Armstrong House Museum Gets $5 Million for Visitors Center

An empty lot across the street from the Louis Armstrong House Museum will be the site of an 8,500-square-foot visitors center, thanks to an award of $5 million from New York State.

“The visitors center will provide substantial benefits not only to our visitors, but to our community,” says Museum Director Michael Cogswell, referring to plans for additional exhibitions, concerts, lectures, and other services and programs in the new space. “We’ll be able to present more community-oriented programs. Plus, cultural tourism has long been recognized as an important contributor to economic development. More visitors to the Louis Armstrong House Museum means that more visitors will stay in local hotels and eat in local restaurants.”

The new center will provide another significant benefit. “We currently hold concerts and special events in our beautiful garden, but only in warm months and we hope for nice weather,” says Cogswell. “With a visitors center we can hold events all year long and never be rained out.”

The center will also allow for restoration of the house’s garage to its original state. That space now contains a gift shop, which will be moved to the visitors center. Once restored, the garage will house a 1967 Lincoln Town Car, like the one Armstrong drove.

“We are deeply grateful to Senators John Sabini and Serf Maltese, Assemblymen José Peralta and Jeff Aubry, and all the other elected officials who worked so hard to acquire this essential funding,” says Cogswell.

The estimated total cost for design and construction is $9 million; Queens College must raise an additional $4 million for the center, which is expected to be completed in 2009. Lord Cultural Resources, one of the world’s top museum design firms, and Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates developed the master plan for the center. The project will be administered by the CUNY Department of Design, Construction, and Management.

“When we created the master plan for the visitors center in 2003,” says Cogswell, “we held more than 20 interviews with community leaders, elected officials, and block residents to learn what they wished for there. Many wonderful ideas came out of those interviews and we are excited about realizing them.”

Man Bites Dog! College Students Don’t Drink!

It is probably the kind of information parents hide from their children when they are making a decision about which college to attend. But one graduate of Queens College, who is now a successful journalist, decided to broadcast the news from the pages of the Chicago Tribune: “Yes! My alma mater made it onto the lists in the Princeton Review’s 2007 edition of The Best 361 Colleges, which went on sale last week. There it was, No. 8 on one list. The list being: Stone-Cold Sober Schools.”

Barbara Brotman ’78, a staff reporter at the Tribune, couldn’t hide her enthusiasm for the rating: “A toast to my old school! Or maybe not. Because our ranking on another list, this one for beer drinking, was even higher. Queens College, part of the City University of New York, had the third-lowest rating for consumption of beer.”

Continued on page 2
QC Community to Create New Strategic Plan

With the announcement of the new curriculum and the ongoing success of the capital campaign, President James Muyskens believes the time is right to create a new Strategic Plan that builds upon these accomplishments and sets a vision for Queens College for the next five years and beyond.

“Such a plan will guide our decisions regarding where we should invest our resources,” he observes. “At the same time, it will sharpen our sense of institutional identity and enhance the college’s visibility both nationally and internationally.”

In a recent memo to the college community, Muyskens provided the outlines of the process that will create the Strategic Plan. It includes a Strategic Planning Council which he chairs, comprised of members from various sectors of the campus community, including faculty, students, staff, alumni, members of the QC Foundation, and a member of the Queens Chamber of Commerce. The council has ultimate responsibility for creating the Strategic Plan. It will advise on issues and ideas, review all drafts, and formally adopt the plan at the end of the process. Within the council are eight Strategic Planning Committees formed around various key topics. The committees and their co-chairs are:

- **Enhancing Academic Quality**: June Bobb (Asst. Provost), James Moore (Anthropology)
- **The Balance of Teaching and Research**: Jeffrey Halperin (Psychology), Donald Scott (History)
- **Strengthening the Quality of the College Experience for All Students**: Joe Bertolino (VP for Student Affairs), Joyce Chang (Sociology)
- **Ensuring a Strong Financial Foundation**: Mario DellaPina (Exec. Dir., QC Foundation), John Walker (Accounting and Information Systems)
- **Strengthening the Quality of Life for the College Community**: Elizabeth Hendrey (Dean, Social Sciences), Naveed Husain (Asst. VP, OCT)
- **Enhancing Physical Facilities**: David Gosine (Dir., Campus Facilities), Thomas Strekas (Dean, Math & Natural Sciences)
- **Increasing the Visibility and Reputation of the College in New York City and Beyond**: Rachel Lyon (Media Studies), Maria Terrone (Asst. VP, Communications)
- **Setting Performance Measures and Ensuring Accountability**: Craig Michaels (Economic and Community Programs), Penny Hammrich (Dean, Education)

Each committee will produce a position paper that will be submitted to the council in January 2007.

As described in the president’s memo, the plan must include priorities set by CUNY in its 2004–2008 Master Plan and take into account performance goals established by the chancellor for each college. “This plan will depend heavily on input from our faculty, staff, students, and alumni,” says Muyskens.

A first draft of the plan will be widely circulated among the QC community next March. It will be posted on the Web and a site created for online discussion. There will also be several town hall meetings. Where appropriate, comments will be incorporated into the final document that will be issued in May 2007.

**What Do You Think?**

If you could make one change to the college, what would that be? Send your ideas to president@qc.cuny.edu. All suggestions thoughtfully considered.

**In July Tom Cracovia competed at the seventh Gay Games in Chicago, where he won three medals in swimming events in his age group: two gold in the 4x100-meter free-style relay and the 4x50-meter medley relay and a silver in the 50-meter breaststroke. Some 12,000 athletes from all over the world competed and there were over 30,000 attendees. Formerly called the Gay Olympics, the event has been held in different cities around the world since 1982. Cracovia, who is on the board of directors for the event, has previously won medals in track and field and masters physique as well as swimming.**

Continued from page 1

“This rating only confirms what we at the college have always known,” says President James Muyskens: “Our students are serious and hard-working. But they are also fun-loving.” This was echoed by *The Best 361 Colleges*, which notes how “free hour events bring everyone together for parties, speakers, discussion groups, or food” and students “are very active in clubs and after-school activities.”

Brotman also noted, “In addition to the sober living lists, Queens College is also on the Princeton Review’s lists of ‘Best Northeastern Colleges’ and ‘America’s Best Value Colleges.’”

A member of the *Chicago Tribune* since graduating from QC, Brotman currently writes for the paper’s metropolitan news section’s special projects team. She wrote one of the stories in the Tribune’s 2004 series, “Struggle for the Soul of Islam,” which won first place in the Religion Newswriters Association’s Templeton Story Award category. She also enjoyed writing this article.

The ‘Stone Cold Sober’ rating led to a deluge of national publicity for the college, leading Brotman to observe: “It’s been a blast hearing from so many Queens and CUNY grads out here. A lot of satisfied customers, we former teetotalers.”
Bill Helmreich  
**Director of Center for Jewish Studies**

“I stand on the shoulders of giants,” observes Bill Helmreich, quoting a 12th-century French philosopher as he undertakes his new role as director of the Center for Jewish Studies.

“Benny Kraut accomplished a lot in his eight years,” he says of his predecessor, whose tradition of accomplishment he hopes to continue and, perhaps, take in a different direction. “As I am a sociologist and interested in contemporary affairs,” says Helmreich, “it may be that the center’s conferences and some of the lecture series will have a more contemporary flavor; they may emphasize more political affairs in the Middle East, and more current issues of anti-Semitism. We are planning a major conference for the spring about the state of world Jewry, for example, featuring speakers such as Bernard Lewis, Leon Wieseltier, Norman Podhoretz.

“I am also embarking on two other projects,” he says. “One is long-range: to establish an Hispanic-Jewish institute at Queens College that would focus on research into the relationship of these two communities.” The short-range project is the creation of a Bukharian Community Center that would feature conferences and programs, particularly for students. “There are close to a thousand Bukharian students who are Bukharian attending Queens College,” he says. “We surely have the largest Jewish Bukharian college student population in America, and we ought to help that community maintain itself culturally.”

“All these things are going to require money,” says Helmreich, who has an established track record as an effective fundraiser. As president of the North Shore Hebrew Academy, he was a major force in helping the academy raise $48 million for a new high school that opened its doors in September.

Helmreich is professor of sociology and Judaic studies at the CUNY Graduate Center and City College of New York. He also serves as director of the City College Conflict Resolution Center. A former Woodrow Wilson Fellow, he is the author of 11 books, including *Against All Odds: Holocaust Survivors and the Successful Lives They Made in America*, which won a National Jewish Book Award. He has written for the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and many scholarly journals, and appears frequently on radio and TV shows such as “Oprah,” “Larry King Live,” and the “CBS Morning News.” “I’m not shy about talking to the media,” he says.

As director of the Center for Jewish Studies, Helmreich inherits half the mantle worn by Kraut, who also was director of the college’s academic Jewish Studies Program, a position that has been assumed by Mark Rosenblum (History). While Rosenblum’s focus will be the undergraduate program, Helmreich will concentrate on community programming and outreach.

**QC Launches New Online Advising Tool**

For students and their advisors, the “What if?” aspect of course selection recently received some important technological assistance with the launch of DegreeWorks (which at Queens College is being called eCAT, an acronym for Electronic College Advising Tool).

“We took the 2003–2005 college bulletin and coded all the different degree and major/minor concentrations, Gen Ed, and LASAR requirements into the DegreeWorks system,” explains Donna Lipper, assistant to the provost for academic data. “DegreeWorks takes the student’s academic transcript, plugs it into these requirements, and comes up with a Web-access report which says: ‘This is what you’ve completed; this is what you have to do.’ And it tells you the courses that can be taken to fulfill the requirements.”

When students use DegreeWorks “hover” over the names of courses, Lipper says, a window pops up giving course description and credit information. “This does all those clerical functions for them so that advising session time is better spent addressing questions such as ‘What do you want to do with this major?’”

DegreeWorks is available 24/7, notes Lipper, “so it’s there for the student who does things in the middle of the night or who waits until the last minute to register.” Other features include a GPA calculator to determine what grades students need to achieve a desired GPA or to qualify for various honors programs.

A number of schools around the country use DegreeWorks. While some CUNY schools have their own stand-alone DegreeWorks systems, Queens College’s program is among five that are being run on CUNY’s central server. Consequently, it must be accessed through the central CUNY Web site. Lipper says she believes the university’s goal is to eventually have all the schools on the central server.

The QC system, which took almost two years to get running, went live last May but only on a limited basis, says Lipper, as it was important to be sure all the technical issues had been addressed. “It’s currently being used in the Advising Center, Counseling and Advisement, and in the Registrar’s Office as part of their degree audit review.”

Meetings are now taking place with department chairs to get them to sign off on their department’s information on DegreeWorks. “We think the information is right,” says Lipper. “But the last person to say it’s right is the chair. We’re hoping within the next month or two that all the programs will have signed off.”

Lipper is emphatic that DegreeWorks is not a substitute for students talking to advisors: “It’s meant to be a tool to assist, not to supercede advisors.”
New Food Vendor Steps into the Breach

With the premature departure of Panda House, a new food vendor, Metropolitan Food Services, has stepped in to sate the appetites of the college population.

Panda House’s contract with the college was originally set to expire in January 2007, explains Vice President for Student Affairs Joe Bertolino. But over the summer the vendor requested an early release in order to accept an offer from Kingsborough Community College.

“We were willing to do this,” says Bertolino. “But we, of course, needed to find another vendor very, very quickly.”

The problem was made even more difficult, explains Bertolino, because when QC put out its last Request for Proposals (RFP) for a food service supplier in the spring, the only bidder had been Panda House. Consequently, several potential vendors were quickly contacted, with four submitting proposals.

“Of those four,” he says, “the Auxiliary Enterprises Association (AEA), which is the corporation which oversees food services, selected Metropolitan.”

The AEA at QC, explains Bertolino, is comprised of students, faculty, and administrators and oversees all vendor services. A few factors weighed in Metropolitan’s favor, including their “student-friendly pricing structure” and the fact that they already serve Queensborough, Baruch, and City College.

“Given the short amount of time, the familiarity with CUNY was certainly one of the more significant points,” he says. “This is only a one-year emergency contract.” Bertolino continues, explaining that the RFP process will be initiated again to find a vendor for a more long-term engagement. It could well turn out to be Metropolitan, which, in the meantime, is getting what might be considered a one-year audition.

“For the most part they’re up and running,” says Bertolino, citing the operations in the Student Union, the Science Building, and the library.

“In the meantime,” he says, “we just ask people to bear with us.”

Beveridge Village housing complexes in Manhattan . . . The announcement of plans to build a visitors center for the Louis Armstrong House Museum was the subject of a Sept. 5 Daily News story which quoted director Michael Cogswell. The Daily News also published an editorial in its Sept. 12 Queens editions lauding the development. News of the center also made its way to the jazz Web site of About.com. “Chasing History Home,” part of Dish Network’s programming for HDTV, profiled the Armstrong House on Sept. 23 . . . A story in the Sept. 11 edition of the national magazine Newsweek suggests that first-graders may be overtested and overworked quoted Dominic Gullo (EECE) . . . Bill Helmreich (Cir Jewish Studies) was quoted Sept. 17 in a story in the New York Times about ongoing tensions in the Lawrence school district, where Orthodox Jews who send their children to private schools hold a majority of seats on the school board . . . Mark Rosenblum (History) was quoted in an Aug. 18 story in Newday concerning the recent clash between Israel and Lebanon. The Queens Gazette featured a story August 30 on its Web site about Rosenblum’s unique course on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He was also profiled in the September edition of Westchester Jewish Life . . . A story appearing Aug. 24 in the Queens Chronicle about concerns parents have regarding violent video games quoted Harold Schechter (English), author of Savage Pastimes . . . Joseph Sciorra (Calandra Institute) offered his reminiscences for a Sept. 17 New York Times story discussing the passing of Luigi Rossi, a longtime merchant and resident of Little Italy who sold Neapolitan records, sheet music, figurines of saints, and other Italian miscellany . . . Popstars!, the Godwin-Ternbach Museum’s current exhibit of works by the superstars of the Pop Art Movement, was reviewed in the Sept. 15 Queens Tribune. It also received notices Sept. 10 in Newday, Sept. 14 in the Queens Chronicle, and Sept. 19 in the Daily News, and was the subject of a public service announcement on WQXR radio . . . The exhibition at the Queens Art Center of photographs by Tony Gonzalez, Figure Studies and Banyan Trees, was reviewed Sept. 5 in the Daily News, and Newday noted it Sept. 13 in its Fall Arts Preview . . . Gothamist, a Web site of news about New York, featured an item Aug. 22 about QC’s #8 ranking by the Princeton Review The Best 361 Colleges as a “Stone Cold Sober” school. The Daily News, Newday, AM New York, New York Sun, Associated Press, WCBS-AM, NY1, WNBC, Fox, and WB also covered this . . . The Learning for Life program’s recent Astronomy Night event was highlighted Aug. 31 in the Queens Chronicle, Sept. 8 in Newday, and in the September editions of Queens Parent and Parent Guide. . . . The Queens News section of the Aug. 22 edition of the Daily News featured a story about freshman orientation programs at QC and St. John’s University . . . QC was profiled in the Back to School & Fall Guide in the Aug. 24 Queens Chronicle.
JOE BROSTEK (Special Events) contributed a number of personal anecdotes about his and his family’s experiences as Mets fans to For Met Fans Only (Lone Wolf Press), a book by sportswriter Rich Wolfe, who’s authored a similar volume for Red Sox fans . . . TOM CRACOVIA (Director, Learning for Life) will assume the presidency of the Continuing Education Association of New York at the organization’s annual conference later this month. Its membership includes most CUNY and SUNY colleges and universities . . . MIRIAN DETRES-HICKEY (Director, Office of Special Services for Students with Disabilities) has been recognized as one of two Individual Award Winners by the Senior Vice Chancellor’s Productivity Awards Program. She was cited for her innovative solutions to maintaining services for 653 students served by her office when congressional action last year cut $250,000 in funding, the first such cut in 20 years . . . THOMAS GIBSON (Director, SEEK) made a presentation in September at the Council for Opportunity in Education’s national conference in New York City. He spoke about how the likelihood of postsecondary success can be significantly improved for low-income and first-generation students when the admissions process produces a “good institutional fit” . . . PYONG GAP MIN (Sociology) has been selected as a visiting scholar for the 2006–2007 academic year by the Russell Sage Foundation. He will write a book examining how the involvement of immigrants in ethnic businesses affects ethnic attachment, solidarity, and conflict among Chinese, Indian, and Korean immigrants in New York City . . . EUGENIA PAULICELLI (European Langs) spoke on “Fashion and Design: Influences and Exchanges between Italy and the US” at a Sept. 13 conference about The Influence of Italian Style in American Culture and Architecture at the University of Bologna. On Sept. 21 she spoke on her current research on Cesare Vecellio’s renaissance costume books at the International Conference on Paraitre and Apparances dans une perspective spatiale in Lille, France . . . CAROLINE RUPPRECHT (Comp Lit) published “Post-war Iconographies: Wandering Women in Brecht, Duras, Kluge” in South Central Review, vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer 2006).
QC COMMUNITY

Faculty and Staff Assembly October 18
Mark Your Calendar: The Fall Faculty and Staff Assembly will take place on Wednesday, October 18, at 3:30 pm in LeFrak Concert Hall. President James Muyksens will outline the accomplishments of the past year and address many of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The introduction of new faculty and administrators will be followed by the presentation of the President’s Awards. A short video entitled Leading the American Dream will also be featured and light refreshments will follow in the Atrium.

Faculty Reading Group
As Benny Kraut (History) takes a sabbatical, Stuart Liebman (Media Studies) will assume the role of coordinator of the Jewish Studies Faculty Reading Group. A founder and regular participant, Liebman invites anyone with an interest in Jewish literature, texts, ideas, etc., to join the group, which has been meeting since 2000. He emphasizes that you need not be Jewish to join. The group meets four times each academic year to discuss four books; each session is conducted by a faculty member with expertise related to the book’s subject matter. The next meeting is Oct. 10 at 6:30 in G Building, Room 200, when Liebman will conduct a discussion of Amos Oz’s memoir A Tale of Love and Darkness. For more information contact Liebman at 72962 or Pat Tortorici at 74530.

Athletic Conference Headquarters at QC
The headquarters of the CUNY Athletic Conference recently relocated from Lehman College to QC. They are temporarily working in Razran Hall, Room 315, with plans to move to a still-to-be-determined permanent location, says Assistant Director Dave Gansell. Ten CUNY senior colleges and five community colleges are members of the conference. (QC withdrew from the conference some years ago to become a member of the NCAA.) CUNYAC is looking for interns and work-study students. Anyone interested should contact Gansell at ext. 74273.

STUDENT PROFILE

Lauren Talerman ’08
Winner of Boren Undergraduate Scholarship

“You’re out of your mind” is what many of Lauren Talerman’s friends told her when she announced she had won a scholarship to study Arabic in Egypt this past summer. After all, Talerman, an Orthodox Jewish female, would be traveling through an Islamic country during wartime. But she felt it was a challenge and an “exciting time to be in the Mid East.”

Meeting challenges is just part of life for Talerman. For a year she commuted two hours each way by subway and bus from her home in Brooklyn to attend Queens College as a CUNY Honors College student. (She has since moved to Flushing.) So competing for a national scholarship where summer study abroad is rarely awarded—and choosing to study in Egypt—did not seem all that unusual.

Talerman has a keen interest in international relations, particularly the Mid East, and a career goal in foreign policy. Before her trip to Egypt she could read and write standard modern (textbook) Arabic, but realized that a “true language-immersion experience” required study in an Arabic-speaking country. The David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship—which awards up to $20,000 for study in a “region of the world crucial to U.S. interests” in exchange for a year’s service in the federal government—afforded her that opportunity.

For seven weeks Talerman took classes in colloquial Arabic, printed and oral media, and political texts at the American University in Cairo. The small and intense classes, taught by Egyptian professors, enabled her to be more conversant in Arabic, to read and understand the local media, and become more aware of perspectives, cultures, and politics different from her own.

Coursework was supplemented by afternoon, evening, and weekend field trips organized by the university. These included a trip to Alexandria to see the pyramids, a cruise down the Nile, and an exploration of Cairo at night.

“I never felt uncomfortable traveling through Egypt,” says Talerman. “I met so many fascinating people and made a lot of friends from all around the world who had similar interests and career paths. Even though there were no synagogues or Kosher food available, I managed. For example, I ate either cooked vegetables, rice and yogurt, canned tuna brought from home, or LaBriute meals, which are self-heating and ready-to-eat.”

Talerman, who speaks fluent Hebrew and Spanish (her father is from Colombia), is majoring in political science and anthropology and hopes to minor in Arabic. In addition to her regular coursework at the college, where she maintains a 3.9 GPA, she is executive editor of the Knight News; co-editor of the Journal of Jewish Studies; and serves on the President’s Strategic Planning Council.

“Most of my friends from Brooklyn chose to go away to school, but I don’t regret my decision to attend Queens College,” says Talerman, who passed up admission to Princeton. “I love it here! I get a personalized education and all the opportunities and experiences of an Ivy League college at one-tenth the price.”
10 TUE
CHAMBER MUSIC LIVE: Violinist Rolphe Schulte & pianist Andrew Rangell. Works by Schubert & Janácek. LeFrak Hall, 10 am. Free with QC ID.

24 TUE
CHAMBER MUSIC LIVE: Gerald Robbins, piano & guests. LeFrak Hall, 10 am. Free with QC ID.

11 WED

25 WED

12 THU
LONG ISLAND COMPOSERS’ ALLIANCE: Martin Halpern, concert director. LeFrak Hall, 12:15 pm.

13 FRI
RECITAL: Yu-Hsuan Chiang, horn, and Shinae Kim, clarinet. LeFrak Hall, 3 pm.

19 THU
RECITAL: Elena Rojas, violin and viola, and Wei-Hsien Lien, piano. LeFrak Hall, 12:15 pm.

26 THU

22 SUN
CONCERT: The Fab Faux. Colden Auditorium, 4 & 8 pm. $50–$40

28 SAT
CONCERT: An Evening with Michael Feinstein & Linda Eder. Colden Auditorium, 8 pm. $46, $41 w/QCID, srs.

30 MON

31 TUE
CHAMBER MUSIC LIVE: Mendelssohn Quartet. LeFrak Hall, 10 am. Free with QC ID.

1 WED

Exhibits
Figure Studies and Banyan Trees: Photographs by Tony Gonzalez. QC Art Center, Rosenthal Library, 6th floor. Through October 27.
POPSTARS! Includes Andy Warhol, Jim Dine, Robert Indiana, Roy Lichtenstein, Mel Ramos, Claes Oldenburg, Larry Rivers, and James Rosenquist. Godwin-Ternbach Museum. Hours Mon.–Thur., 11 am–7 pm; Sat., 11 am–5 pm when classes are in session. Through December 14.
Armstrong and Africa. Explores Armstrong’s travels through the continent in 1956 and 1960 using items from his personal collection. Screenings of rare film Satchmo the Great by Edward R. Murrow. Louis Armstrong House Museum. Tuesday–Friday, 10 am–5 pm; Saturday–Sunday, 12 noon–5 pm. 34-56 107th St., Corona, Queens. Information: 718-478-8274; www.louisarmstronghouse.org

Items should be submitted to Maria Matteo (maria.matteo@qc.cuny.edu), Kiely 1310, x 75590.