Pyong Gap Min Named Distinguished Professor of Sociology

Pyong Gap Min (Sociology) is now Queens College’s twelfth distinguished professor, a title bestowed by the City University of New York on its finest teachers and scholars. One of the nation’s leading researchers on immigration and Korean and Asian Americans, Min is also the founding director of the Research Center for Korean Community, the only academic center of its kind in America.

Min’s path to the pinnacle of academia was arduous. He was born in a small village in South Korea, where his father was a poor rice farmer. Min’s mother died when he was eight, and none of his six brothers and sisters survived childhood. His siblings all succumbed to disease, Min says, because the family had no access to medical care.

Since he showed promise as a student, Min was sent to the capital, Seoul, to attend high school. Life was hard, but after entering Seoul National University as a major in history, he started tutoring high school students who were preparing to take the university entrance exam. As a university education is highly valued in Korea, families who could afford it paid well for Min’s services.

After graduating, Min worked briefly as a reporter and did more tutoring until he had saved enough to come to America. He enrolled at the University of Georgia, but had to transfer to Georgia State University after one semester when his money ran out.

To see himself through a master’s degree and two PhDs—in educational philosophy and sociology—at Georgia State, Min found jobs as a janitor and a factory worker. He struggled with adjunct teaching positions until finding the perfect academic home in 1987: QC’s sociology department.

“I worried, maybe with my non-white background I would feel out of place,” he recalls. “But I never did.”


This year Min plans to publish Preserving Ethnicity Through Religion in America: Korean Protestants and Indian Hindus Across Generations, which will examine how the children of immigrants connect with their parents’ religious and national identities.

There are an estimated 250,000 Korean Americans in NYC, Min says. A quarter of them live in nearby Flushing, a distinct advantage for a scholar whose career has been focused on studying their experiences in America. On February 19, Research Center for Korean Community, which Min founded and will direct, opened at QC.
Taking a New Approach to Lie Detection

Any fan of TV crime drama knows that a polygraph is the standard way to learn if a suspect is telling the truth. The problem is that polygraph tests, which track a person’s autonomic responses to lying—typically accelerated sweating, heart rate, and respiration—often yield inconsistent and imprecise results and are not admissible in court. But research conducted over the past 13 years by Ray Johnson, Jr. (Psychology) may provide a more scientific basis for detecting deception.

Johnson’s research, funded by a series of PSC/CUNY grants, is an outgrowth of work he did in the 1990s with a U.S. government panel looking to develop more advanced polygraphic techniques. At QC’s Brain and Cognition Laboratory, which he heads, he and a team of graduate and undergraduate assistants are mapping the neural pathways and cognitive processes brought into play when a person plays fast and loose with the truth.

In one experiment, volunteer test subjects were asked to learn a list of 50 words, which were then randomly intermixed with new words and flashed on a screen. “The subjects were instructed to press a button signaling that the familiar words were unfamiliar to them, and another button falsely indicating familiarity with the new words,” Johnson says. Electrodes attached to each subject’s scalp fed their EEGs into a computer for analysis.

“Despite the simplicity of this simulation, we found that making deceptive responses distinctly alters the usual pattern of brainwaves generated by telling the truth,” Johnson says. In fact, the findings to date have pointed to 28 specific differences in cognitive processes and brain functions between truthful and deceptive responses.

“Across experiments, the results indicate that our first impulse is to always tell the truth,” Johnson explains. “Thus, in order to lie, you must first determine the truthful response and then inhibit it before selecting and executing a different response. In other words, lying involves more cognitive processes than being truthful, and these processes can be observed and measured in terms of the brain’s electrical activity and behavioral response times.”

In another experiment, Johnson elicited the test subjects’ attitudes—for or against—on a broad range of issues, from gun control to food preferences. Later, the subjects were asked to make truthful or deceptive responses about those attitudes. For example, a subject who opposed the death penalty might now indicate that she supported it. “In this case, we saw evidence that subjects used long-term monitoring processes to ‘keep their stories straight’ by making their responses consistent over items,” Johnson says. “This produced even larger change in brain activity and slowed their deceptive responses even further.”

These days, Johnson’s research continues to shed new light on the complex processes involved in deception. “The ultimate goal is to turn what we’ve learned into a workable device,” he says. Should that happen, his findings could revolutionize the technology of lie detection—in real life as well as on TV.

Monitoring New York City Air from page 1

Members of the CBNS team that provided data for the New York City Community Air Survey are: (front, l to r) Jordan Fuentes, Anna Tilles, Holger Eisl, Alyssa Benson, Rolando Munoz, Lyad Kheirbek; (rear, l to r) Jonah Haviland-Markowitz, Steven Markowitz, John Gorcynski, Andres Camacho.

first comprehensive sustainability plan, PlaNYC. Launched in 2007 by Bloomberg, its ambitious goal is to achieve “the cleanest air quality of any big U.S. city” by 2030.

Although clean air regulations have improved air quality in the last few decades, pollution in New York and other cities continues to contribute to asthma and other health problems, especially in people with respiratory or cardiovascular conditions, experts say.

NYCCAS is one of the largest ongoing street-level monitoring projects ever carried out in the United States, a program to assess variation in air quality across New York City’s diverse neighborhoods. The suitcase-size monitoring units are attached to lamp posts at a height of 10 to 12 feet above the ground. The units are deployed at 150 pre-selected sampling sites for two-week sampling periods during each of the four seasons of the year.

Results from the first report show higher concentrations of fine particles (PM2.5), elemental carbon (EC), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), and sulfur dioxide (SO2) in neighborhoods with more traffic and more residential and commercial buildings, especially those with older heating furnaces burning heavier grades of heating oil. Other significant sources that may contribute to pollution levels in the city may include charcoal burning grills in restaurants and outdoor food carts, said Dr. Eisl. He expects the city will use the findings from the NYC-CAS program to introduce new regulations, for example, requiring trucks and school buses operating within the five boroughs to switch to clean fuel technologies and, through incentives, encourage building owners to upgrade older heating furnaces.
Alum Offers New Program to Help Businesses Increase Sales

Despite its acronym, the new Institute for Competitive Excellence (ICE), which in March will offer a certificate program through QC’s Continuing Education Programs, hopes to warm members of the New York business community to the idea of employing novel science-based marketing concepts to dramatically enhance business revenues.

The brain-child of Howard Moskowitz ’65 and Stephen Onufrey, ICE will begin classes at a Manhattan location on March 15. There will be eight three-hour Monday evening sessions: Students will receive lectures, participate in hands-on computer labs, and do homework assignments that apply the principles they are learning directly to their own businesses.

A well-known experimental psychologist in the field of psychophysics, Moskowitz is the institute’s chairman and chief technology officer. He can point to any number of products—Prego Spaghetti Sauce, Vlasic Pickles, Swanson Frozen Dinners, Maxwell House Coffee, to name a few—that have significantly expanded sales thanks to his efforts.

Having majored in mathematics and psychology at QC, he received his PhD in experimental psychology from Harvard. He’s president of Moskowitz Jacobs, Inc., the marketing research firm he launched in 1981, and the author of 20 books, including the best seller Selling Blue Elephants: How to Make Great Products that People Want Before They Even Know They Want Them that introduced readers to his concept, Rules Developing Experimentation (RDE). Moskowitz appeared weekly from 2004 to 2006 on “ABC NewsNow” as the “Food Doctor.” In January, Moskowitz’s work was recognized with his receipt of the 2010 Ralston Chubb Award for Innovation from Sigma Xi, the international honor society of research scientists and engineers.

Stephen Onufrey, the institute’s executive director, spent 38 years with IBM during its period of mega-growth, where he marketed business solutions to retail banks.

Recognizing a natural synergy between Moskowitz’s capacity for developing innovative concepts and Onufrey’s for selling businesses on the idea of employing such concepts, a mutual acquaintance at the Wharton School brought them together three years ago. Moskowitz says, “It was love at first sight: He immediately understood what I was doing with experimental design, and I saw in him, as an ex-IBMer of 38 years as ‘Mr. Process.’”

“It was a perfect blend of skills,” says Onufrey, who observes that since their meeting “we’ve been on the phone an average of three times a day, including Saturdays and Sundays.”

The product of those conversations is a distillation of their science and marketing principles that they are calling Addressable Minds. It’s a concept they tell prospective ICE students will “bring science-based research to your bottom line.”

Explains Onufrey, by having a prospective customer respond to a few specific questions, Addressable Minds can determine which of a number of carefully researched “segments” that individual falls into. Henceforth, the construct of that segment determines all future interaction. “You can then communicate with them in terms of things they consider most relevant and most important.” Utilizing this concept, says Onufrey, the charitable organization Stand Up To Cancer was able “to sequence their messages so as to maximize donations” during their September 2008 telethon.

“We calculated that in that one hour, instead of $70 million, they pulled in $100 million.”

Moskowitz sees ICE as filling a void in the business world. “Very few companies have a systematic way of discovering what the customer wants,” he says. But ICE graduates will be able to take what they learn from customers using Addressable Minds “and make it part of their intellectual property for years to come.”

Deconstructing Guido

“I was born and raised a Guido,” Paulie D. says proudly. Paulie is one of the stars of MTV’s hit series “Jersey Shore.” “It’s just a lifestyle,” he continues, “it’s being Italian, it’s representing family, friends, tanning, gel, everything.” New York State Senator Diane J. Savino also believes that “Guido was never a pejorative.” But for Andre Dimino, the president of UNICO, the national Italian-American service organization, “Guido” is a despicable term that signifies young Italian men as young, dumb, fist-pumping guys with a severe hair gel addiction.

Anthony Julian Tamburri, dean of QC’s John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, takes a more objective view. At the Calandra-sponsored colloquium “Guido: An Italian-American Youth Style” held on January 21, Tamburri said he sees Guidos as a contemporary manifestation of youth culture that equates to the “greasers” of the mid-20th century, as well as to the Fonzi, the character in “Happy Days,” the hit TV show from the 1970s and 80s that glorified the 1950s and 60s. “Guidos,” Tamburri believes, are “Italian-American working-class youth who are very self-reflexive and concerned with how they look.”

The colloquium’s featured speaker Donald Tricario—a sociologist at Queensborough Community College and author of the 1991 essay, “Guido: Fashioning an Italian-American Youth Style”—echoed Tamburri. He described the “Guido” phenomenon as “an urban youth subculture associated with late capitalism” that “consumes commodified leisure styles.”

The “Guidos” colloquium attracted more than 100 people and led the New York Times to devote the major article in its January 23 Arts Section to the controversy. Times writer Patricia Cohen observed that attendees were “probably not MTV’s usual demographic. There were scholars, elected officials, representatives from Italian-American organizations and the Consulate General of Italy, though there was a sprinkling of people who proudly called themselves Guidos and Guidettes.” In fact, Maurizio Antonini, Vice Consul from the Italian Consulate, joined in the discussion.

“Jersey Shore,” which glorifies the Guido aesthetic, has been problematic even before its premiere. Daniel Cappello, the executive director of the Jersey Shore Convention & Visitors Bureau, complained to ABC News that “The program certainly depicts the Jersey Shore as a culturally vapid place and doesn’t make it appealing to anyone outside the demographic [MTV] is showing.” Tamburri too pans the show as a “totally silly, totally unrepresentative view of Italian-American youth culture. It’s reality television,” he adds, “a commercial entity that deforms any reality of what this culture might be.”
Building a Better Web

Like any new release, the college’s website is a work in progress. Efforts are under way not only to improve it, but also to help staff learn more about SharePoint, the site’s content-management system.

During free hour on January 27, the Office of Converging Technologies and the Office of Communications held the first of five meetings in Campbell Dome with content editors, who update the web pages for their respective offices and departments. “The meetings are progressive,” says Chief Information Officer Naveed Husain (OCT), who has scheduled subsequent sessions for March 3, April 5, May 5, and June 2. “We want everyone to come back.” The main subject of the day was the difference between the public college portal and MyQC, an intranet accessible only to members of the campus community. Eventually, MyQC will be the primary electronic information source for the college’s internal audience of faculty, staff, and students.

Another topic was the pending launch of People@QC. Expected to debut later this spring, People@QC will allow faculty and staff to post their own pages on the Internet, revising them at will. “People@QC will provide an outlet for faculty and staff to create external personal websites that highlight their achievements and allow them to interact with the public and colleagues at other educational institutions,” explains Marketing Director Steve Whalen (Communications).

At the end of the meeting, OCT and Communications fielded questions from content editors. Long-term QC employees in attendance saw a familiar face in the OCT contingent: Angel Arcelay. Manager of user services during his first on-campus incarnation in the 1990s, he returned in 2003, spending three years as director of web development and training before accepting a position at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Now he’s back once again as director of enterprise and application services. “I love QC, and will do anything I can to help the college grow,” says Arcelay. Among the projects he’ll be tackling is developing mobile applications for the website. “I am all about allowing students to do work on their PDAs and iPhones,” he notes.

In additional personnel changes, OCT is hiring four temporary staffers to help academic departments prepare for the next stage in QC’s web development—migrating content from qcpages to the SharePoint platform. “We will hire two developers and consult with Communications in hiring a project manager and writer,” says Husain. “From now until the end of the fiscal year, they will work directly with content editors to organize material in a way that works for the departments and the college.” The conclusion of this phase will result in a much more content-rich MyQC.

World-Renowned Composer—and Graduate—in Residence at ACSM

When Bright Sheng wanted to build on the education he got at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, he enrolled in the master’s program at Queens College, where his teachers included George Perle and Hugo Weisgall. Now the celebrated composer and pianist is returning to his alma mater: He’s in residence at the Aaron Copland School of Music for the spring, as guest artist.

In addition, Sheng will present “A Disentangling Musical Journey,” a series of four public lectures on his unique experience as a Chinese-born, Western-trained composer who survived the Cultural Revolution. Some of the lectures will involve demonstrations on Chinese instruments.

Sheng’s residency will continue in the fall, when he will conduct the ACSM orchestra in his composition Nanking! Nanking!, featuring acclaimed soloist Yang Wei on the pipa, the Chinese lute.
**Popular Mentoring Program Revived**

It was a cold December evening during exam week, yet the Agora Café was warm with the enthusiasm of students, faculty, and administration officials who had gathered to celebrate the revival of a popular program: Undergraduate Research and Mentoring Education (UR/ME) was returning after a six-year hiatus.

The initiative, which enjoyed a successful run at QC from 1993 to 2004, funds activities in which undergraduates and faculty collaborate in research or other scholarly or creative work. Many in attendance were already engaged in or about to begin projects receiving funds from the program.

The event’s organizer was Eva Fernandez (Linguistics & Communications Disorders), a member of the committee shepherding the new initiative and director of its administrative home, the Center for Teaching and Learning. She noted that “It’s really delightful to see so many of you and from so many different departments.”

In fact, 11 departments are represented in UR/ME. Within these 78 students are working with 19 faculty on 17 projects ranging from hard science research involving copper nanoparticles to creating a community-based puppet theatre production about New York City commuters. A project on “the regulation of new neurons in the adult brain” is the brainchild of undergraduate Sara Wildstein, who is heading a group of students mentored by Carolyn Pytte (Psychology). (Learn more about the projects at [http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/ctl/urme/](http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/ctl/urme/))

“This is really exciting, this is what a world-class college is all about,” said President James Muyskens, who then saluted Dean Savage (Sociology) for resurrecting the program that Savage and Charles Smith, a former dean of Social Sciences, had piloted in 1993 with a $300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Savage, in turn, observed that “The program is back and better than ever,” largely due to the efforts of “a really wonderful team of young faculty members” who are administering it, including Steve Pekar (SEES), Kristin Celello (History), and Ed Smaldone (Music).

“One of the things that everybody is interested in is for students to have high-impact experiences,” said Savage. “Working together with a faculty member on a research project that the faculty member is really committed to—that qualifies as a high-impact experience.”

Muyskens also credited QC’s new provost, James Stellar, for helping make UR/ME happen. Stellar confided that the new UR/ME initially appeared to be a victim of “success failure.” With sufficient funding for an anticipated dozen proposals from faculty, to everyone’s astonishment some 51 were submitted. But before Stellar had even finished explaining the dilemma to Muyskens, the president offered to provide additional funding.

Observed Fernandez, the close faculty-student collaboration fostered by UR/ME allows students to experience their professors as real people, like themselves. She added, “The program’s acronym is UR/ME: You are me.”

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**Beauty Magnified**

No, these aren’t Christmas tree ornaments. These objects are microscopic fossils—presented here courtesy of the Micropaleontology Press. QC is hosting the nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the stratigraphic sciences. The press provides images and information to QC scientists and scientists the world over. Learn more about their work at [www.micropress.org](http://www.micropress.org).

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**Slamming**

A large and very enthusiastic crowd was on hand for December’s SEEK Poetry Slam event in Rosenthal Library to hear works by members of the Poetry Club founded by Cicely Rodway (SEEK). Subjects of poems ranged from interpersonal relationships to issues of identity, immigration, assimilation, and politics.
Breaking Down the Great Wall of Autism in China

Peishí Wang

In China, efforts toward educational equity for children with disabilities have been directed exclusively toward those with hearing, visual, and limited intellectual disabilities. Even though there may be at least 2.6 million people with autism in China (current data are inconclusive), education and other services for children with autism have been virtually nonexistent.

A new partnership between Queens College and the Beijing Wucailu Children Center—a school founded by Chinese philanthropist Menglin Sun that provides support for autistic children and their families and teachers—should go a long way toward solving this problem. Peishí Wang (ECP–Special Education), who met Menglin in 2005 at a conference in Beijing, is spearheading this partnership. Wang has been traveling to the school each year, providing professional development for parents and teachers, while conducting research about the needs, support, and coping strategies of parents of children with autism.

Wang and other QC educators now have an ambitious plan to help Menglin and the Beijing school improve their autism services. They are working with the school and government on an important first step: establishing teaching credentials in China for the autism field. Information exchange, research activities, technical assistance, and advocacy are also among their goals. One of the keystones of this partnership is a teacher exchange between the college and the Beijing school that will give Chinese teachers the opportunity to observe proven best practices in New York area schools for autism. To prepare, Wang will evaluate the Beijing school’s program and needs this summer.

“We hope our involvement will really make a difference in shaping public policy and creating mechanisms for education and other services for children with autism,” says Wang. “If we can’t break down this wall in China, perhaps at least we can weaken it.

NSSE Survey Finds Students Happy with QC

Last spring QC first-year students and seniors were again asked to participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The results, published in November, confirm what anyone who has spent time here can readily observe: Our students are actively engaged in learning and in enriching activities that lead to learning.

Launched in 1999 at Indiana University, the NSSE provides colleges and universities with information that can be used to improve undergraduate education. QC is among 616 schools that participated in the 2009 survey; it previously participated in 2000, 2005, and 2008.

“Our students were initially invited to participate via email, and a subgroup of non-respondents received the paper surveys,” reports QC’s Institutional Research Director Meg McAuliffe. “In all, 351 first-year students and 212 seniors responded.”

The survey posed 42 key questions about classroom participation, interaction with faculty, and time spent on enriching activities. From the responses, NSSE gauges benchmarks in five areas: Level of Academic Challenge, Active and Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty Interaction, Supportive Campus Environment, and Enriching Educational Experiences. The 2009 findings are presented in comparison to QC’s ’05 and ’08 survey results, offering a gauge of progress in these areas.

Students appear glad they chose QC: 80 percent of first-year students have a favorable image of the school, and 87 percent of seniors would choose QC again.

Among the findings for first-year students: 76 percent feel QC places substantial emphasis on academics; 56 percent say they frequently work harder than they thought they could to meet faculty expectations; and 55 percent say they frequently discuss readings or ideas from coursework outside of class.

By their senior year, 39 percent of students have participated in some form of practicum, internship, field experience, co-op, or clinical assignment; 24 percent frequently assist fellow students by tutoring or teaching them. Forty percent of first-year students say faculty are available, helpful, and sympathetic, and by their senior year, 21 percent have done research with a faculty member.

Not surprisingly, 52 percent of first-year students report they frequently have serious conversations with those of a different race, and 55 percent say they frequently have serious conversations with students who are different from themselves in terms of their religious, political, or personal beliefs. By their senior year, 15 percent of students have studied abroad and 41 percent have participated in community service or volunteer work.

A substantial 67 percent of first-year students feel QC has a strong commitment to their academic success, and 41 percent feel well-supported regarding their social needs. Yet, only 4 percent spend more than 15 hours a week in co-curricular activities, and 68 percent spend no time in such activities.

“It’s gratifying to know that the overwhelming majority of our seniors—87 percent—would choose QC if they had to make the decision again,” says President Muyskens. “Still, there are areas of the student experience here that we’re committed to improving. For example, in the next survey, we want far more than 39 percent of seniors to have participated in ‘experiential learning.’ To that end, we’re developing many more student opportunities for internships and field experiences—the many ways that education is enhanced outside the classroom.”

The 2009 results are largely consistent with those for 2005 and 2008, says McAuliffe. “We dipped a bit in a couple of areas and got a slight bump in others.”
Written in pencil on ruled paper that has yellowed with time, the essays betray keen social observation and halting literacy. On some sheets, a teacher’s corrections stand out in red ink.

The context of these assignments is what makes them resonate to this day. They were submitted by pupils at Freedom Schools, alternative institutions opened in Mississippi and other states in the summer of 1964 to reach African Americans who were denied access to public education. Now, through QC’s Civil Rights Archive, these authentic period documents are available for research and classroom use. “It’s part of QC’s proud history of social activism,” says Ben Alexander, head of Special Collections Archives, Queens College Libraries.

The collection also demonstrates the value of a new GSLIS program that provides hands-on archival experience to graduate students serving as special collections fellows, earning course credit but no cash for their efforts. In the past two years, five QC alums—Art Gatti ’65, Mark Levy ’64, Elliot Linzer ’67, Stan Shaw ’65, and Michael Wenger ’65—gave the college a trove of their civil rights mementoes, including personal correspondence, lesson plans, voter registration flyers, and newspaper clippings. Subsequently, the items were turned over to a team of library staffers and GSLIS graduate students. Their mission is to catalog and store all of it in accordance with archival standards, and set up a system that will accommodate new acquisitions, since fieldwork is part of the job.

“It’s like urban archeology,” observes College Assistant Kevin Schlottmann, who focuses on the civil rights holdings, housed in the basement of Rosenthal Library in a room decorated with copies of photos and posters from the archive. Filed in acid-free boxes, the material already occupies 30 linear feet. After washing his hands, Schlottmann produces his finding aid, a detailed inventory that took three people 300 hours to compile. “Without the finding aid, this is just stuff in a box,” he comments.

With the finding aid, he instantly locates pieces that evoke an entire era, such as political buttons featuring black-and-white images of icons such as Emiliano Zapata, Joe Hill, and Harriet Tubman; the set is mounted on nonreactive Ethafoam, so the pins won’t rust. Another box contains Levy’s vintage Yashica camera. After Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner were murdered, “newspapers were afraid to send staffers to cover stories, so editors asked kids to shoot photos, and told them not to develop their film down south,” says Alexander.

This collection is not the only donation to get professional attention from staff and grad students. In a larger space across the hall from the civil rights room, special collections adjunct Katie Hughes points to one of many archival projects she focuses on: The papers of the late musicologist and alumnus K. Robert Schwarz, whose subjects ranged from minimalism to the work of writer and composer Paul Bowles. Among the prizes here, donated by Schwarz’s mother, are autographed photos of Ned Rorem and Aaron Copland and cassette tapes of Schwarz’s interviews with Bowles and Steve Reich.

Given the success of the first three classes of collections fellows, from which, Schlottmann and Hughes were hired, Alexander looks forward to continued expansion of the program. The current class of fellows has eight new applications for Fall 2010 underway. “Our model is up and running,” he reports. “Now we’re able to begin putting other collections together.”

At work with QC’s Civil Rights Archive are (l to r) Katie Hughes, Kevin Schlottmann, and Ben Alexander.

Alexei Tartakovski, a transfer student studying piano performance with Nina Lelchuk at the Aaron Copland School of Music, placed first among six finalists at the 2009 Heida Hermanns International Piano Competition Dec. 5 in Westport, Connecticut. Tartakovski, 20, was the youngest finalist in the competition. He played the first movement of Sonata in B Minor by Franz Liszt and Fantasy in B Minor, Opus 28, by Alexander Scriabin.
Reducing the College’s Footprint

Each fall George Hendrey (EES) asks students in his Environmental Problem Solving course to use the knowledge they have gained to address an issue in environmental science. This year, this capstone fall semester course—required for all seniors in the School of Earth & Environmental Sciences—focused on how to cut Queens College’s ecological footprint.

Like a coach in a championship game, Hendrey reminds his students that they must work collectively to achieve their goal. “Imagine you have just been hired by a consulting firm,” he tells them. To win its contract, the company must create a comprehensive proposal, so students need to research their topic thoroughly and develop a plan describing how the problem will be solved.

Hendrey makes sure that students understand the multiple details the project entails. There is a deliverable: a report containing research and “a plan on how to get it done.” Reducing the college’s footprint will require an examination of electricity usage, the generation of steam, building energy use, materials consumption, food consumption, solid waste management, food waste, wastewater management, and transportation. But project management is a subtext in the course so there are additional questions to pose: Who, for example, will design the layout, who will edit and assemble the chapters, and who will make the 50 copies of the final document (so Hendrey can distribute them to colleagues, politicians, the media, and any other interested individuals)?

The students satisfied all of the project’s requirements in producing a 224-page report, Ecological Footprint. To reduce QC’s footprint, the students made many suggestions, some easily implemented, others more aspirational in nature. For example, the college can reduce the amount of pollutants on campus simply by planting more trees and vegetation. Building energy audits can identify wasted electricity, while the installation of faucet aerators can reduce water usage. Mandating double-sided printing will save a great deal of paper.

But there were also proposals that will require significant societal and institutional change, such as reducing general consumption. The report asserts that “The only way to really effect positive change in our society is by changing our behavior.” The students also recommend switching from conventionally raised food animals to grass-fed, organic beef. In addition, they urge the development of a new required—and campuswide—curriculum. An indication of the scope of the educational job that lies ahead to achieve a more ecological and sustainable culture is that “an astonishing 45 million Americans think that the ocean is a viable source of drinking water.”

Hendrey’s students also learned that the college has been working to achieve a more ecological approach to campus life. Queens now emphasizes recycling, has installed motion sensors on classroom and office lights (that turn off when no one is in the room), swapped incandescent for fluorescent bulbs, and installed more energy-efficient motors on fans, pumps, compressors, and generators. It also has bought hybrid-electric and off-road electric vehicles for security patrols, people moving, and maintenance.

All of the report’s findings and recommendations will be discussed at an April 21 President’s Roundtable.

Alex Garrett: Always on His Game

On his first day as a freshman last September, Alex Garrett showed up at Queens College’s radio station WQMC and asked for a job. Actually, what he asked for was his own show. And he got it.

At 1 pm on October 15, Garrett settled into his broadcast chair in the basement of the Student Union, tested his mike, and went live with “The Sports Hour with Alex Garrett.” The weekly show, a mix of mostly sports-related commentary and interviews, has aired regularly ever since. Guests have included QC soccer coach Carl Christian, Student Affairs VP Joe Bertolino, NBC-TV weekday sports anchor Bruce Beck, and former Yankees outfielder Bernie Williams.

“I work best without a script, but I keep a newspaper in front of me when I’m on the air,” says Garrett. “The show is more spontaneous that way.” Statistics—the meat and potatoes of sports journalism—figure importantly in “The Sports Hour,” but Garrett’s emphasis is on analysis, not just numbers. “I work hard at making sure listeners understand what I’m talking about,” he says. In addition to “The Sports Hour,” Garrett has also begun doing play-by-play radio broadcasts of QC basketball games.

Though only 18, Garrett isn’t exactly a rookie. Born with one leg, he attended Henry Viscardi School in Albertson, Long Island, a school for students with physical disabilities. From early childhood he ate, drank, and breathed sports as both a commentator and participant, emceeing school sporting events and often representing the school as a media spokesperson. He was also a headline year after year, in the school’s annual Sports Night, appearing with such luminaries as Bud Harrelson, Tiki Barber, JoJo Starbuck, and Scott Hamilton.

When he wasn’t announcing games, he was often playing in them. “I started running when I was two,” he says. “We did a lot of adaptive sports at Viscardi, and I was right in there. I played quarterback in football.” He frequently represented the school in the New York State Games for the Physically Challenged and was a gold-medal winner in several categories, including long-distance running and table tennis.

In honing his broadcasting skills, Garrett has had a number of top-tier teachers. Last September he was invited to join WFAN’s Ann Liguori in the broadcast booth at the U.S. Open. And, since 2006, he’s been mentored by Baseball and Basketball Hall of Fame sportscaster Bob Wolff. “Bob has helped me refine my on-air reading skills and my ‘broadcaster’s voice,’” he says. “He’s also had me write and read scripts to him, and then critiqued my performance. In so many ways, I owe my success to him.”

Not surprisingly, Garrett, who is majoring in media studies, plans to make sportscasting his career. Meanwhile, he’s using his time at QC—and at WQMC—to sharpen his edge.

“Analysis is everything,” he says. “‘When you’re talking about sports, it’s not just the `what’ that matters, but the `why.’”

**Student Profile**

Alex Garrett is bracketed in the QC broadcast booth by play-by-play announcer Joe Masi (right) and color commentator Michael Schleifer.

Garrett
**Joe Brostek Looks Back on 60 Years at Queens College**

Not only does Joe Brostek control the heavens, it seems he also holds dominion over the Earth.

The incredible string of rainless commencements the executive director of events supervised from 1988 to 2008 is Queens College legend, but many may be less familiar with the story of Lake Misiurski.

Reflecting on his 60-year association with QC as a student, alumni board member, and employee as he approached his January 29 retirement, Brostek recalled his role in dealing with the large body of water that for 20 years had plagued pedestrians and drivers on Reeves Avenue. In 1994 when he asked Buildings & Grounds about the enormous puddle, they laughingly said “That’s our lakefront property,” explaining they’d named it for former B&G head Julian Misiurski.

Money to address the inadequate drainage was regularly proposed in the city’s annual budget but never made the final cut. So Brostek and Jeff Gottlieb ’64, a QC alum in City Councilmember Morton Povman’s office, initiated a lobbying effort with local officials. On October 24, 1995, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new drainage system. Lake Misiurski vanished from the face of the Earth.

That doggedness has characterized Brostek’s time at the college going back to 1950, his freshman year. Even then he was always a campus booster, whether serving as student body president or helping to lead a fundraising effort for the March of Dimes. “I was part of what was affectionately called ‘the lunatic fringe,’ the two or three percent of students who were responsible for most campus activities,” he said.

As much as Brostek has helped define QC in that time, he has, in turn, been defined by QC. “I met my wife Carol Heiser (’54), here,” he said, “and my best friend at the college was best man at my wedding. Many classmates remain our friends to this day.”

While a student he was wing commander of the college’s Air Force ROTC unit, graduating as a lieutenant and doing a tour of duty with the Strategic Air Command in Topeka, Kansas. He then embarked on a business career in marketing with several blue chip firms, running events in the U.S. and abroad. Representing GE’s satellite manufacturing division, he witnessed space launches at Cape Canaveral.

Those experiences would later serve him well in his role marshalling the disparate elements essential to QC’s annual launch event, commencement. “In 1986 President Shirley Kenny asked me to come to the college as a consultant; two years later she offered me the job of director of special events and I assumed responsibility for commencement.”

Characteristically, for someone who has regularly made notes to himself during events of ways he could make something work better next time, Brostek said, “I’ve been working very hard for several months to prepare what I call legacy documents to pass on to my successor.”

Presumably, they will explain such things as working with city agencies in the event of a future Lake Misiurski or the need for QC signage on the LIE. “In my career here at QC, half of what I did was not in my job description,” he remarked. “And I enjoyed that.”

“That” has included such things as his idea to create a time-lapse video of the construction of The Summit. “We captured 15 months of work in 28 seconds,” he boasted, also noting his role in helping make QC one of the first schools to webcast its commencement and to create a permanent exhibit saluting alumni (in Jefferson Hall).

Brostek also served as director of alumni affairs from 2001 to 2006. At commencement 2005, he joined fellow members of the class of 1955 in celebrating the 50th anniversary of their graduation. That day borough president Helen Marshall ’73 issued a proclamation from the podium declaring it “Joe Brostek Day” in the borough of Queens in recognition of his service to the college and the community. (*Newsday* profiled Brostek in its “Everyday Hero” column, declaring he’s “spent a lifetime singing the praises of his beloved borough.”)

Brostek acknowledged that his association with QC has been long enough that many of the people he’s known in that time, such as Dean Margaret Kiely, “have become building.”

Perhaps there’s a Joe Brostek Hall somewhere in QC’s future?

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**Renaissance Exhibit at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum**

Madonna and Child, from the workshop of the Flemish painter Peter Paul Rubens, is among the treasures on view at Godwin-Ternbach Museum through March 27 as part of Scholars, Explorers, Priests: How the Renaissance Gave Us the Modern World. The exhibition of some 70 paintings, prints, sculpture, and decorative objects from the museum’s collection also includes works by Dürer and Rembrandt. Curated by James Saslow (Art History), it provides a richly detailed account of how Renaissance art bequeathed modern values to succeeding generations.
Bright Future for Water Polo Team

Despite an overall 4–13 record last season (1–6 in conference play), coach Or Gil says the QC water polo team is on course to being “one of the best teams on the East Coast.”

Gil, who became coach last May, describes the team as currently being in a rebuilding phase. Pointing to a number of close losses last fall, he explains that these are noteworthy as they were achieved with a roster of nine players instead of the usual 13 or 15. “Most of our games we were playing one man down during the whole last quarter,” he says. “I don’t have words to describe how proud I am of them. To lose a game by one goal, and the only reason a team is better than you is because it has one more player. And these were teams that last year we lost to by an average of seven or eight goals.”

This is all the more remarkable, Gil says, when one considers the physical demands of the sport’s short and intense playing season: September to November, with Final Four competition in the first week of December. “Every weekend we play four games,” explains Gil. “Wednesdays, we sometimes play our conference games, so we’ll have five games in one week.”

“Things will be much better next year,” he promises. “I’ve already signed eight new players, so our roster will be 14.”

Coming aboard in late May, explains Gil, didn’t allow him sufficient recruiting time. “Most of the players had already been signed by other schools. But we were extremely lucky with Srdan,” he says, referring to Srdan Milic, a last-minute recruit who became the team’s leading scorer and was named to the 2009 Division II Eastern All-Tournament Team. A star player in his native Croatia where he was the nation’s top scorer in 2000 and 2001, Milic came to play with fellow countryman and former teammate, Knights goalie Jadranko Pocekaj. “And Srdan,” he continues, “is bringing his cousin, who’s a great player. So next year we’re going to have a really great team.”

Gil has even found a silver lining in the bad economy: “I’m talking to a player from UCLA. We got lucky that they just raised their tuition by 30 percent. He can’t afford UCLA anymore.”

Money Talks at Palmer Conference

Lilly Ledbetter, namesake of the equal-pay legislation signed into law last year by President Barack Obama, will deliver the keynote on March 15, when the Virginia Frese Palmer Conference explores the topic of Gender in the Workplace.

The ninth in a series of annual Women’s History Month conferences at QC—and the first since the death of sponsor Virginia Frese Palmer ’42—the event will be held from 9 am to 1 pm in the ballroom of the Student Union, and will be followed by a luncheon. The other panelists will be QC faculty Hester Eisenstein (Sociology) and Sheryl McCarthy (Journalism); Carmella Marrone, executive director of QC’s Women and Work program; Patricia François, a member of Domestic Workers United; Janet Gornick, a professor of political science and sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center; and Lara Vapnek, a St. John’s University history professor specializing in gender and labor.

Ledbetter became a feminist icon fairly late in life. Before retiring from her supervisory job at a Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company factory in Gadsden, AL, she learned that she made less money than her male peers. She sued her employer for discrimination. The case reached the Supreme Court, which ruled 5–4 that the claimant had failed to file within a six-month window, dating to the time when the disparity began. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act drastically extended the filing deadline, giving Ledbetter a moral victory but no other benefits. A widow, she receives a pension that is based on her earnings.

Midnight Breakfast

Quite literally moonlighting as a short order cook, provost Jim Stellar ladles out one of the many dishes available at Midnight Breakfast, a free late night meal break served up by senior administrators and student leaders to cramming students beginning at 11 pm, December 15.
In the Media: People

**SALMAN AHMAD** (Music) was interviewed Jan. 15 on NPR’s “On Point” in connection with the release of Rock & Roll Jihad: A Muslim Rock Star’s Revolution. He was also interviewed about the book Jan. 30 on “CNN International/World Report” . . .

**A . DAVID BAKER** (Chemistry/Biochemistry) and his brother Mark, a chemistry professor in Canada, have co-authored an article on an effective way of teaching nanotechnology to undergraduates. The article is the featured cover story in the March issue of the Journal of Chemical Education . . .

**RENAUD GIORDANO** (Psychology) was quoted Feb. 4 in an Associated Press story concerning the slight increase in Cubans receiving visas to visit the U.S. since the beginning of the Obama administration . . .

**NANCY FOLDI** (Psychology), **JEFFREY HALPERIN** (Psychology), and **JOHN WALDMAN** (Biology) appeared in Metro’s series of “21st-Century Pioneers Profiles” on Dec. 21, Jan. 4, and Jan. 11, respectively . . .

**JOSHUA FREEMAN** (History) contributed his observations about the MTA’s chronic problems to the New York Times blog, “Room for Debate,” that appeared Dec. 16 . . .

**Writing the Body**, the exhibit of works by alumna **NAOMI GROSSMAN**, recently on display at the QC Art Center, received coverage Oct. 1 and Nov. 12 in the Queens Chronicle and Dec. 10 in the Queens Courier . . .

**In a wide-ranging Jan. 25 interview on WNYC’s “Leonard Lopate Show” pegged to the release of his autobiography I Walked with Giants, jazz legend **JIMMY HEATH** (Emeritus Music) discussed his years as a teacher at QC . . .

**MICHAEL KRASNER** (Political Science) offered his analysis of the New York State Senate’s defeat of a bill to legalize same-sex marriage for a Dec. 8 story in the Queens Courier . . .

**A Dec. 22 story in the New York Times concerning the disparity in the numbers of arrests between black and white violators of New York marijuana laws cited a study by **HARRY LEVINE** (Sociology) . . .

**In a Dec. 8 story in the Daily News about efforts by local merchants to boost holiday sales by issuing discount cards featured observations from **GEORGIOS MARKATAKIS** (Economics) . . . **MICHAEL NEWMAN** (Linguistics) was among those quoted in a Feb. 7 New York Post article about the dying “New York City dialect” . . .

**The Daily News caught up with STEVE PEKAR** (SEES) on a ship off the coast of Antarctica for a Feb. 9 story about his research into climate change . . .

**A Feb. 4 story in the New York Times about the response of the local Haitian community to the earthquake in Haiti featured observations from **FRANÇOIS PIERRE-LOUIS** (Political Science) . . .

**The Jewish Week New York website featured an article Feb. 8 quoting MARK ROSENBLUM** (Jewish Studies) and Rabbi **MOSHE SHUR** (QC Hillel) about QC’s planned offering of the first course at an American university to explore Bukharan Jewish history and culture.

In the Media: Events & Programs

The Dec. 3 Queens Courier reviewed the exhibition Fitz Maurice: Common Ground at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum. It was also mentioned in a Dec. 31 roundup of significant art events in Queens during 2009 that appeared in the Queens Chronicle. A Nov. 26 cover story for the arts and entertainment section of the TimesLedger cited it as one of a number of QC events tied to the theme of “tolerance,” which also included a Nov. 17 event at Kupferberg Center headlined by Bernie Williams. The concert received mentions Nov. 12 in the Queens Courier and Queens Chronicle . . .

**A Dec. 10 New York Times roundup of holiday events included the Russian American Ballet presentation of The Nutcracker at Kupferberg Center. It was also included Jan. 10 in the Times’s “This Week in the Community” listings . . .

**A program in which QC will train teachers from CUNY schools in Queens seeing significant increases in applications in the face of a weak employment picture . . .


**A Jan. 14 TimesLedger story mentioned QC among CUNY schools in Queens seeing significant increases in applications in the face of a weak employment picture . . .


**A Jan. 14 TimesLedger story mentioned QC among CUNY schools in Queens seeing significant increases in applications in the face of a weak employment picture . . .

**The Jan. 24 Daily News carried a listing of the Queens Choral Society’s call for auditions for its Spring season . . .

**The Jan. 31 Daily News carried a listing describing the offerings for Black History Month at the Louis Armstrong House Museum.**
QC Authors

Which documents and artifacts should you keep—and how? These are among the questions facing staffers of archives, museums, and other cultural institutions charged with selecting and maintaining material evidence for future generations. Ben Alexander (GSLIS) and Jeannette Bastian, director of the archives program at Simmons Graduate School of Library Science, have provided practical guidance as editors of Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory (Facet Publishing). Drawing on examples from around the world—the efforts of an aboriginal community to establish a land claim in Western Australia, the work of a truth commission in post-Pinochet Chile—the anthology’s 13 case studies examine the relationship between a group of people and the records that group generates. The book also looks at the exciting archival possibilities created by recent technology.

Widely admired in his lifetime, Flemish painter Hans Memling has been in and out of fashion since he died in 1494. The Romantics of the 19th century preferred him to Jan van Eyck; in 1953, after art historian Erwin Panofsky called him a “major minor master,” Memling slipped in the rankings. An exhibition held on the 500th anniversary of his death renewed academic interest in his work. Now he’s the subject of a monograph by Barbara Lane (Art), an expert on the Northern European Renaissance. Richly illustrated in black and white and color, Hans Memling: Master Painter in Fifteenth-Century Bruges (Brepols) follows the career of the German-born artist and tells how his influence extended beyond the ateliers of his adoptive city.

As songwriter and guitarist of the Pakistani band Junoon—the U2 of the Muslim world—and a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador, nonpracticing doctor Salman Ahmad (Music) tries to heal the rift between East and West. Born in Lahore, Ahmad spent most of his adolescence in Rockland County. He rooted for the Yankees and jammed in a garage band with an Irish Catholic guitarist and a Jewish bassist. In his late teens he returned with his family to Pakistan and dutifully enrolled in med school before pursuing his passions for music and social activism.

His memoir, (Free Press), is simultaneously a coming-of-age story and an eyewitness account of the struggles engulfing his homeland, where politicians alternately embraced Ahmad as a popular icon and suppressed the tolerance he espouses as an exponent of Islam’s Sufi traditions.

Founded in the wake of the Holocaust, Israel was heavily populated by European immigrants and their descendants, whose standards dominated the country. In this climate, Mizrahim—Jews from Muslim lands—were treated as second-class citizens, their differences seen as signs of backwardness. Sami Shalom Chetrit (Classical Langs.), whose family left Morocco for Israel when he was a child, documents this ethnic clash across more than half a century in Intra-Jewish Conflict in Israel: White Jews, black Jews (Routledge). The racial allusions of the title are deliberate; seeing analogies between their experience and that of African Americans in the United States, Mizrahim launched their own civil rights movement, mobilizing people through groups such as HaPanterim HaSh’horim (Hebrew for the Black Panthers) and the political party Shas.

Raised in poverty by damaged, abusive parents, Mirian Detres-Hickey (Special Services) endured a horrifying childhood. Her initiation into adulthood was little better: In her teens she married a man who began beating her on their wedding night. Her raw, tell-it-like-it-was memoir, When It Rains, It F—n Pours: A Transformation of a Minority Woman from the Ghetto Streets of New York (Authorhouse), spares no one, not even its author, whose violent response to an insult landed her in a public mental institution for two years. Fortunately, Detres-Hickey wrote herself a happier ending. Her determination to provide a better future for her children inspired her to turn her life around, get an education, and help other people do the same. At a book presentation event on February 24, she discussed her book and signed copies.

Lyrical Ladies

A Lady with a Hand Mirror, A Lady with a Hat Box, and A Lady with a Cake Box are, respectively, Natalia Salemmo, Melisa Bonetti, and Jessica Bender presenting a scene from Dominick Argento’s surreal opera Postcard From Morocco. The performance was part of Lovers and Other Operatic Strangers, A Program of Opera Scenes presented December 7 at LeFrak Hall by the Queens College Opera Studio.
QC People

JEFFREY RENARD ALLEN (English) won the Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence for his collection of short stories, Holding Patterns. The annual $10,000 prize, sponsored by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, recognizes African-American writers of excellence. Allen gave a reading Jan. 25 at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. As part of the Museum of Modern Art’s Modern Mondays series, ZOE BELOFF (Media Studies) appeared January 18 to discuss her exhibition Dreamland: The Coney Island Amateur Psychoanalytic Society and its Circle 1926–1972 at the Coney Island Museum. The following evening she appeared at Light Industry, a new venue for film and electronic art in Brooklyn, to curate Obedience, a showing of three films concerning psychological studies, including one about Stanley Milgram’s ’54 controversial 1962 experiments at Yale University designed to evaluate people’s deference to authority within institutional structures.

The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) named ANDY BEVERIDGE’S (Sociology) demographics website Social Explorer (www.socialexplorer.org) as an “Outstanding Reference Source for 2010.” RUSA is a division of the American Library Association. At the February 20 African American Heritage awards ceremony at the Langston Hughes Library in Corona, MICHAEL COGSWELL (LAHM) received the Cultural Award for Outstanding Service. The awards, which are given annually to honor local leaders who make a difference in their community, were presented by Queens Borough President Helen Marshall ’75. NICOLE COOLEY (English) has won the Kinereth Gensler Award from Alice James Books for her poetry manuscript, Milk Dress. It will be published November 2010. The Society for Cultural Anthropology awarded its Cultural Horizons Prize to Assistant Professor OMRI ELISHA for his article “Moral Ambitions of Grace: The Paradox of Compassion and Accountability in Evangelical Faith-Based Activism.” The prize is awarded yearly by a jury of doctoral students for the best article appearing in Cultural Anthropology. The New York Academy of Sciences presented a podcast January 29 on its website in which JEFFREY HALPERIN (Psychology) discussed his work with preschool children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Click here to see it.

ULDIS ROZE (Emeritus Biology) has regularly appeared as Santa Claus for children attending the annual Christmas party at the Sumner Child Health Clinic in Brooklyn, where his wife is a pediatrician. This year he literally was Santa Claus, and several people at QC were his helpers. With considerably fewer than usual toy donations from local businesses and civic groups this year due to the sour economy, Roze reached out to ZAHRA ZAKERI (Biology), who organized a lightning 48-hour toy drive among her department colleagues, students, and Glen Cove neighbors. The response was terrific, and her office was inundated with contributions. Members of the biology department who participated included NATHALLA HOLTZMAN, POKAY MA, ALICIA MELENDEZ, CARLOS PEÑALOZA, and JOHN WALDMAN. RICHARD VETERE’S (Media Studies) novel Baroque has been published by Dramatic Publishing, a nonprofit publisher of Italian-American literature. Set in Rome in the 1600s, the novel concerns the painter Caravaggio. (2010 is the 400th anniversary of Caravaggio’s death.) Additionally, Vetere’s play Caravaggio, published by Dramatic Publishing, was recently translated into Italian and will be performed in Rome, Milan, and Porto Ercole this year. JOHN WALDMAN (Biology) and MELISSA CHECKER (Urban Studies) are among the moderators for a series of free public colloquia Waldman helped organize as part of QC’s partnership in the CUNY Institute for Sustainable Cities. The series, Turning the Tide: New York’s Waterfront in Transition, began Feb. 24 and runs through April 28. To learn more about it, Click here.

DEBRA WANNEER (Drama, Theater & Dance), who has worked with some of the most notable choreographers in New York’s downtown dance scene, recently formed her own company, Debra Wanner Dance. She will be presenting Close, four works created in collaboration with her dancers, April 15 to 17 at the Chen Dance Center on Mulberry Street. A reception will follow the opening night performance. For more information: 212-349-0126 or 212-349-0438. DANA WEINBERG’S (Sociology) book Code Green: Money-Driven Hospitals and the Dismantling of Nursing won the Connecticut Nurses’ Association 2009 Media Award for its presentation of “organizational structure and change and its impact on nursing practice and patient care.”