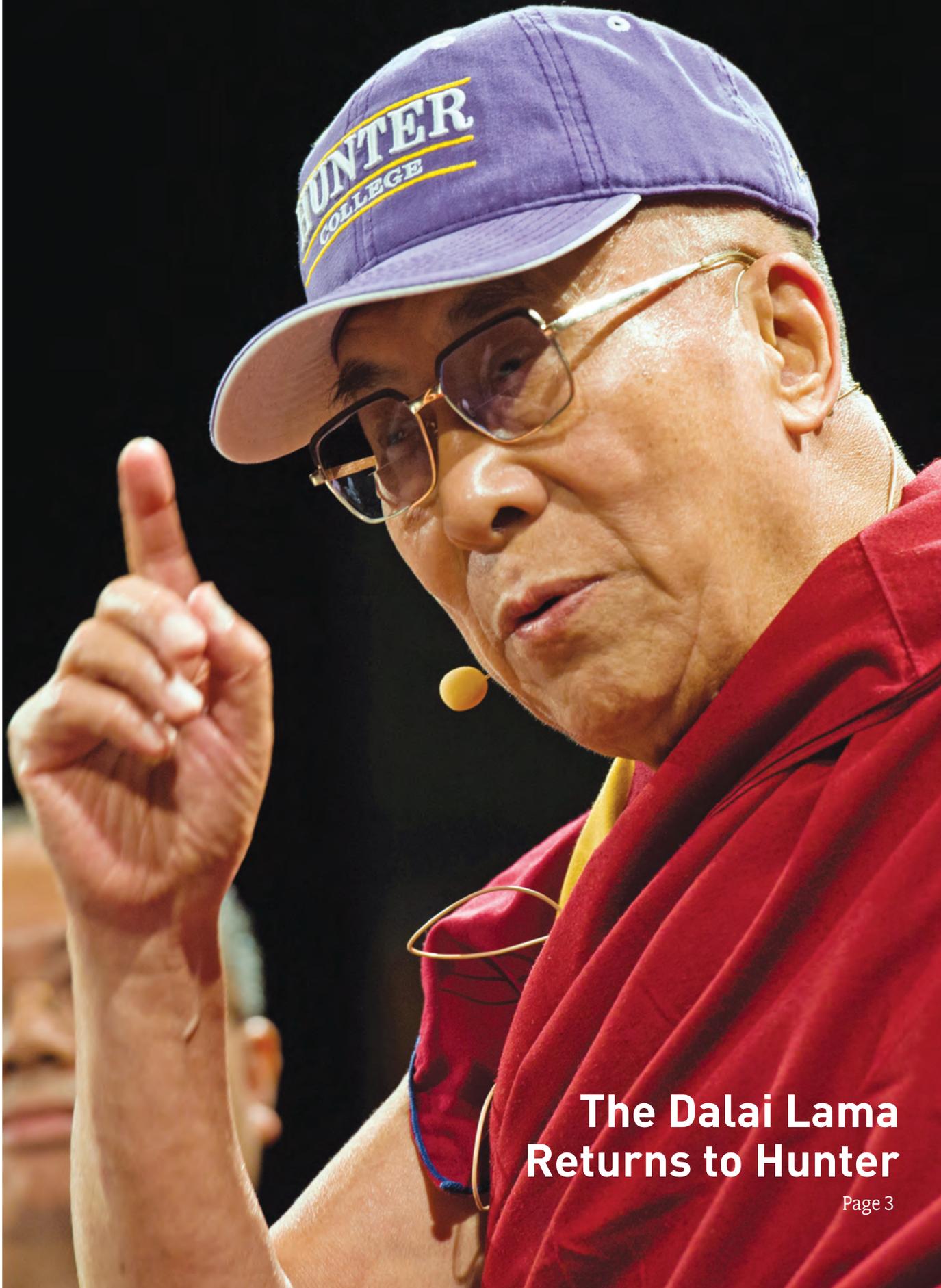


SPRING
2014

At HUNTER



The Dalai Lama Returns to Hunter

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Photo: John Abbott



THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

In a speech at the White House on January 9, President Obama called Hunter College “one of the best colleges in the country” (page 9). The articles in this edition of *At Hunter* showcase just a few of the people, programs, and projects that are capturing the attention of our city and nation and affirming the president's high praise.

To begin with, Hunter's expansion continues at a record pace. On pages 4-5, you can read about our newest campus addition, the 4th floor of Weill Cornell Medical College's new Belfer Research Building. Like all of our recent and forthcoming building projects — such as our \$45 million privately funded library renovation and our joint venture with Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center to construct a spectacular science and health-professions building on 74th Street — the Belfer Building is about far more than increasing the size of the campus. In this case, the added space will rapidly enhance Hunter's partnership with Weill Cornell and our critical role in bringing urgent, practical, “bench-to-bedside” medical research and health care to New Yorkers.

The arts at Hunter are growing as fast as the sciences. In addition to the extraordinary new home for our Studio Art MFA program at 205 Hudson Street in Tribeca, our Department of Theatre will finally have its own freestanding home right around the corner from the main campus, thanks to a \$15 million gift from Hunter trustee and Theatre Advisory Board chair Patty Baker '82 and her husband, Jay. The 26,000-square-foot building on East 67th Street that the Bakers have enabled us to purchase will provide essential new rehearsal, classroom, and performance space (page 6). We have no doubt that it will pave the way for more theatrical projects like *The Weiner Monologues*, which was entirely written, directed, produced, designed, and performed by Hunter students and faculty and which landed off-off-Broadway for a sold-out run (page 7).

Hunter nurtures extraordinary artists among its students, alumni, and faculty alike — such as opera diva and Kennedy Center honoree Martina Arroyo (page 17) and award-winning filmmaker Kelly Anderson (page 14). But the College is an arts mecca not only because of our artists. There are also our art scholars and historians. A prime example is Professor Emily Braun, the curator behind Leonard Lauder's Cubist collection, worth an estimated \$1 billion, that he recently donated to the Met (page 10). And as we enter the next golden age of the arts at Hunter, who better to inspire our newest graduates than former Hunter students Holland Cotter, chief *New York Times* art critic, and Anne Pasternak, president and artistic director of Creative Time, New York's leading commissioner and presenter of public arts projects (page 11)?

Hunter is flourishing in more corners of the city than ever before. In particular, we have become central to life in East Harlem, where the Silberman School of Social Work works closely with grassroots organizations and with the Schools of Nursing, Education, Public Health and Arts and Sciences, as well as centers and institutions across the Hunter campus, to improve the health and welfare of the local community. In this *At Hunter*, we also focus on their vital contributions to supporting New York's rapidly growing aging community, a dedication and success they share with our Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging (page 16).

The reputation of Roosevelt House as a world-class think tank continues to grow. Its classes in public policy and human rights are in great demand with students, and its public programs, like the fascinating conference on President Eisenhower (page 8), are attracting packed houses. Roosevelt House has also expanded to include the Institute for Education Policy, led by School of Education Dean David Steiner and destined to become a national leader in K-20 education (page 16). Nearly every day, top scholars, authors, educators, activists, and policy leaders visit Roosevelt House, as well as classrooms and gathering spaces across Hunter; a small handful are included in these pages.

Perhaps no one inspired our students and the community as much as the Dalai Lama, now a two-time visitor and a recipient of a Hunter College honorary doctorate (page 3). As an example of all that we at Hunter strive to impart to our students — a commitment to active citizenship, brave leadership, universal tolerance, and the simple notion of giving back — he is a powerful symbol of the Hunter motto, *Mihi Cura Futuri* (“The Care of the Future Is Mine”), and the perfect person to adorn our cover.

Jennifer J. Raab

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▲ Students enjoying the newly renovated 3rd floor of Hunter's main library

HUNTER AWARDS HONORARY DEGREE TO DALAI LAMA



▲ (l to r) Nessa Geffen '11, Peter Geffen, Howard Rubenstein, Bobbie Frankfort, Patricia Demisch '69, Wolfgang Demisch and Dean David Steiner congratulate the Dalai Lama on his honorary degree.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, making his second visit to Hunter, received the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters in recognition of his humanitarian work and to celebrate his lifelong dedication to promoting peace around the world. He told a cheering audience of 2,000 — students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community leaders — that “all religions have the same potential to build inner peace and harmony in society” and that his “number one commitment” was to “educate people that the ultimate source of happiness is not money, not power, but compassion, tolerance, and forgiveness.”

Presenting the honorary degree to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's head of state and spiritual leader, Hunter president Jennifer J. Raab noted, “Your teachings on ethics, nonviolence, religious harmony, and peace have made you one of the most revered figures in the world today.

“What you teach is near and dear to us at Hunter College,” she added, “because our motto is *Mihi Cura Futuri* — “The care of the future is mine” — and the insights you give the world are very much about the care of the future.”

In his response, the Dalai Lama, whose many

honors include the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, said that all those awards “do not make me more or less a person; I am simply this little monk.” But, he added, they are “expressions of recognition of my little service to humanity, which gives me encouragement.”

His commitment, he continued, “is to a promotion of not hurting others, not bullying others, not cheating others, not exploiting others — because you have a sense of their being.” Enlarging on his belief that compassion and concern can bring about great practical changes in the world, he said, “We can bridge the gap between the Tibetan and the Chinese by making it personal; building personal-level friendships can make it possible to discuss difficult situations.”

Three Hunter students took part in the presentation ceremony: David Ma, a psychology major born in Shanghai, who founded Hunter's Entrepreneur Club; Rigzin Kundo, a psychology major planning to become a nurse, born in Nepal to parents from Tibet; and Bianca Malhotra, a student in Hunter's Macaulay Honors College who plans to earn a law degree and is the daughter of immigrants from India.

Earlier that day the Dalai Lama, who first visited Hunter in 2010, spoke at the Kaye Playhouse. There he

addressed an audience of 600 — Chinese Americans, Tibetan Americans, scholars, artists, professionals, and others interested in China — about “Finding Common Ground: Ethics in China.”

Discussing the background of the Tibetan leader's visit, Hunter professor Peter Kwong (see article below), said the Office of Tibet in New York had suggested that Hunter host the meetings so that “young people, especially young people of Chinese descent, might come to understand what the Dalai Lama stands for.”

Professor Kwong accepted the suggestion enthusiastically, he said, because of what he knew from his previous meetings with the Dalai Lama.

“A lot of people are surprised to hear a religious leader say he doesn't care whether you're Christian or Muslim,” Kwong said. “He is not about ‘my side



▲ The Dalai Lama offers warm wishes to Hunter students (l to r) Victoria Lassen, Rigzin Kundo, David Ma and Bianca Malhotra

versus your side.’ His message is about undermining people's rigidity, people's unthinking attachment to their own country, their own religion. This is a very disarming message, suggesting that people not think in terms of abstractions but in terms of connections between individuals.”

SCHOLAR AND ACTIVIST PETER KWONG BRINGS DALAI LAMA TO HUNTER

Peter Kwong, the principal organizer of the Dalai Lama's two visits to Hunter, is a Distinguished Professor of Asian American Studies and Urban Affairs and Planning at Hunter. He is a pioneer in both fields, a leading scholar of immigration, and an award-winning journalist and filmmaker.

Because of Professor Kwong's widely praised writing on Chinese Americans and Chinese-Tibetan relations, as well as his human rights and social justice activism, the Office of Tibet in New York asked him to help

organize a forum at Hunter where the Dalai Lama could meet with Chinese-American academics and others interested in the China-Tibet issue. In 2011, following the extraordinary success of that forum, the Tibetan government invited Kwong and his wife, the historian Dusanka Miscevic, and three other people to a private meeting with the Dalai Lama in India to discuss Tibet-China relations, Indo-Tibetan relations, and a wide range of philosophical and religious questions. The second forum at Hunter grew out of that audience.



A NEW ERA FOR HUNTER AS SCIENTISTS MOVE INTO WEILL CORNELL BUILDING



Photo: Carlos Rene Perez

▲ (l to r) Sanford I. Weill, chair of the Board of Overseers of Weill Cornell Medical College, Dr. Laurie H. Glimscher, dean of Weill Cornell, and Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab unlock the doors of the new Belfer Building.

In what is a truly transformative moment for the College, a group of Hunter scientists is preparing to leave outdated labs in a building that dates back to 1939 and move into a state-of-the-art medical research center.

Scheduled to take place toward the end of this year, the move into the science center, built by Weill Cornell Medical College, is a major step forward in Hunter's drive to become one of the nation's foremost scientific research institutions.

This historic advance will also mark a milestone in American higher education — the coming together of one of the nation's most selective universities and one of its most diverse public colleges. As President Jennifer J. Raab explained it, "The partnership between a top public college and an Ivy League university is something that rarely, if ever, happens. Historically there has been a great divide between the two, so Hunter and Cornell are serving as pioneers."

Weill Cornell's handsome \$650 million Belfer Building, designed by Ennead Architects, is located on East 69th Street just a short walk from the main Hunter campus. Hunter scientists will occupy the entire fourth floor, which the College has purchased from

Weill Cornell. Once there, they will collaborate with their Weill Cornell counterparts in taking on some of the world's most daunting health challenges, including cancer, cardiovascular disease, and neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

"Touring the laboratory space at Belfer with science faculty from biology, neuroscience, medical laboratory sciences, chemistry, and physics, I found the sense of possibility and excitement palpable," said Hunter's provost, Vita Rabinowitz. "Our faculty could see how Belfer will provide the platform for collaborations across departments and with other institutions, including Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center."

Faculty tours have already inspired 10 applications, representing 20 Hunter researchers, for space at Belfer. In these applications, faculty members were encouraged to list their "dream teams" of Hunter and Weill Cornell collaborators.

For example, Hunter chemists, who have significant strengths in cancer imaging, detection, and treatment, wrote of expanding research in exciting interdisciplinary areas of biochemistry and biophysics, especially as they relate to cancer. Research of

“The partnership between a top public college and an Ivy League university is something that rarely, if ever, happens.”

— President Jennifer J. Raab

this type has great potential for being integrated with work at Weill Cornell and Memorial. Biologists see Belfer as a place to explore the mechanisms of metastasis in solid organ cancers — a common cause of cancer-related deaths. Hunter biophysicists are interested in advancing the technologies and applications of biomedical imaging for the early detection and treatment of demyelination diseases or degenerative disorders of the nervous system, such as glaucoma.

The Belfer Building has inspired people to think big and across boundaries. This has led Hunter scientists to call for strategic hires in computer science, quantitative biology, and bioinformatics in order to analyze the big data sets that are emerging from the College's research. Hunter has just hired a rising star in bioinformatics, Dr. Konstantinos Krampis, to complement the work of the College's current quantitative scientists, and is building additional capacity in bioinformatics and data analytics.

The Belfer Building, with its open floor plan, was designed specifically to encourage this sort of interdisciplinary teamwork. To further facilitate the exchange of ideas and information, Hunter faculty and students will have access to almost all of the 480,000 square-foot building, including the two-story atrium, second-floor terrace, and landscaped garden.

The extraordinary real estate deal that puts



▲ A rendering of Hunter's new state-of-the-art labs in the Belfer Building

Hunter's name on the same building as Weill Cornell's traces back to 2007, when Hunter's School of Nursing and the Gene Center became part of the Weill Cornell-led Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSC), a grand partnership that brings together a vast array of educational, medical, and scientific institutions on Manhattan's East Side. The CTSC has been so successful that the National Institutes of Health has cited it as a model for public-private research and has funded it with nearly \$100 million through 2017.

As the CTSC was emerging as a major research organization, the ties between Hunter and Weill Cornell were growing closer, ultimately leading to Hunter's purchase of the floor in Belfer. It is a transaction both schools warmly embrace. President Raab calls it "the physical expression of the long-standing relationship between our two institutions."

Dr. Laurie H. Glimcher, the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medical College, also expressed her enthusiasm, saying, "We are thrilled to have Hunter College share this facility and to have our scientists continue to collaborate on biomedical research. Research in the building's open-design space will encourage cross-disciplinary collaborations between some of New York City's top scientists."

The CTSC emphasis on interdisciplinary communication and cooperation seeks to break down barriers between areas of research, and Hunter nurses are playing an increasingly important role in this process. For example, they are working with Weill Cornell medical students to find ways of treating people based not just on physical symptoms, but also on a better understanding of social and cultural factors. This project has great potential to benefit minority and foreign-born patients.

Ultimately, all the research done through the CTSC has one overriding objective — that the results be "translational." The meaning of that term is best

captured by the phrase "bench to bedside" — taking the findings from a laboratory study and applying them to the treatment of a patient.

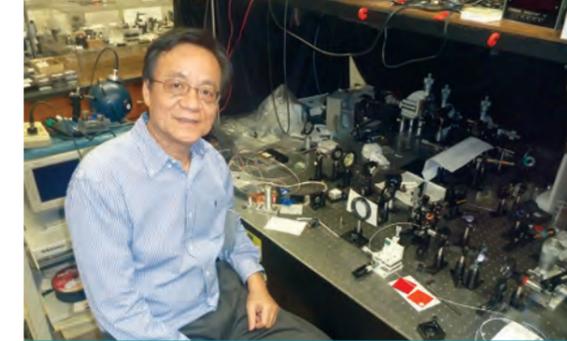
This goal-oriented approach to scientific research is fundamental to the new partnerships Hunter is forging with great neighboring institutions like Weill Cornell Medical College and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. It is an approach full of promise for the shared goal of improving human health.



▲ The Belfer Building at 413 East 69th Street

“We are thrilled to have Hunter College share this facility.”

— Weill Cornell Dean Laurie H. Glimscher



▲ Hunter physics professor Y.C. Chen has worked with Weill Cornell researchers on better imaging techniques for examining the human eye.

Where the Science Is Going to Take Us

What breakthroughs will emerge from the Belfer Building once Hunter scientists begin working with their counterparts from Weill Cornell Medical College? Based on the work that is already going on through the Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSC), the forecast is promising.

Consider the breakthrough that a partnership between Hunter physics professor Y.C. Chen and Weill Cornell ophthalmologist Ronald H. Silverman has produced. By combining Chen's expertise in lasers with Silverman's knowledge of ultrasound, they developed a noninvasive device that vastly improves imaging of the human eye. With it, doctors will be able to detect early signs of macular degeneration, tumors, and other danger signals.

Consider, too, the exciting possibilities of an app that psychology professor Tracy Dennis and her research team have developed to help pregnant women relieve childbirth anxieties. Or the work that Anita Nirenberg, the William Randolph Hearst Professor of Clinical Nursing, is doing to develop a wearable device for medication management in elderly patients with chronic pain.

Nursing professor Judith Aponte is increasing the visibility of Hispanic nurses and improving the health of highly vulnerable Hispanic populations through her policy-relevant research and through courses she developed to educate health care professionals about the unique impact of the diabetes epidemic on different Hispanic subgroups.

Hunter faculty are also becoming national leaders in community health — the prevention and cure of illnesses in low-income neighborhoods — thanks to the work being done jointly in East Harlem by the Silberman School of Social Work and the Schools of Nursing and Urban Public Health.

THEATRE AT HUNTER

PATTY BAKER '82 AND JAY BAKER DONATE \$15 MILLION TO HUNTER, GIVING THE THEATRE DEPARTMENT ITS OWN BUILDING



▲ Jay Baker and Patty Baker '82, announcing their gift at the Kennedy Child Study Center.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Hunter trustee Patty Baker '82 and her husband, Jay, Hunter's Department of Theatre will soon have a beautiful new home. The Bakers' \$15 million gift was announced on January 13 at a meeting of the Hunter College Foundation Board of Trustees.

Their gift funds the acquisition and renovation of a landmarked 19th-century 26,000-square-foot building on East 67th Street, right near Hunter's main campus. The Bakers' gift was doubly welcome because of how difficult it is to acquire real estate on Manhattan's Upper East Side.

"This was the kind of opportunity that comes along once in a lifetime," said Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab. "We had to take advantage of it, and the Bakers' wonderful gift allowed us to do that."

Because the building has housed the Kennedy Child Study Center, a school owned by the Archdiocese of New York, its sale required Vatican approval — if not an actual papal blessing.

Patty Baker attended Hunter while working as a flight attendant and at Tiffany & Co. Now a Broadway producer, she credits a Hunter theatre course for sparking an interest that led to a new vocation. She has been a producer of shows as varied as the musical *Memphis* and a revival of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, both of which won Tony Awards. Her most recent show is the musical *Beautiful*, about singer/composer Carole King. Ms. Baker, who is on the Hunter College Foundation Board and is the head of the College's Theatre Advisory Board, is also developing career preparatory

programs for Hunter theatre students. Jay Baker, the longtime president of Kohl's, retired after building the company into a retail giant. In philanthropic partnership with his wife, he now devotes himself to supporting excellence in higher education.

The Bakers had advised Hunter of their plan to donate \$10 million. But true to their love for great drama, the couple arrived at the trustees' meeting with a spectacular new script. After President Raab announced the multimillion-dollar gift, they raised their hands and revealed that they were increasing the sum by 50 percent. Members of the Hunter College Foundation, the theatre faculty and a number of theatre students were present, and the room erupted in cheers and applause.

The Department of Theatre's new home will be named Baker Hall.

In an article about the gift that appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, Ms. Baker said the donation was intended to help the College become a "leading school for theatre," and that the building, once renovated, would contain "oodles" of rehearsal space.

"Theatre is a discipline that takes place in space, and to have this building will be a game changer for our department," said Professor Joel Bassin, the chair of the Theatre Department. "In this new space, we'll be able to realize our dreams."

The Kennedy Child Study Center, meanwhile, will move uptown to a renovated building in East Harlem. In fact, the center will be close to Hunter's Silberman School of Social Work and School of Urban Public Health, and discussions are already underway about ways the two institutions might collaborate.

“In this new space, we'll be able to realize our dreams.”

— Hunter professor Joel Bassin



The future site of Hunter's Theatre Department at 151 East 67th Street was built in 1890 as the Mount Sinai Dispensary Building. Since 1987, it has been the home of the Kennedy Child Study Center. ►



Hunter Theatre Students Turn the Anthony Weiner Scandal Into High Drama

“Oedipus. Othello. Weiner?” That was the question asked by *The New York Times* in its article on *The Weiner Monologues* — a mock Greek tragedy about the Anthony Weiner scandal conceived, written, directed, acted, produced, designed, and launched as an off-off-Broadway play by students in Hunter's Theatre Department.

How did this successful, inspirationally off-kilter production — which includes a Greek chorus led by Marilyn Mon-

roe — come about? The process began in spring 2011, when Hunter students Jonathan Harper Schlieman '13 and John Oros '12 approached Joel Bassin, chair of the Theatre Department, and asked for campus space to run a summer workshop. Meanwhile, the Weiner scandal was breaking, producing a flood of revelations that provided the Hunter students with an abundance of “found texts” to work with. They included extracts from newspaper articles, press conferences, late-night TV monologues, and, of course, transcripts of

tweets. Slowly, the students began shaping this material into a tale about the fall of a public figure in a media-saturated age.

After the students performed a successful reading, Professor Bassin proposed a fully staged production at the College, which could double as a senior honors project for both Oros, a student in Hunter's Macaulay Honors College, and Schlieman, a Thomas Hunter Honors student. The result was *The Weiner Monologues*, in which the found texts are embellished with dance, video, song, and an original smartphone

◀ (l to r) David M. deLeon '14, Devin J. Heater '14, and Jillian Stevens '14 perform a scene from *The Weiner Monologues*.

app that enables audience members to view those infamous photos.

Last fall, after Weiner's mayoral campaign reignited the scandal, the all-Hunter cast and crew of nearly two dozen brought a fresh staging of the show, produced by Professor Bassin, to the Access Theater on lower Broadway. They opened the day after Election Day for nine sold-out performances, and won praise from the *Times*, NPR, Reuters, and others.

“From start to finish, *The Weiner Monologues* was a product of Hunter College and none of it would have been possible without the school and department's support,” said Schlieman. “The cast and crew are indebted to the faculty and staff for their continual encouragement. Hunter gave us the space to workshop the piece, and they saw us from our first reading all the way to the off-off-Broadway premiere.”

Students Lunch With Theatre's Leading Lights at “Wednesdays at One”

Seven Tony Award winners, two Pulitzer Prize finalists, and a winner of the National Humanities Medal are among the theatre professionals who have inspired hundreds of Hunter students at “Wednesdays at One,” the highly successful series of lunchtime forums that the College has been presenting since 2012 to connect Hunter students with the larger New York professional theatre community.

Speakers have included playwright John Guare; playwright, actress, and scholar Anna Deavere Smith; director and choreographer Jeff Calhoun; casting director Ilene Starger; actor and director Roger Rees; producer, company manager, and theatre executive Paul Libin, winner of a 2013 Tony for Lifetime Achievement; representatives from the Roundabout Theatre, who discussed the full range of possible theatrical careers;

and producers Randy Adams, Sue Frost, and Patty Baker '82. Baker is a generous supporter of the Department of Theatre (see opposite page) and chair of Hunter's Theatre Advisory Board, which has helped launch and fund this student engagement program and recruit speakers.

“Wednesdays at One” also builds on the success of the Floria Lasky Visiting Artist Program, funded by the Frederick Loewe Foundation in honor of the late Hunter alumna '42 and lawyer who represented many of the most famous names in the theatre industry. The program brings distinguished playwrights and other theatrical professionals to Hunter for classroom discussions and evening events; once here, many of these guests choose to share their knowledge and expertise with a wider audience by participating in “Wednesdays at One.”



▲ (l to r) John Guare, Jeff Calhoun, Anna Deavere Smith

“One huge benefit of the series,” said Hunter professor Barbara Bosch, former chair of the Theatre Department and a frequent “Wednesdays at One” modera-

tor, “is that the students gain a sense of the many ways to be involved in theatre. Many students have said the ‘Wednesdays’ have changed their lives.”

IKE RECONSIDERED: A Roosevelt House Symposium Explores the Eisenhower Legacy

“Ike Reconsidered: Lessons of the Eisenhower Legacy for the 21st Century” took an illuminating look back at Dwight D. Eisenhower’s presidency. Co-sponsored by Roosevelt House and the Eisenhower Foundation, the two-day conference featured roundtable discussions by leading historians, journalists, political scientists, and presidential aides on such subjects as presidential leadership, foreign affairs, advances in science, and civil rights.

The overarching aim of the conference, said its organizer, Andrew Polsky, acting dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of political science, “was to demonstrate the ways in which Eisenhower’s presidential leadership remained relevant in the 21st century.”

David Eisenhower, the 34th president’s only grandson, introduced an evening program that began with a video of his grandfather’s most famous speech, his farewell address as president, warning of a critical danger to American democracy.

“In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex,” the retiring president said. “The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.” Those words became famous not only for their prescience, but also for their unlikely source: a five-star general who was supreme commander of the Allied forces in Europe during World War II.

In her welcoming remarks, President

Jennifer J. Raab said that “when we consider how skillfully Eisenhower reached across political divides to gain bipartisan support, it is clear we have much to learn from this master.” She went on to note that, as president, Ike joined with Democratic congressional leaders to preserve and expand part of FDR’s New Deal, bringing tens of millions of self-employed Americans into the Social Security system. Such bipartisanship, and its contrast to American politics today, was the focus of the evening’s keynote address by journalist Evan Thomas and the ensuing discussion and debate among policy experts.

On the panel were political scientist Jean Edward Smith, author of the 2012 book *Eisenhower in War and Peace*; Eisenhower White House staff member Stephen Hess, now a senior fellow emeritus at The Brookings Institution; Hunter alumna Rita Hauser ’54, an international lawyer who served in the Nixon and George W. Bush administrations; and historian Philip Zelikow, who served as executive director of the 9/11 Commission. Veteran journalist Jim Newton, author of *Eisenhower: The White House Years*, moderated the discussion.

Central to their lively exchange was a question posed by Zelikow: Could Ike win the Republican nomination today? The answer? Most of the panelists seemed hopeful that he could, given his enormous personal appeal and political skill.



▲ David Eisenhower, grandson of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, addressed the symposium.



▲ (l to r) Philip Zelikow, Rita Hauser ’54, Stephen Hess, Jean Edward Smith, and moderator Jim Newton

Hunter Student Roger Brown '16 Makes It All the Way to the White House



▲ Roger Brown '16 (top row, third from right, and inset) at the White House with President Obama

In January, President Obama, standing before a small audience in the East Room of the White House, spoke of poverty in America and his administration’s determination to help youths from poor communities get ahead by getting an education. Behind him stood a group of young men and women from Harlem, who are in college or on track to go there.

The president singled out one of those young people, 19-year-old Hunter sophomore Roger Brown. He began by admiring Brown’s dreadlocks. “I used to have a haircut like that,” he said. “And maybe, after I’m done with the presidency, I’m going back to that.” As the laughter died down, the president told the audience: “I want you to listen to Roger’s story, because it’s unique and it’s special, but it’s also representative.”

Roger, the president noted, was raised partly in foster care, as well as by his single mom, who held down two jobs as she struggled to support her family. Then, in the sixth grade,

Roger won a lottery that admitted him to Harlem’s Promise Academy, a pioneering charter school.

Initially Roger had difficulty at the demanding school. “He was the class clown and acting out, and almost got

himself expelled,” the president said. “But the teachers and the staff did not give up on him. They kept pushing him. Then one summer when Roger was home visiting his foster family, he looked around the room and realized nobody in that room had gone to college, nobody in that room had a job. At that moment, something clicked. And Roger decided he wanted something better for himself — and for his mom and for his two sisters, who looked up to him.”

From that point on, Roger began to excel in school. He became part of the first graduating class at Promise Academy, then became the first member of his family to go to college. He chose Hunter — which President Obama called “one of the best colleges in the country” — where more than one third of the students are the first in their family to attend college.

As a top student at the Promise Academy, Roger could have gone to any number of colleges, but he chose Hunter because, he says, “I wanted to

go to a school that was challenging. I looked at a myriad of schools but I also wanted to go somewhere affordable.

“In the end,” he added, “Hunter provided me that competitiveness I wanted to challenge me. The professors here are really smart and they’re engaged in incredible research. Their work is interesting and it’s fun, and you can feel the passion emanating from them as they push their research forward.”

Roger, who is now completing his sophomore year, has a GPA of 3.65 in his demanding, science-heavy course load. He is also working some 15 hours a week as a home health aide. He wants to become a neurologist — either as a practicing physician or as a researcher. It’s a dream he’s had for some years, one that was reinforced as he watched his late grandmother succumb to dementia. One day, he says, he’d like to find a way to help others who are afflicted by this illness.

“Hunter College in New York [is] one of the best colleges in the country.”

— President Barack Obama



▲ Leonard A. Lauder and Emily Braun

That’s an eye-catching sum. Tell us about your role in assembling this world-class collection.

Before I talk about that, I want to point out that this figure was not verified in any way. It’s nice that it opens eyes, but what should impress people is that someone who has spent 35 years building this collection wanted to ensure it ended up in the right hands and is accessible to the public. Putting a figure on the collection is not representative of its true value, which cannot be measured in dollars. The fact that someone could bring such pictures together in a single collection is unmatched, and you can’t put a price on that.

How did you become his advisor and what advice do you give him?

It started in 1987, right after I got back from 18 months of research in Italy for my dissertation. He was looking for a curator and I was recommended to him. Over time the relationship grew beyond my managing the collection into an advisory role, and so we’ve worked together to achieve his aim of assembling this museum-quality collection. When it comes to buying, though, he has his own eye — he knows what he is doing. As an art historian my role is to research the pictures and give him background on them.

What’s in the collection that went to the Met?

It is probably the finest collection of Cubist works ever in private hands. It

focuses on the so-called four essential Cubists — Picasso, Braque, Léger, and Gris. They’re called that because in the years before World War I they invented new pictorial forms on a level far beyond anyone else, and so Leonard focused on them. What’s especially important is that all the great Modern art collections of the past have been dispersed, so it’s wonderful that these works were brought together and will be kept together.

How does your work with Mr. Lauder dovetail with your work at Hunter?

One of the great things about working with someone who is not only a collector, but also a philanthropist and a historian, is that he appreciates the educational value of his collection. He’s always been generous in lending pictures to exhibitions. He’s always invited scholars to look at them. And he’s always encouraged me to use them in teaching, so I’ve been able to conduct seminars on both Cubism and research methods based on his collection. Students get to see the works firsthand as they become experts in the field of provenance. They learn that these are material objects that have lives of their own, and we’ve brought in conservators to talk about the technical material aspects of the pictures.

Furthermore, Leonard has hired Hunter students and graduates to work on his collection. One is my esteemed colleague, Lynda Klich, who is now a Hunter professor. She

Q&A with Emily Braun

Distinguished Professor of Art History at Hunter

Emily Braun was in the news recently when the art collector she has advised for 27 years, Leonard A. Lauder, gave the Metropolitan Museum a collection of 79 Cubist paintings, drawings, and sculptures — a gift, according to newspaper reports, worth more than \$1 billion.

was an undergraduate and a master’s student here, and I was her professor. About 15 years ago Leonard told me that we needed someone to be curator of his postcard collection, which consists of tens of thousands of works and is quite something. I told him I had just the person, and of course that was Lynda. She’s worked with him ever since.

Another example is Anna Jozefacka, who came from Poland to get her undergraduate degree in art history at Hunter and is now an adjunct professor. She works with me managing and researching the Lauder collection — she’s an extraordinary researcher. And then there’s a current Hunter student, Luise Mahler, who is finishing her MA with me and is helping to document the Lauder works. I think these are wonderful stories, because the learning continues, the mentoring continues, and several careers have developed because of this collection.

All this must be very satisfying for you personally as well as professionally.

For any art historian, the opportunity not only to do one’s own academic work, but to have hands-on contact with works of art, is fantastic. So often in our field it’s bifurcated. You have people in academia, and you have people in the museums. The ability to combine the two is enriching in the classroom and creates extra opportunities for the students.

You teach, you mentor students, you advise Mr. Lauder, you’re

co-curating the special exhibition of his works at the Met in the fall and working on the catalog, and, oh yes, you have a family. How do you manage it all?

(Laughing) I drink a lot of coffee. Teaching is the main event, of course. As for the rest, I have assistants who help me in my work with Leonard, and the catalog was well along when we started because of the documentation that’s been done over the years. Life is full, but it’s manageable.

What advice do you give students who want careers in the field of art?

I tell them the best preparation is the thorough study of art history. You have to learn how to study objects, how to research their historical context, and how to conserve them. And I tell them to follow their passion. You need to know your field well, and to do that you must read a lot, study a lot and, above all, bring enthusiasm to your work.



Fernand Léger, *Composition (The Typographer)*, 1917-18, Oil on canvas, 98^{3/4}" x 72^{3/4}", Leonard A. Lauder Cubist Collection ►

Holland Cotter (MA '88) Accepts Honorary Hunter Doctorate

“My time at Hunter was the most stimulating time I had at any school,” Holland Cotter told the graduating class of January 2014. “For the first time in my life, I was a good student because I was enjoying being one.”

Cotter, co-chief art critic at *The New York Times* and winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Criticism, received a master’s in art history from Hunter in 1988. He received his undergraduate degree from Harvard and earned a second master’s, in South Asian art, from Columbia. He was at the 208th Hunter Commencement to receive an honorary doctorate of humane letters.

Before joining *The Times* in 1992, Cotter worked for a number of influential magazines, including *Art in America* and *Art News*. He is celebrated for introducing Western audiences to contemporary Asian art,

and after donning his doctoral hood at the commencement, he credited his Hunter professors for contributing greatly to his global outlook.

Cotter made special mention of one recently retired professor, Ülkü Bates, calling her a wonderful teacher whose slides of mosques and textiles piqued his interest in Islamic art. He noted that the final slide in one of her presentations was a snapshot of an older man and woman sitting side-by-side on a couch in an Istanbul apartment.

“This is my mother and father,” Cotter recalled Bates telling her class. “Every time I’ve written for *The New York Times*, I’ve thought of my teacher and her parents.”

Predicting that today’s graduates would also benefit endlessly from their experience at Hunter, he advised every member of the class, “Be a global citizen. It’s the only way to go. I learned that here.”



▲ Holland Cotter (MA '88), co-chief art critic of *The New York Times* and former Hunter graduate student, accepts his degree.



▲ Anne Pasternak, left, with her mentor, art historian Emily Braun

Standing on the stage of Radio City Music Hall, accepting her honorary doctorate in fine arts from Hunter, Anne Pasternak described art and culture as an integral part of everyday life and social progress.

“Culture is essential to shaping public sentiment,” Pasternak said at Hunter’s

207th Commencement. She emphasized everyone’s role in this process when she told the graduating class, “Your creative contributions, deliberate or not, are shaping our culture.”

Pasternak, president and artistic director of the nonprofit Creative Time, has won acclaim as a pioneering director

Anne Pasternak, High Art Democratizer, Receives Hunter’s Highest Art Degree

of public art projects around the globe. Her collaborators have been the leading artists of our time, including Christo, David Byrne, Marina Abramovic, and Julian Schnabel. One of Pasternak’s most celebrated projects was *Tribute in Light*, the twin beacons that rose from Ground Zero in the dark months following 9/11, and *Key to the City*, an interactive, multi-borough, scavenger-hunt-like project created by Hunter studio art professor Paul Ramírez Jonas, who is on the board of Creative Time.

After studying art history as an undergraduate at the University of Massachusetts, Pasternak came to the graduate program in art history at Hunter. There, she studied with Professor Emily Braun (see page 10). “When you have a

great teacher,” Pasternak said, “it opens up doors to you that you could never imagine. Professor Braun was that to me.”

Pasternak began producing ambitious projects from her loft in lower Manhattan. She had few material resources, but was motivated by a vision of bringing great art to urban spaces. She continued to pursue her vision after joining Creative Time, and during her two decades there has led the way in changing the face and scope of public art. From the Coney Island boardwalk to the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans, Pasternak has enabled those who live and work outside the traditional art scene to view and experience innovative, moving, and provocative works that help transform how people view their world.

HAPPENINGS AT HUNTER



▲ At Hunter's commencement at Radio City Music Hall, CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer receives the Hunter College Inspiration Award. He later told his TV audience that the experience of meeting "all these wonderful young graduates" had been deeply moving.



▲ (l to r) Colum McCann, distinguished lecturer in the MFA in Creative Writing Program, signs copies of his novel *TransAtlantic* for Gabriel Byrne and Loretta Brennan Glucksman after a reading at The Kaye Playhouse. The reading was part of the program's Distinguished Writers Series.



▲ Writing Center benefactor Lisa Schiff (l) celebrates with best-selling crime novelist Linda Fairstein, the guest of honor at the Center's anniversary dinner.



▲ Soprano Renée Fleming and Damian Woetzel, director of the Aspen Institute Arts Program, discuss the importance of bringing the arts to underserved communities and the powerful role music can play in education and public life.



▲ House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (r) visits Hunter to discuss a national initiative to expand economic opportunities for women. Taking part in the discussion were elected officials, equal rights advocates, and Hunter students, including (l-r) Sophie Steinman-Gordon (HCHS), Jacqueline Tosto, Shu Shu Wu, and Audrey Stienon, a 2014 Luce Scholarship winner.



▲ Singer Judy Collins performs for the audience as part of a conversation with Roosevelt House director Jonathan Fanton about her life and career.



▲ Winston Churchill's great-grandson Randolph Churchill (shown with his sister Jennie Churchill Repard) talks about how the British prime minister's American-born mother influenced his political career. The lecture was part of the Tina Flaherty-Winston Churchill Series.

The Mystery of Human Longevity



▲ Herman Pontzer, professor of anthropology

Back in 2012, Herman Pontzer, associate professor of anthropology at Hunter College, and a team of scientists made headlines with a study of the Hadza, a tribe of nomadic hunter-gatherers in Tanzania. They discovered that the Hadzas' characteristically slim figures were not, as previously

thought, the result of an active lifestyle, but instead were due to their low-calorie diet.

The lesson, as Pontzer wrote in a *New York Times* op-ed, is that, as a society, "We're getting fat because we eat too much, not because we're sedentary. Physical activity is very important for maintaining physical and mental health, but we aren't going to Jazzercise our way out of the obesity epidemic."

Now Pontzer and his team are back, with a new, much publicized, study that seeks to answer the question of why humans live so long compared to other mammals.

Their study shows that humans and other primates burn 50% fewer calories each day than other mammals of similar size. The study, "Primate Energetics and Life History," suggests that this slow metabolism may help explain why humans (and other primates) mature more slowly and live longer than most mammals.

Pontzer and his team examined 17 primate species in zoos, sanctuaries, and the wild. Using



▲ Research shows that humans and other primates burn far fewer calories than other mammals.

a safe and noninvasive technique, they measured the number of calories the primates burned over a 10-day period.

"The results were a real surprise," says Pontzer. "Humans, chimpanzees, baboons, and other primates expend only half the calories we'd expect for a mammal. To put that in perspective, humans — even those with a very physically active lifestyle — would need to run a marathon each day just to approach the average daily energy expenditure of another mammal their size."

Bike Safety on the Rise in New York



▲ William Milczarski, professor of urban affairs and planning (left), and Peter Tuckel, professor of sociology

Bicyclists in New York City are riding more safely, according to a new study by Hunter College professors Peter Tuckel and William Milczarski. In their report, *Bike Lanes + Bike Share Program = Bike Safety*, they found that an increasing percentage of cyclists — women more than men — are

wearing helmets and obeying traffic laws. They also found that the number of women cyclists in New York City has doubled since 2009.

Tuckel, who teaches a research methods course in the Department of Sociology, and Milczarski, who teaches data analysis in the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, first joined forces for a field study of bicyclists' behavior in 2009. Their initial study, published that year, attracted attention because it found cyclists were not riding safely.

Since then, much has changed. Milczarski, referring to the two researchers' latest report, says, "The facts are clear. Running red lights, riding on the sidewalk or against traffic are all on the decline, and helmet use is on the rise."

In the half-decade between the two studies, the authors write, there have

been several developments that could account for the changes in ridership and rider behavior. First, there has been a steady increase in the number of bike lanes around the city. Second, more laws enforcing bicycle safety have been enacted, including one mandating helmets for commercial riders, who include bike messengers and delivery persons.

Another factor, say Tuckel and Milczarski, is the introduction of the CitiBike bike sharing program. Their work shows that so-called "citi-bikers" are more likely to follow the rules of the road than others. "Maybe the rest are just getting the hint," added Milczarski.

These biking studies serve a dual purpose for the professors. The first is pedagogical. "The majority of the observations and analyses in both



studies were conducted by Hunter students," says Milczarski. "We had about 70 students out there this fall collecting data for three weeks."

The second purpose is to influence policy by raising awareness. "Any publicity generated that leads to more communities demanding more bike lanes is a good thing," says Milczarski.

Tuckel and Milczarski say they will continue tracking this data. "Riding is becoming a bigger part of living in New York City," said Milczarski. "We will see if over time things get better or slip backward."

"My Brooklyn" Takes an Unsparring Look at Urban Renewal

In 2006, seven years before Bill de Blasio ran successfully for mayor on the strength of "a tale of two cities" campaign, Professor Kelly Anderson began shooting and directing a documentary on the same theme.

My Brooklyn examines the human cost of the redevelopment and gentrification of Brooklyn's downtown, including the Fulton Street Mall and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

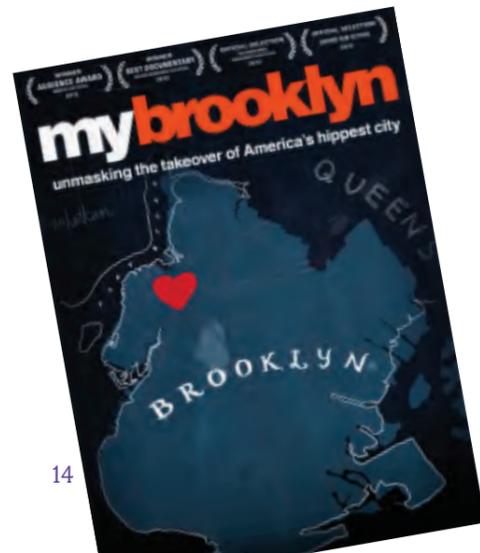
The film won the Audience Award when it premiered at the 2012 Brooklyn Film Festival, and later won the Best Documentary and Best Director Awards at the Red Hook International Film Festival. It also received a glowing review from *The New York Times*. Sharing the honors was producer Allison Lirish Dean, who received her master's in urban planning from Hunter in 2011.

Last July, as the mayoral race intensified, the filmmakers made *My Brooklyn* available at no charge to any New Yorker who wanted to host a home screening. Accompanying each copy of the film was a facilitator's guide with a list of questions for post-screening conversation and various proposals for civic engagement.

Anderson, a resident of Brooklyn and deputy chair of Hunter's Department of Film and Media Studies, also screened the film at Roosevelt House in September. Afterward, she told the audience that the film was intended to help spark citywide discussion on the impact of urban development and to serve as an instigator of grass-roots political involvement. "We felt there was a conversation that needed to happen about city policies that have intensified gentrification, instead of just focusing on individual choices about where to live," Anderson said.



▲ Documentarian and Hunter professor Kelly Anderson



Exploring the Lives of Animals

Can dolphins type? How do snails mate? These are some of the mysteries Hunter professor Diana Reiss and Hunter graduate student Isabella Rossellini are trying to unravel.

Reiss is a founder of Hunter's innovative Animal Behavior and Conservation (ABC) master's program in psychology, which trains students to work in the fields of animal behavior, conservation, and welfare. She is also among the world's leading experts on animal cognition and has published groundbreaking studies on dolphins, including one that showed that they can indeed use an underwater keyboard.

Rossellini, the daughter of Ingrid Bergman and Roberto Rossellini and a celebrated actor and director in her own right, has brought her study of the sex lives of animals to film and stage. She transformed her series of shorts

on the mating behavior of insects and crustaceans into a one-woman show that she has performed to sold-out crowds in New York and around the world. In *Green Porno: Live on Stage*, Rossellini wears Day-Glo costumes and communes with puppets as she mimics the reproductive rituals of a variety of creatures.

Recently, at New York's Rubin Museum of Art, Reiss and Rossellini appeared together in conversation on the nature of animal cognition. They discussed the complexities of nonverbal communication, the nature of human-animal bonds, and whether animals can feel empathy. Reiss presented videos of her work, including extraordinary footage of a dolphin recognizing itself in a mirror. Rossellini likened animals to good actors. "As an actor, 90% of what we do is nonverbal," she said. "With a good actor, you just read the emotion."



Photo: Michael Palma

▲ Actress and Hunter graduate student Isabella Rossellini with psychology professor Diana Reiss at the Rubin Museum of Art

Reiss is no stranger to the camera herself. She served as science advisor for *The Cove*, a documentary about dolphin hunting in Japan that won the 2009 Oscar for Best Feature Documentary, and appears in *Inside Animal Minds*, a three-part docu-

mentary premiering this month on PBS. Rossellini followed up *Green Porno* with two more series of film shorts: *Seduce Me*, about animal seduction, and *Mammas*, about the maternal instinct, or lack thereof, in the animal kingdom.

Hunter Schools Take the Lead in Caring for New York's Aging Population

Over the next 17 years, the number of Americans 65 or older will rise from 35 million to 70 million. Public health experts warn of a severe shortage of medical professionals specially trained to care for the elderly, and the National Institute of Medicine has called for the swift establishment of educational programs in geriatric care.

Hunter is leading the way in recognizing and meeting this critical need. Working in close collaboration with one another, the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging, the School of Urban Public Health, the School of Nursing, and the Silberman School of Social Work are making rapid advances in the field and receiving national attention as a result.

Hunter's School of Nursing demands that every student become competent in elder care; those aiming to specialize can pursue programs in gerontological/adult nursing practice at both the master's and doctoral levels. Recognizing Hunter's leadership in this field, the William Randolph Hearst

Foundation has made a \$750,000 gift endowing a new faculty chair.

Dr. Elizabeth Capezuti, who earned her master's in nursing at Hunter in 1984, returns to the College as Hunter's first Hearst Professor of Gerontology. An internationally known geriatric nurse researcher, Capezuti previously



▲ Elizabeth Capezuti (MSN '84), Hearst Professor of Gerontology

taught at the University of Pennsylvania and NYU, was co-director of the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing, and received the American Academy of Nursing's 2013 Nurse Leader in Aging Award. As the Hearst Professor, she is charged with shaping new curricula, directing research, teaching in the doctoral program, and mentoring junior faculty.

"Professor Capezuti will help lead the drive to integrate gerontology into all our curricula – undergraduate, masters, and doctoral," said Dr. Gail McCain, Hunter's Joan Hansen Grabe Dean of Nursing. Further, Capezuti will work closely with Hunter's Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging, which seeks to improve the lives of older New Yorkers through medical research, policy initiatives, and course work.

The Silberman School of Social Work is also in the vanguard of improving elder care. As a result, the Gerontological Society of America and the John A. Hartman Foundation have named the Silberman School a Hartford Center in Geriatric Social Work Excellence – a designation held by only five schools in the nation. With this designation comes a \$140,000 grant for research, curriculum development, and joint ventures with professionals and agencies dedicated to the well-being of the aging population.

"No one goes it alone anymore. It's all about interdisciplinary collabora-

tion, especially in gerontology," said Silberman School of Social Work Dean Jacqueline Mondros. "We look forward to putting this award to work and joining with other health professions to improve outcomes among older adults."



▲ From left, Nancy Giunta, assistant professor at the Silberman School of Social Work, Joan Jeffri, director of the Research Center for Arts and Culture at the National Center for Creative Aging, Gilda Perwin, sculptor, and Alana Hartman (MSW '14) at "Aging: A Progressive Issue," a conference held at the Silberman School of Social Work

Hunter Launches the Institute for Education Policy at Roosevelt House



▲ David Steiner, dean of the Hunter School of Education, interviews mayoral candidate Bill de Blasio.

"What are the values we seek to transmit to the next generation? What in the end constitutes an educated human being?" These were just two of the weighty questions asked by participants at the inauguration of the Institute for Education Policy at

Roosevelt House, founded and directed by David Steiner, the Klara and Larry Silverstein Dean of the Hunter College School of Education. In her welcoming remarks, Hunter President Jennifer Raab stressed that Roosevelt House is the perfect location for the Institute; FDR, she noted, called education "the

safeguard of democracy," while Eleanor Roosevelt said, "On the public school largely depends the success or the failure of our great experiment in government 'by the people, for the people.'"

The mission of the Institute, which focuses on all aspects of K-16 public education, is to become a major resource for researchers and policy-makers seeking to improve educational outcomes for America's students.

At the launch, Dean Steiner laid out a vision of the Institute as "a space for research and analysis and debate," then moderated a panel discussion with educational leaders about the challenges and possibilities for the future of public education.

One of the Institute's earliest programs was a series last summer of one-on-one interviews with leading candidates in New

York City's mayoral race. Bill de Blasio, not yet a front-runner, used the platform to outline his vision of a school system that serves as "a real career ladder."

"We are missing a focus on early childhood education," he said. "We must have universal pre-K education and after-school programs for all middle school children. If we don't, we should not expect the fundamental changes we need to make this school system work for everyone."

Upcoming Institute events include a master class on leadership and a conference on closing the college graduation gap, as well as discussions on charter schools and the place of religion in schools, to name just a few.

For information on the Institute and its programs, go to: ciep.hunter.cuny.edu.

Opera Star Martina Arroyo (HCHS '53, '56) Receives Kennedy Center Honors

On December 8, 2013, in Washington, D.C., the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts paid Martina Arroyo its highest tribute.

Seated in the presidential box with the Obamas and her fellow honorees, the great soprano received the Kennedy Center Honors for a lifetime of outstanding contributions to American culture. At a White House ceremony earlier that evening, President Obama honored the Hunter graduate who became a star of the Met, the Paris Opera, La Scala, and other classical stages around the world.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor led the Kennedy Center accolades for the famously generous and witty woman whose voice *The New York Times* once called "among the most glorious in the world." Sotomayor drew abundant laughter and applause when she announced, "I'm here for the diva!"

Arroyo, a graduate of both Hunter College '56 and Hunter College High School '53, grew up in Harlem and was only 19 when she graduated from college. She made her Carnegie

Hall debut just two years later.

In 2006, Arroyo told *Opera News* about the defining role Hunter played in her life.

"I was lucky, because I went to the Hunter College Opera Workshop in the '50s," she recalled, noting that it all began when she was in high school and Josef Turnau, a professor at Hunter, caught her and her friends outside the auditorium, imitating the opera singers inside.

"Professor Turnau made me sing as a punishment," she said. But then he realized she had talent, and advised her to take the workshop. "I went for fun but became so involved that I ended up going to Hunter. Music took over my life entirely."

Today Arroyo maintains a strong working connection to her alma mater through the Martina Arroyo Foundation's Prelude to Performance program, an intensive, comprehensive, six-week training program for emerging artists aged 20 to 35. The program brings together promising young opera singers with a staff of performance professionals led by Arroyo herself. The singers learn, explore, and



Photo: John Filo

▲ Martina Arroyo (front row, right) with her fellow Kennedy Center honorees Shirley MacLaine, Billy Joel, Carlos Santana, and Herbie Hancock.

develop their characters through music coaching and classes in role, libretto, language, movement, stagecraft, and stage combat. The program culminates each year with two fully-staged performances at the Kaye Playhouse.

Arroyo is also a trustee emerita of the Hunter College Foundation.

When the Kennedy Center announced Arroyo's nomination, it cited her extraordinary achievements as an

educator as well as an artist: "Martina Arroyo has dazzled the world with her glorious soprano voice and continues to share her artistry with a new generation of opera singers."

And when several of Arroyo's talented young protégés performed at the Kennedy Center, the television cameras closed in on a visibly moved diva, her eyes welling with tears of pride and delight.



▲ Morty and Lee '61 Kaufman

Brad and Angelina, Meet Morty and Lee: Lee Kaufman '61 and Her Husband, Both 91, Are Sudden Stars

Lee Kaufman, half of TV's popular Swiffer-ad couple, has experienced some of life's major turning points at unusual times.

Kaufman was already past 40 when she graduated from Hunter and embarked on a successful teaching career. She was the widowed mother of two when she met and married Morty, the widowed father of four. And

they were both 90 when, bantering in their kitchen, the pair ad-libbed their way through a TV commercial to accidental stardom.

Now Kaufman is balancing the demands of newspaper and TV interviews with her fundraising work on the board of the Hunter Alumni Association's busy Long Island Chapter.

"We have a very nice, active group,"

she said recently, speaking on the phone from her now-famous home in Valley Stream, Long Island.

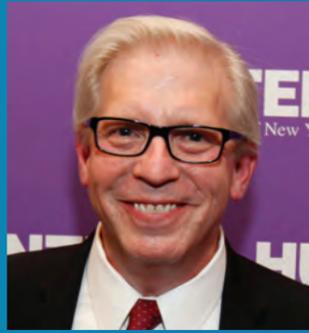
Kaufman was living in Brooklyn and raising her children when she decided to return to college and earn a degree. She chose Hunter, which required a long subway ride into Manhattan.

"I did all of my homework on the train," she said.

2013 Hunter Hall of Fame



Elbrun Kimmelman ('72) achieved great success in commercial marketing and advertising and developed the field of social marketing, which applies marketing techniques toward the betterment of society. She has advised numerous foreign governments on the use of marketing for development and nation-building. She headed an effort to restore a former British diplomatic residency, which now houses the oldest women's liberal arts college in South India. Kimmelman serves as board chair of the New York Council for the Humanities and is a member of Hunter's Roosevelt House Advisory Board.



Michael Glantz ('84) is the president and a co-founder of Headline Media Management, a firm that represents high-profile TV anchors, reporters, hosts, and executives, as well as coaches in college and professional football. While earning his degree at Hunter, he served as coach of the women's swim team and as sports information director. He rose to leadership positions in television news and sports at CBS, MTV, and NBC. His mother, Phyllis Glantz ('54), is also a member of the Hunter Hall of Fame. They are the first mother-son duo in the history of the organization.



Carol Goldberg ('56) has shared her great knowledge and love of art with many buyers and enthusiasts during her long career as an art advisor. She was a board member of Independent Curators International, which brings exhibitions to venues around the world and trains young curators. Through her work for ArtTable, she helped other women succeed in her field. In a space they opened in Mount Kisco, Goldberg and her husband have exhibited work from their private collection, and since 2007, she has sponsored a playwright's award presented by the American Renaissance Theater Company. She is a member of the Hunter College Foundation and chairs Hunter's Art Advisory Board.



Richard Boris ('64) is a professor of political science and an expert on Soviet politics. He served as executive director of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions from 2001 to 2013. During his tenure, the organization, which is dedicated to studying the use of collective bargaining as a means for advancing higher education and the working conditions of faculty and staff in colleges and universities, founded two new journals, increased its revenues, greatly expanded its research and training programs, and became a major national force in academic collective bargaining.



Mary Cirillo-Goldberg ('68) rose to the top ranks of the banking and financial services industry. She is currently on the boards of Thomson Reuters and Hudson Venture Partners, a venture capital firm, as well as several cultural, medical, and educational institutions. Cirillo-Goldberg began her career at Ernst & Ernst and spent 23 successful years at Citibank before being appointed to global leadership posts at Bankers Trust and Deutsche Bank. She also served as chair and CEO of Openier, LLC, an internet consulting firm. Cirillo-Goldberg is a member of the Hunter College Foundation and serves on Hunter's Theatre Advisory Board.



Ruth Bernstein ('55) is a powerful advocate for people with hearing loss – a disability she has lived with herself for many years. She has held important positions at the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, the Jewish National Fund, and the Teaneck, NJ, Board of Education, and she founded the organization Advocates for Better Communication. She has also created a mentoring program for New York City high school students with hearing loss.



Doris Derby ('62), an educator and documentary photographer, was a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee from 1962 to 1972, working for the overthrow of Jim Crow in the Deep South. Her photos from that period have been widely published. Derby was founding director of the Office of African American Student Services and Programs at Georgia State University, and she served on the Georgia Board of Regents' African-American Male Initiative Task Force.



Jacqueline Gordon ('87) is a guidance counselor and town councilwoman on Long Island, and a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves. Her overseas service includes wartime deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. At home she is a leader of the Veterans Museum Project and the Veterans Advisory Council, and serves on the board of Girl Scouts of Suffolk County. She has worked for many years at the Wilson Technological Center, and is a member of the scholarship committee of the Association of Long Island Vocational Educators.



Joyce Griffin-Sobel (MSN '81) is a leader in nursing education. A specialist in oncology and a former professor at Hunter's School of Nursing, she is currently dean of the College of Nursing at SUNY Upstate Medical University. During her service in the U.S. Naval Reserves, Griffin-Sobel developed and directed the Navy Nurse Corps' first program of clinical nursing research. Her academic articles have been widely published, and she is a past editor of the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*.



Leslie Lieth ('72) was certified as a nurse practitioner in 1975 and went on to provide primary care to children as a pediatric nurse practitioner for more than 30 years. She also served on numerous community and nursing boards in New York. She is a longtime leader of the Alumni Nursing Association at Hunter.



Catherine Merolle ('71) oversees print production on all magazines published by the Hearst Corporation in the United States. As a director of operations, she is responsible for scores of publications, including *Good Housekeeping*, *Oprah*, *Esquire*, *Elle*, *Harper's Bazaar*. Merolle is active in many graphic-arts industry groups and is known as a champion of digital workflows and electronic advertising formats. In 2009, *Publishing Executive Magazine* named her one of the "Top Women in Magazine Publishing."



Leonardo Rodriguez (MSW '82) is an expert in providing residential treatment to troubled children and adolescents. He joined the Jewish Board of Family and Children Services shortly after receiving his master's in social work from Hunter. Today, he is the Board's chief program officer, responsible for residential and day treatment services for children, preventive services for families, and a group of domestic violence shelters.



Martha Adams Sullivan (DSW '91) was elected president of the National Association of Social Workers New York City Chapter in 2012. Sullivan has served as vice president of the St. Barnabas Healthcare Network and as executive director of the Fordham-Tremont Community Health Center. She is currently on the Governor of New York's Geriatric Interagency Planning Council, and she was formerly deputy commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Class Notes

1940s

In a profile by *The Epoch Times*, **Judy Lerner ('43)** recalled her undergraduate years at Hunter and her lifetime of activism for human rights, women's rights, and peace. For nine years, she has been chair of the international committee of Peace Action, an NGO with the United Nations.

Ruth Rosenfeld Janko ('49) has published a book, *On Becoming a Person: Tales and Perspectives on Parent-Child Relationships*.

1950s

Mildred Dresselhaus ('51) received the Materials Research Society Von Hippel Award for her pioneering contributions to the fundamental science of carbon-based and other materials, her leadership in energy and science policy, and her mentoring of young scientists. Dresselhaus has said she had good luck in finding mentors, including future Nobel Laureate Rosalyn Yalow ('41), while she was at Hunter.

Barbara B. Doonan ('59), principal scientist at Altria Group (retired), is currently a research fellow at New York Medical College. She recently published "Prevention and Management of Obesity by Isoflavones" in *Isoflavones: Chemistry Analysis, Function and Effects* (Royal Society of Chemistry).

Arthur M. Pfeiffer ('59), a Palo Alto mathematician and software designer, has developed successful poker apps for the iPhone and iPod Touch. He now plans to open an Internet-based poker room that will legally allow Americans to play online poker for real money.

1960s

Mary Guinan ('61), dean of the School of Community Health Sciences at the University of Nevada, is a key figure in implementing the Affordable Care Act in Nevada. She has served two terms as Nevada Health Officer.

Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick ('63), retired senior associate judge of the New York Court of Appeals, joined the international law firm Greenberg Traurig in 2013. The first Hispanic and second woman on the Court of Appeals and the first Hispanic woman to sit on any trial bench in New York, she received an honorary degree from Hunter in 2013.



Fredric Leeds ('67) recently retired as chancellor of Penn State Shenango. Among his many

honors are the Penn State Administrative Excellence Award and Penn State's establishment of a scholarship in his name.

Susan Rogers ('67) received the Clifford W. Beers Award, Mental Health America's highest honor. She is director of the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse, a consumer-run national technical assistance center, and is director of special projects at the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Joel Iskowitz ('68) is one of the few living artists whose artwork is displayed in the Pentagon, the

Capitol, and the White House. His art has been featured on the covers of books, periodicals, and journals, in public spaces, and on coins and postage stamps worldwide, and was featured in *ARTslant* in August 2013.

1970s



A paperback edition of *Weeds Like Us* by **Gunter Nitsch ('71)** was published in June 2013.

Andy Furman ('72) is a co-host of the national morning show *Fox Sports Daybreak* on Fox Sports Radio.



Art historian **Diane Radycki (MA'73)** is the author of *Paula Modersohn-Becker: The First Modern Woman Artist* (Yale University Press). Radycki is

associate professor and director of the Payne Gallery at Moravian College.

Ray Gleason ('74) is the author of a novel, *The Violent Season* (Unlimited Publishing), drawing on his experiences in the Vietnam War. A retired U.S. Army infantry major, Gleason is a lecturer at Northwestern University's School of Continuing Studies in Chicago.

Nancy Kantor ('74) was promoted to executive vice president, original programming, and general manager, Disney Junior Channel Worldwide.

An exhibition of **Liu Heung Shing's ('75)** photographs was held at the Chinese

Art Museum in Shanghai. A former correspondent and photojournalist who covered China, the U.S., India, South Korea, and the former Soviet Union, he won the 1989 Pulitzer Prize for Spot News Photography, shared with his colleagues at the AP for coverage of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Martin McLee ('79) was recently elected bishop of the United Methodist Church, New York Episcopal Area. He is the former



senior pastor of the Union United Methodist Church in Boston. He was also an adjunct professor of social work

at Simmons College and taught at Brandeis.

1980s

Thelma Allen Stich (BSN '80), recently listed in Strathmore's *Who's Who Worldwide*, has a PhD from Rutgers, and is the president of Student Nurse Coach LLC on Staten Island.



Fred S. Sganga ('81), executive director of the Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook, received

the Secretary's Award from the Department of Veterans Affairs. The award recognizes his service as president of the National Associa-

tion of State Veterans Homes, the nation's largest provider of long-term care for veterans.

William Reifer (MSW '82) has been promoted to vice president of quality and case management at Phelps Memorial Hospital Center in Sleepy Hollow, NY.

Steven M. Schall (MSW '83) has been named president of the board of University Settlement on the Lower East Side. He is a partner in Schall & Russo Planning Works, which provides services to nonprofits and government agencies.

Debra Drelich (MSW '84), a specialist in geriatric care, was featured in *The New York Times* column "Ask the Expert," providing advice on assisted living for aging relatives.

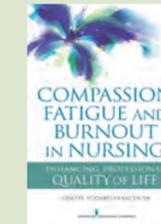
Vilma Torres (MSW '84), a longtime advocate for crime victims' families, was honored at Safe Horizon's annual Champion Awards Gala. Torres, who began working at Safe Horizon as an intern while still a Hunter student, has spent nearly 30 years at the organization.

Among the highlights of the 2013 Aeschylean Festival in Greece was a performance of *Agamemnon* directed by **Niketi Kondouri (MA '86)**.



Jacqueline R. Banks (MSEd '87) is the author of *A Fine Piece of Chocolate: Righteous Sistas Crossing Over to the Wild Side*, published by WestBow Press.

Landscape paintings by **Eva Lundsager (MFA '88)** were exhibited at the Academy Art Museum in Easton, MD. Her works are in the permanent collections of the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art in Oakland Park, KS, and the St. Louis Art Museum.



Compassion Fatigue and Burnout in Nursing: Enhancing Professional Quality of Life (Springer

Publishing Co.) by **Vidette Todaro-Franceschi (MSN, MPH '89)** seeks to provide solutions to the increased compassion fatigue among nurses. Todaro-Franceschi is coordinator of the Clinical Nurse Leader Graduate Program at Hunter.

1990s

Theresa Hawkins ('90) is the founder and group coordinator of the Atlantic City Free Public Library's Film Society, now in its seventh year.

Henry Butler ('91) has been appointed district manager of Community Board 3 in Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. He previously served as board chair.

David Lilenfeld ('93), co-founder and CEO of SterlingFunder, spoke at the 2013 Urban League Young Professionals Entrepreneur Boot Camp. The annual event provides young entrepreneurs with guidance and training from leaders in the metro Atlanta business community.

Susan Dessel ('95, BFA '03) was named a 2013-2014 Frankel Institute Fellow at the University of Michigan. Her work will be based on her research about Martha Gruening (1889-1937), a suffragist, journalist, and civil rights activist.

Veronie Lawrence Wright ('95) was appointed campus director of the College of New Rochelle's Bedford-Stuyvesant campus in Brooklyn. Known as the School of New Resources, the school offers the bachelor's degree and provides a support system for its low-income students, some of whom were incarcerated, homeless, or substance-dependent.



The Centre d'Art Contemporain in Geneva hosted the first retrospective of work by American artist **Edy Ferguson (MFA '96)**. Ferguson uses multiple media, with references drawn from film iconography, rock music, and the spirit of punk.

New York City history teacher **Joshua Vasquez ('96)** was nominated for a 2013 Hometown Heroes in Education Award, sponsored by the *Daily News*, the New York City Department of Education, the United Federation of Teachers, and the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators. Vasquez, chair of the History Department at Bushwick Leaders' High School for Academic Excel-

lence, led efforts to strengthen safety measures at the school.

2000s

Patricia Caffrey (MSN '00) was among 50 women recognized at the June 2013 Brooklyn Top Women in Business Networking Awards Dinner for outstanding accomplishments in the health care, corporate, education, or nonprofit arenas. Caffrey is the nurse administrator for the Brooklyn satellite of Calvary Hospital.



The video artist **Omer Fast (MFA '00)** was the subject of a recent article in *The New York Times*. His latest piece, which premiered at the Frieze Art Fair in London, explores the labor involved in pornography. Fast told the *Times* that his goal was to keep his own final product balanced between being "arguably pornography, but also arguably art."

The New York City comedy club Caroline's recently featured actress and comic **Natasha Leggero ('00)**.

Alexa Pomales ('02) is assistant director of the Child and Family Center at Rockefeller University.

Bill Sothern ('02), a certified industrial hygienist, was featured in a *New York Times* article on residential mold detection. His firm, Microecologies, volunteered its services in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and is battling

continued →

household mold problems caused by Hurricane Sandy.

Sara Abrams ('03) has been named assistant rabbi of the Westchester Reform Temple in Scarsdale.

A solo exhibition of works by artist **Jules de Balincourt (MFA '05)** was on view at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts through



April 2014. His works are in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art.

Fenella Saunders (MA '05) is managing editor of *American Scientist*, the magazine of Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society.

An exhibition of new paintings by **Zach Harris (MFA '06)** was recently held at the David Kordansky Gallery in Los Angeles. Harris's work has been featured and reviewed in *Artforum* and *The New York Times* and is in the permanent collections of the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, the Princeton University Art Museum, and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

Ten new paintings by **Peter Demos (MFA '08)** were presented in a solo exhibition at the David Richard Gallery in Santa Fe during summer 2013. Demos is a recipient of the Hunter College Tony Smith Award and recently completed a Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation Studio Residency.

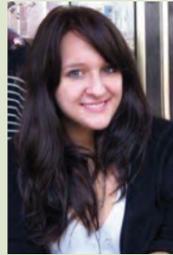
Kelle Jacob ('08) has been promoted to assistant manager, North America Innovation, at Estée Lauder.

Steve Rivera ('08) opened a new gallery, NOVELLA, on Orchard

Street in lower Manhattan.

2010s

Jean Keogh (MSW '12) has joined the education team at Nassau County's Coalition against Child Abuse and Neglect and the Coalition against Domestic Violence.



Lindsey Ferretino's (MFA '13) new play *Moonlight on the Bayou* had a staged reading at the Classic Stage

Company in New York City. Her work has been performed at the Kennedy Center Theater Lab in Washington, Atlantic Theatre Company, Rattlestick Playwright's Theater, the Manhattan Repertory Theater, and other venues in New York. She is a playwriting candidate at the Yale School of Drama.

Julie Oppermann (MFA '13) exhibited a series of her paintings at the Mark Moore Gallery in Culver City, CA. Oppermann, who lives and works in New York, recently completed two residency programs — in São Paulo at the Residencia Artistica and in Berlin at the University of Kunste.

Westward Mutations by **Kristen Palmer (MFA '13)** was one of eight plays featured at the Tangent Theatre's 2013 NEWvember New Plays Festival in Tivoli, NY. Her play was chosen from more than 300 submissions from around the world. Palmer is artistic director of Oddfellows Playhouse Youth Theatre in Middletown, CT.

Fivel Rothberg (MFA '13), a filmmaker and educator, is working on a new web-based documentary about sexual consent which aims to educate young men. He was interviewed about the film by the *Jewish Daily Forward* in July.

Literary Notes: New Books by MFA Alums

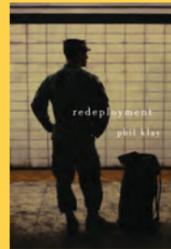
Gary Shteyngart's (MFA '02) latest work, the memoir *Little Failure*



(Random House), has received terrific reviews in a host of major news outlets. "Of the many enormously gifted authors

now writing about the immigrant experience... Gary Shteyngart is undoubtedly the funniest," wrote Michiko Kakutani in *The New York Times*.

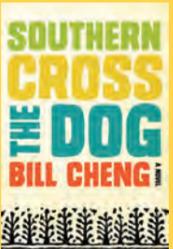
Phil Klay's (MFA '11) *Redeployment*, his debut short story collection



about the Iraq war and its effects on the soldiers who fought in it, has been published by The Penguin Press to wide acclaim. Dexter

Filkins, in his review in *The New York Times Book Review*, wrote, "*Redeployment* is hilarious, biting, whipsawing and sad. It's the best thing written so far on what the war did to people's souls."

Bill Cheng's (MFA '11) first novel, *Southern Cross the Dog*, was



published by HarperCollins in 2013. *The New York Times* said the book "has all the markers of a novel written in the finest

Southern gothic tradition."

Jessica Soffer's (MFA '09) debut novel, *Tomorrow There Will*



Be Apricots, has been published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. *The Atlantic* described her book as "a moving,

extraordinary novel....sorrowful and beautifully written."

In Memoriam

Sisters Lucille Duke Kaufman '47 and Barbara Duke Dickstein '48



▲ Sisters Barbara Duke Dickstein (left) and Lucille Duke Kaufman

Lucille Duke Kaufman '47 and Barbara Duke Dickstein '48, sisters who were close to each other and their alma mater, died last year within months of each other. Lucille died on June 29, 2013, Barbara on November 7, 2013.

Lucille, an art major at Hunter, helped her husband build a thriving plumbing contracting firm and owned her own company, LDK Contractors. She was a founding member and vice chair of the Hunter College Foundation Board of Trustees. She was also on the boards of the Alumni Association and the Scholarship and Welfare Fund and was a generous donor to Hunter's library and art galleries, as well as the College's Mother's Day Scholarship Campaign. She and her husband, Ted Kaufman, also funded the Lucille and Theodore Kaufman Genetics Research Laboratory.

In recognition of her service to the College, Lucille was inducted into Hunter's Hall of Fame. She is

survived by her husband, a son and two grandchildren.

Barbara contributed generously over many years to Hunter's Annual Fund and its Mother's Day Scholarship Campaign. She loved to get to know the students she sponsored through letters, emails, and visits to the College.

A longtime 20th-century costume historian at the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of American History, Barbara collected most of the Smithsonian's 1970s garment collection and worked on several major exhibitions. At Hunter, Barbara majored in speech and drama. She is survived by her husband, Sidney Dickstein, and by three children and five grandchildren.

Lucille and Barbara were both loyal Hunter alumnae and strong presences on campus many years after they graduated. They will be greatly missed by the Hunter community and all those whose lives they touched.

Opera Star Regina Resnik '42

Opera legend Regina Resnik, who while still in her teens gained acclaim for her performances at the Hunter College Assembly Hall and went on to sing at the world's greatest opera houses, died on August 8, 2013. She was 90. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Hunter's Class of January 1942, Resnik was a star of the Metropolitan Opera from 1944 to 1983 and later became a master teacher and an opera and film producer and director.

Resnik's most celebrated roles included Carmen, Donna Anna and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, Amneris in *Aida*, Klytaemnestra in *Elektra*, and the Countess in *Queen of Spades*. She began her career as a soprano, but in what she called "the biggest gamble of my life," she took on the mezzo-soprano and contralto repertory and gained still greater success.

She was a regular guest performer at La Scala in Milan, Covent Garden in London, the Vienna Staatsoper, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, the Chicago Philharmonic, and the San Francisco Opera, among others.

Resnik made her Broadway debut in 1987 playing Frau Schneider in a revival of *Cabaret*, for which she earned a Tony nomination. Three years later she played Madame Armfeldt in a Lincoln Center staging of *A Little Night Music*, winning a Drama Desk nomination.

As a Hunter student Resnik sang Gilbert and Sullivan roles at College venues, and in later years she produced "Regina Resnik Selects" at The Kaye Playhouse, established a scholarship for Hunter music students, and served as a special consultant on cultural affairs to the president of the College. She was one of the earliest members of



Photo: David Rodgers

the Hunter College Foundation Board of Trustees, which was established in 1991, and after serving three terms she was named a trustee emerita. Hunter awarded her an honorary doctorate and a President's Medal, and the Alumni Association gave her its 1986 Award for Outstanding Professional Achievement.

Hunter Remembers

Jeanne H. Mehler '31
Dorothy Selengut '33
Agnes Fauerbach '34
Henrietta Berger Kahn '34
Augusta Strauss Thomas '34
Sarah Kenyon '35
Helen F. Rosen '38
Rae Thomas '38
Lilia Morales Ayala '40
Helen Rehr '40
Mary Josephine Ruzicka '41

Lillian Dinkin '43
Estelle Silverman '43
Eugenia Chen Wing '44
Antoinette Maggio '44
Jeanne Payne '45
Chana Gordon Mlotek '46
Eleanor Schildkret Sapakoff '46
Mildred Snyder '46
Aclen Lewis '47
Elsbeth Gaertner Lewin '47
Helen Yuen '49

Gerard Leon Cafesjian '50
Mary Capone McDonnell '50
Zelda Boley '52
Eileen Agnes Sullivan '53
Barbara Mullings-Carter '56
Edwin Kabakow '57
Margaret Roy Gotti '61
Judith Daninhirsch '63
Marie Angelos '64
Susan Gildenberg Jeffers '64
Stanley Snadowsky '64

Angeline Gallman Donaldson '65
Barbara Bluckhorn Lane '66
Dolores Prida '69
Patricia Blevins '70
Aspasia Couloumbis Christopher '72
Araceli Cabeiro McShane '76
Thomas A. Dern '79
Virginia Griffith Frank '85
Eileen Roaman '95
Alfred Chiodo '05

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FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER **DON CAPOCCIA '82**

“I owe Hunter an enormous debt,” says Hunter College Foundation Board of Trustees member Don Capoccia (MUP '82). “I wouldn't be doing what I do today if not for what Hunter College did for me.”

What Capoccia does today is manage a major real estate development company that makes affordable housing a reality for thousands of New York City residents. BFC Partners, which Capoccia founded, has helped spur the resurgence of neighborhoods like the East Village, East Harlem, Williamsburg, Downtown Brooklyn, and Stapleton in Staten Island through residential, retail, and community facility building projects. Capoccia recently added the Bronx to the list by becoming a co-owner of a rundown 252-unit com-

plex that he and his colleagues will convert into quality apartments for middle- and working-class tenants.

Capoccia is also a dedicated philanthropist and arts advocate. He has served as vice chairman of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and vice president of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing, which he cofounded, and is on the boards of the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation and the Battery Park City Authority.

Capoccia's commitment to accessibility and diversity in urban planning was fostered at Hunter. Though he was raised upstate and earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Buffalo, it wasn't until he came to Hunter to pursue his master's in urban planning that he understood what made New York City

special. “It was a great introduction to people,” he said. “For the first time, I became aware of real cultural and racial diversity.” An undergraduate class he taught had perhaps the greatest influence. “I was teaching kids from all over about ‘city life’ — but really, they were teaching me.”

Capoccia has been a generous contributor to Hunter's library fund, LGBT Center, and urban affairs projects, and he has provided many Hunter students with career-building internships. He became a trustee in 2012 so that he could have an even greater impact. “There are so many younger people at Hunter who come from challenging upbringings, and it can be so hard to find opportunity,” he said. “I want to help provide that.”