Building on the Legacy of Louis Armstrong
COMMEMORATIVE GIFTS
A Living Legacy

Commemorative gifts provide you with the opportunity to leave behind your own permanent legacy. There is no better way to honor a graduate, remember a professor, or memorialize a loved one.


Bricks will be placed in designated areas on the Queens College campus. They can be created in your name or to honor a classmate, professor, club, houseplan member, etc.

Tree Plaque: Choose a living tribute to help beautify the 80-acre college landscape. A bronze plaque will be placed at the base of your tree.

Kupferberg Center Seating Plaque will be placed on the armrest of one seat in either the 475-seat Goldstein Theatre or the 2,140-seat Colden Auditorium.

From the President

What a pleasure it was to participate in this summer’s ribbon-cutting for the new $26 million Louis Armstrong Center, subject of the cover story on page 14. First envisioned more than 20 years ago, the center features space for exhibitions, a jazz club for performances, and the extensive personal archive of Lucille and Louis Armstrong, formerly housed on the Queens College campus. The collection includes 650 home-recorded red-to-red tapes in hand-decorated boxes, 86 scrapbooks, 5,000 photographs, and 12 linear feet of papers, letters, and manuscripts. These materials will enhance scholars’ understanding of the musician widely regarded as the first great jazz soloist. The article, richly illustrated with photographs, serves as a tour of the center and captures the thrill of its opening, with the support of New York City and State governments. Do come and visit [www.louisarmstronghouse.org/our-new-center](http://www.louisarmstronghouse.org/our-new-center)!

In other exciting news, Queens College Athletics had a banner year: Seven teams made it to the East Coast Conference playoffs and three went to the NCAA tournament. Read about these Knights to remember on page 8.

As it does every year, Queens magazine features accounts of accomplished alumni. Manuel Godoy ‘17 founded Black Sands Entertainment with his wife, Grisell; the company specializes in comic books, graphic novels, video games, and animation rooted in a Black-centered appreciation of precolonial history. In our article, on page 20, Godoy explains how his major—economics—prepared him to run a business. Dominick Yezzo ‘75 was recovering from his military tour in Vietnam when he enrolled at Queens College; he credits the college with giving him the education that enabled him to thrive in his multifaceted career as a writer, college professor, attorney, judge, and volunteer advocate for fellow veterans. He is profiled on page 22.

Rounding out this issue are stories about the first Diversity Week on campus (page 11); TIME 2000, a math teacher preparation program offered only at Queens College (page 12); and CUNY Distinguished Professor of Sociology Pyong Gap Min (page 18), whose research has focused on Koreans and Korean Americans.

We want to hear your stories, too. Contact us at qmag@qc.cuny.edu so we can share your news with the Queens College community.

Sincerely,

President Frank H. Wu

Cover: The Louis Armstrong Center is a cultural and architectural landmark. Inset: Ready to cut the ribbon are (rear, from left) Community Board 3 Chair Frank Taylor, State Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright, Louis Armstrong House Museum (LAHM) Board Chair Jay Hershenson, President Frank H. Wu, NYC Commissioner of Cultural Affairs Laurie Cumbo, State Senator Jessica Ramos, LAHM Board Treasurer Stephen Malott, NYC Council Member Francisco Moya, Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation Board Member Jonathan Robok, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, CUNY Chancellor Felix Rodriguez, LAHM Board Members Sonie Chaser and Larry Miller, and (center front) LAHM Executive Director Regina Bain.

Cover photos by Andrew Koby.

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We welcome your letters: qmag@qc.cuny.edu
CUNY Distinguishes QC Professors

Two QC faculty members—Ann米尔 Alkaly (Classical, Middle Eastern, and Asian Languages and Cultures) and Talia Schaffer (English)—are among the dozen scholars nominated in August 2023 to distinguished CUNY professorships.

“The 12 faculty members who have recently been elevated to CUNY’s distinguished professorate join a group of extraordinary scholars and teachers who have built international reputations for their scholarship, creativity, and vision,” said Chancellor Félix V. Mates Rodríguez. “We congratulate these individuals on their latest recognition of their accomplished status as leading lights within their fields.”

Alkaly is a poet, novelist, translator, critic, and scholar with some 30 books to his credit, including two new titles, Controlled Demolition: A work in four books, and Follow the Person: Archival Encounters, which will be published in 2024. He has written for The New York Times, Time magazine, The Village Voice, The New Republic, and Middle East East Report, as well as for such literary journals as Grand Street, Conjunctions, and Paper Air.

In 2017, he received a Before Columbus Foundation American Book Award as the founding editor of Lost & Found: The CUNY Poetics Document Initiative. Alkaly has published widely in topics in 19th-century literature and material culture, with over 50 articles on disability studies, nonconformism in the Victorian novel, gender- and race-related cults, popular fiction, aestheticism, and Victorian texts. In her most recent book, Communities of Care: The Social Ethics of Victorian Fiction, she uses the feminist philosophy of ethics of care as a way of understanding Victorian social relations. Her other books include Romance’s Rival, Familiar Monsters, and Victorian Fiction, which won the North American Victorian Studies Association’s Best Book Prize for 2016 and was selected as one of Choice’s Outstanding Academic Books of 2016.

“I warmly congratulate Annир Alkaly and Talia Schaffer on their elevation to distinguished status,” said President Frank H. Wu. “They are outstanding members of the QC faculty and deserve this recognition.”

Changes Near the Top

Just in time for Fall 2023, Queens College announced several executive appointments.

Maria Delongoria was named interim associate provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs. Delongoria came QC from Medgar Evers College, where she served as chair of the Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences, associate professor of History, and executive director of the Caribbean Research Center.

Sonija Munshi was appointed director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership. For the past year, Munshi led the Asian American / Asian Research Institute (AA/ARI) as interim executive director.

Yung-Yi Diana Pan, most recently an associate professor of Sociology at Brooklyn College and The Graduate Center, succeeded Munshi as interim executive director of AA/ARI at Brooklyn College, Pan served as the director of American Studies and the faculty dean associate of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

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Mazis Sanchez, QC’s interim general counsel since April 2022, was given the full title.

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Alumni Entrepreneurs Build on College LaunchPad

Reginald Wills ’22 and Sojen Wu Wu ’22 have big plans for their small start-up business.

In December 2022, Wills and Wu Wu finished first in the network round of the national Blackstone LaunchPad Business Idea Competition, under the category of Social and Climate Impact. (They advanced to the national contest upon winning the same category in the Queens College tier of the competition.) Now, with their prize—a $10,000 grant from the Blackstone Charitable Foundation—they’re developing the company they pitched, Collabiversity. Envisioned as an intermediary between brands and colleges, Collabiversity will create a merchandise and digital assets marketplace for students and alumni and raise scholarship funds for students. Wills and Wu Wu came up with the concept after casualwear brand Kid released its first limited QC collection and provided a portion of sales revenue to the college.

“My name is Mas peri Mitchell (Economics),” he taught both students in his Introduction to Business Writing course, encouraged them to work together, and mentored them through the competition. “They beat 45 other universities/colleges, including but not limited to Cornell University, NYU, UCLA, University of Texas, Baruch College, and Syracuse, in only Queens College’s second year of competing. It’s a huge deal.”

Aiming for the Moon with the Artemis I Mission

Artemis I got off the ground in November 2022 with help of computer science major Umar Kagzi ’22. He was part of a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) team that developed software for the mission, an uncrewed test flight that orbited and flew beyond the moon.

Specifically, as a software engineer intern for NASA, he helped write test flight software for the SLS (Space Launch System)–Artemis Program. “My primary task was to develop this software for both the Artemis I and Artemis II spacecraft using Python and an internal NASA tool,” Kagzi explained. “The software tested the internal components and the guidance and navigation systems of the spacecraft in a virtual environment to ensure they would work fine in the actual Artemis I spacecraft.” Kagzi worked for NASA as a software engineer for about two years, during much of that period he was studying at Queens College.

Since March 2023, he has been employed full-time as a software engineer for the consulting firm Accenture.

Discovery Rocks Anthropology

Contrary to popular belief, the world’s oldest profession is – paleoanthropology. Thomas Plummer (Anthropology) is the lead author of a paper recently published in Science showing that hominins—a term comprising modern humans and our extinct ancestors—used tools in food preparation 3 to 2.6 million years ago, as much as 400,000 years earlier than previously estimated.

Plummer is part of a team studying a site in Nyanza, Kenya, where they uncovered bones of hippos that had been carved up for meat, as well as stone tools that were used in that work. (The team included two QC alumnae who became CUNY graduates: Frances Forrest ’06, now on the faculty of Fairfield University, and Raquel Lamela Lopez ’13.) Stone toolmaking is a skill that scientists have attributed exclusively to humans in the genus Homo. Intriguingly, two molars discovered alongside the Paleolithic utensils come from the extinct hominin Paranthropus, raising the possibility that members of that genus crafted tools, too.

Queens Honors King

Borough leaders turned out for the college’s MLK Day Celebration on Sunday, January 15, 2023, in LeFrak Concert Hall. New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr., and Assembly Member Khadeen Anderson ’19 joined President Frank H. Wu and student leaders in offering greetings.

The program began with a stirring rendition of “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” the Black national anthem, by Aisayma Lennard, an Admissions counselor at QC. Event honoree Jelani Cobb, dean of the Columbia Journalism School and staff writer for The New Yorker, delivered the keynote. The program also included the first screening of a video tribute, “The Legacy Connection: Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Queens College.” But for many, the most memorable part of the afternoon was a set by jazz vocalist Samara Joy, who brought down the sold-out house. The next month, she won two GRAMMY awards: Best New Artist and Best Jazz Vocal Album.

In 2024, QC will hold its MLK Day Celebration on Sunday, January 14.

Federal Officials Visit QC To Mark AANAPISI Week

On September 22, 2023, President Joe Biden issued the first-ever presidential proclamation designating September 25-October 1 as Asian American and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander–serving Institutions (AANAPISI) Week. Four days later, Nasser Paydar, U.S. assistant secretary for Postsecondary Education—the highest-ranking federal higher education official—visited Queens College, highlighting the administration’s efforts to strengthen AANAPISIs and support the nation’s Asian American and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities.

AANAPISIs are defined as colleges or universities with an undergraduate enrollment that is at least 10 per cent Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander, which hosts the AANAPISI Project, certainly qualifies. Among the project’s student services are multilingual tutoring, offered in collaboration with the college’s writing center, and opportunities for experiential learning through internships with local AAIP institutions. Faculty have access to workshops designed to strengthen understanding of local AAIP histories and issues and encourage development of AAIP-focused course content.

Paydar toured campus with Dean of Students, and member of the college administration to discuss federal support for AANAPISIs, affordability and student retention initiatives, maintaining multiple minority-serving institution statuses, and student mental health challenges and support services. In connection with the visit, a panel of students covered topics such as belonging and inclusion, first-generation student status, English as a Second Language, and mental health.

Queen's Honors Program

From left: Wu, Adam, jazz vocalist Samara Joy, CUNY Board of Trustees Vice Chair Sandra Wilkin, Columbia Journalism School Dean Jessi Cobb, and Richards.

Bands of Brothers

House plans were a significant part of student life at Queens College from the late fifties to the early seventies. Many students forged lifetime friendships through these social organizations. Alumni of Big Houses connected in person on campus and over Zoom during a reunion in June 2023.

Roughly two and a half months later, an on-campus gathering for Phil Epston ’63 attracted 25 members of the fraternity spanning class years 1956–1974. The brothers remain involved with their alma mater through the Phi Epston Pi Scholarship Endowment, which to date has given awards to 16 students. Two of them attended the reunion: The 2023 scholarship recipient, Red Zapata-Tino, a senior majoring in accounting, delivered remarks.

From left: Erika Morisutu, Frank H. Wu, Nasser Paydar, and Phil Kim

Initiative on AANAPISIs. These officials met President Frank H. Wu and members of the college administration to discuss federal support for AANAPISIs, affordability and student retention initiatives, maintaining multiple minority-serving institution statuses, and student mental health challenges and support services. In connection with the visit, a panel of students covered topics such as belonging and inclusion, first-generation student status, English as a Second Language, and mental health.
Great Sports

In 2022–2023, Athletics Had a Year for the History Books

By John Scarinci

The 2022-23 Queens College Athletics season was one to remember. The program was vastly improved from the previous year, with multiple teams making playoff runs and earning prestigious awards. Some teams even made school history by winning the conference championship, qualifying for their first NCAA tournament, or setting new school records.

FALL SPORTS

The 2022 men’s soccer team had one of those historic seasons. They won a program-record 13 games and hosted their first East Coast Conference (ECC) Semifinal game. Despite the loss in the semifinals, QC earned an at-large bid into the NCAA tournament—a first-ever NCAA Tournament bid.

For the opening round of the tournament, the Knights traveled all the way to Charleston, West Virginia, only to take on Adelphi University, a school located just 13 miles from Queens. Unfortunately, the Knights came up short in a hard-fought match, losing 1-0 to end their season. Head coach Frank Vertullo was named the ECC Coach of the Year for leading the Knights in their extraordinary 2022 season.

Freshman Ryann Frontera proved to be a difference maker, as she was named the ECC Rookie of the Year after leading the ECC in digs per set (5.13 per game). Additionally, junior Alexi Deodot was voted to the ECC All-Conference Second Team and sophomore Christina Francis was an All-Conference honorable mention selection.

Although the women’s soccer team failed to reach the ECC playoffs, finishing with a conference record of 2-6-2, the Knights had two players earn at-conference honors. Senior midfielder Marina Pappas was a Third Team All-Conference selection as was sophomore defender Sarah Anderson.

For cross country, both the men’s and women’s teams placed fifth at the 2023 ECC Championships. On the men’s side, the Knights were led by Njehan Philip, who placed 15th at ECC Championships and qualified for the NCAA East Regional. For the women’s side, Rashel Mov also qualified for the NCAA East Regional.

The 2022 men’s basketball team had one of those historic seasons. They won an at-large bid into the NCAA tournament, or setting new school records.

Several student-athletes received post-season honors, led by freshman Braniava Davia, who was named the ECC Rookie of the Year, while also being named to the All-ECC Third Team and All-Metropolitan Second Team. Guards Raven Pitt and Chelsea Reeves received third-team All-Conference honors, too.

The men’s basketball team came up just short of qualifying for the ECC playoffs last season. Nonetheless, the Knights had some notable individual accomplishments. Senior center Tyler Carey was selected as the ECC Defensive Player of the Year and earned a spot on the All-Conference Second Team and the All-Metropolitan Second Team. Sophomore guard Saniya Diamond was voted to the All-Conference Third Team.

SPRING SPORTS

The spring season was full of thrilling moments and perhaps no Queens team had more thrills than the baseball team. The Knights captured their first ECC title since 1998 in dramatic fashion. Queens defeated rival Molloy University, 9-8, in the championship game, winning on a walk-off error in extra innings. The Knights earned a bit of revenge against Molloy, who had defeated them in the championship game the previous year. The win also automatically qualified the Knights for the NCAA regionals, their second appearance in school history.

The spring season came to a close with the welcoming of a new mascot to Queens College. The old mascot, “Sir Wins-a-Lot,” was laid to rest and his successor, “the Knight,” was anointed in a campus ceremony in February. The fun and lively event helped set the tone for an exciting slate of spring sports.

The winter season was highlighted by the women’s basketball team, who qualified for the postseason for the first time since the 2017-18 season and then earned an upset victory in the ECC playoffs. The Knights came into the playoffs as the #6 seed and got the road to knock off Mercy College, 66-52, in the opening round.

Unfortunately, the Knights season ended in the next game in the ECC semifinals against St. Thomas Aquinas College. For cross country, both the men’s and women’s teams were voted to the ECC All-Conference Second Team.

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Seven members of the team earned All-ECC Honors. Sophomore second baseman Mark Cisco, freshman outfielder Jovann Jimenez and senior first baseman Anthony Fontana were First-Team selections. Jimenez was also the ECC Rookie of the Year, the Knights’ second consecutive ECC Rookie of the Year Honoree. Sophomore Matt Filip, junior Liam Pyatt and seniors Danny Gargano and Jordan Sanabria were named to the All-ECC Second Team.

Following the conclusion of the season, Cisco, Jimenez, and Fontana earned All-East Region honors with Cisco and Jimenez being selected to the First Team and Fontana garnering Second-Team honors.

Additionally, Fontana was invited to participate in the MLB Draft League during the summer. Athletes selected for the MLB Draft League refine their skills and receive unprecedented visibility to MLB Club scouts through both in-person observation and state-of-the-art scouting technology.

The men’s tennis team put together another fantastic season which resulted in their fifth ECC championship in six years and a trip to the NCAA tournament for the 21st consecutive season. The Knights posted a 15-5 record for the year; in the ECC Championship, they knocked off St. Thomas Aquinas College, who had defeated the Knights in last year’s championship match.

In the NCAA tournament, the Knights season ended in the round of the 32 where they lost a hard-fought match to LeMoyne College by a score of 4-3.

The Knights earned numerous post-season awards in recognition of their outstanding season. Sophomore Cameron Henricy, who posted an 18-6 singles record and a 15-5 record in doubles play, was announced as the ECC Co-Player of the Year. Graduate student Ann Grimshaw and sophomore third baseman Emma Zumpol were each named to the All-ECC Second Team. Grimshaw batted .337 with a team-high 16 RBIs, while Zumpol batted .348 in conference games.

The outdoor track and field team showed improved results in the outdoor season. The Knights medaled in 12 events at the ECC Outdoor Track and Field Championships compared to two for the indoor season. On the men’s side, Demitola Babalola placed second in the 110-meter hurdles. Matthew Castro was third in the javelin throw, and Hakeem Griffiths earned the bronze in the triple jump. The 4x100 relay team also placed second.

For the women, Khareema Primus was third in the 100-meter dash and second in the 200-meter dash. Fatimah Morrobel won the bronze in the 400-meters. Bianca Hitz finished third in the 100-meter hurdles and triple jump, and Madelyn McMahon placed second in the javelin. Additionally, the 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams each placed third.

In all, the Knights sent seven teams to the ECC playoffs and had three teams reach the NCAA tournament; 42 student-athletes were awarded post-season honors with six earning major ECC Awards, six named to an All-Region team, and one earning All-American status. The 2022–2023 Queens College athletics season will go down as one for the history books. The future is looking bright for another great season this year.

The softball team returned to ECC playoffs for the first time since 2015—and they weren’t satisfied with just getting there. In the opening round of the tournament, the fourth-seeded Knights upset top-seeded Molloy University by a score of 9-0 to advance into the winner’s bracket. However, the Knights fell in their winner’s bracket game against St. Thomas Aquinas and were later eliminated by Molloy in a loser’s bracket matchup.

In addition to their team success, the Knights softball team received many individual accolades. Graduate student Alysson Dilday was a First-Team All-Conference selection. Dilday pitched a team-high 131.1 innings and finished with a 2.33 earned run average and eight wins. Senior utility player Ann Grimshaw and sophomore third baseman Emma Zumpol were each named to the All-ECC Second Team. Grimshaw batted .337 with a team-high 16 RBIs, while Zumpol batted .348 in conference games.

Members of a proudly multicultural institution developed insight into themselves and each other during Queens College’s first Diversity Week, sponsored by the CUNY Chancellor’s Campus Climate Initiative and the Petrie Foundation. Organized by Chief Diversity Officer and Dean of Diversity Jerrima DeWese and her planning committee, the “week” was short; events ran from Monday, April 17, through Friday, April 21. But the programming met up to its billing, tackling a new theme each day.

Monday was devoted to climate. Let’s Talk about Race.” The event featured a panel discussion and an interactive exploration of Hebrew and Arabic calligraphy, and Disability Justice 101: Bodily Autonomy and the Law discussion conducted over Zoom.

In keeping with Tuesday’s theme—compliance—the president’s cabinet took part in bias and compliance training. For everyone, the New York City Human Rights Commission facilitated a workshop on bystander/upstander intervention.

Culture was the topic on Wednesday. Eugenics and the Roots of Racism in American Culture connected the now discredited work of 20th-century eugenicists—who believed they could improve human beings through genetics and eugenics—with ideas about biology, behavior, and identity. At free hour, the Quad highlighted food, music, and traditions from around the world. Afternoon programs included an exercise in painting LGBTQQAJA pride, a presentation on the challenges faced by Italian Americans in higher education, and a workshop on how to realize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in classrooms, clubs, and departments.

Nontraditional students and first-generation students were the panelists for the evening event on Thursday, which emphasized community. In HAIR-E-HAIR-E, intersectional talks covered topics like hair types, color, and styling, as well as religious practices involving hair, such as head coverings and adorning. Over Zoom, players in the game-based platform Kahoots explored the intersections of oppression and sexual violence and learned how to support their communities and peers.

On Friday, under the topic of change, Diversity Week offered an all-day Dismantling and Combating Hate Conference, with a panel discussion, a networking lunch, and breakout sessions on racial healing, antisemitism, and New York City human rights law. Also on the menu that day: a student panel about diversity in neuropsychology research; a screening of a documentary about QC alum Corky Lee, a photographer and activist for Asian American rights; and a CERRU event that used fashion to present social identities (such as race, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and disability) and combat stereotyping.

(For more information about the Petrie Foundation, see Increasing Opportunity on page 34.)
Strength in Numbers

Innovative QC program has been preparing math teachers for 25 years

By Jacquelyn Southern

These are memorable times for TIME 2000, Queens College's groundbreaking program in math-teacher preparation. This year, the program has been celebrating its milestone 25th anniversary; on November 3, it hosted its 20th annual Celebrating Mathematics Teaching conference. Founding director Alice Artzt '68, MS '73, a mathematics education professor, created TIME 2000 after being dismayed by the high dropout rate among mathematics education students. In 1997, the National Science Foundation awarded her and Eleanor Armour-Thomas (Secondary Education and Youth Services, or SEYS) a grant to start a program based on a cohort model of strong preparation. This year, Christine Franklin, an emerita professor, worked with students participating in Celebrating Mathematics Teaching as freshmen. Markinson recalls guiding speakers around, assisting them, and speaking on student panels. She credits the yearly conference with cementing students' sense of themselves as future math teachers. "They look around on Conference Day and they say, 'Wow, look what I am a part of. I'm a part of something tremendous and really special that people care a whole lot about.'"

The need for well-prepared math teachers is more acute than ever, especially with the decline in math skills among secondary students. However, noting new challenges like the pandemic and artificial intelligence, Markinson takes an optimistic view of the future. "I know that TIME 2000 will react appropriately in a way that supports our students and is in touch with the needs of students in the schools," she says. "I can say with 100 percent confidence that the program faculty are lifelong learners. Nobody is stagnant, everyone is looking to evolve . . . every semester we're tweaking things, changing things, adding things, making them meet the needs of learners in 2023 and 2024. That excites us. We see that as our mission so that when we send our TIME 2000 graduates on interviews and into the classrooms, they know what they have to do."

Immersion, community, hard work, and high expectations are the backbone of TIME 2000, whose team of SEYS and Mathematics faculty prepare QC undergraduates to become mathematics teachers for grades 7–12. Whether freshmen, transfers, or QC students, applicants to the program must pass a high bar of grades, aptitude, four years of college-preparatory mathematics, serious commitment to a vocation as a mathematics teacher, and a letter of recommendation from a high school math teacher. Once admitted, they pursue a demanding curriculum of math and education courses. They also receive a tuition scholarship, faculty mentoring, enrichment opportunities, and the benefits of taking carefully sequenced coursework together as part of a close-knit cohort.

"The students benefit tenfold," says TIME 2000 alumna Mara Markinson '12, MSEd '15, an assistant professor in SEYS. "They have an immediate cohort of peers who are becoming instant friends, moving through their courses with them, tutoring each other, there for each other." Artzt herself works with each student one on one. "It’s not like she puts them in the classes and that’s that," says Alan Sultan (Mathematics), who helped shape the program. "She sees them again and again during the semester; she’s always asking about what’s going on in their lives, she takes a real interest in them, and they feel that.

Students are prepared to expect diversity of all sorts in the classroom, and they learn methods designed to respond to a variety of needs. "The thing we try to prepare our students for are the typical 80 percent of all students who do not want to learn math and see no value in it," says Artzt. During fieldwork, students are taken to observe and reflect on excellent teachers. "They all witness the same pedagogy that has been intentionally chosen," explains Markinson. "We know what we want them to see. Then they have deeply reflective assignments that have them analyzing what they saw.

To date, 312 students have graduated from TIME 2000. Most have had stunning success in their careers, with about 9 out of 10 teaching math well beyond their two-year commitment, and several working as assistant principals or principals. "We have an excellent retention record," notes Artzt. "Nationally, the retention record of teachers is dismal. If they make it to five years, it’s a miracle. To our knowledge, approximately 88 percent of our graduates are still teaching.

Queens College faculty also benefit from the program’s innovative structure, in which conversation, advising, and mentoring are key. Sultan credits TIME 2000 with enriching his own pedagogical experience. "I was a good teacher," he recalls, "but I would go into the classroom, I would do my thing, I would go home, and that would be the end of it. But in the program, I got to know the students. I got to talk to the students. It was a step up."

The annual Celebrating Mathematics Teaching conference is a showcase of the student-centered TIME 2000 community. The event offers attendees—hundreds of high school students and their mathematics teachers along with TIME 2000 students and faculty—a chance to enjoy participating in mathematical explorations presented by exemplary teachers.

This year, Christine Franklin, an emerita professor from the University of Georgia as well as a fellow of and K–12 statistics ambassador for the American Statistical Association, shared lessons from more than 40 years of teaching experience. In the afternoon, 18 workshops—many led by TIME 2000 alumni—engaged attendees in fascinating, interactive experiences.

The alumni were in familiar territory. TIME 2000 majors begin participating in Celebrating Mathematics Teaching as freshmen. Markinson recalls guiding speakers around, assisting them, and speaking on student panels. She credits the yearly conference with cementing students' sense of themselves as future math teachers. "They look around on Conference Day and they say, 'Wow, look what I am a part of. I'm a part of something tremendous and really special that people care a whole lot about.'"

The need for well-prepared math teachers is more acute than ever, especially with the decline in math skills among secondary students. However, noting new challenges like the pandemic and artificial intelligence, Markinson takes an optimistic view of the future. "I know that TIME 2000 will react appropriately in a way that supports our students and is in touch with the needs of students in the schools," she says. "I can say with 100 percent confidence that the program faculty are lifelong learners. Nobody is stagnant, everyone is looking to evolve . . . every semester we’re tweaking things, changing things, adding things, making them meet the needs of learners in 2023 and 2024. That excites us. We see that as our mission so that when we send our TIME 2000 graduates on interviews and into the classrooms, they know what they have to do."
The new Louis Armstrong Center houses the archives of its celebrated namesake, as well as exhibition and performance spaces.

Assembled on June 29, 2023, for the opening of the Louis Armstrong Center—part of the Louis Armstrong House Museum (LAHM) campus—are (from left) Community Board 3 Chair Frank Taylor, LAHM Board Chair Jay Hershenson, President Frank H. Wu, LAHM Executive Director Regina Bain, students Edimilson Garcia and Manuel Mejia, NYC Commissioner of Cultural Affairs Laurie Cumbo, State Senator Jessica Ramos, NYC Council Member Francisco Moya, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, CUNY Chancellor Felix Matos-Rodriguez, LAHM Board Members Larry Miller and Simona Chazen, and Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation Board Member Robin Bell-Stevens.

Insets at left: Richards, percussionist Joe Dyson and trumpeter Antoine Drye.

All photos by Andrew Kelly except as noted.
A visitor enjoying the “Here to Stay” exhibit

One of Armstrong’s instruments

Trumpeter Danny Jonokuchi and bassist Jen Hodge

Armstrong Center architects Sara Caples and Everardo Jefferson

Trumpeters (clockwise from bottom) Jon Faddis, Antoine Drye, Rafael Castillo, Summer Camargo, Kali Rodriguez, Waldron Ricks, Dave Adewumi, Riley Mulherkar, Linda Briceño, Steven Bernstein, Danny Jonokuchi, and Bria Skonberg

Left-right: LAMH Board Members Michele Stoddart and David Bodney; Ramos; Moya; Community Intern Rubi Batista; Cumbo; Richards

“Here to Stay” exhibit explores Armstrong’s career

Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry

Frank Sinatra High School for the Arts Jazz Ensemble

Left-right: Matos-Rodriguez, Director of Research Collections Ricky Riccardi, and Wu

Hershenson and ASL Interpreter Brandon Kazen Maddox

Queens: The Magazine of Queens College

Photo: Andy Poon

Moya

Bain
Breaking New Academic Ground

CUNY Distinguished Professor of Sociology Pyong Gap Min made QC a center for the study of Koreans and Korean Americans

By Leslie Jay

“Queens College has been the best of places for me. I enjoy conducting research on Asian Americans and there’s a large Asian community in Flushing, which serves as a natural laboratory.”

“Immigration and assimilation have changed American society,” observes Pyong Gap Min, CUNY Distinguished Professor of Sociology. Min has had a similar impact on Queens College. The first faculty member to focus on Koreans and Korean Americans, he founded the Research Center for Korean Community (RCKC), which promotes research on Korean Americans and disseminates its data and information to the QC and Korean communities, as well as the Korean government. On a more personal note, in anticipation of his retirement in 2024, he established a scholarship in his name for a sociology student experiencing financial or family difficulties.

Min understands these issues all too well. He grew up in a rural Korean area where people had lots of children, losing many of them before they reached adulthood. “My parents had seven children; I was the only survivor,” he says. “My mother died when I was eight. My father was a farmer who had only three to four months of education.”

To attend high school, Min moved to Seoul. “I had no money,” he recalls. He slept in an unheated room, walked to school instead of taking a bus, and skipped lunch, which the school didn’t supply. “While the other kids were eating, I walked around campus.” The reward for his discipline: “I was accepted into the best university in Korea.”

At Seoul National University, Min earned a bachelor’s degree in history, supporting himself by tutoring high school students from rich families in English, in preparation for their college admission tests. He spent six months as a general reporter with the Korea Herald, an English-language newspaper, and two years teaching English in high schools and private academies before deciding to go back to school himself. “I wanted to be a scholar,” he says. “I liked to study.” Weighing options in the United States, he applied to the institution with the lowest tuition—Georgia State University—and was admitted.

In Atlanta, Min juggled minimum wage jobs and graduate school, earning a master’s degree in history and a PhD in educational philosophy. Unable to land a job, he completed a second PhD in sociology, becoming an instructor and a research associate at Georgia State. A tenure track position proved elusive. “The job market for sociology was terrible,” he notes. “I submitted more than 100 applications.” His sociology dissertation came from a brand-new program at Georgia State, which left him at a competitive disadvantage.

On the suggestion of a sympathetic committee member, Min applied for a National Science Foundation grant. In 1986, the NSF awarded him $78,000 to research “Some Positive Functions of Korean Immigrants in Los Angeles,” a project that strengthened his curriculum vitae. When QC’s sociology department opened a search for an expert on Korean and Korean American community, Min was among the five candidates interviewed. “He was very active, had two PhDs and an NSF grant,” reports Andrew Beveridge, sociology emeritus. “It was a no-brainer to hire him.”

Appointed an assistant professor in 1987 at age 45—“late,” Min says—he advanced quickly. Within nine years, he was promoted to full professor; he established the RCKC, serving as its director, in 2009. The following year CUNY named him a distinguished professor. “Assembling his materials, it was plain that Min’s work was recognized as seminal by a dozen international recognized scholars in Asian and Migration Studies who reviewed his work,” comments Beveridge.

“I feel very lucky,” says Min. “Queens College has been the best of places for me. I enjoy conducting research on Asian Americans and there’s a large Asian community in Flushing, which serves as a natural laboratory.” Exploring topics such as immigrant entrepreneurship, religious and ethnic identity, and redress for Korean “comfort women” enwalled in Japanese military brothels, he has written seven books, edited or co-edited 15 more, and released a steady stream of chapters, journal articles, and book reviews.

Not surprisingly, Min has accumulated honors and distinctions, including fellowships, book awards, a second NSF grant, and recognition from the New York City Comptroller’s Office for his tremendous contributions to the city. In 2012 he was the first Asian American to receive the Distinguished Career Award from the International Migration Section of the American Sociological Association. Five years later, the government of Korea gave him the Presidential Award. He was recently nominated for membership in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

For Min, retirement represents just another phase in a remarkable career. “I cannot stop doing research,” he declares. He gets up at six in the morning, goes to the park, and regularly plays tennis. “You have to continue your work to be healthy, and you have to keep healthy to be able to contribute.” He hopes he’ll be succeeded at the RCKC by another immigrant Korean sociologist, whom he can assist by getting grants, collecting donations, and inviting visiting scholars from Korea. His next book will tackle a subject he knows intimately: He plans to write his autobiography.
Alum Blazes Own Trail Publishing Black-Centered Comics

Keeping Control of His Company, Manuel Godoy ’17 Rejects Shark Tank Offer

By Bob Suter

When Manuel Godoy ’17 and his spouse Geiszel walked onto the set to face the “shark” investors on ABC’s “Shark Tank” show in January 2022, it appeared that all the stars were in alignment for the couple to move forward with their dream to turn their company, Black Sands Entertainment, into a dominant purveyor of comic books, graphic novels, video games, and animation grounded in a Black-centered appreciation of history before colonialism.

Applying that evening as a “guest shark” was the comic actor and entrepreneur Kevin Hart, one of these people Manuel Godoy has said he most admires for their savvy in marketing, managing, and continuing to own their intellectual property—the others being filmmakers Tyler Perry and George Lucas. As Godoy had anticipated since learning two weeks prior of Hart’s appearance, the comedian was very interested in what he had to pitch.

Offers and counter-offers ensued; the Godoys walked away with a tentative deal in which Hart and fellow shark Mark Cuban would receive an equity stake in Black Sands Entertainment. In return, Hart’s Hartbeat media company would offer its considerable resources to help Black Sands expand its portfolio of offerings, grow their distribution, and possibly move into film, television, and video game production.

But the partnership was not to be. Negotiations ended, with Manuel Godoy recently telling Birmingham Christian Family Magazine, “It just wasn’t for us. There’s a lot of red tape with celebrities… It had to be either-or, and we had to go with what we already knew.”

What Manuel Godoy knew was that there was an audience for what he and Geiszel had to offer, an audience they considered themselves part of: African Americans looking for works of historic fiction that feature Black characters but don’t involve slavery or the civil rights movement. Works that parents of pre-teens like the Godoys would be happy to have their children read.

The original “Black Sands” comic is set in ancient Egypt, an age according to history buff Manuel’s research, was populated by far more Black people than has been depicted in the Eurocentric creations experienced by generations of moviegoers. It follows the adventures of a young Black boy, Ausur, who wants to prove to his grandfather that he has what it takes to become pharaoh.

In February 2022 appearance on “The Breakfast Club” radio show (105.1 FM in NYC) and podcast, the Godoys explained how Manuel’s original ambition to create a “Black Sands” video game was undone by the prohibitive amount it would cost to produce. “So, I was like, ‘Let’s pivot. Let’s make a comic book off of the same series.’ Then we went to Kickstarter and raised $20,000 off of a $4,000 Kickstarter. The rest was history.”

In 2017 Manuel opened a kiosk in a mall in Hoover, Alabama, to sell the original “Black Sands” comic book. He sold $6,000 worth at the kiosk while during the same period he sold $45,000 online at Shopify. Clearly, online merchandizing was the way to go. It was also where Manuel could leverage his social media savvy to build a fan base. As he told “The Breakfast Club,” “Online you know who your audience is and you can start laser focusing on them with your marketing strategy.”

As CEO of a company he created, Manuel Godoy is plainly proud of the independence he continues to enjoy. “(Geiszel is CFO) He has used online platforms, principally Patreon, to raise capital from small investors to sustain and grow Black Sands Entertainment. As of June 2023, the website wefunder.com reported Black Sands Entertainment had raised $219,771 from 5,126 investors. In 2021, the company did more than $2 million in sales continuing to issue titles under the Black Sands brand featuring Black characters in historical settings before the advent of European colonialism. A departure from that formula are titles written by Geiszel called “Mori’s Family Adventures” and “Ineola.”

As Manuel explained on “The Breakfast Club,” he hoped to avoid the pitfalls experienced by Milestone, an earlier Black-owned publisher of comics with Black superhero figures: “Milestone did some things that were great, but they didn’t have the tools that are available to us today. They didn’t have the social media platforms to literally build their own audience, because if they did, they probably would have made different choices.” One choice, to broaden their audience by becoming part of powerhouse DC Comics, ultimately led to Milestone’s demise: DC killed the brand for failing to meet anticipated sales figures.

That historic failure may have contributed to the decision to walk away from the “Shark Tank” deal, as Manuel explained in a phone interview from his home in Delaware: “The main thing was just simply control. At the end of the day, you give up a lot of control with these ‘Shark Tank’ deals. Of all the major causes that were deal-breakers for us was that I couldn’t raise capital through my fans anymore… I’m not trading in my freedom for the chance of success.”

By his standards, Manuel Godoy already is a success, ticking off the capital he’s been able to raise through investments and sales and projects he has in the pipeline, which include an anime deal with Carl Reed and Composition Media and production of the video game he’s always wanted to create: “I can afford it now. I might be able to get an Xbox distribution deal to go with it… I’m pretty comfortable.”

MANUEL, who grew up in Kew Gardens and Flushing, attributes his success in large part to his education at Queens College, where he earned a BA in Economics. “My years of studying economics have brought me to think of everything as supply versus demand… I didn’t have an internship or anything. I learned most of what I know about finance and business administration through college, and that was it.”

Education, specifically the education of middle schoolers, is an area where the Godoys have been making inroads with a deal to sell their publications to Birmingham public schools. Manuel also mentioned a recent conversation with a librarian who was ordering books for public libraries in those New York City boroughs. Parents, Manuel told “The Breakfast Club,” complain their children aren’t reading enough. With our publications, he says, “You can get them interested in reading first, and then you give them Clark’s Web.”

Launching a new publishing genre: Manuel and Geiszel Godoy, founders of Black Sands Entertainment.

“Just wasn’t for us… It had to be either-or, and we had to go with what we already knew.”
Ten days into his tour, Yezzo was critically wounded by a grenade explosion. He was medevacked by helicopter to a field base and stabilized, but doctors could not remove shrapnel from his right shoulder. After recuperating on the USS Repose, a U.S. Navy hospital ship stationed off the coast of the South China Sea, he was sent back to his unit. He spent the rest of his tour in constant fear, surviving regular mortar attacks and a firefight, witnessing the deaths of fellow soldiers as well as Vietnamese civilians, and recording it in his journal.

"I started to write a journal because I thought the possibility that I could die was real," he commented. "You understand early on that you’re in a condition where life and death are the chief tension. Nobody lives like that here. In war, that’s how it is.

Yezzo arrived home on August 17, 1969, the third day of the Woodstock Music Festival in upstate New York. While nearly 500,000 people were promoting peace and love, he struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), ringworm, and a damaged shoulder. His mother helped him to pick up the pieces.

“She sat beside me at the kitchen table, held me tight, and said ‘Wash your face, comb your hair, and go to work. Control what you can control.’ It was the best advice I’ve ever been given my entire life,” said Yezzo.

His mother also read his journal, getting an understanding of what he endured in Vietnam. She mentioned the journal to a family friend who happened to be a writer for the Daily News. Her friend helped Yezzo get the journal in the hands of publishers. Released in 1974 and reviewed by the New York Times, A G.I.’s Vietnam Diary sold out its first printing and went into a second.

“The irony was that I was in remedial English at Queens, and the book was published and reviewed in the New York Times,” observed Yezzo, who improved his English grades and majored in English literature. “I didn’t realize literature was taking a hold of me. . . . I had no skills, but most of the teachers were patient with me. I really have a good undergraduate degree at Queens College. It’s a basis for a lot of broader ranges of duty and citizenship.”

Upon receiving his BA, he enrolled in a graduate program in language and literature at City College. Before he completed his master’s in 1980, he was teaching literature at Nassau Community College, where he became a full-time lecturer—a position he still holds. Ready for yet another challenge, Yezzo applied to and was accepted at CUNY School of Law.

“It was that same hidden dream,” he said. “That attempt at something unavailable to persons like me. There was more to do. I always enjoyed the law.”

Balancing law school while teaching a full course load at Nassau, Yezzo earned his JD in public interest law in 1988. Three years later, he opened a private practice specializing in personal injury. Highly successful, he maintained his practice until 2009, when he turned his attention to law in the service of human need—public interest law. He became a law judge for New York City’s Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). An executive agency independent of the state court system, OATH holds hearings on summonses and administrative trials issued by various city agencies; Yezzo is still employed there today.

Looking ahead, Yezzo is still employed there today. His passion for serving others has led him to volunteer with the Vietnam Veterans of America, a nonprofit that promotes and supports the full range of issues important to Vietnam veterans. He is also the chair of Veterans Incarcerated and in the Judicial System, which serves imprisoned veterans and veterans in treatment courts who suffer from PTSD and TBI. Yezzo advocates on their behalf with prison administrators, wardens, judges, and district attorneys in 50 states and develops strategies to help vets affected by hidden conditions.

"Not that we are soft on crime, but we certainly don’t want to leave [incarcerated veterans] behind," explained Yezzo. “Post-traumatic stress caused these people to be unable to reason properly, and they are of value to the prison system. . . . They are carrying with them, in many cases, an awful burden. Once you’ve been in a war and experienced the destruction of people and property, you’re likely to struggle with the results of that in a human way. The results are profound, even if we don’t admit it to ourselves. PTSD is never gone. I still struggle. If you don’t have the support that I had when I came home, which is a family and people who honored your service, you can be bitten by it—as soon as it happens or many years later.”

Reflecting on his life and what he has accomplished, Yezzo remains grateful to the institution that took a chance on a veteran many years ago, helping him become a writer, professor, lawyer, judge, and humanitarian. “I praise Queens and the administration who were patient enough to let me develop the skills I needed to become a successful student,” he concluded. “I honor QC first because QC honored me.”
In these pages, we celebrate the lives and achievements of members of the Queens College community who passed away.

Kenneth Abrams
Kenneth Abrams, former member of the QC English faculty, died in August 2023. He was 94. Abrams devoted his entire career to public service in New York City. After teaching at QC and SUNY Stony Brook, he became part of the team that founded Empire State College in Saratoga in 1971. He stayed there for 35 years, retiring as Empire’s dean for international programs. Abrams was remembered for his love of horse racing. Wordsworth, animals, food, and wine, colleagues, friends, and relatives, and his dedication to progressive education and social justice causes.

Elaine Alberts
Elaine Alberts ’70 MS, ‘72 MSEd Elaine Alberts, an elementary school teacher dedicated to environmental education, passed away in March 2023 at the age of 87. Alberts was a lifelong advocate for the protection of the environment. She worked for institutions such as the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art and Christie’s and Sotheby’s auction houses, died in July 2022. He was Jeffrey Arnstein, an antiques restorer whose clientele included the New York City Department of Social Services, at his retirement in 1994, he was deputy director of New York University and Columbia University. He spent 30 years in Center in her basement.

JohnBehrens ’66
John Behrens, who spent 35 years at Queens College, teaching physics and heading the physics labs, died in July 2023. He was 92. Behrens began working at this campus after graduating from Westchester Community College and serving for four years in the Air Force as an airplane and engine mechanic stationed in Biloxi, Mississippi. His love of physics led him to the love of his life, QC Physics Professor Joan Deremer. They married and lived in Dix Hills, raising two daughters. In retirement, Behrens and Deremer moved upstate to Skaneateles, where he gardened, played golf, and took daily walks with their two chocolate Labrador retrievers.

EricBermann ’56
Eric University of Michigan faculty member Eric Bermann passed away in June 2023. He was 68. A psychology major at QC, Bermann completed his master’s and doctoral degrees in psychology at the University of Michigan, and subsequently a master’s in public health. He spent decades at the university, teaching and chairing the graduate program in clinical psychology. In addition to his academic responsibilities, he was chief psychologist for the Children’s Psychiatric Hospital at Michigan. He was the co-founder of the Grand Rapids Child Guidance Center, Detroit Neuropsychiatric Institute, Ann Arbor and Willow Run public schools, and Washumass Intermediate School District Detention Home.

JudithBookis BA ’58, MA ’75
Judith Bookis who taught AP English in public schools for more than three decades, passed away in July 2023. Bookis interrupted her own education, leaving Queens College after three years to get married—to QC alumnus Blaise Books—and raise a family. When their children were older, she returned to school, earning not only a bachelor’s degree, but also an MS, MA, and PhD. She is remembered as an active member of her community and church, an avid Mets fan, a talented knitter, and voracious reader.

Anne-MarieBourbon ’74, ’76
Anne-Marie Bourbon, professor emerita of French at Queensborough Community College, died in June 2023 at the age of 86. Born in the French Alps, Bourbon immigrated to the United States in adulthood and Enrolling in QC in her thirties, she earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees, followed by a PhD in French literature from CUNY. A Renaissance specialist, she published articles in journals, wrote book reviews for the Renaissance Society of America, and translated some titles into English. She was also the co-author of Préuves littéraires, a reader for students of French. In her spare time, she sang with the Oratorio Society of Queens.

Francis Brancalone ’79 MA
Scholar, pianist, and music critic Francis Brancalone, professor emeritus at Manhattanville College, died in February 2023. He was 86. An alumnus of QC, Brancalone completed a doctorate in childhood development at Union Institute and University and founded the San Francisco International Toy Museum, which was visited by more than 50,000 children in its four years of operation. Having established herself as an expert on toys, Auerbach wrote books, advice columns, and reviews. A set of her papers and materials has been given to the Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at the Strong Museum of Play in Rochester, New York.

César Castillo BA ’03, MA ’10
César Castillo, chief biology lab technician and adjunct faculty member, passed away in March 2023. Castillo, who immigrated to New York as a child, credited Queens College with reawakening the love of nature that his grandmother nurtured in him in his native Colombia. He was celebrated on campus and as a botanist. A San Francisco-based MyLibraryNYC advisor director who enjoyed helping everyone—particularly people from underserved and diverse New York City communities—appreciate the world around them. As a graduate of the University of Michigan, and subsequently a master’s in public health. He spent decades at the university, teaching and chairing the graduate program in clinical psychology. In addition to his academic responsibilities, he was chief psychologist for the Children’s Psychiatric Hospital at MetroHealth. With his friendly smile, he was welcomed by many as he delivered the morning announcements.

Charles Crawford
Charles Crawford, a physical education teacher at Queens College, passed away in August 2022. He was an alum of Queens College at the age of 84. Auerbach had been given to the Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play in Rochester, New York.

Lisa Delange MLS ’04
Lisa Delange, a lecturer in culinary arts at Kingsborough Community College (KCC), passed away in August 2023. She was 52. “Librarian or Chef Instructor . . . why choose?!” Delange noted on her LinkedIn entry. She held a BA in English from Barnard College, an AOS in Culinary Arts from the Culinary Institute of America, a BS in Hospitality Management from Florida International University, an MA in Food Studies from New York University, and an MLS from Queens College. Before the KCC faculty in 2012, Delange taught at the Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation, New York University, and Johnson and Wales University in Miami, and was a researcher and writer for the Food Network. She also worked as a young adult librarian in Rye and Mamaroneck and as an outreach librarian for MyLibraryNYC, which expands student and teacher access to books in the city’s public library system.

YaSoda Dhanraj
Yasad Dhanraj, part of the Queens College community for more than 20 years, passed away in October 2023. She was 48. Dhanraj started at campus as a contract security guard and then became a CUNY campus security assistant. With her friendly smile, she often greeted people at Gate 2, the women’s gym, and Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library. Her work ethics made her a valued member of the Public Safety team and garnered her yearly requests for her presence at QC’s summer camp.

Constance Diamond ’62
Artist and educator Constance Diamond passed away on July 26, 2023. She was 88. Diamond graduated from Queens College in 1962 and earned a master’s in education from New York University and Queens College. Diamond returned to NYU for a doctorate in art. In addition to teaching at Nassau Community College and at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building at Cooper Union in Manhattan and Hauppauge, she showed her work in and around New York City and founded a collective art studio.

Alan Eysen ’52
Award-winning journalist Alan Eysen died in February 2023. He was 91. Eysen earned a BA in psychology at QC, followed by a master’s of journalism at the University of California, Los Angeles, and an MA in 1988. After teaching investigative journalism at Stonybrook University, Hoftstra University, and LIU Post College (formerly the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University), and served as a political consultant.

In Memoriam
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Susan Duhan Felix ’58 Celebrated ceramicist Susan Duhan Felix passed away in February 2022. At QC, she was 85. An honors student and a member of the Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity, she helped found the Woomzoon Review, a literary magazine that would last for 40 years. Impressed by ceramic dishes she couldn’t afford to buy, Susan decided to make them herself and took a class. The experience prompted her to drop out of Brown University in order to study and work with clay instead. When the couple and their daughter relocated to Berkeley, California, Susan continued using her new hometown, making ceramics, teaching, founding the Jewish Arts Community of the Bay in 1979 and serving as its executive director from 1990 to 1991. She was regularly featured in solo and group art shows in California and elsewhere in the United States.

Darryl Feldman ’69 Psychologist, psychoanalyst, and marriage counselor Darryl Feldman died in May 2023. He was 75. Feldman majored in psychology at QC in 1969 with a Pi Epsilon Pi fraternity. A diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology and a certified group psychotherapist, he was the director of psychological services at the Adelphi University Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies and the State University of New York at Farmingdale. In his private office he worked with individuals, couples, and groups, but his practice wasn’t limited to those clients. On September 11, 2001, at the request of the New York Police Department, Feldman gathered a few other psychologists and went to the department’s Manhattan headquarters to help people deal with their trauma. Active in professional organizations, he was a past president of both the Suffolk County Psychological Association and the New York State Psychological Association Division of Group Psychology and Psychotherapy.

Janice Fenster ’64, MSEd ’67 Janice Fenster, a public school teacher devoted to community service, died in February 2023. Over the years, Fenster held many roles within the New York City Department of Education, working in early childhood, elementary school special education, a resource room teacher in high school special education, and a teacher trainer in special education. Away from the classroom, she frequented many organizations. At the time of her passing, she was a member of Queens’ Community Board 9, representing Richmond Hill, and sat on the advisory board of the Kaplan Holocaust Resource Center and Archives at Queensborough Community College. At her alma mater, she supported an endowed scholarship in Jewish Studies.

Cornellius Foley, ’61, MSED ’65 Cornellius Foley, whose career took him from education to prominence in state government, died in July 2023. Upon graduating from QC, Foley entered the U.S. Navy Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island. He was assigned to communications on the USS Long Beach CGN-9, the Navy’s first nuclear-powered surface ship, and the USS Lawrence DDG-4, a newly commissioned guided missile destroyer. His commitment over, he earned an MSED from QC in 1965 and taught psychology at New York University. Foley taught social studies in Lynbrook public schools before becoming a finance and legislation specialist for the Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services. He went on to work for the New York State Assembly Ways and Means Committee and served as assistant secretary and deputy secretary to the governor for education, local government, and the arts. In 1988 he was appointed assistant director of the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation. Foley subsequently held positions with the State University of New York Central Administration and New York State United Teachers.

Anne Foner ’41 Anne Foner, a member of Queens College’s first graduating class, passed away in September 2022 at age 101. Foner continued her education at Columbia University and graduated with a degree from QC, earning a doctorate in sociology from New York University. At Rutgers University, where she taught for years, she served as sociology chair and published widely on topics involving aging and society.

Bruce-Michael Gelbert ’73 Gay rights advocate, writer, and photographer Bruce-Michael Gelbert passed away in April 2023 at the age of 61. A student of the late Jack Kerouac, Gelbert joined Gay People at Queens College as well as the Gay Activists Alliance (GAA). After graduating from QC, he worked at the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookstore—the first dedicated queer bookstore on the East Coast—and for New York State Attorney General Bob Abrams. As vice chair of GAA’s Community Relations Committee, Gelbert founded the launch of LGBTQ groups throughout the New York area and called attention to gay issues by organizing street fairs in front of the alliance’s community center on Wooster Street. He published articles and photos in LGBTQ publications including QueerStage.com, NewYorkQNews.com, and the Fire Island News. A talented singer, he participated in community theater and frequented piano bars.

Lloyd Gilden Lloyd Gilden, psychology professor emeritus, passed away in September 2023 at the age of 94. A Cleveland native who left college one semester short of graduation to serve in the Korean War, Gilden saw five years of military service. Upon returning to civilian life, he enrolled in McGill University in Montreal, completing a doctorate in experimental psychology. He subsequently joined the Queens College faculty. In addition to teaching, Gilden had a private psychotherapy practice and served as president of the Lifecraft Foundation, a research foundation created by influential psychoanalyst Trigant Burrow.

Michael Gottlieb ’68 Biologist, teacher, and researcher Michael Gottlieb passed away in April 2021 at the age of 76. After graduating from Queens College, he got a PhD from CUNY and conducted postdoctoral research at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health. In 1978, he joined the faculty of Johns Hopkins University. Gottlieb returned to NIH in 1991 as a program officer in the Parasitology and International Programs Branch, becoming its chief within ten years. For his work in initiating and developing the institute’s pathogen genomics research, he received the US Army’s Award for Exceptional Scientific Achievement. He was also a recipient of the Alexander and Florence Kouguell Cello Scholarship for a talented cello soloist at QC who excels academically and also participates in chamber music and the Queens College Orchestra. Subsequently, he gave all his cellos, bows, music, and memorabilia to ACSM, accompanied by a generous donation.

Jack Herschlag ’53 Writer, entrepreneur, and sports promoter Jack Herschlag died in July 2023 at the age of 91. At Queens College, Herschlag majored in English and minored in education, inducted in the U.S. Army upon graduation, he was sent to Korea as a high-speed radio operator. Demobbed, he was first a reporter and editor at Women’s Wear Daily and then advertising manager for the film division at Walt Disney. Leveraging his experience in fashion and advertising, he moved over to the National Association of Men’s Sportswear Buyers, which held semi-annual trade shows in New York City. He would stay with the association for 36 years, retiring as its executive director in 2004. Herschlag also took on numerous entrepreneurial ventures, from co-authoring books including Halfcourt Basketball, Inc. with the help of Naimith Memorial Basketball Hall of Famer Rick Barry. Halfcourt Basketball promoted three-on-three tournaments in dozens of U.S. cities, leading to the eventual debut of three-on-three basketball as an Olympic sport.

Alan Hewan ’62 Politician Alan Hewan, a QC political science professor who reached statewide office before resigning in disgrace, died on November 9. He was 83. First elected to the state assembly in 1971, Hewan represented Forest Hills for nearly 20 years; he supported Medicaid funding for abortions, barred hospitals from turning away indigent New Yorkers, and fought against the return of the death penalty. He next became New York City comptroller. In collaboration with state officials across the country, he achieved a settlement in which Swiss banks had to pay $1.25 billion in restitution to Holocaust survivors. In 2002 Hevesi won his first term as state comptroller. Re-elected, he stepped down shortly afterward, admitting that he had illegally delegated personal errands—such as chauffeuring his ailing wife—to state employees. Subsequently, he was sentenced to prison for corruption: in return for $1 million in gifts and campaign donations, he directed state pension fund investments to financier Elliott Broidy.

Andrew Kampiziones ’63 Banker turned educator Andrew Kampiziones passed away in February 2023 at the age of 91. Kampiziones joined the faculty of Darlington Technical College. An advocate for the arts in general and Greek culture in particular, he held seats on the boards of the Florence Symphony and the Florence MUSEUM OF MUSIC, and the Clarion Music Society of New York. He also joined Queens College’s music department, where he would teach for nearly seven decades, returning as an adjunct following his retirement.

As a performer, Kouguell toured extensively in the United States, Europe, and the Near and Middle East, his travels enriched with his command of Russian, French, and Arabic. He recorded for the Columbia, Decca, Monitor, Nonesuch, and CRI labels. Dedicated to the college and the Aaron Copland School of Music, he established, with his wife, the Alexander and Florence Kouguell Cello Scholarship for a talented cello soloist at QC who excels academically and also participates in chamber music and the Queens College Orchestra. Subsequently, he gave all his cellos, bows, music, and memorabilia to ACSM, accompanied by a generous donation.

Elaine Kaplan ’55 Elaine Kaplan, an elementary school teacher turned Dowling College dean, passed away in April 2023. She was 88. Upon graduating from Queens College, Kaplan taught third grade in New York City schools. While remaining in the classroom and raising her three boys on Long Island, she earned a PhD from Hofstra University. Her career took

QUEENS IN MEMORIAM

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Steven Malin '72, MA '73
QC faculty member and alumnus Steven Malin completed his doctorate in economics at Queens College and obtained a job in the same field from CUNY. From 1990 to 2007, he was a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. He served as a spokesperson on matters pertaining to New York federal policy. Additionally, the bank’s board of directors appointed him corporate secretary, recognizing his significant contributions to the organization. Malin dedicated several years to teaching macroeconomics at his alma mater, and his classes were immensely popular. He possessed a deep knowledge of the economics literature, drew valuable insights from professional experience, and had a wonderful sense of humor. An exceptional athlete, Malin had a deep passion for baseball, supporting the QC team after his graduation and coaching the college team of the Long Island Astros.

Charles Molesworth
Charles Molesworth, a member of the English faculty for 40 years, died in his home on May 20. Molesworth wrote two books of poetry, biographies of modernist writers, including Alain Locke, Countee Cullen, and Marianne Moore; and studies of Gary Snyder and Donald Barthelme. He edited Alain Locke’s papers for Oxford University Press, and his final book was on the relationship of Roger Fry, J. P. Morgan, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Molesworth was also the author of many articles on the visual arts and social movements. A fine pianist, he frequently played for his students and staff. A prolific writer, he was elected to the faculty of The Graduate Center. Renowned for her teaching in the Department of Fine Arts, Molesworth was a tenured professor and then dean of Education. Kaplan believed deeply in the value of reading and education for young children—and herself. Family members recall that the only phone calls she received were from those who appreciated the library,alerting her that a book she reserved was available for pickup.

Barbara Jones Omolade ’64
Sociologist and educator Barbara Jones Omolade passed away in July 2023 at the age of 80. After graduating from Queens College, Omolade earned a master’s degree from the City University of New York. An activist from her student days, she participated in the Mississippi Summer Freedom project and was a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Turning her beliefs into a career, Omolade worked for the Center for the Elimination of Violence in the Family, the Women’s Action Alliance, Empire State College Center for Labor Studies, CUNY, and the City College of New York. She moved to the Midwest in 2011 and was a research fellow at the Jeannelan Multicultural Affairs at Calvin College—now Calvin University. Her books include The Rising Song of African American Women, It’s a Family Affair: The Real Lives of Black Single Mothers, and Faith Confronts Evil.

Jon Peterson
Jon Peterson, professor emeritus of history, died in July 2023. He was 87. Peterson held a BA in history from Smith College, an MA in American history from Ohio State University, and a PhD from Harvard University. Specializing in American urban history, he joined the Queens College faculty in 1966, went on to direct the master’s degree program, and from 1991 to 1995 chaired the history department. Returning to QC after almost 40 years, he had more time to pursue his interests in watercolor painting, photography, birding, gardening, and hiking.

Burton Pike
Burton Pike, professor emeritus of comparative literature and German, passed away on August 17. Pike was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1932. He received his bachelor’s degree at Haverford College and his MA and PhD in Comparative Literature at Harvard University. A member of the faculty at both Queens College, where he chaired the German Department, and the CUNY Graduate Center, he received Guggenheim, Fulbright, and American Council of Learned Societies fellowships. In recognition of his work with Robert Musil’s The Man without Qualities and scholarly work on Musil, the city of Klagenfurt—the Austrian novelist’s hometown—awarded Pike its Medal of Merit. Professor Burton Pike passed away on May 6. He was 87. Born in Poland, Prager was a little girl when World War II divided her parents, she fled to the Soviet Union with her mother, while her father served in the Polish army. Reunited in a Siberian labor camp, the family eventually made their way to New York City. Majoring in chemistry, Prager attended Queens College, met her husband in a lab. The couple settled in South Kingston, Rhode Island. When their children left for college, Prager pursued a master’s degree in community planning from the University of Rhode Island, earned a dozen years as South Kingston town planner, served on the town council and as its president, held policy positions in the governor’s office, and chaired the board of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. Prager is also recalled for her efforts to address the affordable housing crisis nearly 20 years ago, leading the board of directors to develop a corporation charged with creating low- and moderate-income residences in the county.

Grace Marie Robbins
Grace Marie Robbins, an alumna whose marriage to novelist Harold Robbins made her a celebrity in her own right, died in July 2023. She was 91. Robbins, nee Palermo, was a casting director at Gray Advertising when she met her future husband. They exchanged vows—for the first time, he for the second—moved to the house they built in Connecticut, and settled in New York. Putting her casting talents to use on behalf of an orphanage, Grace Robbins hooked Cy Charise, Tony Martin, Josephine Baker, and other A-listers for good causes, rubbed elbows with the stars and helped children of all ages. In 1972, Robbins was introduced to Omolade’s parents; she fled to the Soviet Union with her mother, while her father served in the Polish army. Reunited in a Siberian labor camp, the family eventually made their way to New York City. Majoring in chemistry, Prager attended Queens College, met her husband in a lab. The couple settled in South Kingston, Rhode Island. When their children left for college, Prager pursued a master’s degree in community planning from the University of Rhode Island, earned a dozen years as South Kingston town planner, served on the town council and as its president, held policy positions in the governor’s office, and chaired the board of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. Prager is also recalled for her efforts to address the affordable housing crisis nearly 20 years ago, leading the board of directors to develop a corporation charged with creating low- and moderate-income residences in the county.

Constance Wain Schwartz ’71
Artist, art teacher, and art therapist Constance Wain Schwartz passed away in October 2022. She was 91. Schwartz honed her creative talents at Pratt Institute, the Art Students League, and Hunter College before leaving school to get married and raise a family. Settling in Huntington Township, New York, she found time to illustrate books for children and moderate-income residences in the county.

Anna Friedman Prager ’58
Anna Friedman Prager, whose service to local and state government in Rhode Island prompted the United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services to name a local office after her, died by her own hand on May 6. She was 87. Born in Poland, Prager was a little girl when World War II divided her parents, she fled to the Soviet Union with her mother, while her father served in the Polish army. Reunited in a Siberian labor camp, the family eventually made their way to New York City. Majoring in chemistry, Prager attended Queens College, met her husband in a lab. The couple settled in South Kingston, Rhode Island. When their children left for college, Prager pursued a master’s degree in community planning from the University of Rhode Island, earned a dozen years as South Kingston town planner, served on the town council and as its president, held policy positions in the governor’s office, and chaired the board of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. Prager is also recalled for her efforts to address the affordable housing crisis nearly 20 years ago, leading the board of directors to develop a corporation charged with creating low- and moderate-income residences in the county.

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Betty Lee Sung ‘68
Betty Lee Sung, founder of City College’s Asian American Studies program and co-founder of CUNY’s Asian American/Asian Research Institute (AA/ARI), died in January 2023. She was 98.

The future scholar, née Betty Lee, was born in Washington, D.C., to an immigrant couple who ran a laundry out of their home. Her father was a so-called “paper son” who had bought documents identifying him as a blood relative of a Chinese individual with U.S. residency or citizenship. Struggling in the Depression, the family moved to China, where Lee’s mother and one child died. The five surviving members of the family eventually regrouped in the United States, Lee and two of her siblings fleeing China just ahead of the Japanese invasion.

Attending the University of Illinois on a scholarship, Lee majored in sociology and economics. After graduation, she married her classmate Hui Yuan Sung. They settled in New York, where she researched and wrote Chinese-language scripts for the Voice of America (VOA); based on work on that project, she published her first book, Mountain of Gold: The Story of the Chinese in America. Subsequently, while employed at the Queens Public Library, she completed an MLS from Queens College. That resume prompted City College to put Sung on its faculty in 1970, she earned a PhD at CUNY a dozen years later. During and after her doctoral studies, she released a series of books illuminating the experience of Chinese immigrants and their children.

In 2001, nine years after her retirement, Sung teamed up with immigrant and City College alumnus Thomas Tan, the first Chinese American to serve as a CUNY trustee, to found AA/ARI. She later established a $100,000 endowment at CUNY for AA/ARI to host a research fund on Asian American topics.

“Betty Lee Sung was a giant,” said President Frank H. Wu. “She did so much for Asian American Studies. She is among the heroes in the field whom we need to remember.”

Lois Schwaebler ‘56
Lois Schwaebler, former director of legal services at the Safe Center, died in June 2023. She was 87. Finishing high school at age 16 and college at 20, Schwaebler briefly taught in Lower East Side schools before marrying and becoming a full-time homemaker. Once her youngest child graduated from high school, she took to volunteering at the Nassau County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the precursor of the Safe Center. She found the work so compelling that in middle age she went to law school, came back to the organization as an attorney, and later oversaw its transition into the Safe Center. Dedicated to public service, she was a member of the Nassau County Executive’s Family Violence Task Force, Nassau County’s Judicial Women in the Courts Committee, the Nassau County Bar Association’s We Care Fund Advisory Board, and the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s Legislative Committee, among other appointments. Retiring at 2020, Schwaebler was named a Woman of Distinction by Senator Anna Kaplan and honored by New York State Senate Resolution 2021 1468.

Donald Snyder ‘08
Print, radio, and TV journalist Donald Snyder died in July 2023, two days after filing his last story. He was 90. Upon graduating from QC, Snyder briefly worked as a copy editor at Newsday. A moving target for the next two decades, he was a stringer in Vienna, Budapest, and West Germany; returned to New York City for a one-year international reporting fellowship at Columbia University; and ran Mutual Broadcasting System’s Berlin bureau from 1970 to 1973.

Two years later, he hired on with NBC as a news producer first with the Peacock’s radio network and then moving over to the “Today Show.” Retiring in 2001, Snyder freelanced for NBC, the Forward, the National Catholic Reporter, and other outlets. He identified himself on LinkedIn as an independent online media professional.

Bernard Solomon
Bernard Solomon, a professor of Chinese in QC’s Department of Classical and Oriental Languages for nearly 25 years, died in December 2022. Solomon, who held a BS in Mathematics from the City College of New York, found his calling by serving in the Army Cavalry Corps. He enrolled in the Army Language Training Institute in Classical and Oriental Languages. Then he went to Harvard University, receiving an MA and PhD in Far Eastern Languages (now East Asian Languages). He held positions as a research assistant on the Harvard- Yenching Institute Chinese-English dictionary project and a Fulbright Research Fellow at Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana before joining the faculty of the State University of New York at New Paltz. In 1962, Solomon arrived at QC. Over the next 25 years, he taught modern and classical Chinese language, literature, and civilization, and founded the programs in Chinese and East Asian Studies. His scholarly works include The Veritable Record of the T’ang Emperor Shao-tung and On the School of Names in Ancient China. He was also co-editor of The Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms by Su-ma Kuang.

Rebecca Shareah Taleghani
Rebecca Shareah Taleghani, a professor in the Department of Classical, Middle Eastern, and Asian Languages and Cultures, passed away in September 2023. Taleghani held a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley, and a master’s and doctorate degree in the early and Eastern Islamic studies from New York University. Joining the QC faculty in fall 2014 after a year as a visiting assistant professor, she went on to teach Arabic, classical Islamic and modern Arabic literature, and the graphic novel in the Middle East and North Africa, among other classes. At the CUNY Gradurate Center, she led courses on dissent and exile in the literature of the Middle-East and North Africa. Taleghani is remembered as an advocate for political dissidents and rescue animals. Her cat Zohbi was known to make came appearances during online classes.

Robert Trotman
Robert Trotman, a QC alumnus who led Nu-Finmen Swimming, preparing children from diverse backgrounds to swim competitively, passed away in March 2023. He was 82. After learning to swim at a club in the Bronx, Trotman became the first Black swim team captain at the borough’s DeWitt Clinton High School and competed in meets through the Amateur Athletic Union. In 1959, he and his friend Charles Sims opened the first indoor pool and launch center in Brooklyn. After military service, Trotman returned to New York. He attended QC for two years and expanded on theImagen, which for years operated out of Hempstead, Long Island, and now is based in Cambria Hills. Athletics Trotman trained became all-state swimmers, NCAAA, All-Americans, and Junior Olympic champions, among other distinctions. Imagining his success in introducing his sport to members of underrepresented groups, USA Swimming, which administers competitive swimming and selects the Olympic teams, gave him the Diversity & Inclusion Award in 2014.

Joseph Tufariello ‘57
Joseph Tufariello, chemistry professor emeritus at the University at Buffalo SUNY, passed away in November 2022. He was 87. Tufariello achieved a bachelor’s degree from Queens College followed by a PhD in organic chemistry at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He enjoyed a long and distinguished teaching career at SUNY Buffalo, eventually chairing its chemistry department. The Buffalo News reports that during his tenure, research expenditures doubled from $1 million to $2 million and the department achieved notable success in obtaining grants from non-government sources. In subsequent positions, Tufariello served as dean of Natural Sciences and Mathematics—joined the creation of the Natural Sciences Complex on campus—and served vice provost for educational technology. In retirement, he indulged his interests in biking, nature walks, crossword puzzles, and rooting for his beloved New York Yorkers.

H. Barbara Weinberg
Art History Professor Emerita H. Barbara Weinberg, who held a joint appointment at Queens College and the CUNY Graduate Center, passed away in August 2023. She was 81. Born, raised, and educated in New York, Weinberg held a bachelor’s degree from Barnard and a master’s degree and doctorate from Columbia. Specializing in American paintings, she joined the faculty of QC in 1967 and of that of the Graduate Center a few years later. Retiring from CUNY in the 1990s, she became a curator at the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Colleagues recalled her as a prolific author, gifted lecturer, and nurturing mentor. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Richard Whalen ‘57
Journalist and presidential consultant Richard Whalen died in July 2023 at the age of 87. An English and political science major at QC, where he met his wife, Whalen hit the fast track after graduation: in five years he landed staff positions at the Richmond News Leader in Virginia, Time magazine, the Wall Street Journal, and Fortune magazine. His epic Fortune profile of Joseph Kennedy, researched without the cooperation of the subject or his family, became a best-selling book—The Founding Father—and changed the course of Whalen’s career. He joined a DC think tank, wrote speeches for Richard Nixon, breaking with him bitterly, and served more happily as an advisor to Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

Frederick Wolfe ‘58
Frederick Wolfe, a rheumatologist celebrated for his work in identifying fibromyalgia—a chronic disorder that causes muscle, skeletal pain, fatigue, and other issues—died in September 2023. He was 87. After graduating from Queens College, Wolfe earned a medical degree from the State University of New York, and served two years in the U.S. Air Force. Settling in Kansas, he established the Wichita Arthritis Center and became a clinical professor of internal medicine at the University of Kansas, Lawrence. Computing medical records before that was common, he collected data from his clinic and others for research purposes; he’s credited as the lead or co-author of hundreds of peer-reviewed papers. In 1987, he brought together 20 rheumatologists to define the group of symptoms that would become known as fibromyalgia. He would continue studying the condition for the rest of his life. Wolfe enjoyed amateur radio, gardening, cooking, and bicycling, repeatedly crossing his home state with Bicycling Across Kansas.
Extending “Helping Hands”

Gerstner Philanthropies gives the college a grant to get students through temporary setbacks and keep them in school

Generous new aid from Gerstner Philanthropies will help Queens College students facing emergencies that could derail their education. Gerstner has given the college a Helping Hands grant of $85,333 for the 2023–2024 academic year, to be administered by Student Affairs under the leadership of Vice President Jennifer Jarvis. Student awards from this grant are assessed and managed by Sean Pierce, interim assistant vice president for student affairs, and his assistant Maylene Santiago.

Gerstner is a family foundation with philanthropic programs primarily in three cities. Their Helping Hands awards are directed toward organizations that help individuals move past temporary, but potentially life-changing, setbacks. About 10 years ago, Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., founder and chairman of the foundation, was moved by the plight of a woman made homeless by fire and realized that just a small infusion of cash could have a big impact on her prospects. “With the cash assistance to tide her over in that situation, she could be back and resume her life as it was before,” explains Alice Goh, program director of Gerstner Philanthropies. “That’s the specific type of case our foundation and our chairman hope to help. We have now given over $33 million in total.”

Partnering with colleges began only recently, but from the outset Gerstner focused on CUNY. They were already familiar with the Queens College programs aided by the Petrie Foundation, and also conducted some exploratory research of their own. They wanted to support colleges that had a track record of improving students’ social mobility,” says Goh. “The other criterion was to partner with schools that had a demonstrated commitment to serving disadvantaged students.” Queens College “did very well on those two measures,” adds Goh, “and so we felt they would represent a welcome change.”

While the Helping Hands grant helps students cover the cost of an immediate emergency, Pierce and Santiago also consult with each grant recipient individually. They are experienced at helping them improve their financial literacy and budget skills, and they can put them in touch with further economic help, scholarship information, or job-hunting assistance as needed. Their toolkit is varied. For instance, the Helping Hands grant sets a lifetime cap of $3,000 in emergency aid to any one student, but Student Affairs is able to direct students—and even personally conduct them—to resources that allow them to stretch their cash, such as the Knights’ Food Pantry, free Metro cards, and gift cards for laundry.

For students, a cash gift at the right time can make the difference between finishing college or not. The wraparound services can have a crucial impact as well. As Pierce puts it, “At CUNY and Queens College, our goal is to help students achieve upward mobility, to have opportunities they may not have had prior to coming to our institution. We want to make sure that we’ve got you connected to opportunities and continue to help you on your journey because we want you to graduate, we want you to be able to take that next step and be successful.”

How To Teach Hebrew

With support from the Steinhardt Foundation, QC launches a program to professionalize instruction in a critical language

Seven years ago, World Language Education at Queens College added to its undergraduate, post-bac, and graduate options by launching a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Critical Languages, the only such program in the United States. As might be expected in the polyglot Borough of Queens, where estimates for the number of languages spoken by residents start at 150, the MAT keeps expanding. Through the program, teacher certification is now available in a dozen of the languages deemed to have particular value for national security: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Russian, and Urdu. For instance, the Helping Hands grant helps students cover the cost of an immediate emergency, Pierce and Santiago also consult with each grant recipient individually. They are experienced at helping them improve their financial literacy and budget skills, and they can put them in touch with further economic help, scholarship information, or job-hunting assistance as needed. Their toolkit is varied. For instance, the Helping Hands grant sets a lifetime cap of $3,000 in emergency aid to any one student, but Student Affairs is able to direct students—and even personally conduct them—to resources that allow them to stretch their cash, such as the Knights’ Food Pantry, free Metro cards, and gift cards for laundry.

For students, a cash gift at the right time can make the difference between finishing college or not. The wraparound services can have a crucial impact as well. As Pierce puts it, “At CUNY and Queens College, our goal is to help students achieve upward mobility, to have opportunities they may not have had prior to coming to our institution. We want to make sure that we’ve got you connected to opportunities and continue to help you on your journey because we want you to graduate, we want you to be able to take that next step and be successful.”

Jacquelyn Southern

For learners who spend years drilling the grammar of a foreign language without developing the ability to use it, the methods of World Language Education—a unit within the School of Education’s Department of Secondary Education and Youth Services (SEYS)—would represent a welcome change.

World Language Education prepares teachers to stress practical skills. “We emphasize intercultural competence and language proficiency that learners can use right away in the community, at college, at work, and in the world,” says Jennifer Eddy, the program’s director, World Language Education. “We are so directive that districts accept its candidates as interns even if they haven’t quite completed the program. It was only natural for QC to become part of the Consortium for the Teaching of Hebrew Language and Culture, which gets some of its funding from Steinhardt and advances principles similar to those of World Language Education. One of the challenges to overcome in the United States is that classes in modern Hebrew are often led by native speakers, whether or not they have pedagogical backgrounds. There’s a big difference between language learning and language acquisition,” observes Vardit Ringvald, the consortium’s director. “For retention, teacher training is key.” Consequently, the consortium, which originally collaborated with Brandeis University and Middlebury College and now, in addition to QC, also includes Universidad Hebraica in Mexico City, seeks to professionalize Hebrew instruction. Demand already exceeds supply in the New York metro area and beyond. Growing numbers of public schools, charter schools, Jewish day schools, and yeshivas are in the market for credentialed Hebrew teachers.

“We all need Hebrew teachers,” says Valerie Khayutin, chief external officer of Hebrew Public, which oversees a network of five managed charter schools and six affiliates across the country, teaching children of all backgrounds. “We look everywhere for native or near-native speakers with American classroom management experience. Having that (MAT) training will help them be successful.”

Ringvald and Eddy began discussing the Hebrew MAT before the pandemic. “When I conceived of this program, I couldn’t think of any institution better suited to it than Queens,” Eddy says, citing the college’s supportive community and excellent Hebrew language and Jewish studies faculty, and the track record of World Language Education. Rabbi Gedzelman of Hebrew Public, which oversees a network of five Hebrew language charter schools, is equally enthusiastic. “We have a good relationship with the School of Education. World Language Education has a great model for creating a community of teacher-scholars of all backgrounds learning to teach languages.”

“QC is proud to partner with the Steinhardt Foundation in meeting an urgent need for professionally prepared Hebrew language teachers, including coursework on modern Hebrew culture and expression,” says Gerwin.

Many world language teachers end up in schools where they lead one-person departments. Like the MATs in other languages, QC’s 39-credit, post-baccalaureate program in modern Hebrew will prepare people to design as well as teach K-12 curriculum. Upon completing the first 24 credits, candidates receive initial certification, which allows them to start working in the classroom. To earn the MAT and become eligible for professional certification, they have to finish the remaining 15 graduate credits.

Career changes are encouraged to apply to the program. “Whether it’s five or 20 years after they graduated, we welcome them with open arms,” Eddy says. A degree in Hebrew is not required; neither is previous teaching experience. Instead, applicants will be asked to demonstrate their language skills through an oral interview and a writing proficiency test administered by Language Testing International. For more information about the MAT in Critical Languages Education in Hebrew, contact Jennifer Eddy at jennifer.eddy@qc.cuny.edu.
The Petrie Foundation has been providing emergency grants to students since 2005. It collaborates with CUNY and some private colleges in New York City with significant numbers of low-income students. CUNY colleges distribute more than $1.5 million in Petrie Student Emergency Grants to approximately 1,800 students annually.

In the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, when CUNY launched the Chancellor’s Emergency Relief Fund, the foundation stepped forward to provide a $1 million grant. Expressing the foundation’s essential mission at that critical time, Cass Conrad, the foundation’s executive director, observed, “Not only will this fund provide near-term relief to CUNY students and their families, but we believe it will help ensure that they can remain in school, complete their degrees, and ultimately contribute to the revival of the city. Through its work with CUNY and other nonprofit organizations, the Petrie Foundation has a long history of enabling New Yorkers to achieve their college and career goals, even in the most challenging times.”

With respect to career goals, the Petrie Foundation supports programs to ensure that upon graduation students find strong first jobs. These include projects that provide career exploration, networking, and advising to navigate the job market, and internships that may facilitate job placement, enhance technical skills and credentials valued by employers, and foster productive collaboration between workforce training programs and college degree programs.

Petrie Fund Foundation funding is assisting QC students in other ways, as well. In 2022 QC received a $50,000 Innovation Grant for QC ADAPTS (Academic Development Ambassador Program for Transfer Students). These grants aim to support transfer students among others as part of the foundation’s goal of ensuring that students persist in remaining in college and on track to a career. Also, in 2021 Queens College received, as did other CUNY senior colleges, a $40,000 grant to be used over 12 months across its Campus Climate Initiative with Hillel International, one of an ongoing series of measures the university has initiated to address an uptick in antisemitism globally, locally, and on campuses across the country. As of July 2023, 50 colleges and universities across the United States are participating in the initiative, which Hillel says is aimed at ensuring Jewish students feel comfortable expressing their diverse identities free of antisemitism, harassment, and marginalization.

“All students deserve to feel safe, nurtured, and valued by their faculty and peers,” said Conrad. “We are so pleased that CUNY and Hillel have chosen to work together to ensure that Jewish students, staff, and faculty have what they need to thrive academically and socially on campus. We are happy to support the Campus Climate Initiative, which we hope will pay dividends for students of all backgrounds and faiths for years to come.”

—Bob Suter

Increasing Opportunity

The Petrie Fund Foundation enables low-income New Yorkers to achieve their college and career goals.

Nearly four years on, it remains difficult to calculate the enormity of the economic impact experienced by most Americans because of the Covid-19 pandemic. While the federal government stepped forward with multiple rounds of record-level Economic Impact Payments to aid individuals who became unemployed or whose incomes were otherwise disrupted, the funds often fell short of providing full economic security.

For college students working to prepare for careers, the prospect of completing their education was often in immediate jeopardy, with many experiencing food insecurity and difficulty meeting routine daily expenses. At Queens College, however, students had a lifeline: The Carroll & Milton Petrie Student Emergency Grant Fund, expressly created to help low-income New York City college students in the grips of an emergency continue their education without interruption and successfully complete their degrees.

Situations that Petrie emergency funds could address include such things as overdue utility bills/shut-off notices, risk for eviction/homelessness, assistance for paying for goods, transportation, and basic necessities due to recent unemployment or sudden financial difficulty. The emergency fund was created by the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation, a philanthropic organization whose goal is to increase economic opportunity by strengthening college and career opportunities for low-income New Yorkers.

In 2021, Queens College received a $300,000 grant to be disbursed over a 12-month period. Other CUNY campuses—
Queens College students, alumni, and friends together through a Meetup each academic year, the Office of Institutional Advancement brings New York University Langone Health.

Our distinguished speakers are experts in their fields as well as role models for career success. Many of them got their start at Queens College. Professionals on Campus gives you the opportunity to learn from and interact with alumni and friends of the college representing multiple industries and professions.

We are proud to recognize the exceptional participants for the 2022–2023 academic year.

Rajib Ahmed ’05, Chief Technology and Product Officer, Meetup

Avital Vitman, Managing Director and Head of Public Finance, Janney Montgomery Scott LLC and Board of Directors, Northeast Women in Public Finance (NEWPF)

Michael Brest ’84, Chairman and CEO, EisnerAmper LLP and Partner, Eisner Advisory Group LLC

Suzanne Brenner ’81, Partner & Chief Investment Officer, Brown Brothers Harriman

Ira Cohen ’77, Founder and Principal, Ira Cohen, P.A.

Jennifer Marest (Economics) talks with Frank Yu.

Frank Yu ’94, Founder, Chief Executive Officer, and Interim President of the New York School Boards Association, which advocates for the interests of school districts, trains local school board members, and provides resources for the advancement of public education.

Thea Scherzer

Thea Scherzer, Sharon Weisbrod, and Peggy Charney are also among the distinguished speakers for the 2022–2023 academic year.

Professionals on Campus

At top from left, Amber Guth in conversation with Esther Mihulshaker (Biology); in bottom photo from left, Lorae (Economics) talks with Frank Yu.

Celeste Guth ’82, Partner, Strategic Advisory Group, PJT Partners

Freda Johnson ’68, Former President, Government Finance Associates, Inc. and Board of Directors, NEWPF

Joseph Milizio, Managing Partner, Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP

Leigh Nader, Managing Director, Assured Guaranty Corp. and Board of Directors, NEWPF

Chesed Simpson ’95, Senior Scientist, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Joseph Trotti ’80, Partner, Vishnick McGovern Milizio LLP

Vanessa Youngs, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Moody’s Corporation and Board of Directors, NEWPF

Frank Yu ’94, Founder, Chief Executive Officer, and Chief Investment Officer, Ally Bridge Group

1965: Dena Fisher was named to the board of Community Health Program, which provides medical, dental, and nutrition services in Berkeley County, South Carolina. The second exhibition is seen through putting aside that knowledge and considering the work as a piece of art.

1977: Mariannitti Troppoli was selected to have her art displayed in the exhibit Alpine’s Rarities for the Woodstock Art Association and Museum from April to June 2023.


Jay Beren was appointed secretary of the Adult and Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD) Foundation, a not-for-profit agency whose mission is to provide opportunities to more than 1,300 children and adults with autism, learning, and developmental disabilities. Howard Elson participated in the Over The Hurd Men’s Senior Baseball League (PSBL) National Championship, where his team won for the second consecutive season.

1977: Barry D. Bass selected to have his art displayed in two exhibitions on display in Raleigh, North Carolina. He had an art exhibit of work on display at the East Meadow library in February. She specializes in oil paintings of landscapes and still life. 1975.

1977: Herb A. Dyer assumed to participate in Remote Area Medical medical centers to underserved areas. 1977. Lisa Barash-Rosario was a featured artist in July at Woodbury Public Library in Woodbury, Connecticut. The exhibit, titled “Nature… Up Close and at a Distance,” featured her oil panel paintings.

Lynne Friedman

Lynne Friedman was named to the advisory board at Tiger Overture at Forest Hills last year. Jeremy Chernick has been a special effects artist at the San Diego’s biggest musicals for over 25 years.

He recently designed the special effects for the musical ‘Sweeney Todd’ at the Overture in Forest Hills this year.

Alumni Notes

1966: A. D. Klasky

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WELCOME TO A NEW ENSURING...

**Queens County Saving Bank is proud to support the Kуперфелмer Foundation for the Arts and their mission.**

March 2023... Raquel-Maria Sapino received a 2023-2024 Fulbright Scholar Fellowship. She will travel to Suriname, where she will support the use of music and languages as a medium of instruction at the primary level in Suriname. Sapino will also develop and deliver two series of workshops aimed at increasing resources and visibility for minority languages of Suriname, as well as advancing research into language ideologies in the country.

1997: Jessica Bedar (MEd) was selected as the new principal at James H. Vernon School in the Oyster Bay-East Norwich School District. Nicole Christodoulouides was elected as the youngest president of the Republic of Cyprus. She assumed office in February 2023. She previously served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2018 to 2022 and Spokesperson of the Government from 2014 to 2018.

1995: William Ferris (MFA ‘95) is the new director for the East Meadow Public Library.

2005: Larissa Bukalov (MSEd) ‘03, a teacher at Bayliss High School, won the 2005 Math for America Muller Award for Professional Influence in March 2005. She was named Head of Berman Hebrew Academy in 2023.

1994: Michele Wright was named senior director of education at the Rhode Island Philharmonic Music & Music School.

1993: Sapién was promoted to principal at the New York law firm Herrick, Feinstein, LLP. She was awarded a Fulbright Scholar Fellowship. She will travel to Suriname, where she will have children isn’t that simple. 2013: Brandon Doubtful (MFA) ‘07 was one of four featured artists for the Indy Arts Council’s “Art & Soul” celebration, a public program that has kicked off Black History Month in Indianapolis since 1996 and helped expand the city’s awareness and appreciation of African American art and music.

2011: Evan Galante was hired as the director at the Lincoln Center Theater as part of the lead role, Lincoln Center. 2015: Stephanie Goff, a violinist and viola player, was featured in the London Jazz. 2014: Friedly Tonantzintli, a writer, performed at the legendary Martin Hall in New York City in July. He performed classical and modern music, and received a repeated standing ovation. 2008: shelves and clean and creating a vibrant place where everyone can feel at home.”

2004: Dan Bilawsky was the new executive director of the Wolfsburg Housing Improvement Development.

2003: Caryl Kastrinos, a professional opera singer, made her debut performance on two of the world’s biggest stages. She performed as a soloist at Carnegie Hall last March and was featured in the Lincoln Center Theater as part of the lead role, Lincoln Center. 2019: Kayla McAvoy was hired as a...
In Memoriam

Douglas L. Burgess ’42
Clare Browne ’79
Stanley Brown ’64
Ethel Bratton ’76
Annabel Moffat Brantley ’48
Jimmy Ross Branch MSEd
Francis Brancaleone ’79
Denise Bracco ’73
Sigrid Bentzen Braaten ’43
Judith M. Priestley Bookis ’58, MA ’75
Patricia Bond ’73
Caroline Bonacci ’83
Marie Barbsis Boily ’82
Ellen Bogolub
Joseph H. Bochner ’73
Rita J. Bobelis ’78
Janet Rosenberg Black ’47
John Bitterman ’87
Irwin Bernstein ’56
Alfred Bernstein ’54
Miriam Starr Berke ’45
Judith Berenberg
Ruth Rappeport Berelson ’45
Ralph Benzenberg ’64
Doris Meyers Bellis ’66
William Bell ’78
John F. Behrens ’66
Janice Bauer ’70
Rosalie Corigliano Barr ’53
Joanna Barnes
Elizabeth Bacon
Alice A. Alers Aviles MA ’78
Frank Askinazy
Helene Antell ’80
Jane Anderson ’49
Joan Ambrosino ’65
Keshawna Alderman ’19
Elaine Schwartz Alberts ’70, ’72
Alan Ackerman ’63
Frank A. Abbate ’72
by their friends and colleagues.

some of its valued members. They will

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ALUMNI NOTES

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Tickets & Info

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Make your gift by filling out the reply envelope, calling the Development Office at 718-997-3920, or going online at www.qc.cuny.edu/give.
SAVE THE DATE

Queens College’s 33rd Gala

Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 583 Park Avenue

Queens College’s 32nd Gala was a wonderful event. We honored three distinguished alumni: Richard R. Barakat ’81, Amber A. Guth ’79, and Celeste A. Guth ’82.

Our emcee, Gail A. Marquis ’80, led the evening’s festivities, which showcased music from our talented students, faculty, and alumni.

Join us at our next Gala at 583 Park Avenue!