Academic Support Center

RENOVATIONS CELEBRATED

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Monday, April 28, to celebrate completion of major renovations to the Academic Support Center. These changes should make the Center “more functional and welcoming to students,” says director Howard Kleinmann. The work includes everything from moving walls to upgrading furniture. A new Writing Center replaces the former Workshop, with the goal of “creating a state-of-the-art writing center to address writing-across-the-curriculum needs of our students.” The center provides numerous services, including tutoring, testing, and a multimedia learning center where students can hone their academic skills. “The college has made a very tangible effort in demonstrating that it’s serious about servicing the needs of our students,” Kleinmann says.

Accounting Students Win Big

FIRST AT KPMG COMPETITION

A Queens College team of students recently won the Northeast KPMG Accounting Case Study Competition held in Boston, defeating Baruch, Pace, Bentley, UMass, and Illinois. The group had to prepare a case concerning drilling rights for the oil and gas industry. “These students worked very hard to achieve this goal, primarily under the guidance of Professor David Erlach,” noted Accounting chair Israel Blumenfrucht. “Our department gave them full support and we are truly proud of them.”

Celebrating a victory: Prof. Israel Blumenfrucht (l) and students Joe Rios, David Feliciano, Daniel Villa, Nazir Naibzada, Mohit Nayar, and Prof. David Erlach

From left: Ann Cohen, dean of academic support; Judith Summerfield, former dean of undergraduate studies, now at 80th Street; Howard Kleinmann; President Muyskens; and Thomas Salemi (FCS), who was responsible for design and project management.

ANDREW BEVERIDGE and SUSAN WEBER (Sociology) were cited in an April 13 New York Times article concerning New York and L.A. They noted there were many similarities between the two, including that the more affluent white residents live beyond the core of the city, leaving the center to poorer, nonwhite foreign-born residents . . .

The friendship between Queens College Evening Readings Director JOE CUOMO (English) and author Jamaica Kincaid was cited in an April 4 article in Newday. Kincaid appeared at the college on April 8 to read from her work. . .

Do you find offers from phone companies confusing? You should, said DAVID GABEL (Economics) in the April 9 Atlanta Journal-Constitution. “They’re intentionally designed to be confusing to consumers in order to minimize the amount of price comparison. If everybody offered a homogenous product, customers would always select the product with the lower price” . . .

An article by AMITAV GHOSH (Comparative Literature), “The Anglophone Empire,” appeared in the April 7 New Yorker. Ghosh was also recently praised in India Today for writing “some of the most brainy pages in the post-Rushdie boom of Indian writing in English” . . .

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Summer Theatre Camps

Once again, the Center for Preparatory Studies in Music will host programs for children this summer. From June 30 to July 31 it will offer the Orchestra & Chamber Music Camp to violinists, violists, cellists, and double bassists between the ages of 11 and 18. Students will perform in a string orchestra and in chamber groups to improve their musicianship and enhance their understanding of the literature. In the final week, they will perform in Gala Festival Concerts. Classes meet Monday–Thursday, 9 am–3 pm.

The Music Theatre Summer Workshop, for children entering fifth through tenth grades next September, will run from July 14 to August 7. Students will take classes in vocal technique, dance, performing a song and audition repertoire, acting, and scene study, culminating in a Showcase performance open to the public. Classes will meet Monday–Thursday, 9 am-3 pm, with optional field trips on Fridays.

July 7 to August 14 are the dates for the Summer Jazz Workshop for young professionals and children 12 and older. Workshops instruct students in numerous jazz styles; each day’s schedule includes three ensemble rehearsal periods, a midday performance forum, master classes, jazz theory and improvisation, and jazz listening. Workshops finish with a concert at LeFrak Hall. Classes will meet Monday–Thursday, 9:30 am-3:30 pm, in two three-week sessions; students may register for one or both sessions.

All three programs will be held at the Copland School of Music. For information about admission, contact the CPSM office at 3888.

Reading Room Open 24 Hours for Finals

The Rosenthal Library’s Level 2 Reading Room will provide extended hours during exams, thanks to the support of the Auxiliary Enterprises Association. The Reading Room will be open 24 hours a day from Thursday, May 15 at 7:30 am through 6 pm on Friday, May 23. Rosenthal Library service hours remain the same: Monday-Thursday, 9 am-10 pm; Friday, 9 am-5 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 12 noon-6 pm.

Commencement Update

Commencement will take place at 9 am on Thursday, May 29 on the quad. It will be followed by 15 divisional and departmental ceremonies and receptions. Baccalaureate will be held on Tuesday, May 27 at 7 pm in Colden Auditorium. Full information on commencement is posted at www.qc.edu/graduation. Running a commencement-related event? Post it online at the college’s web calendar by sending an e-mail to events@qc.edu.

Presidential Roundtable

Nancy Hemmes (Psychology) spoke on “Comparative Psychology of Time Perception” at the April 28 roundtable. The series concludes May 14 when Martin Braun (Math) will explain “Why John Quincy Adams Would Have Failed the CUNY Math Assessment Test.” For a reservation, call 5559.

Sanjek and Ponsot Awarded Guggenheim Fellowships

ROGER SANJEK (Anthropology) has been named a Guggenheim Fellow. The award, which recognizes both distinguished achievement and a promise of exceptional continued creativity, includes a $35,000 grant in support of completion of a book on the Gray Panthers. Sanjek is already well known for his research on ethnicity and race in Queens. From 1982 to 2002, he headed the New Immigrants and Old Americans Project, which produced a large body of novel research. His next book will draw heavily on his personal knowledge of the Gray Panthers from 1976 until 1987. Beginning as an applied and advocacy anthropologist at one of its free clinics in Berkeley, Sanjek went on to hold local and national office in the organization.

The Gray Panthers are committed to many social causes, including equity for old people. Founded in 1970 by Maggie Kuhn, the group grew dramatically in the seventies, suffered an internal crisis in the eighties, declined in the nineties, and recently began a comeback. Sanjek believes that the emergence and legacy of the Gray Panthers hold increased relevance for today, with the graying of America and aging of its activist baby boomers.

MARIE PONSOT (English, Emerita) also received a Guggenheim fellowship for her poetry. Several years ago Ponsot won the National Book Critics Circle Award for her collection The Bird Catcher. Her most recent volume of poems, Springing, was published last year to near-unanimous praise. She is also the author of The Green Dark and Admit Impediment.
Research on Microbes by Engel and Students Receiving Wide Coverage

An article in the April 2 edition of the online journal NewScientist.com has led to a blizzard of inquiries about research performed by ROBERT ENGEL (Chemistry) and two of his former students. Journalists are fascinated with the researchers’ work on new techniques for killing microbes. Bandages and other medical materials—even everyday clothing—could be manufactured using chemically modified surfaces to kill microbes.

Engel’s team has modified the surfaces of carbohydrate-based materials such as cotton cloth, gauze, wood, paper, and bulk cellulose, giving them both antibacterial and antifungal properties. The modified surfaces remain effective even after being washed.

Science reporters in Europe seem to be especially interested in this work. In the last few weeks Engel has done interviews with journalists from Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, and France. Here in the States, he did radio interviews for CBS in Los Angeles and NPR’s “Microbeworld.”

Engel worked with two of his former students on this research: JaimeLee Iolani Cohen ’98, now an assistant professor of chemistry at Pace University, and Karin Melkonian, currently assistant professor of biology at Long Island University-C.W. Post.

Because of the relative ease of the Engel/Cohen/Melkonian method of creating antimicrobial properties, the research has been called “elegant in its simplicity” and is expected to have countless applications. To see the article, go to www.newscientist.com and type “Engel” in the Search News box.

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM HAMOVITCH William Hamovitch, a longtime member of the Department of Economics, provost from 1977 to 1986, and Acting President in 1985, died on April 20 at the age of 80.

Born in Montreal in 1922, Hamovitch received his bachelor's degree in economics from McGill University, where he was a Bronfman Fellow. He later earned an M.P.A. and M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University. He joined the college’s Economics Department in 1953, serving as its chairman from 1965 to 1977. Hamovitch, who specialized in the study of public finance and municipal economics, was the author of several books, including Conflict and Stability in Labor Relations and Employment and Occupation Projections for Nassau-Suffolk.

Hamovitch left the college in 1986 to accept the post of provost at William Paterson University in New Jersey. He served in this capacity until 1990, when he returned to teaching in the university’s Department of Economics and Finance until his retirement in June 1992.

SAMUEL J. LEFRAK Samuel J. LeFran, an advocate of affordable housing who built Lefrak City in central Queens, died April 16 at the age of 85. As chairman of the Lefrak Organization, he oversaw one of the largest private building firms in the world, constructing close to 200,000 units of middle-income housing throughout the city.

Besides his work as a builder, he was the U.S. delegate to the International Conference on Housing and Urban Development in Geneva; a special consultant for the State Department; a member of the U.S. National Energy Council; New York City Landmarks Preservation Commissioner; and a member of the New York City Task Force on Housing.

Although not a graduate, LeFran was a strong supporter of the college and a trustee on the board of the Queens College Foundation.

He endowed the Hope and Pride Through Music Program at the college’s Center for Preparatory Studies in Music, which awards scholarships to musically gifted youngsters who cannot afford private instruction. In recognition of his generosity, the concert hall in the Music Building was named the Samuel J. and Ethel LeFran Concert Hall in 1993.

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article in the Christian Science Monitor examining gains of the black community in the past 25 years, ANDREW HACKER (Political Science) is quoted as saying that “Despite all the talk of the creation of a black middle class, the relative position of the black community to white America has not changed that much” . . . Actress in the House, a novel by JOSEPH MCELROY (English, Emeritus), was reviewed in the April 20 New York Times Book Review, where it was hailed as “this most singular and stylistically uncompromising of novels” . . . President JAMES MUYSKENS and MARIO DELAPINA (Development) appeared in a NY1 segment April 17 and 18 on Samuel LeFran. They spoke of the philanthropist’s generosity toward the college (see this page). . . . ALICE SARDELL (Urban Studies) was profiled in the April 4 Newsday, which highlighted her work on how children are serviced by the U.S. health care system.
Since its founding in 1979, the Queens College Center for Environmental Teaching and Research at Caumsett has opened the doors to discovery for 200,000 students from the greater New York area.

“I am now meeting teachers who tell me that they vividly remember their own class trips to Caumsett years ago, when they were school children,” says Peter Schmidt, director of the center.

Located on 1,600 acres of state parkland near Huntington on Long Island’s north shore, Caumsett is a “wilderness classroom” in the environment and natural sciences for students, grades 1-12, from New York City and Long Island.

In 2002 alone, Caumsett directly served more than 10,000 students and teachers through its overnight and day programs, summer camps, and outreach visits to classrooms. Schools range from the elite Friends Academy in Locust Valley to public schools in all five boroughs of New York City. One elementary school in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, has been sending its students for more than 18 years, says Schmidt.

The center also serves as a research facility and hands-on training program for students enrolled here and at other local colleges—our region’s future teachers, biologists, geologists, and environmental scientists.

The setting is magnificent: seashore, cliffs, salt marshes, meadow, wood-lands, and ponds—one of the most diverse habitats on the East Coast, teeming with a rich variety of plants and animals. Here students, guided by knowledgeable naturalists, experience wildlife up close—including Caumsett’s resident owls, hawks, and a 15-foot python.

The Caumsett Center itself, the 64-room mansion of Marshall Field III now on the National Historic Register, has been remodeled to accommodate dormitories for overnight visits, as well as laboratories and classrooms.

Caumsett also serves as an ideal training site for students and teachers involved in the international GLOBE program, which was launched by the National Science Foundation and federal agencies to improve the teaching and learning of science. GLOBE participants take specific environmental measurements and send their data to an Internet site accessed by scientists worldwide. As a GLOBE training partner for southern New York since 2001, Queens College has trained teachers from nearly 70 schools. The ultimate objective is to train 10,000 teachers.

Through GLOBE and the many activities of the Caumsett center, Queens College is helping to play a key role in improving science education throughout the region.
5 MON
PHYSICS COLLOQUIUM: “GLASS TRANSITIONS & MELTING IN THIN POLYMER FILMS,” Jonathan Sokolov, SUNY-Stony Brook; Science Bldg. B326, 12 noon.

QC BRASS ENSEMBLE, David Jolley, director, Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 12 noon.

6 TUE
CHAMBER MUSIC LIVE: “CELEBRATING LEONARD BERNSTEIN,” Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 10 am (for info call 3802).

7 WED
HEALTH FAIR, EXHIBITS AND SCREENINGS, Student Union, 4th flr., 10 am-3 pm.


OPERA STUDIO, Doris Lang Kosloff, director, Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 12 noon.

GALLERY TALK, Colleen Randall, Dartmouth College, former student of Clinton Hill, Godwin-Ternbach Museum, 12 noon.


SEMINAR: MARCUS BORG’S “READING THE BIBLE AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME,” Alan Bentz-Letts, moderator; Student Union 203, 7:30 pm (for info/to register, call 261-1550).

8 THU
ELECTRONIC MUSIC STUDIO CONCERT, Hubert Howe, director, Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 12 noon.

QUEENS PHILHARMONIA, Dong-Hyun Kim, director, Elena Rojas, violin; Gorecki’s Symphony No. 3; Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 8 pm.

9 FRI
MA IN PERFORMANCE RECITAL, Hye Seon Lee, violin, Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 1 pm.

LECTURE: “THIRTY YEARS OF IMAGES BY CORKY LEE,” Corky Lee, Asian American/Asian Research Institute, 25 West 43d Street, Manhattan, 5 pm. For info visit www.aaari.info

10 SAT
CONFERENCE: ITALIAN AMERICANS AND EARLY ROCK & ROLL, with Mary O’Leary (née Aiese) of Reparata & the Delrons, Vito Picone of The Elegants, Nick Santamaria of The Capris; Student Union, Room 208, 1:30 pm (admission free)

QC CHORAL SOCIETY: HAYDN’S CREATION, James John, director, Golden Auditorium, 8 pm ($15, $13 with discount).

12 MON
NOTA BENE ENSEMBLE, David Jolley, director, Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 12 noon.

PHYSICS COLLOQUIUM: “ELECTRON TUNNELING & PROTON TRANSFERS IN PHOTOSYNTHETIC ENERGY STORAGE,” Marilyn Gunner, City College; Science Bldg. B326, 12 noon.

13 TUE
CHAMBER MUSIC LIVE: NEW YORK GRAND OPERA, Vincent LaSelva, director, Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 10 am (for info, call 3802).

JEWISH LECTURE SERIES: “IS EGALITARIANISM HERESY? RETHINKING GENDER & THE MARGINS OF JUDAISM,” Shaul Magid, Jewish Theological Seminary; Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 7:30 pm.

14 WED

PRESIDENTIAL ROUNDTABLE: “WHY JOHN QUINCY ADAMS WOULD HAVE FAILED THE CUNY MATH ASSESSMENT TEST,” Martin Braun (Math); Dining Hall, Patio Rm. South, 12 noon (RSVP to 5559).

SEMINAR: MARCUS BORG’S “READING THE BIBLE AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME,” Alan Bentz-Letts, moderator; Student Union 203, 7:30 pm (for info/to register, call 261-1550).

15 THU
EXHIBIT OPENING: LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME: LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS FOUR WIVES, curated by Peggy Alexander; Armstrong Archives, Rosenthal 332, 10 am (through Sept. 18).

QC VOCAL ENSEMBLE, James John, director, works by Monteverdi and Bach; Music Bldg., LeFrak Concert Hall, 12 noon.

Exhibits
LOUIS ARMSTRONG IN CONCERT. Through May 8.

LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME: LOUIS ARMSTRONG & HIS FOUR WIVES. Starting May 15. Armstrong Archives. Rosenthal 332. Mon-Fri, 10 am-5 pm, Sat. by appointment (for info, call 3670).


LEAH JACOBSON & KATHERINE PARKER: STATES OF UNION (SCULPTURE & PAINTINGS). Through July 16, QC Art Center, Rosenthal, 6th flr. Mon-Thu, 9 am-8 pm, Fri, 9 am-5 pm when classes are in session.

To Our Readers: Please submit items for FYI at least two weeks in advance to Public Relations, Kiely 1310, 5590. Items longer than one short paragraph must be submitted on disk or via e-mail to mmatteo@qc.edu.