



# Academic Affairs Update

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## Performing Arts Center Named in Memory of Early President

**D**r. Marcia V. Keizs, current President of York College, recently presided over a poignant dedication of the College's performing arts center as the Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center (MGBPAC), witnessed by his family, friends, founding faculty members, members of the Bassin Cabinet, and members of the Southeast Queens community who supported the college's mission.

Milton G. Bassin (1923-2012), who became the second president of the then-fledgling York College in the summer of 1971, kept the College alive and viable throughout the fiscal crisis of the 1970s that threatened to eliminate it from the CUNY map.

The Performing Arts Center is now the first building on York's campus of six structures to be named. Funds raised around the naming now finance the Milton G. Bassin Endowment Merit Scholarship. Janae Hunter, a York senior and a graduate

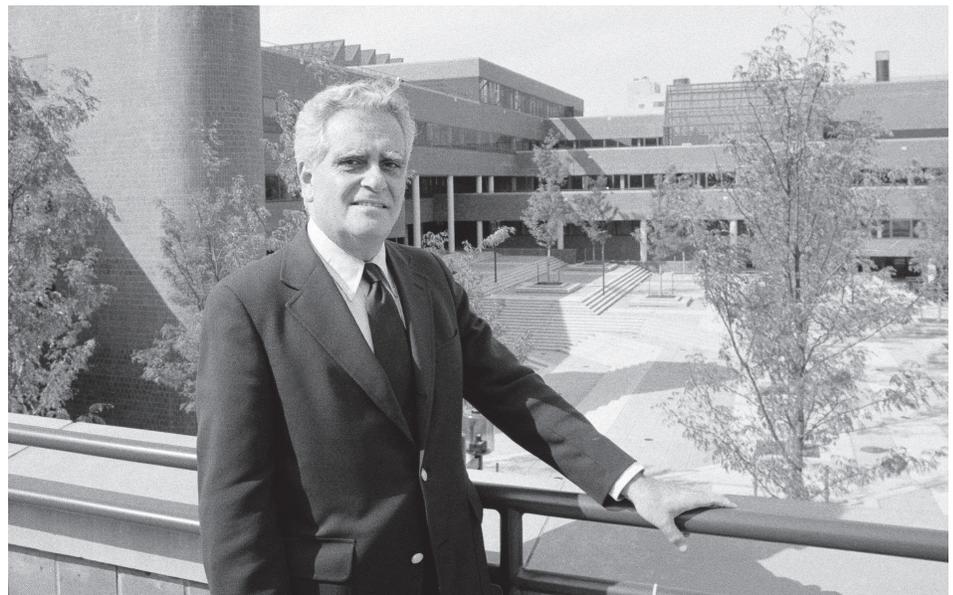
of the York Early College Academy -- and the first recipient of the Bassin Scholarship, introduced the late president's children, Lori Bassin and Robert Bassin, who were accompanied by their mother, Mrs. Bernice Bassin, and Milton and Bernice's grandchildren, Noah and Maya Sharma.

President Keizs was delighted with the outcome of the ceremony, held in the atrium of the Bassin PAC, and used it as opportunity not only to pay tribute to her

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## Deadline!

All items for the **February 2015** issue of **Academic Affairs Update** should be submitted in MS Word to [AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu](mailto:AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu) by **January 23, 2015**.



The late former president, Milton Bassin, who served York from 1971 to 1991, enjoys the view from the balcony of the Academic Core Building, the culmination of his fight for York

# York Hosts HHC CEO for Ebola Forum

By **ALMA SACASA**, York Journalism Major

**R**am Raju, MD, MBA, FACS, FACHE, the president and CEO of New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC), was the keynote speaker at a recent York College public forum on the Ebola disease.

Dr. Raju explained to the audience in the Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center, that while the disease is indeed frightful, Americans need not panic.

“Don’t be swayed by all of this media hype,” said Raju. “It’s a deadly disease, but it’s difficult to contract. Everyone (in the US) who has contracted the Ebola disease so far has been a health professional who has worked in close space with Ebola patients.”

According to the HHC website, the Ebola disease first came about in 1976 in Zaire (now known as Democratic Republic of the Congo). This time around the disease has made its way across Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone; and as of mid-November 2014, there were 13,268 cases and 4,960 casualties, including Dr. Martin Salia, a legal permanent resident of the United States, who had been working as a surgeon in Sierra Leone. He died November 17th, barely into his second day of treatment at a hospital in Nebraska. Dr. Salia, who arrived on a private flight, was in extremely critical condition when he arrived.

At the forum, facilitated by the York College Division of Student Development, Dr. Raju announced to the audience that Doctor Craig Spencer, who returned from the epicenter of the disease in Guinea, and came down with symptoms some days after returning home to New York City, had now been released with a clean bill of health from Bellevue, an HHC facility.

“I am pleased to announce that we were able to treat and cure a hero who put himself in harm’s way to care for others,” said Raju of Spencer.

Bellevue has been designated one of eight Ebola treatment centers in the state and one of five in New York City.

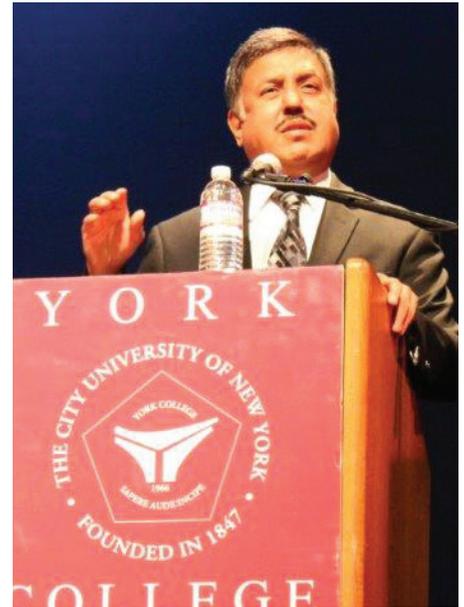
“It’s better to treat in one place because it can replicate and we wouldn’t want that” said Raju.

According to Dr. Raju, HHC will provide unbiased care to anyone with the disease and with the same standard protocol.

“We help everyone” he said. “It doesn’t matter your race, age or immigration status, because all that matters is your health.”

Dr. Geneva Walker-Johnson, vice president for Student Development at York, was delighted with the event.

“We were very fortunate and honored that Dr. Raju accepted our invitation to come to York to discuss the facts and myths that have surrounded the Ebola virus,” said Dr. Walker-Johnson. “The depth of his knowledge about the virus and his presentation style were both engaging and informative, putting those



Dr. Ram Raju, CEO and president of HHC

in attendance at ease. In addition to the outstanding formal education we offer, as an educational institution, our commitment to our students and to our community is to be the place where important public service information is disseminated.” ■



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Sean Williams, faculty; Dr. Geneva Walker-Johnson, vice president for Student Development; Dr. Ram Raju, president and CEO, HHC; Dr. Jean Phelps, director, Student Activities; and Dr. David Ajuluchukwu, faculty

# Arts Center

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early predecessor, but to highlight some of the College's more recent milestones.

"Many speakers will undoubtedly remind us of the Bassin legacy...of the tenacity of the man," she said. "They will admire his vision for York as a senior college within the CUNY umbrella. They will applaud his wisdom in cementing the relationship with the community to advocate, some would say agitate, on behalf of York College to the City and State. They will note that were it not for that strong coalition that President Bassin built, a coalition of town and gown in Jamaica and Queens -- York would not enjoy this 50-acre campus we now call home. ["This] includes our Academic Core, our Health and Physical Education facility...."

In addition to the more than 200 attendees, CUNY Chancellor Emeritus Matthew Goldstein, who knew Bassin well, and endorsed the naming when it went before the CUNY Board of Trustees in 2013, also came to pay tribute to his fellow City College alumnus. Goldstein painted a picture of Bassin as an engineer who loved the opera and indeed gave the Chancellor Emeritus his first exposure to the genre. Dr. Rob-



Congressman Gregory Meeks addresses the gathering at the naming ceremony for the Milton G. Bassin PAC

ert Parmet, a York founding professor served as emcee of the two-hour event.

"Throughout his 20-year tenure as president, he maintained both fiscal and academic integrity, which was an important defense against those who would do us ill during the fiscal crisis of the 1970s when our campus was as yet unfinished and we operated with relatively few students in rented facilities in Downtown Jamaica," said Parmet.

President Keizs also spoke to the importance of continuing to build on the Bassin groundwork.

"We are grateful to the Bassin legacy and are proud to carry it forward, building on his strong foundation," said Keizs. "His is a legacy of intellectual vibrancy, of scientific discovery, of cultural experimentation, of academic excellence and

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Installation of the Bassin name on the Performing Arts Center

# Arts Center

Continued from 3

of civic engagement that have impacted the lives of the 27,000 people we claim as alumni and the 8,400 students currently enrolled at York. [So] this naming, not only honors our past; as well it links our past to our present as a symbol of our continued vibrant and hopeful future.”

Among the generous donors to an endowment fund that has been established to provide an annual Milton G. Bassin Merit Scholarship present for the celebration were Milton and Bernice Bassin’s former son-in-law Sanjiv Sharma; President Bassin’s brother, Eugene, and his wife Judy, and Milton’s niece, Anita Asch, and her husband Arthur, as well as Bernice Bassin herself. Community guests included Congressman Gregory Meeks, Assemblywoman Vivian Cook, Councilman Archie Spigner (ret); Queens Borough President Melinda Katz and Senator-Elect Leroy Comrie; alumni members Judge George Grasso, ’80 and Donald Vernon ’90, who spoke movingly about his days as Bassin’s “chief antagonist,” only to “grow up and realize that President Bassin was the best parent I ever had.” ■



Lori Bassin, President Marcia V. Keiz, Borough President Melinda Katz, Congressman Meeks and Robert Bassin



At left, Chancellor Emeritus Matthew Goldstein



The Bassin children, Lori and Robert, flank York senior Janae Hunter, first recipient of the Milton G. Bassin Endowment Merit Scholarship



Robert Bassin, Bernice Bassin, Lori Bassin and President Keiz huddle beneath the Milton G. Bassin sign on the front of the PAC

# Ray Rice Tape Serves as Catalyst for York's Latest Anti-Domestic Violence Forum

By **ALMA SACASA**, York Journalism Major

The Ray Rice domestic violence video inspired a town hall meeting at York College with a diverse group of women including York Psychology Professors Donna Chirico, Kathariya Mokruue, Social Work professor Selena T. Rodgers; and special guests Tanya McLeod, of Voices of Women Organizing Project; actress Madeline McCray, and author and activist Terrie M. Williams.

Moderated by Dr. Ron Daniels, York Distinguished Lecturer in Political Science, the event covered many facets of the problem. According to Safe Horizon's website, one in four women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime.

McLeod, a domestic violence survivor, says victims remain in the home with their abusers because they are either in love or have nowhere to go because their abusers are the breadwinners, thus making it harder for them to fight back and leave at any time.

The panel's advice to victims was plenty, but the main one was that they shouldn't just leave the abusers for their own safety, but also for their family's as well.

During the question and answer portion, audience members shared their own experiences or expressed outrage that domestic violence continues. One young man admitted to having been violent with his significant other. He

was cheered for his bravery in publicly admitting such an ugly secret; and applauded for taking the first step in stopping; as well as showing his child what a loving relationship without violence is, as McCloud and others observed.

"What is going on in a child's life seeing abuse and seeing the rage [that leads to one parent abusing the other] comes out later on in their life" said the actress Madeline McCray.

There are other perceived consequences for the children as well. Another young man at the forum explained that he had a stuttering problem, which he believed developed as a result of witnessing his father abusing his mother. He said it gave him conflicting feelings because here was a man he loved, and who gave him whatever he wanted, but was hurting his mother.

"Anger is not the only issue," said Dr. Kathariya Mokruue. "Men are able to manage their anger in certain situations."

Panelist Terrie M. Williams agrees.

"We often ask 'what's wrong with that person,'" said Williams, a social activist and author of the seminal *Black Pain: It Just Looks Like We're Not Hurting*. "But the real question we should be asking is 'what happened to that person' because it tells us the real history."

Often time the issue of domestic violence is seen as something only women go through. But there are many men suffering through abuse as well. Men are victims of nearly three million physical assaults as stated on the Safe Horizon website. However, shame keeps them from speaking out.

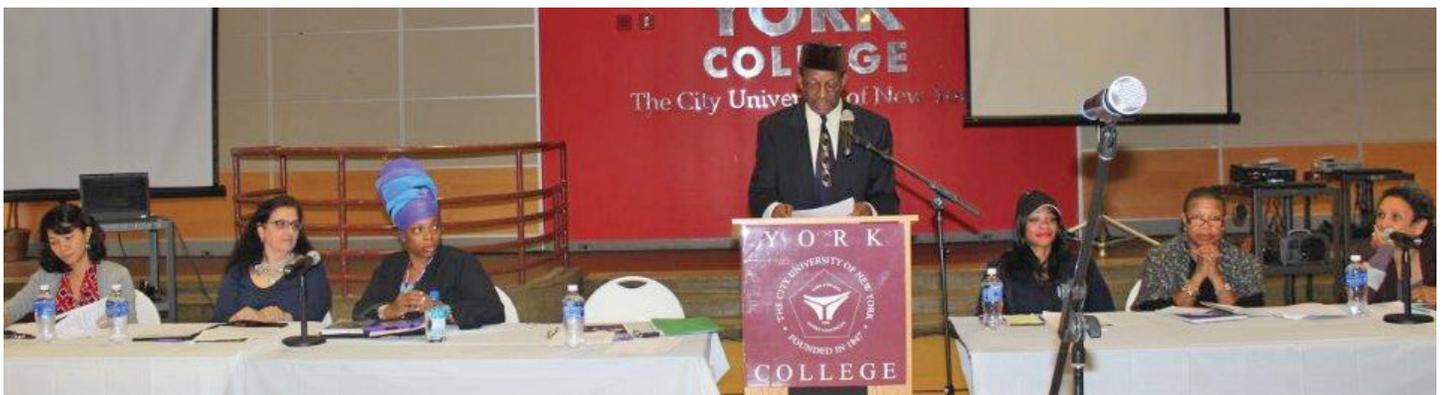
Domestic violence has always been a part of society's secret.

"What has changed in 2014 is social media's involvement in domestic violence by shutting down communication between caregivers and children," said Dr. Chirico, who in addition to being a Psychology professor, is currently serving as the Interim Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences for York. "We must talk to children because we are losing the opportunity to connect to the next generation and help them understand that violence is not acceptable."

Held on October 21, the well-attended event, which took place in the Atrium of the Academic Core Building, took advantage of the fact that October is Domestic Violence Prevention Month. This fact was not lost on Dr. Rodgers.

"Just because it's October doesn't mean it's the only time we should advocate against domestic violence," said Dr. Rodgers, a Social Work professor and Fulbright Specialist award-winner. It (domestic violence) happens all the time. We have to rise up people!"

*Safe Horizon is one of the largest victims' services agencies in the United States and their mission is to provide support, prevent violence and promote justice for victims of crime and abuse.* ■



L to R: Dr. Kathariya Mokruue, Dr. Donna Chirico, Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, Dr. Ron Daniels (podium), Tanya McLeod, Terrie M. Williams and Madeline McCray

## CUNY Chancellor Milliken Hosts York Fulbright Awardees

Dr. Linda Gerena, Associate Professor in the Department of Teacher Education at York College, Dr. Linda Perry, Associate Professor in the Department of Business and Economics and Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work, commemorated Veterans Day by attending a reception for the United States Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) who sponsored Fulbright program Scholars, Specialist and Students at CUNY Chancellor James B. Milliken's residence, in New York City. It was an opportunity to meet other Fulbright awardees, and to share information on the vast array of research studies and academic projects that have been supported by the Fulbright program.

Approximately 85 participants across the 24 CUNY institutions attended the reception in honor of CUNY Fulbright recipients.

Another highlight of the celebration was to receive acknowledgement from Chancellor Milliken who tweeted a photo which captured three York College Fulbright awardees—Gerena, Perry and Rodgers. The Chancellor's tweet certainly helps raise the visibility of York College. York College, CUNY faculty from the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs and School of Business and Informational Systems are On The Move... For three consecutive academic years: 2011-2012, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, respectively, York college faculty members have won the prestigious United States designation as Fulbright Scholars and Specialists. They have represented their respective disciplines, schools, the college and university locally, nationally and globally.

In 2011-2012, Dr. Linda Gerena was a Senior Scholar in residence in Madrid, Spain and worked collaboratively with



From left to right: Dr. Linda Gerena (Associate Professor, Teacher Education), CUNY Chancellor James B. Milliken, Dr. Linda Perry (Associate Professor, Business and Economics), Dr. Selena T. Rodgers (Assistant Professor, Social Work)

the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid researching bilingualism and bilingual educational programs in the Community of Madrid's public schools. Dr. Gerena's research agenda was to investigate perceptions of bilingualism, and to record evidences of program quality and instructional effectiveness. Dr. Gerena's research included school observational visits, electronic surveys, and teacher, assistant, administrator and student interviews. To accomplish this, original electronic surveys, a classroom observational, and interview protocols were developed. Dr. Gerena has published two peer reviewed academic journal articles based on this research, with a third article entitled *Voices of Bilingualism: A Case Study of Bilingual Learners in Madrid, Spain*, currently in progress.

During the inaugural Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) sponsored Research Delegation in 2011 to Cuba, WI, a fortuitous conversation occurred between Dr. Rodgers and Dr. Vadim Moldovan, Associate Professor at York concerning Cuba

and the Republic of Moldova political and economic reforms. The aforementioned occurrence led to Dr. Rodgers spending the summer of 2013 as a U.S. Scholar participating in the Fulbright Specialist program at Free International University (ULIM) of Moldova in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova. Professor Rodgers provided co-training and workshops to the ULIM faculty, and administrators. Also participating in the workshop was the Minister of Labor and the Social Protection and the Family Republic. A Fulbright Specialist, Professor Rodgers piloted courses with two Moldovan cohorts and students who participated in the York/CUNY summer 2013 Study Aboard program in Moldova; Dr. Rodgers concurrently participated in a co-teaching curriculum between Moldavian and U.S. Faculty. Her peer-reviewed article entitled, "Trauma pipeline in baccalaureate social work students enrolled in field education at urban public colleges" published in *The National Journal of Urban Education* &

*continued on opposite page* ►

*Practice: Advancing Excellence and Equity in Education, Special Edition*, 6(3), 174-187 was designated as one of the readings for the Global Social Work: Multiculturalism, Trauma and Posttraumatic Growth course. A subsequent article written by Dr. Rodgers, entitled, "Posttraumatic growth" in: C. Franklin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Work Online (ESWO)*, 21th Edition published by NASW Press and Oxford University Press, Inc. was added to the course readings. The readings were used as a means to help raise awareness for tolerance and respect for difference about cross-cultural trauma experiences and strengthened-based responses.

Dr. Rodgers has lectured about her Fulbright endeavor at professional conferences and universities which span four continents—Africa, Australia, Europe and North America. She serves as an invited peer-reviewer for the Romanian - U.S. Fulbright Commission. Ad-

ditional information about Dr. Rodgers' global agenda and other professional endeavors is available at: <https://www.york.cuny.edu/Members/sroddgers>.

During the academic year 2013-2014, Dr. Linda Perry and Dr. Vadim Moldovan were awarded Fulbright designations. Dr. Moldovan, Associate Professor of Social Work, is completing his Fulbright Scholar assignment in Moldova, Eastern Europe. Dr. Linda Perry, Assistant Professor of Business and Economics, hopes to complete her Fulbright Specialist assignment at the University of Oviedo in northern Spain to help develop academic courses in marketing during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Committed to sustaining a robust Fulbright legacy at York College, Professors' Gerena, Perry and Rodgers are exploring mentoring alliances to help cultivate a rich cross-disciplinary group of students

and professors who express an interest in global opportunities. "Dr. Rodgers encouraged me to move forward on my application for the Fulbright and assisted me in doing so. I would welcome the opportunity to assist other faculty members and students in that way so we can have even more awardees in the coming years" commented Professor Perry.

York College Fulbright awardees wish to express their sincerest gratitude to CUNY Chancellor James B. Milliken and Nana Smith for hosting and honoring CUNY faculty and student Fulbright recipients. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with colleagues from across the 24 CUNY campus University. To learn more about Fulbright programs, visit: <http://www.iie.org/fulbright>. ■

*Submitted by Dr. Selena T. Rodgers*

## Chinese Delegation Visits York for Fraud Prevention Seminar

A delegation of nearly two dozen high-level Chinese government officials recently participated in a three-day seminar at York College, learning from York experts.

The seminar, "Government Procurement Procedure and Fraud Prevention," was led by Accounting Professor Mary-Jo Kranacher, a specialist in fraud and forensic accounting; and Professor Chiao-Han Lin of the Business and Economics Department.

But the visiting dignitaries were not the only ones who gained from the experience arranged by Dr. Chun-Pin Hsu, director of the CUNY Aviation Institute at York College. Teachers learned as well.

"It was certainly a learning experience for me, said Kranacher. "I shared my knowledge of fraud prevention and I learned a lot about Chinese culture."

The group took time out of their training to visit with President Marcia V. Keizs, who told them through an in-

terpreter, about her time as a Fulbright Scholar in China in the early 2000s. Acting Provost Panayiotis Meleties and Vice President Ronald C. Thomas also met with the group to extend greetings from the broader York Community.

The visit to York was inspired by a trip Dr. Hsu made last year to the China Annual Conference for International Education and Expo 2013, where he was one of more than 30,000 attendees. Hsu made a presentation about York and mentioned several of the college's special

programs: Aviation Management, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Finance; and Accounting and Fraud Prevention. Members of the Chinese government were interested in the subject areas but chose Fraud Prevention as the first foray into their York experience.

"When I went to the conference in China, my purpose was to increase York's visibility," said Dr. Hsu. "[But] this didn't just increase our visibility. It shows our students that our teaching quality has been recognized internationally." ■



Seated: Professor Chiao-Han Lin, President Marcia V. Keizs and Professor Mary-Jo Kranacher With Chinese officials at York

## Kudos!



John Drobnicki (Professor, Library) published “CUNY Librarians and Faculty Status: Past, Present, and Future,” in the peer-reviewed *Urban Library Journal* 20 (2014). Online at <http://ojs.gc.cuny.edu/index.php/urban-library/article/view/1538>.



Anamika Megwalu (Assistant Professor, Library) published two articles in the peer-reviewed journal *The Reference Librarian*: “Practicing Learner-Centered Teaching” in 55.3 (2014): 252-255, and “Transliteracy: A Holistic and Purposeful Learning” in 55.4 (2014): 381-384.



Congratulations to Dr. Dana Fusco on her chapter, “The Social Architecture of Youth Work Practice,” which is part of the new book, *Global Perspective on Youth Work*. Dr. Fusco, chair of the Department of Teacher Education, is a respected scholar in Youth Development and Youth Studies.

## York Alum Appointed President of a SUNY Community College

Dr. Belinda Miles, a member of the York College Class of 1983, has been appointed president of Westchester Community College and will begin her tenure in January 2015.

The State University of New York (SUNY) Board of Trustees voted to approve the college’s recommendation to appoint Dr. Miles, a career educator, who is currently provost and executive vice president for Access, Learning, and Suc-



Dr. Belinda Miles, new president of Westchester Community College

cess at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) in Cleveland, Ohio, where she also served as president of that system’s Eastern Campus from 2006 to 2011.

Miles, who majored in Political Science at York, went on to earn an M.A. in Educational Psychology and an Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration, both from Teachers College, Columbia University. As president of Westchester Community College she will be following in the footsteps of Dr. Richard Hankin, who served a protracted presidential tenure at the 68-year-old institution.

“This is an outstanding leadership and service opportunity and I thank the Board for their confidence in me,” said Miles. “I am succeeding someone who served 42 years [as president]. This is an opportunity to showcase what students are already doing there and build on that. The community is getting increasingly diverse, which enhances the campus culturally. Together, we will develop relevant programming that creates pathways to success for all students.”

The president-elect added that she is looking forward to meeting with the WCC faculty and is excited that community colleges are now being called upon to increase the number of college graduates in the nation.

“I will need to get to know the Westchester (CC) team and would like to engage faculty, in particular, in various initiatives that facilitate student learning and success,” said Miles. “Expanded community engagement will be part of our work as well—including partnerships

with the K-12 sector and other community agencies on behalf of college readiness. We will look at academic programs and maintain high rigor, making sure students not only get in, but get through.”

Miles was always a leader.

Attending York during its nomadic era, the young scholar’s part-time job was that of campus English tutor. She also served as film critic on the college’s student newspaper, “Pandora’s Box.” But her ultimate leadership proving ground at York turned out to have been her two terms as Student Government president.

“I had an amazing undergraduate experience at York” said Miles. “It was a tremendous opportunity to be exposed to ‘the world of ideas’ as the first in my family to go to college. I learned a lot from Professor [Shirley] Ostholm, Professor [Richard] Boris and others; and as Student Government president, I stood before the CUNY Board of Trustees telling them, ‘We need a campus!’”

Dr. Miles, who started life in Long Island City, moved to Hollis, Queens at 12 when her family achieved the American dream by buying their own home. She has more than 30 years of experience in higher education, including at CUNY’s LaGuardia Community College where she was project director for Queens School-to-Work Opportunities.

She was chosen for WCC’s presidency after a national search.

“I am so grateful there were such opportunities at York,” said Miles. “It stayed with me and really shaped who I am.” ■

# Intergenerational Technology Sharing: It Takes A Village

On November 14, 2014, Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, assistant professor in the Department of Social Work, School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs at York College, City University of New York (CUNY) and the York College Empowering & Encouraging Together (YC SWEET) Club attended the Rochdale Village Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to commemorate the official launch of the newly upgraded *Computer Technology Learning Center* dedicated to Rochdale Village Community by NYS State Assemblywoman Vivian E. Cook. York College social work alumnae, Elaine Cooper '10, Nirquette Guillaume '04, and Nadine Robinson '04 were among the attendees (NORC Social Workers). Ms. Guillaume and Ms. Robinson have since earned their Master's Degrees in social work from Stony Brook University.

In her multifaceted roles—Educator, Faculty Advisor to YC SWEET Club, Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-R), Researcher, Rochdale Village resident—Professor Rodgers has helped uphold and strengthen the professional and collaborative partnership between two pillars in the Queens Community, Rochdale Village: The Jewel of Jamaica (second largest housing cooperative in the United States) and York College of the City University of New York (CUNY), which is the largest university system in the world. “My service to York College, CUNY is rooted in social work values which link student academic excellence with rigorous classroom and experiential learning to urban and global communities,” said Dr. Rodgers. Affirmed by an intergenerational, technological sharing initiative—which began in 2013—Sherba Austin, Director of Rochdale Village (NORC) and Dr. Rodgers collaborated to recruit students to volunteer and provide technology instruction (emailing, texting and Smartphone interfacing) to Rochdale NORC older adults. Social work alumni, Dania William '14 and Jason Brooks '14 were the first to volunteer. Later the same year, Mr. Brooks began his internship at Rochdale Village NORC. Concurrently,



Back row left to right: YC SWEET Faculty Advisor, Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, York College Social Work Alumnae/Rochdale NORC Social Workers, NORC Director Sherba Austin and YC SWEET Club members (seated) wearing apparel donated by York College Student Development

Ms. Austin and Rochdale Village Social Services, Inc. President John C. Scott remained indefatigable in their efforts to secure state funding to bring existing computers into the 21st century. In July 2013, they were approved for a NYS Capital Grant.

Intergenerational Technology Sharing: It Takes a Village! York College social work faculty member and students, Rochdale Village, Inc. Board Members, Rochdale Village Social Service Board Directors, community partner stakeholders, representatives from NYS Senator James Sanders Jr. office and other notable New York elected officials—Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer, NYS Senator Elect Leroy Comrie, Councilmember Rubin Wills—applauded the Honorable New York State Assemblywoman Vivian E. Cook for her approval of NYS Capital Funds to replace outdated computers in the Senior Center computer lab and the New Technology Learning Center. The program has since expanded to also target Rochdale Village afterschool youth.

A very important highlight of this momentous celebration was the salute

to Assemblywoman Cook with a beautiful wall plaque honoring her steadfast support to Rochdale Village. ■

## Watch for York's Winter Health Campaign Posters Around Campus



Photo courtesy of HumbleNation. Photographer: Tiffany Cudjoe, York College '13

# Executive Leadership Breakfast Series Speaker Explains Election Results

Errol Louis, host of NY1's "Inside City Hall," was the featured speaker at the most recent Executive Leadership Breakfast in the York College series.

The November 7th event followed the General Election results that saw Republicans take both houses of Congress and keep the New York State Senate in their control.

However, Louis said the voters still hold the power to make legislators produce.

"They don't get there until we put them there," said Louis. "You have to demand more. There is a serious need to know how development is going to happen, how equality issues are going to be addressed and what the state is going to do about the minimum wage...."

Moderated by York Distinguished Lecturer Dr. Ron Daniels, the Breakfast was a great opportunity for the college and extended community members to have the election results elucidated by the nationally respected political thought leader.

Guests at the event included Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Senator-elect Leroy Comrie and the Hon. Herman Lamont, Council General to Jamaica, W.I. ■



The Hon. Herman Lamont and President Marcia V. Keizs



Keynote speaker Errol Louis



The audience listens intently as Louis breaks down the meaning of the election results



## ANNOUNCEMENT FROM ACTING PROVOST MELETIES



Assistant Provost Holger Henke has accepted a position with Kean University of New Jersey. He will be the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for their developing China campus.

Dr. Henke joined the York College Academic Affairs team in the fall 2008; and during his six years of service at the college, he participated in many college and

university initiatives. He was the liaison to the CUNY Academic Affairs, submitting curriculum items for the Chancellor's Report and was the chair and secretary of many college-wide committees. Dr. Henke planned, organized and executed the Provost Lecture Series and Provost Distinguished Lecture Series, respectively, and served as the liaison and main Academic Affairs partner with Division of Student Development in the Foundations of Excellence effort and the launching of the Cardinal Pulse.

Dr. Henke is a noted scholar of Caribbean issues with six books and several peer refereed articles to his credit. He was awarded a Fulbright U.S.- United Kingdom International Education Administrators Program award in 2013; and earned a Harvard Institutes of Higher Education certificate earlier this year.

Please join me, President Keizs and her cabinet in thanking Dr. Henke for his service to the college and in wishing him the best in his new position.

## York Inducts New Cohort of Eta Sigma Gamma Honorees

The York Chapter of Eta Sigma Gamma has inducted its latest round of students from York's School of Health and Professional Programs into the 47 year-old international organization.

"The significance of this national honor society is that it was established for Health Educators throughout the United States," said Dr. David Ajuluchukwu, Chairperson of Health and Physical Education and Gerontological Studies and Services at York. "It is important that York College students join this esteemed honor society in order to promote their specified career fields, [which will] afford them the opportunity to network with various students throughout the United States who share their passions, thus allowing them to interact and network with professionals in the field."

Emceed by Dr. Linda Barley, with Dr. Mitchel Brodsky, Dr. Marjorie Celestin,



Faculty and honorees at the Eta Sigma Gamma induction ceremony

Dr. Nicholas Grosskopf and Dr. Ray Marks also in attendance along with Dr. Ajuluchukwu, the honorees were, **Sheeba Oliver, Hannah Civil, Philip Paul, Bania Bernadin, Ta-Kerrah Crayton, Malika Jones, Jocelyn Heywood, Karyn Richards, Vicky Rajcoomar, Cecilia Orozopa, Taahira Thompa-**

**sionas, Coleen Henry, Yannick Louis, Raquel Nicholson, Cassandra Milfort and Naana Wusua.**

"It will help students build upon their leadership and research skills, while finally, helping them maintain professional contacts and connections to the job banks," said Dr. Ajuluchukwu. ■

## York Wins NASA Grant for Robotic Mining Contest

By **CHERESE SHEEN**  
York Journalism Student

York College this year won a \$25,000 grant from NASA to compete in the 2015 Robotic Mining Competition, where a team of five to seven students will compete at the John F. Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Universities from around the country will meet on May 18, 2015 for three days of competition.

"[The competition] is like David versus Goliath," said Daniel Phelps, who teaches in York's Communications Technology program, and is lead faculty advisor to the team.

According to NASA's website, the team with the most points from all categories will

win the grand prize, the Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence and a \$5,000 team scholarship. Awards for other categories include monetary team scholarships, a school trophy or plaque, and team certificates.

The robots, built by each team must be lightweight, remotely operated, dig and transport a sand mixture called Black Point-1 within 10 minutes, according to the competition rules.



Professor Daniel Phelps, team advisor

Besides the construction of an efficient robot, each team is graded on four other categories.

Each team must submit a paper by April 13 outlining the methods they plan to use to design and build a mining robot. The individual teams must also participate in an educational outreach project in their local community. An optional slide presentation and 20-minute demonstration can be shown for added points. Teams will also be judged on team spirit, according to NASA's Sixth Annual Robotic Mining Competition Rules & Rubrics 2015.

"We are not an engineering school, but that should not keep us from doing well in this competition," said Phelps, adding that his team has passion, and determination.

Only a few colleges get funding from NASA, and Phelps is looking to be one.

After travelling fees, hotel costs, and administrative fees, the team is only left with about \$15,000 to build a prize-winning robot, he explained.

All participating students will receive course credit. ■

## Geology Professor Rocks as Twain During York Presentation

Robert M. Alvey could be aptly described as a Renaissance man. He is a geologist and teacher, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) employee, a bird sanctuary volunteer, an Albert Einstein mimic and a Mark Twain impersonator. And it was “as” the 19<sup>th</sup> century author that he ended his presentation for the Geology Club on November 25<sup>th</sup>.

But he wanted to be even more.

“My career as a geologist was by accident,” said Alvey, an adjunct professor at York. “I wanted to be an underwater explorer, but I had an allergic reaction to sea water.”

The bulk of the presentation was on the environment and the impact of industrial pollution. According to Alvey, the law has become much stricter on polluters.

“If companies don’t clean up their toxins the government will clean it up and charge you three times as much,” said Alvey, founder of the Garden City Bird Sanctuary in Nassau County, and who ended his presentation with a reading of Twain’s 1903 letter, “Nothing Hurries Geology.” The reading was done in Twain regalia and voice impersonation.

His department colleague in attendance was pleased with the presentation.

[“It is] extremely important for our students, particularly in the geosciences, since presentations like these allow attending students to obtain, and comprehend cutting-edge information from the presenters, which goes beyond classroom knowledge,” said Dr. Nazrul Khandaker, Associate Professor and Discipline Coordinator of Geology. “Rob Alvey is an es-

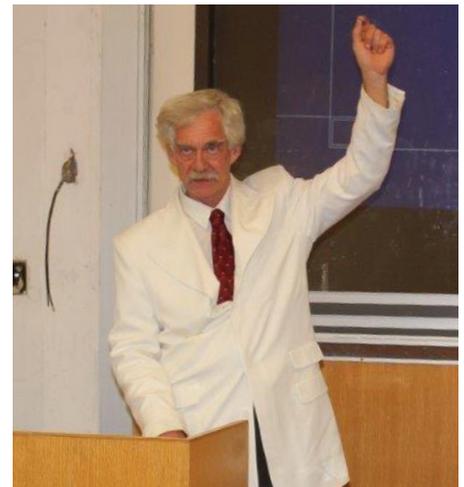


Brian Velez, president of the Geology Club; Prof. Robert M. Alvey, Prof. Nazrul Khandaker, Acting Provost Panayiotis Meleties and Geology major Barbara Barnett

established geologist and environmentalist. His presentation blended geology and society together; and allowed the audience to appreciate the role of geology in resolving societal needs. “

Dr. Khandaker added that the presentation enabled students “to establish professional network and become proactive in relation to entering professional careers in the geosciences.”

“Traditionally, the Geology Club had been very active [in] hosting such events. As a club mentor, I am quite happy to notice such dedication from the participating students over the last 10 years, which is instrumental as a recruitment tool for new geology majors.” ■



York adjunct professor Alvey ends presentation as Mark Twain

## York Hosts Disaster Preparedness Town Hall

A Citizen Preparedness training program sponsored by Governor Mario Cuomo and a host of local elected officials, CUNY and York College took place at York on December 3rd with approximately 400 community guests in attendance to learn what to do in an

emergency and receive “go bags” distributed by the National Guard. The event, was also a Student Development initiative with support from York’s SGA.

Training for the session was facilitated by the Air National Guard and Army National Guard personnel. ■





# Geology Major Brings More to College than Traditional Undergrads

By **ALMA SACASA**, York Journalism Major

Barbara Barnett grew up in Trelawny, a rural part of Jamaica, West Indies, where farming was a big part of her life. In fact her farming upbringing was the reason she majored in agricultural science.

“I have an appreciation for my upbringing said Barnett. “And I love to see things grow and being a part of the process.”



Barnett attended The College of Agricultural Science & Education in Portland, Jamaica where she obtained her degree in 2001 and moved onto becoming a specialist teacher at Claremont All Age School in the parish of St. Ann.

Before coming to study at York College Barnett was an H-club coordinator, temporarily senior teacher and also worked as an Agricultural Science teacher for 7-9th grade.

She often visited the United States during the summer and winter to see her son and it was in 2011 that she came to York College where at first she majored in biology because agricultural science isn't offered at York.

“My son wanted me to come to school here because he wanted his mother with him” said Barnett, who declared a Biology major when she arrived at York, but became discouraged when she realized that she would have to take chemistry and physics classes, which are subjects that don't fit her interests.

She decided to take a speech class and it was in this class where she realized what major was meant for her.

“Professor (Matthew) Corcoran told me to write about something that I found interesting said Barnett. So I picked the topic of [hydro] fracking, which is the process of getting oil from underground, which is bad for the environment.”

Through her research on fracking Barnett was led to the Geology Department

where she met Dr. Nazrul Khandaker and realized her true calling was in geology.

“The similarity that it has with my old major of Agricultural Science is what made me want to major in geology” said Barnett, a member of the Class of 2015. “Geology is the study of the earth, its processes, materials, history and its effect on human and life in general.”

She has also received a lot of support and help from Dr. Khandaker.

“He is more than a mentor or a professor. He helped me switch to geology and still keeps up with me even after the first semester said Barnett. “And he doesn't stop at the classroom. If he receives any information on volunteer work he lets you know about it.”

Dr. Khandaker, who has guided Barnett, says she brings something different that most traditional students don't.

“She is very diligent, persuasive, and full of curiosity,” said Dr. Khandaker “and being a nontraditional student, Barbara takes her classroom knowledge to the next level where she can apply it to her known surrounding and this way, makes it more meaningful, scientifically sound, and [she] notices the connectivity.”

Barnett, according to Khandaker, is a nontraditional student not only because she's an adult student.

“She came to the Geology program with a background in Agricultural Science from Jamaica and wanted to blend her knowledge in relation to geology and landscapes constraining soil genesis and it does help if someone already knows what to expect from the Geology program” said Dr. Khandaker, a highly respected geoscientist. ■

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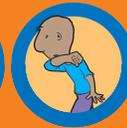
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stuffy nose



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or more tired  
than usual

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- **TREAT** the symptoms of fever



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## English Open House Reveals 'New' English Major

To play on lyrics from the Buffalo Springfield song, "For What it's Worth," there's something (new) happening here in York's English Department.

Every November the department celebrates itself with an open house where students get to share their work with the college community through readings and other presentations. This year's theme, "Introducing the New English Major," was especially intriguing.

There is indeed a newness to some of the course offerings available to students these days. Alumni from yesteryear might even be wont to think, *this is not my generation's English major* as student after student presented their works and works in progress from the podium. They are engaged, creative and happy to share.

"The Open House is important to us because it gives us a chance to celebrate our students, show the community what our students and faculty have been doing," said Professor Heather Robinson, whose specialties are in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Writing Program Administration and English for Academic Purposes. "We use it to show the kinds of inquiry the humanities can help us with – this year, we saw students exploring questions about the choices that they make every day; in the past we have had readings and conversations on many varied themes."

Asked what the department means by the "new" English major, Dr. Robinson explained that the influence is both internal and external as well as influenced by the scholarship interests of faculty.

"The new English major recognizes that a lot has happened in the world – both at York and outside," said Robinson. "Our previous major was designed in the 1980s, and many of the faculty whose interests and expertise inspired it have retired. The new major reflects a new group of faculty, and explores liter-

ature, language and writing studies from contemporary perspectives. We still have most of the courses from the old major; they're just configured to make it easier for students to graduate, and to move into graduate work or their careers."

To underscore the point, students' presentation topics included "A Tale of Two Fighters," (Alexis Haney) and "Richness in Poverty" (Linda Campbell) both under the heading of "Critical Literacies." There were also lively debates amongst students in Introduction to Writing, Rhetoric and Language (English 262) (Ralphy Santana, Madelyn Guerra and Manpreet Kaur) on topics such as the "Merits of Universal Pre-K."

Not to be outdone, Journalism student Joseph Jafaari introduced Pandora's Box's new website and discussed the plan to pay student journalists "to teach [them] what it is to be a paid, working journalist."

Next year's event should be equally engaging as upcoming program offerings include "Storied Lives: Crafting Cultural Narratives in the 21st Century (English



English majors Ralphy Santana and Manpreet Kaur present from their writings

298); "World Englishes" (English 272) and "The Language and Linguistics of Children's Books" (English 320).

The English Open House, held in the Faculty Dining Room on November 12th, was emceed by Journalism Professor Tom Moore, with greetings from Dr. Linda Grasso, chair of the department; and an introduction by Dr. Cynthia Haller, deputy chair. ■

## President Keizs, Students and Administrators Attend TMCf in DC

Since 2000, this national program has developed students' leadership skills, introduced various career opportunities, created a community of scholars, provided companies access to a talented and diverse student population, and helped students make connections that lead to internships and full-time positions. Each year, the conference gives students attending the 47 publicly-supported Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), including the law and medical schools, a first-hand professional development experience. Students are interviewed during the spring

and fall semesters, and those selected as "TMCf Scholars" will attend a four-day conference in Washington, D.C. where they will have the opportunity to learn from and exchange ideas with some of the world's top leaders of business and government.

The conference culminates with the students participating in a recruitment fair where they meet with companies, government agencies and graduate program representatives offering job, internship and continuing education opportunities. Successful leaders of industry, government and higher education invest in their education, further developing their talents. The secrets to developing professional skills and leadership are unearthed at this conference. ■

Submitted by Earl G. Simons  
Director of Government and  
Community Relations  
Office of the President

York College Human Resource Club  
together with the  
York College Student Chapter of the  
Society for Human Resource Management



Agenda:

Dinner and Awards Ceremony  
Interviewing Skills Workshop  
HR Club Officer Elections for Spring 2015

Thursday December 11th, 2014

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Location: AC/2D01

RSVP: [pmassimino@york.cuny.edu](mailto:pmassimino@york.cuny.edu)



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## York Makes List at #1 for Graduating Students with Lowest Debt

Based on a study conducted by The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS), NerdScholar, a scholarship information organization and website, recently listed York College as the “US College with the lowest student debt in 2013” (\$2,271).

The national survey chose York as number one on its top 20 list of colleges and universities both private and public. Three of York’s sister CUNY colleges also made the list: Baruch, #5 (\$5,979); Lehman, #12 (\$8,525); and Brooklyn College at #20 (\$11,200). Ivy Leaguer, Princeton University, came in fourth place at \$5,552.

Details are available at: [www.nerdwallet.com/blog/nerdscholar/2014/colleges-lowest-student-debt-2013/](http://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/nerdscholar/2014/colleges-lowest-student-debt-2013/) ■

