



SPRING-SUMMER 2008

Diplomatic Overtures

**Katherine Greene '78
Makes Music in North Korea**



THE BLOB

KIMIKO HAHN

In 1896—nearly fifty years after Melville’s masterpiece,
three years before Freud’s *Dream*
and my grandpa’s journey across the Pacific—
a storm shoved seven tons of white blob
onto a St. Augustine shore:
twenty-one monstrous feet of glistening flesh—
a surviving archaist or alien
or devil of the deep.
Chunks were immediately shipped to the nascent Smithsonian
for display then storage;
until, one hundred years later, a Florida scientist
examined the same specimen, as well as
new blobs floated up from the depths—
declaring the cryptozoological curios merely
the remains of large cetaceans.
The narrative of the stupefying has closed with
nothing more than pure collagen
washed up from the ocean’s unconscious. *Sad to say.*



Author of seven books of poetry, Kimiko Hahn is a Distinguished Professor in the MFA writing program at Queens College. She has received numerous honors, such as the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize, the American Book Award, and the Shelley Memorial Prize. In recognition of her accomplishments in American literature, she just was given the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry. The Voelcker prize is issued in even-numbered years to an American poet who fulfills early promise by maturing with each successive volume of work.



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Cover: Katherine Greene (courtesy Chris Lee);
background, North Korean children perform
for the members of the New York Philharmonic
(courtesy Reuters).



Civil Rights Alumni

QC’s contributions to the civil rights movement of the 1960s was the subject when (above, l-r) Michael Wenger ’65, Ronald Pollack ’65, Office of Student Activities staffer Helen Hendricks, Rep. Gary Ackerman ’65, and I met in the congressman’s office in Washington, DC, this past winter.

Like many other QC students, we participated in civil rights activities, such as the South Jamaica Student Help project; freedom school in Prince Edward County, Virginia, in 1963; the July 1964 Campus Freedom Fast; voter registration and freedom schools during Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964; and church rebuilding initiatives in Mississippi the next year. QC students also chartered a bus to go to the 1963 March on Washington where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous “I Have A Dream” speech. In addition to our civil rights work, we took part in QC student government and newspaper activities, as well as in the QC Chapter of CORE. Hendricks assisted and encouraged us.

After graduation, each of us brought our social values and political commitments into successful, meaningful careers in public service and activism. Wenger is acting vice president of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies; Pollack is executive director of Families USA. Hendricks retired from QC in 1992 as pre-professional advisor and assistant to the dean of students. Ackerman serves New York’s fifth Congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives,

and I recently retired as executive director of a union, CIR/SEIU.

In recent discussions with a number of faculty members, we talked about finding and reestablishing contacts with other QC civil rights activists, collecting and preserving their archives and oral histories at the college, and finding ways to bring this proud history to the attention of current students. Two courses will be taught during 2008–2009; in addition, the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement, and QC’s role will be explored in events on campus. We also hope to find ways to fund and start a collection of personal archival materials at the library.

If you are interested in learning more, sharing your story, or participating in any of these activities, please contact me at qc-crm@earthlink.net.

Mark Levy ’64
New York, NY

Calling All Former Students of John Loret

Dale Kaplowitz ’74 and Nancy Sing-Bock ’77 are putting together a special book to mark the 80th birthday of former QC Prof. John Loret (see Easter Island story in Fall ’07 *Q* magazine). They request you send any vignettes you might have of courses, experiences, or trips you have taken with Dr. Loret to:

Nancy Sing-Bock, PS 51,
520 West 45th St., New York, NY 10036
email: nbock@schools.nyc.gov

Send your letters to *Q* Magazine, Queens College, Kiely Hall 1307, Flushing, NY 11367 or email John.Cassidy@qc.cuny.edu.

BioBlitz team



The recent BioBlitz (see Fall ’07 *Q*) uncovered the creatures shown on these pages, such as this wood frog.

QUEENS COLLEGE IS NY

College’s Strategic Plan in Step with University and State Goals



Nancy Bareis

Noting that feedback indicates a “good consensus” within the QC community over the goals set out in the college’s new Strategic Plan, Sue Henderson (VP Institutional Advancement) says the college is ready to take the next step. “What we must do now,” she says, “is to take the three major goals of the plan—advance our academic programs, build a culture of community, and solidify our financial foundation—and create a plan to

implement them.” This new plan will have four parts: identifying specific, measurable goals; developing a timeline for their completion; determining the resources needed; and describing the activities necessary to reach the goals. Henderson points out that there are significant areas of convergence between QC’s Strategic Plan and some of the recommendations recently made in the report of the Governor’s Commission on Higher Education, including the hiring of more “stellar faculty” and the need for colleges to be more entrepreneurial. On the topic of entrepreneurship, Henderson notes that “There will be a state fund that colleges will compete for. What needs to come out of this grant money is a product that will drive the

economic development of the state. So we all need to be thinking what kinds of things we might do that would benefit our community.” As an example of responding to the requests of the community, Henderson cites a proposed master’s program that combines business knowledge with computer know-how. The commission’s report also addressed the idea of “the Compact.” “CUNY was the first university system to do it,” Henderson says, referring to Chancellor Matthew Goldstein’s 2005 Compact for Public Higher Education. “The Compact says that for every dollar we need for new initiatives, we’ll ask the state for 20 cents of it and we will get the rest by being more efficient, increasing tuition, or raising more private funds. “A major goal of the Strategic Plan,” she continues, “is for the college to diversify its funding streams, which means we have to think like entrepreneurs. We must also raise more external funds. We have just finished a \$100 million campaign, and the Strategic Plan calls for a \$400 million campaign over the course of 10 to 15 years, a goal that is supported by the QC Foundation. The foundation has also recognized that we must grow our endowment. We’re currently at about \$36 million, and the foundation wants to increase it to \$100 million.” Henderson also stressed the importance of the college’s role in implementing the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system (the updating of CUNY’s computer systems) with respect to fulfilling the goals of the Strategic Plan. “Technology shows up everywhere in our plan,” she observes. “It is the piece that allows people to be more connected—whether through the plasma boards, the kiosks, the Web, or, eventually, an Intranet.” An essential element in QC’s selection by CUNY as a “vanguard” ERP college is that the college has made significant technological strides in its business processes and in the classroom. Henderson cites, in particular, the contributions of Provost Evangelos Gizis in creating new academic structures within the ERP. “The CUNY people are very complimentary of our vanguard team,” she affirms. “They know we’re getting things done.”

Schutzman Center for Entrepreneurship Now Open for Business

Len Schutzman’s dream of a center to capture the entrepreneurial spirit waiting to be tapped at his alma mater and the borough of Queens was realized this spring with the opening of the Schutzman Entrepreneurship Center at Queens College. It’s been three years since the former PepsiCo executive and venture capitalist organized QC’s first conference on entrepreneurship, convening a panel of his friends and associates to demonstrate the kind of talent he could harness to help people with marketable ideas find the means to market them. Now, his enterprise has a permanent office on campus in Alumni Hall (the former J Building). The dedication of the Schutzman Center took place on May 2, at which time businessman Don Chang, founder and CEO of the Forever 21 chain of fashion stores, received the college’s Distinguished Entrepreneur Award. Schutzman, who graduated from the college in 1967 with an economics degree, was instrumental in the creation of QC’s Business and Liberal Arts program. He is currently an executive professor of business administration at the University of Rochester and a trustee of the Queens College Foundation.



Nancy Bareis

Taking care of business at the opening of the Schutzman Center, from left: Councilman John Liu, Assemblywoman Ellen Young, Vice President Sue Henderson, Don Chang, Len Schutzman, President James Muyskens, Queens Borough President Helen M. Marshall, Bloomberg administration staffer Andrea Shapiro Davis, and Social Sciences Dean Elizabeth Hendrey.

William Green ’49 Honored for 50 Years of Teaching at the College

In the same week that the Ford Motor Company introduced the Edsel, Bill Green began his teaching career at Queens College. Fortunately for QC’s English Department, unlike the Edsel, Green was built to last. When he arrived at the Flushing campus to begin his teaching career in the fall of 1957, Green was actually returning to Queens College. A 1949 graduate, he had begun music studies in 1944 only to have them interrupted by a military gig: During World War II, he played clarinet in the Navy Band. Among his assignments was playing in the funeral procession accompanying the body of President Franklin Roosevelt as it was transported by carriage from Union Station to the White House. At last fall’s Faculty & Staff Assembly, as he received the first Annual Queens College Special Service Award in recognition of his long tenure with the English Department, Green confided to the LeFrak Hall audience that, had he been a better musician, he might have spent the last 50 years teaching music rather than English. But, he explained, when your father is a virtuoso clarinet player in the NBC Symphony under the baton of Arturo Toscanini, it’s a very high standard to meet. President James Muyskens observed in his introductory re-



Nancy Bareis

marks that as the college’s longest-serving faculty member, Green has set his own high standard as “a popular and well-respected teacher and fine scholar.” Muyskens also praised the honoree for his service to the greater Queens College community as “one of the founders and guiding spirits of the Friends of the Queens College Library” and as an instrumental figure in creating the position of Poet Laureate for the Borough of Queens. Accepting his award to vigorous applause, Green then acknowledged Oscar James Campbell, his mentor during his graduate English studies at Columbia University, and thanked him for giving him a simile by which he says he’s guided his career: “A college professor is like an athlete who is running a relay race, and he passes on the baton from person to person.” His voice beginning to break, he finished. “And I’ve tried to do that.”



College’s First TV Ad Urged Viewers to “Take the Q”

For six weeks beginning March 31, TV viewers who regularly tuned in to Mets and Yankees games encountered Queens College students asking: “Do you have what it takes?” “If you have what it takes,” they declared, “then take the Q.” The vehicle for this inquiry was Queens College’s first-ever TV ad. “Momentum is building for the college on so many fronts,” says Maria Terrone (Asst. VP Communications). “The time is right

to move to the next level of marketing—getting the word out more widely to those who may not be aware of how wonderful Queens College is. The TV campaign was intended to generate that awareness of the college and to recruit more students. One-fifth of the CUNY Compact funds that we receive through New York State hinges on our increasing our enrollment, so the ad can also help us meet that goal.” The concept for the 30-second spot originated with its producer, Rich Billay (formerly of Video Services), who creatively substituted the Q logo for the word “cue.” “Our students are the stars,” Terrone continues. “They truly represent the college’s diversity and energy. In fact, so many terrific students auditioned that we created two versions of the ad—same script, different mix of people.” Viewers saw these students extolling QC’s great faculty, affordability, and beautiful campus—the ad includes a stunning aerial shot of the Quad. The overall narrator, student Timothy Carney, also notes the college’s selection by the Kaplan/Newsweek *How to Get into College* guide as one of “America’s 25 Hottest Schools” and our perennial inclusion in such ratings guides as the Princeton Review *America’s Best Value Colleges*. But you did not have to be a baseball fan to see the ads, as they also appeared on MTV, NY1, and other stations. “We chose programming targeted to the youth market, their parents, and both, such as the baseball games,” notes Terrone. The ad was broadcast more than 1,000 times, reaching nearly 3 million households via Time Warner Cable in Queens, Manhattan, and Brooklyn, and Cablevision in Nassau and western Suffolk.

A TIME-ly Gift for Future Math Teachers

Two million dollars divided by 10 equals \$200,000. That’s the annual amount TIME 2000—the innovative QC program that prepares undergrads to teach high school math—will get through 2018, courtesy of a generous anonymous donor. “The money will be used to cover student tuition and support operating costs,” says Alice Artzt ’68 (Secondary Education and Youth Services), TIME 2000’s founder and director. Now in its second decade, the program was created as an antidote to the critical shortage of math teachers in local secondary schools. “We get students as freshmen, recruiting them right out of high

school,” observes Artzt. “Then we watch over their education. They form study groups and attend monthly seminars. The retention rate of our graduates is about 95 percent; they don’t leave teaching.” Students in the TIME 2000 Program major in mathematics and minor in secondary education. They work closely with professors and peers and engage in course work, seminars, and special extracurricular activities. Upon graduation and completion of New York State examinations, students are qualified to teach mathematics in grades 7 through 12.



BioBlitz team

Monarch butterflies start out as striped caterpillars before developing the orange and black wings that allow them to migrate south.

The Greening of 65-30 Kissena Boulevard

As part of Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s directive that municipal and other institutions decrease their production of greenhouse gases by 30 percent over the next 10 years, Chancellor Matthew Goldstein named a Task Force on Sustainability with councils at every CUNY school to make campuses green.

“We had already begun this effort,” says Katharine Cobb (VP Finance & Administration), director of the QC Sustainability Council, a 17-member group comprising faculty, students, and staff. “It’s part of our strategic

plan, so discussions and projects along these lines had been initiated.”

Recycling paper, bottles, and cans is a priority Cobb was charged with upon her arrival at QC a year ago. “We just developed a partnership with a company called Royal Recycling Solutions, which will pick up our paper recycling for free,” she says. “Anything over a certain amount we will receive money for.” Other recycling efforts include the disposal of computers and chemicals.

Cobb also notes that the college is using green cleaning products and recycling cooking oil. Building and Grounds is examining the use of organic fertilizers. Reducing electricity usage is another major part of QC’s sustainability efforts. Students’ consumption of paper and ink is likely to drop under a campus-

wide print management system being introduced this summer.

Security and maintenance personnel now drive 12 hybrid electric vehicles, says Cobb, who notes also that QC participates in the Zipcar program, which rents cars by the hour. A loaner bicycle program is also under consideration.

To make sure that no good green idea is overlooked, Cobb says, “We’re going to have a Sustainability Suggestions program with prizes for those who participate.” And demonstrating that members of the QC community are willing to go where no one has gone before in pursuit of a greener campus, Cobb cites a noteworthy development: “B & G tells me they’re experimenting with a flushless toilet.” Now, if only it could play the “Star Trek” theme . . .

Nancy Bareis



Nancy Bareis



College Inaugurates Veterans Support Services

QC is marshalling support for its men and women in the armed services. On February 27, the school held an Open House (shown above) to inaugurate Veterans Support Services at Queens College, a comprehensive program that helps veterans and reservists adapt to academic life.

“Our veterans and members of the reserves are an important part of the college who bring to this campus a unique perspective that enriches us all,” said President James Muyskens, addressing the crowd gathered in the Student Union and alluding to his special guest, World War II veteran and QC grad Arnold Franco ’43. “From now on, with our Veterans Support Services program, we are going to see that they have all the assistance they need, be it advice on choosing a course of study, career or personal guidance, help with physical problems, or just a sympathetic ear to listen to their concerns.”

For more information on the Veterans Support Services program, go to the site index at www.qc.cuny.edu

specially trained liaison familiar with veterans’ education benefits and services, whether they’re available on campus or off. The holistic approach will reduce red tape and help a unique group of students make the most of their education.

Initiated by Provost Evangelos Gizis at the behest of CUNY, which created an Office of Veterans Affairs, VSS at QC unites seven departments: the Academic Advising Center, Career Development and Internships, the College Counseling and Resource Center, Continuing Education Programs, Health Service Center, Special Services, and the Registrar. Each office boasts a

Fred Gardaphé: QC’s Newest Distinguished Professor

Apparently, Queens College made Fred Gardaphé an offer he couldn’t refuse.

This spring he left SUNY Stony Brook, where he had directed the Italian/American Studies Program, to become a distinguished professor at QC and the Calandra Institute. A versatile academic who has written fiction and plays in addition to groundbreaking literary analysis, Gardaphé looms large in his field. His career has special resonance on a multiethnic campus filled with first-generation college students.

The Illinois-born scholar grew up in Melrose Park—which he calls “the Bensonhurst of Chicago”—in an Italian-American family with a French surname, the legacy of a paternal relative. After high school he stayed close to home, enrolling in Triton Junior College. Then he transferred to the University of Wisconsin–Madison and majored in English and communication arts. “I became a reluctant intellectual,” says Gardaphé.

He followed his bachelor’s degree in education with a master’s

in English from the University of Chicago in 1982. Immersed in teaching, freelance writing, and, last but not least, raising a family, Gardaphé would need another 11 years to complete his PhD in literature from the University of Illinois at Chicago. While he was in grad school, he co-founded Bordighera Press, which publishes the semi-annual journal *VIA, Voices in Italian Americana*. “When you’re a pioneer in the field, you have to do everything,” he says. “It’s like a mom-and-pop store.”

His doctoral project put him on the

multicultural map. “I wanted to write a book about Italian-American writers, so I made it my dissertation,” the professor explains. Hailed as a landmark in ethnic literary studies, *Italian Signs, American Streets* won the Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli/Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Award and was named an Outstanding Academic Book by *Choice*. Afterward, Gardaphé—then teaching English at Columbia College in Chicago—was asked to create courses in Italian-American studies for SUNY Stony Brook, which offered a minor in the subject.

In 1998 the school invited him to lead the department. “I hadn’t taught any of the classes I designed,” says Gardaphé, who conceives of Italian-American studies as American studies influenced heavily by Italian language and culture. His definition of culture encompasses some topics that other Italian-American academics avoid. During QC’s spring semester, he taught “From Wise Guys to Wise Men.” Based on his recent book of the same name, the course uses gangsters from film and fiction to illustrate different notions of masculinity.

Nancy Bareis



High-Profile Graduates in the New York Assembly

City Hall magazine’s annual “40 Under 40” list, which highlights up-and-coming leaders in city and state politics, includes a pair of QC alums representing Queens in the New York State Assembly: Rory I. Lancman ’91 and José R. Peralta ’96. Both are up for re-election this fall. Their thumbnail biographies appear below.



Rory I. Lancman

25th Assembly District, Democrat, first elected in 2006

At QC: Lancman interned with the New York State AFL-CIO.

After QC: Earned a JD at Columbia University Law School and opened a private practice. Attained the rank of first lieutenant with New York’s 42nd Infantry Division, spent more than 16 years on Community Board 8, chaired the Queens Hospital Center Community Advisory Board, and held leadership roles in other community organizations.

Legislative agenda: Protecting New York journalists from overseas defamation judgments; providing flood relief to homeowners; keeping New York State’s promise to provide New York City schoolchildren with smaller class sizes; providing all kids with quality health insurance.

Quote: “Good government and good community service is the best politics.”



José R. Peralta

39th Assembly District, Democrat, first elected in 2001

At QC: Peralta was student body president from 1995 to 1996, the first Hispanic to hold that position at the college; he also served in the University Student Senate.

After QC: Served as community liaison for Assemblyman Brian McLaughlin and director of the Commission on the Dignity of Immigrants.

Legislative agenda: Supporting workers’ rights; providing affordable health care through Child and Family Health Plus programs; improving public safety; addressing the needs of new arrivals, existing residents, and the undocumented; improving public transportation.

Quote: “Keep the faith and never give up on your dream of making a difference because, believe it or not, eventually you will.”

Arizona Import Named Rookie of the Year

By Neal Kaufer



On November 18, 2007, Arizona import Amanda Bartlett burst upon the Queens College basketball scene. In her collegiate debut that evening, she showed a glimpse

of what was to come when she poured in 26 points against Wilmington University. Four short months and eight Rookie of the Week Awards later, Bartlett was the East Coast Conference's leading scorer—averaging 17.6 points per game—and its Rookie of the Year.

"I wasn't sure what to expect when I got to Queens College," says Bartlett. "I knew that they had a rough season the year before and I was hoping to help turn around the program."

That's exactly what she did, helping the Lady Knights to an East Coast Conference playoff berth while also earning first team all-star accolades from the Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association and Daktronics Second Team All-Region honors.

"We had a good season," Bartlett notes. "We went through a rough part because we had many new freshmen and still needed time to gel as a team. We were picked to finish tenth in the pre-season poll, which motivated us to prove everyone wrong. When we beat New Haven and C.W. Post, I think people started realizing how good a team we had become."

Despite her success, things weren't always that easy for Bartlett. "There were times when I first got here that I was homesick, being 2,500 miles across the country from home, but my team always made me feel better. Coach Flahive is willing to help us with anything we need."

Hard work and an enjoyment of what she is doing also helped make things go easier for the Mesa, AZ, native. In the words of Coach Tom Flahive, "Amanda has a tremendous work ethic and her love of the game of basketball is apparent every time she steps on the court. She wants to improve daily and is just a great



player to watch."

Did she do the right thing by coming to Flushing? "I am very happy with my decision to come to Queens College. It changed my life in many positive ways and I am looking forward to future years," says the talented guard.

As for that future, Bartlett and the Lady Knights are hoping to use the 2007-08 season as a stepping stone to greater success. "As a team, we want to win the ECC championship next season. All of us freshmen will be sophomores and have a year of college-level basketball under our belts." She adds, "Individually, winning the Rookie of the Year was an accomplishment, but next year I won't be a rookie so I will need to work even harder. My goal is to lead the conference in assists next season."

Above: Basketball star Amanda Bartlett moving past an opponent.

Carmella Marrone: Working with Women

By Margo Nash

Carmella Marrone keeps a photo of two wolves on the windowsill of her midtown office, a memento of a long-ago encounter in the Georgia wilderness. That encounter led her to create *Women and Work*, the Queens College job and life skills training program in Manhattan, which has changed the lives of hundreds of participants, including single mothers and battered, homeless, immigrant, and older women.

Nancy Bareis



After her life was overturned by personal and professional upheavals, Carmella Marrone went back to school at Queens College, where she created a program that helps other women take control of their futures.



Today the chic, dark-haired Marrone, executive director of Women and Work, is getting a PhD in sociology from CUNY. She has BAs in sociology and in women's studies and a master's in applied social research from QC. She has won many awards, including New York 1's "New Yorker of the Week," been the subject of numerous feature articles, and has been profiled on CUNY-TV's "Studying with the Best."

But 30 years ago, when she met up with the wolves, she was in recovery from cancer and was so frail her joints had to be braced. She was also dealing with the breakup of an 18-year marriage and the loss of her executive job due to her illness. So it was that Marrone, from New Hyde Park, NY, took a year off to live in a cabin in the Georgia mountains, to meditate, keep a journal, and decide what to do with her life if she lived.

After three months of being alone, she says, "I started getting phenomenally lonely and depressed. I left the cabin in a huff and started walking and had no protection, no water, nothing. By the time I had walked off my frustration and anxiety, I just fell down on the ground and was crying. I was dealing with the loss of my life as I knew it. It was turning dark. I was upset and confused, and stumbling to my feet, I saw what looked like this very large dog, which turned out to be a full-grown wolf. And I thought, well, this is it. I'm going to die. But I was done running; I'm not running from anything, I don't care what it is, if it has teeth or no teeth. So I walked. I looked up and saw another wolf, and then I heard this very deep man's voice calling out 'Alpha! Omega!'"

The two wolves ran off to a man standing on the ridge above her. He told her he had raised them from pups and they would

not bother her. The trio disappeared over the ridge.

"I remember thinking how calm I felt," Marrone says. "It is only when you stop running that you can face those confrontations. Everybody has to face death at some point. It's really about how you've lived your life. Maybe that's why I was crying. For in the event that I had died of cancer, the only thing my life was credited with was the bottom line of a corporation and the people who loved me. But I would leave no legacy." She decided to go back to Queens College, finish the BA she began in the 1960s, and pursue a career helping others.

She was taking a Women's Studies 101 class in 1998 when she met Hester Eisenstein (Sociology), then chair of the Women's Studies program. Marrone became interested in the field of women and work; the two came up with a plan to expand the training program for women. Marrone became the director, and the program took on a life of its own.

"She was amazing," recalls Eisenstein, describing how Marrone found office space at Fort Totten, got the Ford Foundation to donate computers, and with support from Queens College, started Women and Work in 1999.

"We rapidly understood that our mission was going to be about lifting women and children out of poverty," Marrone says. The small program impressed foundations and corporations early on, including the Liz Claiborne Foundation. "Carmella is such a strong leader. When we met them, we believed in the potential," says Melanie Lyons, vice president of philanthropic programs at Liz Claiborne Inc.

Today Woman and Work is headquartered at CUNY's offices

at 25 West 43 St. in Manhattan. QC and CUNY provide the space, phones, and copying machines. Marrone raises money for everything else.

Sixty students are accepted for the 15-week program, held twice a year. In all, 120 students attend annually, and another 80 to 100 women are served through the post-program. They learn technical skills, improve their reading, writing, and math, work on business projects together, learn how to look for and retain jobs, how to dress for success, and how to believe in themselves. They also get to know Marrone and read excerpts from her journal about her time in the Georgia woods.

"This woman was great. She motivated me," says graduate Gillian Nelson, who attended Women and Work in 2002 while living with her children in a shelter for battered women. Like Marrone, Nelson came to find writing "therapeutic, a chance to express ourselves." The program also gave her "the motivation and state of mind to be open to possibilities."

Nelson, who took a chance on a job selling ice cream at Le Parker Meridien Hotel, now earns over \$50,000 working in the hotel's engineering department. She was the guest speaker at Women and Work's last graduation.

CUNY trustee Kathleen Pesile has attended three Women and Work graduations. "I think it is a necessary program, and even more so today, if our economy goes into a downturn." The Women and Work program, she says, helps fulfill the CUNY mission of providing an education to those who cannot afford it.



Marrone (left) and others bring their experience to the table.

Marrone has had other trials to overcome: She was run over by a Winnebago in 2000. Now she has limited use of her right hand and arm. Nevertheless, she calls surviving this accident a second miracle.

"I had a reason to be saved, and I think everybody has a reason to be saved. But if cancer came back tomorrow and says you can't be saved this time, I can still look upon the world today and the contributions I have made and know there are 600 women earning a living and supporting families, and a goodly number of them will not be beaten, and will be able to put keys in locks and provide safe places for their children—and be able to say, we have that opportunity because Queens College believed in us."

A Program Teaching Success

From where Lynne Bellantuono works, she can see the planes taking off from LaGuardia, the parks, the rooftops, and the campus. "It's a Queens panorama," says Bellantuono, an assistant in QC President James Muyskens' office, where she has worked since December—when she completed the Women and Work Program. Graduates of the training and life skills program work all over the city, including the college.

"To think that I started out just taking a course, and I ended up in the president's office," Bellantuono says.

Like all the women who take part in the program each year, Bellantuono had her own reasons for needing a career tune-up. Hers were divorce, loss of income, and an empty nest after her children went off to college.



Sharyn Soucy (l.) and Lynne Bellantuono

"Even my dog died. Everything hit all at once. I went through a very bad depression, and I had no direction," she recalls. Bellantuono enrolled "to gain some computer skills, but I gained so much more in bonding with these women." She especially loved the sessions where women talked about their feelings.

Those sessions were also special for Rosalie Thomson, a spring 2007 Women and Work graduate. "You got to vent and reach out to others," says Thomson, who has gone on to become a customer service representative for Gold Pure Food Products. "I had been bouncing around from job to job because of the economy. I was blessed to get this job. Those teachers are just really well-versed, and Carmella is a unique and powerful educator."

Sharyn Soucy is part of the college's Development Office. She had not worked for a decade because of family responsibilities, and decided to try Women and Work. "I needed to get back. They really help to build your self-esteem besides teaching computer skills and the work basics." Soucy appreciated the positive atmosphere. "They taught you how to present yourself to other people," she says. "And every day I had to dress as if I were going to work. It just made you feel better about yourself."

In February a new group of women, already dressed for success, were getting to know each other in the Manhattan offices of Women and Work. The rainy day outside on West 43rd Street did not dampen their spirits. "This is the light at the end of the tunnel," one of the women said.

Media Mavens

Queens College professors are trusted sources of information for reporters in the world’s most news-savvy town

By Leslie Jay

People Person

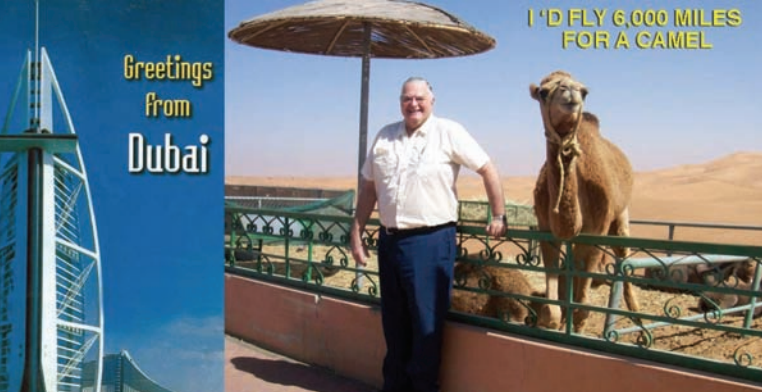
Facts tell a story. And Andrew Beveridge’s unrivaled command of demographic facts makes him the man behind a lot of the stories published in the *New York Times*. By applying geographical information system (GIS) technology to U.S. census data, the sociology professor spots trends as they’re happening. In March 2007 the *Times* used his data to note a baby boom among wealthy, white Manhattanites; the following August, his statistics led the paper to report that as a group, young New York City women out-earn men their age, a story picked up by media nationwide.

Beveridge discovered the power of GIS nearly 20 years ago, while serving as the president of the Yonkers school board, which was embroiled in a battle over desegregation. The technology ultimately allowed him to redraw Yonkers’ city council districts in compliance with federal law. Meanwhile, he introduced GIS—which he recalls as “a new technique that no one had mastered”—to his QC students. “We started to work with the 1990 census,” he continues. “We set up teams with undergraduates to map data patterns.” The resulting evidence of residential segregation within New York City was so compelling that the *Times* made it the major story on the front page of the metropolitan section—and in 1993 put Beveridge on retainer as a consultant.

Subsequently, with support from sponsors that included the newspaper and the National Science Foundation, he created Social Explorer, a census-based Web site that covers the United States from 1940 through 2000. Its public edition, free to anyone with an Internet connection, comprises thousands of demographic maps that can be accessed with the click of a mouse.

Under the terms of his *Times* contract, Beveridge himself is less accessible; he cannot comment to reporters at other

New York City dailies, although he does write a demographics column for *Gotham Gazette*, an electronic newsletter published by the Citizens Union Foundation of the City of New York. He constantly fields calls from local broadcasters and out-of-town correspondents. And sometimes he takes a hit from the home team. “Jayson Blair [the discredited former *Times* journalist] misquoted me,” says Beveridge with a laugh. “I got it fixed when he was unmasked.”

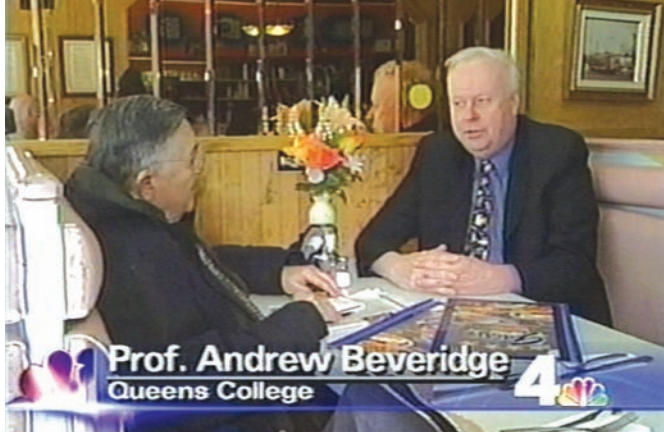


Nick Coch (above with friend) is in demand both at home and overseas, including Dubai, where he recently lectured on hurricanes.

Storm King

If Nicholas K. Coch (Earth & Environmental Sciences) spends any more time on television, he’ll have to join the broadcasters union. In the last year alone, QC’s celebrated hurricane authority has appeared on the National Geographic Channel, the Weather Channel, CNN, and Channel 5. He was also quoted on WCBS Radio News and in articles published in *New York* magazine, the *New York Sun*, and *Forbes*, achieving the media equivalent of a perfect storm. “I’m an equal opportunity disaster person,” says Coch, who travels all over the world to present papers at weather conferences and insurance summits.

A coastal geologist by training, he started developing his expertise in 1989 by studying the damage patterns of Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina. “With each succeeding big hurricane, I’d go into the field,” explains Coch. The data he accumulated persuaded him that New York City’s location in the right angle created by Long Island and New Jersey increases its vulnerability to storm surge. Furthermore, he forecast a period of greater hurricane activity in connection with oceanic cycles. His dire warnings, memorably expressed—he told one reporter that “the



city has millions of people to offer the God of the Sea”—won him the nickname Dr. Doom. (No run-of-the-mill alarmist, he lives in Queens and has a second home in Suffolk County, where numerous storms have hit.)

He bolstered his claims with forensics, using debris uncovered on Coney Island by his grad students and nineteenth-century *New York Times* archives to demonstrate that in 1893, a Category 2 hurricane had obliterated Hog Island, a resort area on a barrier island south of present-day Rockaway Beach. Coch and Brian Jarvinen of the National Hurricane Center used the weather data from the storm to create a computer model of the hurricane as it swept northward. Ever since, important listeners have given him credibility. “I’m very proud of the fact that the city has made serious attempts to address hurricane preparedness,” he says.

“Recently, someone asked me if they still call me Dr. Doom,” reports Coch. “I told him, ‘No—they just call me.’”

Immigrant Scholar

Hearing herself described as a “press pundit,” Madhulika Khandelwal (Urban Studies) launches into an impromptu lesson in etymology. “You see, we have come full circle,” says the animated professor, sitting in her office. “Pundit is an Indian word, and in India it connotes a priest or expert.” Almost any setting serves as a classroom for Khandelwal, whose work promotes understanding of émigré South Asian communities.

An expatriate herself, she left her homeland more than 20 years ago. “I had a tenured position teaching American history at the University of Delhi,” she recalls. “I thought I’d come here for a short stay, have a deeper experience, and go back.” Instead, as a graduate student at Carnegie Mellon University, she grew interested in the experience of Indians who settled in the United States in the 1960s and afterward. Research led her to Queens and to a position at QC’s Asian/American Center, where she won attention for people from her part of the world. “I worked with the mayor’s office; I worked with the governor’s office,” she says. “I was a foot soldier. I became known as the South Asian representative.” She also became known as an essential source for journalists covering multicultural issues.

Apart from five years at the University of Massachusetts, Khandelwal has spent most of her U.S. career at QC; her 2002 appointment as director of the Asian/American Center coincided with the release of *Becoming American, Being Indian: An Immigrant Community in New York City*. Written for general readers as well as academics, the acclaimed oral history further enhanced the reputation of its author. Now she juggles teaching, research—the local Indo-Caribbean community is one of her latest topics—appearances on live radio programs, and last-minute calls from outlets as varied as the *New York Times*, *Newsday*, the Associated Press, and *India Today*. “Writers are always calling me and saying, ‘I’m on deadline,’” she says.

Len Rubenstein



Campus Diplomat

A dispassionate analyst of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Mark Rosenblum (History) is often asked for his insights into Middle Eastern events. In the last decade he’s appeared on an alphabet soup of media outlets, ranging from ABC, BBC, CNN, and NPR to Syrian state TV, where in 1998 he was the first American Jew



to be interviewed on the “Newsmaker Forum.” He is also a very busy guy. Concluding a recent Presidential Roundtable on the prospects for peace, the former college athlete all but sprinted from the Q-Side Lounge to his next appointment, calling out his cell phone coordinates to anyone who wanted to talk to him.

Encouraging conversation—particularly between people who are inclined to disagree—is the core of his mission. A history professor who directs the Jewish Studies program and the Michael Harrington Center, Rosenblum has firsthand experience with diplomacy. “I played modest back-channel roles between the Israelis and the Palestinians,” he says, citing one especially memorable event: a spooky 3 a.m. negotiating session in which he met Yasser Arafat in his Cairo compound.

Rosenblum had been teaching at QC for more than 25 years when his work took on new urgency. “I experienced 9-11 with my students,” he recalls. “We watched the Twin Towers fall.” In response, he created *The Middle East and America: Clash of Civilizations or Meeting of the Minds*, a new curriculum that obliges each member of the class—which includes Christians, Jews, and Muslims—to research a viewpoint opposite his or her own, and maintain it in model negotiations. The new curriculum is part of a larger project that uses concerts, art exhibits, lectures, and stand-up comedy to help people discover common ground.

This approach has won coverage from CBS Evening News, the front page of the *New York Times* Metro section (and in the *Times*’ national edition), and Queens and Westchester papers. “I’m not shy about strobe lights,” says Rosenblum. “The attention will help us do this someplace else. I want to be able to create a replicable program that allows students to walk in the other side’s shoes.” In fact, he just brought Common Chords—a program featuring noted Jewish and Muslim musicians—to San Diego State University to reach high school students of both communities.

How the Right Went Wrong

Veteran White House advisor Richard Whalen, a conservative Republican, explains why he's breaking with his party and supporting Barack Obama

By Bob Suter

"We live in interesting times," began Richard Whalen '57, invoking the ancient Chinese proverb with considered understatement. The celebrated journalist, best-selling author, and political advisor to three presidents had returned to his alma mater on a crisp February day to talk about one of his favorite subjects: presidential politics.

Given his prior billing as a veteran conservative Republican strategist, what the man who authored that rallying phrase of Republican conservatism—"the silent majority"—said next probably surprised more than a few in the packed Powdermaker Hall classroom. "But we also live in times of blessing and the fulfillment of ideas that, frankly, I never thought that I would live to see fulfilled."

Then he said firmly, "I believe Barack Obama is going to be nominated. And I believe that if he's nominated he's going to win. I'm a lifelong Republican, but I'm saying this because I think it is possible, and it would be very, very good for us as a nation to do this. And it would be a message to the world that America is back."

Right at the outset, the students, faculty, and staff members attending the Political Science Club-sponsored event were getting a taste of why the blog Whalen writes daily for *Congressional Quarterly* is called The Maverick Conservative (<http://blogs.cqpolitics.com/whalen/>).

Catching Nixon's Eye

Whalen offered an account of his own interesting times following his graduation with degrees in English and political science from Queens College: beginning with his early years as a newspaper reporter covering the civil rights movement (a period in which he also wrote for William F. Buckley's fledgling *National Review*), to his work for *Time* and *Fortune* magazines and the *Wall Street Journal*, and his authorship of a bestselling book, *Founding Father: The Story of Joseph P. Kennedy*. Runner-up for both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, the book caught the attention of a man with his sights set on the White House: Richard Nixon.



Whalen laughs with President Ronald Reagan and poses with QC students.

"I was lucky enough at the age of 33," said Whalen, "to have written a famous book and to have been considered an articulate conservative, to be the youngest member of the board of editors of *Fortune* magazine, and the man who wrote the monthly editorials. All of those credits got me an invitation from Richard Nixon to join his team in 1966." The team included such nascent political personalities as Pat Buchanan and Alan Greenspan, the long-time chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

"I came aboard as the strategy guy and a speechwriter," said Whalen. It was in the latter capacity, he explained, that the phrase "the silent majority" was born—a phrase that would soon take on a meaning its author had not intended.

"The biggest thing that I contributed to Richard Nixon was common sense about the racial politics of 1968," Whalen continued, describing a time marked by race riots in many American cities that grew even more violent with the assassination

of Martin Luther King. "One day as I was typing a memo for Nixon's speech, a phrase tumbled out of my typewriter: 'the silent majority.' I said don't pay attention to Stokely Carmichael and the other black radicals who were saying 'Burn, baby, burn.' Pay attention to the silent majority of blacks who in their churches and their homes are as offended and afraid of this violence as any white person, who need to be given solidarity and support as they see this thing through.

"Well, Buchanan grabbed that phrase and applied it to the whites we were trying to get loose from George Wallace, and that helped Nixon take the Wallace vote from 22 percent, down to 13 percent. Nixon's was a very strong showing against a very demagogic, dangerous Wallace. He won with a plurality, just barely. Nixon represents the very beginning of the conservative movement that is now coming to an end."

Disturbed by Nixon's reluctance to commit to ending the war in Vietnam, his campaign's courting of the Wallace vote, and Nixon's seeming indifference to the plight of black Americans, among other things, Whalen quit the campaign staff before the '68 election. He recalled, for instance, how at his insistence, a reluctant Nixon attended the King funeral—advice for which he was later bitterly rebuked: "'You almost cost me the election.'"

Rallying Around Reagan

Whalen chronicled his disenchantment with Nixon in his 1972 book *Catch the Falling Flag*. He observed, "Nixon's worst enemies have nothing to say about him so damaging as the observations of hurt, puzzled friends."

But, Whalen recounted, he later joined the administration of another Republican president. "Ronald Reagan was a genuinely decent, honorable man, a man you could see taking a bullet for," he said. "I never felt that way about Nixon."

He recalled the icon of Republican conservatism telling him that as a young Democrat he had voted four times for that icon of liberal democratic politics, Franklin Roosevelt. But disenchanted with the leftward drift of his party, Reagan eventually became a Republican. "'I didn't leave my party; my party left me,'" Whalen recalled Reagan saying. "And that," said Whalen, "is what happened to me: my party went so far to the right they left me. I'm a moderate, centrist conservative. What we've had since Reagan is radicalism; it's not conservatism."

While he later served as an advisor in the presidential campaign of Reagan's successor, George H. W. Bush, Whalen sees nothing of the father in the ways of the current president, George W. Bush, whose administration he described as "the worst in modern U.S. history."

"I am not exaggerating; I am telling you the simple truth," he continued. "The Bush presidency has been a gross failure. But it has been an arrogant and extremely dangerous failure because of its usurpation of powers that were not intended by the founders to be given to the president, such as the wiretaps and other violations of our constitutional rights.

"The unnecessary war in Iraq is a presidential war, as I have written," he said, referring to his provocative article "Revolt of the Generals," which was the cover story in the October 16, 2006, issue of the *Nation*, one of America's most liberal journals. It reported a growing rebellion among America's retired Army and Marine generals—two with recent service in Iraq—who saw "the U.S. adventure in Mesopotamia as another Vietnam-like, strategically failed war." The generals blamed "the errant, arrogant civilian leadership at the Pentagon."

Whalen likened this to his experience on Nixon's staff when junior officers returning from Vietnam convinced him that "U.S. military involvement there should give way to diplomacy." This led to Whalen's authorship of Nixon's famous secret plan for "ending the war and winning the peace," a critical element in Nixon's defeat of Hubert Humphrey in 1968. (Whalen's piece also described his leading role in a policy decision with continued relevance for today's college students, a decision without which some who were listening to him might be otherwise engaged: the abolishing of the draft in favor of an all-volunteer military.)

If John McCain ("a good man running at the wrong time") continues to support the war, Whalen said, "He will be annihilated" in the general election.

Identifying himself as "a working-class Irish kid from Queens," Whalen concluded his biographical and political remarks with a pointed bit of wisdom directed to the diverse group of students sitting before him. "The dirty little secret about America is not racism," he said. "The dirty little secret is class. Class is how Americans move upward. They are perceived to be in a higher class through education, accomplishment, income. Queens College changed my life, changed my class status, changed my prospects. It will change yours."

“One day as I was typing a memo for Nixon’s speech, a phrase tumbled out of my typewriter: ‘the silent majority.’”

That phrase would soon take on a much different meaning than its author intended.



DIPLOMATIC OVERTURES

Violist Katherine Greene '78 visits North Korea with the New York Philharmonic

By Leslie Jay

Have viola, will travel. That could be the motto of Katherine Greene '78, who in nearly two decades with the New York Philharmonic has been to South America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. In February, the orchestra visited its most exotic and forbidding destination to date: North Korea. "We went to a place where Americans hadn't been in 50 years and offered our hearts through music," says Greene.

The Philharmonic's 105 instrumentalists learned last fall, during the planning stages for their 2008 tour to Asia, that North Korea might be added to the itinerary. "The idea was met with a lot of skepticism," says Greene, who knew little about the country. "As an idealist, I spoke up immediately in favor of going."

No Cell Phones, No Pictures

While diplomats and the Philharmonic's tour staff set up the trip, musicians got a crash course in the nation's history and culture. "We read books and saw a video," reports Greene. "Ambassador Christopher Hill [Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs] came and spoke to us on behalf of the state department. We knew it would be an adventure."

The adventure began on February 25, when the orchestra, which had flown from Beijing, China, on a 747 donated by Asiana Airlines, landed at empty Sunan International Airport in Pyongyang. "Our cell phones were taken away on the plane," says Greene. "We could keep our computers, but there was no Internet." Cautioned not to take pictures, members of the 400-person contingent—including patrons, journalists, and tech staffers who had driven trucks across the demilitarized zone—couldn't stop themselves. Surprisingly, no official intervened.

For the next 48 hours, the Americans enjoyed the status of honored guests. "The whole group was taken to a cultural center, where we were treated to a performance of dancing, singing, and acrobatics, followed by a lavish banquet," says Greene. Afterward, the violist and her colleagues were bused to a 50-story hotel. "The streets were very dark," she recalls. "Each little apartment had one tiny light in the center of the room. Shanghai and Beijing looked like Disneyland compared to North Korea."

While they were better fed than the city's residents, the visitors were watched almost as closely. "Pretty much every hour was accounted for," says Greene. "We were kept together in several groups, and each group had a minder who spoke excellent English. They were always there."

Another omnipresent figure was Kim Jong-Il, North Korea's "Dear Leader," who didn't attend any of the Philharmonic events. "All that you run across is his face on billboards and his sayings on obelisks," says Greene.

On the morning of February 26, the ensemble taped its dress rehearsal before an audience, using the occasion to present North Korea's State Symphony Orchestra with woodwind instruments, string accessories, and orchestral scores and parts. Breaking at noon, the musicians had a few hours off. Some people went sightseeing; others held master classes for students at the local conservatory. Then everyone returned to East Pyongyang Grand Theatre for the concert.

Making Contact

The presumably handpicked audience remained unexpressive during most of the program, which included the American and North Korean national anthems, Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, and Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. "There was an impassive look on people's faces," observes Greene, who sits on the outside edge of the orchestra. "It was hard to make eye contact."

The mood changed dramatically after the Philharmonic played the Korean folk song "Arirang" as an encore. Met with unending applause, the orchestra stood up to leave the stage. "Much of the front section of the audience began waving goodbye," reports John Schaefer, host of WNYC's "Soundcheck," in his blog. "Clearly caught by surprise, some of the musicians started waving back. A few were clearly starting to cry." Backstage, the musicians marveled over the intense personal connection they had just experienced. Then they were feted with a second banquet and driven to their hotel. The next day, they flew to Seoul, the final stop on the tour, where, Greene says, South Koreans greeted them as heroes.

"It sure is great to be home," she concludes, weeks after returning to her house in Rockland County. "When we got back to John F. Kennedy Airport and were going through customs and immigration, I handed my passport to the officer and said, 'There is nothing like a trip to Pyongyang to make you grateful to be back in this beautiful country.' He smiled and passed me right through."



Left: Friendship blooms between Greene and her North Korean "minder." Above: Members of the New York Philharmonic wave to the audience at the end of their concert.

String Theory and Practice

On a personal level, Katherine Greene's journey to her position in the New York Philharmonic was nearly as momentous as her trip to North Korea. "I took up viola in my teens," says the Queens native and High School of Music and Art alumna. "I came to QC as a pianist. I made a late switch—and a propitious one." She credits her viola teacher at QC, Patty Kopec, with giving her the solid foundation for a career. "The music department was such a supportive environment," continues Greene. "I got fantastic grounding in history and theory. I loved every delectable year of my bachelor of music program."

She made a strong impression on at least one of her classmates. "Kathy Greene was one of the best string players in the Music Department," says Edward Smaldone '78, who is now director of the college's Aaron Copland School of Music. "She was also the same outgoing and warm person she is now. She played the viola in two of the very first pieces I ever wrote, and I still remember the care and enthusiasm she gave to my music, and to all music she played. She seemed to really be aware of how special a gift it was to make music your life's work."

After Queens, Greene enrolled in the Juilliard School, studying with William Lincer, former principal violist of the Philharmonic, and earning a master's degree. Upon graduating, she freelanced and practiced, hoping to win a seat in a top-tier orchestra.

She faced an uphill battle in a field where hundreds of people apply for each opening, even if it's in an ensemble with a part-time schedule. "It took 10 years of taking auditions to get the Philharmonic job," admits Greene, who played in the prestigious Aspen and Blossom summer festivals and served as assistant principal in the New Jersey Symphony. "It was a long, heart-wrenching period of not giving up. If you want something badly enough, what matters is perseverance."

In 1990 her hard work paid off: She won a place on the New York Philharmonic's roster. "It's the absolute dream job for me," says Greene. "I have traveled all over the world. I've seen my career as being a musical ambassador." Nonetheless, on her latest "posting," she entered truly foreign territory.

» HIGH-TECH VISIONARIES

By Leslie Jay

The root of the word technology is *techne*, Greek for art or skill. Queens College professors and graduates are displaying plenty of both as they wield cutting-edge tools in innovative ways. **Joan Nix** (Economics) has her students complete assignments as characters on a social networking Web site, where they participate in investment gambles and team activities and illuminate financial behavior in the real world. **Matt Huenerfauth** (Computer Science) is using professional animation equipment to design computer software that will automatically translate English into on-screen American Sign Language and make the Internet more accessible to the deaf. And **Brian Gruber '79** has drawn on his extensive career in cable television and new media to create FORA.tv, a thinking man's YouTube where the film clips cover politics, arts, business, and science.



Clockwise from top right: Brian Gruber's FORA.tv thinks large; a reimaged Jefferson Hall; a computerized figure talks in sign language; and a view of Powdermaker Island, which looks strangely like a certain college minus a few buildings.

» TEACHING THE NOT-SO-DISMAL SCIENCE

Joan Nix takes economics classes online with her first foray into the virtual world of Second Life



Joan Nix

At 11:45 pm on any night of the last semester, Joan Nix (Economics) knew where many of her students were: logged onto Powdermaker Island, QC's private enclave within the virtual Internet world Second Life (SL). At midnight, they could learn whether their fictional investment portfolio made or lost equally fictional money that day in response to weather generated randomly on the island. Although the information would

be emailed to them, many of the students wanted to see their results immediately. "The strength of this response surprised me," admits the professor, who introduced SL in classes this year with the support of a President's Grant for Innovative Teaching.

Nix takes mock investments seriously. A Queens native, she majored in economics and political science at QC, graduating in 1979. Then she went to New York University for a doctorate in economics. "I've always been interested in behavioral finance—how people make their decisions," she explains. A full-time faculty member for 20 years, she commutes to QC two to three days a week from New Jersey, where she lives with her husband, who works for a hedge fund, and their twin daughters.

Raised in a generation that lacked the gadgets her children take for granted—"I grew up before the PC; no DVR, no videos," she observes with a laugh—Nix appreciates twenty-first century tools, especially her iPhone. Call her an early adopter and she's flattered. She started to bring technology into the classroom several years ago, after the temporary closure of Powdermaker Hall elongated class time and prompted her to move away from the standard lecture model. "It forced me to think seriously about group activities during classes," says Nix, who added team problems and quizzes to her lesson plans. "Once I began changing the way I taught, I looked around for technology that could help." First she tried Lecture123, a software package that allowed her to upload whatever she said—and wrote on a tablet PC—to an affiliated Web site. Last fall, she experimented with the SnapKast program, using it to post review sessions on Google Video.

The educational possibilities of SL dawned on her after she read about its use in a Harvard Law School course on cyberlaw.

She reasoned that a virtual outpost with round-the-clock access would appeal to busy QC undergraduates. "Our students are juggling work and school," Nix notes. "Second Life is a social networking site where they can meet anytime they want, using avatars [electronic alter egos]. There is even the potential for me to hold office hours in cyberspace." Better yet, courses built around such a site could update the image of economics—often referred to as the "dismal science"—encouraging greater engagement with the material.

With her grant money, Nix rented a share of SL's unreal estate for six months; Powdermaker Island, which computer science major Aleksei Fedkovits '08 started building in December 2007, opened on the first day of the spring semester. Entry was restricted to Nix's students, all of them upperclassmen. The professor always knew who was in there and what they were doing. Because she was teaching two classes in the spring, she planned to involve one class in SL and use the other as a control. "The class that wasn't on protested," says Nix, who relented and included everyone.

Truth to tell, she enjoys the alternative QC location as much as her students do. Conducting a virtual tour as Prof. Beaumont—her avatar—she points out familiar landmarks in the elaborate 3-D complex, which changes with the season. "It's nice for students to see the campus," says Nix. Okay, the mountain with the PowerPoint display panel for group meetings is purely imaginary. And some buildings quietly disappeared. But the library has a coffee area, books, and a computer terminal bearing a Microsoft logo, and the clock at the top of Chaney-Goodman-Schwermer Tower shows the correct time. The Powdermaker building is a warren of rooms, one of which holds trophies; by participating in team activities online, students won and displayed these awards.

The benefits of SL weren't limited to fun and games. Nix used the site to set up gambles, or investment scenarios, and kept a history of all financial decisions made on the island. "Attitudes toward risk and reward really come alive here," she comments. Successful investors accumulated Linden dollars, the currency of SL. Like the virtual trophies, Linden dollars were powerful motivational instruments—in an echo of the real world, students cared about how much they made in comparison to their peers. "Money" won on Powdermaker Island could not be used elsewhere in SL. At the end of the semester, students were ranked on the basis of their earnings.

"Powdermaker Island is a lot of fun for all of us," says Nix, who will continue to rent the site. "It's a work in progress." But one economic trend is already clear. "Students were more interested than they would have been if I posed the same problems on paper," she concludes.

VOTED OFF POWDERMAKER ISLAND – DELANY HALL AND KLAPPER HALL



» MAKING A SCREEN PLAY FOR THE DEAF

Matt Huenerfauth is designing a computer program that will convert English into American Sign Language

To a deaf person raised in an American Sign Language (ASL) household, English is a completely foreign tongue. Its vocabulary is vast, its syntax bewildering. Matt Huenerfauth (Computer Science) wants to bridge that communications gap.

In his QC computer lab stocked with three-dimensional animation software and motion capture equipment, he's creating software to automatically translate English into on-screen ASL. "Sign language animation would make so much of the Web more accessible to the deaf," says Huenerfauth, who specializes in assistive technology.

He likes playing with high-tech tools; as the son of a mechanical engineer and a middle school science teacher, he's done so all his life. "My toys were Transformer robots," says the youthful professor, who grew up in Springfield, Pennsylvania. "We got a Commodore 64 computer in the late 1980s, and I remember sitting with my dad, trying to program it."

Attending the University of Delaware on a full scholarship, Huenerfauth majored in computer science, captivated by the notion that advances in his field could improve the lives of others. "In the introduction to my first class, my professor said this work had applications for people with disabilities," he recalls. "So I asked to work on her project." He received simultaneous bachelor's and master's degrees in 2001; for his thesis, he created a grammar checker to assist deaf students writing in English.

Next stop was University College Dublin, part of the National University of Ireland, where Huenerfauth completed a second master's on a Mitchell Scholarship. "I designed the look and feel of a handheld device for illiterate people in rural India," he says; the device relied on pictures and sound, instead of text. The following year, he attended the University of Pennsylvania on a National Science Foundation fellowship. Immersing himself again in English language literacy issues among the deaf, Huenerfauth picked up a third master's in 2004 and a PhD two years later. He did extensive coursework in ASL, too. "It helped me make connections and gave me credibility," he explains.

After graduating, he joined the faculty of QC, seeing it as the ideal base for teaching and research. "I really wanted to live in New York," says the Forest Hills resident. "There are five high schools for the deaf within 40 miles of the college." Proximity to such schools is essential; he has to recruit fluent signers—the ASL equivalent of native speakers—to lend literal hands to his efforts. In addition, Huenerfauth wants input from his target audience. "It's extremely important that people with disabilities be involved with assistive technology research projects," he insists.

To put deaf subjects at ease, he has created a lab with extra eye appeal. He's decorated the second-floor Science Building space with brightly colored throw rugs and wooden stools, and a pair of his own Mondrian-style canvases; a former counselor at his mother's art camp, he hasn't had much time to paint lately.



Matt Huenerfauth's signing is recreated on screen behind him.

Otherwise, the playful environment houses the kind of equipment more commonly found in animation studios and video game companies. "You're in the minority if you purchase this for a research setting," observes Huenerfauth, pointing to a flexible spandex glove rigged with magnetic sensors, just one item financed by research funding he has received, including a five-year \$581,496 Early Career Development Award from the National Science Foundation. He hits a few keys on a computer and a pair of miniaturized hands promptly forms shapes on the screen, thanks to the Siemens Corp., which supplied a software grant for a \$633,150 program that simulates the motions of human bodies.

The way it all operates? Wearing the gloves and other motion-sensors, signers render English sentences into ASL; the sensors, which have to be recalibrated for each user on each occasion, track every gesture. After these motion data have been collected and digitalized, they are uploaded to a computer. Huenerfauth analyzes this data using "machine learning" algorithms to automatically detect patterns in the movements of natural ASL signing. This information will allow him to improve the quality of the ASL animations produced by his software so that they appear more natural and easier to understand.

With this system up and running, Huenerfauth has begun tackling straightforward material: Short declarative sentences about objects in three-dimensional space. "You actually show three-dimensional space in ASL," he says, drawing a rectangle with his fingers. "Then you set up an object in space for subsequent reference, like a pronoun." Nonphysical concepts are harder to translate. But Huenerfauth expects that his solutions will have international applications. "What I'm doing can be applied to other sign languages," he concludes.

» PRESENTING THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST

Brian Gruber posts videos of prominent thinkers, leaders, and writers on his interactive Web site, FORA.tv

Unimpressed by the offerings on network and cable TV? Tune into a smaller screen instead. Thanks to Brian Gruber '79, president and chief executive officer of the Web site FORA.tv, a steady supply of high-brow videos—lectures, interviews, and panel discussions—can be seen online at a single location 24/7. "The concept is that tonight, in cities around the world, brilliant ideas will be presented in public places; don't miss them," says Gruber, who founded FORA.tv in 2006 after devoting most of his post-college career to cable TV and new media.

Ironically enough, the future Internet entrepreneur grew up in a family that was, technologically speaking, a little behind the curve. In his Brooklyn home, "we had a rotary dial phone and a black-and-white TV," he admits with a laugh. "The highest-tech innovation was a plastic film that you put over the television screen to make it look like color." With or without the screen cover in place, he liked to watch Bill Moyers on WNET. Gruber also read the *Village Voice* and listened to radio station WBAI-FM. "I had a passion for and interest in the media," he notes.

Enrolling at QC, he settled on a double major of communications arts and sciences, and theatre. His primary extracurricular activity was video production. "I loved college," Gruber recalls. "It was an intellectual breeding ground for me."

Next stop was Pepperdine University in Malibu, California, for graduate studies in broadcast management. He served as news director of the campus TV station and worked for a state senator; his thesis topic was cable television programming trends in the San Francisco area. Armed with a master's degree, Gruber landed a job at C-SPAN, the fledgling public service cable network, which hired him as its first director of marketing.

"The first time I got cable TV, I was transfixed by watching [Senator Daniel Patrick] Moynihan chair a meeting," he says. "I had the desire to use my theory and production courses to change the way news is presented. Working at C-SPAN was a very exciting experience." Among his achievements was the successful launch of spinoff channel C-SPAN-2. He also hosted a pair of live call-in shows that featured legislators and activists, John McCain, Nancy Pelosi, and Cesar Chavez among them.

After three years with C-SPAN, Gruber worked for several California cable companies, as well as marketing agency Ogilvy & Mather Direct. In 1995 he moved to Sydney, Australia, to oversee the launch of News Corp.'s FOXTEL cable network. Building a team in a foreign country was a bit of a challenge. "You have a résumé in front of you and you don't recognize the university or the company," says Gruber. "But the language was the same, and the urban culture was very similar to ours." Returning to the United States the next year, he began using his expertise to advise new media companies and startups; except for a brief stint as vice president of marketing and sales at Charter Communications in Los Angeles, he spent nearly a decade as a consultant.

In his spare time, Gruber dreamed up FORA.tv, giving it a name built around the plural of forum. "Web 2.0 technologies allow big ideas from experts, authors, and leaders to be captured and presented," he explains. "Our mission is to use technology to allow you to watch TV, store an event, share it, and discuss it." Drawing on his own savings, and contributions from family and friends, Gruber brought a prototype site online, sourcing videos from all over the ideological map. Topics ranged from art to international affairs.

Today, the roster of content providers includes C-SPAN, the New School, the Brookings Institution, the Cato Institute, and independent booksellers. A recent revamp organized material into four channels—politics, business, culture, and science and technology. Clips may be viewed by anyone who visits the site, but the right to download them or post comments is restricted to members, who can register almost instantaneously for free.

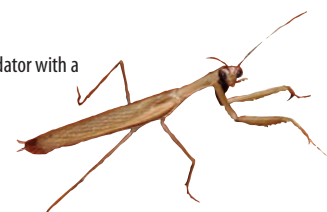
With seed money from the software developer Adobe Systems Incorporated and venture capitalist Will Hearst, Gruber hopes to expand FORA.tv and add videos in foreign languages. He'll also bolster the budget with discreet, uncluttered advertising. "Once a program starts, there will be no ads," he promises.

A San Francisco resident, Gruber could work from home, but usually doesn't; he values face-to-face contact, and his office is only two miles away. His top portable devices are a Treo smartphone, an iPod, and a Mac laptop with a wireless broadband card. He has two other computers in his house, which is hooked up to DSL service. Surprisingly, what he doesn't have is cable television. "I want to watch less TV," he admits.



Brian Gruber '79

The praying mantis is a skilled predator with a taste for smaller insects.



Women of the Year

Two members of the Class of 2008 reflect on life at college—and after

By Mary Ann D’Urso

One grew up in Haiti; the other, Brooklyn. Between them they speak six languages. Their desire to learn about the world flourished on a campus that helped them experience unfamiliar cultures. With graduation in hand, Adjani Papillon and Lauren Talerman can reflect on the past four years and look ahead to new challenges.



Adjani Papillon

A New York City native who was raised in Port-au-Prince, Papillon applied to Queens College on the recommendation of friends. “When I came to visit the school, I fell in love with the campus,” she recalls. “It has a magnificent view of the city.”

Better yet, the school was filled with dedicated professors who had open-door

policies. “They really encourage you,” she says, citing David Leventhal (Business and the Liberal Arts) and Ruth Frisz (Coordinator of the Peer Program) as two faculty members who were especially supportive.

Outside of the classroom, Papillon threw herself into student activities, serving as a member of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, a QC delegate to the CUNY Student Senate, and publicity coordinator of the Peer Counseling Program, to name a few of her many roles. “You have to get involved, go to different clubs and organizations,” she insists. “The experience is not complete when you don’t.”

Supporting Her Peers

A psychology major who minored in BALA and student personnel and counseling, she found her work as a peer counselor to be particularly gratifying. In addition to the satisfaction of helping other students, she enjoyed getting exposure to cultural practices from around the world. “It’s good to see different perspectives, hear different ideas, see how people deal with different situations,” notes Papillon.

After an eventful final semester in which she was elected president of the student government, she returned to campus this summer to begin graduate courses for her master’s in elementary education. Eventually, she may go to law school. “It’s been

my passion for a long time to be an immigration attorney,” says Papillon, who has special credentials for that specialty: She’s conversant in French, Creole, and Spanish.

Seeing Many Sides to a Story

Talerman may also become a lawyer—but not yet. A yeshiva alumna interested in the Middle East, she delved into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through QC classes created by history professor Mark Rosenblum. Building on coursework that pushed participants to learn more about the side with which they least identify, Talerman—who speaks fluent Hebrew, as well as

Spanish and rudimentary French—used a David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship to study Arabic in Egypt. “It made sense to acquire the other dominant language,” she explains. She got additional language training during two trips to Morocco funded by the Macaulay Honors College.

When she wasn’t traveling, Talerman kept busy on campus. A double major in anthropology and political science, she worked her way up the masthead of the *Knight News*, becoming executive editor. That experience taught her how difficult it is to get an objective version of a story. “I don’t think most writers realize this until they start interviewing sources for an article and compiling multiple accounts of an event,” she says.

In addition, Talerman co-edited the 2006 *Journal of Jewish Studies* and was a member of the QC Strategic Planning Committee. She also served on the Governor’s Commission on Higher Education. Not letting up in her last semester, she was an assistant to Prof. Rosenblum, and addressed the QC community as the Commencement student speaker.

Next year, in return for her Boren Scholarship, Talerman will be working for the government, perhaps in the U.S. Department of State. “I’m using that as a sort of break between college and graduate school, in my case, probably law school,” she says. After that, she has set her sights on a career in foreign policy, putting the skills she acquired at QC to excellent use.



Lauren Talerman

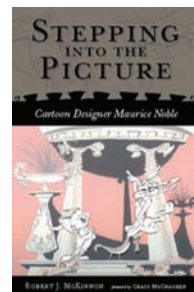
Len Rubenstein

Bookshelf



In the days before group therapy, Oprah, and Prozac, people found comfort in books. **Sandra Kitain** ’74 (MS, 1976) would like to promote that habit in elementary school age children. Drawing on her

bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education, and the master’s in library science she completed last year at Clarion University, Kitain wrote *Shelf-Esteem* (Neal-Schuman Publishers) to nurture young readers, literally. The guide describes numerous titles that can help kids cope with difficult issues like sibling rivalry, moving, death, divorce, and substance abuse. Discussion questions and activities suggested for each title encourage personal reflection and growth.

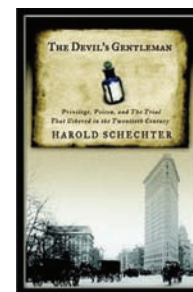


Before the digital age, cartoons were drawn by hand; each second of film involved 12 to 14 celluloid frames known as cels. Like latter-day Renaissance masters, the top artists plotted the scenes, leaving routine brushwork to their subordinates. **Robert J. McKinnon** ’83 (MS), who has written for *Comics Journal* and *In Toon* magazine, profiles one of those masters in *Stepping into the Picture: Cartoon Designer Maurice Noble* (University Press of Mississippi). Noble’s seven-decade career took him from Disney to Warner Bros. But that’s not all, folks: During World War II, he collaborated with Theodore Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss, and Frank Capra on movies for the U.S. military.

New York City’s melting pot has frequently reached the boiling point. In the 1980s and ’90s, Korean grocers felt the heat. Ill-served by white suppliers, boycotted by black customers, and picketed by Latino employees, the business owners presented a collective response through the Korean Produce Association. Then, as



racial tensions faded, the bonds between the shopkeepers started to loosen. In *Ethnic Solidarity for Economic Survival: Korean Greengrocers in New York City* (Russell Sage Foundation), **Pyong Gap Min** (Sociology) tells this story, using extensive research to dispel the notion that culture alone accounts for the achievements of Korean entrepreneurs.



Crime historian **Harold Schechter** (English) has written several books about serial killers. But the subject of his latest effort, *The Devil’s Gentleman: Privilege, Poison, and the Trial That Ushered in the Twentieth Century* (Ballantine Books), was convicted of dispatching merely one woman, and that verdict was overturned. In 1898 Katherine Adams, a respectable Manhattan widow, died after consuming a tonic prepared with bromo-seltzer that her boarder had received in the mail. Handwriting on the medicine package led detectives to Roland Molineux, the son of a Civil War hero. The young man’s trials, with their scandalous revelations, were major media events, foreshadowing the tabloid fodder of today.



A painter-etcher whose efforts are included in the collections of at least 62 American and Canadian museums, Stephen Parrish is less well known than his son Maxfield. For **Rona Schneider** (MA, 1978), an art history writer and a dealer in American fine art prints, this imbalance represented an opportunity. She dedicated 22 years to researching and compiling *Stephen Parrish/The Etchings: A Catalogue Raisonné* (The Old Print

Shop). Printed on archival paper, the lavishly illustrated catalogue covers the 153 etchings its subject produced from 1879—when, in his 30s, he took his first etching lessons—to 1890. The book also has a chronological biography of Parrish senior, who worked in coal and stationery businesses before embarking on a career as an artist.



A distinguished poet in his own right, **Lloyd Schwartz** ’62 has devoted the last seven years to *Elizabeth Bishop: Poems, Prose, and Letters* (Library of America). Co-edited by Robert Giroux, a principal in the firm that published much of Bishop’s writing, the volume comprises essays, short stories, memoirs, reviews, travel pieces, and extensive personal correspondence—all of it witty and some of it appearing in print for the first time. The poems appear in the order Bishop arranged them in her books; bonuses include close-to-finished drafts and “new” works discovered by Schwartz, a professor of English at the University of Massachusetts at Boston and a Pulitzer-winning music critic.



Forty years after his assassination, Martin Luther King, Jr. is revered around the world as a civil rights leader and martyr. But his concerns weren’t limited to racial justice. At the time of his death, he was speaking out against the war in Vietnam and poverty at home, believing both to be immoral. **King: Pilgrimage to the Mountaintop** (Hill & Wang), a biography by University of New Hampshire history professor **Harvard Sitkoff** ’61, presents a fuller picture of a towering and all-too-human figure who was ahead of his time—and ours.

Help Beautify the Queens College Campus and Support Our Students

Queens College has set aside areas along the newly landscaped quadrangle where alumni can have their name or that of a parent or friend commemorated. Offerings include a plaque placed beneath a newly planted tree, or upon a park bench where students sit and study.



Naming opportunities are also available in two of the Kupferberg Center’s performance facilities: the 479-seat Goldstein Theatre and the 2,124-seat Colden Auditorium. A seating plaque commemorating a friend, loved one, or yourself will be placed on the armrest of a seat in the theatre of your choice.

Our new Alumni Plaza in front of historic Jefferson Hall provides the opportunity to celebrate a graduation, highlight a special occasion, or remember a loved one with an inscribed commemorative brick.

- Trees (14-foot high): \$800
- Benches, outdoor and indoor: \$1600
- Named seats in Kupferberg Center (Colden Auditorium and Goldstein Theatre): \$300
- Donation of books to the library with bookplates placed in each book: \$500
- Small bricks: 4-inch x 8-inch (three lines of text): \$130
- Large bricks: 8-inch x 8-inch (six lines of text): \$250

The easiest way to place an order is by visiting www.qc.cuny.edu/QCF. You may also fill out the form below and return it with your payment in the prepaid envelope in this magazine. For other naming opportunities of \$2000 and above, please call the Office of Development at 718-997-3920.

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Questions? Contact the Office of Development by email: QC_Foundation@qc.cuny.edu, phone: 718-997-3920, or mail: Queens College Foundation, 65-30 Kissena Boulevard, Flushing, New York 11367.

Fighting for Recognition

As president of Vietnam Veterans of America, John Rowan ’72 battles on behalf of the men and women of the armed forces

By Leslie Jay

More than 40 years after he left the Air Force, John Rowan ’72 is performing a different kind of military duty: He’s the president and chief executive of Vietnam Veterans of America (www.vva.org). “My job is enlightening people,” says Rowan, who views himself as an advocate for current and future vets.

Like many of his peers, Rowan joined the armed services because he had no other choice. An Elmhurst native and graduate of Brooklyn Tech, he attended Baruch College for one semester before dropping out and taking a technical job at AT&T. Without his student deferment, he was likely to be inducted. “I enlisted in the Air Force in July 1965,” he explains. “It was that or get drafted.” Assigned to a specialized intelligence unit, he studied Indonesian at a military school for a year, and subsequently cross-trained in Vietnamese.

Sent overseas in April 1967, Rowan worked in air-to-ground communications and flew on reconnaissance missions over North Vietnam. A family crisis abbreviated his tour. “I was on the ground for 32 days and in the war zone for seven months when I got out early on a hardship discharge,” he says. “I was an only child, and my father was dying of lung cancer.”

Back in New York, Rowan picked up where he had left off—AT&T had preserved his position, promoting him while he was away. He also decided to give college another try. “I had thought about going to school while I was in the service,” he says. “Everyone in my unit was a college graduate or a dropout.” In the fall of 1968, he took night classes at QC. The next summer, he quit his job and accumulated enough credits to enroll full-time in September 1969.

“I didn’t have much in common with the students,” recalls Rowan. “At age 24, I was older than many of them. I was hanging out more with professors,” especially the Political Science Department’s Harry Psomiades, who had taught in the Army War College. But he had no problem identifying with the social and political changes engulfing the campus, and became involved with Vietnam Veterans Against the War. “I was a long-haired hippie freak,” he says. Majoring in political science, Rowan completed his bachelor’s degree in two and a half years.

Upon earning a master’s in urban affairs from Hunter College, and interning for Bronx Borough President—and future New York State Attorney General—Robert Abrams, Rowan held a series of government posts. He spent a year with Abrams followed by three years handling community relations for Queens

Congressman Benjamin Rosenthal. In 1977, with the revamp of New York City’s community boards, Rowan was appointed the first district manager of Queens Community Board 4. Later, he moved to the New York City Council as an investigator and then to the Comptroller’s Office, where he was an administrative staff analyst until his retirement in 2002.



John Rowan ’72

During those three decades, he married, became the stepfather to two sons, and remained active in veterans’ affairs. “I kept in touch with colleagues in the city and across the country,” Rowan says. “We created an old boys’ network.” In 1981, he helped found the Queens branch of VVA, a congressionally chartered not-for-profit corporation. “We were Chapter 32,” notes the Middle Village resident. “The latest chapter is 1011.” Rising through the state and national ranks of the organization, he couldn’t devote himself to it full-time until he left the comptroller’s office. In 2005, he was elected president of the VVA; last July, he won a second two-year term.

As advocate-in-chief for the group’s 50,000 members and their families, Rowan puts their medical needs at the top of his to-do list. “I’m fighting for health issues, trying to get enough money for our vets

and all vets,” he says. Vietnam veterans have a higher than average risk of adult-onset diabetes, neuropathy, and a long list of cancers. “These are presumptive diseases, from exposure to Agent Orange,” says Rowan, referring to the herbicide and defoliant that U.S. armed forces sprayed in Vietnam. Linking his own diabetes to his month of military action, he predicts that veterans of the Persian Gulf War or the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan will develop distinct service-related problems.

Other conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), are not unique to any single conflict. It has been surfacing in men and women returning from tours in the Middle East. But, thanks to the efforts of Rowan and his colleagues, veterans suffering from PTSD are more likely to be diagnosed correctly. “Some things are generic to war,” he observes. “Today, everyone knows what PTSD means. The psychological community has come to understand the pervasiveness of it.”

Although Rowan’s war is long over, his battle for benefits is likely to continue. Recently, he has begun working with a new group, Veterans of Modern Warfare, which is open to anyone who has served in the military since August 2, 1990. “Our experience has hopefully made us more aware of what we need to do for all veterans,” he concludes. (Contact: jrowan@vva.org)

Michael Keating

1943: Jacob Rand has retired from medicine—the profession he took up after his military service in World War II—and is now an inventor. In 2007 he received a patent for a device that prevents tractor trailers from jack-knifing. **... 1947: Samuel Menashe** was interviewed by online magazine *Nextbook*. “I never decided to be a poet,” he said, in a lengthy Q&A. “I don’t decide anything. I fall off the brink and land someplace else” **... 1948: Vera Jiji** has retired from teaching English at Brooklyn College and found another creative outlet: She took up the cello and plays chamber music. To encourage others to follow suit, Vera has just published *Cello Playing for Music Lovers*. “If you’ve ever dreamed of playing the cello, here’s how you can actually learn to do it,” she says **... 1949: Geoffrey Hartman**, Sterling Professor Emeritus of English at Yale, still puts in appearances on the New Haven campus: He’s the project director and faculty advisor for the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, which has been housed at Yale for 25 years **... 1950: Thomas MacAvoy** sends greetings to his brothers at Phi Omega Alpha. Since graduating from QC, Tom served in the Air Force, went to grad school, worked for Corning Glass—he retired from its presidency in the early 1980s—and then had a second career teaching in business schools. Father of four and grandfather of 10, he lives in Charlottesville, VA, with Peggy, his wife of 55 years **... 1955: Marc and Phyllis Pilisuk** both have new books in print. Marc, a professor at Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center, has written *Who Benefits from Global Violence and War: Uncovering a Destructive System*

(Greenwood/Praeger); Phyllis has completed *Expressing Myself Through Poetry* (iUniverse), her fourth collection of verse **... 1956: Miriam Brickman** works both sides of the Atlantic; last year, the versatile pianist shuttled from the New York area to England and France for gigs **... “Archie” Ken Fitzgerald** spent most of his career in the computer industry, designing and developing operating systems and then moving into networking. He also taught graduate-level computer science courses at Southern University in Baton Rouge. Archie, a Phi Omega Alpha brother, raised five children with his wife, Pat, a Sigma Delta Chi **... 1960: Allan Loren** has been nominated to the board of Fair Isaac Corporation, which provides credit scoring, decision management, fraud detection and credit risk score services **... 1961: Peggy Sapphire** has been appointed to the board of the Frost Place in Franconia, NH. Partisan Press published her first poetry collection, *A Possible Explanation*, two years ago. Peggy and her husband, Robert Feinberg, live in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont in a home they designed themselves **... 1963: Michael Goldstein**, retired CEO of Toys “R” Us, sits on the boards of Bear Stearns and Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. But he also volunteers at P.S. 107, where he was Principal for the Day in 1996. Michael visits the school—where children with disabilities are mainstreamed with the general K-6 population—several times a year, participates in fundraisers, and finances special events **... 1965: Lynne Friedman** (MS ’74) had a solo exhibit, *Dancing Ground of the Sun: Paintings of New Mexico*, at the Booth Western Art Museum in

Cartersville, GA, that ended in Feb. 2008. The next month her work appeared in *La Tierra Sagrada: Past, Present & Future* at the Galeria Nacional Museum in San Jose, Costa Rica **... Alan Stillson** is the co-author of *Sudokuagrams* (Sterling), which combines the logic skills of sudoku with the language skill of anagramming (unscrambling) words. Alan has written or co-written eight other books, including seven titles designated as Official American Mensa Puzzle Books **... 1969: Kalila Borghini**, a social worker and ordained Yoruba priest, maintains a private practice in Manhattan,



specializing in psycho-spiritual therapy and healing. She is writing a book and has launched a Web site, www.childofthestones.com **... 1970: C.J. Golden** is making the rounds of the lecture circuit, talking about *The Tao of the Defiant Woman*, a life guide she wrote for women over age 40. C.J. also reaches listeners through “Golden Ponderings,” her segment on Sally Jesse Raphael’s syndicated TalkNet radio show **... 1972: Irene Buszko** (MFA) shared the billing late last fall at *Suburban Landscape*, a two-person show at Suffolk Community College’s Gallery West. Irene comes back to Queens fairly often—she paints her canvases from direct observation in Richmond Hill **... Bernice Siegal** is a supervising judge of the Queens County Civil Court, where she served on the bench for five years **... 1973: Earl Fitz** (MA), who completed his doctorate at the CUNY

Graduate Center, has enjoyed a distinguished teaching career. After positions at the University of Michigan, the University of Iowa, Dickinson College, and LaGuardia Community College **... Anthony Pantaleo** was chosen School Practitioner of the Year by the New York Association of School Psychologists. The award committee recognized Anthony for his 30 years of service to Long Island’s Elwood School District **... 1976: Patricia Farrell**, a psychologist who earned her doctorate at New York Univer-

sity, has been appointed to New Jersey’s Board of Psychological Examiners, the licensing authority for psychologists in the state. A multimedia pundit, she is the moderator of WebMD’s anxiety/panic board and appears frequently on television. To see clips of her on “The Today Show” and “Anderson Cooper 360,” or get general consumer information, visit her Web site at www.drfarrell.net **... Dom Montalvo** has been appointed vice president of operations at Florida Metropolitan University, where he will oversee operations for 10 FMU locations and

also, as a supplement, by the *New York Times*. The list, representing the top five percent of attorneys in the metropolitan New York area, was compiled through an independent survey of nearly 90,000 lawyers **... Jerry Seinfeld** remains as busy as a certain honey-making insect; he co-wrote, produced, and lent—or rented—his voice to *Bee Movie*, an animated film released in October **... 1977: Barbara Arnstein** (MS 1983) has written a fantasy short story, “You May Grow Up to Be a Fish.” Would-be readers can download it from the Amazon



four National School of Technology campuses with nearly 13,000 students and 1,300 employees. Dom has previously held executive positions at Kaplan Higher Education, Thompson Learning Corporation, and High Tech Institute **... Warren Nimetz**, a partner in international law firm Fulbright & Jaworski L.L.P., was named to the New York Super Lawyers list published by *Law & Politics* magazine and

also, as a supplement, by the *New York Times*. The list, representing the top five percent of attorneys in the metropolitan New York area, was compiled through an independent survey of nearly 90,000 lawyers **... Jerry Seinfeld** remains as busy as a certain honey-making insect; he co-wrote, produced, and lent—or rented—his voice to *Bee Movie*, an animated film released in October **... 1977: Barbara Arnstein** (MS 1983) has written a fantasy short story, “You May Grow Up to Be a Fish.” Would-be readers can download it from the Amazon

Auto-Motivated

Bruce Bendell ’75 is at the wheel of New York’s largest car dealership

Bruce Bendell ’75 was not yet 17 when he bought his first set of wheels, a red Chevy Impala station wagon, for \$200. Six months later, he sold it for \$500. Bendell has been making money off cars ever since. Today, he’s the chief executive, president, and chief financial officer of Queens-based Major Automotive Companies Inc., one of the largest dealership groups in the state.

He got his inspiration from his dad, a Ukrainian-born butcher who emigrated after World War II, settling in Brooklyn. “My father got up at about 4 am daily and got home at around 8 pm,” says Bendell. “Seeing how hard he worked, I wanted to make money and be less dependent.” In his teens, the future businessman sold ice cream from a Mister Softee truck for two summers. Then, teaming up with his older brother, he decided to handle merchandise that was less perishable and more lucrative.

With \$22,000 in collective savings—Bruce, who was studying economics and accounting at QC, could kick in only \$6000—they bought a car wash and repair shop in Brooklyn. “The car wash was great when it was sunny,” Bendell observes. Looking for year-round earnings, they unloaded the car wash and opened an indoor used-auto lot. “Cars were cheaper then; people traded them in frequently,” continues Bendell, who approached procurement creatively. One of his most successful gambits was purchasing police cars that were less than two years old, and turning them into New York City taxis.

The brothers operated the lot seven days a week, spelling each other on alternate Sundays, a schedule that complicated the younger man’s academic career. “Considering all of my jobs, I didn’t come out with the highest grades,” Bendell admits. “But I understood what I was doing.”

That’s an understatement. In an era when it was hard for used-car dealers to arrange bank loans for their clientele, he realized that many of his customers needed help. “I talked to the Pomonok office of Marine Midland, right near the QC campus, and grabbed applications that I brought to the lot for buyers, thereby providing ‘bank financing,’” he recalls.

In 1985 the Bendells acquired Major Chevrolet, an Astoria dealership. Adding more franchises over time, they grouped them under the umbrella of Major Automotive, which with its affiliates now comprises 18 dealerships in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Major’s headquarters on Northern Boulevard is a local economic engine, with 100 salespersons. For 15 years, the founders’ father, who died in 1995, was one of them. “At age 65, I made him quit his business and work for us,” says Bendell. “He was our best salesman.” Bendell himself left sales long ago to oversee corporate operations.

Despite his high-powered job, he makes time for community service. He’s a director of the Queens Chamber of Commerce, the Long Island City Business Development Corporation, and the Long Island City Lions Club, as well as a member of the management board of the Long Island City YMCA. “I don’t know how to say no sometimes,” comments the busy executive, who is also a member of the QC Foundation Board.

Married to Lauren for 25 years, the father of three children whose ages range from 14 to 21, Bendell has new concerns these days. “Now that we’ve grown the empire, the question is, how do we control it and pass it down to the next generation?” he says. If his kids don’t want to join the family business, he won’t object. But on one issue, Bendell is adamant. “When she first started driving, I told my oldest daughter, who’s a college student, that she’s not getting a new car,” he says. “Used cars offer better value and are much more appropriate for new drivers.”



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Shorts section of Amazon.com's Books category for only 49 cents ... **Howard Shareff** has sold the general dental practice he ran for 23 years and launched a wellness-based business. Its initial product is a beginner's yoga program to reduce physical and mental stress. Howard believes in what he sells; after practicing yoga for years, he collaborated with his instructor on the DVD and manual. Find out more at www.youcallthisyoga.com ... **1978: Edmund Dane** was elected to Nassau County Family Court. An attorney with more than a quarter-century's experience in matrimonial law and family court matters, he previously served in district court ... **Anthony Gagliano** just published his first novel, *Straits of Fortune* (Morrow). After briefly attending graduate school at Columbia, Anthony joined the work force; his resume includes a turn as house detective at the St. Moritz hotel in Manhattan. Now he lives in Miami with his family ... **1981: Marsha Brandsdorfer** has spent much of the past 25 years supporting herself as a legal assistant. She currently works for a large patent litigation law firm in California. *The Accidental Secretary*, the memoir Marsha wrote about her experiences, can be purchased online through Xlibris; to read an excerpt, visit www.accidentalsecretary.com ... **1982: Austin Alexis** has written a chapbook, *Lovers and Drag Queens*, published by Poets Wear Prada Press ... **Robert Wann** was appointed to the board of directors of New York Community Bancorp Inc. and its subsidiaries, New York Community Bank and New York Commercial Bank. He has been COO of New York Community Bancorp since



2003 ... **1987: Kaitsen Woo**, who has a master's in architecture from the University of Buffalo, was recognized for his continued service to the school: The UB Alumni Association awarded him the Volunteer Recognition Medal for 2007 at a dinner in downtown Buffalo on April 5 ... **1988: April Lynn James** ('96, MA '90) won an Individual Artist Grant from the Queens Council on the Arts for the current calendar year. A mezzo-soprano who specializes in trouser roles—male characters traditionally sung by women—she'll use her \$2500 grant to present a concert of 18th-century music at St. Gabriel's Church in Hollis on October 12 ... **1989: Juan Acosta** worked as a paramedic before graduating from the New York School of Osteopathic Medicine in 1997; he is now the EMS medical director at St. Barnabas Hospital, where he did his residency. An online medical control physician for the Fire Department of New York, Juan is finishing a master's in clinical investigations at Weill Cornell Medical College ... **1990: Phil Lewis** (MA) returned to campus in 2004 to serve as an adjunct lecturer in the sociology department. He also works for the New York City Department of Finance, where he is the director of data analytics ... **1992: Carlos Manzano** has been named executive director of the New York City Latin Media and Entertainment Commission. Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced Carlos's appointment last fall at a Gracie Mansion reception in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month ... **Deborah J. Piazza** has joined Hodgson Russ as a partner in the Restructuring, Bankruptcy & Commercial Litigation Practice Group, where she handles restructurings,



commercial finance, Chapter 11 bankruptcies, and workouts. Deborah works in the NYC office of the firm ... **1993: Kevin Dunn** has written *The Necromancer*, a horror novel set in 17th-century Salem. Multi-Media Publications released the title in March, just in time for Kevin to do a reading at the Horrorfind Weekend convention in Adelphi, MD. To learn more about the book, visit www.thenecromancer.com ... **1996: Nazo (Nazar) Haroutunian** has been promoted to operations manager of the new Stamford, CT, office of Starpoint Solutions, a firm that provides enterprise-wide consulting and custom application and integration solutions. Nazo lives with his wife and daughter in Hillsdale, NJ ... **Andrew Jackson** (MLS), executive director of the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center, was one of six community leaders honored at the annual African-American History Month celebration held by New York City Comptroller William Thompson. Andrew was hailed as an activist librarian who calls attention to Africana history and culture and encourages reading ... **1999: Robert Manley** (MA) is senior VP and head of the post-war and contemporary department at Christie's New York; in his previous position, as head of post-war and contemporary art evening sales, he presided over record-breaking events ... **Kenneth H. Ryesky** (MLS) is a solo law practitioner in East Northport and an adjunct at QC, where he teaches classes in business law and taxation. He recently published articles in the *BYU Education & Law Journal* and the *Journal of Effective Teaching* ... **2001: Rafael Elster** was featured in a "60 Minutes"



segment about Venezuela's innovative music education program, El Sistema. He directs a Nucleos branch in the program, which operates youth orchestras throughout the country, providing free instruments and training to underprivileged children ... **Marsha Heydt** reports that her first CD, *One Night*, has been released by Blue Toucan Records. To be apprised of Marsha's activities, visit www.marshaheydt.net or myspace.com/marshaheydt ... **2003: Numyi Lee** (MFA) had a solo exhibition of her paintings at Chashama in midtown Manhattan last November. Numyi is currently an artist in residence at Chashama's 57th Street gallery; some of her work makes brief appearances in the movie *American Gangster* ... **2005: Didier Garcier** (pictured with wife) is running pixélion, the graphic design firm that he launched in college. Recently he designed the Ford Foundation's Web site and the 2006 annual report for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation ...



Lifetime, and NFL Football are among his outlets. He has also launched a music school that teaches kids about playing in rock ensembles ... **Kenji Omae** (MA) is playing and teaching saxophone in Seoul, Korea. He recently took first place in the country's Jarasum International Festival competition ... **2007: Ross Herskovits** braved thick smoke to carry a disabled 84-year-old neighbor to safety. Ross hopes to become a social studies teacher; the fire marshal invited him to apply to the fire department instead. Community Board 8 honored the hero at its February meeting ... **Rachelle Nones** (MS ED) is editing an English handbook that will help students prepare for high-stakes tests. Her article "Homework Wars—Is Homework Helpful or Harmful?" will be published in an upcoming edition of *Teacher & Principal Quarterly* ... **Dave Volpe** is going to Colorado this summer. He's attending the Aspen Music Festival's Film Scoring Program, which admits only a few composers each year ... **Bradd Wierzbicki** is shooting for a pro basketball career overseas. Bradd, whose cumulative 1,686 points makes him the fourth-highest scorer in Knights history, is living in Malaga and practicing with two top Spanish teams.

WE REMEMBER

Evelyn "Mimi" Erkins Darrow, '41
Seymour Dorman, '41
Dorothy Van Dillen, '41
Jane Weinberger Stein, '41
Donald Wladaver, '41
Gladys Wurtenburg, '41
Dr. John J. Burns, '42
Joseph Ungar, '43
Leah Willner Cohen, '44
Florence Heyman Kravtin, '45
Thelma Wickers, '46
Harriet Zeamans Kupferberg, '47

For a more complete list, see our Webzine at www.qc.cuny.edu/nis/qmag/qwebzine.php

ALUMNI NEWS

Homecoming Weekend Starring George Carlin! Homecoming 2008 will take place September 20–21 with seminars, sports, a concert, brunch, a tour of the Louis Armstrong House, and a performance by **George Carlin on Saturday, September 20**. To get tickets to see this legendary comedian at the special alumni price of \$45, call **718-793-8080 after July 7**. First 100 ticket buyers will be invited to a special post-concert reception. Invitations and more information about the weekend will be mailed out soon!

GOLF & TENNIS CLASSIC The college's third annual Golf & Tennis Classic will be held at the beautiful Fresh Meadow Country Club in Lake Success, LI, on Monday, August 25. For more information or to register, visit www.qc.cuny.edu/QCSPORTS/golf_tennis_classic.html or call **718-997-2733**.

SEND US YOUR NEWS We want to hear more from you. Tell us where you are and what you are doing, and enclose a photo.

Email: alumni@qc.cuny.edu
Mail: Alumni News, Office of Alumni Affairs, Queens College, 65-30 Kissena Boulevard, Flushing, NY 11367. Phone: **718-997-3930**

Look for us on the Web as we are always adding news about the college and upcoming events: www.qc.cuny.edu/alumni_affairs

And check for winter and summer **Web-only updates of Q magazine** at www.qc.cuny.edu/nis/qmag/qwebzine.php

MISSING ALUMNI Not on our mailing list? You can add or update your address at www.qc.cuny.edu/QCF.



(Opposite page, from top)
Iron Man flexed box-office muscles in the spring. The movie starring Robert Downey (left) was directed by QC alum Jon Favreau.

Two new exchange programs brought 16 out-of-town students to Flushing for the fall semester. Some of the participants lunched with President James Muyskens and Vice President Sue Henderson.

(This page, clockwise from top left)
Earning an A for effort, Josh Lehman '67 drove from Massachusetts to turn in a sign of his time at QC. Lehman, who took the souvenir from the discard pile in his student days, says it marked a small structure near Jefferson Hall; campus facilities has no record of Z mysterious building.

An all-star combo opened Armstrong Alley, the concert space in the college's main dining hall. Helping President Muyskens (center) cut the ribbon are Deslyn Dyer (Armstrong House Museum), Music School Director Ed Smaldone, Antonio Hart (Music), and Jackie Harris (Armstrong Educational Foundation).

Alums bend elbows in March at a reception before the student production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Visiting QC Music Professor Salman Ahmad and his wife, Samina, flank Nobel Peace Prize laureate Al Gore in December 2007 at the Oslo concert celebrating his award. Ahmad performed during the event with his band Junoon.



Student Journalists File Award-Winning Paper

The *Knight News* made headlines last fall at the National College Media Convention in Washington, D.C. Competing for the first time for the prestigious Associate Collegiate Press Pacemaker Award, QC's biweekly ranked in the top 20, out of 250 entries. The paper also received the Best in Show trophy, held here by Editor-in-Chief Steven Appel. The *Knight News* accumulated more prizes in the spring, including Best College Newspaper 2007-2008 and First Place with Special Merit from the American Scholastic Press Association, as well as the Society of Professional Journalists' Mark of Excellence Second Place Award for Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper.



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