

# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

**YORK** College

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## Provost's Academic Affairs Retreat Sets Course for Success



Provost Griffith (ctr.) responding to a question raised during the Retreat

Winter recess was anything but a time to forget about the academy as Provost Ivelaw L. Griffith and a team of academic leaders convened in early January to discuss the priorities of the

new semester and beyond.

The annual Academic Affairs Retreat's keynote speaker was George L. Mehaffy, vice president for Academic Leadership and Change at the

American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU).

Held on January 8, 2013, the day-long event billed as "Reflection and Renewal for Changed Opportunities and Outcomes," covered the CUNY Pathways initiative, academic and space reorganization, enrollment, pre-tenure review, technology and a litany of other important issues.

"The idea of pre-tenure review isn't to zing or to zap anyone," said Dr. Griffith. "It is something that facilitates how you can progress and how we can help you to progress. York

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## Emeritus Professor Makes Financial Investment in York

Dr. Peter Ranis, a retired professor, who was among the founding members of the Political Science discipline at York, has shown his appreciation and enduring fondness for the college in the form of a Charita-

ble Gift Annuity that will benefit students in his old department.

Dr. Ranis, who taught at York from 1968 until his retirement in 2003, worked with Dolores Swirin-Yao, York's vice president for Institution-

al Advancement, to make the gift.

"I have four grandchildren to think about," said Ranis, a passionate political scientist and professor during his tenure at the college. "But I

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- Academic Affairs Retreat
- Game-based learning at York College
- Undergraduate Research Day Coming
- York's Law Alumni celebrate Emerita

## Dr. Ron Daniels Addresses New “Slavery” During Distinguished Lecture

by Clariluz Rojas (York Journalism Major)



Dr. Ron Daniels

York College Distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Ron Daniels, recently gave a special lecture at the college on “Black History as Corrective for Racism and Cultural Aggression.”

The lecture focused on the treatment of black people in America from slavery and the issues black people still face in the twenty-first century.

The speech touched on the subject of racism being more insidious than prejudice. Racism is systematic and structural. It is embedded and done without notice.

Prejudice, he says, is more a one-on-one issue because it is an assumption about an individual.

Dr. Daniels explained that racism is a process that has different layers to it, which is why it is systematic. In order to see that racism is a system, the history behind it must be understood. Black people were taken from Africa and scattered to different parts of the world. Black people did not come to the United States freely [during the time of slavery].

The professor further explained that whites

benefit from certain privileges from exploiting other people. It goes back to the slave breaking process and the de-Africanization of black people. It is the repression of a group of people and stripping them of their customs, language and culture.

The lecture also covered the nuances of money and power dating back to the times of slavery. Black people were taught to internalize the sense of white superiority. And indeed even their names were changed to reflect that

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## Provost Lecture Series

### “Pride and Shame in Achievement: Links to Attachment Security and Implications for Education”

Thursday, February 28, 2013  
Rm. AC 4M05 • Noon to 2:00 pm



**Margareth Lafontant**  
(Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Teacher Education,  
*School of Health & Behavioral Sciences*)



Can our tendencies to express pride and shame be linked to how we first learned to function in our earliest relationships? This lecture explores if these tendencies and relationships might also have a bearing on how we react to success and failure in achievement contexts, such as in the preschool classroom and, perhaps, even in the college classroom?

## Game-based learning strategies at York College – Interview with Prof. Robert Duncan



**Can you describe how your professional achievements have advanced innovation in education?**

My research is designed to have an impact on a local level. Students in my laboratory design educational games to positively affect the lives of their peers. These games are used to inform, shape, and assess behavior. Our games adjust task difficulty according to user performance, which facilitates sustained attention, engagement, and learning. Consequently, the players experience a state of “flow,” where time seems to pass very quickly.

The *Transformative Games Initiative at York College* is designed to inspire educators, teachers, scientists, students, and game designers. We provide information about game-based learning, organize local efforts to incorporate games into the classroom, and analyze the results of these efforts in order to make improvements at the college. Our sister organization, the *CUNY Games Network*, also distributes

this information at a national level.

**What has changed as a result of your efforts?**

The games program has increased student and faculty participation in research. The *Transformative Games Initiative* works closely with the York College Office of Undergraduate Research to provide students with research opportunities. Students can collaborate on game based projects with faculty mentors and domain experts in any field. By engaging in the process of design, student researchers further their understanding of a subject. The general student population also profits from these new opportunities for game-based learning. Faculty lecturers have used games to enliven their classrooms. And faculty who never participated in research are now getting involved by developing novel game-based pedagogies for their disciplines.

**How can others facing similar challenges implement what you've learned through your**

**work?**

Anyone can improve their classroom by adopting game-based learning strategies. Any lesson that requires practice, feedback, or scaffolding can benefit from the use of game mechanics. Games-based research allows a faculty mentor to work with a larger number of students on a variety of projects. Any educator can make an immediate impact on their classroom or research program using simple resources like pen and paper. The art of design does not depend upon technology. Add technology to your design process slowly as needed.

**How have you applied technology in innovative ways to support your work?**

While I use a variety of tools to create games in the lab, the most valuable tools are the simple ones. We have a dry-erase board installed in the lab and it's used throughout the development process. All of my students develop work-

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Dr. Robert Duncan



## Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning



### 2012-13 Theme: Enhancing Instructional Effectiveness in and out of the Classroom

Thursday, Feb. 14	<u>Presentation:</u>	<i>Of CUNY, by CUNY, for CUNY: Why We Need an Institutional Repository</i>
		12 – 1:45pm, CETL, AC 4EA1
	Presenter:	Jill Cirasella, Library Department, Brooklyn College
Thursday, Mar 7	<u>Workshop:</u>	<i>The Art of Scientific Writing</i>
		12 – 1:45pm CETL, AC 4EA1
	Facilitators:	York College WAC Writing Fel- lows
Thursday, Mar 14	<u>Presentation:</u>	<i>Blogs@Baruch and the Possibilities of an Open Academic Publishing Platform</i>
		12 – 1:45pm CETL, AC 4EA1
	Presenter:	Luke Waltzer, B. Schwartz Com- munications Institute

## Law Alumni Celebrate With Retired Professor

Dr. Shirley Ostholm-Hinnau, York's legendary pre-law emerita professor, reconnected in December 2012 with former students who now serve as attorneys across the United States.

Sponsored by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, the inaugural reception to celebrate law alumni,

was hosted by Dwayne Andrews, Esq., Class of 1996, at the corporate office of Blank Rome, LLC in Manhattan, where he is a principal.

"There was such a warm feeling in the room as alumni greeted each other and began to reminisce about their experience at York College," said Mondell

Sealy, director of Development and Alumni Affairs. "The evening ended with everyone talking about getting together again in 2013."

Dr. Ostholm-Hinnau, who is celebrated as one of York's all-time favorite professors, was in her element as she reconnected with early alums and at least one recent

alumnus, who was among her last. Joseph Grasso, '10, was a second-generation Ostholm-Hinnau mentee, as she had also been his father's mentor in the late 1970s/early 1980s. The Hon. George Grasso, '81, is now a Criminal Court Justice in Brooklyn.

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was perhaps the only senior college not to have pre-tenure review before 2011. And it is important to have the dean in the process of promotion and reappointment, tenure..."

The provost also reminded the group that deans of the three schools are "not symbolic," but involved in the processes and are now becoming more involved in fundraising for their respective schools, as well.

It was also brought to the fore that three years after organizing into the school model, York students are still not identifying with the schools of their major. They generically identify with the college in general and their departments.

"We've not made enough progress with creating identity with the schools," Dr. Griffith. "We have to find a way of developing identity with the schools."

The Retreat discussions were led by the provost and deans Lynne Clark of the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences, Alfred Ntoko of the Schools of Business and Information Systems, and Panayiotis Meleties of the School of Arts and Sciences.

Department chairs such as Donna Chirico,

(Behavioral Sciences), Gila Acker (Social Sciences), Michael Smith (ACET), Boadnarine Bharosay (Accounting & Finance), Emily Davidson (Health Professions), Stephen Tyson (Academic Achievement), Larry Johnson (Chemistry), Gerard McNeil (Biology), Timothy Amrhein (Performing and Fine Arts) and Olajide Oladipo (Business and Economics) were also vibrant contributors to the discussion.

Dr. Johnson spoke to the importance of inter-departmental collaborations.

"Let's bring together people in departments with some common grounds and get them collaborating in scholarly work," said Johnson. "For example, let's teach Social Work students how the human brain works. You hope there will be more collaborative research and grants..."

Dr. Johnson and others also spoke of the value that technological aids such as Blackboard are adding to the teaching and learning process; while Biology professor Gerard McNeil also weighed in with a discussion on the need not so much for additional space, though that is a

factor, but with the need for a reorganization of the existing space.

"We should have schools and [their] departments close together" said Dr. McNeil. "The biggest challenge is work space."

Professor Amrhein discussed the need for realigning the curriculum and administrative services, and the provost touched on the topic of decentralization and the potential benefits of school curriculum committees versus the existing College-wide curriculum committee, and the structural elements that may need adjustment.

Dr. Chirico, chair of the Pathways committee, put forward the idea of pre- and post-assessments on issues such as the schools and Pathways.

On the topic of retention, Dr. Aghajan Mohammadi, director of Institutional Research disclosed that many students leave York in their second year. They do so because of failure to get into the professional programs that brought them to the college in the first place. He also acknowledged that grants and research funding at York are on the decline.

At the same time dean



**Dr. George L. Mehaffy, Vice President (Academic Leadership and Change), AASCU**



**Retreat attendees taking note of the ongoing conversation**

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also feel an obligation to York, my employer of 34 years.”

The Charitable Gift Annuity program is managed by the City University of New York and backed by the assets of the state of New York. The minimum gift to establish a Charitable Gift Annuity is \$10,000.

The American Council on Gift Annuities describes the program as “a contract under which a charity, in return for a transfer of cash, marketable securities or other assets, agrees to pay a fixed amount of money to one or two individuals for their lifetime.”

Participants who make a gift to York get a tax deduction; York makes fixed payments to the participant or a designee, starting immediately and continuing until the individual’s death,

at which time the balance of the annuity goes to the college.

The rates on an annuity vary by age and as of January 1, 2012 are: age 70: 5.1 percent; age 75: 5.8 percent; age 80: 6.8 percent; age 85: 7.8 percent and age 90 and above: 9.0 percent.

According to Swirin-Yao, the Charitable Gift Annuity makes sense in a marketplace where current rates on certificates of deposit (CDs) are well under 2 percent. It is a winning investment strategy for all involved. And she is delighted Dr. Ranis has signed on to support the college’s fundraising efforts in this manner.

“This generous support from Professor Ranis is another sign of the tremendous loyalty of our long-time York faculty,” said Swirin-Yao. “By establishing York’s

first Charitable Gift Annuity, Professor Ranis has shown that it is possible to do well for oneself – by receiving a steady annual annuity payment at a very favorable rate for life – while at the same time doing good for future York College students by supporting a scholarship.”

Swirin-Yao advises would-be participants to consult with their own financial advisors before making an irrevocable gift such as a Charitable Gift Annuity.

“We hope that others – faculty, staff, alumni and friends in the community – will follow Professor Ranis’s example and keep York in mind as they make their estate plans,” she said.

For more information, reach Vice President Swirin-Yao at 718-262-5193 or [dswirin@york.cuny.edu](mailto:dswirin@york.cuny.edu).



Dr. Peter Ranis

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## Mentorship at York Recognized

The *Queens Courier* recently honored York College professor Gerard McNeil and his mentee, Kirk Haltaufderhyde, ‘11, among more than two dozen “Kings of Queens” at the annual Kings of Queens Champions Breakfast Awards &

Networking Event, held at Terrace on the Park in Flushing Meadows/Corona Park.

Dr. McNeil and Haltaufderhyde, a 2012 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow at Brown University, gamely donned the requisite crown and gown remi-

niscient of ancient English kings, for the occasion.

Haltaufderhyde’s Ph.D. research at Brown includes “Characterizing Lariats to Discover Tissue Specific Differences in Branch Points.” He was joined at the breakfast by his wife, mother and sister.



Mr. Haltaufderhyde (l.) and his mentor, Dr. Gerard McNeil

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Ntoko stressed the importance of national accreditation for Business and other programs at York. He also encourages collaboration among faculty and units, and that faculty should “take ownership” of advisement of students in their departments.

“When students bond with faculty they tend not to transfer,” said Ntoko, who added that significant resource allocation was needed for niche programs and research by faculty in his school.

Stephen Tyson, director of the Academic Achievement Center, spoke about the importance of marketing the Center so that students will know from the beginning that there is tutoring available in all subject areas but writing, which has its own center. He too bemoaned the lack of space for his program. Tyson also asked faculty to incorporate tutoring information into syllabi.

Lester Raphael, director of Academic Skills and School Outreach Programs and interim director of Advising revealed that soon

“Counseling will no longer be doing advisement for incoming students.” Rather, there are “several models being proposed” for the fall 2013 semester and beyond.

“The president has requested a recommendation for restructuring the advising model at the college,” Rafael explained later. “The proposed plans would move incoming freshmen advising out of the counseling area and to the Advisement Center and/or the individual departments. Incoming transfer students with declared majors would move from the Advisement Center to the departments. All undeclared students would be advised by the Center. Several models that break down these plans further are being discussed to present to the president. Full or partial implementation is expected for fall 2013.”

Business Department chair, Dr. Olajide Oladipo also emphasized that “advisement is an important feature of retention.”

Keynote speaker George L. Mehaffy,

opened his discussion with the assertion that there are three truisms in public higher education right now:

“Funds are going down; we’re in a knowledge economy, and technology is changing everything,” said the founder of AASCU’s “Red Balloon” project, which “re-imagines” undergraduate education. “I really believe we’re in a moment where technology is going to revolutionize everything... Our university model founded in the eleventh century is not working in the twenty-first century.”

Mehaffy added that if things continue on the same trajectory, “we won’t have public education by 2059, based on the budget right now... higher education is a set of subsidies.”

According to Mehaffy, artificial intelligence is getting “so good” it will replace human intelligence. And networked knowledge is increasingly important. He would like to see more institutions incorporate blended courses (some in-house, some online) and other variations.



**“To know what people really think, pay regard to what they do, rather than what they say.”**

— *George Santanyana*

**Faculty have used games to enliven their classrooms. And faculty who never participated in research are now getting involved by developing novel game-based pedagogies for their disciplines.**

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ing physical or paper prototypes of their games first. If the game demands digital technology, we gravitate toward the Adobe Flash platform or the Unity3d game engine. Recently, we are using the Unity engine more because of its intuitive user interface and because it can publish to a broad range of platforms. Unity3d has also proven to be a great environment to learn programming. Unlike traditional software environments, game engines allow new programmers to see the results of their code immediately. Even though educational licenses for software are abundant, we use open-source technology as often as possible. For example, all our art assets are created in GIMP or Blender.

**What is the biggest obstacle you have had to overcome to ensure students are receiving a quality education?**

The greatest obstacle I face on a daily basis is breaking students of behaviors that are oriented toward grades, financial success, or other secondary reinforcers. Tapping into a student's true passion and motivation for living is surprisingly difficult because they

are often unaware of that passion themselves. Social and familial pressures for academic and financial success often occlude student needs but, as the psychology literature informs us, these indicators do not predict happiness. I try to shift the focus from grades and money to Quality of Life.

**What is your region doing well currently to support education?**

York College and the greater New York City area couldn't be more supportive of these endeavors. The faculty and administration at CUNY understand our students are faced with unique challenges that require novel solutions. CUNY is working closely with the National Council for Undergraduate Research. At York College, we have started an annual research conference for undergraduates, we offer faculty incentives for participation, we sponsor faculty-mentor programs, and we are planning to offer research scholarships to students.

**What conditions must change to better support education?**

Most of the challenges we face result from over-

crowding in primary schools, the same budget issues that affect everyone, cultural issues that emphasize financial success above happiness, and a lack of data-driven educational practices. An immediate change that can happen quickly is to incentivize members of the faculty to participate in undergraduate research. If the administration offers significant course credit for faculty, more faculty and students will buy into these programs, and more undergrads will have an opportunity to participate in research early in their academic careers.

**What is the best opportunity for innovation in education?**

Data indicate that the best way to improve education in our country is to improve the student-teacher ratio. However, this ratio is getting worse around the world as the population increases. We must utilize the Internet and asynchronous communication to provide personalized attention to a larger number of students. We now have the opportunity to incorporate limitless resources in the classroom and reach out to more

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students than ever before.

**What advice would you give a new teacher (or to anyone wanting to make a difference in education)?**

Learn everything you can about traditional pedagogy in your field and the physiology of learning. Never forget that learning is a physiological process. Embrace models that are supported with data, and then fearlessly challenge these models. Document everything. Education will only be transformed if we challenge the status quo using sound scientific methods.

**What educational “trend” do you think is helping students? Is there a trend that is getting in the way of**

**learning?**

I’m very happy to see a rapid shift from the traditional consumer-based model of education to a model where students are encouraged to design and create. Maker Labs are springing up in classrooms all over the world, which indicates that we are experiencing a paradigm shift. There is also a movement toward personalized education, where students decide what they want to learn in a course or a major. The largest obstacle to achieving this transition is our overdependence on state-mandated assessments. Assessment is critical for monitoring progress in the classroom and improving upon current pedagogy. However, the needs of one community are not the same as another. Insisting on a one

-size-fits-all model denies the needs of the individual student.

**If you could give one educational tool to every child in the world, what would it be? Why?**

I am an avid supporter of One Laptop per Child and free Internet access for developing nations. Unfortunately, these efforts have proven more challenging than anticipated. Despite these challenges, offering free access to the Internet is critical for empowering children throughout the world.

Source: *dailyedventures* - <http://dailyedventures.com/index.php/2013/01/15/duncan/>. Re-published with permission

 **dailyedventures**  
Anthony Sakito's 365-day look at global heroes in education.

**We must utilize the Internet and asynchronous communication to provide personalized attention. We now have the opportunity to incorporate limitless resources in the classroom and reach out to more students than ever before.**

*After many years of hard work, frequently interrupted by professional obligations, York College Music professor Thomas Zlabinger has successfully completed his Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology at the CUNY Graduate Center, making him officially, Thomas Zlabinger, Ph.D.*

*Congratulations, Dr. Zlabinger!*



## York Professor and Graduate Assistant/Adjunct co-present research



Dr. Rosenthal (l.) and Mr. Mika'il Deveaux

On December 4, 2012, Beth Rosenthal (Social Sciences) and her CUNY graduate assistant (also York adjunct professor) Mika'il Deveaux gave a presentation at the Graduate Center titled "Use of Mental Health Services among CUNY students." The presentation was an outgrowth of Rosenthal's research funded by the HealthyCUNY Initiative; the Initiative is a joint venture of CUNY's School of Pub-

lic Health and its Central Office of Student Affairs.

The research that Rosenthal and Deveaux's presentation was based on was conducted during summer and fall, 2012; the team also included York social work students: Krystalbella Murnane-Victorelli and Anemanie Ram.

The study focused on the national concern regarding the widespread prevalence of psychological distress among col-

lege students concomitant with the students' underutilization of mental health counseling services. The research team studied about 1,000 York first year students over a 7 year period; and measured actual use of counseling services, stated willingness to use services if the need arose, and 20 "barriers" to use of counseling. The barriers were grouped into 4 dimensions: lack of access to

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black people had become white people's property.

He also spoke on the difference between slavery in the United States and slavery in the Caribbean. Slavery in the United States was among the harshest anywhere because whites were being the dominant group. In the Caribbean, black people were the dominant group and families were allowed to stay together.

Dr. Daniels talked about Modern Day forms of "slavery" as well.

"Most prisoners in the United States are

black and Latino," said Dr. Daniels. "Incarceration is modern day slavery and solitary confinement shows this. Stop and Frisk laws today are another example of "minorities" being viewed negatively and police brutality is an ongoing issue."

He also talked about how drug usage in the United States is viewed as a crime, where another culture may view it as a health or mental issue. Drug laws are a conspiracy and drugs have been used to oppress people in the United States.

Dr. Daniels's speech also touched on the

Emancipation Proclamation and how its intent was to save the union. President Abraham Lincoln realized that black people were emancipating themselves. Although some improvements were made when slavery was abolished, freed black people still had no social rights. Thus, they had to create parallel societies.

"In order for things to continue to change in this country, people have to unite and go against the way we have been brainwashed so we can continue to grow," said Dr. Daniels.

## 4th Annual Student Research Day

The Office of Undergraduate Research at CUNY-York College is now accepting registrants for the 4th Annual Student Research Day which will be held on **Thursday, April 18th**, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm in the Atrium of the Academic Core building.

Registration is open to all York College students, whether part-time or full-time, who have engaged in research or creative works under the supervision of a faculty member. Students may register in one of three categories: poster presentation or panel presentation. [If a student intends to conduct a performance they should e-mail [uresearch@york.cuny.edu](mailto:uresearch@york.cuny.edu).]

**The registration page can be found here:**

*[www.york.cuny.edu/academics/undergraduate-research/research-day-registration](http://www.york.cuny.edu/academics/undergraduate-research/research-day-registration)*

Please note that all students who have co-authored papers are required to register individually. Advisors should receive a confirmation email indicating that their students have registered. Students should seek the approval of their advisors before registering. Registration will close March 1st, 2013.

Student Research Day is the largest annual exhibition of student research and creative efforts at York College. The day is organized into three sessions: poster and panel sessions – which run concurrently – and the lunch session during which a keynote speaker gives an invited talk.

Past keynote speakers have included:

- Dr. Ken Furton, Dean of Arts & Sciences at Florida International University;
- Staceyann Chin, performance artist and author of “The Other Side of Paradise”;
- Hari Kunzru, novelist and winner of the Somerset Maugham Prize.

This year’s keynote speaker will be **Dr. Partha P. Mitra** (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory). Also, Provost and Senior VP of Academic Affairs Ivelaw L. Griffith will be announcing several awards to be given at the 4th Student Research Day.

Thank you in advance for helping to make this Student Research Day even more engaging and remarkable than it has been for the past three years.

For more information or any questions, please contact Dr. Rishi Nath, Director, Office of Undergraduate Research, at [rnath@york.cuny.edu](mailto:rnath@york.cuny.edu) or (718) 262-2813.



YORK COLLEGE CUNY

## First city ROTC program in decades comes to York College

by Maggie Hayes

New cadets are being trained for a future serving the country right at York College, in the first city ROTC program in decades.

Last September, the CUNY school took on an ROTC program for young, hopeful cadets.

“I’ve wanted to be an officer all my life,” said junior Jerome Taboasares. “I wanted to go to school close to home, and as soon as I found out [York] offered ROTC, I jumped right in.”

York’s ROTC program is the first offered at any CUNY college since 1960, and includes a three-credit course comprised of Military Science 101, 102 and 202, as well as Military Custom and Courtesies, Army Ethos and more. An appreciation breakfast was held on Wednesday, January 17 in honor of the growing program; the

York cadets, faculty and also Army members were in attendance.

Taboasares, a first generation New York native, comes from a long line of Filipino ma-



**President Marcia Keizs (ctr.), ROTC officers and students**  
(photo courtesy of Jerry Speier)

rines and knew that he wanted to follow in the footsteps of those before him. A nursing major, he intends on taking his ROTC experience and continuing on to the Nursing Corp of the Army, hopefully as a Nursing General.

“I’d like to add [something] new to our family,” he said. “If my relatives can do it, so can I.”

Colonel Twala Mathis, U.S. Army Cadet Commander and Second Brigade Commander, addressed the young cadets, commending them for their participation in ROTC.

“This is the absolute best leadership training

in the nation,” she said. “Today’s service members are part of a unique team, working together for a single purpose.”

During what Mathis called “one of the most turbulent times in our nation’s history,” she said it was young cadets like those at York that will continue to ensure the safety of our country.

“ROTC is about developing strong leadership skills for life,” said Marcia Keizs, president of York College. “With this preparation, our participating students are enhancing their abilities as leaders.”

*Reprinted with permission of the Queens Courier*

**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”**

**– Nelson Mandela**



### Occupational Therapy students organize Close Drive for Super-storm Sandy evacuees

Prof. Sharon Faust helped OT students organize clothes and supplies for evacuees from York College who were sheltered at York College.

**In the picture (l.-r.):** Students Alexandria Touris (1st yr.), Rachel Mendoza (1st yr.), Prof. Sharon Faust, Danielle Fallon (2nd yr.)

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The younger Grasso is currently in his second year at SUNY Buffalo Law School.

Among the highlights of the evening were the remarks given by Monique Walker, '07, Camille Wynter, '10 and Joseph Grasso, '11 who all shared personal stories about their student experience at York and how the Ronald H. Brown Summer Pre-Law School Preparatory Program at St. John's University readied them for law school.

The St. John's program is considered one of best in the country in preparing students for admission into law school. Candidates are taught courses by actual law school faculty; receive internships with



**L.-r.:** Dr. Shirley Ostholm-Hinnau, Lorraine Mohr '77 (graduate of Cardozo Law School), Brigid Geoghan McKinley '77 (graduate of Fordham Law School), and Tomas Lopez '77 (graduate of Georgetown Law School)

judges and lawyers working in a variety of settings, along with comprehensive test preparation for the LSAT. York College has participated in the program since its inception in 2005, thanks to the efforts of program director Len Baynes and Dr. Ostholm-Hinnau.

"The reception was

an extraordinary event which I will never forget," said Ostholm-Hinnau. "It was a wonderful reunion and celebration of our law alums of whom I am so proud!"

According to Ostholm-Hinnau, alumni in attendance reconnected with their classmates some of whom

they had not seen nor heard from in many years. They also inquired about other faculty members fondly remembered; and networked even as they indicated that they hoped the reception would become a tradition. The alumni from the Class of 1977 especially enjoyed the mini-reunion amongst themselves.

"These law alums are truly a testament to the influence of York on their lives and careers," said Dr. Ostholm-Hinnau. "I had not seen [some] in 35 years, but because of the reception they are now in touch with me and with each other. Tomas [Lopez] came all the way from California for the reception."

## In Memoriam

2012 could conceivably be considered an *annus horribilis* for the many deaths associated with the York College family.

It started in August with the passing of retired president, Milton Bassin, and ended in December with the deaths of former president, Dr. Charles C. Kidd and recent graduate, Dominique Jamison, who perished in a car accident.

Dr. Kidd who had successfully battled illnesses after leaving York to regain his health and career, died on December 10th of natural causes at the age of 76.

“During Dr. Kidd’s tenure new academic programs were added and new community partnerships forged,”



Dr. Charles Kidd

said Dr. Marcia V. Keizs, the current president of York College. “President Kidd extended the college’s reach into Far Rockaway to bring that area of our Queens community into the CUNY fold. It was also under his stewardship that the CUNY Aviation Institute at York College was born from a partnership between the college and the Port Authority of

New York and New Jersey.”

Dr. Kidd, who was the fourth president of York, returned to the college as a professor during the 2010-2011 Academic Year in the Department of Earth and Physical Sciences. Dr. Kidd, who held the Ph.D. in Environmental Health Science, spearheaded an informative and well-received forum at York on the cause and effects of the devastating event.

Born in Washington, D.C., to Charles and Lorraine Kidd, President Kidd is survived by his wife, Mary, and five of their seven children.

“Our deep sympathies go out to them, his extended family; and his friends and colleagues

here at York and elsewhere,” said President Keizs.

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**Dominique Jamison**, Class of 2012, died early on the morning of December 30th in a tragic car accident on Brookville Boulevard near Rockaway Turnpike, when the car in which she was travelling crashed into the marsh near Kennedy Airport.

Jamison, an enthusiastic stage actress on campus, was also a talented member of the York College Gospel Choir, which honored her memory by performing at her funeral services at Calvary Baptist Church near York.

“When she was in the choir she definitely left

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mental health counseling; stigma involved in use of mental health counseling; lack of knowledge about mental health counseling; and the effectiveness of mental health counseling.

Among the team’s findings were: very few students (only 12%) used mental health counseling in the past 6

months; over half of the students are not likely to use counseling even if the need arose; the biggest barriers to use of counseling are: perceived lack of access (e.g., cost, time), the stigma involved in use of mental health counseling; the smallest barriers were its perceived ineffectiveness, i.e., about 90% of the stu-

dents felt that mental health counseling is effective.

Other findings included gender differences (e.g., females are more likely to use counseling than males); and lack of ethnic group differences (no ethnic group is more likely either to have used or be willing to use counseling than any other

group).

The team also made numerous suggestions to HealthyCUNY for potential interventions and for future research: e.g., develop and evaluate various outreach programs to encourage use of counseling; develop and test a model of the psychodynamics underlying use of mental

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her mark and got into the spirit of what we were doing,” said Professor Jonathan Quash, choir director. “In keeping with that, many of the members came back and sang at her home-going service.”

Jamison, according to Professor Timothy Amrhein, chair of the Department of Performing and Fine Arts, was a natural performer.

“Dominique immediately took center stage in the York College Theatre’s production of *FAME: The Musical*,” said Amrhein. “Dominique’s continued dedication to her art and her education only got brighter as she took on more demanding roles in *Don Juan* in Chicago and *Macbeth*. Her talent, her character, her conviction and her love of family had gained her so much deserved recognition among the faculty, staff and students at York.”

Amrhein added that each student contributes

in no small measure to the vibrant community “that we create together at York College.”

“I know that the loss of any student, particularly in so tragic and senseless a manner, grievously wounds us all, and through it unites a community,” said Amrhein. “May we forever find ways to keep our memories of her alive.”

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**Bakary Jammeh**, a member of the York College Mail Service team, lost a short but valiant fight against pancreatic cancer on December 7th.

Born in Gambia, West Africa, Bakary joined the staff in 1991 and became a popular member of the York family as he made his rounds throughout the various departments.

“I could always rely on him,” said Marjorie Brun, his supervisor. “He was reliable, trustworthy and he never let anything bother him. He

took good care of his family in Gambia. We hire a lot of Work Study students and he always gave them advice. He took them under his wings.”

Ronald Thomas, vice president for Administrative Affairs at York also shared fond memories of Bakary.

“The suddenness of Bakary’s passing makes the loss all the more painful,” said VP Thomas. “Whether you knew him for only a short while or for as many years as I did, his cheerful demeanor, as well as his ready smile, were always uplifting. Going beyond the call of duty was normal for Bakary. His dedication to the college was unsurpassed. We shall miss him dearly. Our prayers and thoughts go out to his family.”

*All other members of the college family known to have died last year have already been memorialized in this publication and elsewhere on campus.*



Dominique Jamison

cont.'d from p.14

health counseling.

HealthyCUNY and Professor Rosenthal are exploring ways to continue working together; they have already begun collaborating on the development of a course to

be given by the School of Public Health.

Professor Rosenthal and Krystalbella and Anemanie will build on their work during Spring, 2013, in the Independent Study course

the students will take with the professor. They will study the relationship between use of mental health counseling and GPA.



## York Alum Changing Lives as Bronx Teacher

York College alumni are wont to remember and reconnect with professors who influenced them at the college.

To this end, Dr. Lindamichelle Baron, a Teacher Education professor and department chair, recently heard from a member of the Class of 2009.

Christopher Astacio wanted Dr. Baron to know he had found a teaching job due to the training he had received at York where he had majored in Physical Education with plans to teach.

"I just wanted to keep you updated," Astacio said in his email mis-



Christopher Astacio

sive. "I did manage to secure a physical education teaching position in a middle school in the South Bronx. It also happens to be one of the worst schools in the city in regards to drugs, gang activity, pregnancy, etc."

Astacio added, "But I love a challenge and the

o p p o r t u n i t y t o work with my people. I have broken down the walls of some of the toughest kids in the school. I literally saved a dean from physical harm by convincing a 6'2", 200+ lbs. student that his life had meaning. Imagine me, this small teacher, holding back this massive student. He confessed that if I wasn't there to stop him, he would have 'lost it'."

A c c o r d i n g t o Astacio, something he learned from Dr. Baron, who is also a popular poet, helped him to diffuse the situation between the angry student

and the educator.

"I began my own poetry slam morning class and chose the most difficult kids," said Astacio. "So for 45 minutes, Tuesdays through Thursdays, we speak and write about our lives, which has helped turn these kids around."

A c c o r d i n g t o Astacio, when he's not with his poetry class, he connects with his students in other ways as well.

"I go around the entire school establishing bonds, finding those who cut class and making my presence

cont.'d on p.17

**"The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself."**

**Edward G. Bulwer-Lytton**



**Dr. Andrea Krauss (r.) was honored by Dean Clark for her many years of service as chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy. She remains the Program Director of Occupational Therapy.**

cont.'d from p.16

known,” he said. “There are days that I want to give up, but I continue on. I have been threatened, called names, had my gym vandalized, materials stolen, been involved with breaking up brawls, you name it. However, I know I can make a difference and I will.”

Astacio’s road to York was a little unconventional. After his dying sister persuaded him to continue his education he looked for an affordable college.

“My sister had just died,” he said in an interview with *Academic Affairs Update*. “But I looked up colleges with P.E. as a major and saw that York College and Queens College both had it. I tossed a coin in the air and chose York.”

It was in one of Dr. Baron’s classes that Astacio picked up the teaching tip that now serves him and his students.

“Dr. Baron talked about reaching kids on another level than education,” he said. “She told us to ‘see them as people first and see them in their writing.’ That helped me. If a kid won’t talk to me, I have them put it on paper (in the form of poetry). It helps give them some kind of direction and

we’ve created a 100-plus page book of poetry.”

Baron is pleased that her teaching is helping her Teacher Education students to make a difference in their profession as well.

“Mr. Astacio was a teacher education candidate in a method’s course that is required for all secondary school educators, said Baron. “Often, educators both in -service and pre-service in high schools do not see the benefit of embedding reading and writing strategies in their lesson planning and teaching in their content area. Yet an emphasis on reading and writing in the content areas is critical for myriad practical reasons related to cultural, language and other differences that impact understanding of content area reading.”

Baron added that Astacio “was one of the students who embraced the idea of reaching students beyond issues of comprehension, in order to connect to students’ sense of self and motivation to achieve.”

“When Christopher Astacio brought in samples of his students’ journal entries and later the students’ actual completed poetry anthology the course was motivated and energized,” she said.

“I hope that his initiative is making a difference for the students of other graduates in that course, several years ago, who are teaching from the imperative to reach all students minds, hearts and souls.”

Astacio, the father of two children, Cristina Jailyn (5) and Justin Christopher Astacio (10) says there are many children who need help.

“There are so many lost kids; but I want them to create their own destinies and have a purpose for their life,” he said. “One girl asked me, ‘why do we have to go to school, we’re just going to die anyway.’”

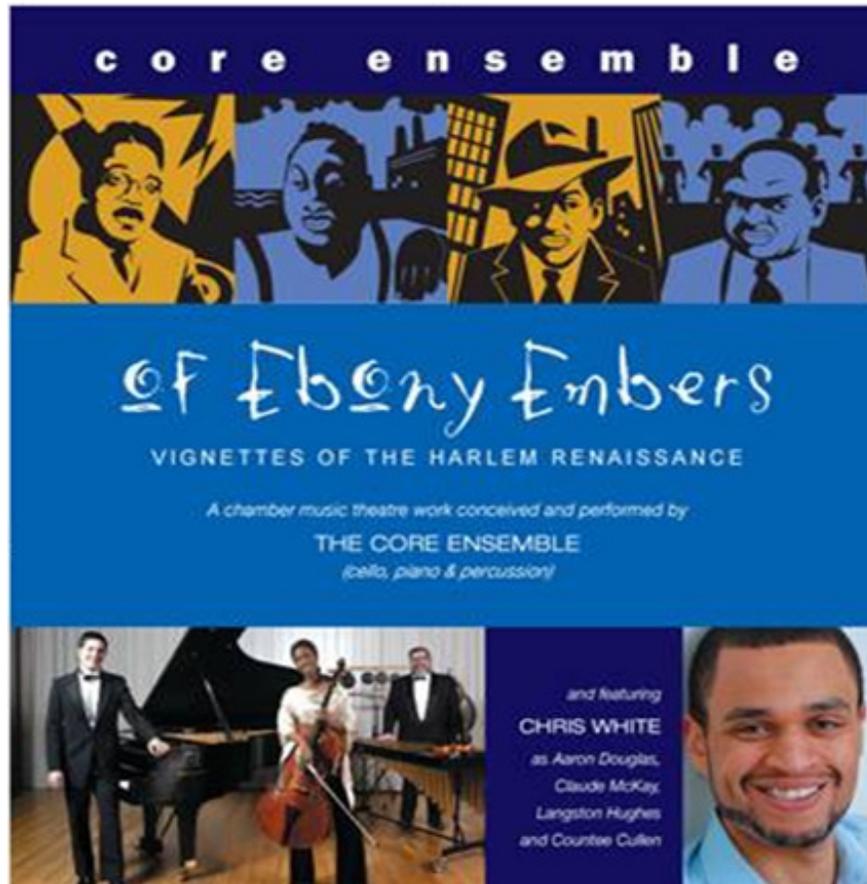
Astacio has said he works with another gym teacher “to bring structure” into the lives of their students for whom chaos is the norm.

His efforts have not gone unnoticed. Astacio, who is raising funds for new gym equipment for his students, has received the Paraprofessional Award from the United Federation of Teachers (UFT).

“I don’t want our gym to reflect their lives right now,” said Astacio. “Their lives are poor and broken and I want to provide them with new equipment to replace what has been stolen and vandalized.”

**“There are so many lost kids; but I want them to create their own destinies and have a purpose for their life. One girl asked me, ‘why do we have to go to school, we’re just going to die anyway’.”**

**YORK COLLEGE IS CU NY**



## **Ebony Embers – Musical Drama**

**February 8, 2013**

**YORK College Performing Arts Center**

**7:00 pm**

**Tickets \$10 / \$20**

*Poetry of the Harlem Renaissance brought to life with music by the Core Ensemble.*



**Alex Blake – Jazz Concert**

**February 16, 2013**

**7:00 pm**

**YORK College Performing Arts Center**

**Tickets \$10 / \$20**

*One of the most multifaceted bassists and jazz musicians of our time.*

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*All items should be submitted in MS Word*

*via email to:*

*AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu*