



# Academic Affairs Update

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## York Fills Deanship Position

**F**ollowing a national search, York College recently appointed Dr. Charles Gengler as Dean of the School of Business and Information Systems.

Dean Gengler earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from the University of Illinois and his Master of Science and Ph.D. in Marketing/Management Science from the University of Texas-Dallas. A professor of marketing with numerous publications and invited talks, he comes to York after more than 20 years of distinguished academic appointments, at least 15 years of which were spent at Baruch College/CUNY. At Baruch, Dr. Gengler also served as Chair of the Department of Marketing and International Business in the Zicklin School of Business. He also has international education experience, serving most recently as the department chair of Marketing and Information Systems at American University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, and he has extensive entrepreneurship experience as well, having founded and consulted with several successful companies.



Dr. Charles Gengler

Photo: McAlexander Ciceron, York College, CUNY

Gengler also noted the need to “build York’s reputation at home and abroad.”

“We will work toward “a goal of accreditation, bring the [college] closer to that goal, support our students and increase enrollment in certain programs,” said the dean. “We will reach out to different schools to increase our reputation both here and internationally.”

Gengler will also develop programs with the college’s Adult and Continuing Education Department; bring value to alumni relations; and partner with local businesses. He is a firm believer in the value of fundraising to expand not only programmatic offerings, but the campus as well.

That ought to fit well into York’s updated Master Plan, which calls for a new structure to house

the School of Business, administrative offices, student spaces and a conference center.

Dr. Panayiotis Meleties, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, is pleased with the addition of Dean Gengler to the college.

“Dean Gengler has served with distinction and provided leadership within CUNY [and] other national and international educational institutions,” said Dr. Meleties. “He combines unique academic and entrepreneurship experiences that will be valuable for the York College students and faculty.” ■

## Deadline!

All items for the **March/April 2016** issue of **Academic Affairs Update** should be submitted in MS Word to [AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu](mailto:AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu) by **March 25, 2016**.

# Fall Research Expo Puts Arts and Sciences Front and Center

More than 70 York Students in the School of Arts and Sciences recently demonstrated their research acumen to guests and the college community.

Presenters from across the school's many disciplines ran the gamut from earth science to biology, English, computer science and chemistry.

The December 10th event held in the college's atrium and Faculty Dining Room also provided a look into a practical, cross-discipline collaboration between two of York's departments. Students from Computer Science are developing a digital device for the chemistry department to use on BlackBoard, thereby allowing for better usage of the web-based learning management system, which enables online courses and information storage. The team for this research ("Developing BlackBoard Building Block to Grade Chemistry Lab Reports") included students Mahmudul Hasan, Christopher Look, Arban Nichols and Deven Thiel; and faculty members, Wenying Huang-Stolte, Shweta Jain (lead), and Catherine Foster (functional lead).

The team used a "Building Block process" to accomplish the task.

"A Building Block is added to Blackboard via its application Program In-

terfaces (APIs)," they explained in their report. "We develop the code to perform the required tasks using java servlet and

jsp, create Oracle database schema and tables added in Blackboard database to store the data..."

The Arts and Sciences Distinguished Lecture segment of the Expo, "Why Poetry? And Why Now?" was given during the luncheon by Maria Lisella, poet laureate of Queens, who read from her collections, *Thieves in the Family*, *Amore on Hope Street*; and *Two Naked Feet*. Ms. Lisella, who is the sixth winner in the competition for Queens Poet Laureate and the first Italian-American to hold that title, is



An overhead view of the posters



Salim Ghabode explains his research to a fellow student



Left to Right: Mahmudul Hasan, Arban Nichols, Deven Thiel, Christopher Look and Rohit Karki





Left to Right: Dr. Stanley Schleifer (holding rock), Dr. Timothy Paglione and Nazrul Khandaker of the Earth and Physical Sciences department

a native New Yorker and gave a lively presentation illustrating “how poetry can speak to contemporary issues such as how new immigrants must adjust to their new world and the personal tensions this causes.”

Dr. Donna Chirico, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at York, was pleased with the outcome of this important event in the life of her school and thankful to those who contributed to the outcome.

“The success of the Fall Arts and Sciences Exposition is thanks to the collaborative efforts of faculty and staff,” said Chirico. “The Exposition Committee is co-chaired by Professor Deb Chakravarti (Chemistry) and Ms. Vanessa Grande (History and Philosophy), who oversee the numerous details needed to have a successful day. They make it look easy!” ■

## English Department Hosts Literary Reading and Open House

On Wednesday, November 11, the English Department hosted both a literary reading and an open house, organized by Professor Phebe Kirkham with assistance from others in the department.

At the 2 pm literary event, Professor LaForrest Cope’s performative reading kept the packed room spell-bound. Her dialogue with students afterwards was characteristically direct, witty, and impassioned. At the Open House later in the day, Professors Andie Silva and Matt

Garley presented informative and concise introductions to Digital Humanities, an exciting new field of literary study. Their talks were followed by presentations about digital work in journalism by students Valerie Victor and Vernick Govern, who discussed how digital photography is changing the way news is made and conveyed.

Following this segment of the program, Heather Robinson informed the audience about the revival of York’s student literary journal, *The York Review*, currently co-edited by Phebe Kirkham and Andie Silva. English Education major Vernick Govern read an essay she wrote in different “dialects” about English language imperialism that will appear in the next issue of the *Review*. Last but not least, Professor Mychel Namphy read moving tributes to long-time faculty member Janice Cline, who stopped teaching full-time in English



Janice Cline

and Cultural Diversity after 43 years at York. The Department is dedicating a student award in Janice’s honor so that her commitment to social justice in the classroom, university, and world will continue on the York campus. ■



Professors Linda Grasso (English Department Chair), LaForrest Cope, and Phebe Kirkham



Professor LaForrest Cope at her performative reading

# York Alumna Appointed Commissioner of Family Court in Delaware

York College, CUNY can now add alumna Danielle S. Blount '01 to its list of distinguished alumni in law. She was recently confirmed by the Delaware State Senate as Commissioner of Family Court.

As a political science major at York, Blount connected early with that discipline's then-mentor, Dr. Shirley Ostholm, who had already sent dozens of her graduates to law schools across the country. Blount followed suit, graduating with her JD from Howard University School of Law in 2007. She was admitted to the Bar in New Jersey and Delaware, her current state of residence.

The Flushing, Queens native worked her way up the legal ladder in a private law firm, followed by her service as deputy attorney general in Delaware prosecuting bench and jury misdemeanor trials in the Court of Common Pleas, Family Court and Justice of the Peace Courts. From there she became deputy legal counsel in the Office of the Governor of Delaware. It was from this position that Governor Jack A. Markell nominated her for the position as Commissioner of Family Court.

But Blount has not forgotten her Queens roots. Not only is she proud of her York College degree, her impressive resume still features early jobs at the Jamaica YMCA, at Queens Child Guidance Center, at Safe Horizons, and at Highland Church, where she was a dedicated member and employee. Asked what made her choose York for her undergraduate education, Blount said it was a matter of convenience as much as it was anything else.

"I chose York College because I wanted to be close to home and to my church," she said. "I was very active in ministry at Highland Church in Jamaica. I remember leaving ministry work and walking to my classes and returning to church after my classes concluded. York College was the right choice for me because it allowed me to pursue my education while remaining active in my church and local communities."



Delaware Gov. Jack A. Markell, Dr. Shirley Ostholm, Prof. Emerita, York College; and Judge Danielle Blount, '01

Mentors were crucial as well, and in addition to Mary Daniels, then a member of the Financial Aid Office, Blount recalls Dr. Ostholm's influence.

"Professor Ostholm has been my constant support," she said. "I remember sitting in the front row in one of her lectures and I knew I needed to meet her and tell her my plans. Professor Ostholm helped me chart out my plans, which included obtaining some real life and work experiences, to become a lawyer. We discussed [my] attending Howard University School of Law, working as a prosecutor and becoming a judge. Every item we discussed and planned for has become a reality."

Blount, who achieved Dean's List status many times during her student days at York and was a member of the college's Pre-Law Club, is thankful for the foundation provided at her alma mater.

"York College assisted in shaping me into the leader I am today," she said. "I became an outspoken advocate of my position while attending classes at York. My hand was always up, I prepared for all my classes like I was going to be

grilled on any topic, I asked questions, and followed up with my professors because of my desire to learn."

Blount also explained that her forebears were also instrumental.

"Understanding that my path was paved by the sweat-tears-blood of my ancestors ignited my desire not to succeed but to surpass all expectations," she said.

Dr. Ostholm, whose countless mentees include local judge, George Grasso (1981) and his son, Joseph (2011), who recently passed the Bar Exam in New York, is excited that yet another of her mentees has reached a career milestone.

"I am thrilled for Danielle," said Ostholm. "I believe that Governor Markell and the Senate have made an excellent choice in Danielle, given her temperament, character, experience and good judgment. I am so proud of [her]. I always believed that she was well suited to the field of law. She has advanced so quickly in a short time, and deservedly so. With her experience, leadership, integrity, empathy and work ethic she will be an outstanding Commissioner!" ■

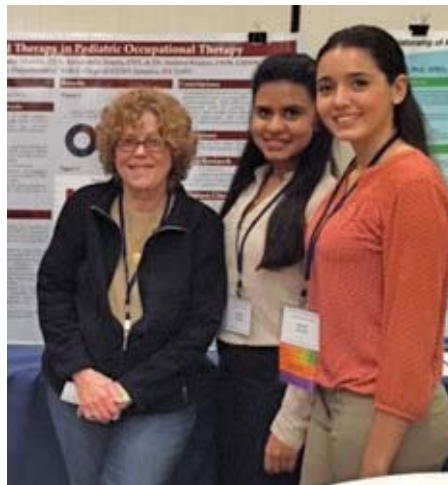


# Occupational Therapy Faculty and Student Scholarly Contributions to the Profession

**BEVERLY HOROWITZ, PhD, OTR/L**

Twentieth-century occupational therapy practice requires occupational therapy graduates to be able to analyze and apply occupational therapy, healthcare, and rehabilitation research findings for evidence-based practice. The York College Occupational Therapy Program addresses research in multiple courses across the curriculum, culminating in graduate student research projects and the Department's annual fall research presentations. Additionally, the Program prepares and encourages students to submit applications to present their research at state and national conferences, and to attend conferences to expand their knowledge of occupational therapy across specialty areas.

In 2015 over 30 York students attended the Annual New York State Occupational Therapy (NYSOTA) Conference in White Plains. We were most proud to have 4 research teams comprising 19 fourth-year graduate students invited to present their faculty-mentored student research at a special poster forum on Friday, November 6, 2015. Graduate



Dr. Andrea Krauss with her research students at the NYSOTA conference

students Tzipora Abaev, Asia Mojescik, Angelhika Riger, Milana Shimonov, Adino Simkhayeva, and Roxana Socol presented a study titled "The Relationship of Age and Practice in Learning a Purposeful Complex Motor Activity: A Lifespan Perspective," under the direction of Dr. Lillian Kaplan. Tiffany Almonte, Sarbjit Kaur, and Andrea Vasil presented a study titled, "Use of the



York students at the NYSOTA conference with Dr. Kaplan (front left), Dr. Krauss (front center) and Dr. Beverly Horowitz (far right, rear).

Home Safety Self Assessment Tool (HS-SAT) to Promote Home Safety among Urban Older Adults" in collaboration with Dr. Beverly Horowitz. Samera Ahmed, Heather Mitchell, Nataly Murillo, and Alexandria Touris presented a third study under the mentorship of Dr. Andrea Krauss titled "The Use of Sound Based Therapy in Pediatric Occupational Therapy." The fourth study, "The Impact of Advancing in the Occupational Therapy Curriculum on Increasing Students Perceived Subjective and Objective Knowledge in EBP: How Wide is the Gap?" was presented by graduate students Emel Kaya, John Lee, Marina Leykina, Rachel Mendoza, Lika Portnaya, and Krystal Warner under the advisement of Dr. Tamara Avi-Itzhak. In addition to these research presentations, Dr. Beverly Horowitz presented a paper at the NYSOTA conference titled "Occupational Therapy Community Practice to Support Aging in Place".

Our significant presence was recognized by all in attendance. NYSOTA President Gloria Lucker applauded York College occupational therapy students' participation and highlighted the number and diversity of research presentations during her Presidential address. York College students were in greater attendance than all other New York State occupational therapy programs.

Successful research commonly results from a team effort. Dr. Tamara Avi-Itzhak, who has primary responsibility for teaching Occupational Therapy Department research courses, is a role model for students in regard to scholarship and publications. This year in addition to mentoring student research she has published "Ability of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy Practice Test to Estimate the Probability of First-Time Pass Status on the National Certification Exam" (*American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, September/October 2015, Volume 69 (Supplement 3), 1-7). She also co-authored the paper "Sleep Patterns of Emergency Department Nurses on Workdays and Days Off" (in press) to be published in *The Journal of Nursing Research*. ■

# York's Aviation Institute Gets Grant for Community Support Program

Dr. Chun-Pin Hsu is one of York College/CUNY's busiest professors, but he still makes time to pursue grants to create opportunities for students.

Most recently Professor Hsu, who is director of the CUNY Aviation Institute at York College, secured a grant in the amount of \$75,000 from the Volunteer Services for Children Foundation (VSC). The funds will be used to purchase a Federal Aviation Administration-approved advanced aircraft training device: a Redbird FMX flight simulator. The simulator will be used both for the college's aviation program and for outreach to children in the community.

"We want to promote interest in careers as pilots," said Hsu. "Ninety percent of (commercial) pilots are white males, but since we live in a diverse community we should promote this [for all]."

Mondell Sealy, a former VSC volunteer and a member of York's Development and Alumni Affairs team, was aware of the VSC's grant-making capacity and reached out to the organization for support for York's CUNY Aviation Institute. Dr. Hsu submitted a grant proposal and York was awarded the top grant.

According to Hsu, research shows that minority pilots, including women pilots, are "as capable, if not more capable and qualified, than their white male counterparts. However, in the United States, only 4.1 percent of airline transport pilots (ATPs) are women, 2.7 percent are African-American, 2.5 percent are Asian and 5 percent are Hispanic/Latino."

Volunteer Services for Children (VSC) is a 50-year-old New York City-based non-profit "devoted to helping underprivileged youth in the New York City metropolitan area." They serve the region through the commitment of volunteers. Their Saturday Outings Program works with children who are currently residing in temporary foster care facilities. Volunteers and the children participate in cultural and educational activities in New York.

"The Board of Volunteers for Children have been supportive of the programs at CUNY Aviation Institute for

several years and have been impressed with the quality of the students and the training they are receiving for future careers in this field," said Gregory Wiske, executive director-group head at VSC.



From left to right: President Marcia V. Keizs, Dr. Chun-Pin Hsu and Mondell Sealy

"As a result of our positive experience with the program and realizing the opportunity this program presents for these enthusiastic students, the Board of VSC were open to stepping up our support to the program."

According to Wiske, CUNY Aviation Institute gave VSC an exciting proposal to add a flight simulator and related curriculum surrounding the purchase.

"It was very evident to the VSC Board that this type of addition to the program would be highly valuable to the students in their future endeavors in this field," said Wiske. "As such, the Board fully supported a \$75,000 grant to help make this program a reality. We anxiously await the purchase and the program to be put in action." ■

## English Students Attend Euripides Play

In Fall 2015, students in the English Department capstone seminar attended a production of Euripides' play *Medea* at La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, as part of their study of the ways in which writers have historically imagined anger, revenge, and justice. Directed by Italian theatre artist Dario D'Ambrosi, the cast included professional actors as well as differently-abled students from the La Magia del Teatro Drama Academy, who performed the role of the chorus. The Rome-based Academy provides artistic opportunities for students with psychological and physical disabilities such as schizophrenia, manic-depression, autism, and Down Syndrome. Celeste Moratti, the professional actor who played *Medea*, presented a lecture about Greek tragedy, discussed how she interpreted *Medea's* actions, and dialogued with students about the play and its production. ■



*Medea* actor Celeste Moratti (center, hand on drum) with Professor Linda M. Grasso and York College students



# Female Geoscientists Lead Strategic Panel Discussion on Geology Careers

**NAZRUL KHANDAKER**

For the first time in the history of York's Geology discipline, a very high-profile geoscience outreach event was entirely dominated by four female geologists, including Zarine Ali, Kathy Robbins, Charren Cabaroy, and Shirley Jackson, geosciences professionals and graduate students. This highly packed Friday late afternoon event was hosted by the Geology Club on December 04, 2015 and facilitated by club advisor Dr. Nazrul Khandaker and club president Timothy Fraser.

The presence of these women brought renewed interest and excitement about geosciences to many, particularly minorities and women. The presenters' sharing of geoscience-related knowledge, experience and personal information with the attendees generated a plethora of stimulating discussion topics. Geology being a field science and largely requiring team work in the field, professional connections and bonding are highly important, and, for the most part, this professional relationship extends further even after graduation. York's geology program has the reputation and demonstrated track record of connecting with its alumni through professional meetings, field excursions, or Geology Club-hosted open houses.

Given the major thrust to encourage a greater number of female geomajors for graduate level education and to create a pipeline for academic job opportunities, the event was very timely and drew in plenty of attention from the audience. Provost Panayiotis Meleties, Dr. Stanley Schleifer, Professor Robert Alvey (Senior Hydrogeologist, EPA and Adjunct) and several York graduates carefully listened to the presenters and were pleased to hear their strong endorsement of the unique knowledge and support they all received while pursuing



Left to right: Kathy Robbins, Zarine Ali, Nazrul Khandaker, Charren Cabaroy, and Shirley Jackson

their geology degrees at York. Zarine Ali (MS, Brooklyn College, now at EPA, York 2012), Shirley Jackson (pursuing MS at City College, York 2013), Charren Cabaroy (MS, Brooklyn College, independent consultant, York 2007), and Kathy Robbins (K7-12 Earth Science Teacher and pursuing an MS in Environmental Engineering, City Tech, York 2012) very successfully led the conversation, titled "Female Geoscientists and Important Career Information." They offered many strategic career-related tips such as receiving competitive undergraduate training both in the geosciences and basic science courses; availing oneself of summer internship opportunities; preparing presentations for the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America, actively seeking study abroad; and pursuing local geoscience/city agency-supported paid internships. Participants were reminded over and over again about the importance of acquiring an up-to-date, applied, well-rounded and field-based geoscience education to become successful in securing future geoscience-related career paths. Each presenter had something different to add based on their own perspective in regard to the geoscience education they received from York, which provided something different for everyone to take

back and think about as part of their undergraduate training while at York.

Traditionally, York geology graduates remain well-connected to the greater geology family and even after their graduation, friendships continue and relations with faculty never cease to exist. It is certainly a very strong outreach component of the geology discipline, and incoming students notice it right away, which further creates opportunities for strengthening the geology family. Since York is an urban public institution, where traditionally freshman students do not enter as geology majors nor consider geology as a career option, such an event is very significant in terms of motivating undecided majors to think beyond stereo-typed and peer-driven career interests. This is of key importance, since several studies indicate difficult times are ahead in the geosciences. Recent reports identify a looming shortage in the number of scientists in the United States, including geologists and geophysicists (NSF Report, 2004).

It is well-known that geoscience professions lack equity in terms of gender distribution, and it is particularly quite pronounced in applied field geology or

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## Female Geoscientists

*Continued from previous page*

exploration sectors. In 2010, women held only 16 percent of tenured and tenure-track geoscience faculty positions and 20 percent of non-tenure track geoscience faculty positions. Participation rates of women in geoscience faculty positions still lag broader science and engineering trends, where women hold 28 percent of tenured and tenure-track positions in all science and engineering fields (American Geosciences Institute, 2011). The percentage of female geologists seen in academia is also astoundingly low when it comes to professorial rank in the university. In 2007, Dr. Khandaker served as Chair of the Geological Society of America's (GSA) Committee on Minorities and Women in the geosciences, working in collaboration with various GSA Education Outreach committees to tackle these issues and make recommendations concerning recruitment, retention and empowering of minorities and women in the geosciences (GSA Today, 2007). Both Drs. Khandaker and Schleifer offer topical sessions primarily aimed at engaging K12-16 students representing minorities and women to present their research outcomes at the GSA annual meeting; since 2004, nationally over 300 students took advantage of these topical sessions and almost 30 students were from York. Many of the presenters, particularly females, pursued STEM as a career and acknowledged their



Kathy Robbins conducting field geology, Rosendale, Ulster County, New York

delight for having this presentation opportunity made available to them. These activities certainly put York on the geosciences map and is highlighting York's dedication to train undergraduates equipped with experiential learning skills and ready for the future STEM workforce.

Involvement of students in these topical sessions often lead to presentations at the national GSA meetings, and quite a few students become first authors as part of their engagement in geological research. The sessions provide a nationally-recognized forum for high school/undergraduate research that generates a strong sense of ownership and achievement for young researchers; they allow visibility/networking and professional feedback that simply cannot be replicated in typical undergraduate-level activities; and they represent a valuable avenue for minorities, women, and underrepresented students to participate in a broad range of scientific programs at the national level. Early involvement in geological research and conferences also allows students to measure their strengths and their academic preparation compared to their peers at other institutions. Finally, from the standpoint of recruitment and retention of geoscience students, such an early experience is also known to catalyze program success for many academic institutions.

The following candid reflection on the presentation from Zarine Ali sums up her basic understanding of geosciences-career opportunities and provides important tips on how to become successful:

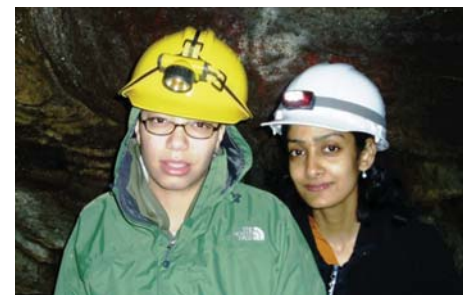
*I am a Physical Scientist at the EPA today because of York's Geology program. Although York has a smaller department in relation to other CUNY Colleges, students in the Geology program are provided with a classic geology background. Having a diverse background allows students to have an edge in a competitive job market.*

*Most students were unaware that they can only apply for City and Federal internships while still a student. I emphasized the importance of building relationships during an internship, no matter how short the internship may be and keeping in touch with those contacts. I was an intern at the EPA in the Fall of 2012 for only two months, and I got hired in the summer of 2015 after graduating with my masters in geology.*

*I always knew York had a great geology program; however, I did not fully appreciate this until I got to graduate school. Although everyone in my graduate class had an undergraduate degree in geology, some students had a difficulty in understanding the course material, whereas I was able to build on the foundation I received at York. The professors at York understand that their students are mostly immigrants with very diverse backgrounds and they encourage camaraderie amongst the students. This was especially important for me, as I dropped out of high school at the age of 15 and I did not have formal education for 8 years before declaring geology as my major my first semester. Without the professors providing a nurturing environment, while at the same time demanding the best, I [would] not be the Geologist I am to-*



Shirley Jackson preparing Hawaiian beach sand samples for chemical analysis in the geology lab



From left to right: Charren Cabaroy and Zarine Ali; Tory Cave, Connecticut



day. Alumni are loyal to York because of the professors.

Khandaker currently works with the Education Committee of the Geological Society of America, which is undertaking a massive initiative to train and prepare 220,000 geologists to meet future demand

projected around 2021 (American Geosciences Institute). An American Geosciences Institute report notes that at current graduation rates, most of these geoscience jobs (professionals, teachers, and consultants) will not be filled by U.S. citizens. Being at York, Khandaker feels very proud to be a part of this massive campaign and echoes

John Geissman's (past GSA president) position statement, "High-quality geoscience education is essential to understanding and adequately addressing the very pressing needs of our society, including sustainability and human-caused climate change, as well as keeping the growing number of geoscience jobs filled by U.S. citizens." ■

## York Staff Attends HACU Conference

In order to learn how to best serve York College's increasing Hispanic population, several York staff joined 1,600 others nationwide and flew to Miami Beach, Florida to attend the 29th HACU Conference (Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities, October 10–12, 2015).

The York delegation consisted of Deans Paola Veras and Vincent Banrey; Fabiola Salek, Chair of the Foreign Languages, ESL and Humanities Department; Ismael Perez, Assistant Vice-President for Planning and Budget; and Sarah Garcia, career counselor. The group learned how to help York's Hispanics stay the course until graduation and received accurate statistics about the 57 million Hispanics in the U.S., including their academic, demographic, and workforce trends and their impact on the U.S. economy.

The conference contained 50+ workshops, a town hall meeting, a pre-conference Latino higher education leadership institute and a post-conference deans' forum. More than 400 undergraduates attended the conference's Student Track, a networking and career development con-



HACU conference hotel complex

vention. Students networked with faculty, administrators and leading corporate, federal and nonprofit sector representatives.

Upon return to the York campus, York's HACU conference attendees supported the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration in the atrium and the birth of the York College Hispanic Society, a new club on campus. Through these two programs, the resources received in Miami will be disseminated, and the subjects of most concern to Hispanics will be addressed in a self-supporting manner.

Did you know:

- Colleges and universities are expected to see a 42% increase in Hispanic students by 2021
- Only 17% of the U.S.'s 57 million Hispanics acquire a 4-year college degree
- The most underrepresented minority group in government is Hispanics
- HSI = Hispanic-Serving Institution
- HSI's enroll more African-American and Native American students than PBI's (Predominantly Black Institutions) and tribal colleges, combined
- To be an HSI, a college must have a 25% Hispanic student population. York is currently around 19% Hispanic
- HSI's receive federal funding. ■



HNIP staff (HACU National Internship Program) & Sara Garcia

## Kudos!

York congratulates this year's Student Government Association (SGA) Scholarship Awardees:

### **Academic Excellence Scholarship Awardees (\$2,000):**

Bebi Rajendra, *Mathematics*  
Hadiatou Akinwande, *Physical Education*  
Manjeet Kaur, *Chemistry*  
Mathieu Francois, *Accounting*  
Osman Hossain, *Physician Assistant*  
Sequena Clarke, *Information Systems Management*

### **SGA Emerging Leader Scholarship Awardees (\$1000)**

Tanging Sherpa, *Physician Assistant*  
Ariel Rosario, *Psychology*  
Emina Selmani, *Physician Assistant*  
Daniela Arias, *Biology*  
Ney Francois, *Occupational Therapy*  
Carl Henry Isidore, *Social Work*  
Irshaad Ismail, *English*  
Katerina Murtazaeva, *Psychology*  
Gadina Gill, *Occupational Therapy*  
Clara Knowles, *Psychology*  
Boris Avizov, *Biology*  
Marco Loureiro, *Geology*

## CUNY Academic Commons Workshop

**Faculty Workshop**—How York College Faculty Can Utilize the CUNY Academic Commons for Research and Scholarship.

**Thursday, May 12, 2016**  
**12:30 – 1:30pm, AC-2A04**

Contact Kelly Josephs, [kjosephs@york.cuny.edu](mailto:kjosephs@york.cuny.edu) with any queries.

## TEN80 STEM Expo 2015 at York College

On Friday, December 4, 2015 approximately 600 students from neighboring NYC high schools as far as the Bronx came to York College to participate in a STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) Expo sponsored by the United States Army and led by TEN80 Education. Through the coordinated efforts of both the Division of Student Development and the Office of Academic Affairs, the college was able to highlight its academic programs to both high school students and teachers alike that were unfamiliar with the notable programs offered at York College. The event opened with a welcome and greetings from Dr. LaToro Yates, Director of Admissions, who pointed out the many advantages of both academic and student life programs offered to students at the institution. Immediately thereafter, a panel discussion introduced students to the day's agenda and objective of the program, which was to introduce participants to STEM related areas. During the panel

discussion students were provided with career insights from LTC Gussenhoven (ROTC), Prof. Wayne Forrester (Business and Economics), Dr. Elizabeth Alter (Biology), and 2015 & 2012 National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Top Fuel World Champion, Mr. Antron Brown. York faculty members were invited to participate in the program so they could highlight academic programs of study. Each speaker brought their expertise to the discussion with an emphasis on key elements of leadership, business and finance, biology and engineering respectively.

Following the discussion, students were divided into teams of five and they then moved through a series of workshops each designed with a different focus to help them formulate their teams in the following areas: Leadership (LED), Pitch (PCH), Intellectual Property (IP), BEAT (Computer Engineering), and Energy (EGY). In the LED workshop students explored the principles of lead-



Teams strategize at the BEAT workshop

ership while working within a team. In the PCH workshop students explored the art and science of turning ideas into an effective sales pitch. Students learned to utilize optimizing words to make compelling presentations. Students also crafted key sentences to create a team sales pitch through a “Shark Tank” style exercise. In the IP workshop teams worked together to create an invention or innovation as well as how to protect their idea through IP law and tools. In



From left to right: Professor Wayne Forrester, Dr. Elizabeth Alter, Antron Brown and LTC Richard Gussenhoven address the assembly of NYC high school students and faculty



the BEAT workshop students learned the language of robotics and also explored how robots sense the world and get a feel for what they can they do. In the EGY workshop students discovered the concepts at the core of engineering, examined an electronic racecar, and the electricity that drives it. Students discovered how energy technology and policy impact how we trade, and the implications of research and development on energy technology. The teams then re-

grouped at the Innovators-in-Training Challenge where students faced the ultimate challenge of developing an innovative product or service for their community. The students then produced a 30-second sales pitch video to sell their idea. The recordings were then entered to compete against the other participating high schools nationally. The winning team receives \$500 per team member for their school. The TEN80 team was so impressed with the college and the sup-

port provided that they asked to return for their next event. York College will host the Ten80 Education team again on March 23, 2016. This year's event will feature a concert and new workshops targeting students with interests in sound engineering and music production. We welcome faculty participation in this and future events. The TEN80 event was coordinated by Ms. Erzulie Vica Mars in collaboration with the Office of Academic Affairs. ■

## AACSB International Assessment Seminar

In pursuance of the School of Business and Information System accreditation and the Middle States accreditation for York College, Dr. Lloyd Amaghionyeodiwe and Dr. Fenio Annansingh-Jamieson attended and participated in the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International Assessment Seminar in Tampa, Florida, which was held on November 2-3, 2015.

The integration of practitioners into the business faculty is a prominent part of AACSB international's revised accreditation standards, approved for both business and accounting programs in 2013. This standard requires schools to address three new areas: innovation, impact, and engagement. These cannot be achieved without a balance of academic and professional faculty.

Participants worked on understanding the AACSB accreditation standards (2003 and 2013) and what is required for Assurance of Learning (AoL). The workshop also looked at the differences between course assessment and program assessment. Furthermore, it allowed participants to:

- Review the 2003 and 2013 accreditation standards;
- Evaluate sample learning goals and objectives;
- Write program learning goals (derivate of mission);
- Utilize Bloom's Taxonomy to write program learning objectives;

- Conduct primary trait analysis to write a rubric;
- Reason about how best to address faculty resistance to AoL;
- Determine their current AoL division of labor and determine if the assignment of tasks, duties, and responsibilities is appropriate.

In recognition of the fact that many faculty are reluctant to engage in the assessment process, participants were encouraged to engage in continuous assessment and not just during the accreditation period. A number of tricks and tips were identified to help engage faculty in the assessment process. This included:

- Don't ever explain or justify the need to assess as an accreditation requirement.
- Don't ever request participation in assessment; request participation to help students improve.
- Express assessment as total quality management of students drawing upon business principles.
- Invite faculty to participate based on their own interest.
- Show faculty how assessment (e.g. rubrics) can save them time.
- Have faculty share successful experiences.
- Request the faculty's time and input only when it's truly needed.
- Be appreciative of faculty contributions.



Dr. Lloyd Amaghionyeodiwe and Dr. Fenio Annansingh-Jamieson of the School of Business and Information Systems

- Show faculty how participation in assessment can meet both teaching/service and research goals.
- Meet faculty where they are:
  - Build upon faculty's pedagogical practices in their own classes;
  - Build upon a rich history of course assessment and course improvement and then help faculty understand that only the level of analysis is different (i.e., the program).

Finally, it is important to find the proper division of labor to get as many hands on the assessment ball as possible by identifying requisite tasks, duties, responsibilities and the players. It should be noted that these guidelines are minimum—each institution should base the acceptance level on its mission. ■

# Innovative Game-Based Pedagogies on Display at the 3rd Annual CUNY Games Festival

The CUNY Games Network, which is composed of over 100 educators from a wide range of disciplines across CUNY, hosted the third annual CUNY Games Festival at the CUNY Graduate Center on January 22nd, 2016. The CUNY Games Festival is a two-day conference on game-based pedagogies in higher education. Participants included over 135 faculty members, researchers, graduate students, and undergraduates from across the country. The festival committee was led this year by Dr. Robert O. Duncan, Associate Professor of Behavioral Science at York College and The Graduate Center. The conference featured a plenary panel with Josh Debonis (Game Designer, Sortasoft), Leah Potter (Senior Instructional Designer, Electric Funstuff), Carlos Hernandez (Professor of English and designer of the Lewis and Clark adventure game Meriwether, BMCC), and Jennifer Mangels (Professor of Psychology, Baruch College and The Graduate Center). Several York College students and faculty were in attendance.

With the growing maturity of game-based learning in higher education comes a new set of questions. The focus has shifted from whether games are appropriate for higher education to how games can be best used to bring real pedagogical benefits and encourage student-centered education. The conference addressed current topics in game-based learning for higher education: What problems need to be addressed in higher education, and how might game-based learning address those problems? How might game-based learning mediate these problems if other solutions are present? How do these solutions generalize across learners, disciplines, and campuses? What possibilities are there for educators to not only create/implement games for learning but also to utilize/alter/subvert commercial games for learning? What differences do we see in digital versus non-digital game-based learning? What affordances or barriers are inherent in each?

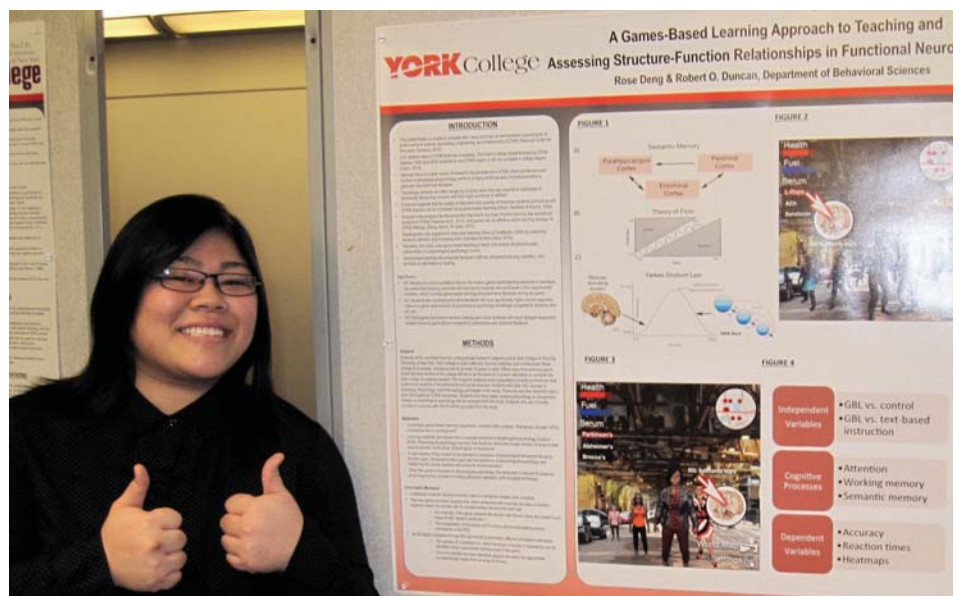
In his review of the conference, Dr. David Seelow (Program Director for Arts and Humanities at Excelsior College and Founding Executive Director of The Center for Game and Simulation-Based Learning) hailed the conference as a success and a role model for how faculty can organize to transform research and teaching. The article, CUNY Games Festival 3.0: New Voices and Practical Strategies in Game-Based Learning for Higher Education, is reprinted below with permission from the author. ■

A couple of weeks ago I had the good fortune of attending the third annual CUNY Games Festival, which, in turn, had the misfortune of needing to cancel the second day's activities because of the monstrous storm Jonas that buried New York City in nearly two feet of snow. The Games Festival is an outgrowth of the CUNY Games Network, a group of CUNY (City University of New York) faculty (Joe Bisz, Francesco Crocco, Carlos Hernandez, Julie A.S. Cassidy, Robert Duncan, Bruce Homer, Deborah Sturm, Kathleen Offenholley and Maura Smale) from different branches and disciplines of the university system with a com-

mon mission of promoting game-based learning. It is an admirable model for how faculty can voluntarily gather, organize and act in a way that makes a system-wide impact on both faculty and students.

For those who do not know, CUNY is a mammoth urban university with just under 270,000 students enrolled in degree programs, 24 campuses, and around 6,700 full time faculty. In other words, this city system is larger than most state-wide systems. Its mission is to provide quality low cost education to New York City residents and provide an upward path for disadvantaged populations. CUNY is among the most diverse institutions of higher learning in the country. The conference took place at the Graduate Center, which can be found on 5th Avenue and 35th Street between the legendary landmarks of the Empire State Building to the south and the New York Public Library to the north.

What impressed me most about the conference was the open forum given to new voices. All too often once something becomes popular in academia the platform to speak shrinks to the self-selected anointed and new voices, diverse voices, are often shut out. At the Games Festival, there was space for many people interested in game-based learning, and they could be heard in an informal, collegial atmosphere dedicated to improving classroom practice. The focus on both the classroom and higher education made this a vital



York student Rose Deng, presents at the CUNY Games Festival





event. Moreover, the opportunity to bring together many disciplines outside professional game designers with an interest in using games of all kinds—digital and non-digital—in the classroom, both physical and online, was a welcome sight for me.

I will touch on just a few of the sessions I attended to point out a few practical ideas for other instructors. Let me start with my own strand “Literacy and Story,” (I will speak about my presentation in the next blog). Beatriz Albuquerque, a PhD candidate from Teacher’s College, Columbia University (northwest of the CUNY Graduate Center) and a native of Portugal, spoke about an art education class. She had her class of students—those wanting to teach art in a public school—play Super Mario World. Although this assignment does not seem to make complete sense in an art class, yes video games are art, but Mario might not be the most artistic of games; nonetheless, the idea was to have pre-service teachers, many who never played a video, play one and simply discover what a video game does. Experiencing something new prompted, Ms. Albuquerque reports, some of the best group discussion she had encountered all semester. In particular, normally quiet nonparticipating students became very active contributors to the discussion. A major advantage of video games in any learning context is the likelihood marginal students will become more central to the class experience.

The final short presentation in my block also had a curious unexpected benefit for me. Professor Joshua Fishburn, from the College of New Jersey, talked about “Writing Game Rules and Instructions, as a Communication Exercise.” He uses the activity in a game design class, but I immediately saw its relevance to a writing class or class in interpersonal communication. Professor Fishburn asked his students to create a simple non digital two player game that would take 15 minutes to play. Students could only use one piece of paper, one writing instrument, and the game could only give

the player one option. The finished games were then played in class with the designer watching, but unable to give the players any feedback. The assignment focused on the printed instructions each designer made for the game. Communication could only take place through the game pieces and piece of paper. Professor Fishburn reported the most common remark from designers was “Not like that!” On the other hand, the most common comment for players was to “clarify” the instructions. In other words, the exercise elicited a tension between the designer or writer of instructions and the player or reader of instructions. Although a design assignment, this translated precisely to the writing situation, especially technical writing, but really all writing. Audience awareness is paramount. If the audience does not understand your writing, you are defeated before starting.

Many years ago, when directing a student teaching program, one of my supervising teachers had her students, all student teachers for Elementary Education, write directions for how to make a peanut butter sandwich. Sounds easy, right? Well if you had no prior knowledge of sandwich making the directions would not help much. Precise instructions are critical in a board game and really in any kind of technical writing. I dare say most written instructions I read end up in the trash because they are so poorly written, and these are written by professional writers!

A final point here would be the constraints put on students making a basic game. This principle works equally well in the writing classroom. Force students to write under very precise constraints—like the 14-line book reviews I used to do for Choice magazine—and you will be surprised by the results. It is an excellent exercise in audience awareness and the importance of clarity in writing. Those 14-line reviews, by the way, carried lots of “power.” Libraries often used the reviews as guides in making decisions about whether or not to purchase the book for their collection.

Next I attended a lively panel discussion in the Proshansky Auditorium. The best suggestion I pulled from this hour long discussion was a terrific idea for CUNY English professor Carlos Hernandez on his adaptation of the classic albeit very simple board game Battleship (Milton Bradley, 1931). Dr. Hernandez calls his classroom version of the game “Battleship Grammar.” Here are the instructions:

*“1) split the students into pairs and have two secretly draw two “battleships” on an 8x8 grid I provide, which have letters along the x-axis and numbers along the y-axis (a la the game Battleship). Then I show students sentences on PowerPoint slides. If they identify all the missing punctuation in that sentence, they may shoot at their partners (again, a la Battleship).”*

Being a sometime writing instructor, in the afternoon, I attended “Story and History.” I learned about a new and promising tool for writing interactive fiction called Undum. As the tool outputs in HTML 5 and CSS 3 it will be readable and playable on mobile devices. We will devote any number of future posts to interactive fiction. Interactive fiction is not exactly a game by most definitions, but many such fictions are; nonetheless, they are classified as games because of their interactive nature. Having taught literature for over two decades I can honestly say no interactive text and no hypertext story has ever approached the quality of traditional fiction. At the same time, as a tool that allows students to create their own work and involve the reader as co-creator, I believe interactive fiction and nonfiction has tremendous teaching and learning potential even if we don’t get a Ulysses or Moby Dick. The point is not to produce classic literature, but to empower students’ creativity, and for teachers to help students use the dynamic features of interactive fiction in a variety of disciplines, especially History/Social Studies and English, but potentially many other subject areas as well.

I also learned about an exceptional time travel card game called Chrononauts. A perfect game for the History classroom, students learn how reinterpreting or changing a key or lynch-pin historical event/decision has wide ranging, long term consequences. This game is a kind of historical choose your own adventure where the student can

*Continued on next page* ►

# CUNY Games Festival

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play out alternative historical scenarios that teach the students how a single event ripples throughout history, but also that history is a construction and not the stable, set reality often described in history textbooks.

Finally, graduate student Geoffrey Suthers talked about his NYU thesis game Sumer. I have always made The Epic of Gilgamesh required reading when teaching Introduction to Literature. For students, Sumerian culture is a relatively unknown, but crucial – indeed the foundation culture of western civilization. Consequently, students should be introduced to this culture. Mr. Suthers described the very real tension between fun and accuracy in educational games. We all know how successful and how much fun the Civilization and Assassin Creed series are, but we also know they are poor history. If such games can act as a springboard to a student's independent investigation of history that's great, but presenting them in a formal History classroom seems problematic. The larger ques-



3rd Annual CUNY Festival drew participants from all over North America

tion concerns "How do we design History games" that are historically accurate and fun? That's a delicate balance very hard to achieve and worthy of extended discussion.

I concluded my day listening to Professor Doug C. Maynard from State University of New York (SUNY) New Paltz, talk about

how he used Ingress, an augmented reality, massively multiplayer online location-based game. Those who are unfamiliar with augmented reality games might want to visit the website and play for a time. Ingress does not particularly appeal to me, but the potential of augmented reality location based games is considerable. Think about weaving a suspenseful story around the exploration of historic neighborhoods (Harlem and Greenwich Village in NYC come immediately to mind), landmarks, museums, public spaces in general. Augmented reality strikes me as especially useful for Environmental Science, Sociology, Urban Anthropology and History.

Overall, the CUNY Games Festival was a refreshing and practical event dedicated to game-based learning and its many faces.

*By David Seelow, PhD.  
Founding Executive Director,  
The Center for Game and  
Simulation-Based Learning and  
Founder,  
The Online Writing Lab Center  
for Online Education, Learning  
and Academic Services  
Excelsior College*

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### 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Undergraduate Research Day

#### Call for Abstracts

The Office of Undergraduate Research at York College is pleased to announce the call for abstracts for our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Research Day. The conference will take place from 9 to 5pm in the Academic Core building at York College on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Research Day is a celebration of undergraduate research and creative scholarship in all disciplines at York College. The conference also offers opportunities for students to connect with potential faculty mentors. Abstract submission is open for reports of original research and creative scholarship as well as classroom projects that engage students in research-like experiences. All submissions require sponsorship by a faculty mentor. Submissions should conform to the Student Guidelines for Oral and Poster Presentations. Accepted abstracts will be published in the York College Undergraduate Research Day Proceedings. Consequently, faculty mentors should be careful to review all submitted work.

- The deadline for abstract submissions is April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Conference registration for **all** attendees will close on April 1<sup>st</sup>. You must register to attend the luncheon featuring the keynote speaker.
- For questions, please email us: [uresearch@york.cuny.edu](mailto:uresearch@york.cuny.edu)

For abstract submission or information on scholarships and research opportunities, please refer to our web page:  
<http://www.york.cuny.edu/academics/undergraduate-research>





## Professor Jayaram on the Lecture Circuit

Dr. Kiran Jayaram (Assistant Professor of Anthropology/Black Studies) recently gave seven presentations on his research. He received invitations to give four talks about contemporary relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic: New York University (New York, NY), University of Tennessee Knoxville (via Skype), Rutgers University (New Brunswick, NJ), and Siena College (Al-



Dr. Jayaram presenting at the AAA conference.

bany, NY). At the Haitian Studies Association (Montreal, Canada; 22-24 Oct 2015), as a part of the all-day pre-conference event for college students, he presented on how to fund studies related to Haiti and Haitians. At the same conference, he gave a paper on Dominican policing as it related to Haitian migrants. During the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association (Denver, CO; 18-22 Nov 2015), Dr. Jayaram presented a paper based upon his experience co-teaching a biological anthropology course in Haiti with his colleague, Dr. Norberto Baldi (Universidad de Costa Rica). He is currently working on expanding the paper for submission



From left to right: Kiran Jayaram (York College), Norberto Baldi (Universidad de Costa Rica), Jhon Picard Byron (Université d'Etat d'Haïti), and Rodrigo Llanes Salazar (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Iztapalapa).

to *American Anthropologist*, a flagship anthropology journal. ■

## New Scholarship and Awards Coordinator Appointed at York

Julissa Contreras, a long-time staff member at York College, has moved to a new position as Scholarship and Awards Coordinator. Ms. Contreras comes to the position with many years of experience at York working in both the Admissions and Financial Aid Offices. As well, she was a former program manager for Bridge to College.

As Scholarship Coordinator, Ms. Contreras will promote and administer all York College internal and external scholarships and awards; advise students in applying for scholarships; develop and implement relevant programs and events;

and represent the College at the CUNY Scholarship Council. She can be contacted at [jcontreras@york.cuny.edu](mailto:jcontreras@york.cuny.edu), 718-252-5343, or in the Scholarship Center (Room AC-4DA1) for information regarding scholarship enterprises at York. ■



Photo: McAlexander Ciceron, York College, CUNY

Julissa Contreras

## Nursing Professors Earn Post-Master Credentials

The School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs and its Nursing Department are excited to announce that Drs. Bernadette Amiccuci and Claudette McFarquhar recently completed the Post Master's Certification Nurse Practitioner's program in Family Practice at Lehman College of CUNY. Such education and clinical training will be highly valuable when York's Nursing Department develops a graduate-level Nurse Practitioner program.



Dr. Amiccuci



Dr. McFarquhar

Drs. Amiccuci and McFarquhar completed a total of 32 credits of coursework, along with a total of some 1,200 hours of clinical, family nurse practice at various clinical sites in NYC. They both are now prepping for their national Nurse Practitioner Certification Exam. ■

<http://www.york.cuny.edu/academics/academic-affairs>



## York College Professor Wins Poet of The Year Award

Tomás Modesto Galán, an adjunct professor in the Department of Foreign Languages, ESL, and Humanities, a “Dominican writer” and cultural activist, was the recipient of the 2015 Poet of the Year Award at the recent Americas Poetry Festival of New York.

The Division of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Center for Worker Education of The City College of New York presented the award at a gathering of multilingual poets from all over the world. The event honors the memory of the late Colombian poet William Beltrán (1973-2011). Professor Galán is the Cultural Coordinator of the Latino-American Book Festival, Libro Abierto. His works have appeared in several anthologies: *Voces de Ultramar*, *Viajeros del Rocío*, *Tertuliando*, and *Brújula Compass 28*, de 1998. Galán’s poetry collection *Amor en bicicleta* was awarded the Premio Letras de Ultramar in 2014.

York College extends congratulations to Professor Galán on his outstanding accomplishment! ■

