuss Testing for Critical Thinking, Portfolios, Performance-based Assessment, and Writing Assessments.

Fenix Arias, Director of Testing, also gave a presentation on the CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE), specifically identifying the competencies assessed by the exam.



Prof. Emily Davidson, Associate Professor (Dept. of Health Professions) during her presentation at the workshop.

Spring Convocation

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In his remarks, Provost Griffith reemphasized the importance of our continuing efforts to adjust different systems at the College. While pointing out that over the past few years, York College has improved markedly with regard to several performance indicators, Provost Griffith also noted that we do not pursue change for the sake of change, but that certain issues that continue to be of concern have real-life consequences for our students as well as the College. Dr. Swoboda reported on the work of the Task Force and the Faculty Inquiry Groups during Fall 2008, stressing the goals and imperatives of the reform effort.



President Keizs during her address to the college community

Equally important was the panel discussion on “Faculty as Agents of Change and Quality,” with presentations by Dr. Griffith, Dr. Laura Fishman of the Department of History and Philosophy, Dr. Linda Gerena of Teacher Education, Dr. Mande Holford of Chemistry and Dr. Mark Schuller from Social Sciences. All faculty members reflected on how their own discipline informed their thinking and action about issues of change and quality. It was particularly good to hear that all of our new faculty members found support and mentoring among colleagues who

have been at York for a longer time.

The Convocation program guide featured the mission phrase, “Recruit, Retain, Release/Respect,” which was especially relevant given the College’s mandate to recruit the best and brightest students, retain them by making York a desirable place on all levels, and graduating them within four to six years, all while showing the utmost respect for their needs and rights, and the needs and rights of faculty and staff who serve them.



Faculty members following the Convocation proceedings

It also was fitting, given the second topic (Faculty as Agents of Change ...), that Dr. Griffith, who is fond of powerful quotes, used the Benjamin Franklin gem, “When you’re finished changing, you’re finished” in the program. The significance of that statement was not lost on anyone. The quote was underscored by data from Dr. Aghajan Mohammadi, director of Institutional and Research Assessment, which indicated the changing demographics among faculty and students, notably a significant drop in the average age of new students at York.

The 90-minute event ended with the President’s closing remark followed by lunch and a celebration of President Keizs’ fourth anniversary at York College.



Report on General Education Reform

Debra Swoboda, General Education Task Force Co-chair &
Stephan Kishore, Student Government Representative

The co-chairs of the General Education Task Force – Margaret Ballantyne, Vadim Moldovan and I – would like to update you on the current state of general education reform at York and share with you what we have figured out so far. We believe that we have made substantial progress in the last six months towards general education reform at York and that we are at a critical juncture in this work. This is because faculty involved in general education reform have delineated a set of imperatives about why a new general education is needed and what it must look like.

One impetus for our continued work concerns why we need to reform general education at all. York College is awakening and responding to the changing world. This may be a cliché but this world – fraught with threat and uncertainty – holds a promise of numerous rewards for those who are capable of understanding and navigating this new environment. It is our mission, as an education institution to become attuned to the challenges of the new world. We need to reinvent ourselves for the sake of our students and our community.

A new general education at York College is a key component of the reform. Most CUNYs have redesigned their general education curriculums and are at various stages of implementation. While we are late comers to this process, we are rapidly catching up: we are on the map. Our work in reforming general education stands on the shoulders of scholars and innovators from York prior to Fall 2008, as well as on the shoulders of the General Education Reform Task Force and Faculty Inquiry Groups who are in the process of developing a unique Signature General Education Curriculum at York College.

We are happy to report to you that the first leg of the voyage has been completed and that we've reached an important milestone. The tireless labor of those involved in the reform has yielded voluminous reports in many areas of inquiry about

what general education is and should be at York. These reports point to nine imperatives shaping the development of the new general education curriculum. We would like to share these imperatives with you. They are:

1. The new general education curriculum should promote **literacies**. These literacies can be broadly defined as encompassing three areas – analytical, communication, and institutional. Analytical literacies include critical thinking, quantitative literacy, research literacy, and information literacy. Communication literacies include reading and writing literacy, oral communication, and use of communication technologies. Institutional literacy includes student acculturation to the College community and to college life at large.

2. In the new general education, promotion of these literacies would require **interdisciplinary and across-the-curriculum** strategies, pedagogies, and assessment. Thus, the new curriculum must move beyond a silo, distribution model of education.

3. The new general education curriculum should utilize **signature pedagogies** that increase students' active, experiential, cooperative learning. This, the new curriculum must include active learning pedagogies developed and implemented by faculty from every department and program so that active, collaborative teaching and learning is truly a college-wide endeavor.

4. The new general education curriculum should promote **breadth and depth** in the major. Thus, the new curriculum must provide the necessary supports so that students are able to link arts and sciences courses learning to learning that takes place in their majors and programs.

5. The new general education curriculum should **reduce the number of credits** required for general education, and not be unwieldy for professional program students. The new curriculum

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General Education Reform Cont.'d from p.9

must work both for students pursuing liberal arts and sciences majors and for students entering professional programs.

6. The new general education curriculum should reflect the central role of the **arts and humanities**, and thus ensure that arts and humanities are not disproportionately decreased.

7. The new general education curriculum should reflect the **Six General Education Principles**. The new curriculum must operationalize these six principles – Ethical, Global, Technological, Collaborative, Experiential, and Integrative – at every turn.

8. The new general education curriculum must resolve **resource issues**. Thus, the new curriculum must secure adequate staffing, appropriate class size, student interaction with full-time faculty, faculty training for pedagogical and interdisciplinary approaches, oversight of general education at large, and transfer articulation.

9. The new general education must foster **collegiality** – including campus buy-in from faculty across all departments and programs and student involvement. Collegiality has been a cornerstone of the process so far. The Task Force includes faculty from a diverse cross section of rank, discipline and experience as well as York students. In addition,

FIG leaders cast a wide net to form their FIGs and many faculty volunteered after the Fall 2008 convocation, while others sadly were invited to participate but declined.

Our next challenge in general education reform is to operationalize these nine imperatives into a **viable curriculum** – one that is innovative and effective. Many ideas are on the table. It is too early at this stage to talk about specifics, as the FIGs are being reconfigured and charged with a new set of tasks. What is ahead is more hard work by the FIGs and rest of the college community on the model of the curriculum design.

General education reform is not a product but a **continuing process** of assessment, re-assessment, and ongoing innovation in the service of the College, students, and the wider community. The architecture of the new General Education at York should finally take shape late in the Fall of 2009 when the Task Force will submit its final recommendations. Spring 2010 is the time of fruition – when the real work of deciding how to implement the new general education curriculum will begin.

We invite you to come on board as FIG members or Gen Ed activists – join in the conversation, offer ideas, support, and expertise. Be **agents of change** in general education reform. Help your faculty colleagues lead and make the new general education at York College happen. Together we can!



York Students at Annual Conference of National Society for Black Physicists

In February 2009 six Physics and Math double majors from York College attended the annual conference the *National Society for Black Physicists* held in Nashville (Tenn.).

(L.-r.): Victor Udinwe, Odingo Mitchell, Dr. Marcel Agueros (Columbia University), Alex Borivitskiy, Ukpebor Obehi, Nicholas Hunt-Walker, and Jesse Mwarage.

York Alumna News

Drop Dead Delicious, a new novel by Jill Brock, is explained by the author as a blended recipe of humor, mystery and racial diversity in friendship. “I guess the theme of this book is that friendship and love have no color,” says Brock. “When it’s not an issue, the possibilities of any relationship are endless.”

Maggie Swift, a pixie red-headed private investigator-in-training, and Odessa Wilkes, a dessert chef on the hunt for a bake-off-winning cake recipe, have been friends since high school.

Drop Dead Delicious is the second book in the story of the friends’ antics in New York City, from Maggie’s promising amateur detective work in between duties as a mother and housewife to Odessa’s triad of struggles with her growing cake-making business, working with her sister, Candace, at the family restaurant and dealing with her embezzling ex-boss who suddenly returns to town.

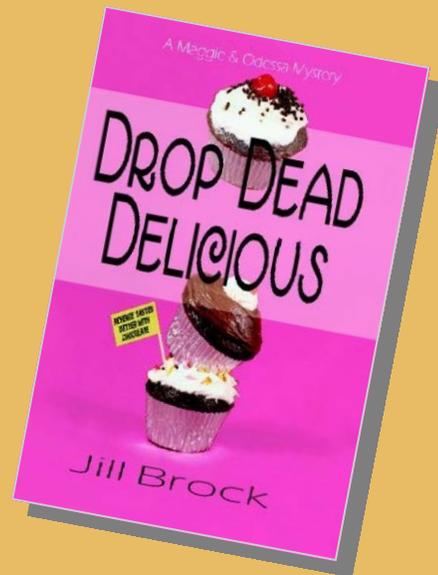


Jill Brock

Author Brock, born and raised in an ethnically-diverse region of New York state, says colorful characters such as Maggie, Odessa and Candace are based on her relationships with family and friends from both the past and present. “That’s why I’m so fond of these characters,” she says. “I know them and love them and, on occasion, when one of my friends or family members asks if one of these fictional characters is based on them, I just

smile.”

For more information or to request a free review copy, members of the press can contact the author at jbrock2@nyc.rr.com. *Drop Dead Delicious* is available for sale online at Amazon.com, BookSurge.com and through additional wholesale and retail channels worldwide.



About the Author

Jill Brock, the youngest of three sisters, grew up in Queens, N.Y. An avid reader since childhood, Brock says she has developed an eclectic taste in books, but prefers mysteries. She graduated from York College with a degree in fine arts and psychology and studied graphic design at the New York School of Visual Arts. In addition to writing fiction, Brock has worked in the mental health field with a focus on creative arts therapy and vocational services.



A Secret of Prospect Cemetery

York College has a secret. It is neighbor to one of America's New York's most important early politicians – Egbert Benson. Benson was New York's first attorney general, he represented New York at the Articles of Confederation Congress, and he precipitated America's first constitutional crisis, the case of the midnight judges.

Benson is buried next door in Prospect Cemetery. Unfortunately, during the 1970's when the graveyard was home to drug addicts his grave was destroyed, probably to steal the bronze plaque that had been put on his grave by the New-York Historical Society, an organization that he had founded.

This year for Constitution Day, the Honorable Albert M. Rosenblatt (retired), Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals of the State of New York and John D. Gordon III, Esq. came to York to discuss Benson. Gordon is one of three Benson experts in the nation. The two speakers were sponsored by both

this year's Constitution Day committee, which consisted of Prof. Scott Sheidlower, Dept. of the Library, as chair; Prof. George White, Dept. of History and Philosophy; and Anthony Andrews, of the Office of Student Activities & Campus Programming, and by the York College Pre-Law Club.



Cate Ludlum, President of the Prospect Cemetery Association, standing by the gravestone of Egbert Benson in Prospect Cemetery.



York College

2008 –
2009

The Year
of
General
Education
Reform

New Programs Launch

“New Education Programs,
Expanded Economic Success”

Don't Miss!

Don't Miss!

Monday, March 9, 2009

Room AC-3D01, 11:00 am

Visit us Online:

York College —
Office of the Provost
website:

[http://york.cuny.edu/
academic-affairs](http://york.cuny.edu/academic-affairs)

CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

March 2009 Forums and Workshops

Wednesday, Mar 4	<p><i>Workshop:</i> <i>Don't Wait for the Writing Center: Strategies for Addressing Grammar in Classroom Assignments</i> 3:30- 5pm <u>Presenters:</u> Heather Robinson, English & Director, Writing Center Sundeep Bisla, English</p>
Thursday, Mar 12	<p><i>Workshop:</i> <i>Writing in General Education: Models, Examples, Imperatives</i> 12- 2pm CETL, AC 4EA1 <u>Presenters:</u> Laura Fishman, History & Philosophy Jim Papa, English Mark Schuller, Social Sciences</p>
Thursday, Mar 19	<p><i>Speaker Forum: Technology and Institutional Culture</i> 12- 2pm Lecture Hall, AC 4M05 <u>Guest Speaker:</u> Richard Knipe, Dean of Learning Technologies, Genesee Community College</p>
Tuesday, Mar 24	<p><i>Workshop:</i> <i>Doing SoTL: Participating in the Title III Faculty Grant Program</i> 12- 2pm CETL, AC 4EA1 <u>Presenters:</u> Emily Davidson, Health Professions Leslie Keiler, Teacher Education George White, History & Philosophy</p>



York Faculty Update



- ◆ **Beth S. Rosenthal** recently published an article and was accepted as a participant in the National Science Foundation's Gender Equity Project's Grand Writing Assistance Program (at Hunter College).

 Rosenthal, B.S., & Wilson, W.C., "Mental health services: Utilization and disparity among diverse college students" in: *Journal of American College Health*, 57 (2008), pp.61-67.
- ◆ **Linda M. Grasso** has published "Reading Published Letter Collections as Literary Texts: Maria Chabot – Georgia O'Keeffe Correspondence, 1941-1949 as a Case Study," in *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, 25:2 (2008), pp.239-250.

New York Historical Society Visit Enriches Study of Literature by Dr. Linda Grasso

On November 15, 2008 students in Professor Grasso's course, English 353, visited the New York Historical Society, a trip supported by the Office of Academic Affairs. In English 353, students study how 19th-century U.S. writers were affected by the presence of slavery in their culture. Reading books written by men as well as women, black as well as white, students consider how writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Harriet Jacobs, Frederick Douglass, Harriet E. Wilson, and Harriet Beecher Stowe imagined freedom, captivity, guilt, and morality.

The New York Historical Society trip made it possible for students to study material culture objects from the same period. Guided by a docent, students examined 19th-century maps, paintings, sculptures, figurines, and decorative

plates, all of which enhanced their understanding of the short stories, slave narratives, and novels they were studying in English 353. Students applied what they learned to the course readings by writing a formal paper in which they drew a relationship between a museum object and a character, issue, or theme in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

In addition to the New York Historical Society trip, students researched, reported on, and wrote formal essays about scholarly websites that contained primary and secondary sources about the writers and texts we studied. In their final examination essay, students reflected on whether the conclusions proposed in *The Brown University Report on Slavery and Justice* regarding reparative justice were applicable to our study of literature in English 353.

Impressions from the York College Spring 2009 Convocation



New Majors Kick-off – Journalism, Nursing and Pharmaceutical Sciences!



The Journalism launch includes an all-star speaker panel with editor-in-chief Alberto Vourvoulias, El Diario, editor-in-chief Elinor Tatum, Amsterdam News, Senior Executive Editor Robert Sapio, Daily News, and more.



The Nursing Launch includes an interactive workshop by the Laerdal Corporation that will show some of the latest in Simulation innovation for Nursing Education.



The Pharmaceutical Sciences Launch includes a hands-on classroom experience with Dennis Guilfoyle and Angelo Damanti, York College, '08, from the Food and Drug Administration.

New Majors Kick-off: Journalism, Nursing and Pharmaceutical Sciences!
Date: Monday, March 9, 2009
Time: 11:00 AM - 3:30 PM
3:00 PM – Campus Tours
RSVP by March 5, 2009
High School Counselors/Teachers – 718.262.2797
General Attendees – 718.262.3866

York College Provost Lecture Series Request for Proposals

The York College Provost Lecture Series, a forum designed to facilitate a cross-campus conversation among scholars, welcomes applications from current York College faculty of all ranks to present their work. Applicants may belong to any academic department, program, or discipline, and may offer presentations or performances individually and in teams. Applications will be peer reviewed and selected by the Lecture Series Planning Committee.

The Provost Lecture Series offers an opportunity to present finished work or work in progress of such quality as to be published in peer reviewed journals, presented at regional or national conferences, or displayed or performed in prominent venues. Presentations should be communicable to a broad audience of peers, students, and other members of the College community.

Application

Name(s): _____

Email address _____

Department(s) or Program(s) _____

Title of Presentation _____

In an abstract of 100-250 words, describe the nature and significance of the work and what will be discussed in the lecture. Applications will be judged based on the quality and clarity of the proposal, stated significance of the project within the context of research within the field (s), and compliance with the guidelines of the application (word limit of abstract).

Please check for equipment needed:

Computer ____ Projector LCD ____ VCR ____ CD player ____ Other ____

**Please send completed applications electronically to fishman@york.cuny.edu
by *April 6, 2009* for a *Fall 2009* presentation.**

The Committee anticipates that there will be three regular sessions during Fall 2009.

Provost Lecture Series Planning Committee

Laura Fishman, History and Philosophy (Committee Chair)

Holger Henke, Office of the Provost

Louis D'Alotto, Mathematics & Computer Studies

Linda Grasso, English

Tania Levey, Social Sciences

Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, Provost

Adam Profit, Chemistry

Ronald Thomas, Administrative Affairs

Eva Vasquez, Foreign Languages, ESL, and Humanities

Francisco Villegas, Behavioral Sciences

**York College CUNY
Spring 2009 Assessment Workshop**

**Assessing Student Learning and
Institutional Effectiveness**

Presenter:

Linda A. Suskie

Vice President, Middle States
Commission on Higher Education



**March 19-20, 2009
York College Faculty Dining
Room**

Topics to be presented include:

- Educational Effectiveness and Student Learning
- Assessing General Education
- Planning for Assessment Success
- Understanding and Using Assessment Results

Please RSVP by March 5, 2009

Register online at <http://york.cuny.edu/assessment-workshop>

For questions, contact Dr. Mohammadi or Shao-Wei Wu
at 718-262-2737 or shaowei@york.cuny.edu

Breakfast and Lunch will be provided

Sponsored by: Office of Academic Affairs supported by a U.S. Dept. of Education Title III Grant

YORK COLLEGE CUNY

York College / CUNY | 94 - 20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd, Jamaica, NY 11451 | 718-262-2333

CUNY AVIATION INSTITUTE AT YORK
EXECUTIVE SPEAKER LECTURE SERIES

SUSAN M. BAER

“ONE WOMAN’S JOURNEY IN THE AVIATION WORLD”

*I*NAUGURAL RECIPIENT OF THE
“CUNY AVIATION INSTITUTE AWARD FOR
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP”



Thursday, March 12, 2009
12:00 - 2:00 PM Faculty Dining Room

This event presented in conjunction with Women's History Month
and the York College Chapter of Women in Aviation.



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Women's History Month - March 2009

Women's Studies - Women's Center

Department of Foreign Languages, ESL, and Humanities

This Program is made possible with funds from the Auxiliary Program Enterprises, Inc.

Date: Wednesday, March 4th @ 6-8 p.m.
Location: Little Theater at The Performing Arts Center

Organized by: Dr. Charles Coleman, Dr. Cheryl Adams, and Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek.
Sponsored by: Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Women's Center, Cultural Diversity Program, and Department of HUM, FL and ESL.
Event: "Expanding Wing...Stretching Space: Creating Room 'tween a Rock and Hard Place." A Theatrical Production with Stories & Poems Written by Survivors of Domestic Violence
Conceived and directed by Nikki



Date: Wednesday, March 11th @ 3:00-6:00 p.m.
Location: AC-4M05
Organized by: Dr. Michael Flynn, Dr. Margarita Drago, and Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek.

Event: "From the Little School to the Strange House: A Mother/Daughter Journey Writing against State Terrorism" by Alicia Partnoy & Ruth Irupe Sanabria.



Date: Monday, March 16th @ 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Location: Faculty Dining Room AC-2D01
Organized by: Dr. Rishi Nath, Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek, and Women's Center.
Event: Dr. Helen Strassberg

Women's History Month Annual Lecture: "Stories of Some Prominent Women in Mathematics" by Laurel Cooley Brooklyn College.



Date: Tuesday, March 10th @ 4:00-6:00 p.m.



Location: Performing Arts Center Lobby
Organized by: Women's Center, Dr. Margaret Ballantyne, and Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek.
Dr. Gloria Waldman

Inaugural Annual Lecture for Women's History Month: "Mi vida comprometida/A Committed Life" by Lidia Falcon.



Date: Thursday, March 12th @ 12:00-2:00 p.m.
Location: Faculty Dining Room AC-2D01
Organized by: CUNY Aviation Institute of York College, Women's Center, and Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek.
Event: Women in Aviation Luncheon



Date: Monday, March 30th @ 7-9 p.m.
Location: Illinois Jacquet Performance Space on 159th St.
Organized by: Prof. Tom Zlabinger
Bassist: Kim Clarke
www.kimclarke.8m.com

Date: Monday, March 23th @ 12:00-2:00 p.m.
Location: Faculty Dining Room 2D01
Organized by: Women's Center, Prof Aegina Berg-Barnes, and Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek.
Event: Letters to the Women in the White House

For more information contact:
Dr. Fabiola Fernández Salek
Coordinator of Women's Studies
(718) 262-2443 - fsalek@york.cuny.edu
Special thanks to Vera Freeman and the Marketing & Communications Dept. at York College



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The deadline for submissions to the April issue of Academic Affairs Update is March 23, 2009.

All items should be submitted in MS Word via email to:
AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu