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## Deadline!

All items for the **March 2015** issue of **Academic Affairs Update** should be submitted in MS Word to [AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu](mailto:AcademicUpdate@york.cuny.edu) by **February 27, 2015**.

## Anniversary Salute to a Leader

**W**hen Dr. Marcia V. Keizs arrived as president of York College on February 14, 2005, her first order of business was to host a reception line to greet every member of the college community who was available to meet her.

It was a sign of things to come as President Keizs launched her presidency with an open-door policy.

"It starts with the people," Keizs recently said. "Before everything else, you have the people."

It is to this end that President Keizs almost immediately introduced an "Open Fridays" policy, whereby members of the college community get to meet with her to share ideas, concerns, encouragement...

... But the tangible accomplishments of the Keizs presidency are as laudable as the intangibles.

Under her leadership the college received reaccreditation and introduced new academic majors such as Journalism, Generic Nursing, Health Science, Supply Chain and Pharmaceutical Science, which has deepened the relationship between the college and the North East Regional Laboratory of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on its campus.

Existing programs were strengthened and received accreditation or reaccreditation (Teacher Education, Nursing, Clinical Laboratory Science and others). Occupational Therapy transformed from strictly a Bachelor of Science degree program to a BS/MS. The college also reorganized its academic departments into the schools



Dr. Marcia V. Keizs

model, creating The School of Arts and Sciences, School of Business and Information Systems and The School of Health and Professional Programs.

The updating of the college's Facilities Master Plan under her administration also proved that York has grown so impressively in its activities and space demands that it is necessary to expand the campus. The goal now is to create a new structure

that will accommodate the School of Business and Information Systems, provide student affinity spaces, and add front office and community spaces. The new building, the Academic Village and Conference Center (ACVCC), is a proposed 163,000 square-foot, nine-story state-of-the art facility that will change not only the face of the campus but the downtown Jamaica skyline as well.

Funds raised toward this goal thus far have rendered the project near shovel-ready, while President Keizs continues to work with Albany legislators toward full funding.

*Academic Affairs Update* congratulates President Marcia V. Keizs on ten innovative years and looks forward to the fulfillment of many more of her dreams for York College. ■

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# Provosts of the Keizs Administration Sing Her Praises

Dear President Keizs,

On the occasion of your tenth anniversary, I write to congratulate you on your many contributions to York College. With visionary leadership, you have reinvigorated faculty and staff with direct impact on all facets of the college and its campus.

a) New programs were created (Generic Nursing, Journalism, Pharmaceutical Science, Health Science, and Aviation Management) and existing programs were upgraded

b) Existing and new programs earned accreditation and re-accreditation, such as PA, Nursing, and Social Work, or are in the process of completing their accreditation

c) The College earned Middle States accreditation in 2008 and completed a successful 5-year periodic review report (2013), gearing up for its next accreditation (2018)

d) The College launched new initiatives and re-energized existing ones, including the summer and undergraduate research programs, the Aviation Institute, and study abroad programs, among others

e) After setting higher admissions standards in 2006, student enrollment grew by 25% to more than 8000

f) Faculty numbers grew as well by more than 25% to 200 full-time faculty members

g) Faculty research and accomplishments have increased, as well as external funding

h) Student awards and recognitions have also been increased, with more students being accepted in prestigious graduate and professional programs and earning scholarships and awards

i) The College community was guided successfully through some challenging times for the university including curriculum reorganization and CUNYFIRST implementation.

Already having accomplished so much in just ten short years, you have set your sight on future goals to enhance the college community and the institution, including securing funds for a new instructional facility, introducing graduate programs in areas of faculty and community strength and needs, and improving the scholarly achievements of faculty and students. I look forward to working with you on these and other enhancements to York College in coming years.

*- Panayiotis Meleties*

Provost and Senior Vice President,  
York College/CUNY

Dear President Keizs,

Oh, how time flies! Ten years and counting!

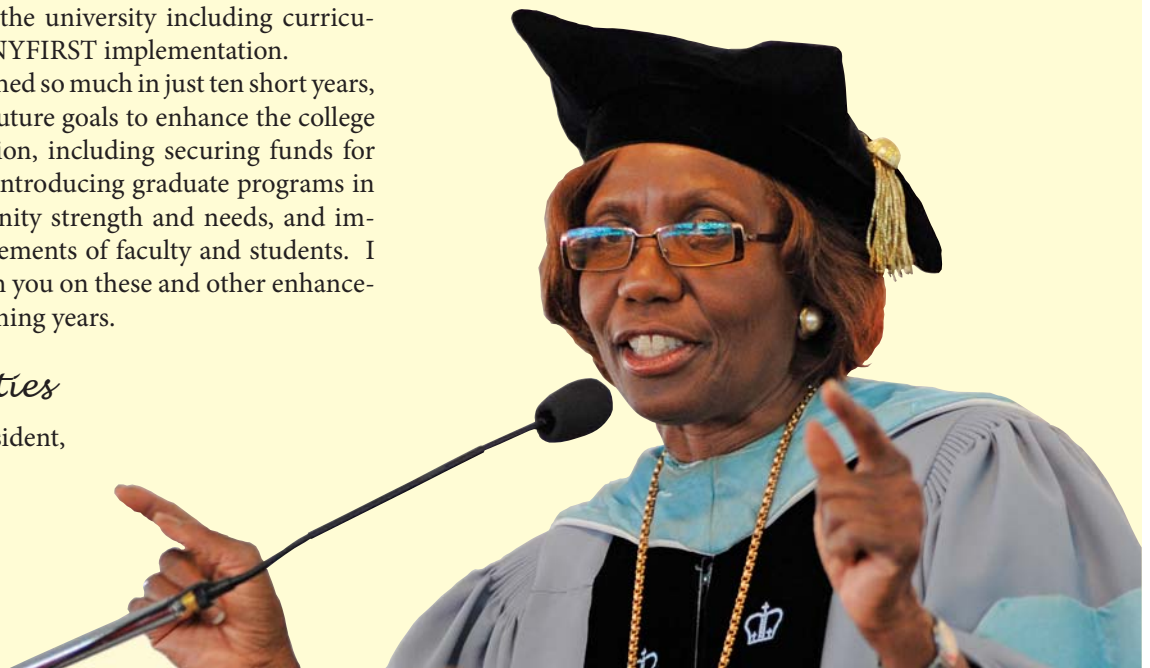
I see an Einstein moment here, related to what he once said: “Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted.” Yes, we can count the number of years that you have been at the helm at York College, but more than the numbers, what really counts, is the educational revitalization you have led, and the thousands of students who have shaken your hands as they fulfilled their educational and career dreams with degrees from York College.

What really counts is the economic impact on Queens Borough and the City of New York in general by virtue of the presence and dynamism of York College. What really counts is the hundreds of graduates who have gone on to graduate and professional schools under your watch, many of whom are now dreaming big and doing big in their various professional spheres. And, there are many, many more things that we can identify that count—that matter—over the years you have labored in the educational leadership vineyards at that educational beacon in Queens.

I applaud you and am proud to have served under you in doing things that can be counted and that also count. Congratulations! Keep on keeping on!

*- Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith*

President, Fort Valley State University, Georgia



# Pre-med Alum and Mentor Come Full Circle as Doctor and Patient

In his 20-plus year medical career Dr. Daniel Brietstein, a pain management specialist in Lake Success, Long Island, must certainly have treated a few people from York College. But there is something special about one particular patient that has brought him full circle.

Professor Jack Schlein was reconnected with Dan Brietstein when a York colleague mentioned that his wife was being treated by Dr. Brietstein. Schlein immediately recognized the name as a student of his in the early 1970s and, one could say, Schlein was in part responsible for Brietstein's becoming a physician. When they got back in touch for a visit, Dr. Brietstein spoke of his specialty in treating spinal pain. Dr. Brietstein learned that Schlein was experiencing just such pain and said that he would love to treat him. And so a doctor/patient relationship was born from what was once a teacher/student partnership.

Schlein, a biology professor at York, was for decades the pre-med advisor for the college and Brietstein was one of his many mentees.

Enrolling at York in 1972 as a 17 year-old straight out of Cardoza High School, Brietstein later took some time away from college.

"I was a wild young kid and York was very good for me," Brietstein recalled. "York [at the time] was smaller than Cardoza and was on the campus of Queensborough [Community College]. I loved that it was a new opportunity and I loved the small college. I got a quality four-year education."

But the "wild young kid" had taken a circuitous route to that four-year degree. Like many young adults, Brietstein wanted to start working and he took a job in the lumber industry and eventually took a sabbatical from school. At one point he was earning a six-figure income but medicine still beckoned. Since he

had already completed enough required courses at York, he was accepted into medical school in at Universidad del Noreste (Northeastern University) Mexico, without the undergraduate degree.

Nonetheless, Brietstein wanted to close the loop at York. So from medical school he returned to York College to complete his baccalaureate degree in Biology, graduating in 1985.

Brietstein recalled great professors such as Dr. Peter Scheiner (Chemistry) and Dr. Leslie Lewis (Biology) but saved his most poignant comment for Schlein, his now-patient. "Obviously I loved him," he said of Schlein, who was in the room as Brietstein discussed his York experience. "York was very good for me. Most of my friends were going to Queens College, but I chose York; and I'm glad I did."

As a faculty member, Dr. Schlein, who is officially retired from York but still teaches part-time at the college, conducted his research in chemical (chemo) receptors of the horseshoe crab and was among the early faculty who created York's formidable Biology Department. He is tickled by the irony.

"I find it quite fascinating that I'm being treated by a former student," said Schlein. "In all modesty it gives me a great sense of pride. Danny was a bright student but very young when he first came to York. When he came back several years later he was more focused and disciplined. I would definitely recommend him to others at York. In fact I referred [an old friend] to Dr. Brietstein."



Dr. Jack Schlein (left) and Dr. Daniel Brietstein

Like many of its alumni in medicine, Dr. Brietstein's reconnection with the college is a good one for current and future students aspiring to be physicians. He is interested in assisting with internship opportunities.

Brietstein, who is associate director of the Division of Integrative Pain Medicine at Pro Health Care Associates, LLP, was previously director of the Comprehensive Pain Management Center at Mount Sinai School of Medicine at Elmhurst Hospital Center.

He completed his anesthesiology residency and pain management fellowship at Long Island Jewish Medical Center; and has practicing affiliation with North Shore University Hospital.

Dr. Brietstein specializes in performing therapeutic injections and other pain intervention treatments. He is board certified in both Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine.

Dr. Schlein's pain is under control, thanks to the professional care of his former student.

"He's helping me," said Schlein.

One could say the same of him toward his "wild" student some 40 years ago. ■

# Fall Research Expo Informs and Delights

Undergraduate research continues to thrive at York and the most recent presentation was the highlight of the fall 2014 semester.

Billed as the “School of Arts and Sciences: Fall Exposition,” the December 11th event featured students across the disciplines who ably explained their work in chemistry; biology; women in media neuroscience; geology; technology innovation (Mathematics and Computer Science); aviation; pharmaceutical science; and much more.

In all, there were 54 posters, two power point presentations and one video presentation. Computer Science students, such as Dr. Shweta Jain’s Computer Science mentees, worked on four different projects. The theme for the projects was to design social network applications.

“These applications allow people to communicate over their devices to exchange files, messages, pictures etc. when they are in the same general area,” Dr. Jain explained. “For example, at a ball game or a concert, people may take pictures of the event and share them with each other. [In] that way people get to enjoy more of the event rather than scrambling to capture images.”



Students, faculty and guests appreciating the presentations

Students Jamar McDuffie, Khaiel Younis, Curtis David, Harpreet Singh, Keshwar Seeram, Damian Lajara, Arban Nichols, Tomas Rondon and Graduate student Cuiyuan Wang were all on hand to demonstrate their apps.

According to Jain, students presented their initial versions, “With some more effort,” she noted, “these applications might be ready to be posted on Google Play for other people to try.”

However, there is another aspect to the project that interests Jain equally.

“As one outcome of this project, students are excited about graduate school,”

she noted. “Khaiel already has an offer of admission to attend SUNY Downstate College to study medical informatics. Arban and Curtis are hoping to apply for fall 2016 after they graduate in fall 2015. I am encouraging Tomas to apply to the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program. The others are all looking forward to applying for other research and internship opportunities.”

Professor Jain added that the opportunity ignited an “excitement for research” and “helped students learn more about software development, goal oriented projects, [and] presentation skills,” both for the department and the college.

“We have something to show when we start looking at Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accreditation,” said Jain. “I would like to explore the possibility of integrating these activities in our curriculum again for ABET purposes.”

In addition to technology, students in the neurosciences presented research on the causes and potential prevention of Alzheimer’s disease, under the guidance of Dr. Francisco Villegas (Psychology); while yet others in Foreign Languages and Women’s Studies, presented on “Women, Body Image and the Mass Media in Today’s Society.”

Conducted by Michelle Sanchez and Ashley Gulliver under the mentorship of



L to R: Arban Nichols, Dr. Shweta Jain and Tomas Rondon of the Mathematics and Computer Sciences Department

Dr. Fabiola Salek, professor and chair of that department, the women's observations were both expected and unexpected.

"Women are seen as sex objects," said Sanchez. "Everything is so sexualized. Size four is now considered plus-size. Girls shouldn't be worrying about size at eight years old. They shouldn't just be eating a salad. They're growing, they should be eating!"

To underscore Sanchez's point, Gulliver added that there is even an online site that gives tips on how to become anorexic.

Nia Rene, a chemistry major under the mentorship of Dr. Jong-Ill Lee, is now a veteran presenter, having presented at previous research symposiums in the past. The scholar-athlete (basketball) is excited about the work she is doing with Dr. Lee.

"I wanted to learn more about chemistry and about myself," she explained about choosing York for her undergraduate studies. "We have great faculty in chemistry and I love being able to think outside the box."

The research centers on a more efficient method of delivering cancer treatment into patients' body, by bypassing healthy tissue and going directly to the malignant tissues.



Dr. Fabiola Salek (center) and her mentees, Ashley Gulliver (left) and Michelle Sanchez, whose research centered around the portrayal of women in the media.

"This lady will do something great," said Lee of his star pupil.

Undergraduate students mentored by Drs. Deb Chakravarti and Bulbul Chakravarti presented on the possible role of advanced glycation end products (AGEs) in the pathophysiology of liver due to type 1 diabetes (T1D). Three students from York College, Tahidul Hossain, Osei Afua and Nara Min, as well as Elizabeth Noh, a graduate student from Williams College, Massachusetts, explained that although AGE-modified proteins were present in the liver, there was no significant difference observed in the level of AGE modification of protein(s) between diabetic and non-diabetic mice.

Further studies will clarify whether the apparent lack of differential AGE modification is due to lower expression of modified protein(s) in the T1D mice, according to the research.

According to Dr. [Deb] Chakravarti, his students rose to the occasion like professionals.

"It was a wonderful achievement, the way the students learned protein analysis techniques and came up with valuable data within a short ten weeks of summer research," said Chakravarti. "Their dedication and willingness to learn made this all possible!"

The event, hosted by Provost Panayiotis Meleties and Dr. Donna Chirico, Acting Dean of the School of Arts and

Sciences, corresponded with a Distinguished Provost Lecture Series presentation, featuring Scott T. Miller, M.D., professor of Clinical Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center. His topic, "A (Failed) Attempt to Tell You Everything About Sickle Cell Disease: A Pediatrician's Perspective," resonated with many in the audience, given the relative prevalence of the disease in the African-American community.

According to the pediatrician, sickle cell can cause brain damage, ear infections, pneumonia, reduced fertility and increase of infection.

The event ended with awards presentations from Mathematics and Computer Science Chair Dr. Adefemi Sunmonu and Dr. Chirico making presentations to veteran professors in his Department "for long term contributions to the development of students and programs in Mathematics and Computer Science."

The awardees were Professor Emeritus Joseph Malkevitch, Professor Robert Coen, Professor Farley Mawyer, Professor Tsu Chih Wu and Mr. Bernard Bell.

"What a privilege to be overseeing Arts and Sciences," said Chirico of her role in planning the event. ■



Jamar McDuffee poses with his "Geek Fitness" app, a social network for connecting personal trainers and trainees.



Dr. Farley Mawyer (center) is presented with an award by Dr. Adefemi Sunomnu, chair of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science; and Dr. Donna Chirico, acting dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, at the fall research symposium.

## York Theater Professor Gets Impressive CUNY Recognition in Two Areas of Scholarship

York College professor Timothy Amrhein says “Theater is a multi-faceted art that combines creativity and research to form a foundation of life, learning and understanding.” That being the case, the associate professor and chair of the Department of Performing and Fine Arts, is living proof.

Amrhein will join the ranks of Distinguished CUNY Fellows at the Advanced Research Collaborative, the Graduate Center for the spring 2016. Prof. Amrhein will be one of a number of fellows who will constitute a community of scholars pursuing their independent intellectual interests, which although diverse, cluster around research themes of priority important to the CUNY institution. His appointment will be as a fellow for the spring academic period beginning January 29, 2016 through August 24, 2016.

Professor Amrhein says that while at the Graduate Center he intends to continue his work on applying and translating the ideas of minorities (specifically Latinos) into the context of American theatre in English. He will also move forward in his research of deconstructing plays in Spanish that deal with the universal theme of self-identity and work on translating them into English.

“This will also be a wonderful opportunity to work on cross-disciplinary projects with others,” says Amrhein, who just days before the Fellowship news, also received a CUNY Diversity Projects Development Fund Award for his project, “Language and Identity: The Latino Mask.”

That project will explore the idea of bilingualism on stage and focus on language itself. It will “attempt to examine how specific cultural idioms in a Spanish-language play could be conveyed to an English-speaking audience in a way that holds true to the main concept of the play presented in its original language,” according to Amrhein.

As part of the project, Professor Amrhein will remount the production of *La Luz de un Cigarrillo* as a professionally staged reading at York College, focusing on the impact of language in the theatre, both for Spanish and English audiences.

“I envision that the process, the most important part of any theatre project, would be the rehearsal period of the play,” says Amrhein. “This period would allow for the discovery of ideas, both old and new, working on the text in both English and Spanish. The company would dissect the various aspects of the text to get at the root of its meaning, attempting to answer the question of language and the impact on a specific audience.”

According to Amrhein, the culmination of the project “will come to fruition” sometime during the week of May 22, 2015 with a professionally-staged reading of the play in both languages, followed by a panel discussion with a group of Latino playwrights and directors.

“The project hopes to bridge the gap between different languages in theatre, artistically and academically, says Amrhein. “It will attempt to expose students and professionals to the art of theatre, promote a better understanding of its diversity in the theatrical community and encourage diversity among the various Latino populations within CUNY.”

A prolific director, some of Professor Amrhein’s credits include: “Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme”, “La Luz de Un Cigarrillo”, “RENT” and “Anna in the Tropics”. Recent designs: the first NYC revival of “The Full Monty”, “The Hedge”, “Twelfth Night”, “Much Ado About Nothing”, “Romeo and Juliet” and “The Merry Wives of Windsor”. He has also designed for The Second City, Carnegie Mellon University, and Cal Rep Theatre. He received the Best Scenic Design award from the New Jersey Star Ledger, Detroit Free Press’s Theatre Excellence Award and most recently the Award for Creative Excellence from the Arts in Christian Theatre. Prof. Amrhein has also helped to translate the Dominican play, “La Luz De Un Cigarrillo” from Spanish into English. ■



Professor Timothy Amrhein



## York Student Creates Outstanding Wikipedia Article

Brandon Breary (Business Major) has received an honor only one in 223 Wikipedia editors can claim; an article Breary created has been awarded Good Article status on Wikipedia! Among Wikipedia’s criteria for a Good Article are that the article is well-written (especially regarding Wikipedia’s Manual of Style), verifiable, and broad in coverage. Breary’s article is on Team Effectiveness and the article page has a green plus sign on the upper right corner, which indicates Good Article status. The article was created after Breary worked with Dr. Ashton (Psychology) on a Wikipedia editing independent study class last spring. ■



Brandon Breary & Dr. William Ashton

## Centralized Advisement Structure Starting to Show Promise

It has been nearly two years since the reorganization of advisement at York College and program administrators are optimistic about the change.

According to Brunilda Almodovar, Associate Director for Advisement, President Marcia V. Keizs wanted to improve advisement following the results of a student satisfaction survey indicating that students were not fully satisfied with the advisement process. Dr. Keizs then created a task force on advisement. From that was born the new advising system. Under the new system, the Academic Advisement Center, Room AC-2C01, now advises first-year students and those who have yet to declare a major. All other students are advised in the departments of their major.

First-year and undeclared student advisors are based in the Advisement Center in Room 2C01, while faculty advisors are based in their departments. Additionally, academic liaisons representing each of York’s three schools—the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs and the School of Business and Information Systems—were appointed to work with the Academic Advisement Center on behalf of the departments and faculty.

“The new structure serves not only students, but faculty and the deans,” said Almodovar, who is the liaison for the School of Business and Information Systems, in addition to her role as associate director of

the center. “The main focus of the liaisons is availability to faculty.” Liaisons help keep the lines of communication open between departments and the Advisement Center, and also collect, check, and disseminate information about programs to ensure that all program information is accurate and up-to-date.

But the ultimate goal of the new advising system is to support retention and graduation and that, according to Lester Raphael, Director of the Advisement Center, will take some time to know.

“It’s too early to tell,” said Raphael. But the transition is going well and we are clarifying the roles of the advisors.”

Raphael added that his team is connecting to each School and building relationships.

“I am very pleased with the support of the senior academic administrators and with the departments really taking this on as well,” said Raphael. “There is now a two-way flow of information.

Raphael noted that General Education and Pathways continue to pose challenges for advising, but that departments and the Advisement Center are working to support one another in student advising.

According to Raphael, indications are that more first-year students are re-enrolling for second and subsequent semesters than was noted in the past.

Once a student declares a major, then a faculty member advises the student. This is a critical piece in assisting students to plan out their college experience and career paths. Faculty members serve as advisor-mentors to students at this juncture, working with students to help them make choices that best serve their talents and aspirations. There are many programs where declaring a major early is key to success. Students who are interested in medicine, law and the professional programs, among others, must take a required block of prerequisite courses and then major courses. Delays in following specified requirements will hinder progress toward graduation. Faculty members can also advise students about internships, service learning and research opportunities that will enhance the undergraduate experience.

“It is essential that the staff of the Advisement Center, colleagues in Student Development and the academic departments work in concert to provide an optimal experience for York students,” said Dr. Donna Chirico, acting dean of the School of Arts & Sciences. ■



Photo: McAlexander Ciceron, York College

## Kudos!

Since completing *Postcolonial Citizens and Ethnic Migration: The Netherlands and Japan in the Age of Globalization* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), **Professor Michael O. Sharpe** (Behavioral Sciences) has kept busy with presentations and talks related to his book. On October 23, 2014, he presented “Remigration Policies in Question: What Do Policies to Repatriate Guest workers and their Descendants Tell Us About the Liberal Democratic State?” at the Harvard Migration and Immigrant Incorporation Workshop (Department of Sociology,



Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts). On November 6, 2014, he was an invited guest speaker at Columbia University on “Remigration Policies in Question: What Do Policies to Repatriate Guest workers and their Descendants Tell Us About the Liberal Democratic State?” (Queen Wilhelmina Program for Dutch Studies, Department of Germanic Languages and Department of History). Directly after that, he traveled to the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands, to present a book talk on November 15.

## Professor Boris on Higher Education

Richard J. Boris, a professor of political science, is prescribing a new path for public higher education. In “From Ivory to Babel to a New Foundation” (*Journal of Collective Bargaining in the Academy*, 6, December 2014), Boris offers a plan to address the existential crises facing higher education today. Leaders of public higher education, he argues, currently share a culture that shorts strategic planning, thinking, and boldness and instead favors ad-hoc, incremental acceptance of the ever-changing, slimmed-down state of affairs. Presidential cabinets and union boards alike symbiotically promote policies that, even when mutually hostile, mostly address short-term local matters and crises while rarely improving educational experience, literacy, and graduation rates, the primary reason for academe’s existence.

As long as old and worn conflict models continue to govern academic culture between administration and faculty and within these groups, public institutions are at risk. The future, however, is not necessarily dark. America’s universities, colleges, and community colleges are populated by enormously talented professionals with cutting edge skills in every conceivable academic discipline and

craft. These professionals advise governments, help heal civil conflicts, research global warming. Others are world-renowned graphic artists and advertising specialists. Statisticians, demographers, and economists abound. A strong cohort of individuals is skilled in digital messaging, branding, and communication. Boris advocates that leaders in higher education recruit these talented individuals to focus some of their efforts on new possibilities for public universities, with the goals of branding institutions and providing a keen narrative to counter the harmful effects of those who currently use such skills to devalue public education.

Boris speaks from long experience, having spent twelve years as executive director (2001-2014) of the National



Dr. Richard J. Boris

Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions (Hunter College, CUNY). An alumni of Hunter College (1964), he received his PhD (1972) in political science from Indiana University, where he was a university fellow and Woodrow Wilson Doctoral Fellow. In 2013 Boris was inaugurated into Hunter College’s Hall of Fame. At CUNY, he has served as chapter chair of the Professional Staff Congress at York College, then vice-president of the Professional Staff Congress and briefly, its president.

In addition to this latest article, Professor Boris’s other recent publications include “Collective Bargaining and Community Colleges,” in *Legal Issues in Collective Bargaining*, Robert C. Cloud, ed., Jossey-Bass (2004) and “Positive Collaboration: Beyond Labor Conflict and Labor Peace,” *Journal of Collective Bargaining in the Academy* (2014). He was also series editor for the National Center’s *Directory of Faculty Contracts and Bargaining Agents in Institutions of Higher Education* (April 2005 and 2009) as well as the Conference Proceedings of the National Center (2005-2013). He has been interviewed often in trade journals such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Education*, as well as by newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Baltimore Sun*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, and by regional news outlets. ■



# York College Social Work Alumni & DSM-5 Training

Social Work Alumni returned to York on this past fall for a York College Alumni Association, Inc. sponsored training facilitated by Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work, School of Health and Professional Programs at York College, City University of New York. “A 7-hour training to view and discuss Dr. David Mays’ video, *Using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5®) for Effective Assessment and Treatment*, was a perfect opportunity to reconnect and reinvest in our students’ professional development by sharing job announcements, peer-reviewed articles, social work labor statistics, York updates and reinforce our mission to the profession to uphold social justice” noted Dr. Rodgers. All participants were highly attentive and engaged in discussions. In addition, the training provided an opportunity for attendees to engage in impactful conversations about the implications of the DSM-5 for culturally diverse populations, trends in diagnosing and lack of strengths-based approaches. Four student scholars enrolled in Dr. Rodgers’ *Social Research II* class also participated in the service-learning training. One student scholar, Kristina Nickoless said, “This training has sparked my interest to pursue practice-informed research using the DSM-5.” Ms. Nickoless, President of York College Social Work Empowering & Encouraging Together Club was accepted to New York University, Silver School of Social Work MSW program for fall 2015. Other participants found the video infor-



Social Work Alumni, Social Work Supervisor and Social Research II Student Scholars

mative and appreciated the opportunity to process each section of the video with attendees. Social work educators reported that they found the training especially relevant, because it informed their practice, scholarship and accountability to their nationally recognized, accrediting body—Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)—to help students master core competencies, pass the NYS Social Work License examination and emerge as leaders to meet the demands and social issues of the 21st Century.

Notably, the forecast for the social work profession looks bright. Hanover Research website found that social work is among the most popular master’s degrees nationally. According to CUNYFirst data, a robust 880 students graduated from York’s social work program over its 30 plus year history (summer ‘85- summer ‘14). Among its legacy and promise and in attendance at the DSM-5 training were alumni—Artis Harry ‘09, Lystra Lessey ‘09, Daicia James ‘09, Elaine Co-

per ‘10, Toni Luck ‘11, Kamau McDonald ‘13, Kimiesha Mcleish ‘11, Lachancha Moor ‘14, and faculty alumnae from earlier years. Several workshop participants have gone on to earn MSW degrees from Adelphi University, Columbia University, Hunter College/CUNY, Lehman College/CUNY Fordham University, with a handful of them passing the licensing exam. Countless York Alumni have made a significant contribution to the labor force. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, social work is projected to grow 19 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations.

Among the attendees at the DSM-5 training were York College, CUNY alumnae and part-time social work faculty members: Nicole Benjamin ‘94, Parthenia Brown ‘85 and Rana Ryan-Begin ‘93 teach a variety of social work courses. Between offering their clinical expertise and commentary about the DSM-5, the dedicated alumni/faculty pledged continued support to students and their alma mater. Professors Benjamin, Brown and Ryan-Begin echoed their appreciation for York’s nurturing environment and their valued education, which provided the foundation for their careers.

The success of this training was not accomplished alone. Professor Rodgers offers a heartfelt thanks to Michelle D. Mack, President of the York Alumni Association, Inc. and members for their sponsorship as well as other volunteers who contributed their time to help organize this training. ■



Dr. Rodgers and Social Work Alumni/Part-time Faculty

## York Professors Provide Opportunities for Students at Brookhaven National Laboratory

It was the biggest laboratory most of them will ever see in their lives, and a group of York College Chemistry majors took full advantage of the opportunity to learn all they could about it on their recent visit to Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL).

Sponsored by the Chemistry Club and guided by Dr. Yolanda Small and Dr. Daniel Robie, professors in the Chemistry Department at York, the trip, which took place in December 2014, gave students the

opportunity to experience one of the most important laboratories in the country.

“Our aim in taking the students to Brookhaven National Lab was for them to be exposed to three large-scale experimental facilities, which attempt to answer major grand challenge questions about the origin of the universe, discovering renewable energy solutions and discovering new proteins to aid in understanding diseases, like cancer,” said Dr. Small. “At the Relativistic Heavy Ion

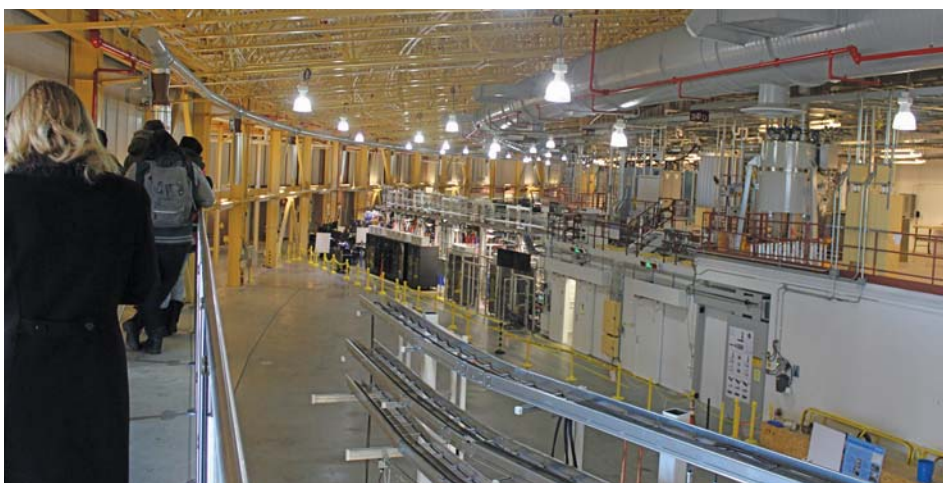
Collider (RHIC), the PHENIX detector that the students toured weighs 4,000 tons and contributes to an understanding of the origins of the universe.”

Dr. Small explained that The National Synchrotron Light Source II (NSLS II) takes up 400,000 square feet of floor space and produces x-rays that are 10,000 times brighter than current sources.

“The work here contributes to the discovery of new proteins which helps us understand disease and disease progression with high resolution crystallography,” said Professor Small, who also works at the Brookhaven, Long Island-based facility. “The center for functional nano materials (CFN) is one of only five national nano centers, contributing to the discovery of cutting edge solar powered devices and nanoscale materials that will revolutionize modern medicine.”

The group of about ten students was not the first foray of York Chemistry students to the lab under Small’s leadership. Other students have had even deeper experiences.

“This tour to BNL is the first that we have organized for this large a group of York College students,” said Small. “However, I have taken a handful of York College students, over the past three summers, to BNL with me on Department of Energy sponsored research grants. These grants are 10-week



York students and faculty on a trip to Brookhaven National Lab

*continued on opposite page* ▶



Participants on trip to Brookhaven National Laboratory from left to right: Dr. Yolanda Small, Osei Owusu, Dr. Daniel Robie, Jessica Garcia, Christian Franco, Ketevan Inasaridze, Muhaned Mohamed (President of the Chemistry Club sponsoring the tour), Eunice Udensi, Carla Pierre Louis, Yaa Boakye, Abbas Nazir (VP of the Chemistry Club), Xavier Odihirin, Nia Rene, Eric Sasu, Nia Rene, Ludma Delva (Treasurer of the Chemistry Club).



Brookhaven Scientist explains the processes to York students and faculty members

summer research experience programs, where I mentor them on a project in collaboration with a BNL scientist.”

Small, who conducted post-doctoral research at the uber lab, said the participating York students in the summer program receive on-site dorm housing “for the 10-week duration, a summer stipend and numerous career development activities throughout the summer.”

They culminate their experience by delivering a research paper and poster about their project and are “enriched by the exposure to cutting edge research.”

In addition to her work with students, Dr. Small, whose research focus includes theoretical and computational chemistry; quantum mechanical/molecular mechanical methods; and classical and ab initio molecular dynamics, is preparing to submit her next publication to a nano materials journal. She will report on recently completed work “where we seek to determine the properties of silver nanoclusters that can be used as biological sensors.”

She explained that silver nanoclusters are potential game-changers in the field of biological imaging and antimicrobial agents, but they are currently not well enough understood for practical applications.

“We are driven to explore the fundamental aspects of these materials that will make them broadly applicable,” said



Students mesmerized by the scope of the facilities at Brookhaven National Lab

Small. “This work is partially the product of my mentorship of York College students during the summer research experiences at BNL over the past few years.”

Dr. Robie, who also teaches physical-inorganic chemistry, has additional expertise in molecular reaction dynamics, photodissociation, cavity ring-down spectroscopy, astrochemistry, atmospheric chemistry and laser spectroscopy. ■

## York College Nursing Faculty at the Lilly Conference in Austin

Professor Margaret Alexandre and Dr. Bernadette Amicucci presented at the Lilly Conference on Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning during the January break in Austin, Texas. Both faculty members presented on the integration of Service Learning in the nursing program at York College. Lilly Conferences on College and University Teaching and Learning have provided opportunities for the presenta-

tion of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for over 30 years. Participants came from across the United States and represented a variety of disciplines found in higher education. The conference provided diverse topics, workshops and opportunities for networking.

Professor Alexandre presented a poster entitled *Curriculum Development and Service Learning to Bring Theory into Practice*. The poster was based on an elective nursing course (NUR 450). Through the development of this course for the department of nursing, Prof. Alexandre, along with Junior and senior level nursing students, had the opportunity to travel to Haiti for service learning, implementation of a hygiene related program and collaboration experiences in a global, underserved community in the area of Carries, Haiti.

Dr. Amicucci gave a podium presentation entitled *Service Learning: Improving Student Experiences in a Nursing Assessment Course*. This presentation described

the process of integrating a high impact teaching-learning strategy into an existing nursing assessment course for undergraduate baccalaureate nursing students as they began their clinical sequence. Students were placed in a community agency and helped to achieve the requirements for the agency while gaining experience working with the well elderly and those afflicted with Alzheimer’s Dementia. ■



Professor Margaret Alexandre



Dr. Bernadette Amicucci



## York student's story 'inspires' President Obama

John Wright is probably the only York College student who can boast that he has a letter from the President of the United States telling him he is inspired by his "strength and resilience."

Wright, a graduating senior, is a rare breed among his graduating peers. For starters, he has told some classmates that he is three times their age. He is 60 and proud of it—almost as proud as he is of his letter from President Barack Obama.

At the age of 20 when most young adults see themselves as invincible, Wright took out a life insurance policy on himself for his loved ones to inherit. Age 60 was not a birthday he envisioned. But he didn't die; he just came very close many times.

Wright, who was born in Brooklyn, has been shot 12 times. Indeed, one shot to the head left his face paralyzed on one side. As a drug dealer at the time, he knew that getting shot was par for the course.

"Where I grew up it was a rite of passage to get shot or go to jail," said Wright. "I grew up in the heart of Bedford Stuyvesant. I was first arrested in 1981 and I was arrested several other



times, but I was convicted in 1989 for distribution of a controlled substance."

Asked what it was like to be thrown in jail, Wright's response was startling.

"Lucky," he said. "It gave me a chance to get off the merry-go-round; and I got my GED."

His worried mother expressed a similar sentiment.

"She said, 'at least now I'll know where you are,'" he recalled.

GED in hand, Wright was ready for college upon his release and he chose York. After "three or four" semesters the streets beckoned once more and he dropped out of college and got arrested a few more times.

"I had stopped caring about myself," he explained. "I was hurting myself and hurting other people who cared about me."

He re-enrolled at York two years ago. This time he was ready and he also noticed that York had the support mechanisms in place for him.

The Health Promotions major signed up for the college's YES program and became a regular in the Men's Center as well as taking a "Drug and Abuse" class with adjunct professor, Martin Carlucci, in whose class he earned an A+. He is es-

pecially thankful to former York College Dean of Students, Dr. Thomas Gibson.

"Dean Gibson gave me my first hand-up by putting me with Mr. [Jonathan] Quash," he said. "Mr. Quash pushes me; and Prof. Carlucci is a real mentor to me. My favorite thing about York is the people. I'm not used to people being nice to me. My life is blossoming. I feel good being in school. God spared me for a reason."

It was Carlucci who wrote to the White House about Wright's story, which led to the presidential kudos.

*"I recently learned of the challenges you have faced and I want you to know I am inspired by the strength and resilience that come across in stories like yours,"* the letter states. *"The spirit of tenacity and hope has endured in the American people since our earliest days, has come to define who we are as a country.... When we summon what is best in us, no matter what comes our way, we can persevere. I wish you the best."*

Wright, who is now a motivational speaker about his life, is humbled by the letter for many reasons.

"For a guy from Bed Stuy who ran the streets to get a letter from the first Black president, it says I have the birthright and the tenacity to be here," Wright mused. "I used to say I'd never amount to anything...." ■



## Kudos!



**Dr. Shawn Williams, DC** (Assistant Professor, Department of Health Professions) recently presented on burnout and work-life balance to students at New York Chiropractic College (NYCC). An alumnus of NYCC, Professor Williams advised students to make good use of social media to establish themselves professionally, to work hard at their careers, and to develop an active life beyond the workplace.



**Dr. George Lam** (Assistant Professor of Music) has been chosen as one of 40 composers to be commissioned to create new works for Synergy Percussion (Sydney, Australia) for its “40 Under 40” project. Prof. Lam will create a new 40-second work for Synergy Percussion to be premiered in its 2015 season in commemoration of the group’s 40th anniversary. More information available at the Synergy Percussion website <http://synergypercussion40under40.com/>

## OT Professor Publishes Article with OT Alumni

Dr. Beverly Horowitz (Associate Professor, Occupational Therapy and Fellow, Gerontological Society of America) recently published an article with two York College Occupational Therapy alumni as co-authors: Horowitz, B., Taliarino, J., & Look, K. (2014). Occupational therapy education, attitudes on aging, and occupational therapy students and therapists interest in gerontology practice. *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics*, 32 (2), 136-152.

Ms. Taliarino is a staff therapist at Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn and Ms. Look is a staff therapist at Elmhurst Hospital Center in Queens. Other graduate students in the Occupational Therapy Department, who participated in this research with Professor Horowitz and were mentored as part of their required graduate research courses, are also acknowledged in the article. Co-authors Taliarino and Look volunteered to re-analyze quantitative data at the conclusion of their research course and assisted Professor Horowitz in organizing information for the publication.

This research was presented as a paper at the October 2014 Annual Conference of the State Society on Aging of New York, in New York, NY and as a research poster at the November 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America in Washington, D.C. The re-

search poster presented findings about a mixed method study conducted between 2011 and 2013. The New York State study, which built upon Professor Horowitz’s prior research on ageism, sought to discern if there were relationships among OT gerontology education, attitudes about older adults, occupational therapist and student “willingness to work” with older adults, as well as therapist and student identification of OT gerontology practice settings. It additionally explored students’ attitudes about older adults and gerontology practice. The study found significant relationships between OT gerontology education and “willingness to work” with older adults for therapists ( $\rho = .351, p = .000$ ) and students ( $\rho = .342, p < .001$ ) and a weak significant correlation between positive attitudes and therapists’ “willingness to work” with older adults ( $\rho = -.18, p = .049$ ). Focus group data found strong interest in working with older adults among OT students.

As an occupational therapy and gerontology educator, Professor Horowitz is interested in increasing knowledge about students’ attitudes about older adults and factors that influence interest in occupational therapy gerontology practice, particularly given the increasing demand for therapists in geriatric rehabilitation and home health care. It is particularly relevant that there was a



Professor Beverly Horowitz

significant relationship between gerontology education and “willingness” to work with older adults, highlighting the importance of gerontology education mentorship and engagement with students in occupational therapy gerontology education. Gerontology workforce issues are an interest of the Gerontological Society of America, given concerns about anticipated insufficiency of allied health providers who have interest in and expertise to work with older adults. Professor Horowitz, as a Fellow of GSA, was pleased to have been invited to present this research poster at the November 2014 Conference. ■

# Report from Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund Event

By **XAVIER CRANDLE**, York College senior

Inside the Washington Hilton's Columbia Hall, moments before competing for jobs and internships with the nation's top students, York senior Malika Jones received a final token of encouragement in the form of a one-inch brass lapel pin. For the community health education major, the pin represented a redefined sense of comradery and emblematic transitioning over one year in the making.

"It shows how interdependent we are, and how to utilize our network, work as a team and make progress collectively," Jones said. "We came in as neophytes and graduated into these well groomed leaders."

Jones joined eight York students who attended the 2014 Thurgood Marshall College Fund's (TMCF) Leadership Institute in Washington, D.C in mid-November. Since its debut in 2000, the annual conference identifies and promotes diverse candidates from 47 public Historically Black Colleges and Universities, introducing students to elite graduate school programs, internships and jobs in government and top corporations.

Accompanied by Career Services director Linda Chesney, York students were among an estimated 470 other students who received insight into the explicit and implicit rules of engagement in corporate settings, and tips for building professional careers.

"These individuals have an opportunity to really understand how to conduct themselves in a professional manner in any environment that they go into," said Scott Lilly, head of Talent Acquisition and Campus Relations at TMCF. "We cannot afford for these students to have their first lessons learned on the job because at that point, it's too late."

The Institute concluded with its 26th annual black tie gala and fundraiser. Hosted by entertainer and Queens native LL Cool J, TMCF broke its own record as the most successful fundraiser held in the history of Washington D.C.



The 2014 gala raised more than \$4 million, while presenting partner Wells Fargo donated an additional \$3.3 million for a total of \$7.3 million .

Randy Punter, Senior Career Opportunity Specialist at York, and former Thurgood Marshall Student Ambassador Stephane Labossiere (York 2014) led the recruitment efforts for the 2014 conference. The two recruited capable students to programs and opportunities within TMCF.

"Mr. Punter asked me what I was really interested in and what I wanted to do with math and youth studies," said conference attendee Bianca Fung A Loi. "I told him I wanted to serve in high need schools and he told me he had the perfect opportunity for me."



York team at the TMCF dinner

That opportunity was the TMCF Teacher Quality and Retention Program, which places teachers in underserved communities to help expose them to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) field.

Labossiere informed Sayeed Shishir, a junior majoring in psychology, of a scholarship through Thurgood Marshall partner, Miller Coors. He interviewed for the Leadership Institute and was accepted in late September.

"He actually pushed me to apply for the scholarship," Shishir said of Labossiere's efforts. He thought I had the grades, the experiences, the volunteer work, and I would be a good candidate."

Labossiere informed Jones of the 2013 Leadership Institute. Jones, however, lacked credits taken at York to qualify after transferring from City College before the fall 2013 semester.

"The following year, I worked on some of the things they asked for," Jones said. "What my leadership skills were, being involved in clubs and other activities, so I was an all-around stronger applicant."

Jones made commitments to YCRadio and Pandora's Box, while presiding over York's Eta Sigma Gamma chapter. TMCF rewarded her efforts and named her the official Student Ambassador after her 2014 interview in September.

"To me, it's a win-win situation," Punter said. "It shows that the program is well advertised, students are very knowledgeable about different aspects on Thurgood Marshall, and more students get to network and develop their skills."

York placed in the top seven of all member schools in interviewing and quality of completed applications in 2013, according to statistics provided to Chesney and Jones.

"It shows that our students are performing well," Jones said. "So if we can invest more time, more effort into strengthening their skills, we can be even better." ■



# Spring 2015 CETL Workshops and Presentations

**Thursday, Feb 26**     **WORKSHOP**     ***Strategies for Encouraging Academic Integrity: Keep Calm and Prevent Plagiarism***  
 12 – 1:45pm  
 CETL, AC 4EA1     PRESENTERS: Writing Across the Curriculum York Writing Fellows

**Thursday, Mar 12**     **PANEL**     ***Tenure Track/Parent Track***  
 12 – 1:45pm  
 CETL, AC 4EA1     PANELISTS: Heather Robinson, English  
                                  Timothy Amrhein, Performing & Fine Arts  
                                  Laura Beaton, Biology  
                                  Stephen Fearnley, Chemistry  
                                  Elizabeth Meddeb, Foreign Languages  
                                  Michael B. Smith, Performing & Fine Arts

**Thursday, Mar 26**     **PRESENTATION**     ***Using the Learning Sciences and Design-Based Research to Develop Undergraduate Research Experiences in the Classroom***  
 12 – 1:45pm  
 CETL, AC 4EA1     PRESENTER: Robert Duncan, Behavioral Sciences

**Thursday, Apr 30**     **WORKSHOP**     ***Simulation as Teaching Pedagogy: Implementation and Evaluation***  
 12 – 1:45pm  
 CETL, AC 4EA1     FACILITATORS: Renee Wright, Nursing  
                                  Lilly Mathew, Nursing



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## Kudos!

Congratulations to **Drs. Nazrul Khandaker, Stanley Schleifer, Alan R. Slaughter, Masud Ahmed, and Belal A. Sayeed** on their recent publication in the *Journal of Earth Sciences and Geotechnical Engineering*, vol. 5, no.14, 2015, p. 35-67.

The article, “Geoengineering Constraints on Foundation: Case Study from Queens, New York City, USA,” is accessible at [http://www.sciencypress.com/Upload/GEO/Vol%205\\_1\\_3.pdf](http://www.sciencypress.com/Upload/GEO/Vol%205_1_3.pdf) Complete with eye-catching photos and graphics, the paper deals with regional geologic information, coupled with geo-engineering and soil characterization aspects of a facility site to be developed by New York City Agency in Maspeth (40° 43’ 28” North, 73° 55’ 10” West), Queens. This current publication, deemed to be very comprehensive and thorough by many geotechnical personnel, was certainly aligned with the geology

discipline’s overall mission pertaining to imparting practical and field-based knowledge on what’s happening with the geosciences as related to Urban Geology.

Congratulations to **Dr. Selena T. Rodgers** (Social Work) on being selected by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz’s African-American Heritage Committee to receive the Education Award at the Annual Black History Month celebration!

“Your unique contributions and dedicated service to the Queens community make you an especially worthy honoree,” the announcement states.

Borough President Katz will present Dr. Rodgers with a Citation of Honor during the program, which will be held in the Faculty Dining Room at York College on February 23 at 6 pm.

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

## York Pins Occupational Therapy Students

The York College Department of Occupational Therapy (OT) celebrated the 2015 graduating class at their Pinning Ceremony, Dec. 4, 2014, held in the Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center. The graduates were officially welcomed into the profession by the department chair, Dr. Lillian Kaplan and keynote speaker, Dr. Elizabeth Chiariello (chair-elect for the Metropolitan NY District of the NY State Occupational Therapy Association), along with cheering OT faculty, family and friends. The graduates received their OT pins and departmental awards from the director of the Occupational Therapy program, Dr. Andrea Krauss.

Wearing their new pins, the graduates went across the street to the Academic Core Building where they presented their master research projects and posters to the college as their first activities as professionals. The evening ended with food and frolic at a party sponsored by the York College Student Occupational Therapy Association (YSOTA). Congratulations Occupational Therapy graduates! ■

