McHugh Leads Research Trip to Haiti

This year two extraordinary research opportunities drew Cecilia McHugh (Earth & Env. Sci.) to sites half a world apart. Last winter she took part in a three-month research expedition to New Zealand, and shortly after that she headed an urgent expedition to Haiti.

Off the coast of New Zealand, on board the R/V JOIDES Resolution, McHugh studied “very deep holes that hold the history of global changes in sea level and the climate,” she explains.

The vessel’s drilling rig, eight stories high, brought up the deepest core (1,927 meters) ever drilled by one expedition of the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program in sediments. This sediment will give glimpses into sea level change as far back as 34 million years, when Antarctica separated from Australia.

Analyzing other cores, “We were surprised at what we think were warm conditions during geologic periods generally accepted as cold. We thought the oceans had cooled much earlier,” she notes.

On board the R/V Endeavor from February 20 to March 13, McHugh guided the research team in assessing the Haitian quake’s causes and why an unexpected tsunami had followed in its wake. Her team raced to document the ephemeral evidence before shallow waters dispersed it. PhD student Katie R. Mishkin was part of the expedition. It also involved several Haitian and U.S. geoscientists and opens up possibilities for bringing Haitian students to QC and CUNY.

This National Science Foundation (NSF) Rapid Response expedition merged seismic science with a mission of mercy: transporting 40 huge donated tents to be set up for schools.

“It was an eerie feeling to go into the bay of Port-au-Prince,” McHugh recalls, for it was like a war zone with all the

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better rates of retention and higher levels of student satisfaction,” he says. “So I’m glad that the college is continuing in this direction.”

Of course, QC’s Eighty-Sixth Commencement will be notable for the absence of Joe Brostek, who directed the event for the past 21 years. But before retiring in February, he passed along to new directors Lee and Andrejack what they call “the Joe Brostek Bible.”

“Our job,” says Lee, “is to provide as much information as possible and to give attendees as broad a sense of the event as we can before they even arrive. What’s different about this year is that John and I have decided to put everything related to preparation for Commencement on the web.”

With an anticipated crowd of 10,000—including students’ family members and guests, some coming from foreign countries—Lee and Andrejack have also been busy urging students with foreign guests to complete the process of securing letters from the college affirming their graduation so they can work with their respective embassies to secure proper visas and other entrance documents in time for Commencement.

This year’s honorary degree recipient will be author Amitav Ghosh, who was formerly (1997–2002) a distinguished professor of comparative literature at QC. One of India’s best-known writers, Ghosh studied in Dehra Dun, New Delhi, Alexandria, and Oxford; his first job was at the Indian Express newspaper in New Delhi. He earned a doctorate at Oxford before he wrote his first novel, The Circle of Reason (1986). His 1990 novel The Shadow Lines won the Sahitya Akademi Award, India’s most prestigious literary prize. His most recent book is Sea of Poppies (2008).

The principal Commencement speaker will be Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, a Palestinian physician who has worked in Israeli hospitals and is committed to reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. In January 2009, during an Israeli military operation in Gaza, three of his daughters were killed when an Israeli tank fired upon the family’s home. Despite his great personal tragedy, Abuelaish remains committed to the peace effort. To honor his daughters, he has created Daughters for Life, a foundation dedicated to providing education and health access to women and girls in Gaza and the Middle East.

A nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize, Abuelaish will be honored the evening before Commencement at the capstone event for QC’s new Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding along with Lewis Bernstein, a QC alum and orthodox Jew who founded the Sesame Street Children’s Creative workshop. Bernstein has successfully pioneered “Sesame Street’s” global educational efforts, including in the Middle East, where his programs have reached Israel, the West Bank, and deep into the Arab and Muslim world. The center will also announce that evening the name of a QC student it is recognizing for fostering understanding between people on or off campus.

QC’s Baccalaureate Ceremony honoring academic excellence will be held on Tuesday, May 25, at 7 pm in Colden Auditorium. Some of our excellent students are profiled below.
A small role as an American salesman led Roll to bigger theatrical challenges and, ultimately, a new career goal. “I derived a different kind of pleasure from acting,” he explains. “I became more involved and found myself taking auditions. Even being in a tech rehearsal for 10 hours was not tedious.”

His musical background has not been wasted: Because singing skills are invaluable to an actor, he took voice lessons with Bruce Norris, co-director of QC’s Opera Studio, for two years. Roll still plays clarinet for fun and profit, accepting the occasional gig. “A lot of training went into it and I don’t want to lose it,” he says.

**Sharon and Frances Tran**
To say that Sharon and Frances Tran have much in common would be an understatement. The twins both majored in English and minored in Chinese. Each had to weigh full-scholarship offers for English PhD programs at prestigious universities. (Frances chose the CUNY Graduate Center and Sharon Picked UCLA.) And each recently had a paper accepted by the National Conference on Undergraduate Research—for the second year in a row. They presented their papers at this year’s conference, in April, at the University of Montana.

“They’re exceptionally talented and motivated students,” says Duncan Faherty (English), the Trans faculty advisor. “Their intellects complement each other. They push each other quite hard.”

The papers the sisters presented in Montana reflect their shared interest in how Asian-American authors deal with the changing meanings of kinship, identity, and nationality in a rapidly globalizing world. Both wrote about how characters in a novel struggle to define who they are. (Frances chose The Love Wife by Gish Jen, a Chinese-American; Sharon picked Native Speaker by Chang-rae Lee, a Korean-American).

The sisters say the issues Asian communities in America face are not unique. Indeed, Asian-Americans and African-Americans have more in common than is often assumed, says Sharon. They “have a shared history of racism and discrimination.”
The sisters’ academic focus comes at least in part from their own history. Their parents and grandparents emigrated from Vietnam, and the sisters were raised by their grandparents in Astoria for their first years, until the family moved to Little Neck, Queens. They still speak Vietnamese at home.

Their parents set high standards, telling the girls they “have to constantly do better;” says Frances. “The pressure only came off after we were accepted into the Macaulay Honors College.”

The twins, whom people often have trouble telling apart, are each others’ biggest backers. “We always read each other’s papers and bounce ideas off one another,” says Sharon. “Sometimes we even get a little competitive.”

When they are not studying, the sisters like reading—and writing—manga, Japanese-style comics, and watching anime, as its animated form is called. They also play volleyball on the QC Quad. Both envisage careers as English professors.

As a teen, Akhmedova won a seat in a Queens College summer program for immigrants. At age 18 she became a secretary, then worked her way up to CFO of two small companies. A decade later, she was finally able to go to college. Still working long days and tapping her savings, Akhmedova intensely pursued classes at QC—nights, weekends, summers—through the Adult Collegiate Education (ACE) Program, and later through the economics department, where she was accepted into its selective BBA program and majored in corporate finance (an accounting major). “I’m someone who is very curious and wanted to learn,” says the speaker of four languages.

She graduates summa cum laude this May. The ACE Program has invited her to be its valedictorian.

This year, as president of QC’s chapter of Omicron Delta Epsilon, the international economics honor society, she has more than doubled membership to 125 and has organized programs like field trips to financial institutions on Wall Street, where she works. She sees an MBA or a master’s degree in her future, plus another dream: “I’d love to run the New York Marathon.”

So in 2006 Bubbico enrolled in an undergraduate program at Queens in geology, a subject that could satisfy his love of the outdoors and traveling.

He wasn’t disappointed. Last July Bubbico joined a small geology expedition to Greenland with his professor, Hannes Brueckner (Earth & Env. Sciences). They got there via a scheduled flight to Iceland’s capital, Reykjavik, then a small plane to an oil company airfield in Constable Pynt, Greenland, and finally a helicopter flight to the country’s east coast. There the group camped in tents for three weeks.

The terrain was rugged, rocky and treeless. But the trickiest part of being there, says Bubbico, was learning to sleep in the midnight sun. He and his professor brought back a carry-on bag full of carefully chosen rock samples that they have been analyzing since their return. The research may expand our understanding of the mountain-building processes, says Bubbico.

Bubbico, who had a 3.96 GPA at the end of his last term at Queens and a number of awards to his name—including the NYC Brownfield Consortium Scholarship and the QC Young Scientist Award—has applied for a QC graduate program in geology and would like to become a professor. “I’m having a good time studying geology,” he says. “I hope it can be a next career for me.”
New Research Center Focuses on Korean Americans

The Research Center for Korean Community officially opened February 19 in a ceremony attended by dozens of leaders of the local Korean American community. The center, whose mission is to carry out academic research on overseas Koreans, is the first of its kind in the United States. It is headed by Pyong Gap Min (Sociology).

The center plans to publish three or four research reports annually documenting demographic, socioeconomic, and residential trends in the Korean American community—it has already published two since last fall—as well as working papers and books. It also intends to open a research library and hold quarterly lectures and an annual international conference.

This year’s conference, on the theme of overseas Koreans’ transnational ties to their homeland, is planned for October 9–10.

Min notes that the information published by the center will be useful in planning social services (Korean immigration to the NYC metropolitan area declined over the last decade, but the Korean American population is aging) and educational and cultural programs, as well as dealing with housing, immigration, and economic issues. “You have to have the data to see where we are moving,” Min says.

Min is one of the nation’s leading authorities on Korean Americans and Asian American immigration. He is the author of Caught in the Middle: Korean Communities in New York and Los Angeles (1996), and Ethnic Solidarity for Economic Survival: Korean Green Grocers in New York City (2008), both of which examine the conflicts Korean American merchants have faced in dealing with other American ethnic communities.

The center, which employs an associate director, two research associates, and two CUNY doctoral student research assistants (all part-time), was established with a $200,000 grant from a local Korean-born businessman. The businessman had originally planned to finance a business studies program at another institution, Min says, but was persuaded that the Queens center would be of more value to the Korean community.

To carry out its work, Min says, the center will rely on donations from Korean-American businesses (a nonprofit foundation is being established to facilitate such gifts), and research grants from both U.S. and Korean government and public agencies.

Zahra Zakeri: Profile of a Scientist Without Borders

As a child, Zahra Zakeri (Biology) always wanted to know how things worked. “My nickname was Questions,” recalls the professor.

After more than 20 years of teaching at QC and investigating programmed cell death—the loss of cells for reasons other than accident—her curiosity and energy are unabated. In addition to directing the Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) program (see page 15), leading undergraduate and graduate classes, conducting her own research, and publishing papers, she runs the International Cell Death Society, an organization she founded in 1994.

Later this month, she will fly to Stockholm, Sweden, as one of about 70 scientists invited to participate in a cell death conference honoring the bicentennial of the Karolinska Institute, which awards the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. Zakeri is also a founding member of Scientists Without Borders, which holds workshops and conferences, in nations whose scientists cannot easily travel. “Our aim is to educate people in third world countries,” she says.

An immigrant herself, Zakeri was in her mid-teens when her family left Iran and settled in Corona, Queens. She graduated from Newtown High School and enrolled at York College, intending to major in math. Her plans changed once she began working in the lab of Leslie Lewis, a biology professor specializing in genetics.

“He was a fantastic teacher, with such dedication to the field,” Zakeri recalls. “I fell in love with biology.” After completing her bachelor’s degree at York, she earned a master’s at Long Island University and a doctorate at St. John’s University, studying virology and tumor growth.

In 1984 she entered a post-doc program at Columbia University, where she became interested in cell death, a subject with huge scientific implications. Normal embryonic development involves cell death; so do many diseases, such as cancer and Alzheimer’s. The ability to control this process could revolutionize medicine.

“It was a quiet field at the time,” Zakeri says. “I was lucky to be there at the beginning.” By 1990, when she started teaching at QC, she had already gotten her first grants for cell death research.

Now she routinely receives major funding; in the last three or four years alone, she has won $8 million in educational and research grants. Her latest work concerns the role gender plays in disease. “We’re looking at whether it matters if a cell is male or female,” Zakeri explains.

Her lab is open 24 hours a day, and her students—including eight undergraduates, three master’s students, two PhD candidates, and one visiting research scientist—put in long hours. So does their mentor. “This research is quite exciting,” she declares. “It keeps me up all night.”
Recognition Comes Early for Six Science Faculty

Most colleges would be honored to have a single National Science Foundation (NSF) Faculty Early Career Development Award recipient. Queens College has six current recipients—all of them assistant professors and recent professional hires in the departments of Computer Science, Chemistry & Biochemistry, and Mathematics.

Says QC President James Muyskens: “Since I arrived on campus in 2002, there has been a dramatic change in the makeup of our faculty, as half have been hired since then. And what a faculty we’ve hired! This latest example represents an unprecedented achievement for these outstanding scientists, as well as for the college.”

“These substantial grants both honor and support outstanding research efforts by promising young scientists early in their careers,” says Acting Dean of Research and Graduate Studies Richard Bodnar. “The money also enables graduate and undergraduate students to do meaningful work in the labs of these faculty members.”

Adds Zhigang Xiang (Computer Science, whose department is home to three of the awardees, “I feel very fortunate. As a department head, there is nothing more you can expect than to get such talented people to join your staff!”

“For several reasons, a majority of deaf high school graduates in the U.S. have at best only a fourth-grade English reading level, but many of these adults have sophisticated fluency in American Sign Language (ASL),” says Matt Huenerfauth (Computer Science, hired 2006). “So, software that can present information in the form of ASL animations, or automatically translate English text to ASL would improve these persons’ access to websites, communication, and information.”

Huenerfauth’s lab uses a range of motion-capture equipment—including gloves with sensors, special body suits, and eye-trackers—to digitize the movements of humans performing ASL sentences, which differ in structure and word order from English. “By analyzing the patterns in how humans perform ASL signs, we can produce animated virtual human characters that produce more realistic ASL movements,” Huenerfauth says.

Seogjoo Jang (Chemistry & Biochemistry, hired 2005) is conducting research on the development of computational methods for energy flow dynamics in soft optoelectronic molecular systems. His work promises to have “a broad impact on the development of methods that could lead to new advances in optics as well as electronic and sensor devices,” says Jang. Recently he received the $75,000 Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award, which also supports promising young faculty.

The research of Jianbo Liu (Chemistry & Biochemistry, hired 2006) focuses on the use of mass spectrometry and ion/molecule reaction techniques to study the reactions of biologically important molecules with reactive oxygen species. Oxidation of biomolecules is an important biological process associated with aging, disease, and photodynamic therapy for cancer. “We also hope to discover and develop new methods and techniques in analytical chemistry and nanotechnology,” says Liu.

Heng Ji’s (Computer Science, hired 2008) work has important implications for researchers looking to automatically retrieve and track information from unstructured, machine-readable documents. “Ideally, you would initiate a search for information on a given topic and the program would automatically extract and track relevant information in all languages,” he says. “The program would then generate a summary of relevant findings.”

Alexey Ovchinnikov (Mathematics, hired 2009) is developing efficient algorithms that can be used to solve differential and difference equations. “These will have practical applications everywhere differential equations are used—in physics, biology, chemistry, and the sciences in general,” says Ovchinnikov.

With the Internet emerging as the main platform for computation, individuals have become increasingly reliant on cryptography to ensure privacy and security in their day-to-day activities and protect their personal information from unauthorized access.

“However, the design of many cryptosystems does not adequately account for new computational and cryptographic attacks made possible by advances in quantum computing and complex protocol interactions on the Internet,” says Hoetek Wee (Computer Science, hired 2008). The focus of his project lies in the design and analysis of new cryptographic protocols that address these new attacks.

Rocking Earth Day Rally

Salman Ahmad (Music) brought his popular group Junoon to Times Square to entertain at the huge April 22 Earth Day rally. Shown here (l. to r.) are Junoon drummer Sunny Jain, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, Ahmad, and musician Yale Strom.
A simple birdsong may have much to teach us about how we think—or, more specifically, about how we remember things. This is the crux of a research project that has secured a prestigious SOMAS (Support of Mentors and their Students in the Neurosciences) Award for Carolyn Pytte (Psychology) and sophomore Shoshana Koman.

The two are studying the role of adult neurogenesis in long-term memory. New neurons (the cells that transmit information in the body via electrical and chemical signals) become incorporated into existing brain circuits throughout adulthood in all animals, including humans. While a great deal of research has focused on understanding how these new neurons affect new learning, nothing is known about how they affect memory.

Continuing over the summer and through the fall, Pytte and Koman will be investigating the potential relationship between the amount of new neurons added to a brain region that stores long-term auditory memory and the accuracy of memories over time. Koman will present their findings in November at the annual International Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in San Diego. “The event,” says Pytte, “is the largest of its kind in the world, typically drawing more than 30,000 participants.”

The vehicle for their research is a common pet shop bird, the Zebra Finch. “Birds,” explains Pytte, “are the only terrestrial animals other than humans that learn their vocalizations. So, they’re the only model system for vocal learning. Baby birds have to be taught by their tutor, their father; whereas with apes and and other primates, it’s all genetically encoded.

“Birds store the memory of this learned vocalization in a region of the brain that undergoes a moderate amount of neuronal turnover,” she continues. “Among birds, Zebra Finches have a stable rate of neurogenesis. Also, they don’t change their songs; they have a very small song repertoire.”

For Koman, this experience may help cement her career objectives. A Macaulay Honors College student, she says, “I’m interested in becoming a doctor and going to medical school.”

Koman learned of Pytte’s research work through another student working in her lab, Sara Wildstein, and began volunteering there. “She’s very good, and very motivated, and very dedicated,” says Pytte of her research assistant. “I asked her if she would be willing to work very, very, very hard, because it’s intense and that’s what’s required. She said she’d love to.”

Pytte is the second QC faculty member to win the SOMAS award. Joshua Brumberg (Psychology) was a recipient in 2006, making QC one of only three institutions in the history of the award with two winners. Pytte and Brumberg also recently received awards under QC’s revived UR/ME program.
Gardaphe and Hahn Receive Major Honors

Two of Queens College’s distinguished professors—Fred Gardaphe (English and Italian-American Studies) and Kimiko Hahn (English)—recently received major academic distinctions.

Gardaphe has been awarded a Fulbright Scholar teaching fellowship for the 2010–11 academic year, during which he will lecture in American Cultural Studies at the University of Salerno in Italy. Fulbright recipients are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.

Gardaphe will teach one undergraduate and one graduate course that will explore how the humor expressed in major U.S. cultural works—by artists as diverse as Mark Twain and Chris Rock—reflects the nation and its people across a significant period of historical development. “I want Italian students to understand the changes large and small wrought upon the American identity, and I want them to understand the role humor plays in American media arts,” he says.

Hahn to Pen 9th Book

The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation recently announced that Kimiko Hahn has been awarded a fellowship. A total of 180 artists, scientists, and scholars received these “on the basis of achievement and exceptional promise,” chosen from a group of 3,000 applicants. Hahn will be working on her ninth book of poetry, inspired by her fascination with science. She teaches undergraduate courses in the English Department as well as graduate workshops in the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing and Translation program.

Hahn is the author of eight books of poems, including Earshot (Hanging Loose Press, 1992), which was awarded the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize and an Association of Asian American Studies Literature Award; The Unbearable Heart (Kaya, 1996), recipient of an American Book Award; and Toxic Flora, poems inspired by both ordinary and rarified fields of science (Norton, 2010). She will use the fellowship to work on a new collection of poetry.

Sidney Grimes: Taking Care of the Campus

Queens College has a new chief administrative superintendent of buildings and grounds: Sidney Grimes joined the college community on March 31, and describes his duties as “maximizing the operational needs of the campus on every level.” He replaces Basil Bascetta, who recently retired.

Grimes is a notary public who has certification as a fire safety director as well as in various sprinkler standpipe functions. He comes to Queens from John Jay College, where, after receiving two promotions in five years, he was a Level Four Administrative Superintendent responsible for custodial and laborer issues, as well as painting and flooring. At Queens he is “looking forward to building on the success of an already impressive institution.” He welcomes the opportunity “to serve in a leadership position” and to “oversee the day-to-day operations of buildings and grounds—everything from engineering to campus beautification.”

Born in Panama, Grimes came to this country as a toddler. He grew up in Brooklyn and now lives in Rockaway Beach, where he enjoys “spending time walking on the beach to think.” Effective communication is a quality he values in both his personal and professional life, and he points out the pleasure of really listening to what others are saying. As a manager, Grimes believes that “one of the most important parts of my job is going to be communicating with the line staff. Respect is the key to productivity.” In his private life, he is an Elder at the Kingsboro Seventh Day Adventist Church, and he seeks to “build connections in his community through communicating.”

This year Grimes expects to complete his bachelor of science degree in public affairs at Baruch College; then he hopes to begin a master’s degree program in public administration. He already holds an associate’s degree in business administration from the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Grimes’s career has been one in which he has steadily increased his responsibilities in facilities management. At Savoy Assisted Living, for two years he was environmental services director. He then worked at the Doe Fund, where he served as facilities manager for nearly three years before moving on to John Jay.

Even in his brief time at Queens, Grimes has been able to appreciate the “beautiful” campus, the success the college enjoys in graduating students “with an education that adds value to the economy,” and an environment in which faculty can flourish. He also is optimistic that he will be able to “do my job with the support of such a strong executive staff.”

Thanks to the receipt of an American Heritage Preservation award for 2010, the Godwin-Ternbach Museum is moving forward with treatment and repair of Washington Irving’s House, an oil painting on canvas by Humbert Arcamonte. This project was one of 54 among 177 applications to receive funding. The treatment by conservator Alexander Katlan should be completed by the end of summer.
Mentors Key to Project Excel Success

When he was a freshman, William Leverett relied on a few key people to help him acclimate to college life. Two, as it turns out, were connected with Project Excel, a QC initiative aimed at promoting the inclusion and retention of underrepresented groups—particularly African-American men like himself—and guiding them toward the services, support, and encouragement they need to succeed.

“Having been given that opportunity, it was only natural that I’d want to help other students in the same way,” says Leverett, now a junior majoring in political science and urban studies. “So I signed up as a Project Excel mentor.”

Housed within QC’s Academic Advisement Center (AAC), Project Excel is a multifaceted program comprising career development, academic advisement, life coaching, workshops, and other resources. But first and foremost, Project Excel is about mentoring. The program is supported by a cohort of 16 mentors, all high-performing juniors and seniors who build one-on-one relationships with motivated students.

In the process, says Irving Macario, coordinator of AAC’s Specialty Advising Services, “the mentees learn how to become successful students themselves and how to take advantage of the services and supports available to them on campus.” Adds Assistant Provost June Bobb, “The emphasis is on excellence and achievement—for both mentors and mentees.”

Like the CUNY-wide Black Male Initiative of which it is part, Project Excel seeks to address the historically high drop-out rates among African-American male students and other minorities.

“The reality is that we lose a lot of students of color in their first two years—not just at QC but nationwide,” says Macario. “Often students from underrepresented groups come here with ambitious career goals but haven’t thought them through and don’t really understand what’s involved in pursuing them or even how to begin. Many have full-time jobs or family responsibilities and may feel unable to connect with campus life.”

A close mentoring relationship with an upperclassman “can go a long way toward helping them feel comfortable in what may be an unfamiliar environment,” says mentor Andrew Hillman, a pre-med senior majoring in nutrition and exercise science.

Project Excel mentors must maintain a 3.0 GPA, but most go far beyond that threshold. Leverett, for example, is a J.K. Watson Fellow and a participant in CUNY’s Ernesto Malave Leadership Academy; Hillman is a recipient of the Dr. Wilbert C. Jordan Award for Best Research Presentation. Natasha Berry, one of several female mentors, also participates in the 100 Black Women Mentoring Program. Indeed, Macario is quick to note that the program is also open to both men and women, as well as individuals with disabilities, and students from other ethnic groups.

“As a rule, we’ll match mentors and mentees on the basis of their interests, political views, campus involvements, and other factors—but not according to their ethnic group,” says assistant project coordinator Ronald Sanchez.

“What really matters most is the ability to listen,” says Hillman. “As the relationship evolves, mentees will discuss their issues and problems with you, but what they need isn’t necessarily answers, just a receptive ear.”
Cutting the Human Costs of Drunk Driving

The statistics are sobering. According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), someone in the U.S. is killed by a drunk driver about every 45 minutes. In 2008, the toll was estimated at 11,773 victims.

In an effort to decrease the number of alcohol/drug-related driving crashes and raise awareness of the devastating consequences of this problem, MADD initiated the Victim Impact Panel (VIP) in 1982. VIPs provide a structured, positive forum for victims of drunk-driving crashes to confront convicted offenders about the physical, emotional, and financial impact of these crimes on their lives. Beginning on Sunday, May 16, QC’s Continuing Education Programs (CEP) joined with MADD to host at the college the first of its monthly court-mandated VIPs for these offenders and their families. This is the first program of its kind in Queens.

“Our organization feels that it’s critical to change the generally accepted attitude that these incidents are accidents, rather than preventable crimes,” says Thomas McCoy, MADD’s Long Island affiliate executive director. “Most offenders who complete evaluations after attending a VIP indicate that their experiences were positive and educational and contributed to a change in their attitudes and perceptions about their alcohol-impaired driving behavior.”

The panels typically involve two to four victims, each of whom spends about 15 minutes relating his/her story in a nonjudgmental, non accusatory manner. The purpose of the panels is for the victims to talk about their experiences, not for victims and offenders to engage in a dialogue. Victims do not appear before the drivers who hit them.

“These programs are very powerful . . . they seem to hit home with the offenders, putting them in the victims’ shoes,” says Cindy Feldstein, CEP’s assistant director for the college’s Drinking Driving Program. “For the victims, these panels provide an opportunity to speak from the heart and perhaps find some healing by sharing their pain and suffering in the hope it will prevent an offender from driving drunk again.”

Hendrey and Bertolino Named ACE Fellows

Dean of Social Sciences Elizabeth Hendrey and Vice President for Student Affairs Joseph Bertolino have been named American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows for academic year 2010–11.

Established in 1965, the ACE Fellows Program identifies and prepares promising senior faculty and administrators for responsible positions in college and university administration. Forty-six fellows, nominated by the presidents or chancellors of their institutions, were selected this year following a rigorous application process.

As dean of social sciences, Hendrey oversees 10 departments at Queens College, including all its business programs. She was also instrumental in the adoption of a new master’s degree program in risk management with concentrations in accounting, finance, and financial analysis.

Bertolino has directed the college’s office of student affairs since 2004. Before he joined QC he served as dean for community development at Barnard College. He has also worked in the New Jersey and Pennsylvania state higher education systems and the State University of New York. Bertolino is also an author, lecturer, and teacher, having presented hundreds of programs to thousands of students at colleges and conferences nationwide. He has received several professional awards for his work, including being named Campus Activities magazine’s “Best Diversity Artist” in 2007.

Each ACE Fellow focuses on an issue of concern to the nominating institution while spending the next academic year working with a college or university president and other senior officers at a host institution. The ACE Fellows Program combines retreats, interactive learning opportunities, campus visits, and placement at another higher education institution to condense years of on-the-job experience and skills development into a single semester or year. Hendrey and Bertolino will be included in the highest level of decision making while participating in administrative activities and learning about an issue to benefit Queens College.

Speaking of Sports

A special alumni roundtable March 18 brought together a group of QC grads who’ve found success in sports or the business of sports. Joining QC freshman and Knights sportscaster Alex Garrett (center) are (l to r) Olympic medalist Gail Marquis ’80, NBA Executive Counsel Howard Benjamin ’61, New York Mets sportscaster Howie Rose ’77, and sports television producer Michael Weisman ’71.
Strategic Plan Update

An emphasis on a more interconnected community characterizes much of Sue Henderson’s (VP Inst. Advancement) description of the progress made to date in implementing the college’s strategic plan.

“A very important part of the plan,” she observes, “is building a sense of community.” Citing the example of QC’s first residence hall, she says, “We’ve not only built a residence hall, but we’ve created a thriving residence hall life for it. We’ve hired more people in the student services area and we now have far more activities during free hour and many more active clubs. So all of our students have benefited from the opening of The Summit.”

Henderson also cites the revived Undergraduate Research Mentoring Education (UR/ME) program that brings students into QC’s community of faculty researchers. “This leads to more students who will stay with us to do graduate work, so it’s a win for us in many ways.

“Another component of community is recognition of our diversity,” she says. “We have a large number of Asian students, and we want to make sure that it’s green,” she continues. “Thanks to Kathy Cobb’s (VP, Finance & Admin.) leadership, in every decision we make, we now ask ourselves: How can we do this in a more sustainable manner?

“Another major aspect of the strategic plan is diversifying our funding streams, and we have done a much better job of that in the last three years,” Henderson notes. “Our endowment has gotten large enough that we’ve hired an investment firm, and the Foundation board is pretty aggressive at keeping their feet to the fire to make sure our portfolio keeps moving forward.”

Henderson even finds a silver lining in the troubled economy. “The latest budget cuts have been something of a blessing for us because they’ve made us stay focused on our priorities, seek efficiencies and more effective ways to bring alternative revenue into the college as well as thinking of more creative ways to deliver courses.”

Also, we are tying a lot of the curriculum in with our Education Abroad program. For example, we invite all students to go abroad, even freshmen. They spend three nights in The Summit and then travel for two weeks and take a mini-course. It’s an introduction to higher education that helps them form a connection with one another that carries over to the school year.

“As we build our community, we also want to make sure that it’s green,” she continues. “Thanks to Kathy Cobb’s (VP, Finance & Admin.) leadership, in every decision we make, we now ask ourselves: How can we do this in a more sustainable manner?

Another major aspect of the strategic plan is diversifying our funding streams, and we have done a much better job of that in the last three years,” Henderson notes. “Our endowment has gotten large enough that we’ve hired an investment firm, and the Foundation board is pretty aggressive at keeping their feet to the fire to make sure our portfolio keeps moving forward.”

Henderson even finds a silver lining in the troubled economy. “The latest budget cuts have been something of a blessing for us because they’ve made us stay focused on our priorities, seek efficiencies and more effective ways to bring alternative revenue into the college as well as thinking of more creative ways to deliver courses.”

Wendy Lee, Meeting Maven

Maven, originally a Yiddish word, has entered the New York cultural mix to define a person who is an expert and an authority. Wendy Lee, who joined the Queens College community on March 1 as director of events, is a meeting maven, a woman skilled at “pulling together all the different details of an event to make it successful.” She likens the experience of managing an event to a conductor leading a musical ensemble through a complex piece of music.

Lee, who is replacing the recently retired Joe Brostek, says her mission is to assist academic departments in organizing the great variety of lectures, conferences, symposia, and performances that are such an important component of college life. Her largest professional task will be managing the college’s commencement ceremonies.

Lee also hopes to expand the use of Queens College’s “fabulous facilities” by convincing community organizations and individuals to hold their events at Queens, whether it’s a business meeting or a wedding.

Lee says she chose to work at Queens because she was attracted by the college’s outstanding reputation, as well as the diversity of its programs, faculty, and student body. She marvels at how welcoming Queens has been for her, how “everyone has been warm, patient, receptive, and easy to work with.” She’s also charmed by the campus, and declares, “If I didn’t know better, I’d feel like I was in the middle of Princeton! This is a very beautiful campus with its views of Manhattan.”

A business administration graduate of Baruch College, Lee has spent her entire career in marketing—and in hosting gatherings. At TIAA-CREF, the nonprofit financial services provider, she worked for a decade as a regional marketing manager and organized seminars and conferences to introduce her company’s services to potential clients. When a colleague informed her of an opening at a New Jersey college, she jumped to academia and spent three years as director of development and alumni relations at Rider University, before moving on to a three-year tenure at Kean University as that school’s director of events and alumni relations.

Lee enjoys playing tennis and appreciates the college’s many courts. She also loves films, books, and travel.
Fifteen public colleges and universities across the nation are outperforming most similar institutions in helping students stay on track and graduate, a major new report from the nonprofit Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) shows. And among those institutions is Queens College. (The only other New York college cited is the College of Staten Island.)

SREB’s findings were recently released in the report *Promoting a Culture of Student Success: How Colleges and Universities Can Improve Degree Completion*. All of the institutions in the report outperform similar colleges and universities by having higher graduation rates. The report also outlines the common approaches and strategies that these institutions are using to boost student success and that can be used by other colleges and universities.

“One of the keys to the retention and graduation success of our students is the strong sense of community here at QC,” says Joseph Bertolino, vice president for student affairs. “In many ways, the college is a home away from home, offering a wide range of educational, social, and cultural programs and activities that foster an interactive learning environment that engages our students. They also feel valued by a caring, supportive staff who provide guidance and counsel on a daily basis.”

Adds Laura Silverman, director of the Academic Advising Center: “The academic advising and support services we offer are at the heart of our mission. We view them as valuable tools that enhance students’ overall undergraduate experience and ultimately help provide a liberal arts education of lasting value.”

Despite rising college enrollment, improvement in students’ timely completion of bachelor’s degrees in the U.S. has stalled, according to the SREB report. Fewer than one-third of degree-seeking, full-time freshmen in public four-year institutions graduate in four years. Most students who enter college as first-time, full-time freshmen take at least six years to earn a bachelor’s degree—and only 55 percent graduate in that time span.

**Rap Impresario, Rabbis Meet**

The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding and Hillel of Queens College convened a panel discussion March 15 at Goldstein Theatre to examine relations between the African-American and Jewish communities. Shown above are (l to r) President James Muyskens, Rabbi Marc Schneier, hip-hop pioneer Russell Simmons, and Rabbi Moshe Shur (QC Hillel.)

**Author, Author . . .**

Nothing, if not prolific, several members of the Sociology Department got together recently to celebrate publication of their latest books. Left to right, are Joseph Cohen, Pyong Gap Min, Samuel Heilman, Sujatha Fernandes, and Hester Eisenstein. Not at the party but published, nonetheless, was Nicholas Alexiou.
Before she entered Queens College, Moya Bedward had never seriously considered going on to graduate school and a career as a college teacher. “I’ve always wanted to be a political activist and assumed that teaching and activism were mutually exclusive,” she says. “But my professors here have educated me about the social and political issues impacting world affairs.” Bedward will apply to graduate school this year and is looking forward to pursuing a PhD and a career in academia. A compelling factor in her future plans has been her experience as one of eight Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellows (MMUF) currently enrolled at QC.

François Pierre-louis (Political Science) is the coordinator of QC’s MMUF, which he describes as “a nationwide program designed to increase diversity among college faculties. It encourages promising minority students—and anyone with a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities—to pursue doctorates in the core fields in the arts and sciences.” Since MMUF’s inception in 1988 more than 100 fellows have earned PhDs, including 18 from QC, which is among a handful of public institutions participating in the program.

Students become Mellon Mays fellows only through a rigorous selection process and must maintain a 3.5 GPA throughout their junior and senior years. They must also commit to pursuing graduate studies and teaching at the college level. “This is not a program for students on a pre-med or pre-law track,” says Assistant Provost June Bobb. Tuition for fellows is funded by the Queens College Foundation through the Office of Honors and Scholarships. In addition, the Andrew Mellon Foundation provides each fellow with a yearly stipend of $4,000 and up to $3,000 for summer research. According to Bobb, “we’re delighted that the recent renewal of our MMUF grant will enable the college to continue the program for the next four years.”

Fellows work on independent research projects under the guidance of a faculty mentor and attend a six-week summer graduate school “boot camp” at Wesleyan College. At last summer’s program, says Bobb, QC’s Mellon fellows had the opportunity to interact with their counterparts from the University of Cape Town.

Throughout the fall and spring semesters there are bi-weekly seminars on campus “which provide a wonderful and safe space for lively and candid scholarly debates,” says QC Mellon Mays fellow Sharon Tran (see her profile, p. 3). “I’ve gained enormous theoretical and life knowledge from these sessions.” Tran, whose area of interest is Asian-American literature, will begin working toward a PhD in English at UCLA in the fall.

Pierre-louis is himself a former Mellon Mays fellow. After graduating from QC in 1994, he earned a doctorate at the CUNY Graduate Center and has been a full-time QC faculty member since 2001.

“I drew great strength and encouragement from both my mentor and other fellows,” he recalls. “Through summer programs and other activities, we were able to share our thoughts and concerns and learn from each other.” With a QC student body that leans heavily to minorities and immigrants, he says, “it’s meaningful to have a program like MMUF on campus. It opens up possibilities many students didn’t think existed.”
A Record Housekeeping Project

Queens College has made impressive progress in implementing the new CUNY Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

Completed by the Office of the General Counsel and approved by the New York State Archives, the schedule specifies how long college records must be kept to satisfy legal, fiscal, administrative, and academic requirements. The records management program was implemented to develop a structured and organized system of record keeping and to facilitate the disposal of unnecessary documents.

In March QC reported over 26 tons of records had been shredded by more than 100 departments and offices. (Some 79 tons of records have been destroyed at five CUNY colleges.) To facilitate the massive housecleaning, Buildings and Grounds has contracted with an outside vendor, while additional shredding is being done in the mailroom.

All this record disposal freed up about 1500 square feet in Kiely Hall, turning one space into a conference room and another into a workroom for Public Safety. For a description of the program, administrative schedules and forms, a statement of CUNY’s Record Retention Policy, and a list of frequently asked questions, click here.
MARC Students Are Making Their Mark

QC students in the Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) program continue to accumulate remarkable distinctions since the fall (see December 2009 FYI). In late February, MARC participant Emmanuel Datan ’11 was among 35 people chosen, out of more than 310 applicants, to present research on host-pathogen interactions at the American Society of Microbiology’s meeting in Baltimore on Biodefense and Emerging Diseases.

Barely a month afterward, MARC participant Andrew Hillman ’10 placed first—outscoring MD/PhD candidates as well as his fellow undergraduates—for his poster presentation at the Student National Medical Association Conference in Chicago. Hillman reported on a promising therapy for children who have a type of cerebral palsy that affects only one side of their body.

Closer to home, QC’s biology department selected MARC student Guy Surpris ’10 as the winner of the Laura and Arthur Colwin Award for outstanding research by a student not going to a health professional school. Surpris, who earned recognition for his projects on how the Dengue virus manipulates cells and provokes an immune response, was accepted by eight graduate programs; he’ll be going to Tufts University this fall to study immunology.

Other undergraduates MARC-ed for success include Marie-Pierre Payen ’10, who has been admitted to Boston University’s graduate program in neuroscience; Luis Vega ’10, who accepted a slot in Harvard’s immunology program; Joanne Broome ’11, who will spend her summer participating in neuroscience research at New York University; and Erica Rodriguez ’11, who, like Datan, has been offered a summer research internship at the Rockefeller University. Hillman, who plans to take the Medical College Admissions Test and eventually apply to medical school, is weighing research opportunities at the National Institutes of Health and Emory University. Zahra Zakeri (Biology), who runs MARC at Queens, says, “We are happy to carry the name of Queens College all over the world.”

Pen Pals

Gathered at the recent Associated Writing Program Conference in Denver are (l. to r.) Kimiko Hahn, Nicole Cooley (English), Cooley’s father, poet Peter Cooley (Tulane University), Harold Schecter (English), former Poet Laureate Rita Dove (U. of Virginia), and poet and novelist Jill Bialosky.

Getting The Lowdown From Lily Ledbetter

Knight News reporter Salimah Khoja interviews pay equity pioneer Lily Ledbetter, keynote speaker at Queens College’s annual Virginia Frese Palmer Women’s Conference held in March during Women’s History Month.
QC People

BRITTANY BASCETTA, a first-year clinical track Neuropsychology student working in JEFFREY HALPERIN’S lab, was awarded a diversity supplement from NIH. Brittany is the daughter of former Buildings & Grounds head BASIL BASCETTA . . . MAGNUS O. BASSEY (SEYS) recently published an article entitled “Educating for the Real World: An Illustration of John Dewey’s Principles of Continuity and Interaction” in Educational Studies, Vol. 36, No. 1 . . . The presentation of a study in March at the annual American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry meeting by MICHELLE CULANG, a PhD student in neuropsychology mentored by JOEL SNEED (Psychology), was highlighted

Joel Sneed and Michelle Culang

March 7 on the website Doctor’s Guide. The study, “Depressive Subtype May Influence Antidepressant Impact on Cognition in Older Adults,” describes how some geriatric patients suffering depression may respond more favorably to tricyclic antidepressants than to the more frequently prescribed selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitors . . . The New York State Speech-Language-Hearing Association honored SIMA GERBER (Linguistics & Communications Disorders) with its Distinguished Achievement Award in April at its annual convention . . . SUGGY JANG (Chemistry) has received a Camille Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award from the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation. This award is given to young faculty in the chemical sciences who show promise of continuing outstanding contributions to both research and teaching. The program provides a research grant of $75,000 . . . CARMELLA MARRONE (Women & Work) participated in a panel discussion on March 23 on Writing Women Back into History, which was presented by the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights of U.S. Customs and Border Protection . . . RICHARD MCCOY (English) has been given a short-term fellowship by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC and a Francis Bacon Foundation Fellowship at the Huntington Library in San Marino California. He will spend part of his sabbatical year (2010-11) at each institution doing research for his book on faith in Shakespeare . . . KARL MITCHELL (Business) is one of 35 international invitees to Two Decades of Academic Discourse, an Oxford roundtable to be held in July at St. Anne’s College of the University of Oxford in England . . . President JAMES MUYSKENS and Vice President SUE HENDERSON coauthored an op-ed that appeared in the April 12 Atlanta Journal Constitution. The piece noted that in the rush to embrace new digital technologies as teaching aids, we should not lose sight of the value of the traditional classroom experience. It can be read at www.ajc.com/opinion/future-classrooms-will-be-457583.html . . . The Robert Busa Prize will be awarded in July to JOE RABEN (English, emeritus) at a conference of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organisations to be held at King’s College London. The Busa Prize is named in honor of Father Roberto Busa SJ, universally acknowledged to be the first pioneer in the application of computational methods to humanistic research. The award is given to recognize outstanding lifetime achievement in this area of scholarly activity . . . CHRISTA SPREIZER (ELL) reports that TIMOTHY MOORE was selected as one of 75 participants in the 2010-11 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals from among the most competitive pool of applicants in the history of the program. The exchange begins in July and includes two months of intensive German-language training, four months of classroom instruction at a German university or college of applied sciences, and a five-month internship in the participant’s career field ROLF SWENSEN (Library) published “A Metaphysical Rocket in Gotham: The Rise of Christian Science in New York City, 1885–1910” in the Journal of Religion & Society 12, 2nd installment (2010) . . . JOHN TYTTELL (English) was part of a panel, Beyond Beat – The Turning Point, which examined the fascination the Beat writers had with Mexico. It was sponsored by The Kerouac Project of Orlando, April 10 and 11 in Orlando, Florida . . . The Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institute and the Nobel Foundation have invited ZAHRA ZAKERI (Biology) to be a discussant at The Cell Cycle and Apoptosis in Disease, one of three Nobel symposia being held to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Institute. It takes place in Stockholm, May 23–26 . . . Members of the Queens College Office of Communications learned in February they won two Educational Advertising Awards in a competition sponsored by Higher Ed Marketing—the former for a 30-second radio spot promoting QC’s Fall Open House; the latter for the college’s new logo/letterhead . . . QC’s Web Services team learned in April that the QC’s new website has been listed on TopSharePoint.com, a compilation of the highest-rated websites created using the SharePoint program.

Save the Date!

Queens College’s Homecoming will be held this year on Saturday and Sunday, October 2-3. Part of the festivities will be the renaming of Alumni Hall as Renée Kroll Zarin Alumni Hall in honor of the former head of alumni affairs. Make plans to be there.
People in the Media

SALMAN AHMAD was the subject of an April 29 New York Times “City Room” blog . . . A Feb. 18 story in the Queens Courier about booming enrollments at CUNY quoted VINCENT ANGRISANI (Admissions) . . . The threat posed to the CUNY LEADS program (Linking Employment Academics and Disability) by proposed cuts in the state budget prompted a Feb. 18 story in the Queens Chronicle featuring a quote from QC LEADS counsel KRISTINA ARANBAYEVA . . . TESFAYE ASFAW (Career Development) was interviewed for a feature at the Aspire.com website advising students how to land internships . . . The Queens Ledger reported April 8 that JOE BERTOLINO (Student Affairs) and ELIZABETH HENDREY (Social Sciences) have been included into the 2010–11 American Council on Education Fellows Program (see story p. 10) . . . ANDREW BEVERIDGE (Sociology) was quoted in a March 21 New York Times story concerning growing numbers of young adults who have been forced by the bad economy to move back with their parents. He was also quoted in a March 23 Times story concerning the bad economy contributing to declining population in Manhattan, and an April 4 CrainsNewYorkBusiness.com story on entrepreneurial immigrants in New York . . . CLARE CARROLL (Irish Studies) was included among a group of profiles of prominent Irish educators appearing in the Oct. 2009 edition of Irish Voice . . . MATTHEW CASANOVA (Financial Aid) was quoted in a spring Aspire.com feature about the college financial aid process . . . A CDC-funded study by ANIL CHACKO (Psychology) and co-investigator Gregory A. Fabiano (University at Buffalo) intended to prevent maltreatment of children by their fathers was the subject of an article in the April edition of the American Psychological Association’s Monitor on Psychology . . . As part of its Black History Month coverage, the Queens Courier featured a profile of MICHAEL COGSWELL (LAHM) on Feb. 18 . . . ALYSON COLE (Political Science) was interviewed March 17 for the BBC’s “Women’s Hour.” The topic was victimhood and feminism. Cole spoke about her book The Cult of True Victimhood . . . YourNabe.com offered a story March 25 about MIRIAN REDJES-HICKEY (Special Services) and her autobiography, When It Rains It F----n Pours . . . DESLYN DYER (LAHM) was quoted in a Feb. 11 Queens Chronicle story about special Saturday presentations during Black History Month at the Armstrong House Museum . . . 

Cited as the author of a book on urban social movements, SUJATHA FERNANDES (Sociology) was quoted in an April 11 New York Times article about political graffiti in Venezuela . . . Metro profiled ASHIMA KANT (FNES) March 1 in its “21st-Century Pioneers” feature . . . RAE KELPADIO, a QC junior who founded her own company, Generator One, was the subject of stories April 8 in the Queens Courier and in the Summer edition of Aspire magazine . . . MADHULIKA KHANDELWAL (Asian/American Ctr.) was quoted in a Feb. 10 story at LittleIndia.com about India’s largest matrimonial website . . . A Feb. 16 Daily News story concerning Queens waterfront residents who have had their homeowner’s insurance policies canceled quoted NICK KOCH (SEES) . . . MICHAEL KRAISNER (Political Science) was quoted in a March 30 Queens Courier story concerning State Sen. Frank Padavan. He was also quoted in an April 6 AM New York story on prospective GOP candidates for governor . . . Changes in attitudes toward pot smoking was the subject of a March 11 AM New York story that quoted HARRY LEVINE (Sociology) . . . Metro profiled CORINNE MICHELS (Biology) April 12 in its “21st-Century Pioneers” feature . . . The naming of PYONG GAP MIN (Sociology) as distinguished professor was cited in the “People Making a Buzz” column in the March 4 Queens Courier . . . GREGORY O’MULLAN (SEES) appeared in an Earth Day (April 22) special on PBS about New York’s aquatic resources called “Fragile Waterways” . . . STEVE PEKAR’S (SEES) participation in an expedition to Antarctica was the subject of a Feb. 9 story in the Daily News. A video conference between a class of fifth-grade students and a group of scientists in Antarctica that included Pekar was the subject of a Feb. 25 article in the Times Record News of Wichita Falls, TX . . . BRIGHT SHENG’S (Music) time at QC as visiting distinguished artist-in-residence was the subject of a Feb. 25 story in the Queens Tribune, which also quoted ED SMALDONE (Music) . . . SIDNEY TRUBOWITZ (Education, Emeritus) authored a piece about teacher accountability for the March 10 edition of Education Week . . . JOHN WALKER (Accounting) was quoted in a March 19 story in the Queens Tribune about a daylong role-playing exercise conducted by the Internal Revenue Service at QC in which students acts as IRS agents investigating a financial crime . . . NY1 aired a story March 15 concerning Lily Ledbetter’s appearance at the QC Women’s History Month conference on gender in the workplace. A March 23 story in the Daily News included remarks from the event’s organizer, JOYCE WARREN (English).
Events in the Media

NY 1 carried a story Feb. 13 about Black History Month events at Louis Armstrong House Museum...The Black History Month presentation at QC of the musical Ghetto Chronicles was reported Feb. 18 in the Queens Tribune...The Godwin-Ternbach exhibition Scholars, Explorers, Priests: How the Renaissance Gave Us the Modern World was the subject of a story Feb. 18 in the Queens Tribune...The Queens Tribune carried a story Feb. 22 about the appearance of dancer Marge Champion at a screening at LeFrak Hall of Keep Dancing, a film documenting her long career...The opening ceremony Feb. 19 for QC's Research Center for Korean Community was covered by NY1 which aired a story on Feb 20. Stories also appeared Feb. 23 in the Daily News; Feb. 25 in the Queens Examiner, Times Ledger, and Queens Chronicle, and March 18 in the Queens Courier and in the Korean print and broadcast media...The March 2 announcement by Borough President Helen Marshall and President JAMES MYSKENS of the search for the next Queens Poet Laureate appeared March 1 in the Queens Courier, March 3 in the Daily News; March 4 in the Times Ledger, the Gleaner, and the Queens Chronicle, March 5 in the Queens Tribune, and March 8 at YourNabe.com. The March 2 announcement by Borough President Helen Marshall and President JAMES MYSKENS of the search for the next Queens Poet Laureate appeared March 1 in the Queens Courier, March 3 in the Daily News; March 4 in the Times Ledger, the Gleaner, and the Queens Chronicle, March 5 in the Queens Tribune, and March 8 at YourNabe.com. The March 2 announcement by Borough President Helen Marshall and President JAMES MYSKENS of the search for the next Queens Poet Laureate appeared March 1 in the Queens Courier, March 3 in the Daily News; March 4 in the Times Ledger, the Gleaner, and the Queens Chronicle, March 5 in the Queens Tribune, and March 8 at YourNabe.com...

In Memoriam: Marilyn Gittell

Marilyn Gittell, who was a major force in the creation of the urban studies department at Queens College, died in February at the age of 78. At the time of her death, she was a professor of political science at the CUNY Graduate Center and director of the center's Howard Samuels Center. Previously, she had been an assistant vice president and associate provost at Brooklyn College. Well known as a proponent of school decentralization in New York City, Gittell held a bachelor's degree in political science from Brooklyn College and an MPA and a PhD in political science from New York University. She taught at Queens College in the 1960s and early 1970s. During part of her tenure at QC she was the director of the college's Institute for Community Studies.

Clarification: On page 7 of the February 2010 issue of FYI, Ben Alexander was referred to as the head of the special collections archives. He is also an assistant professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies.

QC Authors

The impact of music is obvious to anyone who has been moved by a particular song. So it’s no accident that music therapy, which involves music interventions by trained professionals, can allow clients to access and understand their feelings. Emotional Processes in Music Therapy by John Pellitteri (Educational and Community Programs) presents the scientific and artistic dimensions of emotions and explores ways that music therapists can become more emotion-focused in their work.

A licensed creative art therapist and psychologist, Pellitteri shares insights developed through his quarter-century in the field. The four sections of his book cover the integration of emotions, music, and the therapeutic process; the psychophysiological foundations of music and emotions; strategies for integrating an emotion focus in clinical music therapy; and the professional identity of the music therapist.

Richard Vetere (Media Studies) wrote the scripts for Vigilante, a revenge film set in a crime-ridden New York, and The Third Miracle, an adaptation of his novel about a contemporary priest’s research into a woman nominated for sainthood. But Vetere’s interests encompass Rome of the Renaissance and later; his plays include Machiavelli and Caravaggio. In his extensively researched historic novel Baroque (Bordighera Press, an imprint housed at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute), he envisions the Eternal City as it might have been experienced by turn-of-the-17th-century painter Mario Minniti. The plot involves a cast of true-life figures, from the powerful cardinals who commissioned much of the era’s art, to the stunning courtiers who posed for it. These characters, and Minniti himself, all served as models for Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, whose outsized gifts and personality influenced everyone in his circle.

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