

Lehman

TODAY

SPRING 2013

The World of Research at Lehman College

Dr. Alyshia Gálvez
of the
CUNY Institute of
Mexican Studies

**In Memoriam:
Margaret Rice**

**The Lehman College
Art Gallery:
Celebrating Art
In the Bronx**

**The President's
Report, 2012**

THE MAGAZINE OF LEHMAN COLLEGE
For Alumni and Friends

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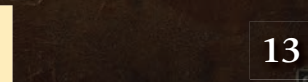
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On the Cover: Dr. Alyshia Gálvez, the founder and director of the CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies, just one of several institutes and centers housed at Lehman College, engaged in groundbreaking research and community outreach.

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LEHMAN
COLLEGE



*NOTE: PLACE FSC LOGO
HERE, CENTERED BETWEEN
CUNY AND TEXT*

A message from

President Ricardo R. Fernández



Spring is the season of new life and new beginnings, and for nearly 2,000 students who are about to graduate, it is, in fact, a new beginning. Students will now embark on a new phase of their lives: a career, graduate school, and just as important—a new relationship with the College, as new alumni. In this new role they are still—and will always be—an integral part of the Lehman community.

In this issue of *Lehman Today* we celebrate the wide array of cultural offerings and scholarly research being carried out at the College. You will read about the artistic programs that fulfill the College's historic mission to uplift our community. The Lehman College Art Gallery, one of the best-kept secrets in the New York City art world, consistently brings world-class artistic exhibits (p. 18) to the Bronx and offers free admission. Thanks to Susan Hoeltzel, who has served as director for two decades, its educational outreach programs are enjoyed by more than 15,000 teachers and students each year.

Over the last few years Lehman has also brought a variety of opera programming to the campus, literally taking the centuries-old art form from the glittering opera houses of the world and bringing it to the people. One such event is our annual alumni concert featuring rising opera stars, sponsored by the Richard Tucker Foundation (p. 10). Lehman is also home to both the Bronx Opera Company and to "Live in HD," high-definition opera broadcasts from around the world.

In our cover story, we focus on the wide breadth of research and service that our scholars embark on at the various CUNY Institutes and Centers that are based at Lehman (p. 13). These include, among others, the CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies, the first of its kind on the East Coast; the Center for Human Rights and Peace Studies, which represents an extension of the work begun on this campus almost seven decades ago when it housed the United Nations' Security Council; and the Bronx Institute which over the past decade and a half has promoted a college-going culture in New York City's northernmost borough.

The past semester has also been, tragically, a time of loss. In one week in November 2012, Lehman lost two members of its family. The first, Margaret Rice, was the long-serving director of the College's Media Relations and Publications department (p. 22). She created *Lehman Today* and poured all her energies and talent into it. She is sorely missed. The other was Emely Gómez, a 23-year-old alumna who died in her sleep. Although her time with us was brief, the joy she left behind to those who knew her, will not soon be forgotten. There are moving tributes to both in this issue.

And that is what an issue of *Lehman Today* ultimately is: a tribute to the students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who make Lehman College what it is: a place where dreams are born and realized. Thanks to your ongoing support we will continue to bring you stories of hopes and dreams, successes and achievements.



campus walk

Lehman Professor Recognized in the Congressional Record

Professor Catherine Alicia Georges, chair of the Nursing department, had her name entered into the Congressional Record in recognition of the role she played in creating National Black Nurses Day, held on the first Friday of February each year.

"When I was the President of the National Black Nurses Association twenty-five years ago, I brought the idea/proposal to now former Congressman Stokes of Ohio," Dr. Georges recalled. "He was Chairperson of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust at the time. He and Congressman Charles Rangel supported the idea and the National Black Nurses Day was born."



Professor Catherine Alicia Georges

Fast-forward a quarter of a century later: On March 15, 2013, Rep. Rangel entered the following statement in the Congressional Record: "I was pleased to cosponsor legislation, a proposal brought forth by Dr. Catherine Alicia Georges, past President of the National Black Nurses Association and Chair of the Nursing Department at Herbert H. Lehman College—The City of University of New York, that resulted in the U. S. Congress establishing the first Friday in the month of February as the day to recognize the contributions to healthcare made by Black nurses. I have a special place in my heart for the work of nurses, as my own dear sister was a retired nurse and I am keenly aware of the role that nurses, especially Black nurses have played in addressing the physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of all patients—a cornerstone of this organization. I am so very appreciative for the many contributions of the Black nurses to the City of New York and our Nation."

The recognition left Dr. Georges feeling grateful. "When someone like Congressman Rangel places your name in the Congressional Record it is a privilege and honor," she said. "I feel great about it and appreciate the recognition."

Lehman Students Receive Latino Trendsetter Awards

Just prior to the beginning of 2013, Lehman students Krystal Perez and Imani DuBois were awarded with Latino Trendsetter Scholarships, given to students who have demonstrated strong leadership skills at work and in class. The two were honored at the 11th Annual Latino Trendsetter Awards and Scholarship Gala, held at the Metropolitan Pavilion in Manhattan in December.

Growing up, Perez saw first-hand how the city's social agencies worked—four of her relatives went through the foster care system. All around her she saw friends, family, and neighbors struggle to

move up and out of poverty. Her goal is to help people, especially children, find resources that will keep them on the right path. "I really believe that the earlier you intervene in a person's life, the more successful you will be at helping them," explains Perez. "I work hard and I push myself because I want to be able to do this for someone else. I want to be a voice for the people."



Imani DuBois (above) and Krystal Perez.

Perez works as a social work intern at the Northside Center for Child Development. She's also an intern at 100 Hispanic Women Inc., where she serves as an administrative assistant, overseeing the company's scholarship program. It was her supervisor who recommended her for the scholarship. "I was surprised and honored when I heard the news," says Perez. "You work hard, and it feels good to be recognized." Her long-term goal is to open a home for homeless youth.

Imani DuBois moved to New York from her native Florida. She traded the state's palm trees, sunny skies, and year-round warm weather for New York's gray and chilly winters. But, it wasn't a hard decision to make. She comes from a long line of Lehman graduates, all of whom encouraged her to apply, and she often visits her grandparents who live in the Bronx. For the past four years, she's been spending her summers as an intern at Bronx Lebanon Hospital, where her grandmother works as an administrator.

As an entering freshman, DuBois is not required to declare a major, but she says psychology has been her passion for some time. At Bronx Lebanon, she worked in the Bronx Community Action for Prenatal Care Initiative program, where she was able to shadow a psychologist who worked with children who suffered from emotional disorders. The experience stuck with her.

She became interested in nursing and has been taking pre-required courses through the College's Freshman Year Initiative. She's considering the field of psychiatric nurse practitioner. "Right now, psychology is still my first choice, but I also want to work in a field where I can be the most useful and have the most impact," says DuBois. It was her supervisor at the hospital who recommended her for the scholarship. "It was unexpected," she confesses. "But it was an honor to go to the gala and see and meet so many successful Hispanic people. It really was inspiring."

Lehman Library Exhibits Bronx Scenes 1955-65

When William O. Folchi and his wife, Corazon, moved back to his childhood home in the Morris Park section of the Bronx in 2008, they knew they would have a lot of cleaning to do. But what they didn't know is what they would find as they emptied out the base-

ment and garage of the house. Buried beneath debris and garbage bags, and completely forgotten by time, Folchi unearthed a virtual museum of artwork: some 100 works—roughly half oil paintings, half watercolors—by his late father William P. Folchi.

In December Folchi brought an exhibit of his father's work—*William P. Folchi: Bronx Scenes 1955-1965*—to the Lehman College Library where it attracted visitors and local media. Again and again the moody, oil paintings bear witness to the scenes of a bygone era: the Bronx of the mid-'50s to mid-'60s. The details of the times, whether 1950-era cars or logos like an old Esso sign at a long-gone gas station, (see below), or the jutting lines of old telephone wires strung across the Bronx sky, are vividly recaptured. "Eighty percent of the paintings," says Folchi, an alumnus of the College (B.A., '75), "I never saw in my life."

Although his father, who died in 1992, worked all his life as a mechanic—the senior Folchi co-owned and operated a repair shop with his father and brother—he was a devoted painter, who used every spare moment to paint scenes of his beloved Bronx, particularly the family's Morris Park neighborhood. "I never saw these paintings but I remember going with my father, taking a drive to Hunts Point or Pelham Bay Park and sitting there while he painted," recalls Folchi.



Since rediscovering his father's work, Folchi has been restoring some paintings while getting them exhibited, such as an art gallery in Long Island City, Queens, which showed a retrospective of his father's work this past April. "My

father never exhibited in his lifetime," he recalls. "His attitude was, 'Why would people want to see my paintings when they can go to the Metropolitan and see Raphael?'"

■ The Richard Tucker Foundation Returns to Lehman College

For the second year in a row, the Office of Alumni Relations brought the Richard Tucker Foundation and two rising stars of the Metropolitan Opera to Lehman College for a special performance. The concert, which featured two singers, mezzo-soprano Emily Fons and bass-baritone, Ryan Speedo Green, was held at the Lehman Multimedia Center, where they were accompanied by pianist Earl Buys. (See this issue's opera feature on page 10.)

Ryan Speedo Green was among the five winners of the 2011 Metropolitan National Council Auditions and is also a member of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Met. A native of Virginia, Green has overcome many obstacles to take his place onstage where, in recent years he has performed in *Turandot* (at the Met) and *Porgy and Bess* (with the Berlin Philharmonic). During her young career, Emily Fons has been known as an interpreter of Mozart, baroque music, and modern composers. She has performed as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (with the Santa Fe Opera) and as Megacle in *L'Olimpade* (with the Garsington Opera). She was a semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2010.



Opera signers Ryan Speedo Green, Emily Fons, and composer Mark Adamo

The Richard Tucker Foundation is a non-profit cultural organization that was founded in 1975 to continue the artistic legacy of the great American tenor for which it is named. The foundation supports the careers of talented American opera singers by bringing opera into the

community and broadening its appeal to new audiences.

■ Science Hall: The Birth of A New Era at Lehman College

On a still wintry day, as students hurried to their classes while a light snow covered the campus, a new era began at Lehman College—the new Science Hall officially opened as the first ever classes were held in the \$70 million structure. "It really was a remarkable day, all the way around," said Dr. Liesl Jones, the chair of the Biological Sciences Department.

Although only a few classes were held on the first day of the new Spring 2013 semester, the first floor of the building was a beehive of activity as students, who had never stepped foot into the building looked around for their classrooms.

"It definitely gives the College a whole appeal and a great new look," said Ricardo Figueiredo, a sophomore business major who was taking an early morning biology lab class in the new building.

Some like Abdallah Ahmady, a sophomore biology major, didn't have any classes in the building on opening day, but still wanted to walk through Science Hall to see it up close on his way to his class. "I just wanted to walk through the building to see how it looked. It's really nice."



campus walk

The 69,000-square foot building is a hi-tech blend of teaching, research, and administrative space. It has been designed to promote collaboration among scientific disciplines and at the same time integrate teaching with research to increase undergraduate engagement with current research projects. Among the projects being researched at Lehman are vitamin A deficiency; cancer and schizophrenia; and medicinal plants for possible use in diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.



Biology students on the first day of classes in Science Hall.

Science Hall was also built to be a green, environmentally friendly structure. The building is slated to receive a LEED—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—Gold certification from the U.S. Green

Building Council. The building has a rooftop greenhouse that will be both a research lab and a classroom, where much of Lehman's pioneering research in the plant sciences will take place.

"This building was made for research and collaboration," says Dr. Moira Sauane of the Biological Sciences Department, who was conducting the first lecture on molecular biology in the building's history that morning. "In the lab, researchers can actually see each other. It makes it all the easier to work together."

President Fernández Named a Director of the Association of American Colleges and Universities

President Ricardo R. Fernández was named a Director of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) at the organization's recent annual meeting in Atlanta in February. The AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career.



"It is both an honor and a privilege to be named to a leadership position within this esteemed organization," said President Fernández. "I look forward to helping the Association of American Colleges and Universities fulfill its mission of making a strong liberal education the basis of a quality higher education."

At its recent yearly meeting, the AAC&U named four other new directors, as well as a whole new slate of officers to lead the association, including Dr. Mildred García, President of California State University, Fullerton, who was selected as the new chair of the board.

Founded in 1915, the AAC&U now comprises nearly 1,300 member institutions—including accredited public and private colleges, community colleges, research universities, and comprehensive universities of every type and size. The AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. The AAC&U's mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education and inclusive excellence at both the national and local levels, and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.

Congressman Rangel Visits Lehman College Twice in Two Weeks

Although he has served New Yorkers as a Congressman for 40 years, Rep. Charles Rangel is new to the Bronx. With that in mind, the prominent Democrat visited Lehman College twice this spring to get to know his new constituents in New York's 13th District.

During his first visit in March, Rep. Rangel held a conference devoted to Social Security and the needs of the local community. Then on April 4, the Congressman held a conference devoted to small businesses and entrepreneurship, co-sponsored by the Bronx Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Joining Rep. Rangel was Dr. Rebecca Blank, acting secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce and David Hinson, national director of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA). The whole idea before the conference Rangel said was "to bring Washington D.C. to the people."

During her address, Dr. Blank focused on three areas: the importance of research, innovation, and entrepreneurship to long-term American competitiveness; how innovation and entrepreneurship drive job creation; and the steps the Obama Administration has taken to foster the innovation and entrepreneurship that brought the economy back from the Great Recession. While Hinson discussed how the MBDA has focused on expanding the U.S. economy and creating new jobs by promoting the growth and global competitiveness of large, medium, and small businesses that are minority-owned.



Rep. Rangel poses with two Vietnam Veterans during his visit to Lehman College this spring.



Highlights of the 2012-2013 Lehman Athletic Season

Records Fall as Men's Swimming Takes CUNYAC Crown

The men's swimming and diving team had a record-breaking season, capturing its fifth CUNY Athletic Conference (CUNYAC) championship in February. The Lightning outscored three-time defending champion Baruch by 52 points, the widest margin of victory in conference history.

This was Lehman's first conference championship since 2009—in the 12 years that this championship has been held, no one has won more championships than Lehman. "Our guys were fantastic," said head coach Peter Kiernan, now in his twenty-eighth year at Lehman. "We have such great senior leadership, and a good group of young, talented swimmers. They deserved this."

Lehman senior Ivan Srdanovic tied for scoring the most points during the championships and sophomore Abel Dupres won the 2013 Swimmer of the Year award for his efforts during the regular season. The last time a Lehman student-athlete won this honor was in 2006, when Darnell James claimed it for the second straight season.



Top: The Lehman Men's Swim Team captured a fifth CUNYAC title this year. Middle: Jose Olanco does the breaststroke. Bottom: The trophy.

The men's team set seven new school records during the three-day competition, including five relay events. Freshman Anthony Preda set two individual records in the 200-yard breaststroke and 200-yard individual medley. In addition, students Ramon Peralta, Jose Polanco, Anthony Preda, Chip Shala, and Ivan Srdanovic were all named CUNYAC All-Stars.

Alli and Springer Take Flight at National Indoor Track Championships

The women's indoor track and field team had another triumphant year, placing second in the CUNYAC, while two of its members qualified for the NCAA Division III Championships.



Tobi Alli, MVP



Jasmine Springer, Gold Medalist

At the CUNY meet, Tobi Alli earned Most Valuable Performer laurels for scoring the most points of any individual in the conference—this was the second time in as many years that she earned the award. She was also named the CUNYAC Performer of the Year. "Honestly, getting this award is such an amazing experience, but getting Indoor Performer of the Year for the second time is an honor," said Alli. "However, what satisfies me the most aren't individual awards, but team achievements."

Also performing well at the Championships was senior Jasmine Springer who won the gold in the triple jump—Alli came in second. The outcome was reversed during the 60-meter dash, with Alli winning the gold and Springer taking second.

The duo both qualified for and participated in the NCAA Division III Championships, held in Naperville, Illinois. Alli just missed All-American status in both the 60-meter dash and the long jump, placing ninth in the country in each event. Springer placed twelfth in the nation in the triple jump. ■

Want More Sports News? Get the Android App

Lehman has released a new Athletics Department mobile application for the Android platform. The app can be downloaded at no cost at the Google Play / Android App market and a search for "Lehman College Athletics." It will give users access to stories, headlines, team rosters, schedules, photo galleries, student-athlete profiles, recruiting information, Facebook, coaches' e-mail addresses, and the Athletics Department staff directory, as well as many other features.



Herodotus, *The Histories*

(Second Edition, Norton Critical Editions, 2013), translated by Walter Blanco, edited by Walter Blanco and Jennifer Tolbert Roberts. \$22.50

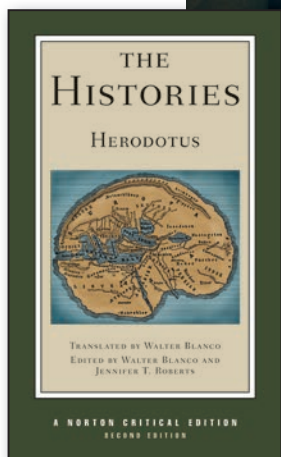
One of Professor Walter Blanco's (English) favorite authors is Herodotus, and like Herodotus, he too can talk endlessly about *The Histories*. His passion for the classics goes back to when he was just seven-years-old, when he rescued a box full of books destined for the trash. Many of the books were from the Loeb Classical Library series, printed in Greek on one page with the English translation on the other. He has been hooked ever since.

His complete translation of *The Histories*, which was first published in an abridged version in 1991, has just been released in a Second Edition. New features include full annotation; a chronology of events; a note on the Persian Wars; seven maps from 490-479 B.C.E.; and ancient essays from Diodorus of Sicily and Strabo, and modern essays by François Hartog, James Redfield, and Siep Stuurman.

When asked what draws him to Herodotus, Professor Blanco can't help but go into lecture mode—albeit one sprinkled with humor. “Herodotus can be a blabber mouth,” he chuckled. “He’s like the uncle who won’t stop reminiscing after a couple of drinks.” This is his fond assessment of the man many consider to be the Father of History.

“In *The Histories*, you find folk tales, ignorance of science, misinterpretation of events, yet you also find insatiable curiosity about the causes of things, acceptance of how other people live, and a desire to live and let live, and that’s what draws me to Herodotus time and again,” says Professor Blanco.

His list of favorite stories from *The Histories* is long, but it’s to be expected from a person who has made his love of the classics his life’s work. By his account, he’s read and re-read almost every work from his favorite authors—Aristophanes, Michel de Montaigne, Robert Burton, Shakespeare, Milton, Cervantes, Samuel Johnson, and more—and in their original language every couple of years.



“As a scholar and academic, much of this is directed reading, but each time I read these works I find something new,” says Professor Blanco.

His list of favorite characters is more succinct—Don Quixote, “because he’s crazy and sane at the same time”; Falstaff, “because he’s fat like me”; Satan in *Paradise Lost*, “because he’s a rebel”; Achilles, “because he’s a true hero”; and Tom Jones, “because he’s a rascal.”

It’s this very level of engagement that he brings to his classroom. Professor Blanco loves to teach, and it shows. He’s been doing it at Lehman College for forty years, serving as chair of the English Department on and off for the last eleven years. This means that he doesn’t get to teach as much—a pity if you’re a student. Sit in one of his Shakespeare classes—or Chaucer or Milton or Johnson—and you quickly realize that you’re in for a vivid and colorful semester. Professor Blanco does more than teach the greats; he brings them to life.

When he was first hired, he was asked to teach courses on Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton, all of which were then required of English majors. He says some of his favorite classes to teach are the Shakespeare course and the History of the English Language. “I love telling my students about how the English language has evolved over time, and that the various ways in which they use it in their day-to-day experiences is just as legitimate as anything that’s come before,” says Professor Blanco.

For Professor Blanco, being in front of the classroom and seeing his student’s reaction, or lack thereof, is an essential part of the academic experience. “I like seeing smoke come out of their ears,” he laughed. “And if they’re fading away, I want to get them back.”

With two years left in his term as chair, Professor Blanco says he looks forward to getting back in the classroom next semester. In the meantime, he’ll soon begin work on his next project for Norton Critical Editions, a translation of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. Once his two years are up, well, the sky’s the limit. ■

Professor Blanco contributed all of the translation of the Greek text for The Histories, and co-edited the critical material with Professor Jennifer Roberts of The City College of New York.

A Nearly Perfect Copy

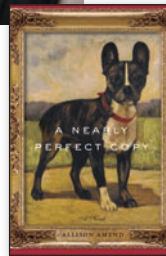
(Doubleday/Nan A. Talese, 2013) Allison Amend. \$26.

A few years ago, Professor Allison Amend (English) happened across an article in the *Times* about the murder of an art forger living in Rome. In the details were information on the art of forgery itself—for instance, forgers never make a complete duplicate of the object in question. She was also intrigued by the notion of human cloning, which was also making headline news at the time. The two seemingly disparate stories—one steeped in the crime world of art forgery and the other a fabrication of science—sparked the idea for her second novel, *A Nearly Perfect Copy*.



“For this story, I was really interested in examining the idea of replication and authenticity,” explains Professor Amend, who is the author of two previously published works—a short story collection, titled *Things That Pass for Love* (OV/Dzanc Books, 2008), and a novel, *Stations West* (Louisiana State University Press, 2010), which was a finalist for the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature and the Oklahoma Book Award.

In the short story collection, which won the bronze Independent Publisher’s award, Professor Amend writes scenes of families, cults, sex, science, and more. For *Stations West*, she writes about one Jewish family’s immigrant experience in Oklahoma. She says she likes to write about different topics because it allows her to “walk” in someone else’s shoes for a short while.



The story focuses on Elm Howells, who works for a Manhattan auction house, and Gabriel Connois, an artist living in Paris. After the loss of her young son, Elm is overcome by grief, and turns to ethically dubious human cloning to get him back. In Gabriel’s case, he’s an artist desperate to break into the Parisian art scene. Like Elm, he too makes a pact with the devil to ensure his success. Their stories unfold, and ultimately converge in unexpected and disastrous ways.

Professor Amend joined the English Department faculty in fall 2012. A graduate of Stanford University, she lived in France briefly to participate in a Fulbright Teaching Fellowship in Lyon, where she taught high school English and translated documents for the Lyon Opera. Later, she attended the University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop, where she received a Maytag and Teaching/Writing Fellowship. ■

Lethal Treasure: A Josie Prescott Antiques Mystery

(St. Martin’s Minotaur, 2013) Jane K. Cleland. \$24.99

In Jane K. Cleland’s (English) latest mystery novel, *Lethal Treasure*, antiques appraiser Josie Prescott is called on to solve a colleague’s murder in the rugged seacoast town of Rocky Point, New Hampshire, where she lives and runs her own antiques appraisal business. She uses her unique skills as an appraiser and her connections in the community to help the police find the murderer.

This book is the eighth in a series, written in as many years. The Josie Prescott Antiques Mysteries are often described as an *Antiques Roadshow* for mystery fans, and are treasured for their heroine, intricate plot twists, and in-depth knowledge of the antiques world.

The first book in the series, *Consigned to Death*, was designated by *Library Journal* as a “core title” for librarians looking to build a cozy collection. It was one of only twenty-two books listed, along with titles from Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers. Other books in the series have won or been nominated for awards, including the David Award for Best Novel.

Prior to joining Lehman in fall 2012 as a lecturer, Professor Cleland led a 20-year career as a business communications corporate trainer. She published a number of nonfiction books in



that field, including *Business Writing for Results* and *Putting First What Matters Most: Strategies for Success at Work and in Life*.

Professor Cleland describes herself as a practical person. “I love seeing how theories apply in the real world,” she says. She learned this lesson after earning her B.A. in Theatre and English from the University of Denver. Finding it difficult to find work she found interesting, she went back to school for her M.B.A. in marketing and management. It paid off. On graduating from Babson College, she locked down a position as a business manager in a museum.

More than 20 years later, Professor Cleland decided that it was time for a change again when she realized that most corporate training was going online and there was likely to be lower demand for her services going forward. She returned to school, this time earning an M.F.A. in professional and creative writing from Western Connecticut State University in 2011.

Professor Cleland is a past New York Chapter president of the Mystery Writers of America. Currently, she chairs the Wolfe Pack’s Black Orchid Novella Award and is the host of the BronxNet/Lehman College-produced “Writer’s Room,” which features a series of interviews with some of today’s bestselling and most intriguing authors. ■



Lehman Receives \$3.1 Million Grant to Ease 'Sophomore Slump'

This past July, Lehman College was awarded a five-year, \$3.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to fund a new Sophomore Year Initiative designed to increase retention rates among undergraduates during their critical second year of college. Lehman was one of 19 Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) across the country—and the only CUNY institution—to receive the Title V grant.

"This is a major boost to the College to help students succeed, attain higher GPAs, raise graduation rates and increase college success on every level," said Vice President of Student Affairs José Magdaleno. He and Vice President of Enrollment Management and Associate Provost Robert Troy are jointly coordinating implementation of the new program.

The grant will benefit all students by setting up an early warning system in which faculty will alert the College to struggling students. "The whole idea is to identify students who are having academic problems earlier in the process so they can get the help they need before it's too late," said Dr. Troy.

Although Lehman offers a wide range of academic support services for students, particularly for those experiencing difficulties, many students either do not know about these options or fail to take advantage of them. Under the system to be implemented, students who are doing poorly will be identified early in the semester and be mandated to seek the help they need before they end up on academic probation. As part of the program, Lehman hired a program director, Erin Varsalone, to spearhead the Sophomore Year Initiative program and oversee its staff.

"We hope to actively engage students in their second semester of study and aid them in their sophomore year," said Varsalone. "Sophomore is a critical year for students and sets the tone for the rest of their college career."



Erin Varsalone, Program Director of Lehman College's Title V Sophomore Year Initiative.

In fact, Sophomore year might be the toughest in a college student's academic career—hence the term "sophomore slump" that has confounded academics across the nation. At Lehman, where two-thirds of undergraduates transfer to the College from elsewhere, and most are first-generation college students whose families are often from other countries, students are particularly susceptible to this phenomenon.

But just as Lehman's award-winning Freshman Year Initiative (FYI), enacted

more than two decades ago, has increased retention rates for freshmen, hopes are high that this new program will do the same for sophomores, helping them transition into upperclassmen. In FYI, students are grouped for their first two semesters into small learning communities that take the same courses together as a group and are taught by faculty who collaborate on assignments and lesson plans.

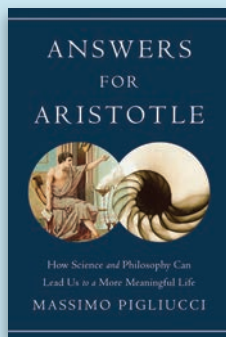
The new proposal was prepared by Dr. Anne Rothstein, director of the Center for School/College Collaboratives at Lehman. It is her third successful application for Title V funding. Previous grants totaled \$15 million and were used to create a comprehensive database to monitor student progress, as well as provide a supplemental instruction program that improved student success in "gateway" courses leading to specific majors.

The HSI program provides grants to make college more attainable for Hispanic students and allows institutions to enhance their academic offerings, program quality and institutional stability. The grants assist schools in furthering educational opportunities for students through faculty development, curriculum development, academic tutoring and mentoring, and other services. ■

Answers for Aristotle: How Science and Philosophy Can Lead Us to a More Meaningful Life

By Massimo Pigliucci (Basic Books), \$28

In his latest book, Massimo Pigliucci, the chair of the Philosophy Department at Lehman College, continues his mission to bridge the gap between the humanities and the sciences. In *Answers for Aristotle*, Pigliucci—who is both a philosopher and a biologist—attempts to marry philosophical quandaries with scientific research, all in an attempt to answer those questions first posed by Aristotle all those centuries ago.



With a Little Help From Our Friends

Lehman College continues to benefit from the generosity of its alumni and friends, as well as deepening relationships with major organizations and corporations. In 2012, the Lehman Foundation has continued its work of funding scholarships for students; over the last four years, the Foundation has distributed \$2.5 million in scholarships to 1800 students. Lehman and its students have continued to benefit from its relationship with the St. George's Society, which has generously donated nearly \$320,000 to 125 students of either British or British Commonwealth ancestry. The Verizon Foundation awarded a \$75,000 grant to the Bronx Institute (please see our cover story that begins on page 13).

Marianna Morello (B.A., '78)

Advertising Mogul Ventures Out on Her Own

By Suzanne Rozdeba

The world of advertising has changed significantly since its “Mad Men” days—and Marianna Morello, who’s been in the business for the last 25 years, has experienced first-hand how it has grown, including an increasing number of women who have risen to the top of the boardroom. “In my business, there are a lot of women who have climbed to the top to become some really heavy hitters,” said Morello, an advertising executive who serves as the president and chief executive officer of Manhattan Media Services, Inc., an integrated media buying service. “I’m so proud of that.”

Morello, who grew up in the Throg’s Neck section of the Bronx, graduated with a B.A. in psychology from Lehman College in 1978, and says the field is closely tied to her work. “I say every day that I feel like I’m a therapist to every one of my clients,” she laughed. “They ask me questions, like, ‘Do you think this is going to work? What will be my return on investments? I tell them, ‘I wish I had a crystal ball. We’re going to learn together.’ It really is psychology, putting the right ad in the right place to get the right results.”

Morello called her Lehman education “top notch” (her sister, Susan, also graduated there with a psychology degree). “There were excellent professors. For me, it was a very, very good experience, as far as learning.” But she struggled with more than cracking the books and managing college life. Her mother, Ida, was ill with Crohn’s disease, a gastrointestinal disorder. She worked diligently and often strenuously to balance school and jobs, while being there for her mom. “It was tough to try to study for exams, and going to the hospital constantly,” she said. “But I got through it, and it made me tougher and stronger.”

While at Lehman, she landed a paid internship with David Geller Advertising Representatives, and quickly learned the ropes of the business, working with the firm’s main client, the *National Enquirer* magazine. “It opened my eyes to the whole advertising industry, which I didn’t know anything about. It sparked an interest in me. David said to me, ‘I’m telling you, you’re cut out for this business.’”

She soon landed a full-time position at another Manhattan firm, SLG Inc., where she would spend the next 18 years building a strong client base. In 1995, she was ready to launch her own business, and opened Manhattan Media Services, Inc. on Fifth Avenue. Morello’s firm specializes in national and global print media placements, and also works on television, online, and outdoor ads. Her main clients include national health care and nutritional supplement companies, over-the-counter hair care companies, and liquor brands. Among them are Telebrands, IdeaVillage, Hair U Wear, and Bosley. In 2000, she was called “Manhattan’s Media



Genius” by *Response* magazine. She has nine employees, including her son, Marcello, 27, vice president of sales. Working with family, she said, can be both “tough” and rewarding. “We’ve got some really great days, and some put-on-the-boxing-glove days. But I know he’ll cover my back.”

Her mother, her biggest fan, was able to witness her daughter’s success before she passed away. “My mom was a great believer in me. She said, ‘I know you’re going to do something great,’” recalled Morello. “She lived to see one year of my business and said, ‘I am so proud of you.’” ■



An Art Form For the People

Barry Tucker works tirelessly to bring opera to the people. As the founder of The Richard Tucker Music Foundation—named for his father, who is widely considered to be one of America’s greatest tenors—he began a relationship with Lehman College two years ago to expose more people to an art form close to his heart, and help Lehman bring opera to the Bronx and beyond. “I’ve been doing this for 39 years or so, and I’m still interested in learning new ways of doing things to bring in the public. Opera is not rock or hip-hop. You have a totally different audience,” said Tucker, whose influential foundation brings budding American opera singers to perform at the College. (Asked if he sings, he quipped, “I wasn’t allowed to sing. I was allowed to yell, ‘Bravo!’ and applaud loudly.”)

Lehman's connection to the Tucker Foundation is one of the creative ways through which the College is bringing opera to New York residents. Through the Bronx Opera Company, which is housed at the CUNY campus; Lehman Stages; and The Metropolitan Opera's "Live in HD" program, Lehman is increasingly offering professional opera performances at modest prices to individuals of all ages, income levels, and demographics, so locals can experience the beauty of an art too often seen as limited to an elitist circle.

The relationship with The Richard Tucker Music Foundation began two years ago when Maria-Cristina Necula, Lehman's director of alumni relations, and a singer who authored *Life in Opera*, approached Tucker about hosting mini-concerts. For that first performance, he brought two rising opera stars to Lehman's Lovinger Theatre followed by a Q&A session. Last December, a free concert starring mezzo-soprano Emily Fons and bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green was held in the Lehman Multimedia Center. Necula said she was surprised at how the packed

audience was as intrigued by the concert as by the Q&A session, moderated by composer and librettist Mark Adamo (*Little Women and Lysistrata, or The Nude Goddess*).

"It was like an *Inside the Actors Studio* for opera singers," laughed Necula. "I heard people say, 'I've never thought of approaching opera, but I'm so happy I went.'" Among the invited guests were students from the nearby Celia Cruz High School of Music, as well as students from Lehman's Music Department, who had a chance to ask the professional singers questions. "It was moving and beautiful to see the interest," added Necula. "They could interact with the singers. It made the whole experience real for them and showed them no matter where you come from, even if you hadn't known opera, you could still appreciate it."

For Tucker, a board member at the Metropolitan Opera, the relationship is symbiotic. "Lehman is a major factor in the school system in New York," he said. "It was an opportunity to complement the Tucker Foundation by showing off our singers, for them to talk about themselves, and their experiences with college kids. They can relate to one another, so to speak. And not that all of the students know opera, but if you sing something popular, like a show tune, and discuss your background, they kind of relate to one another. That's the synergism that takes place between the Tucker Foundation and Lehman College."

Venturing into multimedia, Lehman Stages, a professional component of the School of Arts and Humanities, created the "Opera & Ballet in Cinema Series" about two years ago and established a relationship with Emerging Pictures, which projects high-definition opera broadcasts. Performances from London's Royal Opera House, Milan's La Scala and Moscow's Bolshoi Theater are brought to the Lovinger Theatre, a 500-seat space. Lehman also hosts the Metropolitan Opera's "Live in HD" on behalf of the Celia Cruz High School of Music.

continued on page 12

Renée Tatum performing at the Lehman Multimedia Center in 2011.



"Young people walk into the Lovinger and see an amazing opera performance in HD," said Dante Albertie, director of Lehman Stages. "Because it's so amazing, they then want to see it live. It's a way of turning people on to opera." He also noted that the HD events put Lehman at the forefront of the borough's cultural institutions. "We're most excited and proud of this arrangement. Something will happen at the Royal Opera House, or La Scala, and a week to 10 days later, we'll have it in high definition. In the Bronx, there's nobody else doing it," he said. Opera tickets are \$15, and free for Lehman students and children under 12.

Henry Ovalles, assistant director at Lehman Stages, added, "In the Bronx, we're the premiere venue for opera." He believes the college is bringing the "highest caliber of opera to the Bronx and the Lehman community."

There is also Lehman's relationship with the Bronx Opera, an independent company housed on campus. It produces two operas a year in English, and an annual Christmas concert of Handel's "Messiah." Opera-lovers can see singers who have gone on to star in opera houses like the Met, where, Michael Spierman, the company's founder and principal conductor, said about 35 former singers of his company are on the roster. Tickets to the company's Lehman performances start at \$15.

The Bronx Opera also keeps busy with community outreach, bringing performances to senior centers, businesses, and rotary clubs, and has strong youth outreach. "We go to public schools in the Bronx, where we prepare the kids for operas by bringing over

artists," said Spierman. The company then brings the students to Lehman for a morning and evening performance with their parents (kids get in for free while parents pay \$5). He added: "We give them a backstage tour. They see the shop where scenery is built; they go onstage, see members of the orchestra and talk about their instruments."

Alumni have raved about the College's opera offerings. "The Bronx Opera Company is an amazing resource for the borough to be treasured," said alumna Andrea Rockower, the former associate director for the Performing Arts Center. "It's professional and performed in English, making it accessible to general audiences and people who may be having their first opera experience. And it's a launching pad for singers."

Opera lovers like Necula hope Lehman's outreach can fire up local interest, because, she believes, opera is relatable on a fundamental level. "Opera, if anything, is about basic human emotions. The stories, the music, they all convey what we go through," she said. "It doesn't matter if it was in the 18th or 19th century. It's still an eternal human range of emotions. Once people discover it, they get hooked. It enriches their lives, and their emotions." ■



Above: Barry Tucker with Lehman College Distinguished Lecturer Michael Bacon and his wife Betsy. At right is Alumni Affairs Director Maria-Cristina Necula. Below: A performance of *Les Troyens* from London's Royal Opera House part of the Live in HD offerings at Lehman College.





The World of Research at Lehman College



Lehman College houses a wide array of CUNY Institutes and Centers devoted to the study of various disciplines. Whether promoting human rights and healthy eating; shining a light on injustice or examining the root causes of social inequalities; or funding academic enrichment programs or celebrating ethnic cultures, it all happens at Lehman College.

Preparing Bronx Students for College

Forty Bronx high school students interested in public service, government, and law careers were chosen to travel to Washington, D.C. last November to meet with high-profile figures in those fields, as part of a trip organized by the Bronx Institute at Lehman College. Students met with leaders like U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, New York Congressman José E. Serrano, and Pennsylvania Congressman Chaka Fattah, toured The White House, and visited historic sites.

The meeting with Justice Sotomayor was particularly poignant for all involved. “She was sharing experiences with them,” said Bruce Irushalmi, who has served as the Institute’s associate director for eight years. “This is a Bronx woman who could look in those kids’ faces and say, ‘Hey, I was you.’ When she told her story, it was something all the kids could identify with. As a teacher for many years, I could see her reaching into their hearts, and into their brains.”



Dr. Herminio Martinez of the Bronx Institute with some of the students who have benefited from his program.

The trip, funded by a GEAR UP—Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs—grant, is only one of the multitude of initiatives of the Institute, led by its executive director, Professor Herminio Martinez. The Institute focuses on youth development, professional development, and research and education policy. The Bronx Institute works with a whopping 10,000 Bronx students and 50 schools, and was launched 32 years ago. “The Bronx Institute has benefited greatly from being part of Lehman College and is proud to be able to continue to impact the lives of thousands of Bronx middle and high school students as they make the long journey to college in increasing numbers,” said Prof. Martinez.

Taking over in 1998, Prof. Martinez has paved the way by raising millions of dollars and launching initiatives to prepare students for college. They include ENLACE (Engaging Latino Communities for Education), a rigorous program for high-achieving Latino students; and preparing students for careers in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). The program’s students have gone on to schools like Lehman, Harvard, Boston College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and SUNY schools.

Through its GEAR UP program, students learn about the possibilities, requirements, funding, and scholarship opportunities for college. And now, thanks to the Verizon Foundation, the Bronx Institute has been given a \$75,000 grant to help establish the College’s STEM Pipeline Initiative to offer advance physics classes to Bronx high school students.

The Institute has also distributed nearly 10,000 laptops to Bronx students, aided students in landing scholarships for summer school at Ivy League schools, and has a partnership with the Experiment for International Living to increase opportunities for students to study in Europe, South America, and Asia. “He’s an expert grant writer and has been very successful in raising millions of dollars, to the benefit of Bronx school kids,” said Irushalmi, the associate director, of Martinez. “He’s truly a visionary and creative leader.”

—Suzanne Rozdeba

Fighting the Good Fight

Almost three years after its creation, the Center for Human Rights and Peace Studies at Lehman College has become a leading platform for dialogue on international social justice in the Bronx community and beyond.

The Center has put immigration issues at the core of its outreach activities since its inception. Last year, hundreds of people attended several events organized by the Center on the rights of migrants in the Americas and violence against women, among others. Professor Victoria Sanford, of the Anthropology Department and the founding director of the Center, sees this growing audience as a sign that solving human right issues is a priority for many New York residents and CUNY students.

“Since the beginning, we’ve had a really tremendous response from the Lehman community. I’ve been really moved by the response from students, faculty, and staff,” said Prof. Sanford. “We have to take a look at our community in the Bronx, in New York City and the United States. To understand human rights abroad, we have to understand human rights at home.”



Professor Victoria Sanford

This spring, the Center inaugurates its first human rights film series, co-sponsored with the Leonard Lief Library and the Lehman Center for Student Leadership Development. The series explores a theme close to the center’s focal point, the meaning of violence and genocide in South America, including *Worse than War*, a striking documentary directed by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen (author of *Hitler’s Willing Executioners*) about how authoritarian political strategies have led to genocide around the world.



Dr. Sanford address the Center's New Pathways to Justice conference, held at Lehman College in 2011.

By next year, the Center for Human Rights and Peace Studies also hopes to launch a new interdisciplinary minor in human rights and peace studies with the help of the Center's steering committee members, such as professor Michael Buckley and Anthropology Professor Christa Salamandra who both teach at Lehman and conduct research on human rights issues. "Once we get the minor up and running we'll be able to establish a human rights club for students who are interested in doing human rights," Sanford said. "We are trying to function with the involvement of students."

For over a decade, Prof. Sanford has conducted field research and studied the violence affecting Maya communities in Guatemala in the late 1970s and 1980s. She was recently cited as an expert witness before a national Guatemalan tribunal in the genocide case against former dictator Efraim Rios Montt, accused of ordering the execution of more than 1,700 indigenous Ixil Mayans in the 1980s.



Two of the visiting speakers who appeared at the New Pathways to Justice conference in 2011 at Lehman College.

Since the trial, Sanford has been quoted in *The New York Times* and on CNN as well as numerous international publications to speak about the trial and what it means for the future of rule of law in Guatemala.

"It's the first time in history that a credible domestic court holds someone accountable for a genocide committed in the country," she said. "We have to look at what are the lessons we can learn to not only punish but also prevent, and what kind of interventions can we take to make sure that this doesn't happen again."

—Sophia Tewa

Making a Difference

New York City is home to more than 319,000 Mexicans, the city's fastest growing national sub-group. Nearly a quarter of the population lives in the Bronx. And at CUNY, the Mexican student population has grown 265 percent in the last 13 years. So it only made sense when Professor Alyshia Gálvez of Lehman College's Latin American, Latino, and Puerto Rican Studies helped launch the CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies aimed at connecting with the Mexican community, and one that would offer students the ability to study, serve, and empower the population.

"The Mexican immigrant community is a recently-arrived community, has very high rates of dropouts and young people who are either not in school nor have graduated from school," said Gálvez, director of the Lehman-based Institute and the author of *Patient Citizens, Immigrant Mothers: Mexican Women Public*



Dr. Gálvez addresses a conference at Lehman College. (From left): Dr. Anny Morrobel-Sosa, the Provost of Lehman College, Dr. Judith Zubieta García, a scholar who visited the College in April, and Dr. Gálvez.

Prenatal Care, and the Birth Weight Paradox (Rutgers University Press)—winner of the 2012 Association for Latina and Latino Anthropology Book Award—which examines a health paradox in which Mexican immigrant women have more favorable birth and health outcomes than other groups, despite socioeconomic disadvantages. "We see it as an urgent necessity to do outreach with the community and community-based organizations, and not only try to get people to enroll in CUNY, but do the work that needs to be done before they can enroll," said Gálvez.

The CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies, the first of its kind on the East Coast, launched in February 2012. It followed 10 years of work by the CUNY Working Task Force on Strengthening Educational Opportunities for the Mexican and Mexican-American Community.

"The project we're most proud of is the CUNY IME-Becas Scholarship Program," she says. The Institute recently selected thirteen students of both Mexican and non-Mexican origins for full-tuition scholarships—funded by the Mexican government—for the upcoming academic year at Lehman College; last year, it awarded fourteen such scholarships. The students who are awarded the honor all have one thing in common: a deep passion for studying and serving the Mexican community, and an interest in such issues as immigration reform and rights.

"These are students with extreme financial need. The vast majority receive no financial aid and are not eligible for most other scholarships. It makes the difference between being able to study or not," said Gálvez. The median per capita income for each applicant is a startling \$3,800. "Not only do they now have the opportunity to study, but they have become leaders in their community," she said. The criteria are academic achievement, financial need, and commitment to serving the Mexican community.

The Institute works closely with the Mexican Consulate. "They are very generous and they help us to expand our capacity to work. Our funding from the scholarships is coming from them, but we also collaborate," said Gálvez. In April, scholars participated in a training session at the consulate on becoming CUNY ambassadors, lead by Richard Alvarez, CUNY's Director of Admission. "They were trained to mentor young people in their lives about how to apply to college, how to afford college, and explain what the CUNY admissions process is like," she said.

Another of the Institute's achievements has been placing scholars in prestigious internships such as Memorial-Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Bronx State Senator Gustavo Rivera's office, and the Mexican Consulate. "It's enriching for them, and enriching for the community because they're giving back, and they're supporting institutions," she said.

The Institute also has a multitude of collaborative projects. It is working with non-profit groups FilmDu and Trenza Films in Mexico, and Cinema Tropical in New York for "Ciclo Documental: a Mexican Documentary Film Series." Films are shown across CUNY campuses. It is doing school outreach with "Tertulia Resolana," a high school-college-community collaborative program and is staying busy into the summer months. In May it helped organize conferences like "Mexico-NY: Thirty Years of Migration," at John Jay College and then in June, local high school students will present research in Latina, Latino and Latin-American studies at a conference at Lehman.

Gálvez has faith the Institute can become a community asset. "We're ambitious. We hope the community knows CUNY is a resource, that this is a place they can pursue their educational goals, that it's welcoming, accessible, and affordable, and that they have options for their family to reach their educational aspirations," she said. "We can play a transformative role in what becomes of this community in the coming years."

—S.R.

Keeping Tabs On Social Equality

For the past ten months, the CUNY Institute for Health Equity's new research focused on a local groundbreaking study on infant mortality in the Bronx. Researchers from the Institute have interviewed and spent time with hundreds of women to help determine how to improve the causes behind chronic health issues affecting infants. Lehman Health Sciences Professors Mary Huynh and Marilyn Aguirre-Molina headed this investigation about the effects of environmental stress on birth outcomes in the South Bronx.

The Bronx has the highest rate of infant mortality of any borough, according to a city Department of Health report published in 2009. To better understand this statistic, the Institute undertook a CUNY-wide research study last year. Huynh, Aguirre-Molina, and public health geographer professor Andrew Maroko, trained five graduate students from Lehman and Hunter College in hands-on investiga-



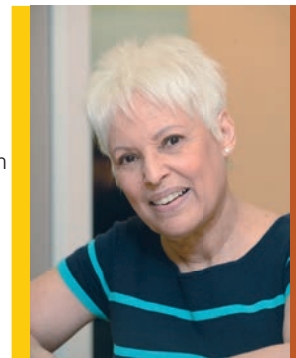
Prof. Marilyn Aguirre-Molina meeting with the staff of the CUNY Institute for Health Equity.

tive techniques. These research scholars studied how social, structural and environmental factors in the South Bronx can exacerbate stress for women in their childbearing years.

The preliminary results of the study showed that external factors can cause stress for pregnant woman and young mothers, including high decibel levels, street sanitation, abandoned buildings and cars, access to green spaces and recreational facilities, traffic counts, the presence of nearby major highways, and housing conditions. The lack of accessibility to food and product also can also create stress for these women.

The findings also indicate that medical care providers need to take into consideration the daily social and physical stress experienced by pregnant women if they want to better understand infant mortality.

"There is also research from other sources that is making it very clear that the prenatal stress has an effect on the fetus and birth outcome," says Prof. Aguirre-Molina, director of the Institute. "We expect that issues of safe neighborhoods, food access, poor housing, sanitation, and poor recreational space must be addressed. We hope to use this information to advocate for healthier communities and accountability of public officials to assure that they do their job in poor communities and assure that the infrastructure is of living standards like in other parts of the city."



Prof. Marilyn Aguirre-Molina

Since its inception, the CUNY Institute for Health Equity has aimed to identify disparities in health services among New York residents as well as promoting program development and technical support to community-based organizations working in the city's most underserved neighborhoods. The Institute conducts most of its studies with the help of public health students and the School of Public Health at Lehman.

"We'll make our research available in scientific journals so that our colleagues can learn from and build further research on this issue," Prof. Aguirre-Molina said. "We'll be finishing the study hopefully by the summer and make this information available to key players in the communities as well as decision makers in the city who have a responsibility in community well-being."

—S.T.

Getting Their Irish UP

What do Irish-American rockers from the Bronx, a children's Irish language class, and Gaelic songs longing for the old country all have in common? They're among the eclectic events offered by the CUNY Institute for Irish-American Studies, housed at Lehman College.



(From left): Irish-American Institute director Deirdre O'Boy with Mary Carroll, the Institute's Assistant Director; Abby Djonbalic, an intern; Michelle Duarte, the Institute's college assistant, and Lana Cekaj, an intern.

The Institute, established in 2000, draws students interested in anything Irish, and community members from the still-thriving Irish population of Woodlawn in the Bronx. "Our mission is to promote Irish-American cultural identity, in addition to integrating ourselves with the cultures that are around us," said Professor Deirdre O'Boy, the Institute's

"Our mission is to promote Irish-American cultural identity, in addition to integrating ourselves with the cultures that are around us," said Professor Deirdre O'Boy.

Executive Director. O'Boy teaches in Lehman's English department and is passionate about Irish literature. "This Institute is about getting students and the community in on this intellectual conversation about Irish-American studies, and how Irish-American studies fit in with other groups," she said.

The Institute focuses on presenting Irish theater and dramatic arts. It gives guidance on courses in Irish language, literature, and



(From left): Professor O'Boy with Mary McPartlan, a visiting Fulbright lecturer; Dr. Eamon Hughes, of Queens University Belfast, and student.

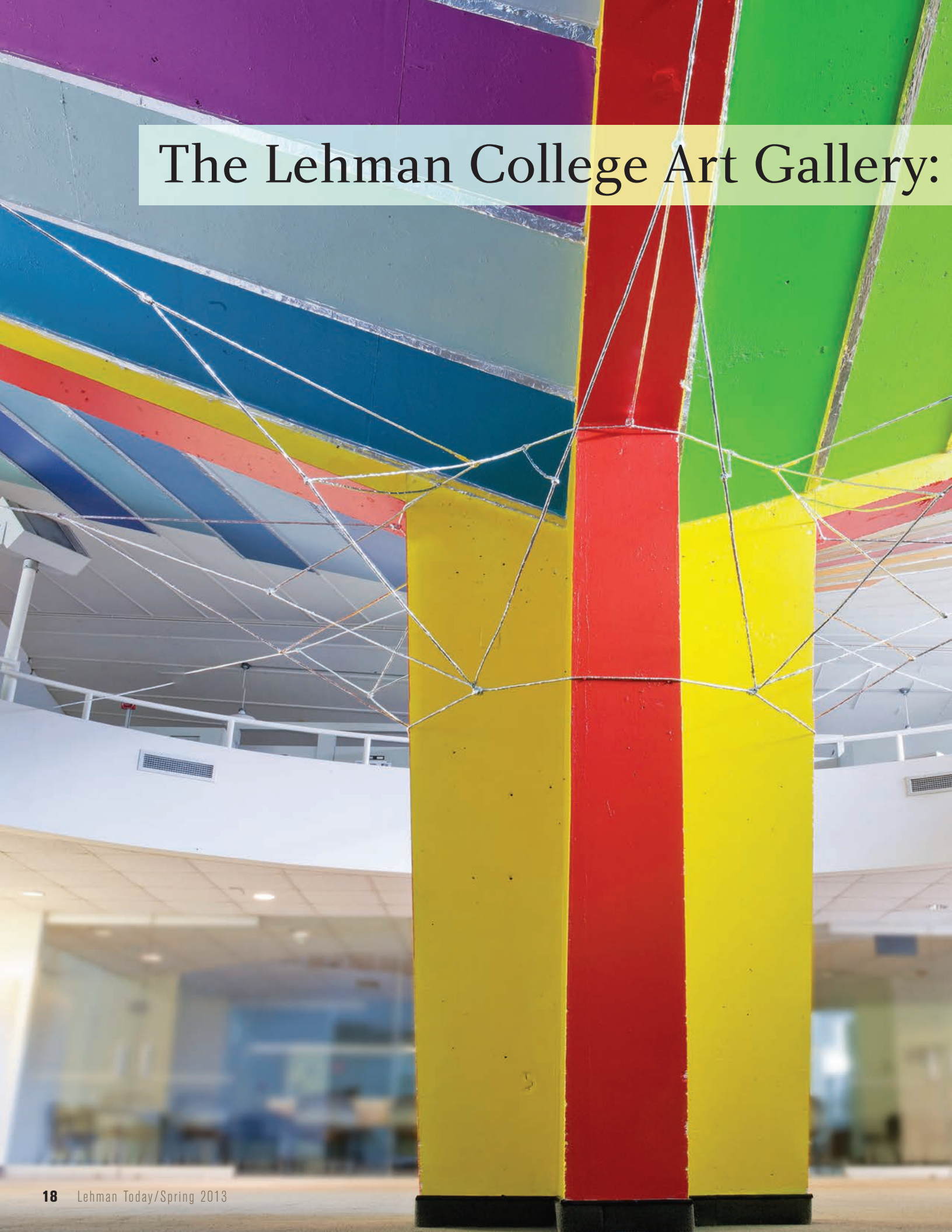
history, and brings distinguished scholars and Fulbright fellows, including famed Irish singer Mary McPartlan, now at Lehman on a Fulbright. It assists students interested in studying abroad through a Fulbright Scholarship at Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland, or those interested in learning Gaelic in Connemara, Ireland through Stocks Scholarships and Gaeltacht Summer Awards.

The more popular initiatives remain the live events, which are generally free and open to the public. In April, with the Lehman College City and Humanities Program and the CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies, the Institute brought "Artists Without Walls" to Lehman's Studio Theatre. "It's a multicultural showcase event for spoken word, music, dance, and short excerpts from plays," said O'Boy. In April alone, it presented the Celtic Tenors, a talk on Medieval and Early Modern Gaelic Ireland. While on May 3, the Institute held its benefit dinner at The Manhattan Club, where it honored Charles Hale, one of the founders of "Artists Without Walls"; George Heslin, founder of Origin Theatre Company; and Joseph B. McElligott IV.

For O'Boy, sometimes her biggest satisfaction at the Institute comes from a student's exuberance. "It's being able to take something I love so much—Irish literature—and working with students coming to it with little to no background, and see them become inspired. They find out how they can study abroad, and they become interested in learning everything they can about the topic in one semester." ■

—S.R.

The Lehman College Art Gallery:





A Treasure of Art in the Bronx

By Suzanne Rozdeba

A child's Victorian era-inspired dress—made of New York City subway maps—stands in one of the main rooms of the Lehman College Art Gallery. Moving to a rear room, the continents of North and South America, and Africa, made of amber-hued honeycombs, hang overhead, the landmasses casting dramatic shadows on the wall. In a third room, country borders are cut into small puzzle pieces that merge and mesh, creating dissipated borders. Nearby, a vivid photograph shows a deep-red apple with continents carved into its skin.

These are among pieces, inspired by a fascination with maps, geography, charting, and graphing, that are part of the “Contemporary Cartographies” exhibition, which ended on May 11. “We’re always trying to figure out how to better reach people,” said Susan Hoeltzel, who has been the gallery’s director since 1993, and who came from the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s education department. “We are in New York, and can borrow extraordinary things.”

The gallery, which has about 6,000-square feet of exhibition space, is celebrating its 30th anniversary next year, and is recognized as a vibrant cultural destination in the Bronx. The building where it’s housed was originally the school’s library, erected in 1959 by architect Marcel Breuer, a major 20th-century modernist, who famously designed the Whitney Museum of American Art. The art department and studios including those for painting, drawing, and ceramics are also housed there.

The gallery receives about 30,000 visits yearly from Lehman students and staff, as well as an increasing number of visitors from outside the college community, thanks partially to a relationship with the local tourism board and aggressive outreach by Hoeltzel and her team. Its exhibitions and impressive education program has been recognized by outlets including *The New York Times*, the *New York Daily News*, *Newsweek*, *Art in America*, and *ARTnews*.

“We try and make programs that will be enticing to teachers and the kids. We make things work on a lot of different levels,” said Hoeltzel, who pointed out how the cartography exhibition ties into students’ geography studies. “We’ve had artists working with comic book imagery, a theme on candy, artists that were working on sweets—sculptures with actual candies—and artwork influenced by architecture and design,” she said before adding, “We try and do it all!”

The gallery also has solid relationships with museums like El Museo del Barrio in Harlem, and presented works from its “The (S) Files 2011” exhibit, part of the Museo’s biennial benefit. The exhibition featured cutting-edge art by Latino, Caribbean, and Latin American artists. They have also worked with the Guggenheim, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, and Wave Hill, a public garden and cultural center in the Bronx.

Inverted Umbrella, 2011,
by Gisella Insuaste. Exhibition:
El Museo’s Bienal: The (S) Files
2011 (June 2011-January 2012).
Curated by Elvis Fuentes, Rocío
Aranda-Alvarado, and Trinidad
Fombella, with guest curator
Juanita Bermúdez.

*Photo credit: Courtesy of
Lehman College Art Gallery*

Hoeltzel said the gallery operates on about \$353,000 a year, and is independent from Lehman, though it receives a small yearly stipend from the college. A large part of raising the necessary operating funds has been grant writing. The gallery also receives support from organizations including the Institute of Library and Museum Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, New York State Council on the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. “We also have a membership program but our broad membership is not wealthy,” she said. “We try and offer as much as we can for free. We have no admissions; we want people to come,” said Hoeltzel.

The gallery—and Hoeltzel—have also won accolades from the artists it has worked with over the years. “Everybody I’ve ever worked with at the gallery is very professional and helpful. The current exhibition [Contemporary Cartographies] is spectacular, taking one idea and showing how 20 different people can view that idea,” said artist Wopo Holup, whose water-themed and gold-leaf pieces, “The Nile” and “Salton Sea,” are a stunning part of the exhibition. “Susan was brilliant in putting this show together. She has such a broad vision.”

One of the gallery’s more notable and progressive milestones was its vigilant, early support of digital art. In 1994, the gallery commissioned “The World’s First Collaborative Sentence” by artist Douglas Davis. “I love technology and I get excited about it,” said Hoeltzel. The online piece was bought by a private collector in 1995 and is now a part of the Whitney Museum of American Art’s permanent collection (see sidebar).



Hoeltzel and her team heavily focus on bringing the art world to local Bronx schools, and inviting schoolchildren to participate in their extensive education program. It is not unusual to bump into a sizeable group of fifth graders making and learning about mosaics, as part of a weeks-long project. Their work often becomes public art in the Bronx public school system. “The education program became a huge part of what the board felt was important, a major part of our mission,” said Hoeltzel. “It runs all year, throughout the summer. The idea is that it’s not just about the art on the wall; we draw them in with the educational programs.” Approximately 13,000 to 17,000 teachers and students visit yearly; programs are available in English and Spanish. “We realized this is how you draw people in: you have programs, gallery talks, panels, artists talking about their work,” she said.



This page, clockwise: A girl looking at the piece *Joint*, by Barbara Cooper, which was part of the exhibition: *Sticks and Stones* (September 2011-January 2012). Curated by Susan Hoeltzel. *Photo credit: Courtesy of Byron Smith / The Riverdale Press.* Two works from the show *Sticks and Stones*. Curated by Susan Hoeltzel. *Photo credit: Courtesy of El Museo del Barrio.* Artist Michael Ferris Jr. talking about his work during the reception party for the exhibition *Michael Ferris Jr.: The Bronx Series and Other Works* (February-May 2012). Curated by Susan Hoeltzel. *Photo credit: Courtesy of Lehman College Art Gallery*





Left: Exhibition *Elizabeth Jobim: Endless Lines* (October-December 2008). Curated by Claudia Calirman and Susan Hoeltzel.
Photo credit: Courtesy of Lehman College Art Gallery

The artists who have exhibited at the Lehman Gallery appreciate the exposure. "They have wonderful, family-oriented education programs and collaborations with the artists. Every time I go, I support whatever they do," said Scherezade Garcia, an artist from the Dominican Republic who has shown her work at the gallery and had a solo show there in 2007. "They invited students, all different ages, from Bronx schools to presentations on my work. I saw and heard scholars with different opinions and interpretations of my art," said Garcia, whose main medium is drawing and has several pieces on exhibit at The Smithsonian. "There was a significant Latino community, and some of them knew the historical references I was using, and it was an opportunity for me to go a little deeper into my work." ■



Left: Susan Hoeltzel, director of the Lehman College Art Gallery.

Below: The Art Gallery was designed by architect Marcel Breuer, a 20th century modernist who famously designed the Whitney Museum of American Art.



Early Digital Art: Lehman College Art Gallery Ahead of the Movement

When digital art began to make waves on the scene in the 1990s, the Lehman College Art Gallery was way ahead of its time. Susan Hoeltzel envisioned an opportunity for the gallery to become a leading force in the then-unheard of genre of Internet art and commissioned "The World's First Collaborative Sentence" by artist Douglas Davis in 1994. The web-based textual and graphic performance allowed viewers to contribute to an ongoing piece. "It anticipated collaborative writing that we're now used to on Wiki, for example, or the blogosphere culture," she said. "It was at a time when 'Net art as a genre didn't exist. It was not until the 2000s that museums began to pay attention."

In 1995 private collectors, Barbara and Eugene M. Schwartz, purchased the piece and later donated it to the Whitney. "Lehman was truly visionary in supporting this endeavor," said Christiane Paul, adjunct curator of media arts for the Whitney Museum of American Art. "The World's First Collaborative Sentence" was the museum's first Internet art, and it gave the Lehman gallery global recognition. "It is definitely one of the first—if not the first—piece of Internet art to enter a museum collection," said Paul, who noted that last year, the Whitney launched a preservation initiative to update the piece and is creating a historic version (for more information please go to: <http://whitney.org/Exhibitions/Artport>).

In Memoriam: Margaret Rice



It was a busy graduation day, and Marge Rice was at work in her office in Shuster Hall when a young man came to the door. He said a professor had sent him—to tell Marge his story. She stopped what she was doing, invited him in, and listened.

The man had grown up in the Bronx in difficult circumstances and had made many wrong choices. He was being held at Rikers Island when an outreach counselor from CUNY found him, saw his potential, and got him into a diversion program. "I guess you could say I was 'sentenced' to Lehman College," he said with a smile, "and today I'm graduating."

Marge told the story to her husband Gene that evening. "When I saw him on the lawn with his mother, posing for pictures," she said, "I went back to my office and closed the door so no one could see me cry."

Margaret McCullen Rice was Director of Media Relations and Publications, founding editor of *Lehman Today*, and an unstoppable force for Lehman College and for public higher education. She died on November 6 from complications of a brief illness. She was writing about Lehman—the opening of Science Hall, the annual gala—until a few weeks before she died. Her life was celebrated at

"Marge was thorough and thoughtful. She had sound judgment and a deeply felt sense of ethics," said Dr. Anne Johnson, former Vice President of Institutional Advancement. "When I retired, we talked about retirement, and Marge said, 'I will always be writing something.'"

"I grew up witnessing my mother write other people's stories with empathy and insight," said Christine Rice McDonald, an award-winning writer and chef. "The sounds of her typing were often the first and last sounds I heard every day. But she didn't think of writing as a job or profession. It was part of her identity. She set the bar very high for me."

Marge was educated by the Roman Catholic Ursuline Sisters, and later graduated from St. John's University and the Columbia School of Journalism. She began her career as a reporter for the *New Rochelle Standard Star*. "They didn't know what to do with this young woman, so they assigned her to the Education beat," said



a memorial service on November 18 at the Stone Mill in the Bronx Botanical Gardens.

"Marge was a prolific writer and a gifted storyteller," said President Ricardo R. Fernández. "She was a staunch believer that Lehman was a place where lives were transformed and communities were made stronger. She told this story eloquently and passionately. To Marge, a graduating class was an opportunity to tell the world about bright, motivated, and resilient women and men. A massive construction site was an opportunity to embark on a bold journey to the future."

For many years Marge was the trusted "voice of Lehman College," said CUNY Vice Chancellor for University Relations Jay Hershenson. But her soft-spoken, calm demeanor was never confused as weakness.

Gene Rice. "Her first story was a three-part series that exposed a scandal at a local school—not the puff piece her editor had envisioned"

Marge was proud to call the Bronx her home. She had strong views about politics and she loved to travel. Last summer, during the U.S. Presidential campaign, she and Gene were on a French river cruise. Their fellow passengers were fascinated by the campaign. "Will Obama win?" they asked.

As always, Marge—who is survived by her husband, daughter, son-in-law Patrick McDonald, and 15-month-old grandson Conor—was worried about the outcome. But she was also a believer. Said Gene: "To her, both the national election and her work at Lehman College were a study in democracy and the democratizing impact of public education." ■

By Anne Perryman

Above left: Marge with her husband, Gene Rice at a Lehman College event in December 2011; Above right: Marge (at left) with former members of the Media Relations Department, including the author (center).

Gregorio Valdez (B.S., '96)

Neuroscientist Studying Latest Developments in How We Age

Gregorio Valdez was 12-years-old when he immigrated to New York City from the Dominican Republic with his mom and siblings in 1987. It was July 4, and he still remembers the fireworks bursting in the sky, what he thought was surely a sign marking his new life.

"I thought all the fireworks were for us, arriving in the United States," laughed Valdez, 38. The family moved to a basement apartment in the Bronx's Mount Eden neighborhood. "It was rough for my mom," he said. "We did have some family here; those were the heydays when Dominicans were coming en masse to the United States. But they were still pretty fresh, and there was a culture and language barrier." Working double shifts, his mom helped forge a path for her son, the first in his family to attend college. "I don't think anyone can work as hard as her. It was incredible what she was able to do."

Today, Valdez is a neuroscientist and assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute, and is also an assistant professor in the university's biological sciences department. He still has a strong connection to his New York roots. An important part of that link is the time he spent earning his B.S. in biochemistry at Lehman, where his science passion was ignited. His research focuses on aging and age-related neurological diseases, and discovering molecules that protect our nervous system's synapses.

"I'm a little biased, but I think neuroscience is the most exciting field out there," he said. "I'm trying to understand what makes the brain and the neurons, and the connections between neurons and skeletal muscles, be less plastic. How can we make them more amenable to deal with injuries and diseases that affect the brain and the muscle system, diseases like Alzheimer's and Lou Gehrig's? I'm trying to figure out how and why the neurons and their connections give in to mutations. Can we enhance the quality of life by stopping some of that deterioration?"

He first fell for science during a Lehman introductory biology course. "It was given by a graduate student, Paul Mathews. Paul was a 6'3" white guy with a funky attitude. This guy was serious about science and excited about the things he was doing," he said. "I was apprehensive about getting out of my comfort zone—the Dominican world—and he seemed approachable and quirky. I asked



Gregorio Valdez poses with students and staff from his lab.

how he got into science. I was the first one in my family to go to college and had no one to show me what was possible," he said.

Mathews introduced him to Professor Eleanore Wurtzel, in whose lab Mathews was working, and they became his mentors. "They're the ones I blame for getting me into this mess," laughed Valdez. His sophomore year he was awarded a Minority Biomedical Research Support grant for plant biology research. "Everyone in the department was open and accessible. Once I found my voice and realized I could be good at science, Lehman College was the right place for me," he said. "The faculty in the department is top-notch."

In 1996, he graduated from Lehman and worked as a lab technician at Stony Brook University, where he pursued a Ph.D. program in neurobiology and behavior. He completed his degree in 2005 and continued to Harvard to study molecular and cellular aspects of neuroscience as a postdoctoral fellow. Now, the Bronx-bred New Yorker has adjusted to life on the other side of the Mason-Dixon Line. "I realized this was an opportunity. I could be part of the leadership to help mold this Institute into a powerhouse," he said. "It's an academic hub. There's a lot of diversity and open-minded people. It reminds me a little of the Village in New York City."

Today, his mom couldn't be more proud of his accomplishments. "I came from a completely different world. I was stuck in 'Dominicanland,' and then met this funky white boy who is still one of my best friends. A lot of things open up your eyes." ■

By Suzanne Rozdeba

Adel L. Morales (M.A. '01)

Making Movies



Adel L. Morales

"I wanted to share the beauty of a borough that is often misconceived as poor and broken."

As more independent urban films are starting to compete with big budget productions, a new wave of filmmakers is starting to rise in the Bronx. Inspired by the success of acclaimed Bronx director Rashaad Ernesto Green, Adel L. Morales, a former English teacher and Lehman alumnus, decided last year to pursue his longtime passion for filmmaking fulltime.

Morales channeled that passion into his feature, *Pushing Dreams*, which tells the story of three Bronxites who share a common dream of becoming independent filmmakers. Partly funded by the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, *Pushing Dreams* premiered in New York at the Anthology Film Archives in February.

Morales caught the bug for filmmaking in his late teen years. He regularly recited poetry at open mic nights at the Village Gate or The Nuyorican Poet's Café, and started auditioning for short films while taking acting classes. But he chose to leave the creative world to become a high school English teacher after graduating with a degree in English Literature from Pace University in 1995. He received a Master's in English from Lehman College in 2001. "The study of English literature helped me feel comfortable with storytelling," Morales said, who also took screenwriting classes at Gotham Writing Workshop. He added: "I soon felt comfortable enough to buy a camera and a computer to make my own films and tell my own stories."



However, Morales continued to act in NYU and Columbia student film projects; and along the way he learned the fine craft of film production—everything from lighting to sound to camera work—by being on film sets. In 2002, he founded HollyHood Productions with two other up-and-coming Bronx filmmakers, Julio Antonio Toro and Frankie Villanueva. After producing two short films and several episodes of a sketch comedy show on BronxNet, Morales acted in another Bronx-based film, *Gun Hill Road*, which premiered in 2011 at the Sundance festival. Encouraged by his friend and director Rashaad Ernesto Green, Morales quit his job and enrolled at the New York University's Graduate School Film Program last year.

"In all my years as an independent filmmaker, I had only met a few people who actually made a feature film. So, I wanted to sit at a table where more people had either made a feature or were planning to make one," Morales said on his decision to study at New York University. "I feel like I'm living a dream."

Morales hopes to distribute the pilot for *Pushing Dreams* on a network television or release it as nine separate webisodes starting this summer. "I wanted to share the beauty of a borough that is often misconceived as poor and broken," he said. "I wanted to produce a show that offers Bronxites an idea that through hard work, dedication, and patience you can accomplish whatever you set your mind to do." ■

Nkechi Ogbodo (B.A. '99)

Building Bridges From Her Native Country to America

Lehman alumni Nkechi Ogbodo has spent much of her life traveling between the United States and her native Nigeria. Multiple trips to small villages there throughout the years made her realize that most girls were unable to afford school and married at an early age. After earning a Bachelor's from Lehman College in 1999, and a Master's from City College in 2004, both in Political Science, she worked for a few years in sales before starting her own organization to empower African girls through education in 2010. She's currently focusing on Nigeria, where only 20 percent of women in the northwest and northeast of the country are literate and have attended school, according to UNICEF.

"Each time I visit my family in Nigeria, I am faced with the unfavorable conditions that most girls in the rural communities of Nigeria endure daily and I felt compelled to make a difference," Ogbodo said. "I saw beautiful, driven young girls who don't have much. The girls are not able to have access to education because their family cannot afford the cost of putting them through school. I thought if they had an education, could you imagine what they can become tomorrow?"

Twenty-seven Nigerian girls are able to attend school after receiving scholarships through her organization, Kechie's Project. The organization pays for their tuition and supplies on a yearly basis. To make this happen, Ogbodo organizes fundraisers throughout the year and travels frequently to Nigeria to make sure that the young girls are able to pay their tuition and have everything they need to start the school year. "We make sure that the girls that we help are girls that have financial needs," she said.

For Ogbodo her work is personal; she knows most of the girls involved in the project, such as Gloria Ashogbo, a 12-year-old girl who was raised by her older sister after their parents died. Her sister makes less than \$50 a month from braiding hair at a market in Lagos, Nigeria. With a scholarship from Kechie's Project, her sister can now afford to send her to school. Most of Ogbodo's protégés are orphans, single mothers, or are raised by their grandparents.

Now she's expanding Kechie's Project to empower African-American girls and bridge the cultural gap between themselves and their immigrant teenage counterparts. Her organization brings together a



Ogbodo poses with some of the girls involved with her non-profit during one of her frequent trips to Nigeria.

very diverse group of teenage girls for workshops, which take place once a month at the Bread & Roses Integrated Arts High School in Harlem, where up to twenty African-American, Hispanic, Caribbean and African students talk about their culture and learn from each other.

It hasn't been easy. At her first workshop, Ogbodo realized that the girls had already developed groups of friends according to their ethnicity and wouldn't mix with each other. The discussions were mostly centered on racial stereotypes spread in their high school and community. But Ogbodo made them come together and share their stories and cultural background. By the second workshop, the girls had brought food from each other's country and were inseparable. "All the girls are looking forward to the workshop every month. They're working together as friends and as a group," she said. "I feel proud that I'm seeing this progress being made."

The organization also developed a college grant award for women who would like to create projects in Africa and established four academic programs in Nigeria.

"Each time I travel to such countries we are overwhelmed with all the problems we see. There is so much to be done but education is the key," Ogbodo said. "Everything revolves around education. It's an agent of change." ■

*"I saw beautiful, driven young girls who don't have much....
I thought if they had an education,
could you imagine what they can become tomorrow?"*

Jamie Parker ('08, '11)

A Graduate's Story



Jamie Parker

Jamie Parker is a man on a mission. Since earning his undergraduate degree and his master's degree in biology from Lehman College, he's established himself in his profession as a scientific researcher at Albert Einstein Medical School and Columbia University; started his own business, Me O'clock; launched a career as a motivational speaker; and started a scholarship fund for Lehman students. He does all this while attending the University of Akron in Ohio, where he's enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Integrative Biology.

A typical day for him starts with a workout, and continues with periods devoted to studying, meetings with business associates, consultations with students, more meetings about mentoring opportunities, and a talk or two. It's a grueling schedule, but one that he's kept since his days as a high school student at the A. Philip Randolph Campus High School in Harlem. For Parker, it's all about achieving and maintaining momentum. "If you're not working toward something, not improving your mind in some way, then you're not growing as a person or as a professional," he said.

As an undergraduate and graduate student, Parker was similarly engaged—while attending classes full-time, he worked part-time, and was active in the College's athletic life. He was on the swim team, for which he won a championship ring and met Michael Phelps; and also ran track where he won several medals.

Now, he applies the same work ethic to the lab. His master's thesis, which he worked on with Dr. Maryam Bamshad (Biology), involved identifying which areas of the brain play a role in recognition of the mate in prairie voles. He has participated in a number of studies and co-written several articles, including an article in the *Journal of Behavioral Processes*. His current research involves examining and understanding the role of estrogen and how hormones play a role in the body.

Parker is ambitious to say the least. Raised by a single mother, he and his brother grew up in the northwest section of the Bronx in the Tilden Towers. Life was hard, but thanks to his mother's devotion and persistence, he managed to stay focused, and out of trouble. "I learned very early on that what really matters is family; that, and hard work," recalls Parker. "Because my mother raised us alone, she couldn't do everything for us, so she gave us responsibilities, which in turn helped to build our confidence."

It's this confidence that Parker hopes to impart through his work mentoring adolescents on the cusp of adulthood; through his scholarship fund, which he personally funds in the hopes that other students may be able to spend more time studying and less time working outside of the classroom; and through his latest business venture—the Me O'clock watch.

The idea behind the watch is to remind people to expect the very best from themselves and from others, and to take the time to improve their lives. The watches come in a sports line and an elegant line, designed for professional use and special occasions. The watches all have a variation of the word "me" on them and are available on his website: meoclock.com. "Ultimately, I want to use my story to inspire other people to just go for it and to also be better than they were yesterday," says Parker. "Whatever it is that you want to do; everything is possible." ■

"If you're not working toward something, not improving your mind in some way, then you're not growing as a person or as a professional"

All In the Family

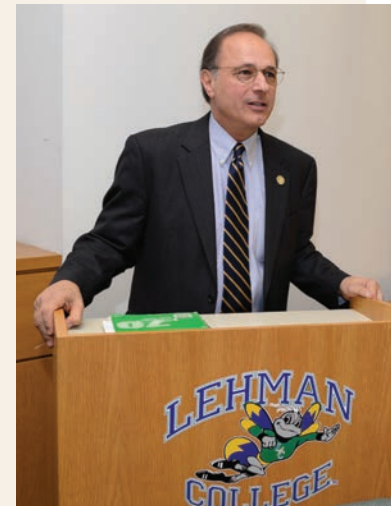
The Lehman College Library and Office of Alumni Relations hosted the opening of an exhibition of William P. Folchi's paintings in December depicting the Bronx's Morris Park neighborhood between 1955-1965. His son, alumnus William Folchi (B.A. '75) brought his father's paintings to the attention of the public after discovering scores of canvases in the attic and garage of his parents' house a few years ago.

(Clockwise from top left): Bill Folchi with Dierdre Pettipiece, the Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities; Folchi with Janet B. Munch, director of Archives and Special Collections and Kenneth Schlesinger, Chief Librarian of the Leonard Lief Library. *Parked Car* and *Bronx Sky* by Folchi's father, William P. Folchi, two of the exhibited paintings.



Together Again

One of the great coaches in Lehman College history, Ed Kramer was remembered on January 12, at an annual event hosted by Dr. Martin Zwiren, Director of Athletics with an alumni basketball game, award ceremony, and reception. Kramer, who led Lehman College to back-to-back CUNY Championships in 1974 and 1975, was chosen NCAA Division III and the City University of New York Athletic Conference Coach of the Year. His wife, Cheryl Kramer, who established the Edwin Kramer scholarship in his honor, was on hand to present The Ed Kramer MVP Award.



(Left): Silvio Conti, Ray Rankis, Pete Gartlan, Ted Hurwitz, Ronnie Parker, Perry San, Ed Sullivan, Stan Brown, and Phil Travers; (seated, from left to right): Steve Ralston, Cheryl Kramer, Billy Dolan, Nick McNickle.

(Right): Dr. Martin Zwiren, Lehman College's Athletic Director.

Learning From the Pros

Barry Mitchell of CUNY TV's "Study With the Best" brought actor and Lehman Alumnus Hiram Kasten (B.A. '74) back to Lehman on Feb. 27. Kasten, who spoke about his life and career to students in the Theatre Department, has appeared on *Seinfeld*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. The event was also filmed for CUNY TV's "Study

With The Best" and organized by the Theatre Department and Lehman Stages in the Student Experimental Theatre.



(Above): Hiram Kasten poses with Lehman theatre students. (Top right): David Sullivan of Lehman's Theatre Department with Kasten, left. (Bottom right): CUNY TV's "Study with the Best" producer, Barry Mitchell.



Art & Ballet

On March 10, 2013, the Alumni Relations Office organized the College's Annual Donor Recognition Event to thank Lehman's alumni, friends, and other donors for their support. As partners in the event, the Lehman College Art Gallery hosted a reception offering guests a chance to view the exhibit "Contemporary Cartographies" and the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts welcomed guests after the reception with a spectacular production of Adolphe Adam's *Giselle* by the Russian National Ballet. Both the reception and the ballet tickets were the College's gift to supporters.

(Counter-clockwise from left): Two alumnae view one of the gallery's current works; Alumni Affairs Director Maria-Cristina Necula, St. George's Society President Robert J.K. Titley and his wife, Pattie Titley; Dr. Ann Morrobel-Sosa, Provost of Lehman College speaks with alumna Karen Argenti '72





1. Carlos Ortiz ('79) with guest at the Yonkers Raceway on April 5;

2. Two alumnae from the Class of 2011, Jessica Gonzalez and Reana Thorne were all smiles. 3. Alumni Association Board Member, Diane Joye ('08) greets guests at the start of the event.

4. Carlos Rivera, Associate Director of the Admissions Department at Lehman College ('00, '06) and his wife Susana ('06, '10)



A Night at the Races

Alumni gathered at the Empire Terrace Restaurant at Yonkers Raceway on April 5 for an evening of fun, food, and horse racing.



Meet and Greet

The Office of Alumni Relations hosted a networking event held specifically for lawyers and CPA alumni. The fun was held at the Globe Bar & Lounge on April 11.

(Left): Maria Grullon ('82), with Alumni Affairs director

Maria-Cristina Necula, center, and Melissa O'Neill ('00); (below, left): Josh Kardisch ('80) and James Corcoran share a laugh with Sol Margulies, the Director of Major Gifts at Lehman College.



Lehman College— the Best in Alumni Affairs!

CUNY's 2013 Outstanding Achievement in Alumni Outreach went to Lehman College's very own Alumni Affairs Director Maria-Cristina Necula, seen here with (from left) Tony Martignetti, radio host of *Tony Martignetti Nonprofit Radio* and Carlos Flynn, University Dean for Institutional Advancement on the right.

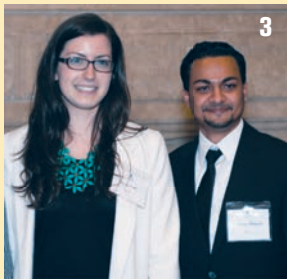
A Special Relationship

Since 2008, the St. George's Society of New York has donated nearly \$320,000 to a scholarship fund that has benefited 125 Lehman College students of British or British Commonwealth origin. On April 18, the President Robert J.K. Titley of the Society came to Lehman to meet with alumni of the program.



1. St. George's Society Scholarship alumni posed with (center left) President Robert J.K. Titley and Lehman College President Ricardo R. Fernández; 2. 2012 recipients Juliet Ansah (left) and Charity Obeney (right) pose with St. George's Society President Robert J.K. Titley. 3. 2012 recipient

Keren Minto and 2013 recipient Lakhran Dhanraj. 4. Testing Coordinator Gloria Figueroa with 2012 recipients Charity Obeney, Kehinde Jegede, and Ava Waterman.



Reminder

Classes of 1968 to 1975 Alumni Reunion is taking place on Saturday, June 15th, starting at 2 p.m. in the lobby of the Music Building. If you haven't received your invitation please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at **718-960-6918** or **alumni@lehman.cuny.edu**. For the reunion schedule please check **www.lehman.edu/alumni** and click on 'Events.'

Network with us!

Congratulations Lehman College Alumni! Our LinkedIn group has surpassed 1000 members. Please network with us by joining the "Lehman College Alumni" group on LinkedIn as well as Facebook. Share your stories on the Lehman College Blog, go to blog.lehman.edu/ and let us know about you and your Lehman experience.



alumni notes

1972

Rhona Silver (A.B.) founded CaterBid.com with the aim of helping people find the most suitable and affordable catering options online for weddings, birthdays, engagements or any other occasion from the comfort of their home.

Ivan Seidenberg (A.B) has been named an Advisory Partner of Perella Weinberg Partners.

1975

Ulrich J. Rosa (M.S.) has been appointed to the board of directors of The Wartburg Foundation.

1977

John Folchi (B.F.A. '77) is an artist who works primarily in oils, including still lifes and nature scenes. He recently held an exhibit of work titled, "Use of Shadow and Light" at the Geary Gallery in Darien, CT, and another show "Paper, Mirror, Torn" at the Brian Morris Gallery in Manhattan. His paintings have also been shown at the Bronx Museum of Arts, the Lehman College Art Gallery, and the Sears Peyton Gallery in Manhattan.

Karen K. Lewis (M.F.A.) is a painter whose subjects include still lifes, landscapes, and large groups of people. She is also a plein air painter of Ojai landscapes, and a printmaker who explores solarplate etching and monoprinting.

Filomela "Phyllis" Marshall (B.S.) has been named dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing at Thomas Edison State College.

Marjorie Salik (M.F.A.), with her husband, owns Talas, one of the city's most comprehensive sources for bookbinding supplies.

1978

Ava Kaplan (B.A.) is now in her fifth year as principal at special education school P.S. 186. She oversees this large special education school, which has five campuses, 542 students, and more than 200 staff members. The Bronx school is under the umbrella of the Department of Education's District 75, which encompasses all of the city's special education programs for students who have autism, cognitive and physical disabilities, hearing or speech impediments, and other serious issues that make it difficult for them to regularly attend a district school.

1982

Bernie Connolly (M.S.) a physical education teacher at Monroe-Woodbury High School, will be named the school's new football coach.

Jenna Johnson (B.S.) writes about higher education for *The Washington Post*. She also runs the blog "Campus Overload", hosts a weekly online chat about student life issues and tweets.

1984

Jacqueline Collier (B.A.) after teaching for more than 30 years now devotes her time to her passion for painting with a focus on water-color. She exhibited some of her work at the Franklin Lakes Library in New Jersey in April.

1985

Javier Hernandez-Miyares, a writer and musician, is the Creative Director of the 17 Frost Theatre of the Arts, an eclectic arts space, in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

1989

Rachelynn Cruz Milby (B.A.), assistant principal of P.S. 36, part of The New York City Department of Education, has been recognized by Worldwide Who's Who for showing dedication, leadership and excellence in education.

1990

Carmen LaBoy (M.A.T.) the longtime music director at Columbus High School directed her final music concert. Ms. LaBoy retired after 27 years of dedication to the school. She will continue to freelance with different bands around the city.

1991

Stephen Powers (B.A.) recently swam across the Hudson River as part of an annual fundraiser for the River Pool (open free to the public) at Beacon, NY. Her swim began on the west side of the River near Newburgh, NJ and ended in Beacon, NY.

1992

Rosemary Prati (M.A.) has been named interim principal at the John Paulding School in Tarrytown, NY, through the 2012-13 school year.

1996

Deron Grabel (M.S.) has been appointed Post University's Faculty Athletics Representative.

1997

Gregory Adams (B.A.) has been named, along with his wife Hattie, CSEA (Civil Service Employees Association) Westchester County Unit 9200's first Members of the Month.

1998

Héctor Manuel Fernandez (B.A.), a LaGuardia Community College professor, received the Education Award at the first annual Queenslatino.com Awards 2012.

2000

Gregory Zenion (M.S.E.), a Chariho Middle School principal, has been named 2012 Middle School Principal of the Year by the Rhode Island Association of School Principals.

2001

Carol J. Browne (M.S.), Instructional Technology Coordinator for the State University of New York/University Center for Advanced Workforce Development (UCAWD), has been recognized by Worldwide Who's Who for Excellence in Education.

2002

Michael DeGrego (M.A.) was a Republican candidate in November for State Senator from Connecticut's 14th District.

2004

Menorah Winston (M.A.T.) performs as an opera singer and as a Cantor all over the U.S. She also serves as a music teacher in New York City public schools.

2007

Kristin Burgess (B.A.) has become one of the first Bermudian women to graduate from Yale Law School.

2008

Felix Otero (B.A., '08) *Mi Odisea en Nueva York*, an original play that he wrote and directed, has been chosen to be a part of the Comisionado Dominicano de Cultura en los Estado Unidos' 3rd Annual Festival de Teatro Hispano. The cast of *Mi Odisea en Nueva York* is comprised of current Lehman students and alumni including Melibelle Lavandier '13, Henry Ovalles '06, Elizabeth Parra '11, Sam Rivera '06, Natalia Rodriguez '08 and Edie Torres '06. Oteria is currently the Production manager for Lehman Stages.

Giselle Vencer (B.S.) has received the 1Q 2012 Daisy Award (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) from Calvary Hospital in the Bronx, NY. Nurses recognized with this quarterly award must demonstrate excellence through clinical expertise, as well as extraordinary, compassionate care. Honorees are also expected to go above and beyond to make a difference, and exemplify a "healing touch" presence with patients and their families.

2009

Daniel Schultz (M.S.E.) was recently appointed as Chiropractic Director of Chiro One Wellness Center of North Aurora, Illinois.

2010

Luke A. Kelly (B.B.A.) was sworn in by the Greenwich Connecticut Police Department as a new officer in March and will begin an 18-month probationary period.

2011

Amy Colantuono (M.S.E. '11) of Ardsley, NY was married Erik Lucas at the Church of the Resurrection in Rye, NY, on November 24, 2012.

Kaminie Singh (B.A.) teaches English language and literature at SVN (Saraswati Vidya Niketan), the Hindu secondary school at Cornelia Ida, West Coast Demerara. She was one of three students sent on scholarship to the United States and has now returned to Guyana.

IN MEMORIAM

James J. Boyle (B.A., '79) of Sparkill, NY, died May 28. He was 73.

Larry Clay Dillard (A.B., '69) of Haverstraw, NY, died May 29. He was 64.

Murray Hausknecht, professor emeritus of sociology at Lehman College, and a founding member of the Lehman Sociology Department, died September 1. He was 83.

Islene Pinder, a Lehman faculty member from 1968-1996, in what was then known as the Speech and Theatre Department, died on June 17. She was 82.

Mary Grandsire Hoy (M.S., '71) of Ardsley, NY, died September 25.

George (Bumper) Movesian, of Bergenfield, NJ, a professor at Lehman College for over 30 years where he served as Department Chairman of Early Childhood Education, died September 29th. He was 81.

Hazel G. Roberson (M.S., '75) of Palm Coast, died September 28. She was 71.

Year Three of Lehman's Strategic Plan: An Ever-Changing Campus



One should never judge a book by its cover. However an accurate way to judge the progress of a college is to watch how its campus grows. In 2012, the historic campus of Lehman College added two new major buildings: Science Hall and the Child Care Center. Both are physical manifestations of our achievements, our continuing progress towards academic excellence, and our ever-expanding ambitions.

The first is a new \$70 million state-of-the-art research and teaching facility that is a major transformative event in the history of both our College and New York City. Science Hall, which was formally dedicated in October 2012, is the first in a three-phase process that will see the creation of a “campus-within-a-campus.” Science Hall will become the cornerstone of the College’s goal to serve as a leading center for science, research, education and innovation in the Bronx and beyond. It will also serve as a pipeline to the STEM fields—Science, Technology, Engineering and Math—as the College increases its K-12 outreach programs to continuously bring more talented students from local schools into the world of science, particularly populations that are not currently represented in such fields.

Phase II of the facility, estimated to cost \$150 million, will add even more wet and dry labs, more classrooms, a lecture hall, and a central atrium. Ground-breaking is expected to begin later this decade. Phase III of the process will be the refurbishment of Gillet Hall, one of the College’s original Gothic buildings. By the time this facility is complete, the northwest section of the Bronx will be transformed into a hub of scientific research.

The campus also gained a new Child Care Center. The building was largely created in three days as each 18-ton module that forms the structure was hoisted via a special weighted crane onto the building’s foundation. When the Child Care Center opens later this year, it will serve twice as many students who need trustworthy and quality childcare services to complete their education while studying at Lehman College. With both of these buildings, we have taken a great leap forward in what our faculty and our students can achieve, and also enabling our staff to better serve the needs of our students.

Last year all academic divisions were reorganized into schools and the plan to create a School of Health Sciences, Human Services, and Nursing was instituted. While that work continues, the College is also in the process of creating a School of Business to better serve our students and to prepare them for a career in accounting, economics, or help them make their entrepreneurial dreams come true. The new School of Business will work hand-in-hand with the Bronx Small Business Development Center that has helped scores of local businesses grow and thrive in what continues to be a challenging economic environment.

And despite that environment, alumni and friends of Lehman College continue to support us in all the above endeavors with their generosity. To continue our work and add to the success stories that are happening at Lehman—you can read about many more of them on the following pages—we will need your continued support and generosity.

January / February

Distinguished Professor of History Joseph W. Dauben is awarded the 2012 AMS Albert Leon Whiteman Memorial Prize. The coveted award is presented to a scholar only once every three years by the American Mathematical Society (AMS).



An exhibit of Robert Charles Hudson's Underground Railroad quilts are displayed at the Leonard Lief Library from Feb. 15-29. Titled "Above the Underground Railroad, Stories in Quilts and Canvas," the exhibit featured quilts that detail the complex and creative methods slaves used to communicate with one another while on their quest for freedom.



March

Best-selling author Esmeralda Santiago (*When I Was Puerto Rican*) delivers the keynote address at the annual Lehman Lecture.



Members of Lehman's Psi Chi chapter receive the inaugural Kay Wilson Officer Team Leadership Award for demonstrating exceptional leadership as a group.

April

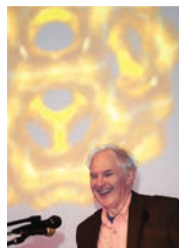
Lehman installs new "Traffic-Light" system in vending machines. The machines are now stocked with more healthy snacks and a color chart to help consumers distinguish between the healthy and not so healthy items.



The Lehman College community celebrates Earth Day on April 25, with a special evening dedicated to the life of the late Dr. Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner and founder of the Green Belt Movement.

May

Nobel Prize winner Sir Harold Kroto delivers the keynote address, titled "Carbon in Nano and Outer Space" at the College's 32nd annual Sweeny Memorial Lecture. Dr. Kroto was knighted in 1996, and won the Nobel Prize that same year for his discovery of C60 Buckminsterfullerene, a new form of carbon.



The CUNY Mexican Studies Institute—the first center of its kind on the East Coast—officially opens its doors at Lehman College with a major



public conference of national significance, focusing on the health advantages and disadvantages experienced by this rapidly growing population.

President Ricardo R. Fernández is honored at the Fortieth Anniversary Celebration of Bronxworks for his leadership in higher education and his dedication to serving the Bronx.



Albert P. Carey, chief executive officer of PepsiCo Americas Beverages, addresses more than 2,600 graduate and undergraduate students at Lehman's 44th Commencement exercises. Carey, who established a scholarship fund at the College in his family's name, was also instrumental in establishing the Business and Liberal Arts program.



June

Professor Melvin Fitting (Mathematics and Computer Science) receives the Herbrand Award for his groundbreaking contribution to the field of automated theorem proving, which focuses on getting computer programs to prove logical and mathematical deductions.



Lehman partners with Corbin Hill Farm to bring New York State's fresh seasonal produce to the campus for sale. Members were able to pick up fresh apples, beets, onions, collard greens, cucumbers, summer squash, and more at reduced prices.

July / August

Lehman's four academic divisions become schools.

Professor Eleanore Wurtzel (Biology) is named a Fellow of the American Society of Plant Biologist (ASPB) for her work on carotenoid biosynthesis, which aims to eliminate Vitamin A deficiency, a leading cause of blindness and increased mortality among children in the developing world.



The Lehman campus goes tobacco free. The new policy, as adopted by the trustees of the City University of New York, effects all twenty-three campuses, making CUNY the biggest smoke-free public university system in the United States.



President Ricardo R. Fernández delivers the keynote address at the University of Guam's 60th Anniversary Presidential Forum. In his talk, he predicted that over the next several decades the digital revolution will drive major changes in the process of credentialing students and workers. Among members of the audience were fellow college presidents, who had gathered in Guam to discuss the future of the island and its region.

Inside Lehman XII, Lehman's student co-produced video news magazine wins three awards—the Videographer Award of Distinction, the Communicator Award of Distinction, and the Hermes Creative Award (gold).

Lehman receives a five-year, \$3.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to fund a new Sophomore Year Initiative designed to increase retention rates among undergraduates during their critical second year of college. Lehman is one of 19 Hispanic Serving Institutions (HIS) across the country—and the only CUNY institution—to receive the Title V grant.

September

Construction continues on a \$6.3 Million Child Care Center. Designed by Garrison Architects, the structure replaces the T-3 Building, which will be demolished to make way for Phase II of the College's new science complex. The new center is expected to open in summer 2013.

US News and World Reports ranks Lehman as a "Top 50 Public College" in the North and a Tier 1 institution among regional universities in the North. This marks the third consecutive year in which the College has maintained these high positions.



October

Lehman partners with Hostos Community College to sponsor the annual Puerto Rican *Festival de la Palabra*. Writers, poets, and journalists from across Latin America held readings and a panel discussion on the state of Latino literature and its influences in the media, politics, and culture. Launched in 2010 in San Juan, P.R., the Festival expanded to New York in 2011. Its goal is to launch the internationalization of Puerto Rican and world literatures, and to promote reading and better understanding of Latino culture.

Managing Editor of *Fortune* Andrew Serwer serves as the keynote speaker at Lehman's annual National Numeracy Network Conference. This year's conference theme is "Quantitative Literacy at Work: Navigating the World of Journalism, Finance, Business and Citizenship."

Lehman dedicates Science Hall, a new \$70 million teaching and research building equipped with high-tech classrooms and laboratories, as well as a roof-top teaching and research



greenhouse. Among the dignitaries at the dedication were Bronx Borough President Rubén Díaz, Jr., CUNY Chancellor Dr. Matthew Goldstein, and many other Lehman, CUNY, State, and City officials.

November

Lehman launches "Lehman Community Connect: Bronx Information Portal," a new site aimed at providing residents, students, faculty, and researchers a one-stop shop for all things Bronx-related. The experimental site is believed to be the first in the U.S. where a college or university has mapped public "open data" to facilitate community interaction.

December

The Leonard Lief Library hosts a new exhibit, titled "William P. Folchi: Bronx Scenes 1955-65." The exhibit features Hopperesque oil paintings depicting scenes of a bygone era: the Bronx of the mid-'50s to mid-'60s. Folchi's paintings capture scenes of simple and elegant beauty: street corners and back yards; brick homes and apartment buildings; the Throg's Neck Bridge and the overpasses of the Bruckner Expressway.



The Richard Tucker Foundation returns to Lehman College for a special performance with mezzo-soprano Emily Fons and bass-baritone Ryan Speedo Green.

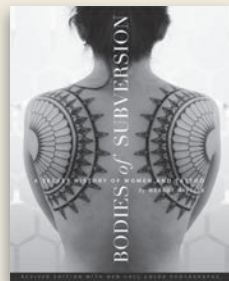


Congressman José E. Serrano of the 16th District of N.Y. met with Bronx Institute GEAR UP students on a recent trip to Washington, D.C.



Professor Margot Mifflin's Book on Women's Tattoo Art is Re-released

A third edition of Professor Margot Mifflin's (English Dept.) book *Bodies of Subversion: A Secret History of Women and Tattoo* has been released. The book features 200 color photographs, 50 of which are new, of tattooed women and tattoo artists dating back to the nineteenth-century. First published in 1997, the book is the first to delve into what was once a forbidden practice relegated to subculture status—a recent Harris Poll shows that women outnumber men in the tattoo department. There is a new section in the book that explores the impact of reality TV shows and Hollywood's overall acceptance of ink on women's tattoo culture.



Research

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Works: Expanding Human Knowledge and Expression

Through a mixture of hard work, determination, and a desire to succeed, Lehman students and faculty continue to make breakthroughs in both research and scholarship. This year our faculty made inroads in the sciences and our students continued to be rewarded with scholarships for their academic achievements.

New Study Finds Link Between Overfeeding and High Blood Pressure

A recent study conducted by researchers at Lehman College, and recently published in the American Heart Association's journal *Hypertension*, shows conclusively that overfeeding causes increases in sympathetic nerve activity (SNA)—part of the fight or flight reflex—which can lead to the development of high blood pressure. Dr. Martin Muntzel (Biology), an expert on diet, Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure, led the study.



For years, scientists have known that obesity and weight gain are the major causes of high blood pressure, but they haven't been able to determine how this happens. To find out, Dr. Muntzel and his team implanted radiotelemetry devices into fourteen female Wistar rats to monitor SNA, heart rate and arterial pressure. This experiment marks the first successful use of radiotelemetry technology in rats.

Over a three-week period, the researchers fed seven of the rats a diet high in fat that included vanilla wafers, crackers, buttered popcorn, Cheetos and other high-caloric nutrients, while the other seven rats were fed a low-fat diet. The results were immediate—within fifteen days the rats consuming the high-fat diet gained weight and their fat mass doubled, activating lumbar SNA, which in turn caused their heart rate, and blood pressure to rise.

"One thing that really surprised me through the course of this experiment is that just two weeks of consuming junk food doubled the subject's fat mass," says Dr. Muntzel. The team chose the cafeteria-style diet not only for its palatability and high caloric content, but also because they knew that it would have precisely the effect they wanted, which was rapid weight gain.

"None of this would have been possible had we not been able to attain the radiotelemetry technology," explains Dr. Muntzel, who joined the faculty at Lehman in 1994, and has authored a number of articles on diet and its effects on the cardiovascular system.

Telemetry-based devices, specifically the kind that records SNA, have been in use for only four years. "There are a number of researchers from around the world that are using this, but our group was the first to actually make it work in rats," he adds proudly.

This research was funded through a four-year National Institute of Health (NIH) grant aimed at increasing minority participation in biomedical research. Dr. Muntzel worked with Dr. Omar Ali S. Al-Naimi, a medical doctor from Iraq, and two now former Lehman students:

Alicia Barclay, who is completing her first year of medical school in Ohio, and David Ajasin, now a Ph.D. student at the Einstein College of Medicine.

Two Lehman Students Win Top Prizes in CUNY-wide Labor Arts Contest

Two Lehman College students have been named first- and second-prize winners in a CUNY-wide contest designed to celebrate labor arts by using creative works to honor working people. Ariella Michal Medows, a Macaulay Honors College student who attends Lehman College, claimed the first place prize, while Samantha Forbes, took home the second-place prize.

The contest, funded by the Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation, aims to promote labor history in the student community. "I am truly humbled that my piece was selected. I'm still processing it," said Medows. "This achievement speaks on a visceral level to the experiences of my family and families like mine, no matter their nationalities, who believe in the power of labor to improve their lives."

Medows, a forensic anthropology student, won the first place in the Fiction/Nonfiction Narrative category—including \$1000—for "Bubby's Blood," a piece about her maternal grandmother who worked hard for most of her life in a sewing factory. When comparing her grandmother's story to her own, Medows wrote at the end of her piece, "I have the agency to write my own future because of the past that she has shared with me, complete with blood, sweat, and the absence of tears."

Forbes, an English major, won for her poem "Lace Work." In the poem she wrote from the perspective of a child worker producing hand-made lace in a workshop where "the bobbins were stained from runny red nose and weeping cracked lips." Forbes said that although she is very critical of her own, her poetry professor at Lehman, Salita Bryant, encouraged her to submit her work to the contest. "I've always loved reading fiction and I just enjoyed developing it and capturing the picture with words," Forbes said.

The contest, judged by a panel of CUNY faculty, is open to all CUNY undergraduate students and offers cash prizes for poetry, essay, fiction, nonfiction, and art projects. Medows and Forbes were both awarded their prizes—worth \$1000 and \$500, respectively—at an award ceremony held on Thursday, April 18 in the Lehman Art Gallery.

"Ms. Forbes's poem is rich with history, striking imagery, and elegance. Just as moving is her nonfiction narrative about her

grandmother, a personal story filled with rich detail, compassion, and empathy. Both works rose to the top in extremely competitive categories," said Lehman College Associate Dean Terrence Cheng, who served as the contest's coordinator. "These students and their work are a testament to their talent as well as their commitment to craft."

Lehman Students Selected for Three-Year JK Watson Fellowship Program

Two Lehman College students were accepted into the prestigious Jeannette K. Watson three-year fellowship program, which will provide them with mentorship and internships throughout their undergraduate college education.

Sophomores Jasmine Miranda and Alison Wong, who attend Macaulay Honors College at Lehman, were awarded the fellowship after a thorough application process where 15 fellows were selected from a large pool of applicants nominated by a dozen New York City colleges.



Jasmine Miranda (left) and Alison Wong (right).

Miranda and Wong will spend the next three summers before graduation interning at prominent non-profit organizations and for-profit institutions, and work in a foreign country of their choice.

Miranda is interested in interning with the Gay Men's Crisis in New York this summer, The New York Botanical Garden next year, and she hopes to travel to India in her senior year to intern with the MV Foundation, an anti-child labor organization. "The fellowship is so unique. There is no other opportunity like it," Miranda said.

The fellowship will also offer personal guidance and orientation workshops to the young fellows as they choose their future vocation. Although Wong has always been interested in environmental issues and climate change, and even interned at the Center For Environmental Research and Conservation at Columbia University last year, she still hesitates between several career choices in the fields of environmental law and international policies. She hopes that the fellowship will broaden her horizons before she graduates in 2015.

"It's hard to figure out what you want to do with your life after graduation," Wong said. "That's a really hard process. I still don't know. I think the fellowship will give me so many opportunities and a look into possible places I can work."

Miranda is hoping to double major in English, with a concentration in creative writing, and speech pathology. Wong is interested in majoring in environmental science and political science. Both students believe that their wide range of interests is one of the reasons why they were selected for the fellowship.

"They were looking for people who had a diversity of thought and different interests," Wong said. "There is so much potential in the program and Lehman students are definitely able and should apply."

Survey of Plants in Van Cortlandt Park Turns up Surprises

When Jack Henning isn't teaching biology at Lehman, he can often be found in the swamps and woodlands of nearby Van Cortlandt Park, conducting an exhaustive survey of its entire flora which has uncovered numerous surprises, from the impact of pollution and acid rain to the slow return of a wetland drained years ago by Robert Moses to build new highways.

During his time spent researching Van Cortlandt Park, he has learned that the park has 1,065 species of plants, more than twice the number previously counted, which makes it home to more species of plants than Central Park, at least half of the listings are non-native plants, and among the native plants, a surprising number have not been previously recorded in this area. Some are considered rare, unusual, and threatened for New York State; acid rain and pollution have led to high levels of lead in the soil of certain areas, which have caused some native species, such as the entire Orchid family, to virtually disappear from the park except for one invasive European species; others are rarer species and have probably either lost their natural pollinator or become reproductively isolated from other populations due to the surrounding apartment buildings and residential neighborhoods. What's more, a part of a swampy bird sanctuary drained by Park Commissioner Robert Moses in the 1950s, is slowly returning inside Croton Woods at the northeastern end. The wetland was drained to facilitate the building of three multilane highways through the park. In the past few decades, as the Parks Department has struggled to keep up with maintenance costs throughout the city's many parklands, the drainage canals placed by Moses in that area have silted in, and the swamp has returned.

Consisting of more than 1,000 acres, Van Cortlandt is the city's fourth largest park and borders the communities of Riverdale, Kingsbridge, Norwood, and Woodlawn, as well as the city of Yonkers. Henning conducted this latest survey year-round for four years in a row and also included the planted flower beds found throughout the park.

Overall, he says, the results demonstrate the need for conservation in city settings. "Given that most humans now reside in city regions," he explains, "better understanding of urban ecology is of dire importance. We cannot afford to ignore any of the plants around us, native or not, since humans cannot exist without land plants. Van Cortlandt Park is a valuable example of this, since few people are acknowledging the diversity that can exist in a highly disturbed environment like a city setting."

Last year, Henning's work was recognized by the New York Flora Association (NYFA), which promotes plant conservation in the Empire State. He earned the group's "Best Botanically Oriented Poster" award for his presentation at its annual Northeast Natural History Conference. "What I think surprised the NYFA is that I had found such richness in a city setting," says Henning, who was chosen as Lehman's Adjunct Teacher of the Year. "This richness is potentially good since it may make the environment more resilient to future disturbance." ■

Community Outreach

Community Outreach: Connecting Campus Resources with Public Needs

While the year 2012 offered the country a presidential election that raised important questions about the widening gap between the rich and poor and national weather disasters once again threatened our way of life, Lehman College remained steadfast in its commitment to serve the community. Whether through a new website aimed at linking all Bronx residents to sheltering dozens of people affected by Hurricane Sandy or by hosting the first ever Bronx SciFest, so that area students can shine, Lehman College continues to foster community relationships.

High School Senior Wins First Ever Bronx SciFest

Keyko Sánchez, a 17-year-old senior, who attends Herbert H. Lehman High School in the Bronx, came in first place in the first ever Bronx SciFest, held in Lehman College's new Science Hall on February 22.

Sánchez, who participated in the first cohort of the College's Women in Science program, which mentors female high school students in the fields of STEM—Science, Technology, Engineering and Math—won a four-year scholarship to Lehman College for her project which detailed how proton wires transports hydrogen ions. She also won entry to the New York City Science and Engineering Fair in March.

"I don't think I realize how big this is at the moment," a surprised Sánchez confessed shortly after she won.

The second place prize went to Amanda Simón and Shanice Smellie, both students at DeWitt-Clinton High School; while third place went to another team of students: Jaritza Abreau, Michelle Martínez, and Natasha Reynoso, all of whom attend the Bronx Center for Science and Math. Each prize was worth \$1000 that will be shared by the students on each team. All the winners participated in Lehman College's Women in Science Program.

The Intel Corporation provided Lehman with a planning grant to pilot a science fair program with six Bronx middle schools and high schools. The Bronx SciFest represents an important step in establishing robust science opportunities among the borough's students.

The other students who participated were: Carlos Fuentes, Dennis Bonilla, Lyniel Smith, Daniel Obeng, and Mohammad Hossain (from Mott Hall V High School); Kimberly Rodríguez (InTech Academy); Lesly Rivero; Timal Ramdinal; Daniel Vargas; Jessica Castro; Gianna De La Cruz; Aaliyah Sánchez; Danialis Abreu; Arnab Mukhopadhyay; Kenrick Alfred; Meagan Khan; Cheryl Kang; Lisandro Saavedra; Angélica Mulero; Raychell Velez; Faith Daniel; Jumi Uddin; Marliana Ramos; Jennifer Hernández; Karla Romero; Desiree Abreu; Lawrence Abu-Hammour; and Saadjo Sow (Bronx Center for Science and Math).



(Above) Winner Keyko Sánchez poses with Dr. Liesl Jones, the director of the Bronx SciFest, and Dr. Ayana Alexander-Street. (Below) Sánchez poses with President Ricardo R. Fernandez and her proud family.



Lehman Honors Hurricane Heroes

Members of the Buildings and Grounds crew, Nayarsons staff, and public safety officers were honored at the College's annual holiday celebration in December for their work at the evacuation center after Hurricane Sandy. For two weeks, the APEX facility was home to approximately 130 displaced persons.

On the evening of October 29, just as Hurricane Sandy's winds were reaching their catastrophic force, Lehman's Buildings and Grounds crew were on the campus, ready to meet any challenge. When the buses and trains stopped running, many were forced to stay on.

In the days following the storm, the College's evacuation center became a hive of activity—first came the senior citizens from an adult care facility, then there were the patients from a nursing home with acute medical needs, people who had lost power found their way to the Center, and, finally, the truly homeless arrived. The

center provided 24/7 service to three distinct populations over a two-and-a-half-week period.

"I call them 'Hurricane Heroes,' because everyone involved in this operation showed true dedication and compassion for these people, many of whom received no visitors during their stay with us," said Vice President of Administration and Finance Vincent Clark. "They truly went above and beyond, and they did it because they cared."



Vice President Vincent Clark with members of Lehman's Hurricane Sandy crew.

Lehman Launches New Website Aimed at Connecting Bronx Community

Lehman has launched a new website, "Lehman Community Connect: Bronx Information Portal," aimed at providing residents, students, faculty and researchers a one-stop shop for all things Bronx-related. The experimental site is believed to be the first where a college or university has mapped public "open data" to facilitate community interaction.

"The new website is part of the College's ongoing mission to actively engage, and above all, serve the community through a variety of resources," said President Ricardo R. Fernández. "This commitment to service is embodied in our strategic plan, and has become part of the fabric of our campus. We hope this new site facilitates discussion, inquiry and participation, and serves as a useful resource for our vibrant community."

"Visitors to the site will have access to information on education, health, sustainability, and other Bronx-related information from a variety of sites including New York's 'Open Data' portal," explained Vice President and Chief Information Officer Ronald Bergmann. "Lehman Community Connect" also highlights the College's commitment to the community through internships, service-learning initiatives, and volunteer activities that directly serve the Bronx and the region.

"This website provides a great opportunity for us to inform students and our community about our first-class program in Geographic Information Science (GISc), which is a fast growing computer technology field involving mapping and analysis of spatial data," says Acting Dean of Natural and Social Sciences Dr. Stefan Becker. "Given that numerous people are likely to investigate the portal, we hope that many will see the amazing potential of an education in GISc and consider studying this field at Lehman College."

"Guests will be able to explore the data sets behind many of the maps and charts provided to conduct personal research, which can then be saved or shared via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter," added VP Bergmann. The site—which can be accessed at bronx.lehman.cuny.edu—includes links to useful video tutorials for conducting such research.

Keeping the DREAM Alive

Right out of her freshman year, Melissa Garcia-Velez ('14) started advocating for the rights of undocumented immigrant youth, a student group that often struggles for access to a college education. In the fall of 2010, she stepped up to create the Lehman DREAM Team, the first student-run support group for undocumented students on campus. Her early advocacy work quickly turned into a bigger effort to advance civic engagement throughout the Lehman College community. This spring as she entered her junior year, she was awarded the prestigious Newman Civil Fellowship, which honors inspiring college student leaders who are actively involved in solving challenges facing communities across the nation.

Garcia-Velez, a Bogota native, moved to New York at the age of eight to live with her mother. Although struggling as an undocumented student, she spent most of her free time in high school volunteering at New York Cares and College For Every Student, a non-profit organization focused on helping low-income students attend and graduate from college. As soon as she joined Lehman,

she volunteered at the Office of Community Engagement and New Student Programs. Her civic engagement work didn't go unnoticed and in May 2011 she was inducted into the Lehman College President's Service Corps. Majoring in social work seemed like the perfect way for her to turn her interests in community service into a career.

Her advocacy work didn't stop at Lehman though. With the DREAM Team, Garcia-Velez organized rallies to raise awareness on issues faced by her undocumented classmates and encouraged students to advocate at the state and national level. She also devoted her spring and summer breaks to community service projects through the Lehman L.I.F.E. (Leaders Involved For Everyone) alternative break program, which organizes student volunteer work across the country. She recently joined 14 other Lehman students in Apopka, Florida, to work with migrant farm workers and their children. In March, she also volunteered to lead a Lehman L.I.F.E. student trip to Chicago to work with homeless youth at the Association House of Greater Chicago.

"I think that it's always very enlightening and life changing when you step out of your comfort zones, you become more compassionate and it gives you a better understanding of why you do the work that you do," Garcia-Velez said. "Going to Florida and Chicago made me a better person and showed me the importance and value of working with the community."

President Ricardo R. Fernández recommended Melissa for a Newman Civic Fellowship after seeing the impact of her leadership work throughout her years at Lehman. Newman Civic Fellowships are awarded in memory of Frank Newman, who founded the organization Campus Compact to promote student community service, and dedicated his life to improve access to college education. The fellowship provides young leaders with a campus-based civic engagement network and access to contacts in their field of work.



"Melissa embodies the essence of a Newman Civic Fellow mostly through her efforts as a student rights activist who passionately advocates for the rights of undocumented youth through examining the root causes of injustice

toward this population," President Fernández said. "Melissa has turned her struggles into determination, empowering and inspiring students to continuously defend their liberties." ■

Dedication: Emely Gómez ('11)

Emely Gómez was a promising Lehman College student who pursued a master's degree in Special Education after graduating with a bachelor's degree in Speech Language Pathology with Departmental Honors in September 2011. While studying for her master's degree, she worked part-time at the school's Health Center. A member of the YAI Network for people with developmental disabilities, Gómez also worked at two different schools in New York and was dedicated to working with special needs students, which she viewed as a vocation. By all accounts, she was a dedicated and hardworking young woman with a bright future.

However, on November 9, 2012, an unspeakable tragedy occurred: Gómez, 23, died of a seizure, in her sleep. More than 1500 people attended her funeral last November to express their sorrow at the lost of such an accomplished and engaged young woman. Staff from Lehman College, the Health Center, and the Peer Educator Program, as well as many groups of students, filled the RG Ortix Funeral Home in the Bronx to remember Gómez three days after her sudden death.

"The love of so many at the funeral and their lovely stories about how my daughter touched each of their lives was like a cushion that held the pain," said her mother Magdalena Gómez of her daughter who was engaged to Lehman alumnus Luis Aviles, whom she met on campus in 2009. "All of my daughters' teachers and friends from kindergarten through college, people of the neighborhood that I didn't even know and co-workers through our lives were there."

Helping others was a consistent theme in her life: In high school, she was an active member of the Sponsor's for Educational Opportunities Scholars Program, a nonprofit organization providing services to young students from underserved communities; at Lehman College, she assisted students through the Peer Education Program. "She always wanted to help kids, to make a difference," her twin sister, Katherine Gómez, said. "She always wanted to work with kids with special needs, that's why she majored in special education."

Born on August 9, 1989, at Brooklyn Hospital, eight minutes apart from her twin Katherine, Emely Gómez grew up in the Bronx. The twins decided to go to Lehman College, following their mother's footsteps and walked together on graduation day. "We went everywhere together," Katherine Gómez said. "We went to the same schools and on the weekends, we always spent time together. In high school, we did a lot of sports together like softball. We traveled together, we did pretty much everything together. At Lehman, we would always find a way to have lunch together, even though we had different schedules."

Gómez's former Lehman College professors and staff raised money to buy a plaque engraved with her name, which they will erect this June on campus to honor her life and inspiring accomplishments at the school. ■



Katherine, left, and Emely Gómez, right, at Commencement May 2011.

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