As Stephanie Lilavois, Coordinator for the Office of Events, approaches running her first Queens College commencement (and the college’s 89th) on Thursday, May 30, she is trying not to think too much about the one element that can dramatically determine the quality of the experience: the weather.

“I’m not sure if ordering more ponchos would be a jinx,” she says, referring to the protective pullovers not needed since 2009 when Civil Rights icon Congressman John Lewis delivered the main commencement address as a steady downpour drenched a crowd adorned in white plastic displaying the college logo.

It is hoped that this year’s commencement speaker, NASSER DAVID KHALILI, who will be awarded the Queens College Medal, will fare better weather-wise. Khalili graduated from QC in 1974 with a degree in computer science and later received his PhD from the University of London’s School of Oriental and African Studies. A Jew born in Iran, Khalili is a renowned art collector, scholar, and philanthropist who has dedicated much of his adult life to the reconciliation of Muslims and Jews. He is owner of one of the world’s largest and most comprehensive collections of Islamic art—about which he frequently lectures, as he did at QC in 2005—and has endowed positions in the study of Islamic art and culture at the University of London, the University of Oxford, and Queens College. He is also the chairman and founder of the London-based Khalili Acceptances at Drama MFA Programs Spotlight QC Talent

Yale Drama School, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, Juilliard, Rutgers, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts—any conservatory would be proud to have some of its graduates admitted. For among these elite schools, the acceptance rate is only 1.5%.

So what to make of the fact that all four undergraduate drama students in QC’s MFA preparatory class have gained admission to at least one of these programs, and some have multiple acceptances? For a drama department in a liberal arts college, the results are astonishing: Thomas Stagnitta to San Francisco’s American Conservatory Theater; Gabrielle Georgescu to the London Conservatory of Music and Dramatic
Maimonides Foundation, which promotes interfaith dialogue.

DIANE RAVITCH, the renowned education historian and policy analyst who served in the administrations of Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, will be this year’s honorary degree recipient. In recent years she has emerged as a strong voice in opposition to the education reform movement as embodied in the policies of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

In addition to all the speeches, there will be music provided by the Wind Ensemble conducted by Kristin Mozeiko (Music), and Susan Babb (Music) will conduct representatives of the Women’s Choir in a performance of the QC alma mater “Blue and Silver,” using the arrangement created by Ed Smaldone (ACSM) that was first performed at QC’s 75th Anniversary Convocation last October.

“I love that arrangement,” says Lilavois. “There’s a soprano part that reaches a high note that’s just divine.”

As at past commencements, members of previous graduating classes will be in attendance. The alumni years being celebrated this May are 1943, 1953, and 1963.

Lilavois notes that, in addition to her professional responsibilities, she has a sentimental connection to QC’s commencement ceremony: Her mother, Liliane, graduated from QC in 1982.

And yes, Lilavois confirms for those who may be wondering, New York Senator Charles Schumer will again be among the speakers.

Parking on Commencement Day

On Commencement Day, Thursday, May 30, the main gate entrance and the Schiller Road entrance will be closed and restricted to emergency traffic. The only vehicles permitted to enter through the main gate will be people with parking decals for Fields 11 and 12, and special disabled parking passes.

If you have a decal for Field 1, you may park in Fields 2/7 or 6. Please enter these fields through the Melbourne Avenue entrance. Faculty and staff assigned to Fields 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 14 must enter through the Melbourne Ave. entrance. To be sure of on-campus parking, you should arrive before 9 am; all entrance gates will be closed when the parking fields are full.

NASHWA EL-SAYED

Due to her daring flight to freedom five years ago, Nashwa El-Sayed missed her high-school graduation in Alexandria, Egypt. At 17 she achieved her fervent desire to return to the United States, from which she had been abducted at the age of two. But she will also miss her Queens College commencement this May as this international relations/political science major will be heading for Oman, Dubai, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestinian territories, traveling as one of six high-achieving American college students chosen for the two-week Ibrahim Leadership and Dialogue Project. “When I do my master’s,” she notes, “I hope I can attend graduation.”

“Arab-Latina, future advocate for abducted children around the world, a woman interested in the Middle East, belly dancer.” In describing herself, El-Sayed could mention many dimensions. Competitive fencer at QC (NCAA regionals). Grew up with Arabic, taught herself English and Spanish, and speaks a little French. Organized an after-school camp for Arab-American children.

“I owe all the progress to Queens College,” El-Sayed believes. “This was the perfect place for me. It was exactly what I needed: people who were really concerned for who I am.”

Who she is springs from a wrenching saga that began after her Egyptian father and Puerto Rican mother divorced. Her mother, who has a PhD, gained custody.

“In 1993, on Father’s Day, I had the day with my dad,” El-Sayed relates. “He never brought me home. He kidnapped me to Egypt. I had just some diapers and the clothes on me.” Egypt does not prosecute non-custodial parents who bring their children there. Her father and stepmothers were “very abusive, physically, emotionally, everything,” she continues.

When she was nine years old, El-Sayed was shocked to find her mother waiting outside her school—her father had said she was dead. They spent a few days together, and over the next seven years her mother visited four more times.

“I was obsessed with the idea that she is American and I am too,” El-Sayed recalls. She prepared for “a better option” by gleaning English from Backstreet Boys lyrics and “King of Queens” subtitles.

El-Sayed’s father encouraged his energetic daughter to join a fencing club—a family talent. When at 17 she reminded him she wanted to study...
Democrats State Their Case for Mayor at Campus Debate

But it was Liu who got the biggest applause of the night when he said he would help ease the financial burden for CUNY students by giving them free Metrocards. This was even more popular with the many students in the audience than former Councilman Sal Albanese’s declaration that as mayor he would “legalize, tax, and regulate marijuana.”

All in all, the two-hour forum in Rosenthal 230 featuring four of the five Democratic candidates for mayor (Council Speaker Christine Quinn had a scheduling conflict) was a spirited, seldom fractious affair with the candidates comfortably fielding questions about education, Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts, police conduct, campaign finance reform, and the economy posed by moderators Errol Lewis of NY1 and Michael Krasner (Political Science).

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

Discussing the NYC Police Department’s controversial stop-and-frisk policy, Liu said, “It doesn’t have to be mended. It has to be ended.” And both de Blasio and former Comptroller Bill Thompson said they would fire Police Commissioner Ray Kelly.

Remarking on the increasing economic disparity during the Bloomberg years, de Blasio described New York as “a tale of two cities,” and Liu called for raising the minimum wage to $11.50 an hour.

Education was a particularly volatile area, with all the candidates agreeing that Mayor Bloomberg’s oft-touted education reforms needed to be seriously reformed: A former Board of Education president, Thompson said he would put an educator in charge of public schools and shift curriculum focus from memorization to comprehension and critical thinking. Liu declared the city should end high-stakes exams and stop running public schools like businesses.

“Legalize, tax, and regulate marijuana,” says Claudia Feldstein (Drama), a QC and Yale Drama School alumna who has been dedicated to this class for the past three years. “The department offers enough foundation to be a strong launching pad to these very competitive theatre schools. One student told me that the head of Juilliard said, ‘They’re doing something very right at Queens,’” says Feldstein.

The prep course, which the department provides at no cost, is “boot camp for the audition,” she says. The grueling process requires candidates to demonstrate their talent by presenting four monologues of both classical and contemporary texts. Feldstein helps students select monologues, and then works with each one as coach, director, and mentor.

Feldstein “helped me with the basics, with notes, direction, character, text, in a very clear and concise way,” says Shaunette Wilson. “We would work for hours.” Wilson hadn’t come to Queens with acting ambitions. She transferred from Marymount Manhattanville, where she had been a playwriting major. Three drama classes with Feldstein revealed the path she needed to take.

political science in the U.S., “he said political science is for men.” She should study business, he told her, and she would be getting engaged to a man he had picked out. Alarmed, El-Sayed asked her mother to contact the FBI and State Department and secretly visited the U.S. Embassy to plead her case. However, a relative exposed her plans.

During a close-guarded visit to Cairo, she gained a second chance. “A State Department person asked me, ‘Can you leave today?’” She hesitated, afraid of the dangers. An FBI agent called, saying, “It’s now or never.” So at 5 am she fled to a waiting van, and soon was once more boarding an international flight with “nothing”—just the clothes she had on, her hijab, and $100 from her mom.

Determined to go to college, El-Sayed showed up at QC’s Admissions Office. “I said, ‘Here’s all the paperwork I have. Please let me in,’” QC admitted her directly, even without a diploma. To pay for college, she worked in a mall and for two years in QC’s Academic Advising office.

When relations at home became strained last summer, El-Sayed withdrew her $600 savings, moved into a shared apartment, and took two jobs. Her fencing coach arranged a full scholarship to keep her on the team.

El-Sayed hopes one day to establish a foundation to help abducted children. The Ibrahim honor is taking her toward another goal: bridging the distance to keep her on the team.

Fencing coach arranged a full scholarship to help El-Sayed pay for her education. Although she was afraid of the dangers, her mother had picked her to join the team, and El-Sayed worked hard to keep her on the team.

**OUTSTANDING STUDENTS - from page 2**

**DAVID KIM**

When David Kim was in sixth grade, he came across a book in the library on computer programming. Intrigued by the fact that it came with a CD, he checked the book out. “It was like, Wow, I had never realized I could make a computer do what I wanted!”

The moment was something of an epiphany, setting this son of Korean immigrants off on a bumpy path of intellectual exploration that his teachers consider close to brilliant.

As an adolescent, Kim became passionate about computer programming, spending much of his time tinkering and experimenting. Never very interested in school, he often cut classes to work on personal programming projects.

In high school, Kim applied to join an AP computer class on Java programming language. With his poor grades, the teacher hesitated, but then quickly noticed the depth of his knowledge of the subject. “She told me I had lots of potential and wrote me recommendations,” recalls Kim. That year, Kim and a classmate won first prize in the ThinkQuest competition for grade school students for their design of a webpage that taught people how to use podcasts.

After high school, and not accepted to his first choice college—Queens College—Kim enrolled in a computer science program at the New York City College of Technology, but was bored and dropped out. He transferred to Queens and, after a year of classes, took off two years to work on building a Massively Multiplayer Online Game. The game was not completed but, as in his past, the hands-on experience was immensely valuable—bringing him a deeper understanding of such computer development skills as graphic rendering and scaling.

Kim returned to Queens to finish his BS degree and is graduating this spring. “David is one of these exceptional students,” says Luat Vuong (Physics). “He is a joy to work with and extremely curious. He brings out the best” in the education process.

Some of his professors have urged Kim to continue in a PhD program. Kim says he is not interested in pursuing an academic track. Nor is he sure he wants to accept any of the job offers he has gotten from Web design companies. As he considers his options, Kim continues pursuing his various passions: breakdancing, photography, and his real love: computer programming.

**MADELINE YAP**

After she graduates with a BA in East Asian Studies, Madeline Yap heads to South Korea on a Fulbright scholarship this summer for a year’s stint as an English teacher. “I like language and can give back by teaching English,” she says. The job should provide a perfect way for Yap to learn more about Korea—a place she has been fascinated with for several years.

Yap’s interest in all things Korean springs in part from her roots. She is the daughter of ethnic Chinese who emigrated from Malaysia to NYC; the family speaks a mixture of Cantonese and English at home. “There is a lot of overlap between the Chinese and Korean cultures,” Yap says, especially “Confucianism and the respect for elders.”

But it was her discovery of Korean pop music—known as “K-Pop” and made internationally famous with such hits as Psy’s “Oppa Gangnam Style”—that hooked her. She studied three semesters of Korean at Queens (Yap discovered she liked learning foreign languages while taking Spanish in middle and high school) and last year did a semester abroad in Seoul. There she soaked up the local culture, took lessons in Taekwondo—the Korean martial arts form—and discovered hiking, which is

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 5**
something of a national pastime on the peninsula. She even developed a liking for Korean cuisine (though she concedes it is an acquired taste).

At Queens she is in the Macaulay Honors College program and on the dean’s list, and tutors primary and middle school students in English and math. She is thinking about a career as a translator or interpreter, or maybe as a language teacher.

When she arrives in Korea this summer, Yap will start with six weeks of intensive training in Korean language and English language teaching. And what about the current tensions between North Korea and the U.S.-allied South? Yap recently received a letter from Fulbright, informing her that her trip was expected to go ahead as planned despite the rise in tensions. “I’m a little nervous,” she says, “but not too concerned.”

New Twist to Class Gift

Members of the Class of 2013 contributing toward the traditional class gift have an opportunity to make their donations a more personal experience via the new Honor a Mentor program initiated by Laura Abrams, Director of QC’s Annual Fund.

“Knowing that a class gift is a typical request made of graduating students. I felt that it would be nice to add something more meaningful to encourage giving and create more good feeling on campus for the people who will be receiving these messages from students.”

Graduating students learned about the program last month in a letter from Student Association President Karamvir Singh, who encouraged them to help fund a combined class gift that would be the equivalent of a year’s tuition for a deserving student.

The event’s principal organizer, Ron Hayduk (Political Science), was pleased with the outcome of the first-ever political debate at QC. It marked the fulfillment of a process that began around the time of last November’s QC Presidential Roundtable, at which he and Krasner had offered a post-election analysis of Obama’s reelection campaign. With candidates for the 2013 New York mayor’s race beginning to declare their intentions, Hayduk pitched the idea of hosting a mayoral debate to President James Muyskens, who endorsed the idea. Hayduk then described the efforts of several faculty, staff, and students in tackling organizing issues, including securing a co-sponsor and moderator. Of meeting these and other challenges, he was particularly effusive in his praise of Maria Matteo (Communications). “She did a lot of the heavy lifting . . . Maria was the one who really got us NY1 and landed Errol Lewis,” he said. “The debate wouldn’t have happened without her.”
First Lady of MA Visits Campus

Last month Diane Patrick ’72—former New York City schoolteacher, successful attorney, and now First Lady of Massachusetts—returned to her alma mater in a role for which she has gained increasing recognition in recent years: domestic abuse survivor.

After a tour of the campus where she received her degree in early childhood education, Patrick appeared at a special event in the President’s Lounge where, in an hour-long interview conducted by Carmella Marrone, director of Women and Work, she revealed to a packed room a chapter of her life about which she retains troubling memories: her first marriage.

When interviewed by QC’s alumni magazine shortly after her second husband, Deval, became governor in 2007, Patrick had only recently begun acknowledging her “first marriage from hell.” But on this occasion she was ready to share considerably more.

Following a lively, mostly upbeat account of her history beginning with a Brooklyn childhood in a warm, supportive family as the granddaughter of the borough’s first black elected official, she spoke of her years trapped in an emotionally and physically abusive marriage.

Her path to liberation, she said, began when a concerned friend arranged a meeting between Patrick and a recent law school graduate who became Patrick’s friend, adviser, and emotional pillar, helping her to break free of her increasingly threatening husband. That friendship grew to something more and the friend, said Patrick, “happens, today, to be the governor of Massachusetts.”

“I didn’t talk about it for a long time,” Patrick continued, explaining how now, every time she speaks about this aspect of her history, she receives cards, letters, and emails from women who say she inspired them to confront their own domestic abuse situations. “If that’s the result of my giving up some of my own privacy,” she said, “then I have found it to be worth it.”

Later in the day, Patrick had a separate, more intimate meeting with members of the Women and Work program, where they were given the opportunity to share with her their experiences of domestic abuse.

That so much of her day was focused on this single issue was the intent from the outset, said David D’Amato, Director of Development, who along with Senior Gift Officer Anne Koestner met with Patrick in the fall while visiting alumni in Boston. “We knew that domestic violence was an important issue for her and that Women and Work would be a good fit,” said D’Amato.
QC People

NICHOLAS ALEXIOU (Sociology) gave a presentation on March 16 at the Festival of Greek Literature and Books, held at Georgetown University . . .

JOSHUA BRUMBERG (Psychology)

had a rewarding April when several of his past and present students co-authored an article on “Organization of myelin in the mouse somatosensory barrel cortex and the effects of sensory deprivation,” featured on the cover of Developmental Neurobiology. It represents research wholly conducted at QC, with the first two authors equally credited and Brumberg named final co-author. Kyrstle Barrera is a former master’s student in psychology who is now finishing her PhD at Loma Linda University and headed to NY State as a research associate at New York College of Osteopathic Medicine. . . . MARIO CARUSO (Graduate Admissions) was a moderator at a conference on Italian Americans and Discrimination in Higher Education, held March 27 at St. John’s University . . .

NICHOLAS COCH (EES) presented a paper on the effects of Hurricane Sandy at the First National Tropical Weather Conference in South Padre Island, TX . . .

ELENA FRANGAKIS-SYRETT (History) received a QC Scholar Incentive Award to do research in Istanbul in spring 2012. While there, she gave a series of talks on her work concerning the development of banking in the Middle East in the 19th and early 20th centuries. She also led seminars about her research, notably a faculty seminar for the Department of Economics at the University of Economics of Izmir (in Izmir) and a seminar at the Institut Français des Études Anatoliennes (in Istanbul). The latter, conducted in English and French, was videotaped . . .

HERMANN HALLER (ELL) gave a plenary address on John Florio’s lexicographical work at the 21st conference of the Associazione Internazionale per gli Studi di Lingua e Letteratura Italiana, held April 5 at the University of Pennsylvania . . .

JAMIE HITTMAN (MFA Creative Writing) is the first recipient of a fellowship offered by Paper Lantern Lit, a literary incubator that develops young adult literature and markets it to publishers . . .

ERGESH IKRAMOV, a Russian native, is the recipient of the Fourth Annual Margaret Mehran Scholarship, awarded to a student who is pursuing ELI studies . . .

ELAINE KLEIN (Linguistics, Emerita) received three grants, totaling about $500,000, from the NYC Department of Education, NYS Education Department, and NY Community Trust. She headed an ongoing project on Bridges to Academic Success, and is senior research associate at C Fluoride treatments and instruction in oral hygiene were among the services provided to Nicaraguan school children by QC students participating in a Global Brigades mission during the winter break.

Students Spend Winter Break Helping the Poor in Nicaragua

When Darya Rubenstein, a senior majoring in psychology, volunteered to be part of the QC “Global Brigade” to Nicaragua during winter break, she had no idea what a life-changing trip it would be.

“The experience opened my eyes to how people in poor parts of the world live,” says Rubenstein, an Orthodox Jew originally from Canada. “They have little food, old clothing, no health care . . . most are illiterate. Yet they are so positive, with a true understanding of life.” The effect of the trip was so profound that she has decided to pursue a master’s degree in public health after graduation.

Global Brigades is the world’s largest student-led global health and sustainable development organization. Since 2004 it has mobilized thousands of university students through programs that work to improve the quality of life for impoverished people in Ghana, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

QC’s second Global Brigades mission—the first was in January 2012 to Honduras—was made up of 28 student volunteers, 19 of whom were from the college. All the students raised funds for their airfare, food, and housing and solicited donations from hospitals and businesses for medicine and supplies, such as soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and vitamins.

Led by Yassmin Simmonds, a pre-med senior majoring in psychology who also directed the Honduras brigade, the nine-day mission began in San Gabriel, about 40 miles northwest of Managua, Nicaragua’s capital. There the volunteers spent three days helping local physicians and dentists examine residents for illness and educate them on proper hygiene and health issues.

“We were able to provide basic medical care to almost 1,000 patients in a local elementary school that was set up as a makeshift clinic,” says Simmonds. The students rotated among the different medical areas in the clinic. After being trained by local doctors, they had the skills to take patients’ vital signs in triage: checking their temperature, pulse, breathing, and blood pressure. In the pharmacy they sat in on doctors’ consultations, observing them make diagnoses and prescribe medications, which they helped distribute. In the dental area, the students showed children how to brush their teeth and administered fluoride treatment and vitamins. They also accompanied a doctor and a translator into patients’ homes to conduct surveys on their health, hygiene, and lifestyle.

“It was humbling to see their living conditions,” says Mamadou Sire Bah, a pre-med junior majoring in anthropology. “Most of the families live in homes with livestock wandering around and don’t have access to basic necessities like toilets or clean water. But they were so welcoming and appreciative that I felt a genuine connection to them. I was more motivated than ever to become a doctor.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9
Scholars and Agents of Change

Funded by an alumna who credited QC with turning her into an activist, the annual Virginia Frese Palmer Conference addressed a particularly apt topic at the Student Union on March 11: Women’s Activism: From Queens College to the World.

Opening the event, QC’s top female administrator, Acting COO and VP Elizabeth Hendrey, praised Women’s Studies and other interdisciplinary programs for their ability to examine subjects from multiple angles. Next, Carol Giardina (History) supplied context for the day’s talks. “Women led the Civil Rights movement,” she said, naming, among others, Rosa Parks, Mamie Till (mother of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates for the day’s talks. “Women led the Civil Rights movement,” she said, naming, among others, Rosa Parks, Mamie Till (mother of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates of the Little Rock Nine, six of whom were female. Identifying herself as a resident of lynching victim Emmett Till), and Daisy Bates.

Then each panelist, introduced in turn by Women’s Studies Director Joyce Warren, addressed the audience. First to the microphone was DIANA DUARTE, who observed that her job as communications director of MADRE—an international women’s human rights organization that collaborates with community-based groups—allows her to put her principles into action. MADRE has grassroots partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, tackling everything from sexual violence to economic injustice. A benefit of activism is that “the personal and the political are connected,” agreed GRACE DAVIE (History), who teaches courses on African history and social movements. Strategic lessons from her research have influenced her work with Occupy Wall Street. “Understand the system you want to oppose and identify its breaking points,” she recommended.

The next two speakers focused on ethnic communities in the United States. “If labor is how people access legal rights, what about non-laborers?” asked ALYSHIA GALVEZ, director of the CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies at Lehman College, arguing that juridical notions of citizenship are insufficient for immigrant Mexican mothers. MILIANN KANG, a University of Massachusetts professor who studies Asian-owned nail salons, detailed the hazardous fumes and repetitive stress afflicting manicurists—many of them recent arrivals from overseas. Her data bolster the case for regulating toxic chemicals and labor conditions in a $6 billion industry.

Domestic workers, even if American-born, need advocates, too. PREMILLA NANDASEN (History) explained that the problems and solutions Betty Friedan discussed in The Feminine Mystique—published 50 years ago—reflected a white, upper-class, suburban perspective. Nadasesn’s agenda for domestic workers’ rights calls for standardized requirements from both employer and employee. While acknowledging class differences among women, the following speaker, CUNY Distinguished Political Science Professor Frances FOX PIVEN, pointed out that general deterioration in the labor climate has weakened income for men, too. “Women are weapons in the race to the bottom,” she said, concluding that “a fight back has become not only possible, but necessary.”

Past and present QC students filled out the panel. Describing herself as an activist since age 13 and a radical Muslim feminist, MEHER MOHNSIN ‘12 recounted her success in registering voters from the city’s Arab and Southeast Asian communities—and filming first-time voters as they emerged from the polls. “They felt they belonged,” she reported. Dasi Fruchter ‘12, an Orthodox Jew studying to be a rabbi, brought up the need for “change rooted in tradition,” illustrating it with the story of how her father offered a suitable blessing for her transgendered sibling. Urban Studies major Grace Magee ‘13 reported how her “burning disdain for wasting food” prompted her to launch a food bank that collects donations from supermarkets and distributes them to the needy. Finally, freshman Melisa Tekin talked about participating in numerous service activities, from joining NYPiRG’s anti-fracking campaign to helping people apply for citizenship—a mission rich in personal meaning. “My parents just became citizens,” she said.

Marie Ponsot Wins Poetry Prize

With six volumes of poetry to her credit, and numerous French-to-English translations, Professor Emerita MARIE PONSOT (English) is not averse to hard work. This spring her efforts paid off handsomely. She is the recipient of the 2013 Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, which at $100,000 is one of the biggest literary awards in the United States. Issued annually since 1986 by the Poetry Foundation, publisher of Poetry magazine, it salutes lifetime achievement by a living poet; previous winners include Adrienne Rich, W.S. Merwin, and Maxine Kumin.

“I’m honored to be a recipient of the Ruth Lilly Award and to be counted amongst such august poets,” says Ponsot. “The spirit of such a prize, as given by Ruth Lilly, is a testament to the power of poetry.” It also attests to the strength of this year’s honoree, a nonagenarian who continues to write—and rewrite—in longhand on pads of paper. In recognition of her achievement, we reprint the above poem.

Late Spring as Usual

The green vine is moving.
The motion’s too slow to be visible but it is racing, racing feeling for a way across the wall of fence it’s scrawling on, inches added every day. Forwarding, sunwarding, it claims its place. Green states its claim. It writes the lesson of the day: longing, longing coming true while arcing out and up according to the instruction of desire. Sun-hungry its tip has tilted toward sun-space. Already it is speeding leaf-notes out of its root all along the sprigless budless thread still scribbling the deed of its location.

In two weeks or one or four morning glory.

(From the collection Easy: Poems, Knopf, 2009. Reprinted with permission of the author.)
College Earns an A for Anti-Tobacco Efforts

By prohibiting all tobacco products from campus, QC, like its sister CUNY schools, has earned a top grade and congratulations from the American Cancer Society (ACS). “The vision and hard work of campuses like yours has made New York State a national leader in the promotion of healthier campus communities,” wrote Alvaro Carrascal, a senior VP at ACS. Indeed, as the home of 67 colleges that are either smoke- or tobacco-free, the Empire State outperforms the rest of the nation, according to ACS’s annual report, Tobacco-Free U: 2013 New York State Dean’s List.

Next year, when SUNY is expected to implement its own ban, the smoke will clear from all of the state’s public colleges and universities—an encouraging trend. “In addition to reducing exposure to secondhand smoke . . . evidence suggests that smoke-free/tobacco-free policies reduce the initiation of tobacco use among young people and assists those who are trying to quit smoking and avoid relapse,” reports Tobacco-Free U, footnoting a study released by the New York State Department of Health in February 2011.

If you’re trying to kick the habit, QC’s Health Services can help. Call the office at 72760 or walk in to Frese Hall, Room 310, from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Thursday, when class is in session.

Corps of Knowledge

Seventeen colleges vied for first-year slots in the CUNY Service Corps; QC was one of seven schools selected for this fall’s launch of the university-wide initiative modeled on Americorps. As a result, 200 QC students will spend 24 weeks in paid, part-time positions in projects addressing public health, education, the environment, or economically distressed areas. In a twist on the QC motto, they’ll be learning—and earning—as they serve.

“I’m excited for our college,” says Special Assistant to the Provost Yasemin Jones, who put together QC’s application and is meeting with the Urban Studies Department and Student Life to implement the program on campus. “The CUNY Service Corps is an opportunity to enhance our mission. Our faculty members work with many community organizations. We hope to leverage those relationships and use what we’ve built.”

Jones’s immediate challenge is to evaluate and interview Service Corps candidates; students’ application deadline is June 1. HR is conducting a search for a full-time administrator who will manage QC’s Service Corps contingent, interact with the program’s central office staff at CUNY, and establish and monitor placements. “CUNY’s rapid assembly of this structure has been impressive,” notes Jones. “Now we have to hit the ground running.”

QC PEOPLE - from page 7

the Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society and the Center for Advanced Study in Education at the CUNY Graduate Center . . . CECILIA McHUGH (EES) received a $22,415 grant from the NSF for a RAPID Grant: Investigations of the Impact of Superstorm Sandy on the South Shore of Long Island;” a collaborative project with Adelphi University and SUNY Stony Brook. In addition, she has been working as a visiting senior scientist for JAMSTEC (the Japanese Marine and Science Agency), studying the 2011 Tohoku-Oki earthquake and tsunami . . . The Overseas Korean Journalists Association selected PYONG GAP MIN (Sociology) to receive one of its six Proud Koreans’ Awards. The only one selected from the U.S. Korean community, Min was chosen because of his “immense contributions to research on the formation and development of overseas Korean communities” . . . GREGORY O’MULLAN (EES) was awarded a grant of $10,413 by the Hudson River Foundation for his project on Rapid Response: Post-Sandy Collection and Preliminary Analysis of Samples from Flood-Impacted Areas. The goal of his research is to study microbial and metal pollution in flood water and debris along the banks of local waterways like the Gowanus Canal and the Hudson River . . . EUGENIA PAULICELLI (ELL) moderated a panel on Fashion, Hacked: Liberation through Participation at the CUNY Graduate Center on February 28. In March she was awarded a fellowship as IAS Benjamin Meaker Visiting Professor at the Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of Bristol . . . PATRICIA RACHAL (Pol. Sci) was awarded $575,000 by the U.S. Department of Education for her New York Deaf and Blind Collaborative . . . SUSAN ROTENBERG (Chemistry) was awarded $348,752 by the NIH for research on Protein Kinase C Substrates in Human Breast Cancer . . . On April 23 KENNETH RYESKY (Accounting) testified at an IRS rulemaking hearing on proposed new healthcare coverage regulations under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act . . . ROLF SWENSEN (Library) is associate editor of the International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society, in which he recently published “Eddy’s Immigrants: Foreign-Born Christian Scientists in the United States, 1880–1925.” He also gave a paper on March 8 concerning “‘Israel’s Return to Zion’: Jewish Christian Scientists in the United States, 1880–1925,” presented at the 3rd International Conference on Religion and Spirituality in Society, held at Arizona State University . . . AMY WINTER (Godwin-Ternbach) was highlighted in the Getty Iris for her research on Wolfgang Paalen, a painter and leader of Mexico’s postwar Dyn circle, which was the subject of an exhibition by the Getty Research Institute. Her book Wolfgang Paalen helped to revive the artist’s reputation.
MARIO D’AVANZO
Mario D’Avanzo (English), who taught at the college from 1968 to 2006, died on February 23. A scholar of great range, D’Avanzo worked in many fields, including Romantic poetry, American literature from its beginnings to the twentieth century, seventeenth-century British poetry, Victorian literature, and the Bible. His books include Keats’s Metaphors for the Poetic Imagination (1968), The Literary Art of the Bible (1988), and A Cloud of Other Poets: Robert Frost and the Romantics (1991), and he published over 80 articles on such authors as Sophocles, Virgil, Shelley, Tennyson, Thoreau, Dickinson, Melville, Yeats, and Faulkner.

Born in 1931, D’Avanzo attended Dartmouth on a Naval ROTC scholarship; he served for three years in the Navy as a lieutenant and as an instructor in amphibious warfare. He then received his MA from Trinity College and his PhD from Brown and taught for five years at Providence College before coming to Queens. In the department he was a member of the P & B and chair of the curriculum committee, among other positions, and directed many MA theses. He also taught a literature workshop to women prisoners on Riker’s Island.

D’Avanzo was also an outstanding athlete who played competitive ice hockey until well into middle age, and at Dartmouth he was a star catcher. At Queens he founded and managed the English Department softball team and was its star shortstop and cleanup hitter, as it took on the Chemistry Department, the Writing Center, the Law School, and other powerhouses.

He is survived by Barbara Horn, his companion of many years and a professor of English and Women’s Studies at Nassau Community College, and by two children.

IN THE MEDIA

People in the Media

A story in the Daily News concerning a new wave of Greek immigrants flocking to Astoria to escape economic turmoil at home quoted NICHOLAS ALEXIOU (Sociology) . . . CLIVE BELFIELD (Economics) published a column at InsideHigherEd.com about the flaws in economic models of college efficiency . . . The transient nature of apartment dwellers in Lower Manhattan was the subject of a New York Times story that cited ANDREW BEVERIDGE’S (Sociology) Social Explorer project as its source of data. His data were also cited in New York Times stories about a proposed apartment complex in Riverdale for people over 65 and the population explosion in city neighborhoods deemed “family-friendly,” as well as in a Northjersey.com story describing how young families are choosing to leave the Jersey suburbs to raise their children in New York City . . . NEIL CUMMINS (Economics) co-authored a story in the Economist about a study of surnames and their relationship to the transmission of wealth over generations . . . An appearance by HARRIET DAVIS-KRAM (History) at which she spoke on the topic “A Peek at the Underside of Victorian History: Murder Most Foul” was reported by HuntingtonPatch.com . . . SUJATHA FERNÁNDES (Sociology) was cited, quoted, or interviewed by several media outlets in connection with the death of Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez and the country’s subsequent elections. These included the Los Angeles Times, the Nation, Christian Science Monitor, radio stations KPFA and KALW and television network MSNBC. She was also interviewed by the international television programs “Russia Today TV,” “Columbia New Tonight,” and “NTN24.” Additionally, she was interviewed on MSNBC’s “Melissa Harris-Perry Show” in connection with the U.S. embargo against Cuba . . . A story in the Chronicle of Higher Education about adjunct orientations quoted EVA FERNANDEZ (Center for Teaching and Learning) . . . JOSHUA FREEMAN (History) was quoted in a Daily News story about the strike by New York City school bus drivers and matrons . . . A story at Hareetz.com concerning the reluctance of UJA-Federation funders to aid Brooklyn’s ultra-Orthodox community quoted SAMUEL HEILMAN (Sociology) . . . MICHAEL KRASNER (Political Science) commented at GothamGazette.com on the political fallout from the arrest of State Sen. Malcolm Smith on charges he was attempting to bribe his way onto the ballot to run for mayor. Krasner was also quoted in a Wall Street Journal story about how turnout for a special election in Far Rockaway had been substantially lowered because so many voters had been displaced by Hurricane Sandy . . . The

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11
consisting of 46,000 entries that was printed in 1598.

The "A Worlde of Wordes," an Italian-English dictionary, was one of the most prominent linguistic and educational works in Elizabethan England. Florio, an exiled Italian Protestant, taught at Oxford, where he received a university education. He moved to England in 1598 and published several works on the Italian language and the greater refinement of Renaissance writer and grammarian. His work, in which he reveals a brilliant collector of words and proverbs, and accomplished writer and grammarian, "A Worlde of Wordes" features a wide variety of social registers, from dialect forms to dialect forms, colloquialisms, and proverbs.

His publication of "A Worlde of Wordes," an Italian-English dictionary, was one of the most prominent linguistic and educational works in Elizabethan England. Florio, an exiled Italian Protestant, taught at Oxford, where he received a university education. He moved to England in 1598 and published several works on the Italian language and the greater refinement of Renaissance writer and grammarian. His work, in which he reveals a brilliant collector of words and proverbs, and accomplished writer and grammarian, "A Worlde of Wordes" features a wide variety of social registers, from dialect forms to dialect forms, colloquialisms, and proverbs.
Three QC Graduates Receive National Science Foundation Fellowships

The National Science Foundation Graduate Research fellowships are among the most prestigious and highly competitive grants in the country. This year three QC graduates—JASMINE HATCHER, ’09 CHRISTOPHER PARISANO ’08, and JAMAR WHALEY ’11—received these awards to continue their research. Their projects include finding a safer way to store technetium, a radioactive by-product of nuclear fission (Hatcher); investigating the relationship that people in Lima, Peru, have with archaeological sites, which often are the only places they can dispose of garbage (Parisano); and exploring the neurological adaptations that occur within individuals suffering from behavioral addiction to the Internet (Whaley).

The NSF fellowships, which provide $126,000 over three years, support graduate students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines who are pursuing research-based master’s and doctoral degrees at accredited U.S. institutions. About 2,000 awards from a pool of over 13,000 applicants were given nationwide.

“I am proud and delighted that the National Science Foundation has recognized the achievements and potential of these exceptional young scientists,” said QC President James Muyskens. “They join the ranks of past recipients who have gone on to become prominent visionaries, inventors, and Nobel Prize winners.”

Remembering Marvin Hamlisch

Celebrating “one singular sensation,” Donna McKechnie (l.), Cassie of the original cast of A Chorus Line, was among the many friends, family, and creative collaborators who performed and reminisced at a May 5 concert at Kupferberg Center honoring the memory of stellar composer, performer, and QC graduate Marvin Hamlisch. Above (l.–r.) are conductor J. Ernest Green, tenor J. Mark McVey, Hamlisch’s widow, Terre Blair Hamlisch, and ACSM Director Ed Smaldone. McVey also performed (above, right) with his children, Grace and Kyle, and wife, Christy-Tarr McVey. Preempted by Hurricane Sandy, the concert had originally been scheduled for November 4.

STUDENTS IN THE MEDIA

The winter break trip by several QC students to Nicaragua to assist Global Brigades in providing health care to the poor was reported in the Queens Chronicle, Queens Gazette, Queens Courier, El Correo, El Diario/La Prensa, and at LatinTrends.com (see p. 7) . . . The New York Times featured a story about the Mellow Pages Library in Brooklyn of which QC student MATT NELSON is one of the co-founders . . . The naming of a street in Bayside to commemorate QC alum MOHAMMED SALMAN HAMDANI, who died in the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center while volunteering as a paramedic, was reported by the Queens Courier.