College Inaugurates Veterans Support Services

QC is marshalling support for servicemen and women. On February 27, the school held an Open House to inaugurate Veterans Support Services at Queens College, a comprehensive program that helps veterans and reservists adapt to academic life.

“Our veterans and members of the reserves are an important part of the college who bring to this campus a unique perspective that enriches us all,” said President James Muyskens, addressing the crowd gathered in Room 403 of the Student Union and alluding to his special guest, World War II veteran and QC grad Arnold Franco ’43. “From now on, with our Veterans Support Services program, we are going to see that they have all the assistance they need, be it advice on choosing a course of study, career, or personal guidance, help with physical problems, or just a sympathetic ear to listen to their concerns.”

Initiated by Provost Evangelos Gizis at the behest of CUNY, which created an Office of Veterans Affairs, VSS at QC unites seven departments: the Academic Advising Center, Career Development and Internships, the College Counseling and Resource Center, Continuing Education Programs, Health Service Center, Special Services, and the Registrar. Each office boasts a specially-trained liaison familiar with veterans’ education benefits and services, whether they’re available on campus or off. The holistic continued on page 2

Projects Move Ahead Campuswide

With the recent installation of decorative gates, construction of the new main campus entrance on Kissena Blvd. is nearly complete. “Once the weather warms up, we’ll plant some sod,” says Facilities Director Dave Gosine, describing the final element in one of the more visible of many current campus projects.

“We’re in the middle of construction for Temp 3, which will be renamed Honors Hall when the honors program moves there from Temp 2,” he says. “We’re renovating a number of rooms, bathrooms, ceilings, and lighting fixtures so it’s going to be a modern, clean, bright facility.” Temp 2, he notes, recently received a standard seam metal roof, “and it’s been nice and dry with all the rain we’ve been having.”

One of QC’s more high-profile projects—the new Visitors Center at the Louis Armstrong House Museum—is moving into schematic design phase, according to Gosine. (In the schematic process, he explains, an assessment is made of the building’s program, mechanical, structural, and electrical elements with an eye toward “maximizing needs within the budget and adding value quickly to our campus.”)

Additionally, the center will attain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) silver status as a green building in terms of its construction and energy operations.

continued on page 3
grant of $203,206 for a research project on the development of oral fluency in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. The funding agency is the Pittsburgh Science of Learning Center, which is subsidized by the National Science Foundation. SOPHIA CATSAMBIS (Sociology) has been awarded a $286,000 grant from the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development for a project entitled Tracking and Achievement Growth in the Early Grades. She aims to expand knowledge of the interrelationships of gender, race/ethnicity, and social class as they affect equal educational opportunities. ROBIN ROGERS-DILLON (Sociology) participated in a roundtable discussion, “Evangelicals and the 2008 Primaries,” Feb. 8 at Princeton, where she is visiting this semester at the university’s Center for the Study of Religion. ALICIA MELENDEZ (Biology) gave a lecture in January at a workshop organized by the Biology of Aging and the Neuroscience and Neuropsychology Programs of the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Aging. She presented the first genetic data showing that cell autophagy—the natural process of self-cannibalism at the cellular level—promotes longevity in the nematode C. elegans. Melendez has been studying autophagy in nematodes since 2000. Last fall the NIH awarded her a one-year, $136,603 grant for research into sarcopenia (age-related loss of skeletal muscle mass) and muscle health span in C. elegans; the grant may be renewable for a second year. MORRIS ROSSABI (History) gave a speech on “Commerce and Culture During the Mongol Era” at Humanities West in San Francisco, Feb. 22. He also delivered a lecture on “From Silk to Oil: China and Islamic Central Asia,” at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, Feb. 27. He will also deliver a lecture on “China’s Influence on Islamic Art, 13th–14th Centuries,” at Washington and Lee University Museum on March 17.

...JOSHUA BRUMBERG (Psychology) recently received a grant of $165,200 from the National Institutes of Health/University of Pittsburgh for research on Corticothalamic Neurons in Sensorimotor Cortex. NEL DE JONG (Linguistics) received a two-year grant of $101,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She aims to expand knowledge of the interrelationships of gender, race/ethnicity, and social class as they affect equal educational opportunities. ROBIN ROGERS-DILLON (Sociology) participated in a roundtable discussion, “Evangelicals and the 2008 Primaries,” Feb. 8 at Princeton, where she is visiting this semester at the university’s Center for the Study of Religion.

Returning veterans, who have multiple needs, require specialized support to adapt to college life,” says Special Services director Mirian Detres-Hickey. “We developed this consolidated approach to make sure that the veterans take full advantage of the benefits due them and to provide guidance and a sense of community as they reenter civilian life in an academic setting.”

This support begins as soon as individuals are accepted to QC, and continues throughout their college experience. “After veterans and reservists are admitted to Queens College, the Academic Advising Center will offer guidance that is attentive to their needs,” says Laura Silverman, director of the center. “At the same time, we’ll ensure that the advice we give is consistent with the policies governing the eligibility and maintenance of their educational benefits.”

Services provided through VSS at QC include educational benefits coordination, career development, and academic advising and educational planning to maintain veterans’ benefits. Short-term personal counseling, campus and community referrals, and health and wellness services are also available. Continuing education certificate and non-certificate courses are open to vets. Disabled veterans may avail themselves of an Assistive Technology Lab and a Laptop Lending Program with specialized software. For more information, please visit http://www.qc.cuny.edu/Advising/pages/SpecialPrograms/COACHOR/VSS.html

VETERANS from page 1 approach is designed to reduce red tape and help a unique group of students make the most of their education.

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The global economy needs people with foreign language skills. So does the United States government. And the languages that are now in greatest demand tend to fall outside the traditional college canon, which stresses Western European literature. So the Mellon Foundation’s $50,000 planning grant to QC is especially timely. The funds will help professors design broader offerings in Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew, and Middle Eastern studies, and new courses in South Asian languages and Korean.

“We were already doing this,” says William McClure (Classical, Middle Eastern, and Asian Languages), who wrote the grant application after President James Muyskens, Vice President Sue Henderson, Assistant Provost June Bobb, and Eva Fernández (Linguistics & Communications Disorders) met with Mellon executives. “The grant allows us to think bigger. We’ll use it to invite experts in to critique us, to show us where we should expand, and how we should develop.”

Paradoxically, QC’s linguistically diverse population could use some academic support. In a recent Institutional Research survey, the student body reported over 75 native languages, including many that are Middle Eastern or Asian. But our students are not necessarily literate in their native tongue, Fernández explains. Meanwhile, those from English-only households may study a foreign language for years without achieving verbal fluency.

“The bigger objective is to transform language instruction Queenswide,” says Fernández. “We need to set reasonable expectations and think about teaching languages in a more effective way. Everybody is good at languages—it’s part of what makes us human.”

Projects from page 1
Similarly, he notes, pre-schematics have been completed on the Kupferberg Center, and some decisions will have to be made based on the scope of individual building projects and their proposed budgets.

Gosine describes another example of forward-looking renovation taking place in Campbell Dome. “In March we’re going to begin replacing the old seating. The new seating will have a more functional layout with electrified work surfaces so you can sit and plug in your laptop computer.”

New technology is at the heart of the Media Commons in the library, where improvements will allow for the introduction of computer-based technology. Work is also ongoing, says Gosine, to “re-program” areas in the library to bring them more in line with current and anticipated needs. Bookshelves will give way to space for quiet study and places for group projects, as well as new infrastructure for more computers and labs.

Gosine also mentions construction in the Student Union of a new media lab for Hillel to allow for film editing and music editing.

“And we’re updating the lounge in Kiely 200. We’re going to put in new carpet, furniture, shades, and paint it to make it a more modern and student-friendly environment.”

Gosine is happy to report that the Remsen addition is proceeding well and on schedule. RFPs are also being issued for architects and engineers to redesign a number of labs for Razran Hall and the Science Building.

Other completed projects include: renovations to the J Building, new home to Alumni Affairs and the Schutzman Center for Entrepreneurship; installation of a fire-suppression system in the rooms where OCT keeps its main server; and improvements to the track and field. (New sod will be planted when weather permits.)

Retrieving samples from strata deep in the Earth’s crust below Antarctica has long been a Holy Grail for scientists hoping to find evidence of what they refer to as Greenhouse World—a time 50 million years ago, when this polar region had a temperate climate and extensive vegetation. Steve Pekar (Earth & Environmental Sciences), second from the right, has received a $256,958 grant from the National Science Foundation to do just that. Last fall, he made his second expedition to Antarctica as a member of an international team of scientists who are part of a program called ANDRILL (Antarctic Drilling). During his eight-week stay, over 1,100 meters of strata spanning some 20 million years were drilled. In October, he will go back to Antarctica, leading an International Polar Year expedition that will include three QC students. They will perform preparatory survey work for a drilling project that may finally reach the Holy Grail.

Searching for One of Antarctica’s Holy Grails

Creatures Featured
Fred Adell ’81 stands alongside one of many creatures he’s painted or sculpted over the past several years. Last month the Art Department held a retrospective exhibition of the QC alum’s work in Klapper Hall for several days. It was appropriately called ANIMALS!
QC’s Agora Cafe: An Attractive Place to Meet and Eat

Nestled in a stainless steel chafing dish, the baked chicken, its skin nicely browned, was tempting. So was the sliced pork, bathed in a vegetable sauce. But maybe the catfish was the most healthful option. Why choose only one?

A buffet is a beautiful thing. And Agora—the faculty-staff dining lounge in the Student Union—operates Monday through Thursday, from 11:30 am to 3 pm. For $10, patrons can help themselves to a multi-course meal of salad, bread and butter, chicken, meat, and fish entrees, assorted side dishes, including steamed vegetables, fruit and freshly baked desserts, and beverages. Better yet, it’s served in a quiet area with table seating. “Comfort was what we were looking for,” explains Steve Aiello, director of Administrative Services for the Student Union.

Last summer, Agora—“meeting place” in Greek—was built with the encouragement of the Student Association, which had used the lounge area as programming space. “We wanted to create a place where departments could have working lunches, or bring candidates,” says Aiello, pointing out the results of the $125,000 makeover: a dropped ceiling, salmon-colored walls, medium brown wainscoting, and a marble, restaurant-style entrance capped by an awning. These details were chosen with an eye toward marketing. After 6 pm on the days it’s operational, the lounge can be reserved for select private events.

As patronage grows, Agora may schedule a few celebrations of its own, with occasional ethnic specialties keyed to the calendar. But the menu will always feature basic chicken and meat dishes that please the widest possible range of palates. “We don’t want to disappoint the regulars,” notes Aiello, adding that some faculty members return day after day to “their” tables.

Student Profile: Golden Glove Champ Spars with Decision to Enter the Classroom or the Ring

Will Rosinsky

As a three-time New York Golden Gloves champion and 2005 U.S. Championship Gold Medalist, boxer Will Rosinsky has successfully eluded many a potentially serious blow. But looming ahead is something he knows he can’t duck: The decision to become either a professional boxer or a gym teacher.

Despite recent stories in the Daily News and other local press describing the QC student as the talented amateur who planned to forgo boxing in favor of a career as a Phys Ed teacher, the light heavyweight is reconsidering. “Not to let everyone down,” he says, “but I think I’m going to try the pros. I have to give it a shot.”

Rosinsky’s current plans call for him to complete all of his QC requirements next fall, which include student teaching at PS 207 in Howard Beach and at either Forest Hills HS, Long Island City HS, or John Bowne HS. After the new year, he believes he will be prepared to make his final decision.

Becoming a teacher wasn’t Rosinsky’s reason for coming to QC initially. “I knew it was a good school; I knew financially it would help my parents out,” he says, referring to the substantial tuition his parents had paid for his education at Molloy HS. “After I’d been here about a year I looked into teaching. I decided on Phys Ed because I’ve been in sports my whole life; I have a passion for it.”

Similarly, boxing was not on Rosinsky’s agenda seven years ago, when the Ozone Park native began working out at a local gym to stay in shape. “I started going just two days a week, but that wasn’t enough; I wanted more and more and more. So I went to a more serious gym.”

That gym is the Starrett City Boxing Club in Brooklyn, where he came under the tutelage of its owner Jimmy O’Pharrow, who is now Rosinsky’s coach.

“It’s hard to train and train and train just to be in shape,” notes Rosinsky. “You have to test yourself to see where you’re at. I tried boxing and I was very successful. Once you start boxing, it’s hard to stop. It’s a rush.”

At the moment, Rosinsky’s trying to avoid a rush to judgment on what career path to take, but he acknowledges professional boxing is exerting a strong pull.

“A lot of kids at my gym who went pro recently say I should at least try it once,” he says. “When you’re a pro it’s a whole different sport. You’re getting ready for a fighter, as opposed to just getting ready for a fight. You can pick and choose your opponent, which you can’t do as an amateur. If you feel you’re not ready for someone, you go to the next guy. That’s how you build a career.

“Hopefully,” he continues, “by the very beginning of next year I’ll make the decision, figure out who I’m going to sign with, and maybe get my first pro fight by the end of January.”

But even as he embarks on a pro career, the dream of teaching will still be with him. Noting how the first 10 to 15 fights tend to be easier as you work your way up the pro ranks, Rosinsky says, “During those early fights—which will take about two years—I hope I can also get my master’s degree.”

Following that, he’ll assess how well he’s done. If he decides to enter the classroom instead of the ring, he will do so content in the knowledge that he gave professional boxing his best shot.
Taking Their Leave: Gregory Rabassa and Emilio DeTorre to Retire in September

After accumulating a combined 79 years on campus, two esteemed faculty members—Hispanic Languages and Literatures professors Gregory Rabassa and Emilio DeTorre—are saying adios to QC and retiring, effective this September. This semester, they’re on Travia leave.

Rabassa has had a rich and varied work history. During World War II he used his language skills as a cryptologist with the Office of Strategic Services, the precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency. On the lapel of his sports jacket he wears “the ancient and honorable order of the ruptured duck”: the gold pin he was given at his military discharge.

“Then I went to a cocktail party.” QC

Rabassa may try his hand at his own novel or a memoir. His book, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, was published in 1967. The next year, he received the National Medal of Arts in a White House ceremony.

Internationally celebrated for his English translations of groundbreaking Latin American fiction, such as Julio Cortazar’s *Hopscotch* and Gabriel García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Rabassa has no intention of putting down his pen. “I just translated another Portuguese novel, *What Can I Do When Everything’s on Fire*, by Antônio Lobo Antunes,” he says. “It’s Proust as written by Joyce.”

Like his colleague, DeTorre started his QC career outside the Spanish department. “I had a master’s in French and was working as a language lab director,” he says. “When the departments were reorganized, I continued the tradition of the holiday party.” His menu usually featured Spanish wine and homemade tapas.

DeTorre still puts in occasional appearances on campus. His plans for the future include studying, reading, and preparing food. “My wife lets me cook all the time; she’s the baker,” he reports. Another passion is soccer. His favorite team, surprisingly enough, is Manchester United. “My wife is of English descent,” he says. But he also roots for Real Madrid.

QC AUTHOR

In a nation that has put the steeldrum on some of its currency, music is more than an art form; it’s a critical element in cultural and political life. So explains KEVIN BIRTH (Anthropology) in his book *Bacchanalian Sentiments: Musical Experiences and Political Counterpoints in Trinidad*. An anthropologist with a long-standing interest in the Caribbean, Birth did field research in Anamait, a pseudonymously named rural village where he conducted ethnographic study in 1989–91, 1996, and 1998. In this, his second book, he analyzes how performers and audiences experience different musical genres, from the familiar calypso and soca, to parang—a Venezuelan- and Spanish-derived folk idiom popular at Christmas—and Indo-Caribbean chantey.

A participant as well as an observer, Birth gained some of his knowledge by playing guitar in parang bands.

With its author’s insight into song lyrics, and the events and situations inspired by them, *Bacchanalian Sentiments* has won raves from experts in the field. “[Birth] demonstrates how central musical experience is to the diverse and changing ways that Trinidadians understand various dimensions of their lives, such as kinship, friendship, community, gender, ethnicity, and national identity,” writes Stephen Stuempfle, author of *The Steelband Movement: The Forging of a National Art in Trinidad and Tobago*.

Performing Race

One of many Black History Month events that took place on campus during February, “Performing Race” provided an opportunity for Townsend Harris High School students and QC students, faculty, and staff to express in a creative way—such as song, art, poetry, or dance—what race and racial identity mean to them. Two Townsend Harris students demonstrated traditional African dance steps at the Feb. 13 event.
QC IN THE MEDIA

RICHARD ADAMS (ACE) and DIANE GAHAGAN (Continuing Ed.) were quoted in a Feb. 14 Queens Tribune article, “Life-long Learners Continue at QC” . . . MARA EINSTEIN’s (Media Studies) book, Brands of Faith: Marketing Religion in a Commercial Age, was reviewed in the Feb. 12 edition of Advertising Age. She also gave a talk about her book on Feb. 27 at St. Bart’s Church in Manhattan . . . PENNY HAMMRICH’s (Dean, Education) Sisters in Science program, an innovative use of sports to teach science to children, was the subject of a feature that aired Feb. 11 on Connecticut Public Broadcasting’s WNPR Radio. It can be heard at www.cpbn.org/selling-science-kids-through-sports. A much longer feature will air later this year . . . KEENA LIPSITZ (Political Science) was interviewed by Telemundo, the second-largest Spanish-language television network in the U.S., for her opinions on the outcome and ramifications of the Super Tuesday presidential primaries. The spot aired Feb. 4 on the 6 pm news . . . STEVE MARKOWITZ (CBNS) was quoted in a Jan. 20 Associated Press dispatch concerning New York City Police marijuana arrests . . . An interview with RABBI MOSHE SHUR (QC Hillel) and DEAN SAVAGE (Sociology) concerning their 1960s civil rights/voter registration volunteerism aired on NY1 News Feb. 14 in celebration of Black History Month . . . STEPHEN STEINBERG (Urban Studies) was quoted extensively in the Feb. 2 edition of the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad in a feature article about “Obamamania” . . . A story appearing Feb. 16 in the Tablet focused on Father Paul Wood and the work of the Newman Center . . . White Landscape, an exhibition of drawings by Jin Lee in the QC Art Center, was featured Feb. 6 in the Korea Daily . . . The current exhibition at the Godwin-Ternbach, Crossing the BLVD, was reviewed Feb. 7 in the Queens Chronicle . . . A Jan. 24 story in the Queens Chronicle focused on the many offerings available to adult students through QC’s Adult Collegiate Education, Weekend College, and Continuing Education Programs . . . QC’s Aaron Copland School of Music was profiled Jan. 24 in the Queens Courier . . . The Feb. 7 edition of the Queens Courier included a story about events at QC in observation of Black History Month.

QC students, faculty, and staff packed a classroom in Powdermaker Hall Feb. 11 to hear alumnus Richard Whalen ’57 hold forth on the state of national politics yesterday and today. A celebrated journalist, author, and advisor to three Republican presidents—Nixon, Reagan, and George H. W. Bush—Whalen is one of several distinguished alumni who are appearing for lunchtime roundtable events. He regaled his audience with anecdotes and observations, and he surprised them, as well. A self-described traditional conservative Republican, he decried the current administration as perhaps the worst in history, and declared his support for the candidacy of a liberal Democrat, Sen. Barack Obama, predicting he would not only beat Hillary Clinton in the primaries, but also handily defeat likely Republican candidate Sen. John McCain.

Alum and Political Veteran Whalen Weighs In

The QC Dance Team, a group founded three years ago by choreographer [and current QC senior] Shawn Garnier, made its first foray into NCAA competition last summer with impressive results. Over the next few months they advanced to the College Dance Team National Championships, which took place on Jan. 18 at Walt Disney World. Competing against 359 teams from across the country, they placed 19th among the final 20. ESPN aired the event on Tuesday, March 4.

QC Dance Team Makes NCAA Finals

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March

6 THUR
ALUMNI RECITAL: Konstantza Chernov (MA ’02), piano and Jonathan Noah, saxophonist. LeFrak Hall, 12:15 pm.

9 SUN
PERFORMANCE: 17th Annual Mark Kyrkostas “Remember Me with Music” Concert. Ivy Adrian, piano, John Vartan, oud, Bob Davian, dumblek; music by Kyrkostas, Bach, Chopin, and Liszt. Choral Room, Copland School of Music, 5 pm. $5. Call 718-428-5650. Mark Kyrkostas was a QC student.

10 MON
PRESIDENTIAL ROUNDTABLE: “Israel/Palestinian Peace: Between the Impossible & the Inevitable,” Mark Rosenblum (History; Harrington Center). RSVP to President’s Office, QC. Pres. EventsRSVP@qc.cuny.edu or call 718-997-5556. RSVP not required, but priority given to those who respond. CLIQ event.

11 TUE
EVENING READINGS: Edna O’Brien reads from her works and is interviewed by Leonard Lopate. LeFrak Hall, 7 pm. $15, free with CUNY student ID.

12 WED

RECITAL: Long Island Composers Alliance, Constance Beavan, soprano; new music for voice and instruments. LeFrak Hall, 12:15 pm.


13 THU
ALUMNI/GUEST RECITAL: Colloquio di Corde, ensemble with Elena Rojas (BMus ’02, MA ’03), violin and viola, and Sylvia Kloc, guitar. LeFrak Hall, 12:15 pm.

14 FRI, 15 SAT, 16 SUN
PERFORMANCE: Mozart’s opera The Marriage of Figaro. Co-presentation of the Copland School and Drama Department. QC Orchestra, Maurice Peress, conductor, David Ronis, director. Goldstein Theatre, 7:30 pm, Fri. & Sat.; 2 pm, Sun., $20/$18 QCID, alumni, seniors. Call 718-793-8080 or visit www.kupferbergcenterarts.org.

16 SUN
CONCERT: Orpheus Chamber Orchestra with Jonathan Biss, piano. LeFrak Hall, 2 pm. $34/$32 seniors, students, QCID, alumni. Call 718-793-8080 or visit www.kupferbergcenterarts.org.

17 MON
CHEMISTRY SEMINAR: “Genetic Changes Induced by DNA Interstrand Cross-links,” Wilma Saffran (Queens College). Remsen 100, 12:15 pm. CLIQ event.


24 MON

30 SUN
CINEMA ON SUNDAYS: Triumph of the Spirit. True story of Salamo Arouch (Willem Dafoe), a Greek Jewish boxer imprisoned in Auschwitz. Discussant: Steven Bowman (Visiting Professor in Greek Jewish Studies, QC). LeFrak Hall, 2 pm. $5.


April

2 WED
CONCERT: QC Orchestra, directed by Maurice Peress. Gershwin’s An American in Paris and Franck’s Symphony in D minor; LeFrak Hall, 12:15 pm.

Exhibits


FYI items should be submitted to Maria Matteo (maria.matteo@qc.cuny.edu), Kiely 1310, x 75593.