Meet President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez

On August 28, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez became Queens College’s tenth president. He has a resume that spans academia and the public sector: He is a scholar, teacher, administrator, and former cabinet secretary of the Department of Family Services for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Immediately prior to his appointment at QC, he spent five years as president of Hostos Community College/CUNY, where he significantly increased its student retention and graduation rates. He has taught at Northeastern University and Hunter College/CUNY, where he directed the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. An expert on the history of women in the Caribbean, Matos Rodríguez is the author of Women and Urban Life in Nineteenth-Century San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1820–1862 and editor of A Nation of Women: An Early Feminist Speaks Out. He holds a BA from Yale University and two MAs and a doctorate from Columbia University. (For a more extensive biography, go to www.qc.cuny.edu/president.)

Could you tell us a little about your life growing up?

I am the oldest of three brothers in a traditional middle-class family in Puerto Rico. My paternal grandparents were of humble backgrounds, country people with eighth-grade educations who moved to the city. My maternal grandmother taught English in a public high school for 35 years. I was very blessed in that I grew up knowing all four of my grandparents and five of my great-grandparents.

My parents have always worked very hard. They both attended the University of Puerto Rico—which is the CUNY of the island—and were part of the generation that saw a social transformation in Puerto Rico. My Dad became an engineer and spent most of his career working for a large flour and feed mill processing plant. He rose from being shift supervisor to becoming the plant’s chief operating officer. My Mom was going to be a Spanish teacher, but then I was born and that was the end of her professional life. Mom and Dad were hyper-involved parents, always engaged in volunteer work and community service.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3
Changes Near the Top

QC started the fall semester with new senior staffers, as well as veterans in new positions.

Glenda Grace has joined the college as assistant vice president, chief of staff, and deputy to President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez. A Long Island native, Grace holds two bachelor’s degrees—in economics and psychology—from the University of Pennsylvania and a JD from Columbia Law School. She came to QC from Hostos Community College, where she served as executive counsel to the president and labor designee.

Claudia Colbert was appointed interim assistant vice president and chief information officer following 10 months as QC’s executive director for program management. Colbert has been with CUNY for 10 years. In 2004 she joined the university’s Computer and Information Service Group, where she was responsible for establishing the CIS Project Management Office for CUNYwide system implementation; she left that office to become AVP and CIO at Medgar Evers College.

Supporting Colbert at QC’s Office of Information Technology (formerly called

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Dennehy Appointed Head of Undergraduate Research

As Queens College’s first director of undergraduate research, John Dennehy (Biology) wants to ensure that freshmen know from the outset everything they should about research opportunities at the college so that they can get on the right track and stay on it.

“We’re trying to formalize a system. Up to now, it’s been rather ad hoc,” he says. “There is no structure to connect students and professors. Many undergraduates are unaware of the opportunities until quite far into their careers. Some students come to me as seniors and say, ‘I want to apply to med school, so I should get some research experience.’ But by that point, it’s really too late.”

The impetus to create the new position came from Richard Bodnar, the dean of research and graduate studies. He encouraged Dennehy to become involved in a CUNY consortium that participated in workshops offered by the Council on Undergraduate Research.

When he received his new appointment, Dennehy says, “I sat down and made a list of all the things I want to accomplish, because as the inaugural director, I wanted to set the tone for all the future directors. This is a three-year position. What I do now should define the responsibility for future years.”

His first priority has been the creation of a web page to serve as a central repository for information on all undergraduate research opportunities at QC.

“There also are a number of successful research programs at Queens College I’m going to become more involved with,” Dennehy says, citing the URME program (Undergraduate Research and Mentoring Education) and the MARC program (Maximizing Access to Research Careers), specifically.

“I hope to develop a database where professors can upload research position listings and students can apply for them. Right now students come by and knock on my door to ask if we have any positions,” he says. “It would be good if the process were a little more formal. If students feel more like they’re applying for a job, when they start working, they will treat it more like a job.”

Since 2009 Dennehy has run Phage Hunters, a very successful undergraduate genomics research program that is supported by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

“Students go out, collect soil, and isolate bacterial viruses,” he recounts. Back at the lab, they characterize the viruses, isolate their DNA, and sequence their genome. In the second semester, they take a genomics class in which they annotate the genome, then compile it into a database with almost 3,000 phages.

“We’ve published a number of papers,” says Dennehy. “I’ve had over 100 students go through my class and many of them have continued on with research, which is my goal.”

Shuttle Bus Gets in Gear

For commuters from Queens, Long Island, and even Brooklyn and Manhattan, the trip to QC has gotten appreciably easier: The college’s new shuttle bus provides daily nonstop service between campus and two major transit hubs, Jamaica Station and Flushing–Main Street Station. The bus also provides cross-campus service between Queens Hall and the Student Union.

Launched on August 28 after a three-day pilot, the shuttle is winning converts among students, who must display a current QCard in order to board. All students pay for the bus through their Student Activity fee. (Faculty and staff must buy a sticker to ride the bus. For rates, go to http://qc.cuny.edu/?id=VZOJ.)

“It’s very good,” says upper junior Dominah Purnell, who travels from Brooklyn and changes at Jamaica. “I get to class faster.”

The trip that used to take her an hour has shrunk to less than 45 minutes.

For second-semester freshman Emmanuel Rodriguez, shuttle bus travel is easier, as well as faster. “I worry less about my destination,” he notes. “It’s my last stop.” He isn’t the only passenger who relaxes in transit. At the end of a recent run to campus, “One kid was asleep at the back of the bus,” reports MV Transit driver Jimmy Fogle. “When I woke him, he said, ‘Oh, I’m here!’”

Ridership is highest at rush hours, adds Fogle. “It’s a good thing for the kids. They have their own private space.”

Information about pickup locations, routes, and hours of operation is available at www.qc.cuny.edu/shuttle.
How did you become interested in studying history?

I went to a Jesuit school, Colegio San Ignacio High School, which was one of the best high schools in Puerto Rico at the time. And there I met Puerto Rico’s most prolific and influential historian, a Jesuit priest named Fernando Picó. He became a mentor of sorts, a model of what an intellectual could be. I also think part of the reason I became a historian is that I grew up in a house in which I heard so many stories from my grandparents, stories that became a part of my life and made me want to know more about the past.

What was your college experience like?

I came to Yale in 1980. I had been to the U.S. briefly twice before—one to Disneyland—but this was my first extended time there by myself. As soon as I landed in New Haven, I was told my luggage had been lost. And then, as I spoke English with a combined Spanish and Long Island accent—almost all my English teachers back home came from Long Island—it was a challenge to find a cabdriver who understood what I was saying.

But once I found my luggage and the campus, I had a wonderful time at Yale; it was a great intellectual experience. Yale had on its faculty the leading Caribbean anthropologist, Irving Rouse, a giant in the field, the man who dug up the most important Caribbean archaeological sites from Venezuela to Cuba. Well, with some of the great naïveté you sometimes have as an undergraduate, I thought I would just go up to him one day and start talking. I did, and he turned out to be receptive and asked me to take a course with him, which would basically be a one-on-one tutorial. What a gift it was to study with a man like Professor Rouse.

To help support myself during my college years, I would referee soccer, basketball, and volleyball, which was a great way to expand my vocabulary, particularly slang, which you don’t learn in formal English high school classes. When a player would get mad and yell things at me, I would say, “What did you call me? And can you spell that, please?” And a yellow or red card usually followed that!

Much of your scholarship centers on the role of women. What drew you to this topic?

During my years at Columbia University, most of the students and scholars who were working on Latin American topics were women. We would talk all the time about feminist theory in literature and in history. When I was looking for a topic for my doctorate, I realized that very little work had been done on pre-twentieth-century Caribbean women’s history, and so I chose that. Some people thought I shouldn’t take on this topic because I was a man. In fact, many times I would go to a conference to deliver a paper and I would be the “token” male on the panel. I think this gave me a little bit of insight into what it must be like for women breaking into any field that is dominated by men.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
After years of teaching, you accepted an opportunity to go back to Puerto Rico with your family. What was behind this decision?
While I was director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter, I was approached by the deputy chief of staff for the governor of Puerto Rico, who recommended me for a position with the governor. My wife, Liliana, is also from Puerto Rico, and we thought this was an opportunity for us both to go back home and serve. Our sons were very young at that time, so this could be a wonderful chance for them to get to know their family and heritage better. So after a few meetings, the governor offered and I accepted a job as head policy advisor on health and social welfare.

After a year in this position, the governor asked if I would serve as cabinet secretary for the Department of Family Services. I had a budget of $2.2 billion, 11,000 employees, 104 regional offices, and a lot of tough cases to handle.

I traveled all over the island, to communities where people had never seen a high-level government official before. I listened to their issues, and in many cases helped to make their lives a little better. I also learned that little things mean a lot to the people who work with you. So whenever I could, I would go out in the field with, for example, the social workers who investigated child-abuse hotline cases. They were very grateful that I cared enough to see firsthand the obstacles they faced in their jobs.

Could you tell us about your years at Hostos?
Hostos, as you might know, is a beloved institution in the Bronx because it was created out of community activism. The main campus building used to be an abandoned tire factory, but the community took it over and said they were not leaving until a college was built there.

We achieved many good things while I was at Hostos, but good things don’t happen because the president is good; they happen because the president has a very good leadership team and dedicated faculty and staff on campus. We were able to improve our graduation and retention rates, develop more community partnerships, work more closely with area employers, and create more student-centered programs.

I am so proud of what we were able to accomplish. Recently, we started a Student Success Coach program in which every freshman is assigned a student service professional who remains with the student until they graduate or transfer. We also received grants from the Aspen Institute and Citibank, for example, to encourage students to go to summer classes, and thus accelerate their time-to-degree.

But most important, our retention rate went up about ten percent in five years, the highest come in with all the tools, professors are able to see your potential and give you a chance,” she observes.

Yu also completed a major in linguistics. She’s fluent in Mandarin and Japanese, studied Spanish at the international schools she attended at home, and at QC immersed herself in other European languages. Her senior recital featured selections in Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, and Russian. But when the artistic director of Yale’s program called Yu to notify her of her acceptance, she found herself at a loss for words. “I had slept in that morning, so I was pretty sure I was dreaming,” she recalls. “I said, ‘You’re kidding, right?’ The director answered, ‘I’m not kidding, dear.’”

That’s success, in any language.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
Looking for Middle Ground in the Middle East

The search for common ground is most important in the places where it seems elusive. That’s why the Ibrahim/Queens College Student Leadership & Dialogue Middle East Program sent 11 students last summer on a free three-week trip to Israel, Jordan, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and the West Bank. Participants—a mix of Christians, Jews, and Muslims drawn from QC, Barnard, Johns Hopkins, Syracuse, University of California—Berkeley, the University of Pennsylvania, and Virginia Tech—interacted not only with each other but also with national leaders, grassroots activists, and social and economic entrepreneurs at each destination.

The experience was eye-opening for all. In Tel Aviv, Fahmida Sarmin, a junior at U. Penn, got the sense that it wasn’t acceptable for her to interact in public with a Jew—until QC’s Daniel Kaplan ’16 invited her to hop on his bicycle. “I sat behind Daniel as he biked me down the streets of Tel Aviv,” she says. “It was a rare sight, an Orthodox Jewish boy and a hijab-wearing Muslim girl riding a bike together.” Sarmin was equally surprised to learn about the wide range of entrepreneurship occurring in the Middle East, with Arab women holding prominent positions.

For his part, Kaplan developed a new perspective on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. “I no longer view it as one-sided, but rather as a multifaceted, complex debate of narratives,” he observes. “Both sides have strong emotional ties to parts of the land being controlled by the other. For example, the Jews have no access to the Tomb of Joseph in Nablus, while many Muslims from Ramallah cannot reach the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. . . . It is tremendously difficult to acknowledge and witness how much pain, suffering, and damage has been caused by the conflict.”

Upon their return to the United States, Sarmin, Kaplan, and their fellow travelers were asked to address seven key topics, from their assumptions before the trip to their plans for promoting greater cross-cultural and interfaith understanding in their respective community or school. “Each individual has to make a commitment,” says Mark Rosenblum (History), who as director of the leadership and dialogue program led this year’s tour and the three that preceded it. “We want to multiply the impact.” Toward that end, participants received training that will enable them to facilitate communication and serve as “shock absorbers” if the events in Gaza play out negatively on their respective campuses.

Sponsored by the Ibrahim Family Foundation—which aspires to share America with the world and share the world with America—and QC, the leadership and dialogue program grew out of Rosenblum’s innovative class, “The Middle East and America: Clash of Civilizations or Meeting of the Minds.” As part of their assignments, students research and support positions opposite to the ones they grew up believing. The Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding (CERRU), which promotes cross-cultural communication on the QC campus and elsewhere in New York City, is another legacy of that course.

Music Library Receives Generous Library Estate Donation

The Queens College Music Library recently received $386,000 from the estate of Claude V. Palisca upon the death of his wife, Elizabeth Keitel. This bequest will facilitate the creation of an endowment to fund acquisitions for the Music Library as well as minor renovations to the circulation desk. “Renovating our lone service point will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our public services,” notes Music Library Head Jennifer Oates. “With library acquisitions in all subject areas suffering from repeated budget cuts, this endowment will significantly improve our annual acquisitions and allow us to build the collection and better support the Copland School’s curricula.”

Claude Palisca (1921–2001) earned his bachelor’s degree in music from Queens College in 1943 before earning his master’s and PhD in musicology from Harvard in 1948 and 1954. He spent most of his career on the music faculty at Yale University, where he chaired the faculty of music from 1969 to 1975 (and again in 1992) and was named the Henry L. and Lucy G. Moses Professor Emeritus of Music upon his retirement. Palisca’s monograph on Baroque music (originally published in 1968 and now in its third edition) remains a standard textbook on the topic; his translation (with Guy A. Marco) of Zarlino’s Istitutioni harmoniche (1558) is the most widely used translation of one of the most important treatises on music theory.

Shortly after her husband’s death in 2001, Ms. Keitel donated his rare books to the college; they are available to researchers in the Special Collections Department in the Rosenthal Library. In 2009 she also donated funds to purchase and install display cases in the Music Library.

FAR LEFT: Dome of the Rock, in Jerusalem;
NEAR LEFT: Nashwa El-Sayed ’13 and Dalya Arussy ’14 flank Mark Rosenblum.
FYI OCTOBER 2014 | 6

More Kudos for the College

For the second consecutive year, Queens College has been recognized by Washington Monthly as the #2 college in America for doing “the best job of helping non-wealthy students attain marketable degrees at affordable prices.” The magazine analyzed 1,540 U.S. colleges and selected 386 that delivered the “Best Bang for the Buck.”

“Since its founding, Queens College has been dedicated to providing a high-quality education to deserving students regardless of their finances,” says President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez. “I couldn’t be more pleased and proud that Queens College is being recognized nationally for the exceptional results of this longstanding commitment.”

A college’s “value” is now receiving extra scrutiny. In August 2013 the Obama administration declared that the federal government would begin to rate colleges to determine “who’s offering the best value, so students and taxpayers get a bigger bang for their buck,” in the president’s words. Because student debt is so high nationwide, colleges are increasingly being ranked for their affordability and students’ earning power after graduation.

For instance, Forbes magazine recently published a list of the “Top Best Value Colleges 2014,” and QC makes the grade, ranking #16. These are “top colleges and universities that deliver the goods without picking your pocket,” advise the editors, who also state, “While college is always going to be a significant financial undertaking, a great education doesn’t have to break the bank.”

Along the same lines, in Money magazine’s new best colleges list, which focuses on quality, affordability (the cost of earning a diploma in tuition and loans), and outcomes (how much the diploma will be worth in salary after graduation), Queens College was evaluated among 665 higher education institutions, ranking in Money’s top 30 percent.

In the just-released 2015 U.S. News America’s Best Colleges, Queens College ranked #8 among “Top Public Schools” in the Regional Universities–North category. Colleges in this category are defined as offering a broad range of undergraduate degrees and some master’s programs but few, if any, doctoral programs. And, as usual, QC is featured in the Princeton Review’s The Best 379 Colleges 2015 Edition. “Queens College offers outstanding academics, which is the chief reason we selected it for the book,” says Rob Franek, the Princeton Review’s senior VP and publisher.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Fourth Year for Teaching in Vietnam Project

Having just sent their fourth group of students to Vietnam for the summer Teaching in Vietnam Project, co-coordinators Donna Gruber (Director, ELI) and Thomas Szlezak (Project Manager, CTL) feel they’ve developed a strong partnership with their Vietnamese colleagues, who do much to facilitate a learning experience that is unique within CUNY.

“We’re very lucky to have partners who are so organized and responsible,” says Gruber of her collaborators at the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Training Center (SEAMEO RETRAC) in Vietnam, who each July host six QC students in Ho Chi Minh City.

“Our students are really the star of the show,” notes Gruber. These students—in coordination with a native Vietnamese teacher who is also a skilled teacher of English—use games, songs, and other activities to teach speaking, reading, and writing skills to elementary school children in what’s called the Summer Fun program.

What do you do to relax?

I try to spend as much time as I can with my family. My wife and I are big movie fans, and we recently saw A Hard Day’s Night on a big screen in Pelham, where we live. I play tennis, softball, and golf. I love to read and just finished a fine book about World War I, The War that Ended Peace, and now I’m into Walter Isaacson’s biography of Ben Franklin. I have no talent for music, but I love it. My son Lucas plays the bass and Juan Carlos plays the cello, so I spend a lot of time with them at music lessons and recitals.

But even though I love music, I am one of the few Latinos who cannot dance.

PRESIDENT MATOS – from page 4

Why did you want to become president of Queens College?

I truly believe that many of the things I have been able to accomplish in my professional life owe to my liberal arts education. So, when the opportunity came to become a part of CUNY’s top and quintessential liberal arts and sciences institution, I knew I had to give it a try. Also, Queens College’s stellar faculty and talented students had always impressed me, so I thought it would be an honor to be associated with them.

The Queens College motto—We learn so that we may serve—is something that is very much a part of my life. I strongly believe that a good life is a life that is dedicated to service. I saw what public education did for my grandparents and parents, and I want to be part of helping to create those same opportunities for students here.
QC Authors

In his new novel, *Song of the Shank* (Graywolf Press, 2014), JEFFERY RENARD ALLEN (English) explores the meaning of the life of Thomas “Blind Tom” Wiggins (1849–1908), a musical prodigy and perhaps an autistic savant as well. Blind Tom lived in the public eye most of his life, beginning his career as a performer while still an enslaved child (including a concert for President James Buchanan). The novel, however, opens in 1866, when the emancipated Blind Tom was subjected to new and continued forms of exploitation as the ward of his former owners, becoming a world-famous pianist and composer. A story this big and fantastic requires a large canvas, and Allen devoted about ten years to the novel. In it he brings Blind Tom and the hucksters, admirers, detractors, and former slave owners around him to life, in the process exploring such questions as genius and identity. The novel has been widely praised for its own musical prose, virtuosic use of magical realism, psychological insight, and profound study of race and freedom in American society.

In a globalizing world, how can we make sense of the city’s post-industrial, multi-racial, ever-changing neighborhoods of new and recent immigrants? TARRY HUM (Urban Studies) has conducted extensive ethnographic and action research among New York’s Chinese immigrants and, in *Making a Global Immigrant Neighborhood: Brooklyn’s Sunset Park* (Temple University Press), she questions the continued use of an ethnic enclave model in understanding their sense of place, identity, and collective agency. That model, which projects a path toward spatial assimilation into the larger society, begins from a notion of “isolated and insular enclaves” where internal community differences are given little weight. In its place, Hum emphasizes the multi-racial, classed, and highly contested space of Sunset Park as a complex neighborhood experiencing multi-national gentrification and real estate speculation, much of it led by Chinese banks and affluent immigrants. She follows the development of a grassroots Asian and Latino coalition seeking a sustainable form of community development that would not displace working-class residents. In the process, as Hum shows with passion and a tremendous knowledge of politics and everyday life in Brooklyn, these new immigrants are helping to create new forms of democratic practice and vision.

**ROBERT KAPSIS** (Sociology) is best known as a scholar of film, especially of filmmakers Alfred Hitchcock, Woody Allen, and Clint Eastwood. Recently, though, with *Conversations with Steve Martin* (University Press of Mississippi), he has branched out to a figure best known as a comedian. Why? As Kapsis puts it, “While those less familiar with his full body of work may think of Martin as primarily the ‘funny man’ with an arrow through his head, this book makes the case that he is in fact one of our nation’s most accomplished and varied artists.” In a compilation of profiles and interviews conducted with Martin over some forty years, Kapsis foregrounds the artist’s many achievements as a writer. In fact, his writing comprises a wide range of award-winning work, including comedy, plays, screenplays, essays, novels, memoirs, art criticism, and songs. Kapsis provides a full chronology of Martin’s work along with an engaging collection of interviews in which Martin reflects on his personal background, artistic experiences, influences, intentions, and the back story to particular works. On October 5 Kapsis will be at the Museum of the Moving Image in NYC to sign copies of his book and introduce Martin’s film *The Jerk*. He is also working with MOMI and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to develop a full-scale retrospective on Martin.

With the publication of *Enigmas of Health and Disease: How Epidemiology Helps Unravel Scientific Mysteries* (Columbia University Press), English readers may now enjoy ALFREDO MORABIA’S elegant and accessible exploration of the medical science that daily touches our lives in countless ways.

Look no further than current headlines to see epidemiologists tirelessly working to sort through the common and disparate elements that, when properly interpreted and assembled, may explain the unprecedented scope of the latest outbreak of Ebola on the African continent. To be sure, there have been other Ebolas: the Black Death (plague) in the 1400s, the Blue Death (cholera) in the early 1800s, consumption (tuberculosis) in the late 1800s, the Great Flu Epidemic of 1918, and, more recently, HIV in the 1980s. Morabia (Prof. of Epidemiology, Barry Commoner Center), who is board certified in internal and occupational medicine, explores these and other medical scourges in recounting the evolution of what we’ve come to know as public health. *Enigmas of Health and Disease* is an English-language adaptation by Morabia of a book he published in France in 2011. He opted to adapt rather than translate, he explains in the prologue, to frame his ideas in cultural concepts that would better resonate for English speakers. The result, he believes, is a book with a distinctly different character. Different, but no less fascinating.

**Tamburri Named Distinguished Professor**

**CONGRATULATIONS** are due ANTHONY JULIAN TAMBURRI (European Languages), dean of QC’s John D. Calandra Italian American Institute: Over the summer, the CUNY Board of Trustees named him a Distinguished Professor, effective September 1. Author of 14 books and editor of 20, Tamburri is an internationally acclaimed scholar in the fields of Italian and Italian American Studies. In his eight years as dean of the Calandra Institute, he has dramatically increased its public presence and extended its academic profile to include faculty exchange and research projects in Italy. Under his leadership, the institute launched an annual international conference, two book series, and a peer-reviewed social science journal, the *Italian American Review*.

“I am both honored and humbled to be recognized as a Distinguished Professor by the City University of New York,” said Tamburri, who is now the fifteenth distinguished professor at the college. “What makes this truly special is, first of all, that it has its origins at the level of peer evaluation—my colleagues at Queens College. That the nomination was then reconsidered and approved by a university-wide board of trustees is due to the tireless efforts of our colleagues at the Calandra Institute.”

“Over the summer, the CUNY Board of Trustees [named] Julian Tamburri as a Distinguished Professor in the College of Staten Island,” said President Tomás Regalado. “We are proud to welcome him to this ranks of our College’s most accomplished and well-regarded scholars. His achievements and contributions to our University are inspirational to our students and an inspiration to the many in our community who study Italian and Italian American culture.”

The nomination of Tamburri is part of a larger effort to recognize the contributions of faculty members to their fields of study. In recent years, the University has recognized other distinguished professors, including Distinguished Professor of Italian and Italian American Studies at the College of Staten Island.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 9**
TEACHING IN VIETNAM – from page 6

The selection process begins in January with typically 40–45 applicants for the six internships. “We try to push for education students, TESOL, linguistics; they can be graduate or undergraduate,” says Szelzak, who is uniquely qualified to work with the program: As an undergraduate, he was among the first group from QC to make the Vietnam trip.

SEAMEO funds much of the cost, including housing, a daily $20 stipend for expenses, and complimentary weekend trips to destinations such as the Mui Ne resort area and the Mekong Delta. QC partially subsidizes airfare.

“I believe this is the first international internship for Queens College that’s a paid internship,” explains Gruber. “It’s very different from a study abroad program where you’re paying to go abroad. This program pays you to go to another country where you’re working and living with the people.

“It’s also a value-added for ELI,” she continues, “because the interns have to tutor students in our ELI classes in preparation for going.” Interns have to prepare 30 lessons before they go; Gruber says they are creating a database of the most successful lessons.

This year, interns were required to check in with weekly progress reports. “It’s an email, very informal, very conversational,” says Szelzak. “We want to know if they’re healthy, what are they teaching, did they go on any weekend trips.”

“Also,” notes Gruber, “there is a SEAMO requirement that the interns must visit the museum devoted to the Vietnam War, as well as some of the tunnels used by North Vietnamese troops during the conflict. But their insistence is very gentle. It’s a very polite culture.”

ELI forged another significant cultural link on the opposite side of the globe this past summer when Associate ELI Director Lorraine Smith taught an intensive two-week professional development workshop for professors at the National University of Mongolia (NUM). The groundwork for this was laid by members of QC’s administration and faculty in visits to the region in recent years.

“Donna had the idea of sending someone to do a workshop as a piece of an ongoing collaboration,” says Smith.

Approximately 54 teachers were recruited for the program by NUM from across a wide variety of disciplines. Another 12 teachers joined during the first few days of the program.

“The way I set up the program was by picking college-level content that they had not taught,” explains Smith. “So it was a level playing field; everything was new and hopefully fresh and definitely different from what they usually teach.”

To further the relationship with NUM, two professors were awarded a scholarship by Gruber to enroll in ELI this fall.

“One of the women who’s coming was my helper, my translator, my assistant, my everything,” says Smith, who notes that all the participants in her program were reasonably fluent in English.

QC People

JOSE ANADON (Biology) participated in an international study of ecological damage to grasslands, funded by the National Academies Keck Futures Initiative and the National Science Foundation. In a comparative study of the United States and Argentina, Anadon joined researchers from Arizona State and McGill Universities in evaluating the impacts of invasive trees and shrubs on lands used for pasture and other purposes. The findings were published in August in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

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In Memoriam

Distinguished Professor of Chemistry ROBERT BITTMAN passed away on October 1 after a prolonged battle with cancer.

A native of Queens, he grew up in Forest Hills. Following his graduation from high school at the age of 16, he came to Queens College and received his degree in chemistry in 1962. He went on to the University of California at Berkeley, where he obtained his PhD in 1965, and then went to the Max Planck Institute in Göttingen, Germany, to work with Nobel laureate Manfred Eigen.

Upon his return to the US in 1966, Bob became an assistant professor at QC, rising through the ranks to being named distinguished professor in 1988. He has been a member of the doctoral faculty of the CUNY programs in both chemistry and biochemistry since coming to Queens.

Bob was other scientists’ ideal collaborator as it was generally known that his approach to solving chemistry problems was the best approach available. His research output was spectacular, with over 320 papers in refereed journals, 64 book chapters, and 19 patents (more are currently in preparation and pending), and continuous external support for his research from 1967 to the present. He also served on the editorial board of Organic Reactions for many years.

In his last days, Bob’s major concern was not for himself; he was totally realistic about his situation and the process of life. His concern was that his students would continue to be well served. We mourn the passing of a great scientist, scholar, and colleague.
Using China to Teach about China

The QC community knows William Daghlian as a former adjunct at the Aaron Copland School of Music, where he taught piano. But he is also an art collector who specializes in Chinese ceramics and sculpture spanning approximately 5,000 years. In 2012, in response to the Year of China—the inaugural program in QC’s annual “Year of” series—he donated 1,650 pieces to the college. Sixty of those items will go on public view November 19, when Highlights of The Daghlian Collection of Chinese Art opens at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum.

“All are welcome to the opening reception that night at 6 to 8 pm.”

“Visitors can scarcely gain a better introduction to Chinese culture than by examining its works of art,” says Distinguished Professor Morris Rossabi (History). “In addition to their beauty, they often reveal a great deal about Chinese values and beliefs.”

Specifically, Highlights of The Daghlian Collection uses ceramics, jade, pottery, and wood objects to document Chinese history and culture from the Stone Age (ca. 6,000–2,500 BCE) to the Ming dynasty (ca. 1368–1644). Like the website (http://daghlian.qc.cuny.edu/) created for study of the collection, the show is organized in chronological sections.

“My hope is that students, faculty, and the public will learn from it and enjoy the pieces,” says Daghlian. “If others can learn from my collection, research further, and contribute new perspectives, it will be just wonderful.” As it happens, QC students have been involved in this project since its inception; a companion exhibition in the upstairs gallery presents ceramics that students, alumni, and faculty created in response to the collection.

Free public programs will accompany the show, which closes on January 10, 2015. Daghlian will talk about collecting on November 19. Rossabi will give a lecture about the Yuan dynasty and the Mongols on December 3; at noon a week later, Marleen Kassel (Chinese history) will discuss the collection. Sin-ying Ho (Ceramics) and GTM Director Amy Winter will lead gallery tours. For more information, please email Marleen. Kassel@qc.cuny.edu.
MacArthur Fellow Makes Campus Appearance

“Poems are not read only re-read,” says poet and University of Pittsburgh professor Terrance Hayes, a recipient this year of a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (the so-called genius grant). The QC community had the opportunity to see Hayes, the author of four published collections—including *Lighthead*, which won the 2010 National Book Award for Poetry—when he shared his work at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum on October 8. The free event, which was co-sponsored by the MFA Program in Creative Writing and Literary Translation and the Poetry Society of America, also featured Hayes’s U. of Pittsburgh colleague Lynn Emanuel. The poetry re-reading was followed by a Q-and-A session and book signing.

QC Explores the Rainbow Nation

After focusing on countries in Asia and South America, QC’s signature “Year of” initiative—which presents multidisciplinary programming about the history, culture, and contributions of a single nation—is moving to a new continent with the Year of South Africa. This semester’s events include a soccer match, a student dance concert featuring choreography by Sduduzo Ka-Mbili, and a film series. For the latest listings, visit www.qc.cuny.edu/yosa.

New QC Shop Clicks with Patrons

If you want to purchase official Queens College apparel and accessories, you’ve got a surprise in store: The QC Shop is now open for online business at www.thecunystore.com/queens_college. As the URL suggests, the shop is part of a venue that gives virtual shelf space to every school in the CUNY system. Merchandise ranges from T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hoodies to key chains, office supplies, and folding chairs, all featuring the distinctive QC logo. For motorists, there’s a highway safety kit that includes jumper cables, a siphon, a blanket, a flashlight, and a tire gauge. What could be more appropriate for—or from—people affiliated with a commuter campus?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11
In Memoriam

Professor Emeritus of Romance Languages FRANK ROSENGARTEN died on August 4. Before his retirement in 1992, he taught Italian at the college and comparative literature at the CUNY Graduate Center.

Rosengarten, who received his PhD in Italian from Columbia University in the 1950s, taught in QC’s Romance Languages Department from 1967 to 1992, following earlier appointments at Adelphi University and Case Western. Remarkably, following his retirement, he obtained a second PhD in French at the CUNY Graduate Center with a dissertation on young Marcel Proust.

Rosengarten’s scholarship was at the intersection of Italian culture and political thought; indeed, he was deeply concerned with social justice. To that end, in 1983 he co-founded the Research Group on Socialism and Democracy and served as editor of the group’s journal from 1984 to 1992. His books include the two-volume edition of Antonio Gramsci’s Letters from Prison (1994) and The Writings of the Young Marcel Proust (1885–1900): An Ideological Critique (2001). This past June he celebrated with family and friends the publication of his two most recent books, The Revolutionary Marxism of Antonio Gramsci (Brill, 2014) and Through Partisan Eyes: A Memoir (Firenze University Press, 2014), regaling all with reflections on his life, career, friendships, and encounters.

Frank is survived by his sister, Jo; his children, Dan and Lydia; and several grandchildren.
PEOPLE IN THE MEDIA – from page 11

Relations) … ULDIS ROZE (Biology, Emeritus) described the ferocity of long-tailed carnivores called fishers for a story at nationalgeographic.com … JOSEPH SCIARRA’S (Calandra Institute) role in the acquisition by the Fenimore Art Museum of an ornate work box created by an Italian bootblack in the 1930s and once displayed at the Museum of Modern Art was reported in the New York Times … In a story at sciencemag.org, FARAH TAHAA (Psychology) described the study, of which she is the corresponding author, that reveals evidence of a strong association between anxiety disorders and the prevalence and incidence of ulcers … The Queens Gazette reported ANTHONY TAMBURRI’S (European Languages) being named QC’s 15th distinguished professor …

JOHN WALDMAN (Biology) co-authored a column in the Providence Journal about how dams severely inhibit the ability of fish to migrate to their traditional spawning grounds … Southernstare.ie described the efforts of NATHALIS WAMBA (Educ. & Comm. Progs.) as a Fulbright Specialist Scholar at University College Cork in Ireland to advance an initiative to develop the knowledge and skills of community healthcare workers in Malawi … A Business News Network report concerning Amazon’s dispute with publisher Hachette over the pricing of e-books quoted DANA WEINBERG (Sociology) … Huffingtonpost.com published an interview with MYRA ZARNOWSKI (Elementary Ed.) concerning the Common Core State Standards for grades K-12.

EVENTS IN THE MEDIA

The inaugural Louis Armstrong International Music Festival presented by the Kupferberg Center generated stories in the Daily News, Queens Chronicle, Queens Gazette, and at theforunnewsgroup.com. The Queens Gazette and broadwayworld.com featured stories about the 20th anniversary of the Armstrong Archives at QC, and the New York Times offered a substantial feature about the archives and the Armstrong House Museum. … The study conducted by the QC Office of Community Studies to explore redevelopment of the abandoned Rockaway Beach Rail Line was reported in the Queens Chronicle, Queens Gazette, and at theforunnewsgroup.com … Sen. Tony Avella’s securing of a $2 million grant for the renovation of labs in Remsen Hall (above) was reported by the Queens Chronicle and at theforunnewsgroup.com … The TimesLedger and Queens Gazette reported Godwin-Ternbach Museum’s acquisition of seven color silkscreen prints by Andy Warhol … A report by Riverkeeper in collaboration with scientists from QC and Columbia University’s Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory on the poor quality of water in the Hudson River was featured at gothamgazette.com and allmediany.com. …

STUDENTS IN THE MEDIA

A current and a recent graduate of the MFA in Creative Writing and Literary Translation program have just won awards. ERIC M. B. BECKER received the PEN/Heim Grant for his translation of Selected Stories by Mozambican Mia Couto. RAJIV MOHABIR ’13 was awarded the Four Way Books Intro Prize for his poetry manuscript The Taxidermist’s Cut. … The experience of NICOLINA DAPILMA, an immigrant from Togo who was recruited by CUNY to enroll tuition-free in its Accelerated Study in Associate Programs, was highlighted in a story in the Chronicle of Higher Education … A story about CUNY’s 2014 valedictorians at jewishvoice.com included PATRYK PERKOWSKI, who majored in mathematics and economics … Eagletribune.com reported on junior JESSICA WIGGINS who, with other QC students, created a Global Brigades chapter to send volunteers abroad to assist medical professionals in countries in need of assistance. Wiggins and members of the QC chapter went to Ghana.

L–r: Dean of Math & Natural Sciences Robert Engel, Senator Tony Avella, and former Interim President Evangelos Gizis celebrating the awarding of a $2 million grant to help renovate the science labs in Remsen Hall.

Andy Warhol, Sitting Bull, 1986, silkscreen print, on view through November 1 at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum exhibit Andy Warhol’s Photo-Aesthetic and Beyond.