

ALUMNUS

THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

VOL. 119 ISSUE 3

SPRING/SUMMER 2025

ACTOR VICTOR ALMANZAR, B.A. '12

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Members of the CCNY Alumni Community,

It's my pleasure to welcome you to the Spring/Summer 2025 issue of *The Alumnus*—a celebration of the extraordinary momentum our City College community continues to build.

In this issue, we spotlight actor Victor Almanzar '12, whose return to campus for the David Dortort Lecture reminded us how art, storytelling, and perseverance can shape lives and reflect the human experience (p.2). We celebrate the Class of 2025 and the journey of students like Valedictorian Eilyn Zuniga Marquez and Salutatorian Andrew Williams, whose resilience and brilliance offer a glimpse into our shared future (p.6).

The issue also highlights the inspiring work of alumni driving innovation—from those championing CCNY's new degree in Digital Game Development (p. 20) to Kyesha Ruffin's leadership of the Young Alumni Group and her mission to empower the next generation through STEM (p.12).

Whether in the arts, public service, science, or education, CCNY graduates continue to lead with purpose and integrity. You'll also read about the growing success of Harlem View student journalism (p.11), the extraordinary impact of our affiliate groups (p.8), and an inside look at a GRAMMY® win with deep campus roots (p.14).

As always, this work is only possible because of you—our alumni. Your involvement fuels scholarships, career pathways, and a culture of belonging that spans generations. I invite you to stay engaged: attend an upcoming event, join an affiliate group, renew your membership, or make a gift to help us shape what's next.

Thank you for being part of the legacy—and the future—of the City College community.

With gratitude,

—David Covington

THE ALMNUS IS PUBLISHED BY THE ALMNUS ASSOCIATION OF THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK.

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ALUMNUS VICTOR ALMANZAR SHARES HIS EXPERIENCES IN DORTORT LECTURE

Victor Almanzar, B.A. '12, Theater and Speech, and the 2024 recipient of the Townsend Harris Medal, never expected to become an actor. As an immigrant who landed in high school in Long Island City, he was placed in a drama class that didn't initially resonate with him. A perceptive teacher saw potential in him and secretly enrolled him in the CAT Youth Theater after-school program. Almanzar's first performance sparked a love for applied arts and storytelling, enabling him to process his environment and emotions in new ways.

After years of serving in the military, Almanzar decided to pursue his undergraduate degree. Although acting wasn't his initial goal, he stumbled upon City College's Theatre and Speech program and couldn't help but enroll in acting classes. "The faculty in the theater department at CCNY were warm and attentive," he reflects. "They cared about my development, not just as an actor, but as a human being."

After graduating from City College, Almanzar attended Labyrinth Theater Company's Summer Intensive. There, he encountered Stephen Adly Guirgis's work and found an artistic home in Guirgis's plays, which focus on people often overlooked in American theater. When Guirgis offered Almanzar the role of Oswald in *Between Riverside and Crazy*, it bolstered Almanzar's commitment to theater. "Through his work, I felt seen as a human being," he shares. "He writes about people who aren't typically represented."

Encouraged by mentors, Almanzar then pursued a master's degree at the Actors Studio Drama School at Pace University, a milestone he describes as one of the most important accomplishments of his career.

That career includes notable roles in television, film, and theater. His portrayal of Oswald in the Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Between Riverside and Crazy" received acclaim on Broadway and in major regional theaters. On screen, his credits include leading the indie film *11:55* and recurring roles in *Homeland*, *Power*, and *Empire*.

Almanzar's life experiences—his immigrant background and military service—profoundly shape his approach to acting. Initially seeing his accent and foreign birth as potential obstacles, he soon realized they were assets that gave him a unique lens through which to view the world. "I approach my characters with this in mind and, no matter the role, I try to give it a deep sense of humanity," he explained. His military experience also instilled a sense of discipline and a deeper understanding of the human condition, which he brings to his craft.

For Almanzar, the biggest misconception about acting is that it's just playing pretend. "Like every other job, you have to put in the work," he says. "You have to delve into the human condition. Analyze your character, the world they live in, the stakes, the wants, the obstacles. You have to memorize lines, research, and place yourself in emotionally charged circumstances—and then perform as if no one is watching."

Almanzar returned to City College on May 7 to deliver the 2025 David Dortort Lecture in the Dramatic Arts at Aaron Davis Hall. In his lecture, "An Actor's Journey," Almanzar shared how his City College degree led to success on stage and screen. The joyful and heartfelt event was filled with both laughter and tears as he shared his remarkable journey. Students eagerly took notes and posed thoughtful questions, and alumni who once shared the stage with Almanzar at CCNY returned to celebrate a rich legacy and a promising future for the College's theater students.

MESSAGE FROM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Dear Class of 2025,

On behalf of the Alumni Association of The City College of New York, it is my great pleasure and deep honor to congratulate you on reaching this important milestone. Today, we celebrate your academic achievements—but more than that, we celebrate your grit, your vision, and your belief in the transformative power of education. Commencement marks both an ending and a beginning—a celebration of all that you have accomplished, and the start of all you are still destined to achieve.

I know that most of you did not arrive on this campus with a silver spoon. No, this is your achievement, along with the people who supported and assisted you, and both you and they must be proud. You are proof that hard work, determination, and a belief in something greater can break through even the most difficult circumstances. Your journey through City College—whether in person or virtually, through late nights, tight deadlines, and moments of doubt—has prepared you not only to succeed, but to lead. You've already demonstrated that you have the resilience to face a shifting world, and now you carry the responsibility to help shape it.

You are graduating during a time of immense uncertainty in our country and across the world. We are facing deep social, political, and economic challenges. We are witnessing increasing division, the erosion of public trust, and troubling attempts to devalue the very idea of knowledge, scholarship, and open inquiry.

The value of higher education is under attack, and institutions like City College—which have long served as engines of opportunity and progress—face increasing challenges. In such times, it would be easy to grow disheartened. But your presence here today proves otherwise. You are living proof that courage, community, and perseverance still carry the day.

City College has always been more than a school—it's a movement. Founded on the principle that excellence belongs to everyone, CCNY has produced generations of alumni who have fought for justice, advanced science and the arts, and lifted their communities. You now inherit that legacy. With your degree comes not only opportunity, but responsibility: to use your knowledge and your voice to build a better, fairer, and more hopeful world.

The challenges you face are real. But so is your power. Never underestimate what can be accomplished when driven individuals come together with purpose, with heart, and with hope. Stay optimistic. Dream big. Work hard. And surround yourself with people who push you to grow and give back. Your education is not just a personal achievement—it is a public asset. You have the power to confront injustice, to champion truth, to protect the vulnerable, and to build the kind of society that reflects the best of who we are. The path ahead may not be simple or smooth, but know this: you are not alone. With desire, with community, and with relentless effort, anything is possible. As you take your next steps—whether into the workforce, graduate studies, or new ventures—I encourage you to stay connected to the College and to one another. You are now part of a remarkable family of over 100,000 CCNY alumni whose accomplishments span every field and every corner of the globe. Our strength is in our unity, and your engagement helps ensure that the City College mission continues to thrive for future generations.

The Alumni Association is your bridge to this vibrant network. Your first two years of membership are completely free, and your involvement directly supports student scholarships, mentoring programs, and vital college initiatives. We invite you to contribute your time, your talents, and, when you're able, your resources—so that those who follow in your footsteps will have the same opportunities you had, and more.

Please see www.ccnyalumni.org for all that we can offer to you.

Class of 2025, I am proud to welcome you into the CCNY alumni family. Go forward with confidence, with pride, and with the unshakable belief that together, we can create the kind of world we all deserve.



Congratulations—and welcome.

With admiration and solidarity,

Larry Greengrass
President, Alumni Association of CCNY

The City College of New York's Homecoming Day took place on Saturday, May 3 from noon to 5 p.m. on the North Campus's Beaver Quad. Alumni and friends of the college reunited for a fun-filled day of activities, games, campus tours, live music, performances, an art exhibition, and more, including special appearances by alumni members of the New York Giants.

The free events kicked off with Lavender Fever Homecoming Week, which ran from April 28 through May 9. CCNY Student Life shared updates on Instagram about the events and activities that happened during Lavender Fever Homecoming Week.

HOMECOMING DAY





MEET THE 2025 VALEDICTORIAN & SALUTATORIAN

Eilyn Zuniga Marquez, a Salvadoran immigrant who graduated summa cum laude in January with dual B.A. and M.A. degrees in psychology from the Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership, is The City College of New York's Class of 2025 Valedictorian. **Andrew Williams**, who also completed his coursework for a BS in psychology summa cum laude in the Colin Powell School's Macaulay Honors Program, is the Salutatorian.



MEET THE 2025 GREAT GRADS

Nominated by their mentors, and representative of all schools and divisions of The City College of New York, these talented and motivated students from the Class of 2025 excelled in the classroom, inspired us with their personal histories, and illustrated the transformative power of the City experience.

Read the issue at: <https://www.ccnycunyu.edu/commencement/great-grads-2025>

NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER BRAD LANDER ADDRESSES CLASS OF 2025



Comptroller Brad Lander took the stage to address the Class of 2025 and send them off into their bright futures.

Lander serves as New York City's chief financial officer, as well as the City's budget watchdog and chief accountability officer. His audits revealed nearly a quarter of a billion dollars underreported in NYC Ferry expenditures, inadequate cost controls in Covid-19 emergency procurement, and the ineffectiveness of the City's homeless sweeps.

He leads an office of roughly 800 public servants in their work to promote the financial health, integrity, and effectiveness of city government and secure a more thriving and sustainable future for all New Yorkers.

As investment advisor and custodian for the City's public pension funds, Lander stewards the retirement security of over 750,000 current and retired public sector workers, with a prudent, diversified, long-term approach to the City's investments and obligations. Under his leadership, three of the City's funds have adopted a detailed plan to reach net zero emissions by 2040, among the most aggressive in the nation. The plan includes divesting from fossil fuels, engaging asset managers and portfolio companies toward decarbonization across the economy, and dramatically scaling up investments in climate solutions.

Lander's team published the first detailed report on emergency shelter costs for asylum seekers and identified more effective strategies for addressing the humanitarian crisis. The office launched the Department of Correction Dashboard to provide much-needed transparency into City jails. And his initiative with Mayor Eric Adams to pay nonprofit human service providers on time has reduced nearly year-long payment delays.

Lander has strengthened the office's efforts to combat the climate crisis, create and preserve affordable housing, and protect workers. His Public Solar NYC plan includes an innovative "public option" to scale up rooftop solar and create good green jobs.

Under his leadership, the NYC pension funds led shareholder advocacy through which most Starbucks investors voted for an independent review of the company's labor and human rights policies and actions.

As part of his commitment to New York City's thriving and sustainable future, Lander focuses on improving the City's public infrastructure. As of July 2023, Lander has managed the issuance of a total of \$7.8 billion in municipal bonds to invest in schools, parks, transportation, water and sewers, and climate resiliency projects. The office's public finance work includes innovative social bonds and tender solicitations that have generated hundreds of millions of dollars in savings, even amid rising interest rates.

Prior to being elected Comptroller in 2021, Lander spent 12 years in the City Council, where he co-founded the Council's Progressive Caucus and won transformative changes to expand workers' rights, secure tenant protections, create affordable housing, integrate and strengthen the district's public schools, and make streets safer. He served previously as the director of the Fifth Avenue Committee and the Pratt Center for Community Development.

Lander lives with his wife, Meg Barnette, in Brooklyn where they raised two children, Marek and Rosa, who still roll their eyes at his dad jokes.



More than 150 alumni attended the annual CCNY Alumni Subway Series game at Yankee Stadium on May 16. The Yankees beat the Mets 6-2.



BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS ALUMNI SOCIETY MARKS ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

Emiliano Venicio, Mymona Tansmin, Sanjida Sanju and Ayubur Bhuyia each received a \$3,000 Mark and Rose Friedman Scholarship at the BEAS's year-end event on May 16. In addition to the scholarships, former BEAS President Charles Ranieri '13 earned the David M. Greene Service Award. The award was renamed in 2024 for Greene, B.A. '63, who passed away in May 2025. During his 61 years of service on the BEAS Board, Greene held every officer position, including president.

Pictured with the Friedman Scholars are (from left to right): BEAS Vice President Adonis Pena '18, BEAS Treasurer Linda X. Li '24, and BEAS President Alejandro Sanchez '17.



Happy New Year!

The Asian Alumni Group celebrated the Year of the Snake on April 25 at Royal Seafood on Mott Street. Zhengzhao Johnny Luo, professor and chair of CCNY's Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, was presented with the Asian American Achievement Award, while the Service to the Asian American Community Award went to CaringKind, the Heart of Alzheimer's Caregiving. Students Arfath Chowdhury and JK A Gongoon were awarded 2025 Student Scholarships for their amazing achievements.



COMMUNICATIONS ALUMNI GROUP INDUCTS THREE HALL OF FAMERS

The Communications Alumni Group inducted Edward Schimmel '73, coordinating producer at ESPN, Anthony Durniak '75, staff director of publications at IEEE, and Wil Cruz '02, executive editor of news practices at ABC News, into its Hall of Fame at its 47th Annual Awards Ceremony on May 14. Elinor Tatum, publisher and editor-in-chief of the Amsterdam News, received the 2025 Media Legend Award.

From left to right: Ed Keller, Ad/PR professor and program director; Lynne Scott Jackson, Ad/PR distinguished lecturer; Takhmina Ilkhomova, 2024-25 Lynn Appelbaum Ad/PR All-Star Scholar; Khloe Fox, 2024-25 Art Stevens Scholar; Honor Dibouey, 2024-25 VML Scholar; Javier Garcia '09, MPS '15, CAG treasurer and Ad/PR professor; and Terrell F. Merritt '20, CAG president.

CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENTS NOW HAVE DEDICATED SPACE THANKS TO ALUMNI PERSISTENCE



From left to right: Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Scott Gurba, Senior Vice President of OIACER Dee Dee Mozeleski, GSOE Dean Alex Couzis, President Vince Boudreau, alumni and sponsors John Eschemuller and Robert Welner, and Civil Engineering Chair Beth Wittig.

ALUMNUS gives a standing ovation to alumni John Eschemuller '70 and Robert Welner '71, Grove School of Engineering, for the recent opening of a lounge space specifically for civil engineering students. For years, they have worked behind the scenes culminating in the ribbon cutting ceremony in Room B6 in Steinman Hall on May 1.

It began several years ago when civil engineering alum Eschemuller recognized the need for a gathering space to bring CE students together in a congenial atmosphere to study, relax and get to know one another. Soon after the idea was floated, a friend from Brooklyn Technical High School, Welner, joined him in lobbying for the space. The pair discussed the idea with GSOE Dean Alexander Couzis to ultimately identify a location in Steinman Hall. Once the space became available, Chair and Associate Professor of Civil Engineering Beth Wittig designed it, keeping in mind the needs of the students.

Support was also given by President Vincent Boudreau and Senior Vice President Dee Dee Mozeleski. Additional monies ensured that the project moved forward.

Welner noted at the ceremony that the Grove School had no available lounge space and this was sorely needed. As members of the Grove School Advisory Board, Welner and Eschemuller hope alumni in other disciplines step forward to create their own student spaces.

Welner and Eschemuller are not content just to beautify CCNY's campus and contribute to student wellness. They are busy fostering CCNY and GSOE awareness at their other alma mater, Brooklyn Technical High School, the largest public STEM high school in the country. With the help of the academic staff at GSOE, they are in the early stages of a proposed idea to attract BTHS students to participate in GSOE campus research activities with the ultimate goal of applying to CCNY. In March, Welner and Eschemuller presented the idea to 100 Brooklyn Tech students, at which a lively discussion and Q&A took place. Another event is currently in the planning stages. Stay tuned for more coming from this dynamic alumni duo.

CCNY'S HARLEM VIEW STUDENT JOURNALISTS WERE FINALISTS IN ELITE NORTHEAST COMPETITION

The *Harlem View* online publication at the City College of New York is a finalist in three categories for the best collegiate journalism in the northeast region, including “Best Independent Online Student Publication,” in the Society of Professional Journalists, [Mark of Excellence Awards 2024](#).

Harlem View Managing Editors Susannah Pittman '25, Katelyn Polanco '25 and Natalie Moreno, an S.J. Levy Fellow, are the forces behind the publication. Polanco, a 2025 Great Grad, is an [Advertising and Public Relations](#) major, and Pittman is a double major in history and anthropology, with a minor in [Journalism](#). Advertising and Public Relations and Journalism are in the [Media and Communication Arts Department](#) in CCNY's [Division of Humanities and the Arts](#). The two other categories for which “Harlem Review” received finalist distinction were “Best News Videography” by Lizbeth Fuentes, film major and journalism minor, and a “Best Food Writing” by Adeshewa Coker, communications major.

For her story, “[Food Vendors Compete with Restaurants in Jackson Heights](#),” Fuentes dove into the complex relationship between street vendors and restaurants on Roosevelt Avenue in Jackson Heights, Queens. Fuentes also provided Spanish translation in her video. Coker's story, “[Jollof Wars at First Love N.Y. Church](#),” explored the subtle differences in the important West African dish jollof, and the dissent it causes between Ghanaian-American and Nigerian-American congregants at a local church.

This is the fifth year in a row that Harlem Review has received honors from the SPJ's Mark of Excellence Awards, where competition is stiff from private universities,

such as Columbia, Harvard, Syracuse and New York University.

CCNY and Harlem View alumnus Luca GoldMansour, writing for CUNY's NYCity News Service, was a finalist in the “Best Print/Online” category for his story, “Pepper spray and surging crowds: Videos show flashpoints at City College.”

The logo for Harlem View, featuring a stylized 'H' icon followed by the text 'HARLEM VIEW' in a bold, sans-serif font.

Harlem View is a project of the Journalism Program, led by Barbara Nevins Taylor '70, in the Department of Media and Communication Arts. It is funded by the Campus Engagement Network, which supports innovative teaching. Recently, Harlem View became part of an effort by the Center for Community News sponsored by the University of Vermont to foster local news in underserved areas. Student reporters at Harlem View cover issues, stories and events throughout New York City, often in communities that receive little coverage. Harlem View stories have been shared with the Brooklyn Eagle and the goal is to share with other hyper local publications. Initial funding for Harlem View was provided by the Ford Foundation. It launched in 2019 with a grant from the Ford Foundation and funding from the Campus Engagement Network. The Engagement Network continues to support the online publication.

KYESHA RUFFIN, M.S. '13 HAS BIG PLANS FOR YOUNG ALUMNI



A proud alumna who returned to college at 27, Kyesha Ruffin wanted to get more involved with her alma mater by engaging recent alumni. So, she cold-called AACCN Executive Director David Covington to volunteer her services.

After a few minutes, “I knew that I wanted to lead that group,” she said.

Since that fateful call in late 2023, Ruffin has revitalized City College’s [Young Alumni Group](#) by reaching out to alumni who may not have been aware that such an organization targeted to their cohort existed.

Ruffin defines that cohort as “recent graduates looking to connect with other young alumni,” regardless of age. Her ambition is to make the Young Alumni Group “the first stop for students graduating from college and connecting with people who are already in the working world...and then also being able to get some support and some training to help them be better equipped and starting their new careers.”

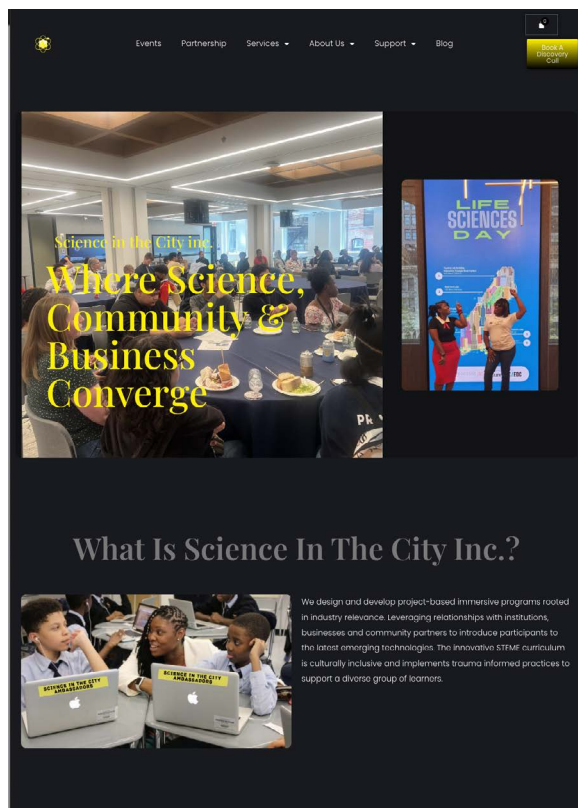
Ruffin’s drive is inherited from her mother, who fought aggressively to have her daughter attend a public school on Manhattan’s Upper West Side instead of the underperforming one in her East Harlem district. After high school, Ruffin briefly attended CCNY, dropping out due to a lack of discipline. She worked in the music, television and financial services industries until returning to finish her degree at the College of New Rochelle in 2007. After the stock market crash in 2008, she returned to CCNY under the auspices of the Teaching Fellows Fellowship, receiving her master’s degree in education in 2013. She earned a second graduate degree, from Fordham University, in 2016.

A few years into her teaching career, her experience in an East Harlem public high school changed her approach.

“There was literally a portion of school segregated for students, which is an individual education program,” she said. “It’s for students who have special needs or special education services”—known as individualized education programs, or IEPs—“and that [was] so inequitable. It was known as the ‘dumb wing.’”

She decided to show these overlooked and misunderstood students how “science is connected to everything,” she said. “Some of these students had never been past five blocks of their neighborhood. I took them down to Chinatown, where we had dim sum. Then we compared Asian cuisine and used geography. I just used everything at my disposal and my experience to be the best science teacher for them.”

That gave her the impetus to found Science In The City, Inc., which she calls “a mission-driven organization that disrupts intergenerational poverty through STEM education, workforce development, and equitable access to emerging career pathways.”



“It was an idea of what can I do to extend the science classroom to make young people excited about what science is and to make them feel good about it,” she explained. “When they feel good about science and they feel like they can master the subject, they automatically feel smart. Every student who thinks they’re good at science has a really high self-esteem because it’s the hard thing that most kids can’t do.”

Ruffin brings that same passion and entrepreneurial spirit to CCNY. She hopes to expand interest in the Young Alumni Group by being physically present on the campus, where she can engage personally with students.

“I need to be there,” she said. “There are so many incredible jewels as City College, and I don’t even think that most people at City College know what’s [there]. You speak to people and they’re like, oh, I didn’t know that existed. It’s even changed my career in this short period of time.”



BASEBALL

The CCNY Baseball team played in the [CUNY Baseball Championship Series](#) for the fourth straight season with a 10-7 [victory](#) over Lehman College. The team took on Baruch College in the best-of-three championship series, on May 10 at Reinhart Baseball Field at Maritime College in Throggs Neck. The Beavers lost to Baruch in the [third game](#) with a final score of 14-10. “We showed tremendous heart today,” said Head Coach [Scott Losche](#). “This team never stopped believing, and I couldn’t be prouder of the fight they showed from the first pitch to the last out.” The Beavers finished the 2025 season with a 13-14 record.



MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD

The [men's](#) and [women's](#) Track & Field teams competed at the CUNY Outdoor Championships in May. The men’s team placed third overall, while the women’s team also placed third.

For more Athletics, visit ccnyathletics.com.

A CONVERSATION WITH GRAMMY® AWARD WINNER DAN PUGACH M.A. '11 AND HIS CCNY TEACHER MIKE HOLOBER



CCNY alumni Dan Pugach, M.A. '11, a drummer, composer and bandleader, won a GRAMMY® in Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album for his album Dan Pugach Big Band Featuring Nicole Zuraitis - Bianca Reimagined: Music for Paws and Persistence at the 67th Annual GRAMMY® Awards on Feb. 2.

The album was dedicated to the memory of his dog Bianca, a pit bull rescue dog, who has since passed away. Zuraitis, Pugach's wife, is a jazz vocalist and songwriter who performed on the album.

From his home in West Haven, Conn., where he lives with Zuraitis and his new pit bull rescue Dolly, Pugach settled into a conversation with his former CCNY professor, jazz pianist,

composer and arranger Mike Holober. Pugach credits Holober with changing the trajectory of his musical career. Via Zoom, the two men kibbited about their shared musical history, classes at CCNY, the ASCAP Foundation Jazz Composer Award and the BMI Jazz Composer's Workshop, which they both attended, albeit years apart, and where Holober went on to become associate director from 2008 to 2015.

They shared notes about venues they've played in suburban N.Y., where Holober lives in Westchester. Between them, the constant refrain was "Now that's a good jazz musician," as they traded names of those they've played with and admired.

While Dolly nestled on the couch next to him, her face between her paws, Pugach answered Holober's questions.

Holober: The GRAMMYS? Well, how was it?

Pugach: You know, I'm still as surprised as the next guy because of the quality of the competition. I was shocked to win. I'm still shocked. But we took it seriously. Nicole hired a publicist because when we had our 2018 nomination for "Plus One with the Dan Puget Nonet," we knew nothing.

We had almost the entire big band fly out for it. 13 out of 18 band members. It was epic. We could have gone to the after parties, but I went to sleep.

Holober: Were there other CCNY musicians playing on the album?

Pugach: Yes, CCNY Master's of Music student Nitzan Gavrieli on piano and CCNY Master's of Music private instructor Pete McCann on guitar. I always mention CCNY because I had no real background in composing or arranging but you saw something in me. You gave me an assignment

to compose for a nine-piece ensemble which was the beginning of my nonet. I learned from you.

Holober: You got an ASCAP Composer's Award.

Pugach: I wanted to get into the BMI Composer's Workshop but was not ready for it at the time so I took a break from the nonet (nine piece band), got the book "Inside the Score" by Rayburn Wright and Modern Voicing Techniques and studied the exercises.

Holober: Wright was the chief conductor at Radio City and went to teach at the Eastman Music school. He was all about the craft of Big Band writing.

Holober: I really want to know, how do you do it? How do you balance between playing drums and writing?

Pugach: It was sometimes difficult to get work in

New York City, so I decided to create opportunities for myself by writing original music with me on drums. These days I take work as a drummer to make a living playing in Nicole Zuraitis Quartet among others.

Holober: It's a rush being a sideman.

Pugach: While playing drums, you can literally think about nothing, explore the music. I don't have to look at the score and think about the other players. I grew a lot as a drummer from writing, especially during the BMI program. I saw how different drummers interpreted and it gave me a sense of

something new, to always be exploring.

Holober: What are you listening to now?

Pugach: Mostly small group jazz. Roy Haynes on drums is my biggest influence. When I was in school, the teachers would always say, "Stop trying to sound like Roy Haynes. Develop your own voice." But I wouldn't mind sounding a little like Roy Haynes. Chick Corea is my all-time favorite. I listen to him a lot. Oliver Nelson, Booker Little, Blue Mitchell, Horace Silver's "Silver and Brass" album is what I want my Big Band to sound like. It's very rich. It's all coloring it together. "Tales from the Hudson"



“MOST OF MY IDEAS COME WHEN I'M NOT PLAYING, WHEN I'M WALKING THE DOG OR SOMETHING BECAUSE MY IMAGINATION IS FREE FROM THE INSTRUMENT. I'M STILL TRYING TO GET BETTER AT ORCHESTRATION.”

clarity. I learned the hard way how to accompany a voice—because I married a vocalist, so I better figure it out.

Holober: There's an arc in composing, to bring your personality to it without harming the music. It's a group effort.

Pugach: I'm still learning. Most of my ideas come when I'm not playing, when I'm walking the dog or something because my imagination is free from the instrument. I'm still trying to get better at orchestration.

Holober: I never stop learning. If you think you've got it down, then you're toast. It's all more tools to use to make better music.

Pugach: I agree. There's the pressure to create new stuff at every musical instance and reinvent the wheel and I have learned to get away from that. At the same time I try to get away from my compositional tendencies so I am a little better at editing and cleaning the score up while producing

by Michael Brecker is one of my favorite records. It changed my life. I remember the solos by heart.

Holober: How do you deal with deadlines? If you have four months to write a piece, do you do it all last minute? Or do you start right away?

Pugach: If I have four months, I pull my hair out, I'm worrying, I'm procrastinating. Then as I get closer to the deadline, I vomit it out. I look at the realistic parameters, all the elements. I usually start two weeks before the deadline. I'm trying to get better at it, but I haven't figured it out yet. I made a leap in my toolbox, to be less judgmental and perfectionist at the writing stage which reduces the anxiety around it. I start working in sketch and I don't worry about orchestration, just about form, content, story. I work backwards, towards the climax and fill in the connecting tissues. I used to work from measure one and on and that got me stuck. My ah ha moment was realizing all the information I need is in the tune and let it write itself.

CCNY BIDS FOND FAREWELL TO DEANS RICH AND PERKINS



Richard J. Henley and Susan L. Davis Dean Andrew O. “Andy” Rich of the Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership becomes the 17th president of Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. on July 1.

Rich has been dean since February 2019. During his six years of leadership, the Colin Powell School has seen growth in every measure, most obviously in the number of undergraduate students, as the Powell School became the largest undergraduate division at the College, as measured by numbers of majors. He has overseen a fundraising campaign that has secured more than \$85 million in pledges and gifts since 2020. Among other things, the funds raised have supported several new faculty hires and a number of new leadership programs, including Leadership for Democracy and Social Justice, and the Moynihan Center at City College. Most recently, Dean Rich oversaw the creation of the Social Mobility Lab at CCNY, which is dedicated to understanding how social mobility is created.

Before coming to CCNY, Rich was executive secretary and CEO of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation, a federal agency that supports young people pursuing public service leadership across the United States, for eight years. Prior to that, he was president and CEO of the Roosevelt Institute, a think tank and leadership development organization based in New York City, for eight years.

Dean Rich is chair of the Board of Friends of the Truman Foundation. He is the author of “Think Tanks, Public Policy, and the Politics of Expertise” (Cambridge University Press, 2004), and has written about the role of think tanks and foundations in American politics and policymaking. He previously taught political science at CCNY and Wake Forest University. He received his B.A. from the University of Richmond and his Ph.D. in political science from Yale University.



Martin and Michele Cohen Dean Susan A. Perkins of the Division of Science becomes the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at SUNY Potsdam, her alma mater, in the summer.

Dean Perkins joined City College in January 2020, just before the onset of COVID-19. She has led the Division of Science with vision, supporting the vibrant research efforts and being a tireless advocate for the College’s students. Her tenure has been marked by her keen focus on student success, particularly the introductory math and science classes that are significant hurdles for many of our students. She was a driving force behind making the Gaming Pathways Program a reality, and she brought the Post Bac Health Professions program to fruition.

In addition to her administrative abilities, Dean continued her own research and taught a class in her specialty, parasitology, every year. Despite attempts to cap the class enrollment, she proved too popular of a professor and the class typically filled to more than 150 percent of capacity. On her watch, funded research grew and the Division was a major contributor to the College, reaching \$100 million in research funding this past year.

Perkins came to CCNY from the Division of Invertebrate Zoology at the Institute for Comparative Genomics at the American Museum of Natural History, where she was curator and professor of microbial genomics for 15 years, teaching in the AMNH Richard Gilder Graduate School, and contributing to major exhibitions. She was also a program director for the NSF’s Division of Environmental Biology, Systematics and Biodiversity Science Cluster, and has served as president of the American Society of Parasitologists.

She earned her Ph.D. at the University of Vermont, focusing on ecology and evolution. She completed prestigious Roosevelt and National Science Foundation Bioinformatics postdoctoral fellowships at the AMNH. She also taught ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

THE BERNARD & ANNE SPITZER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



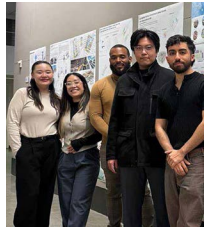
Assistant Professor of Urban and Regional Planning [Laura Wainer](#) and her Spring 2024 B Arch Advanced Studio students (with special credit

to Valeska Abarca, B Arch '24, Lorraine Colbert, B Arch '24, and Juan Jimenez Giraldo, B Arch '25) have published "Pathways to Home: Design Solutions for Immigrant-Centered Housing," a culmination of a two-year collaboration with the immigrant advocacy organization [Make The Road New York](#). View the booklet [here](#).



Aimi Hamraie, associate professor of Medicine, Health & Society at Vanderbilt University, and director of the Critical Design

Lab, an international collaborative of disabled designers, artists, and researchers, delivered the prestigious Lewis Mumford Lecture in March. Hamraie's scholarship focuses on design, architecture and urbanism, critical disability studies, and science and technology studies. Hamraie is the author of *Building Access: Universal Design and the Politics of Disability* and the forthcoming book, *Enlivened City*. Hamraie is also a presidential appointee to the U.S. Access Board and a 2022 United States Artists Fellow in Media.



The School's Graduate Program in Urban Design recently retooled itself, expanding the curriculum

from two to three semesters starting with the cohort entering in Fall 2023. During the new third semester, students now complete a capstone project. Concurrent with this curricular change, the program added a "5+1" accelerated degree option for undergraduate architecture students.

The first cohort of students from this meatier program and the first 5+1 students finished during the 2024-25 academic year. We are pleased to share their capstone projects as we celebrate their graduation!

Special thanks to the Austin, Tex. Office of Climate Action and Resilience, the Austin Circular Economy Program, and the Graduate Program in Urban Design Program at University of Texas for the Austin project as well.

COLIN POWELL SCHOOL FOR CIVIC AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP



The April 21 installment of the Rick and Susan Goings Conversations in Leadership series featured former U.S.

Ambassador to Spain and Andorra [Julissa Reynoso](#), the first woman to hold the position. A Dominican

native who emigrated to the Bronx at age 7, Reynoso is now a multilingual partner and executive committee member at law firm Winston & Strawn, focusing her practice on complex commercial litigation, regulatory enforcement, international arbitration, and cross-border disputes.

The Colin Powell School partnered with global consulting and standards firm AccountAbility to announce the Fall 2025 launch of the [AccountAbility Sustainability 'S' Lab](#). This groundbreaking initiative will equip students with the knowledge, tools, and experiences to excel as the next generation of sustainability and business leaders. The 'S' Lab will provide a unique, immersive learning experience that prepares the next generation of forward-thinking leaders to advance the sustainability agenda across organizations and deliver a positive impact on global society.

CCNY received a \$490,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to establish a new project at the Colin Powell School, "[SUSTAIN-NYC: Storytelling for Urban Sustainability and Transformation in New York City](#)." This project, a partnership with local environmental justice organization South Bronx Unite, aims to undertake various media projects that document, analyze, and publicize ongoing issues of environmental injustice in the communities of Mott Haven and Port Morris.

CCNY was awarded a \$500,000 planning grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation to incubate a [Health and Opportunity](#)



[Leadership Institute](#). HOLI, as it is known, aspires to cultivate a new generation of leaders in public health, medicine, health

policy, and public affairs drawn from diverse and historically marginalized communities. HOLI's founding director will be Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, the [Sternberg Family Professor of Leadership](#) at the Colin Powell School and a former commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology [Nicole Lorenzetti](#), director of the School's Program in Special

Education, presented "It's Just Who He Is: Mindsets of Teacher Education Students and Student Disciplinary Referral," to the American Education Research Association's 2025 annual meeting. The presentation reflected her preliminary findings for a full paper that she is currently preparing for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. The upcoming paper was prompted by research that Lorenzetti conducted for her most recent study, "Teachers Education Students' Classroom Disciplinary Decisions for Students Exhibiting Internalizing and Externalizing Behaviors," that she published in the journal *Voices of Reform*.

Professor of Childhood Education



and Educational Theatre [Jan Valle's](#) Spring 2025 research fellowship from the CUNY John D.

Calandra Italian American Institute examined New York City public school policies in the late 19th to early 20th centuries. The study documents the placement of newly arrived (and mostly male) Italian American students in so-called "special classes," as well as in truant and probationary schools run by the city's public school system.

GROVE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING



Professor of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences [Karin Block-Cora](#), Ph.D. '06, Earth and Environmental Sciences, received

CUNY Graduate Center's Service to CUNY Achievement Award as part of the annual [Alumni Awards](#) celebration. A geochemist and petrologist, her research explores the evolution of minerals in geobiological, geothermal, and magmatic systems, with a particular focus on microbe-mineral interactions and the stability of organic and inorganic metabolic products.



Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering [Robert J. Messinger](#),

whose research includes developing a new generation of rechargeable batteries, is one of City & State's 2025 Trailblazers in Clean Energy. The list shines a spotlight on New York's most remarkable renewable energy leaders, including innovative industry figures, groundbreaking policymakers and notable environmentalists and conservationists.

HUMANITIES & THE ARTS



[Antonio Tibaldi](#), professor of film and video, received a 2025 Guggenheim Fellowship. The award-winning filmmaker is one of 198 distinguished

individuals across 53 disciplines in the [100th class of Guggenheim Fellows](#). Each Fellow receives a monetary stipend to pursue independent work at the highest level under "the freest possible conditions." Tibaldi is a writer and director of fiction and non-fiction films in North America and Europe. His work has won numerous awards and has been presented at festivals such as Berlin, Sundance, San Sebastian, Rotterdam, IDFA and Tribeca, and released by companies such as Miramax, Warner Bros., and Lion's Gate.

The [53rd annual City College Poetry](#)



[Festival](#), dubbed "the Woodstock of the Spoken Word," took place on May 2 in CCNY's Marian Anderson

Theater in Aaron Davis Hall. Hadara Bar-Nadav was the featured poet at the festival, which has become New York's longest-running poetry celebration. Bar-Nadav is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry, the Lucille Medwick Award from the Poetry Society of America, a fellowship from the Poetry Foundation, and other honors.

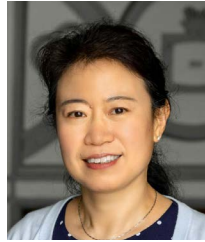


Associate Professor of Yiddish and Hebrew Literatures Elazar (Elik) Elhanan, who teaches in the Michael and Irene Ross Program in Jewish Studies, served in an Israeli Special Forces unit in the 1990s. In 1997, his 14-year-old sister was killed in Jerusalem by a suicide bomber. He and Mai Shahin, a Palestinian peace activist and therapist who fought in the 2000 uprising against Israel, are members of Combatants for Peace, an organization that advocates for peace and dialogue. Earlier this year, they were [interviewed by UN News](#), discussing the prospects for peace in the region.

DIVISION OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES AT THE CENTER FOR WORKER EDUCATION

Jarosław Szczepański, research and teaching associate at the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Warsaw,

presented a talk on “Impact of the “Revolution of Common Sense” on the European Right” as part of the Francis S. Patai Program Lecture Series.



CUNY
Distinguished
Professor of
Electrical
Engineering
[YingLi Tian](#)
presented
“Breaking

Barriers: AI-Powered Technologies in Communication for ASL and Navigation for the Visually Impaired,” in March as part of the CWE’s AI/Chat GPT Lecture Series. The presentation focused on two key applications: AI-driven ASL learning tool; and wayfinding and navigation for the visually impaired.

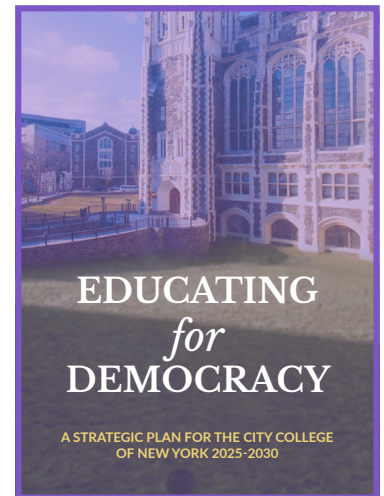
DIVISION OF SCIENCE



Lecturer in Mathematics María Sánchez-Muñiz was selected as a 2025 SIAM (Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics) [Science Policy Fellow](#). Her research applies mathematics to climate science and ecological systems, with her doctoral work developing an energy-based conceptual model for permafrost thawing. Her collaborative research on nitrogen-induced hysteresis in grassland biodiversity was published in *The American Naturalist*, reflecting her broader interest in

modeling natural phenomena. She will meet and engage with representatives of federal agencies relevant to the discipline, such as the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy. Additionally, she will visit U.S. congressional offices to promote the importance of research funding, graduate training, and undergraduate education in applied mathematics and computational science data science.

CCNY'S NEXT STEPS: A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2025



Thank you to everyone who contributed to CCNY’s Strategic Plan. The administration has spent the past year gathering input from the community. The Faculty Senate approved the plan in March. As a result, they have published their findings in a 22-page document called “[Educating for Democracy: Strategic Plan 2025](#).” Highlights include instituting a campus Master Plan, improving financial stability and transparency through expanded student recruitment, and revamping the website.

Alumni Drive Change Through the Harlem Gallery of Science and Gaming Pathways Program

NEW B.S. DEGREE IN DIGITAL GAME DEVELOPMENT AT CCNY DEBUTS IN FALL 2025



Alumni [Brian Schwartz, B.S. '59](#) physics, and [Stan Altman, B.E. '63](#) electrical engineering, narrowly missed each other during their time at CCNY, finally meeting in 2013, over 50 years later. Their subsequent collaboration has profoundly impacted CCNY, directly leading to the creation of the new [Bachelor of Science in Digital Game Development](#).

Approved by New York State in April, this first-of-its-kind B.S. program at a New York City public institution is currently housed within CCNY's Division of Science's [Digital Game Development Program](#). Altman, who earned advanced degrees from Purdue University and the Polytechnic Institute of

Brooklyn, stated, "This is our way of giving back."

Both have significantly influenced public universities in New York through their roles as administrators and educators. Altman's extensive career includes serving as interim president of Baruch College, dean of its Austin W. Marxe School of Public and International Affairs, and holding positions at SUNY Stony Brook, including deputy to the president. He is currently a professor at CCNY and a recipient of the Townsend Harris Medal (2016).

Schwartz, who obtained a Ph.D. in physics from Brown University, served as vice president for Research and development and is an emeritus professor of physics at Brooklyn College, the director of the Science & the Arts Program, and co-director of the New Media Laboratory at the CUNY Graduate Center. His distinguished career also includes tenures at MIT and CUNY as a faculty member, educator, administrator, and researcher. He is a Fellow of both the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Driven by a shared commitment to address the underrepresentation of students of color in the STEAM fields, Schwartz and Altman formalized their collaborative efforts by establishing Science and Arts Engagement New York, Inc, a not-for-profit organization doing business as the [Harlem Gallery of Science](#) in 2016, which engages primarily youth (11-24) in culturally relevant interactive STEAM exhibitions on themes such as basketball, music and digital games.

In 2020, SAENY signed a Memorandum of Understanding with City College to "promote cooperation in the fields of education, workforce development and academic/research activities of mutual benefit." At the same time, Altman moved from Baruch College to City College.

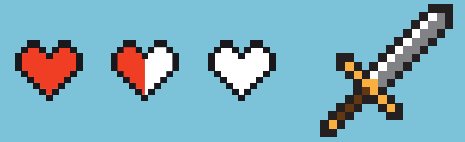
COMMUNITY ON BOARD WITH GAMING PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Schwartz and Altman were instrumental in establishing the Gaming Pathways Program in 2021 in partnership with the Harlem Gallery of Science, CCNY, Urban Arts, a nonprofit using game design to teach STEM skills in Title I high schools, and the NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment which provided \$2 million in funding to jump start the program.

Key components of Gaming Pathways included creating the new B.S. degree, as well as an advisory board consisting of representatives from NYC's leading AAA and indie games companies and others in the digital game industry.

Support has expanded to include the NYC Public Schools' Division of Instructional & Information Technology, Hostos Community College and its A.A.S degree in Digital Game Design and Esports and Game Design Collective. This fits in perfectly with CCNY President Vince Boudreau's goal to find ways to engage the community and the college, said Altman.

COURSES FILL UP WITH EAGER STUDENTS



Seed money allowed them to hire a director of the Digital Game Development Program, [Nicholas Fortugno](#), an award-winning game design and interactive narrative researcher, who has been teaching game design and interactive narrative design at the college level for over 20 years.



CCNY offered its first two courses in digital game development in 2022. By the spring 2024 semester, 432 unique CCNY/CUNY students had taken one or more digital game development courses, earning over 2,000 college credits. More than 90 percent of these students were students of color.

They expect to begin Fall 2025 with between 60 and 70 majors, a combination of current CCNY students who have already taken courses in the program and incoming freshmen who elect to major in digital game development. Students take courses in game design, game programming, game visual design, and game production techniques.

STUDENTS + GAMING = FORCE POWERING THE FUTURE


In February 2024, the Harlem Gallery of Science held an ambitious eight week exhibition that explored the role video games play in the lives of today's youth. This exhibition, *Video Games: The Great Connector*, addressed how youth use video games to explore who they are, how they build communities and what future opportunities for college and careers are available to them. CCNY and HCC students served as docents at the exhibit. Over 3,500 people visited the exhibition, the majority from local K-12 schools in NYC.

Due to the exhibition's popularity, HGS created a pop-up version that was shown at the New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library in May and June 2024, respectively. In 2025, HGS began taking the pop-up exhibition, called the *Video Games Expo*, directly into public schools, including Eagle Academy for Young Men in Harlem, the Mott Haven Village Preparatory in the Bronx, A. Philip Randolph Campus High School, and at CCNY's recent Lavender Week and Alumni Day. To date, the Expo has drawn more than 1,500 students and more than 60 teachers.

E-SPORTS: A VALUABLE PLATFORM FOR STUDENTS

Fortugno has promoted the development of student clubs to increase participation by "gamers" at the college. Currently there are three active clubs: the CCNY esports club, the digital game development student club and a chapter of EGD Collective. In particular, the esports team is an effective marketing tool to attract new students. In recent years, the multi billion-dollar esports industry has gained increasing popularity in NYC.



In August 2024, the CCNY Esports Team competed in a Valorant tournament against five other CUNY schools at OS NYC, one of the city's fastest growing esports venues. After competing in several brackets against teams from HCC, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Baruch College, Hunter College, and Brooklyn College, the City College Beavers won the Grand Finals. In person, the event drew 80 people with over 2,000 views of it streamed live on their Twitch page [@CCNYEsports](#). 

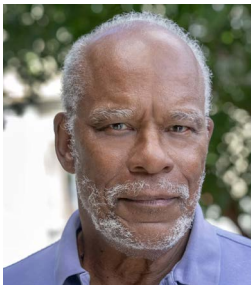
The team recently competed in the Mayor's Cup statewide competition on May 31.



ACCOLADES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Andrew Upton, B.A. '68, economics, was recently honored as the top blood drive donor at the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, also known as The Bayit, in the Winter Blood Drive in March. According to the Jewish Link, Upton's journey as a blood donor began in 1966 when he was a 19-year-old sophomore at City College of New York. "I saw a poster asking for volunteer blood donors to help a fellow student. I had never donated blood, but I decided that if a healthy 19-year-old wouldn't donate, who would?" The Jewish Link reported that Upton found the experience transformative. He was treated like a hero and rewarded with cookies and snacks. Upton discovered not just the ease of donating but the profound sense of purpose it brought. "I became hooked as a blood donor and a blood donor 'preacher.' Over the past 58 years, I've donated 51 times, and I've pestered my work colleagues and friends to join the effort. I'm looking forward to my 52nd donation here at the Hebrew Institute," he told The Jewish Link. Upton holds a master's degree in education from NYU, and a law degree from Brooklyn Law School. In addition to law, he's worked in education and human resources in top-tier financial firms. Though officially retired for three years, he continues to offer his expertise through pro bono legal work and serves as an expert witness in employment cases. Beyond his professional accomplishments, he has been a lifelong blood donor, according to The Jewish Link.



Stanley Nelson '76, an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose work amplifies untold histories and who mentors emerging filmmakers of color, received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree during commencement at Bates College in Maine on May 25. A multiple Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and recipient of the National Humanities Medal, Nelson is a director, writer, and producer of documentaries that capture the struggles and triumphs of the American experience, particularly through the lens of Black history and civil rights. Through his more than 30 films, including "Freedom Riders, Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution," "The Murder of Emmett Till," and "Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool," Nelson has shaped public memory and historical discourse while elevating and amplifying voices never before heard. "What I'm trying to do is part detective," he once said. "There's a feeling that we all know about the civil rights movement. So part of it is finding new and exciting voices that we haven't heard." A 2002 MacArthur Fellow, Nelson is an American Film Institute Guggenheim Symposium honoree and is mentoring a new generation of filmmakers of color through Firelight Media, an incubator for underrepresented voices in documentary film that he co-founded with his wife, the writer and producer Marcia Smith. In 2022, Nelson received his first Oscar nomination for *Attica*, a documentary about the 1971 prison uprising, which won Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Documentary from the Directors Guild of America. Nelson earned a bachelor's degree from the Leonard Davis Film School at the City College of New York. He received an honorary degree, the Doctor of Fine Arts, from his alma mater in 2022.

Artist **Fileve Tlaloc Palmer '99** was one of four recipients to receive the inaugural Southern Finger Lakes Artist Fellowship (SFLX). The \$3,500 stipend was funded and supported by the Arts Council of the Southern Finger Lakes Endowment. Palmer grew up in New York City and is a multigenerational, creole-South African American artist and anthropologist. She has lived and worked amongst Haudenosaunee (also known as the Six Nation Iroquois Confederacy and 'people of the longhouse') for over 15 years. As a trained anthropologist with a propensity to capture human existence through representation of human and animal bodies using cultural symbols to reflect relationships, her work speaks to the emotional and physical condition of human struggles between power and peace, injustice and freedom, and the intersections of race, geography, and nature. Through the examination between historical moments and memories of the subaltern, Fileve explores identity and engages the public. Fileve has exhibited her work extensively throughout New York, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. She is a Fulbright Scholar and a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar to South Africa. She is the recipient of funding through NYSCA's Statewide Community Regrant and Support for Artist Grant programs. Fileve is a current Appalachian Leadership Institute Fellow where she continues to develop her leadership skills to inspire and empower individuals and communities to thrive rather than just survive. In an interview in the Olean Times Herald, Palmer has said that the award money will go towards creating new work, and she already has an idea for a project to continue creating ceramic pieces.



Eugene Stephane Mananga, M.A. '02, MPhil '04, Ph.D. '05, physics, CCNY, CUNY Graduate Center, received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM), the highest national honor for STEM educators. One of 24 recipients selected by outgoing President Joseph Biden, Mananga has taught applied physics at CUNY (BCC and Graduate Center) and the NYU Tandon School of Engineering since 2015. He is also a professor in the physics and chemistry doctoral programs at CUNY's Graduate Center, a Fellow at UC Santa Barbara's KAVLI Institute for Theoretical Physics, and a Visiting Scientist at Brookhaven National Laboratory. He has been awarded multiple highly selective fellowships in the U.S. Department of Energy's visiting faculty program at Brookhaven, Lawrence Berkeley, and Argonne National Laboratories. His research spans condensed matter physics, materials science, computational chemistry, and nuclear medicine. Recent projects include controlling spin dynamics in solid-state nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) and using density functional theory (DFT)-based computational methods to characterize materials in zeolites, catalysts, fuel cells, batteries, and energy storage – fields crucial for sustainability. Mananga, who is the youngest child in a family of eight children, grew up in the Central African nation of Cameroon. His mother had been forced to abandon formal academics after third grade (the highest level of education then offered to girls there), and his father did not go beyond elementary school.



Nkechi Anako '07, engineering, received the Black Engineer of the Year (BEYA)'s Modern-Day Technology Leader Award in Baltimore at the BEYA STEM Conference in Baltimore in February. The award is one of two Outstanding Achievement Awards granted to individuals in the workforce annually recommended by their employers. It recognizes bright women and men who are shaping the future of engineering, science, and technology. Nkechi was nominated by Corning Incorporated, where she has held various roles for the past 14 years, in recognition of her impact and contributions. "This is a testament to the power of leadership, innovation, advocacy, community service and education in driving progress in the technology sector. This award serves as a profound reminder that discipline, hard work, and unwavering commitment are essential to making an impact. And at a time when diversity, equity, and inclusion are under attack, this honor feels even more significant," said Nkechi.



Peter Arvo, B.A. '17, Asian studies and philosophy, is a nonresident senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Freedom and Prosperity Center. He is a scholar of legal anthropology specializing in human rights and international law. Arvo is the supervising attorney with the Office of Tibet in Washington. Previously, he was a member of Oxford University's postgraduate consulting group. Arvo has worked as a research fellow with the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamshala, India, where he conducted research on Tibetan civics and democracy curricula in Tibetan settlement schools. Arvo's research focuses on the emerging fields of Buddhism and democracy along with Buddhism and law. Arvo holds a J.D. from Albany Law School, a master of philosophy in Tibetan and Himalayan studies from the University of Oxford. In law school, Arvo was awarded the Clinical Legal Education Association Outstanding Externship Award for his humanitarian work with the Office of Tibet.

Sameah Algharazi, B.S. '23, biology, is a 2025 Jonas E. Salk Scholar, as awarded by CUNY. Salk Scholarships recognize exceptional students who plan careers in medicine and the biological sciences. As a Salk Scholar, she will each receive a stipend of \$8,000 to be allocated over three or four years of medical studies.

Beliz Kayis, B.S. '24, biomedical engineering, Macaulay Honors College, is a 2025 Jonas E. Salk Scholar, as awarded by CUNY. Salk Scholarships recognize exceptional students who plan careers in medicine and the biological sciences. As a Salk Scholar, she will each receive a stipend of \$8,000 to be allocated over three or four years of medical studies.

CAREER NEWS

Alum Alex Brito '95 Joins Board of Directors CHPC



Alex Brito, B Arch '95, from the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture, was added to the Board of the non-profit Citizens Housing and Planning Council in January. The lead architect at RKT Architects, an architecture, planning and design firm, Brito was invited to join the board by CHPC Executive Director Howard Slatkin. A blue-ribbon research and education organization focused on housing and planning policy in New York City, CHPC will greatly benefit from Brito's experience growing up in West Harlem and his hands-on involvement and expertise in large, high-profile housing projects and policies in dozens of communities, from his own neighborhood to the Bronx to Crown Heights, Brooklyn and to Astoria, Queens. "Alex Brito will bring his insights to bear on our research and policy work, and continue RKT's long standing contributions among the distinguished professionals comprising our board," said Slatkin, who is also on the faculty at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. Since 1937, CHPC has brought together leaders in architecture, housing, finance, planning, and law to address New York's pressing housing and neighborhood needs. Brito aims to leverage his architectural expertise at CHPC to address the national housing crisis and promote a nationwide initiative to construct six million housing units. "For nearly 90 years CHPC's mission has been to develop and advance practical public policies to support the housing stock of the city by better

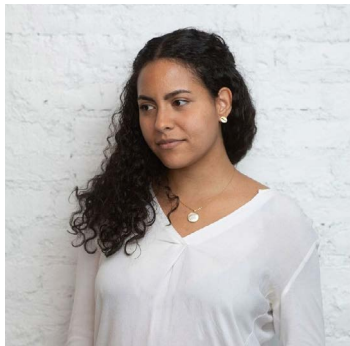
understanding New York's most pressing housing and neighborhood needs," said Brito, whose firm RKT won a prestigious housing leadership award last year from the American Institute of Architects - New York Chapter. "While the group was 'created to fight slums,' as the newspapers said back then, CHPC became a valuable resource for tackling all of the city's housing and urban development issues." Known for their work across the full continuum of housing solutions — from shelters and navigation centers for the unhoused, to deeply affordable and low-cost permanent housing, to mixed-income and market-rate developments created for seniors, veterans and entire communities — RKT has completed hundreds of projects over 60 years for thousands of diverse people of varied backgrounds, budgets and aspirations.

IN THE NEWS



Alumna **Vivian Gornick, B.A. '57, M.A. '60** recently published a piece in the New York Review of Books about her experience and thoughts on CCNY entitled "The 176-year Experiment." Gornick is an author, essayist and feminist critic. She was the CCNY 2024 Commencement speaker. Her work has received two National Book Critics Circle Award nominations and been collected in *The Best American Essays 2014*. Growing up in the Bronx among communists and socialists, Gornick became a legendary writer for *Village Voice*, chronicling the emergence of the feminist movement in the 1970s, and a respected literary critic. Her works include the memoirs *Fierce Attachments*—ranked the best memoir of the last fifty years by the *New York Times*—*The Odd Woman and the City*, and *Unfinished Business: Notes of a Chronic Re-Reader*, as well as the classic

text on writing, *The Situation and the Story*. In the NYRB, Gornick describes her fellow students: "We were the children of tailors, shopkeepers, factory workers; accountants, bakers, dress cutters; clerks, milkmen, bus drivers. Our shoes were scuffed, our clothes came from chain stores, our haircuts from neighborhood barbershops and 'beauty parlors.' And what did we know of the world? Nothing. At the same time, how many of us were wise beyond our years."



Urban designer **Anabella Acevedo Pena, MUP '22** was profiled in *Amazing Architecture* for her work focusing on people-oriented urban planning rather than the cookie cutter vision of many developers. In the piece titled, "Who Are Cities Really Built For," she gets right to the heart of the matter.



Filmmaker **Sisa Quispe '23** was recently interviewed in *Filmmaker Magazine* about her MFA thesis film "Urpi: Her last Wish." Quispe won a 2023 NY Women In Film & Television award when she was still a student in CCNY's MFA Film, Cinema and Video Studies program.

STEM Alum Tai-Danae Bradley in the Spotlight



Meet **Tai-Danae Bradley, '14** who was a double major in math and physics. Recently interviewed by *Quanta Magazine*, *ALUMNUS* caught up with her to discuss her thoughts about CCNY.

WHERE DO YOU CURRENTLY WORK?

Tai-Danae Bradley: I am a research scientist at a tech company called SandboxAQ and also have a visiting faculty position in the mathematics department at The Master's University, a small liberal arts school in southern California.

WHEN YOU WERE AT CCNY DID YOU EVER THINK THIS IS WHERE YOU WOULD FIND YOURSELF AFTER GRADUATION?

TDB: Yes and no. I was inspired to major in math and physics at some point between my sophomore and junior years, because I learned of exciting, unsolved problems and wanted to enter into that arena. In that sense, I am pursuing the dream I had that was born during my time at CCNY. I just didn't know what it would look like, at the time! But ironically, I didn't start my time at CCNY with that dream. I actually played on the women's basketball team my first two years there and initially thought I might have a career in athletics.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT CCNY THE MOST?

TDB: I have very fond memories of my time at City College. I truly loved living in NYC and, to this day, really appreciate the diversity. CCNY is home to people from all over the world and from every walk of life. That is a rare treasure.

DID YOU HAVE A MENTOR AT CCNY?

TDB: Yes. Cheikh Mboup was an adjunct instructor in the math department and transformed the way I thought about math. I didn't like math growing up, and had no plans to major in it (or physics) when I got to City College. But his teaching style was eye-opening and inspirational, and that's what convinced me to pursue this career path. I also had a great mentor in Brooke Feigon, a faculty member in the math department. She mentored me and two other students in original research, and she also helped me navigate the application process for Ph.D. programs. I am very thankful for the time that both Cheikh and Brooke spent with me over the years!

WHAT IS COMING UP THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL ATTENTION TO?

TDB: I have a blog where I occasionally write about my latest endeavors in math. Folks can check it out if interested! www.math3ma.com

ART EXHIBITIONS & MEDIA

Adrian Piper at MOCA Tucson



The award-winning **Adrian Piper, B.A. '74**, philosophy, has her work featured in an exhibition at MOCA Tucson called “Frequencies” through June 29. A conceptual artist who started exhibiting her work internationally at the age of 20, she initially studied art at the School of Visual Arts and graduated in 1969. “Frequencies” is a group exhibition featuring contemporary artists exploring the dynamic possibilities of sound. Working across sculpture, architecture, video, performance, and image, these artists foreground the physical and affective dimensions of sound. Together, they invite us to consider how sound is relational — shaping and shaped by the contexts in which it resonates. Attending to the audible and inaudible traces of the world, the artists propose sound as a conduit for transgressing boundaries and a catalyst for transformation and action. Piper uses voice to draw awareness to the present through repetition and exhaustion. Visitors were invited to engage with books, vinyl records, and audio materials that function as sites for experimentation, expression, and improvisation by artists. The exhibition began in February. While continuing to produce and exhibit her artwork internationally, Piper received her degree from CCNY and a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Harvard in 1981. She studied Kant and Hegel at the University of Heidelberg in 1977-1978, and taught philosophy fulltime for 30 years with specializations in metaethics and Kant. Piper was the first tenured woman professor of acknowledged African descent in the field of philosophy. Piper introduced issues of race and gender into the vocabulary of Conceptual art and explicit political content into Minimalism. In 2000 she further expanded the vocabulary of Conceptual art to include Vedic philosophical imagery and concepts. She is the recipient of many fellowships and awards in art and philosophy, and her artwork is in many important collections. Her seventh traveling retrospective opened at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 2018. Her artwork won the Golden Lion for Best Artist at the 56th Venice Biennale, the Käthe-Kollwitz-Preis 2018 and the Kaiserring Kunstpreis 2021. Piper lives in Berlin, where she runs the APRA Foundation Berlin.

Rose Salane at NYU's IFA



Architecture and conceptual artist **Rose Salane, U.D. '20**, gave a talk in April at NYU's Institute of Fine Arts, in conjunction with an exhibition curated by IFA graduate students of her new works titled “Rose Salane: Periphery in Red, Yellow, Blue.” Salane held a residency at the IFA, during which time students participated in a graduate research seminar on her work. The exhibition probed connections between technology and history through primary colors. Salane works with what she calls “dynamic sets”—objects once held by individuals and institutions alike—to reflect on the intricacies of value and exchange, personal attachments, and sentiments around loss. These have included lost rings found on the subway, invalid currency used for

bus fare, and returned artifacts stolen from Pompeii. Periphery in Red, Yellow, Blue bridged Salane's ongoing investigation into urban environments with Institute research in key areas of art history and conservation. Here, the artists' dynamic sets included a structural reimagining of traffic light lenses, former Institute study materials, and select elements from the Forbes Pigment Collection housed at the Institute's Conservation Center. The centerpiece, a newly commissioned work titled Intersection; a grid in points (continued), was an aggregation of decommissioned traffic light lenses. Following New York City's transition to LED lighting in 2001, Salane acquired the old lenses at a municipal auction. Before CCNY, Salane attended The Cooper Union. She has had solo shows at Tank in Shanghai and MIT's List Visual Arts Center, and her work has been featured in The Whitney Biennial and The New Museum Triennial. She has also completed fellowships at The Villa Medici in Rome and Pompeii Commitment's Archeologie Matters.

Anjanette Levert, MFA '05 won a Peabody Award



Anjanette Levert, MFA '05, Media Arts Production, won a Peabody Award for her work as producer on *The Only Doctor*. The documentary television series won in the Public Service category and is a profile of Dr. Karen Kinsell who operated the lone medical clinic in impoverished, rural Clay County, Georgia's most medically underserved area. The film streams nationally as part of the PBS documentary series *Reel South* and internationally as part of the Al Jazeera series *Witness*. The awards presentation ceremony took place on June 1 in Los Angeles. For Levert, an Atlanta-based filmmaker, educator, and long-time champion of Southern stories, the win is more than just industry recognition but a sign to keep pushing forward.



"This Peabody win affirms everything I believe about the power of documentary storytelling," said Levert. "It is especially meaningful when it centers the lived experiences of people in places too often overlooked."

The series follows Kinsell's fight to keep her clinic open while navigating the complexities of a potential deal with a university hospital. Capturing the local and the systemic, *The Only Doctor* reflects the broader healthcare crisis while grounding its story in a woman's deeply personal sense of responsibility to fellow humans as she believes that healthcare is a human right and most so in the wealthiest country in the world.

The Only Doctor premiered at Hot Docs International Documentary Film Festival and aired on PBS' *Reel South* Documentary Series. It is available to stream:

Levert is a senior lecturer at Spelman College and the former Director of the Documentary Filmmaking Program. She is an alumna of the Southern Producers Lab by the New Orleans Film Society and the Sundance Producers Intensive.

She was just awarded the Spelman College 2025 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mentorship.

Levert had her own mentor at CCNY: award-winning filmmaker Professor Andrea Weiss, Ph.D., who recently released the critically acclaimed *The Five Demands*.

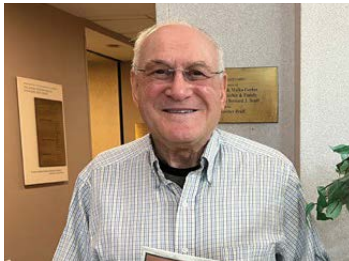
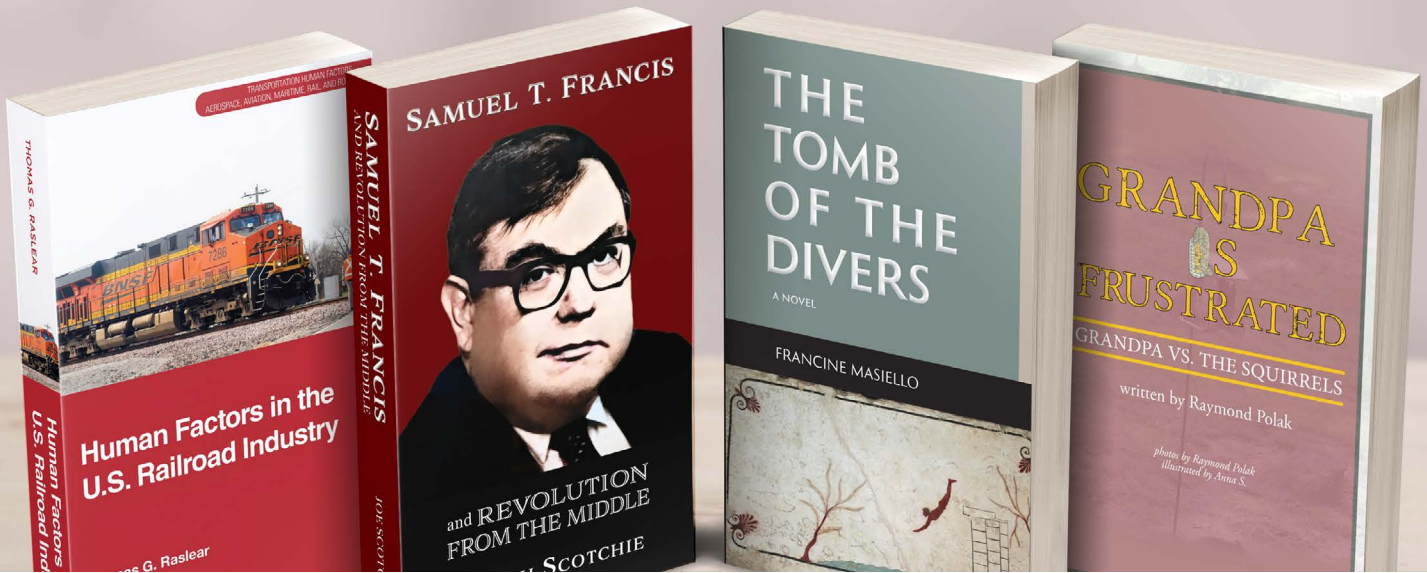
"We came to CCNY at the same time and our lives have become interwoven," said Levert. "We have worked with each other numerous times and have weathered life's events as well."

Levert loved CCNY for many reasons, top of the list of which was the affordability of her MFA degree, the diversity of the student body, and the campus, "which is like a secret garden in Harlem."

She particularly loves "the fact that there's a film program with a focus on independent documentary filmmaking (of which there are very few in the country), as well as the legacy of the film school."

On winning the prestigious Peabody Award, Levert said, "It is surreal, because this journey is long. I'm the 20-year overnight sensation. You start a project because you believe in the story you are telling, but the twist and turns of the journey of bringing this film into the world are unknown. I believe in following the story to the end and this isn't the end for this film to make an impact."

Next up for Levert is "finishing a short film about the segregated Mardi Gras celebration of Mobile, Ala. in a cinema verite film following the 2019 Grand Marshal of Mobile, Dr. Alex White."



Raymond Polak '65 has written a children's book called "Grandpa is Frustrated: Grandpa vs. the Squirrels." Polak, who was interviewed in the Jewish Community Voice of the Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey, "has spent years trying-and failing-to outwit" squirrels. The 82-year-old related a tale as ancient as bird feeders. "This story is not fiction. I've lived in the same house for 47 years, and I've always had bird feeders. Over the years, the squirrels have destroyed bird feeder after bird feeder," said Polak. The book is available on Amazon. The children's book is perfect for anyone under the age of eight or who has persistent squirrel issues.



Thomas G. Raslear, a 1969 honors graduate in psychology, has released his book, "Human Factors in the U.S. Railroad Industry" (CRC Press/Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group). This publication delves into the critical role of human operators within the U.S. railroad system, exploring how factors like error, fatigue, and risky behaviors affect industry safety. Raslear brings over four decades of experience in experimental psychology and human factors research to this work, complemented by master's and doctoral degrees in psychology from Brown University. His extensive career includes 13 years as a principal investigator at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, where he conducted research in behavioral economics, toxicology, chronopsychology,

and comparative psychophysics, retiring as an U.S. Army major in 1989. From 1992 to 2015, Raslear served at the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), ultimately as chief of the Human Factors Research Division. During his tenure, he led a program addressing crucial issues such as fatigue, ergonomics, automation, accident causation, organizational culture, and employee selection and training within the railroad industry. An internationally recognized expert in railroad fatigue and grade crossing safety, Raslear has published extensively on the impact of work schedules on fatigue and accidents, as well as the application of Signal Detection Theory to analyze motorist behavior at grade crossings. His contributions to the field also include membership and former chairmanship of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Human Factors Coordinating Committee, and past membership on the Transportation Research Board Standing Committee on Railroad Operational Safety (AR070). He has authored over 70 papers and reports. Currently, Raslear is an independent consultant specializing in railroad human factors and an adjunct senior scientist at the Institutes for Behavior Resources in Baltimore. Human Factors in the U.S. Railroad Industry synthesizes over 120 Federal Railroad Administration reports published since 1993 on human factors in the railroad industry. These reports cover a wide range of topics, including accident analysis, grade crossing safety and

trespassing, working conditions and ergonomics, employee fatigue, safety culture, and track inspection. The book organizes this extensive research using Moray's Sociotechnical System (2006) framework, offering a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between policy, organizational culture, and system safety.

As the culmination of a lifetime of research, the book examines tools like risk exposure, signal detection theory, and program evaluation, which have been applied to railroad projects and hold potential for enhancing future railroad and transportation research. It provides a valuable synthesis of reports across key areas such as fatigue, ergonomics, and safety culture, relevant to the broader human factors transportation research community.

Dr. Susan H. Regisford '86 has published the book "Rediscover the Power Within" (Trinity Christian Publishers). Drawing upon her experiences as an anesthesiologist, deaconess, and immigrant from the Caribbean who grew up in New York City, Regisford combines her understanding of physical and spiritual well-being in this book. Aimed at serving as a guide to human wholeness and a holistic approach to health, the book addresses the impact of stress on health, mindfulness, and self-worth. Regisford's intention is to help readers regain clarity, value, and worth.

Joe Scotchie, M.A. '86 published his 10th book, "Samuel T. Francis And The Revolution From The Middle." The book explores the life and ideas of the late political commentator Sam Francis, who is best known for his work at The Washington Times in the 1980s.

Spanish Major Francine Masiello's Debut Novel

By Esther Tolkoff '68



Francine Masiello, B.A. '68, Spanish, has written her first novel, "The Tomb of the Divers" (Bordighera Press, 2024), historical fiction about a young Italian-American woman and her brother as they trace the history of their grandparents' siblings as each emigrated from their village in Southern Italy to America and Argentina.

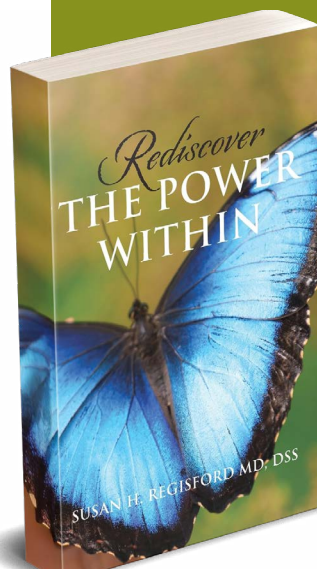
Masiello holds the Sidney and Margaret Ancker Distinguished Professorship in the Humanities (Emerita)

in the University of California-Berkeley's Comparative Literature and Spanish and Portuguese Departments, where she taught for 40 years. She is a well known expert on Latin American literature and politics, often focusing on the intersections of gender and cultural history.

Masiello has written 11 scholarly books in these fields. Three of these books have won top awards from the Modern Language Association and from the Latin American Studies Association.

At CCNY, her mentor was Professor Angela Dellepiane, a prominent Argentine literary critic who taught at City and at CUNY's Graduate Center for many years. Masiello earned her Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in 1975.

Esther P. Tolkoff '68 was the editor of ALUMNUS magazine from 1995-2000 and 2014-2016. She is on the Editorial Advisory Board, as well as the Board of Directors. She was a longtime editor of the Communications Alumni Group's newsletter, The Communicator and is in the CAG Communications Hall of Fame.



NEW ALBUMS



Composer and jazz pianist **Michika Fukumori, M.M. '03** has released her fourth album, “Eternity and a Day,” on Summit Records. A trio album featuring bassist Steve Whipple and drummer Adam Nussbaum, it includes four jazz standards. Seven of the songs are original compositions—a first for Fukumori compared to her other albums. She also produced the album. Originally from Japan, Fukumori moved to New York in 2000 to pursue music studies at City College. Mentored by jazz legends Geri Allen and Ron Carter, she also spent nearly two decades studying privately with master pianist Steve

Kuhn, whom she considers her personal hero. Fukumori established herself in New York by performing at prominent jazz venues such as Lenox Lounge, Cleopatra’s Needle, Antique Garage, Arturo’s, Jazz at Kitano, Zinc Bar, and the renowned Blue Note. In addition to her New York presence, she has cultivated a dedicated following in Japan through annual visits to her home country.

NEW FILMS



The short film “Match Dot Mom,” directed by **Tara Parian, MFA '10**, Media Arts Production, made its East Coast premiere at the Wicked Queer: Boston’s LGBTQ+ film festival in April. The 14-minute comedy was included in the short film program “Laugh, Cry, Embrace.” The film is about a teen girl who stumbles on her mother’s dating profile after joining the dating app “TindHer.” As she stumbles and accidentally swipes right, she finds herself on a journey of identity and self-acceptance. Parian is interviewed in

My News 360 about her filmmaking journey. Match Dot Mom will also be screened at Out Film CT in Hartford from June 20-28. It has also been accepted into the Wyoming Film Festival in July.

CAREER MOVES

Sam Rosen, B.A. '68, liberal arts, retired after 40 seasons as the television play-by-play voice of the New York Rangers on MSG Networks. In 2016, he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame, which presented him with that year’s Foster Hewitt Memorial Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the radio and television industry, and to the game of hockey. He was also honored by the United States Hockey Hall of Fame in 2024, when he received the Lester Patrick Trophy for his outstanding service to hockey in the United States.

Satesh Mahendra Mahadeo, M.E. '19, designed the mechanical parts for the lenses used in the Wide-Field Imagers, three of the four suitcase-sized satellites used in NASA’s Polarimeter to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere (PUNCH) mission that aims to unravel the mysteries of the Sun’s outer atmosphere and its solar wind.

Amber Cartwright, M.A. '20, psychology, was appointed executive director of the Mayor’s Office of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. Her 30 years of experience includes holding high-ranking positions at organizations such as Teaching Matters and several roles within New York City public schools. “Her leadership will be crucial in driving innovation, fostering collaboration, and advancing policies that ensure every child in New York City has access to high-quality care and education,” Deputy Mayor Ana J. Almanzar said in announcing the appointment.

Legah Kokouet, CWE '20, early childhood education, achieved one of her most cherished dreams by becoming a New York City public school teacher. She made several attempts to join the Department of Education since 2011, finally becoming a lead teacher at P.S. 5 in upper Manhattan after earning her degree.

CHARLES B. RANGEL (1930–2025), WAR HERO, HISTORY-MAKING CONGRESSMAN, AND LONGTIME FRIEND OF CCNY



Charles B. Rangel, who served 46 trailblazing years in the U.S. Congress and then dedicated his life to addressing the lack of modern infrastructure jobs in his former congressional district through a program at The City College of New York, died on Memorial Day. He was 94.

A founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus who then made history as the first African American member of Congress to lead the powerful Ways and Means Committee, Rangel represented what is now New York's 13th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1971 to 2017. He then served as statesman-in-residence at The City College.

In 2022, Rangel continued his mission of service by launching the **Charles B. Rangel Infrastructure Workforce Initiative (RIWI)** at CCNY to boost modern infrastructure jobs in upper Manhattan and the Bronx.

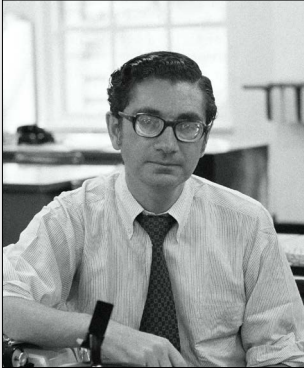
Rangel was a war hero, history-making congressman, and master lawmaker. He was cited as the most effective lawmaker in Congress, leading all of his colleagues in passing legislation. He was the primary sponsor of President Obama's historic health care reform law.

Recognized as one of the hardest working legislators in Congress, he sponsored 40 bills and resolutions that became law throughout his tenure. Among his greatest legislative accomplishments were: championing the national Empowerment Zone program, Affordable Care Act, Low Income Housing Tax Credit, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, and the Rangel Amendment which sounded the death knell for apartheid in South Africa.

Demonstrating his commitment to education, he created financial mechanisms to construct and rehabilitate public schools across the country. Following Saint Matthew's teaching, he was a stalwart champion for the "least among us," dedicated to improving the lives of working families, fighting for jobs and education, and advocating for equality and justice.

Born and raised in Harlem, Rangel was first elected to the House in 1970, after serving in the New York State Assembly and as an assistant U.S. attorney. He retired from Congress in 2017. He was a veteran of the Korean War, where he earned a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

SELWYN RAAB, B.A., ENGLISH '61 (1934-2025)



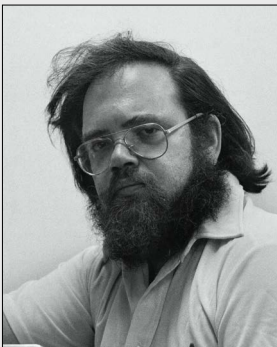
In his career as an investigative reporter, Selwyn Raab wrote the definitive book about the New York mob, and uncovered evidence that exonerated men wrongly convicted of notorious 1960s murders. His 2005 “Five Families: The Rise, Decline, and Resurgence of America’s Most Powerful Mafia Empires,” is considered the definitive book on the subject.

Raab’s work for The New York World-Telegram and The Sun, and then for NBC News and the New York public television station WNET, found that George Whitmore, Jr. was wrongly convicted of the 1963 “Career Girl Murders.” The case was cited by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Miranda v. Arizona*, the landmark 1966 ruling that upheld a suspect’s right to counsel. Raab’s 1967 book about the case, “Justice in the backroom,” became the basis for the television series “Kojak.”

Raab joined The New York Times in 1974 and worked there for 26 years. At The Times, he discovered evidence that helped to free Rubin (Hurricane) Carter, the middleweight boxer who was imprisoned for 19 years in the 1966 shooting deaths of three people in a Paterson, N.J. bar.

At CCNY, Raab was an editor on *Observation Post*, a student newspaper. He was twice suspended from classes for brief periods because of what he wrote—first for strongly resisting student government and faculty attempts to kill the newspaper, later for criticizing college administrators who had fired several professors under attack in the McCarthy era.

MICHAEL KATZ, B.A., HISTORY '61 (1939-2025)



Witty boxing reporter Michael Katz was one of the country’s leading boxing journalists from the mid-1970s until the early 2000s, writing about well-known names such as Muhammad Ali, Larry Holmes, Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvelous Marvin Hagler, Oscar De La Hoya, Mike Tyson, Don King and Bob Arum.

Katz attended CCNY from 1958 to 1961, writing for one of the student newspapers, *The Campus*, becoming its sports editor. He joined The Times as a copy boy in 1961, then rose to news clerk and copy editor before moving to Paris in 1966 to be sports editor of the paper’s international edition. A year later, he moved to The International Herald Tribune. He was fired in 1970 for refusing his editors’ request to change the design of his page layouts, said Gerald Eskenazi '59, a Times friend and colleague who met him at CCNY. He returned to The Times in 1972, covering many sports at first but eventually focusing on boxing.

Katz received the 1981 Nat Fleischer Award from the Boxing Writers Association of America for excellence in boxing journalism, then was recruited by the New York News in 1985 to write four columns a week. He spent 15 years at The News, leaving to write for a website, *HouseofBoxing.com*, which became *Maxboxing.com*. Sometime later, he moved to another website, *Boxingscene.com*. He retired in about 2008.

Katz was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, N.Y., in 2012.

DAVID DIAZ, B.A., PHILOSOPHY '65 (1942-2025)



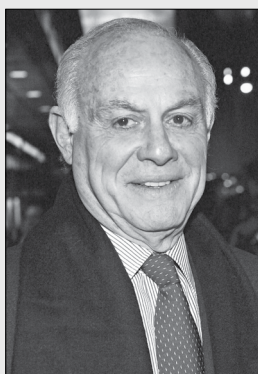
"A reporter's reporter." "New York City guy." "Charming man." "Legend." Those were some of the words used by colleagues of David Diaz to describe the New York staple, television journalist and educator who spent decades covering New York City and the tri-state area.

Born in Puerto Rico in 1942 and raised in Washington Heights from the age of three, Diaz was educated at Fordham Prep and Columbia University in addition to CCNY, from which he graduated with a degree in philosophy. He had been a community activist and newspaper reporter when he was hired by WNBC, where he spent 15 years. He then spent more than 12 years at CBS News New York (WCBS).

His coverage of both city news and national events such as the Oklahoma City bombing, the 9/11 World Trade Center attack and presidential elections earned him numerous awards for journalism excellence. He received five Emmy Awards, two Sigma Delta Chi Awards and an Associated Press Award.

Diaz also found time to give back to his alma mater, as a distinguished lecturer teaching mass media and politics, and journalism. He received the Townsend Harris Medal in 1993 from the Alumni Association of The City College of New York for outstanding post-graduate achievement, and was awarded an honorary doctorate of humane letters by CCNY in 2017.

MARSHALL ROSE, B.S., PHILOSOPHY '58 (1937-2025)



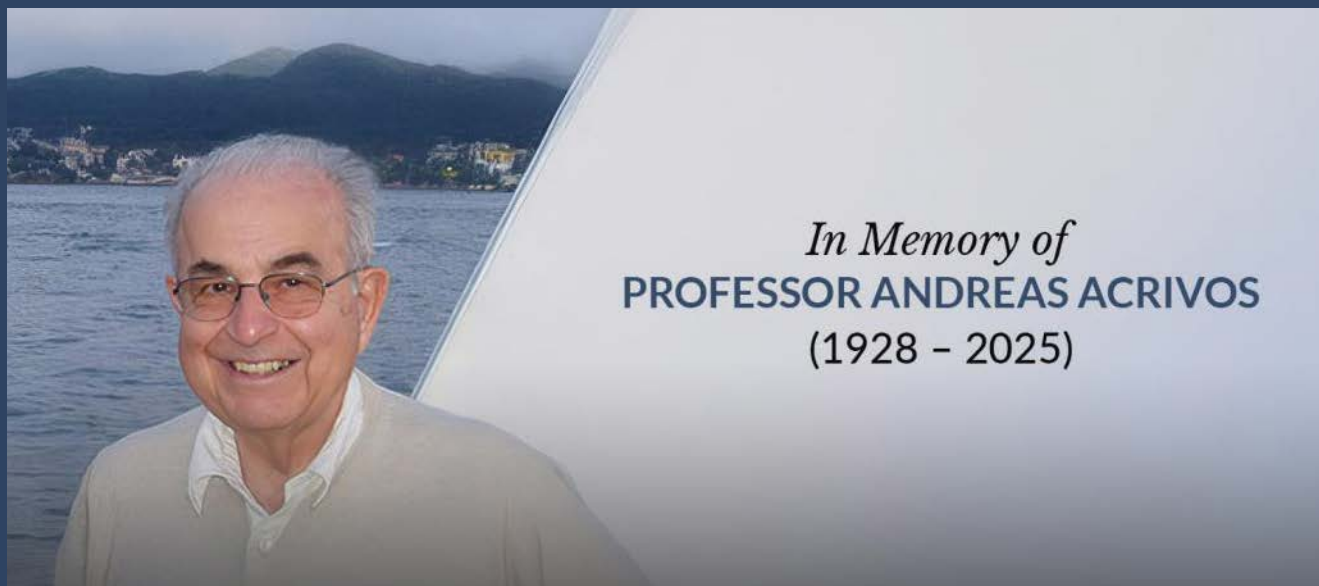
Real estate developer Marshall Rose was instrumental in revitalizing the New York Public Library and transforming Bryant Park as chair of the NYPL's board of trustees from 1990 to 1995. Along with his predecessor, Andrew Heiskell, and Vartan Gregorian, the library's longtime president, he engineered the resurgence of the Beaux-Arts landmark on Fifth Avenue and the derelict Bryant Park to its west. He also steered the decision to construct new stacks for books, instead of a parking garage, under the park.

During his tenure as chairman, the library renovated the Deborah, Jonathan F.P., Samuel Priest and Adam R. Rose Main Reading Room in the research library on Fifth Avenue. He also helped guide the renovation of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem and the Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.

Raised in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, Rose attended Lincoln High School in Brooklyn and then earned a bachelor's degree in economics from CCNY. After graduating from New York University School of Law, he briefly practiced law and for a short time worked on real estate matters for the investment bank Lazard Freres, before deciding that he wanted to develop property.

In 1978, he founded the Georgetown Company, which built and managed shopping centers, apartments and commercial properties in Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston and Washington; renovated Madison Square Garden when it was owned by Gulf and Western Industries in the early 1990s; and oversaw the development of Frank Gehry's headquarters of Barry Diller's IAC/InterActive Corporation in the West Chelsea section of Manhattan, completed in 2007.

He was also known as the husband of Candice Bergen.



Professor Andreas Acrivos, former director of the Levich Institute and one of the foremost scientists in the field of rheology, chemical engineering and fluid dynamics, died in February at age 96.

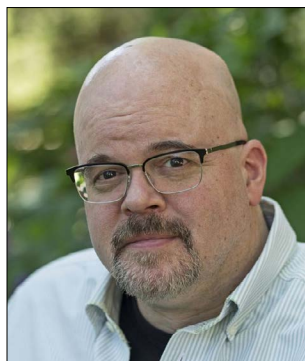
Born in Athens, Acrivos emigrated to the United States to pursue studies in chemical engineering. He earned his bachelor's degree from Syracuse University in 1950, and his master's degree in 1951 and his Ph.D. in 1954 from the University of Minnesota. His academic career began at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1954. Moving to Stanford University in 1962, he played a pivotal role in the development of the chemical engineering program and served as department chair from 1972 to 1975. His research contributions focused on studying the properties of suspensions, emulsions, and fiber-filled materials, significantly influencing the understanding of their microstructure and microrheology. His work, in collaboration with Frankel and Leighton, on concentrated suspensions and shear diffusion, remains a cornerstone of modern rheology.

His mentorship was crucial to the development of many distinguished scientists. He was also advisor to a graduate student named Andrew Grove in his early years at the University of California at Berkeley. Grove, CCNY '60, chemical engineering, went on to found Intel Corporation, and donated \$26 million to his alma mater in 2005. The City College School of Engineering was then renamed the Grove School of Engineering.

Acrivos arrived at City College in 1988, when he accepted the position of Albert Einstein Professor of Science and Engineering and became director of the Benjamin Levich Institute for Physico-Chemical Hydrodynamics until his retirement in 2001.

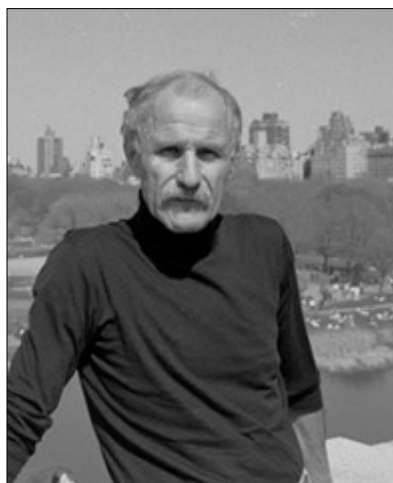
Acrivos was honored with numerous prestigious awards and distinctions, including the National Medal of Science (2001), recognizing his contributions to fluid mechanics and chemical engineering, the Fluid Dynamics Prize from the American Physical Society (1991), the Bingham Medal from the Society of Rheology (1994) and the G.I. Taylor Medal from the Society of Engineering Science (1988). In addition to these prestigious accolades, two significant awards have been established in his honor that include the Andreas Acrivos Award for Professional Progress in Chemical Engineering by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE), recognizing outstanding professional achievements in the field of chemical engineering and the Andreas Acrivos Dissertation Award, presented by the American Physical Society, to recognize outstanding dissertations in fluid dynamics. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2001, the Hellenic Society of Rheology recognized him as an honorary member, honoring his long-standing and significant contribution to the field of rheology.

BRENDAN COSTELLO M.F.A., CREATIVE WRITING '07 (1969-2025)



Writer and adjunct faculty member Brendan Costello taught in the English Department for 17 years. An alumnus of the CCNY MFA in Creative Writing, a winner of the English Department's Irwin and Alice Stark Award for short fiction, and the Goodman Award for graduate essay, Costello was a much-loved part of the CCNY writing community. Beyond City College, he was an active member of the James Joyce Society, organizing annual Bloomsday reading events, and of the Irish American Writers and Artists Association. Brendan was also host and producer of "The Largest Minority," a disability affairs radio show on WBAI. Costello was published in Harper's, the Village Voice, Huffington Post, Slate and other publications. He is remembered by many as their most impactful creative writing advocate and mentor. He often put his own creative writing work aside to encourage the writing and arts talents and skills of others.

M. PAUL FRIEDBERG (1931-2025)



Award-winning and nationally-renowned landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg, founder of the CCNY landscape architecture program, was known for many accomplishments. Believing in the promise of cities to create happier, healthier societies, he felt that public spaces were successful only if people used them, and that parks and plazas should be as inviting and flexible as possible.

Inspired by the adventure playgrounds springing up in Europe, where designers had observed children playing in the rubble after World War II, he created innovative adventure playgrounds at New York City Housing Authority projects in the 1960s in partnership with the Astor Foundation, most famously for Carver Houses and Jacob Riis Plaza.

After graduating with a degree in horticulture and art from Cornell University in 1954, Friedberg spent two years in the U.S. Army in Korea before returning to New York to start his own landscape architecture business. In the late 1960s, the American Society of Landscape Architects

asked him to develop an academic program in urban landscape design, the goal of which was to get urban dwellers invested in the city, and to open the profession to minorities and women. He was successful; he approached CCNY, founding an undergraduate program in urban landscape architecture in 1970, serving as the director for the next 20 years. The program became a national model for the recruitment of minorities and women.

Among his other local projects are: the Winter Garden at Battery Park City; Roberto Clemente State Park; East 67th Street Playground; and Pershing Park in New Jersey. He also designed Fort Lincoln Park and The Yards in Washington; Peavey Plaza and Loring Greenway in Minneapolis; and many other projects in the U.S., Canada, India, Israel, and Japan.



40s Civil engineer **David Laub, B.E., Civil Engineering '42 (1921-2025)**, played basketball at CCNY for Professional Basketball Hall of Fame coach Red Holtzman. During World War II, he served as a combat engineer in the Pacific theater before the Japanese surrender. He then attended officer training school at Fort Belvoir in Washington, where he captained the basketball team. After his service, he was recruited by another Hall of Fame coach, Red Auerbach, to play for the Washington Capitals of the Basketball Association of America. He then moved to the American Basketball League's Troy Celtics. A professional civil engineer who owned and operated his own construction company for more than 30 years, he finally retired in his 90s.



Professor and research scientist **Henry Rackoff, B.S., Chemistry '44 (1924-2025)**, served in the U.S. Navy as an electronics technician after graduating from City College. He went on to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry from Purdue University and taught chemistry at Texas A&M University and Parsons College. After relocating to Peoria, he worked as a research chemist at the U.S.

Department of Agriculture, where he specialized in the synthesis of deuterated fatty acids for use in studying the metabolism of fats in humans. Following his retirement, he continued to share his passion for learning by teaching part-time at Bradley University and participating in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Bradley.



Arts administrator and educator **Herman Krawitz, B.A. '49 (1925-2025)**, spent eight decades in the performing arts. He founded the theater management program at the Yale Drama School, where he mentored generations of students. As assistant general manager of the Metropolitan Opera, he played a key role in planning the new Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center

for the Performing Arts. He later founded New World Records and served as executive director of American Ballet Theatre. He produced seven television specials, including "Baryshnikov's Nutcracker" and "Baryshnikov on Broadway," earning him an Emmy Award, the Golden Rose of Montreux, a Peabody Award, and three Grammy Awards for his recordings.



Medical device innovator **Lawrence Saper, B.E., Electrical Engineering '49 (1928-2025)**, the son of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, graduated from high school at 16. At age 34, suddenly unemployed after the sale of his employer's company, he poured his life savings into starting his own business, Datascope. In 1964, the company introduced Carditron, a

device that transformed cardiac care by being compact enough for doctors to carry in a bag. Datascope expanded its product line to include the pioneering intra-aortic balloon pump, which remains a cornerstone in stabilizing critically ill patients. By its 10th anniversary, Datascope was listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange and had fundamentally reshaped cardiac care, saving countless lives in hospitals around the world. Saper served as chairman and CEO of Datascope until its sale in 2009, retiring at the age of 80.

50s Civil and mechanical engineer **Malcolm Newman, B.E., Civil Engineering '52 (1931-2025)** co-founded and led InterCity Testing and Consulting Corporation, a provider of forensic engineering, consulting and expert testimony to law offices, insurance companies and government agencies. A

passionate consumer rights and safety advocate, he held several patents and provided expert testimony in cases involving vehicle and highway safety and product liability. He and his wife, Esther, helped found Long Island's first Reconstructionist synagogue and were adventurous world travelers, volunteering for many social justice causes.



Nicholas A. Renzi, B.E., Mechanical Engineering '52 (1931-2025), began his career developing jet engines at Curtiss-Wright and Lycoming, where he led gas turbine accessory development. He then joined Pall Corporation as a project manager for filtration systems and, in 1972, became chief engineer at Pall Trinity Micro in Cortland, N.Y. He later served as vice president, then president, of PTM, and senior vice president of Pall Corporation. Nick was deeply involved with the Cortland community, serving on the boards and committees of the Cortland Memorial and TC3 Foundation and the Baden-Powell Council of the Boy Scouts. He was a longtime member of the Cortlandville Planning Board. In 2024, he was inducted into the Cortlandville Hall of Fame for his philanthropy and service, including the leadership gift he gave to Cortland Memorial to create the Renzi Cancer Center, which opened on his 90th birthday. He was a committed supporter of City College throughout the years, and has left a generous bequest to the College.



Cardiologist and health educator **Siegfried Johannes Kra, B.S., Chemistry '53 (1930-2025)**, was born in the Free City of Danzig. His family fled to the U.S. to escape the rise of Nazism. After graduating from City College, he attended medical school in Lausanne, Switzerland, and completed his residency at Yale University and St. Raphael's Hospital in New Haven, Conn. He was a pioneer in the emerging field of echocardiography, authoring one of the first textbooks in this area. In addition to his academic works, he wrote fiction and published several books addressing medical topics for a general audience, including *What Every Woman Must Know About Heart Disease* and *Is Surgery Necessary?* As host of the National Public Radio program *Heart-to-Heart Talk*, he worked to raise public awareness about heart disease and other health issues.



Educator **Arlene Shulman, B.A., Education '55 (1934-2025)**, dedicated her career to teaching in New York City's public elementary schools. In addition to her work in education, she was a trained opera singer who performed with the Amato Opera Company. Deeply committed to the Jewish community, she served as chairwoman of the Queens region of Hadassah and in leadership roles at the UJA Federation.



Daniel E. Rosner, B.E. Mechanical Engineering '55 (1933-2025) was the Llewellyn West Jones, Jr. Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering at Yale University. During his academic career, he developed and taught advanced engineering courses at undergraduate and graduate levels, and directed the Ph.D. research in convective energy- and molecular species-transport, fine particle technology, and combustion. He published more than 280 papers on these topics and the award-winning book, *Transport Processes in Chemically Reacting Flow Systems*. Having studied graphic arts and printmaking at the High School of Music & Art in New York, he resumed printmaking at New Haven's Creative Arts Workshop in the 1970s, and has since displayed his art at shows throughout Connecticut.



Financial analyst and investment banker **Arthur Stupay, B.A., Humanities '56 (1935-2025)** began his career working on anti-poverty projects. Later, he became a partner at the investment firm Prescott, Ball & Turben, followed by launching his own advisory firm and then at Dix & Eaton. He was an adjunct professor of economics at John Cabot University in Rome, and the author of a number of books about the Jewish experience in Eastern Europe. Prominent among them is "Hope Expired, Life Persists" (Lodz University Press, 2014), a biography of his uncle, Dr. Jacob Stupay, who survived the Warsaw Ghetto and who lost 27 members of his immediate family in the Holocaust.

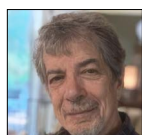


60s | Educator **Leon Lieberman, M.A., Industrial Arts Education '60 (1936-2025)**, taught Industrial Arts at Elwood (N.Y.) Public School from 1961 to 1972, where he helped organize and lead Elwood Federation of Teachers. He joined the staff of the New York State United Teachers as a field representative on Long Island in 1972 and was promoted to regional staff director for NYSUT's capital district in 1976. He was then promoted to assistant to NYSUT's president in 1992, where he served until retiring in 1999. In addition to his master's degree from CCNY, he received his B.S. in education from SUNY Oswego in 1960 and a master's degree in liberal studies from SUNY Stony Brook in 1968.

Scholar and author **Bernard Reich, B.A., Political Science '61 (1941-2025)**, professor emeritus of political science and international affairs at George Washington University, was a leading expert on Middle Eastern politics, with particular emphasis on Israel, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and U.S. foreign policy in the region. In addition to decades of scholarship and teaching at George Washington University, he served as chairman of Advanced Area Studies (Middle East—Fertile Crescent) at the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service Institute, was a faculty member at the Defense Intelligence College, and acted as a consultant to various U.S. government agencies and international organizations. His books included *Quest for Peace: United States-Israel Relations and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* and *Israel: Land of Tradition and Conflict*.



Criminologist **John Kenneth Kelly B.A., '62 (1929-2025)** spent 52 years studying crime, justice and corrections as a New York City police officer, a Fulbright scholar at Scotland Yard, an officer of the United Nations, and a professor at the University of Delaware, where he founded and chaired its Criminal Justice Department. After retiring from the university after 33 years, he spent the rest of his life continuing to write about his experiences and findings.



Guidance counselor **Irving Barlia, B.A., History '64 (1941-2025)**, dedicated much of his career to supporting students as a guidance counselor at Ridgefield High School and Ridgefield Elementary School. Raised near Yankee Stadium off the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, he developed a lifelong passion for baseball. As a student at Taft High School, he pitched a no-hitter that earned him a story in *The New York Times*, but an injury later cut short his playing days. At 62, however, he made a remarkable return to the sport, pitching in a Connecticut summer league and playing in out-of-state tournaments. A gifted photographer, he captured striking portraits during his travels in Asia, which were later exhibited at the Newtown Municipal Center.



The professional and volunteer endeavors of educator and community leader **Vida Elizabeth Peskay, B.A., Psychology '64 and M.A., Education '67 (1943-2025)** spanned academia and community service. Holding a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Minnesota, she taught the value of family involvement in education through her research; her academic work concerned how factors such as family dynamics, communication, and emotional support influence a child's ability to learn. She served on her local board of education and library board in Easton, Conn. She was also a justice of the peace, a role in which she could officiate weddings and perform civil duties for town residents.



70s | Music educator **Elizabeth Smythe, M.S., Music Education '75 (1932-2025)** graduated from Alabama College, now the University of Montevallo, in 1952. Following graduation, she lived in several cities, including Atlanta, Houston, and Washington, before settling in New York City. She studied piano with renowned teachers and pursued a career in music education. She worked various jobs, including as an usher at Carnegie Hall and as a waitress, before securing a full-time position in the New York City school system. For almost 30 years, she taught music in Bronx junior high schools while earning a master's degree from CCNY in music education and one from Hunter College in performance. Throughout her teaching career, she was recognized numerous times for her dedication to preparing students for exceptional school performances and conducting district-wide ensembles at Lincoln Center.

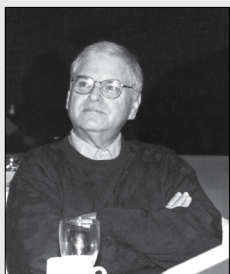


90s | Research scientist **Bert D. Stover, B.A., Psychology '90 (1957-2024)**, grew up on a working farm in Alpena, Mich. After graduating from high school, he became a journeyman carpenter, worked on an herb farm, and in 1984 moved to New York City, where he ran a fine woodworking business with his brother and taught Shaker carpentry at The New School. During this time, he earned his degree from City College, where his work as a research assistant at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital sparked a lasting interest in data science and health research. He later became a research scientist at the University of Washington's Harborview Occupational Health and environmental medicine program in Seattle, and in 2004 completed a Ph.D. in health services research at the University of Washington. His research areas included homelessness, worker disability, and the unintended effects of international HIV programs on local primary health care delivery in Uganda.



Information security executive **Abraham Rivera, B.A., Psychology '97 (1972-2025)**, served as the incident commander for New York City's Cyber Command. He held leadership roles at Bristol-Myers Squibb, Deutsche Bank, Barclays Investment Bank, and Morgan Stanley. Additionally, he held the positions of executive of IT and investigative operations, and peace officer with the New York City Department of Investigation. In academia, he worked as an adjunct lecturer at John Jay College and Bronx Community College, teaching courses in digital forensics, cybersecurity, and public administration. He also founded Watchdog Forensics, LLC, specializing in cybersecurity training, digital forensics, and investigative consulting.

ERNEST MOR DRUCKER, B.A, PSYCHOLOGY '62 (1940-2025)



Pioneering public health researcher Ernest Mor Drucker used epidemiological evidence to advocate for changes in drug policy, alternatives to prison and needle-exchange programs to slow the spread of AIDS, and to improve the lot of the homeless, patients with tuberculosis, and workers exposed to asbestos.

Drucker proposed rethinking the country's approach to illicit drugs, advocating "harm reduction." He argued that the criminal prosecution of addicts only compounded the problem by forcing them underground, where they engaged in dangerous practices such as sharing needles, which resulted in the spread of H.I.V. and made them criminals.

He established some of the world's first syringe exchange programs and warned that the AIDS epidemic was not only afflicting gay men; it was also increasingly devastating poor, nonwhite families. He was a founder of Doctors of the World/USA and its chairman from 1993 to 1997; founding editor in chief of Harm Reduction Journal; and a founder of the International Harm Reduction Association. He would periodically shift his professional focus to and from heroin addiction, public health, occupational safety, AIDS, and alternatives to prison.

Raised in Borough Park, Brooklyn, Drucker graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School with plans to become an engineer. He gravitated toward psychology at CCNY.

IN MEMORIAM

Murray Glanzer, B.A., Psychology '43
 Vernon Mosheim, B.A., Languages '49
 Edith Smith, B.S., Education '49
 Nathaniel I. Magin, B.A., Accounting '50
 Zachary Marantis, B.A., '52
 Saul Fenster, B.E., Mechanical Engineering '53
 Jerry Norman Koral, B.S., Chemistry '53
 Vincent Lombardi, B.A., English '53
 Robert LeRoy Ellis, '54, Arts & Sciences
 Joan Eiger Gottlieb, B.S., '54 Biology
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 Victor Auerbach, B.E., '56 Electrical Engineering
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 Louis Cooper, B.E., '58 Electrical Engineering
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 Gregry M. Sheyon, B.S., '69 Chemistry
 Julius Bogad, B.E., '70 Electrical Engineering
 I. David Widawsky, B.A., '70 Political Science
 Michele Ingrassia Haber, B.A., '72 English
 Paul Martin Layne, B.E., '73 Electrical Engineering
 Ranjit Sinha, '73 Chemical Engineering
 Reginald Brown, B.E., '74 Education
 Neville Gladstone Georges, B.A. '74
 Joseph Colella, B.E., Civil Engineering

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