



# HUNTER

SPRING 2012



Photo: Carolina Kroon

Anita Hill Returns 20 Years Later Page 3



4 The Arts Flourish at Hunter



8 Student Develops Prize-Winning App for Microsoft



19 Hunter Mourns the Loss of Evelyn Lauder

## In This Issue:

Anita Hill Speaks at 20th-Anniversary Event	3
Hunter Galleries Break New Ground	4
Art at Hunter Crosses North-South Borders	5
A Creative, Far-Reaching Curricular Initiative	6
Gleeful Accomplishments by Macaulay Students	8
Thomas Hunter Honored By His Irish Hometown	9
Celebrating Hunter's 204th Commencement	10
Picture-Perfect Happenings at Hunter	12
Welcome Back, Steiner: Education Dean Returns	14
Hunter-Educated Teachers Lead the Way	15
Masters at Teaching Dance, Music and Chinese	16
Providing Strong Support for Women in Science	17
Hunter Loses Beloved Evelyn Lauder	19
Class Notes	20
In Memoriam	23
Obituary: Jacqueline Wexler	23
Meet Foundation Board Member Ada Peluso	24



[www.hunter.cuny.edu](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu)



## THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

In the past few months, we have seen many exciting developments at Hunter – which *The Princeton Review* just named one of the nation's "Best Value" public colleges for the fourth year in a row.

Hunter is emerging as one of New York's premier schools for the study of the arts. We will enhance the arts even further when we move our studio art programs to Tribeca, where three floors at 205 Hudson Street will house studios, work space, and classrooms for our MFA and BFA students, and the ground floor will be home to a 5,000-square-foot gallery.

Equally exciting, thanks to a \$100,000 planning grant from the Mellon Foundation, we have launched Arts Across the Curriculum, an interdisciplinary initiative that involves partnerships with several cultural institutions throughout New York City.

Another flourishing area is the CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College, which shares the building with our Silberman School of Social Work. The school has already reached three important milestones: full accreditation, the graduation of the first PhD student, and the enrollment of over 100 students in our four doctoral programs.

Professors and students of science and nursing are developing exciting projects through our partnership with the NIH-funded Clinical and Translational Science Center at Weill Cornell Medical College. The collaboration has been so successful that it has become a national model for public-private partnerships within the NIH, and it has led Hunter to purchase a full floor in a new complex now under construction at Weill Cornell, just a few blocks from the 68th Street campus.

Finally, on a personal note, I was thrilled this March to be the Kate Stoneman keynote honoree. This annual award is presented in the name of a 19th-century leader who fought to have women admitted to the bar in New York and then became the first woman to practice law in the state. The award is presented by her alma mater, Albany Law School, and with me at the ceremony were two recent Hunter graduates, Aleksandr Oganessian and Sevil Nuredinoski, who are students at Albany Law.

I accepted not for myself, but for Hunter College and its founder, Thomas Hunter, Stoneman's contemporary not only in time but in dedication to equal opportunity for all regardless of gender, race, nationality or creed. It is a tradition that, with your loyal support, our College still proudly carries on.



▲ President Raab with Aleksandr Oganessian ('10) and Sevil Nuredinoski ('10)

## Honoring Anita Hill, 20 Years Later

When Anita Hill took the stage at Hunter College on October 15, 2011, the capacity crowd cheered and rose to its feet. More than 2,000 strong, the audience was filled with activists, scholars, students and creative artists. They had gathered for a conference titled "Sex, Power and Speaking Truth," and their standing ovation was reminiscent of the reception Hill received at a Hunter conference held 20 years ago.

In its coverage of that 1992 gathering, *The New York Times* described the participants as "a Who's Who of politicians, women's rights advocates and writers." *The Times* also reported that a conference group led by former Congresswoman Bella Abzug immediately began a petition drive to put more women in public office.

At the beginning of her welcoming remarks last fall, President Jennifer J. Raab paid special tribute to the late Hunter alumna forever famous for her service in the U.S. Congress and her leadership in the movements for peace, equality and human rights. At Hunter, the crowd was reminded, Abzug also served as president of her Class of 1942 and organizer of the first conference honoring Anita Hill.

"Many of you here today were with us then," President Raab said. "It is my deep pleasure to welcome you back." She particularly thanked Hunter Provost Vita Rabinowitz and Virginia Valian, distinguished professor of psychology, for their participation in both landmark events. Currently, she noted, "Vita and Virginia are co-directors of our Gender Equality Project, which is creating a national model for advancing women in the sciences."

President Raab extended another warm welcome to the woman she referred to as "the great Dorothy Helly," reminding the audience that in the early

1970s Hunter created one of the nation's first programs in women's studies, with Helly one of its first directors.

From the College's founding in 1870 to the dawn of feminism's second wave and up through the present day, President Raab said, "Hunter has remained at the cutting edge of the women's movement."

The 1992 conference took place only six months after Anita Hill appeared at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. After testifying that Thomas had repeatedly committed acts of sexual harassment in the workplace, Hill was vilified and threatened by his supporters. She simultaneously became a feminist icon, acclaimed for taking a stand against injustice, revitalizing the women's movement, and spurring widespread social reform.

Hill had worked for Thomas at two federal agencies, and at the time of the Senate hearing, was teaching at the University of Oklahoma College of Law. She later joined the faculty at Brandeis University, where she is a professor of social policy, law and women's studies. In her talk at Hunter on the 20th anniversary of her Senate testimony, Hill pointed out the legal scholars who were there that afternoon and had sup-



Photo: Carolina Kroon



Photo: Carolina Kroon

▲ Hunter Envoy editor Jenady Garshofsky ('12) interviews Anita Hill before the conference.

ported her for decades, among them Judith Resnik of Yale and Charles Ogle-tree of Harvard. She spoke onstage with Columbia law professor Patricia Williams before answering questions from the audience.

As it celebrated Hill's courage and enduring influence, the conference took on the more complex tasks of analyzing the current confluence of gender, race and class relations, assessing today's political climate, and judging the effectiveness of laws prohibiting sexual harassment.

A strong start to the day included remarks by veteran feminist activist and author Letty Pottin Pogrebin, who co-chaired the event. Immediately afterward, participants heard from a panel of legal experts moderated by Dorothy Samuels of *The New York Times*, and then from such present-day activists as Ai-jen Poo of the National Domestic Workers Alliance and Joanne N. Smith of Girls for Gender Equity.

Following Hill's afternoon appearance, *Ms. Magazine* co-founder Gloria Steinem joined other panelists in a discussion, moderated by conference co-chair Kathleen Peratis, that tackled the question "What Have We Learned in 20 Years and What Comes Next?" An evening program featured a performance by playwright Eve Ensler, whose organization, VDay, had partnered with Hunter in organizing the conference. The daylong gathering was notable not only for its size and focus, but also for its multi-generational breadth.

"In organizing the conference, I wanted to be sure young people were involved," Hill told the audience. And as she counseled the young women there to

overcome their fears, find their passions and build on their strengths, she drew lessons from her mother, born in 1911.

"My mother had to imagine for herself and her children what equality was going to be like," Hill said of the visionary support a Southern black woman managed to offer a bright, ambitious daughter more than 40 years ago. "Now we have to imagine a future where sexual harassment no longer exists – what equality will be like in the 21st century."

"Now we have to imagine a future where sexual harassment no longer exists."  
— Anita Hill

Students like Jenady Garshofsky were deeply inspired by this message. A senior majoring in English with a minor in women and gender studies, Garshofsky is editor-in-chief of *The Envoy*, Hunter's independent student newspaper. She interviewed Hill that afternoon, and later described how exciting it was to speak with someone she views as an important role model: "Anita Hill had a lot to lose, and because she stepped forward, women today feel more comfortable speaking out about sexual harassment in the workplace and other important issues."

## Another Opening, Another Show: Students Take Center Stage at Hunter Galleries

When Annie Wischmeyer decided to pursue an MA in art history, Hunter was her one and only choice.

"I was looking for a grad program that was not only academic but would give me the opportunity for hands-on



▲ Joachim Pissarro, Director of the Hunter College Art Galleries

work with exhibitions. I also knew I wanted to be in New York," she said. Today this Midwest native who completed some of her undergraduate studies in Vienna, Austria, is on the cusp of earning her graduate degree at the College.

"It's been even better than I expected," she said, noting that Hunter's comprehensive program has provided her with more curatorial experience than the narrowly curatorial programs in which some of her friends are enrolled.

Wischmeyer's positive experience can be attributed to the unique role that the Hunter College Art Galleries play in the College's graduate-level arts curricula. Hunter stands alone in using its galleries as a focus and hub for faculty and students in the Art Department's two sectors, art history and studio art.

"I don't know of any other university art gallery with this particular distinction," said Joachim Pissarro, Bershad Professor of Art History and director of the Hunter College Art Galleries.

Only at Hunter are exhibitions regularly created by students in graduate seminar classes under the tutelage of art history and studio art faculty. And students completing Hunter's graduate and undergraduate studio programs in the fine arts always present their thesis work in the College galleries.

"Creativity and scholarly research mutually enhance and enrich each other," Pissarro said. "What is most gratifying for all faculty members is to steward a seminar in which MA students are in constant dialogue with their MFA peers."

Last fall, in a seminar taught by Pissarro, Wischmeyer and her classmates studied the work and legacy of the artist, composer and writer John Cage. Their coursework was the basis for a major spring exhibition, *Notations: The Cage Effect Today*. The show was curated by Pissarro together with Michelle Yun, curator of the Hunter College Art Galleries; artist Bibi Calderaro; and Julio Grinblatt (MFA '10), adjunct assistant professor of art. Presented in Hunter's Times Square Gallery, it marked the centennial of Cage's birth by displaying the works of 28 international artists who have cited Cage as an influence and an inspiration.

Wischmeyer wrote sections of the exhibition catalogue, and helped install the show. She was thrilled to have the opportunity to work directly with Rivane Neuenschwander, a participating artist whose work she has always admired.

Cynthia Pratomo, another MA candidate, also raves about her experience at Hunter. A graduate of Wesleyan University who runs her own graphic-design studio, Pratomo often assists fine arts organizations in creating their catalogues. She looks forward to



▲ Cynthia Pratomo, graduate student and exhibition designer

future work as an exhibition designer and a curator of design-related shows. At Hunter, she has designed the catalogues for shows at the Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery.

This year, in a seminar taught by Professor Maria Antonella Pelizzari, Pratomo and her classmates spent the fall semester conducting preparatory research for the show *Peripheral Visions: Italian Photography, 1950s-Present*. Curated by Pelizzari, the spring exhibition presented a wide variety of works offering an alternative, hard-edged urban view of a country traditionally portrayed through a



pastoral, old-world lens. Pratomo and her classmates acquired the works by reaching out to potential lenders, meeting with curators and gallery owners, and finalizing loan agreements. She had specific responsibilities covering the design of the exhibition's logo, catalogue and signage.

"It's so satisfying," she said about the experience of seeing the concrete results of her research and creative work. She added that the best thing about participating in Hunter's exhibitions has been "the bonding experience among students — the collaborative process."

As they work together, the students are guided and inspired by the creative and intellectual teamwork of their professors.

"Both art history and studio faculty give curatorial shape to their own research and vision, in close collaboration or dialogue with each other," Pissarro said. "This is one of the great strengths of our programs."

◀ Carol Goldberg ('56), Chair of the Hunter Art Advisory Board, and husband, Arthur, interact with an installation at *Notations: The Cage Effect Today*.

## Cisneros Gift Funds the Teaching and Exhibition of Latin American Art

For the class of art history majors, the private viewing of works by acclaimed Latin American artists last fall was an extraordinary experience. Usually displayed under protective glass, these pieces were entrusted to students in the seminar for handling and close examination.

The memorable lesson was part of an undergraduate course on research methods taught by Harper Montgomery, who had arrived at Hunter that semester to assume an important new faculty post as the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Distinguished Lecturer in Latin American Art.

Both the new professorship and the students' personal access to important works were made possible by a generous gift from Fundación Cisneros/Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros. That gift provided Hunter with \$1 million in funding, along with special utilization of the

Cisneros collection for the teaching and exhibition of Latin American art.

"The collection is best known for geometric abstraction, but its breadth and diversity actually reach far beyond this," said Montgomery, an expert in modern and contemporary art from Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, the Latino U.S. and other Hispanic cultures of the Western Hemisphere. She teaches graduate and undergraduate courses, enabling students at all levels to benefit from her vast knowledge of avant-garde and neo-avant-garde movements. Her courses also explore the powerful impact that 20th- and 21st-century Latino art has had on culture, politics and societies around the world.

Beyond the classroom, Montgomery plays the role of College-wide ambassador for Latin American art. She organizes the Patricia Phelps de

Cisneros Visiting Artists and Critics Program, a new series that recently brought the Mexican-educated, Barcelona-based artist Erick Beltrán and the Buenos Aires-based curator Victoria Noorthoorn to Hunter for a discussion on the 11th Lyon Biennial. And she works with colleagues like Joachim Pissarro, Bershad Professor of Art History and director of the Hunter College Art Galleries, to include major Latino artists and critics in Hunter's programs and exhibitions.

A striking product of this collaboration is the installation currently on view in Hunter's West Lobby. It is *Gran Esfera Cobalto* (Large Cobalt Sphere) by the Venezuelan artist Jesús Soto, a delightfully imposing work on loan to Hunter from the Cisneros collection. With this installation, the College has become the first U.S. exhibitor to dis-



▲ In December, Gustavo Cisneros and Patricia Phelps de Cisneros (c) and Fundación Cisneros president Adriana Cisneros (l) attended a reading of a book on Jesús Soto by Ariel Jiménez (r).

play a work from Soto's internationally acclaimed *Esfera* series.

Another product of this collaborative focus on Latino art was the April 4, 2012 panel discussion by artist Jorge Macchi, composer Edgardo Rudnitzky and critic Inés Katzenstein, all from Argentina. They addressed the legacy of John Cage, the subject of a Hunter show that also included works from the Cisneros collection.

## Today Times Square, Tomorrow Tribeca

Hunter's MFA and BFA programs in studio art are moving downtown. The move to a four-story customized space at 205 Hudson Street in Tribeca will take place in 2013. It will allow Hunter's art programs to more fully integrate themselves into New York's flourishing art scene and provide greater opportunities for developing and showcasing student projects.



Hunter's 25-year-old Times Square Gallery on West 41st Street will shut its doors once the move to Tribeca is complete. "We love our old building and it's helped us produce great art," said Joel Carreiro, professor of art and MFA program director. "But it wasn't designed or built for art programs per se. This new space will be."

Professor Jeffrey Mongrain, Carreiro's Art Department colleague, noted, "We're starting with a completely raw space, so the potential is very exciting."

On the most basic level, faculty, students and artwork will be protected by state-of-the-art ventilation and climate-control systems. Further design

◀ Faculty members touring future Tribeca home for program in studio art.

elements of the 5,000-square-foot ground-floor gallery and the upstairs classrooms, exhibition spaces, studios and other work areas will result from collaboration among members of Hunter's studio art faculty. Their collective vision is of a school fully equipped for creative endeavors in the 21st century, including digital photography and video, projects in other emerging and fast-changing media, performance-based art, and innovative collaborative ventures across genres and disciplines.

The airy new Manhattan studios will attract even more applicants to an MFA program that is already highly competitive. The bustling sidewalks and creative reputation of Tribeca will bring throngs of art lovers and critics to gallery exhibitions of student work. And the commitment of Hunter's lead-



▲ Future site of Hunter's art studios, 205 Hudson Street

ership to excellence in the visual arts will add prestige to a program already copied throughout Europe.

The new space, particularly the ground-floor gallery, will also provide exciting programming opportunities for Hunter's graduate students in art history, further cementing Hunter's reputation as one of New York's top training grounds for young curators and art historians as well as artists.

# Arts Across the Curriculum



▲ Filmmaker Chantal Akerman answers questions from students after a screening of her film *The Captive*.

In Hunter classrooms, students studying contemporary works of literature meet and talk directly with the authors. Afterward, the students speak excitedly about the transformative experience of hearing writers candidly discuss the creative process. Meanwhile, astronomy students study images from NASA and see the ways in which science and art intersect and enrich each other. And students studying the history of early modern Europe accompany their professor to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they are transfixed by the creative masterworks of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Age of Discovery.

In such settings and many more, Hunter undergraduates are experiencing the pilot year of Arts Across the Curriculum (AAC).

AAC, an ambitious, wide-ranging initiative, aims to integrate the cre-

ative arts with many other courses of study for Hunter undergraduates. The growing program has been embraced enthusiastically by faculty and students, and beyond Hunter has gained the active support of prominent artists and leading cultural institutions.

The seeds for AAC were planted early in the spring semester of 2011, at a faculty gathering hosted by President Jennifer J. Raab. Packing the room were professors representing a wide variety of fields, and when President Raab introduced the idea of an interdisciplinary arts initiative, the response was overwhelmingly positive. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation also responded positively to the proposal, providing \$100,000 in support for preliminary planning and development.

Led by AAC project director Dara Meyers-Kingsley, professor of English

and faculty committee chair Rebecca Connor and Provost Vita Rabinowitz, a small working group of professors and administrators began looking at ways to make the arts a more prominent part of life at Hunter, both inside and outside the classroom.

For the spring 2012 curriculum, the group augmented seven existing courses in the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities while creating two new courses, "Narrative Writing for Health Professionals" and "Distinguished Living Writers." The nine courses are now being assessed "to figure out what works," said Meyers-Kingsley, a curator of contemporary art who directs Hunter's new Muse Scholar program and teaches the Macaulay Honors seminar "The Arts in New York City."

AAC also became involved with "Teaching Tuesdays," a new discussion series launched by the College's Academic Center for Excellence in Research & Teaching. The series enables faculty members to meet across disciplines and develop forward-looking ideas, and AAC has co-sponsored its discussions on the integration of museum collections into coursework and the unexpected commonalities between sociology and dance.

"It's been fascinating to see the faculty's eagerness to get involved," Professor Connor said, adding, "We're trying to tap the riches all around us—not only our faculty, but also Hunter's facilities, programs, institutes and unique geography."

Toward that end, the initiative has brought a series of public events to the Hunter community. AAC's first public program, co-sponsored last September by Hunter's Center for Health Media and Policy, was "An Evening of Poetry, Memoir, Dementia and Healthcare Policy."

The fields of medicine and creative writing intersected as poet Rachel Hadas discussed her memoir exploring

her husband's struggle with Alzheimer's disease, and Dr. Rita Charon, director of Columbia University's Program in Narrative Medicine, spoke of the powerful role storytelling can play for caregivers and patients. Other highlights of AAC's spring calendar have included a conversation with international filmmaker Chantal Akerman and an arts-infused symposium commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Meyers-Kingsley said that the AAC website, [www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsacrossthecurriculum](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/artsacrossthecurriculum), will play a large part in promoting student awareness of public programs like these.

AAC is also encouraging students to take full advantage of Hunter's exceptional location. "We're expanding the idea of the city as our campus," Connor said, citing relationships the committee has developed with arts-based organizations and institutions throughout New York City. Carnegie Hall, the Asia Society, the Society of Illustrators, the Theatre Development Fund and the Rubin Museum of Art are just some of the institutions that have already signed on as partners in AAC.

The possibilities are limitless, because as Meyers-Kingsley noted, the vast cultural resources of New York are just "a walk or a subway ride away."

"We are expanding the idea of the city as our campus."

— Rebecca Connor,  
Professor of  
English and Faculty  
Committee Chair

## Muse Scholar Program Supports Young Artists

As befits its name, the Muse Scholar Program has had an inspirational inaugural year.

Launched last fall, the initiative provides an extraordinary college experience for a select number of incoming freshmen with a significant interest or talent in the arts and a strong academic record. Benefits include special academic opportunities and co-curricular programs, and membership in a close-knit community of talented students and advisors.

Kingsley teaches a freshman seminar that promotes the students' engagement with the arts and includes rigorous writing and creative assignments addressing their experience and study of the city's artistic life. Class trips this year have included music, dance and theater performances at Carnegie Hall, Le Poisson Rouge and New York City Center; exhibitions at the Guggenheim Museum and the Center for Book Arts; and a behind-the-scenes tour and drawing session at the Society of

study of arts-related disciplines.

"The opportunities seem to be endless," said Muse Scholar Kharis Williams, who developed a passion for the visual arts very early in life.

"I started playing with Legos when I was three," Williams said, "and I became interested in architecture." It wasn't long before the young builder was drawing blueprints for his plastic structures, and he gradually realized he was drawn more to drawing and painting than to architecture and engineering.

Williams especially appreciates what he calls the Muse program's "family-like atmosphere," in which emerging artists of all types share friendships and ideas. He is planning to collaborate on a visual-arts piece with classmate Kelly Baltazar, whose interest is Chinese brush painting, and on a movie with classmate Ethan Greenfield, a filmmaker. The film will focus on young artists around New York, portraying their struggles to survive economically and continue pursuing their dreams.

Perhaps a future Greenfield production will feature the actress Colleen Cash, another Muse Scholar. Like Williams, Cash wasted no time in becoming active in the arts.

"I did my first show when I was eight," she said. From that appearance in a musical revue, she progressed to playing Blanche Dubois and other starring roles for her high school's repertory company. Today Cash is



▲ Muse Scholar Kharis Williams

preparing for dual careers in theater and psychiatric medicine by pursuing preparatory studies in both fields. "I want to do it all," she declared.

Cash credits both the Muse program and Arts Across the Curriculum for powerfully confirming a long-held belief: "My grandmother attended Hunter, and I always felt it was the perfect college for me."

As a Muse Scholar, she especially loves joining her classmates in exploring the visual and performing arts citywide, and appreciates how



▲ Muse Scholar Colleen Cash

the members of this diverse, cohesive group constantly "learn from each other." For these reasons and more, Cash believes, choosing Hunter was "the best decision I have made in my life."



▲ Kharis Williams, *Assessed Failure*, Mixed Media: spray paint, acrylic and ink on paper, 6' x 4'

Muse Scholars also receive a full in-state tuition scholarship; free admission to museums, theaters and concert halls; invitations to gallery openings; and a host of other offers to participate in the city's cultural life.

Program director Dara Meyers-

Illustrators, a new cultural partner of Hunter College. Also part of the seminar experience are introductions to practicing artists and conservators, to attorneys specializing in related areas of law, and to Hunter professors with whom students may pursue further



THE STEINS COLLECT

## The Steins Collect Features Essay by Hunter Distinguished Professor Braun

Dr. Emily Braun, Distinguished Professor and director of Hunter's program in art history, has contributed one of two introductory essays to the catalog of a major exhibit now at the Metropolitan Museum, *The Steins Collect: Matisse, Picasso, and the Parisian Avant-Garde*. Her essay discusses the Saturday evening salons held by Gertrude Stein and her brother Leo, which drew attention to the great, if controversial, European artists of the early 20th century. The exhibit continues through June 3.

# Rising Stars from the Macaulay Honors College at Hunter

## Junior Wins “Favorite App” Prize from Microsoft



▲ Chevon Christie (c) at Microsoft's awards presentation in Austin

Last November, Microsoft challenged college students around the country to develop apps for its Windows Phone. Facebook users chose ScanBizCards, an app that scans and organizes business cards into smartphones, as their favorite free app in the contest. Its creator — and the winner of a \$2,500 prize — is Hunter College junior Chevon Christie.

Christie, a computer science major at the Macaulay Honors College at Hunter, is no newcomer to the world of technology and application programming. He has already had five apps published in the Windows Phone Marketplace, including the very popular Hangman Deluxe and NYC Travel, and he has guided other students to create and publish

apps of their own. A self-taught programmer, Christie has spoken at conferences about his experiences as a student developer and was selected by Microsoft as a Student Partner, a role that enables him to inspire other students to become involved in technology development. In January, he was named Microsoft's Tech Student of the Month.

Christie currently interns at Trendrr, a social media analytics company. He is also working on a project that will help immigrants gain easier access to financial services — a project close to his heart, since he remembers the challenges he and his family faced as Jamaican immigrants to the U.S. Today, Christie supports himself through revenue from his apps while maintaining a straight-A average at Hunter.

Though Christie's early success earned him admission to leading private colleges, “the decision to attend the Macaulay Honors College at Hunter College was pretty much a no-brainer,” he said. “All the positive aspects of Hunter and a full scholarship from the Honors College culminated in an irresistible offer.”

## Sophomore Cast in Coveted Role on *Glee*



Colby Minifie, a sophomore in the Macaulay Honors College, has performed as an actor, singer, and dancer around New York City since childhood. She made her Broadway debut at the age of 13 in *The Pillowman* and most recently appeared as David Hyde Pierce's wayward daughter in the Manhattan Theatre Club's Off-Broadway production of *Close Up Space*, for which she learned to speak Russian. Her movie and television profile grew significantly when she was cast as the young Sue Sylvester in the series *Glee*.

“Working on *Glee* was a true pleasure and a wonderful learning experience,” said Minifie. “Honestly, I thought I had done a lousy audition. There were 30 blonde Jane Lynch look-alikes in the waiting room and the audition consisted of saying two lines. I left without a

second thought and the next day I got the call that I was booked on a plane to Los Angeles.”

The day before the episode aired, Minifie received a call from the director. It was bad news: her scenes had been cut. “The news didn't thrill me, but it reminded me to stay grounded,” she said. “There were only good things that came out of the experience. I think my parents were more disappointed than I was.” Her scenes will, it is reported, appear in the DVD extras.

Minifie remembers facing the choice of whether to come to Hunter or attend an acting conservatory: “I chose Hunter because I am a firm believer in public, state, and city schools. Hunter is called ‘the poor man's Harvard’ and I believe it. I am so happy to be in college with a great education, no debts, and a group of smart, diverse peers surrounding me in the middle of New York City.”

“Plus,” she added, “my time at Macaulay Honors College at Hunter has immensely deepened the level at which I approach my acting. Interestingly, the more academic classes I take that have nothing to do with theater, the better my acting becomes. I owe so much of my success to Macaulay at Hunter.”

## A Senior Dedicated to Making “Real and Lasting Change”

If anyone is compiling a list of young leaders of the future, add the name of David Weinberger. The Macaulay Honors College senior is just 21, yet his record of accomplishments would make someone twice his age envious.

Weinberger was recently named a New York City Urban Fellow for 2012-2013. In this highly selective program, he will work in city government, complete an intensive seminar series exploring urban issues, and travel to

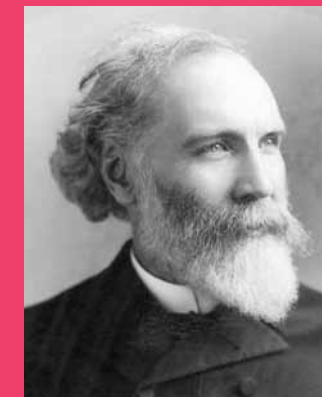
Albany and Washington, D.C. to meet with public officials.

He was previously a senior fellow for the Energy and Environment Policy Center, a national leadership post. He also sat on the International Board of

# Northern Ireland Village Gets “Hunter's Way”

Ten-year-old Cerys Milligan, who lives in Ardglass, a village in Northern Ireland, was thrilled to learn that a man who was born in her hometown was the founder of a major college in New York City.

Because Cerys was so impressed by the accomplishments of this adventurous educator and the college he founded — and she then had a wonderful opportunity to write about those accomplishments — the name of Thomas Hunter and the college he



▲ Dr. Thomas Hunter

began are now honored in Thomas Hunter's birthplace.

“The story began about a year ago,” related Cerys' mother, Louise Milligan, “when Ark Housing Association of Belfast, which was building a new housing development in Ardglass, asked the principal of a local school if the children could help name the new development. To take part in the competition, the children were to choose a

name for the development and write an explanation of their choice.”

Cerys (whose name is Welsh for “love” and is pronounced “Kerris”), continued her mother, “learned about Thomas Hunter from Michael Howland, a local shopkeeper/owner who is related to my husband, Alwyn, and is a font of information about the village and its history. Michael mentioned Thomas Hunter to Cerys and me a number of years ago, and the name stuck in her memory. When the street-naming competition was announced in school, she immediately thought of Thomas Hunter. She researched her information on the Internet. Wikipedia led her to the Hunter College website!”

This is what Cerys wrote: “Thomas Hunter was born in Ardglass in 1831. He founded Hunter College in New York in 1870. At first it was a school for girls only. It was known for ignoring race, religion, financial [circumstances] or political views. The school today is considered one of the most valuable assets of the City University of New York, one of the world's largest urban university systems. Ardglass has lots of people from different countries and different religions living here, and I think this would be a great way to honour his memory.”

Ark Housing Association announced in October 2011 that Cerys' entry — “Hunter's Way” — and her explanation for choosing that name had won the competition. Her prize

was a voucher for purchases in a local store and a certificate, and the school received a tree for their eco-garden.

Hunter's Way consists of 26 homes,

can be traced back to around 2000 B.C., and it has been a fishing port for more than 2000 years. It is a seaside resort, has eight archaeological sites,



▲ Cerys Milligan (c) with Eamon Fitzsimons (l), the principal of her school, and Megan Burns of the Ark Housing Association

including housing for the elderly. The first phase of the new development has been completed, and the housing association has made plans for the next phase, which will be known as Hunter's Close — a name also chosen by Cerys.

Thomas Hunter's birthplace is a coastal fishing village in County Down, Northern Ireland, that had a population of 1,668 people when the 2001 census was taken. Its history

and is home to the oldest trading street in Ireland. Its name comes from the Gaelic words “Ard Ghlais,” meaning “Green Height.”

Thomas Hunter left Ireland in 1849, and in 1850 arrived in New York, where he became a successful public school teacher and principal. In 1870 he founded the Normal and High School for Females, which the Board of Education renamed Hunter College in 1914.

Directors for Hillel, and was president of the Hunter chapter of the Roosevelt Institute Campus Network, the nation's first and only student-led public policy think tank.

Weinberger aims to earn a master's in urban planning, and his ambition “to make real and lasting change in the New York City community” has caught

the eye of several public agencies. The CUNY Chancellor's Office asked him to work with the Empire State Development Corporation in developing an economic plan for the NYC Regional Council. And he served as an intern with the MTA studying “smart growth” transit policies from other regions of the country.

The nation's capital called on his talents for the last three summers. In 2011, he interned for the State Department researching China's environmental record, a position that enabled him, he said, “to influence the department's policy platform going into talks with Beijing.” Before that, he was a Sarah Rosen Fellow at the Democratic

National Committee and served as a summer fellow for the Roosevelt Campus Network.

What has inspired him to go so far in so short a time? “I attribute each and every one of my successes,” he said, “to the wonderful team of people backing me up both at Macaulay and at Hunter.”



◀ Luis A. Ubiñas, president of the Ford Foundation, delivered the January commencement address, in which he urged the graduates to achieve their full potential, have a voice in the direction of their lives, and contribute to society. Ubiñas has a strong connection to Hunter — his aunt is a proud alumna and his wife, Deborah Tolman, is a professor at the Silberman School of Social Work.



◀ Heather Watts and her husband, Damian Woetzel (top center), also a renowned dancer, celebrated with dance and dance education graduates Tiffany Geigel (center) and Ashley Ortiz. John and Jody Arnhold (top left and right) created a new scholarship in honor of Watts for dance education students.

# Dancing for Joy at Hunter's 204<sup>th</sup> Commencement

Heather Watts, the internationally acclaimed ballerina, danced into the commencement audience's hearts as she accepted an honorary degree from President Jennifer J. Raab. Telling the cheering graduates, "You rock!", Watts gave an emotionally uplifting acceptance speech in which she called the Hunter honor "beyond thrilling for me."

Referring to her close association with the renowned choreographer George Balanchine during her 25-year career with the New York City Ballet, she urged the graduates to seek out their own mentors who can be, as Balanchine was for her, "a life-changer."

President Raab called Watts the "perfect honorary degree recipient

for Hunter, where our programs for artists and performers are more popular than ever." She added, "Like our graduates, Heather succeeded by doing it her way and following her own path."

Watts is already deeply involved in Hunter's rapidly growing dance program, teaching ballet master classes and serving on the College's Dance

Advisory Board. The bond grew even stronger when President Raab announced that the College is creating a Heather Watts Scholarship for students in the new five-year BA/MA dance program. The scholarship is made possible by a generous gift from Jody and John Arnhold, the leading supporters of dance at Hunter.

"Standing near so many graduating students who have worked tirelessly towards this amazing achievement is completely humbling, as well as beyond thrilling for me."

— Heather Watts

The theme of dance ran strongly throughout the commencement ceremony. Two graduating seniors were asked to help Watts don her doctoral hood, and each had her own special story. Ashley Ortiz, although only 22, has been teaching dance at a Brooklyn high school since 2009 and last year founded her own dance company. She is returning to Hunter in September to earn her master's in dance education.

Sara Kappraff will enter medical school at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in the fall, in preparation for her second career. Before coming to Hunter, she spent 12 years as a ballet dancer, performing around the

world with such companies as Ballet Hispanico.

And among the graduates singled out for special mention was Tiffany Geigel, 27, who was given little chance of survival at birth because of a severe spinal disorder. Inspired by loving parents, and despite seemingly hopeless odds, she took up dance at the age of 5 and eventually became a dance teacher. A video went up on the Assembly Hall's two giant screens showing Geigel auditioning for the hit TV series *So You Think You Can Dance*. Her grace, skill and athleticism drew gasps from the Hunter audience, and then a prolonged ovation.



▲ Class of January '12 Valedictorian Adam Wier is a literary translator and the managing director of a New York City theatre company. Salutatorian Marta Wronska will start osteopathic medical school in the fall.

# HAPPENINGS AT HUNTER

SPRING 2012



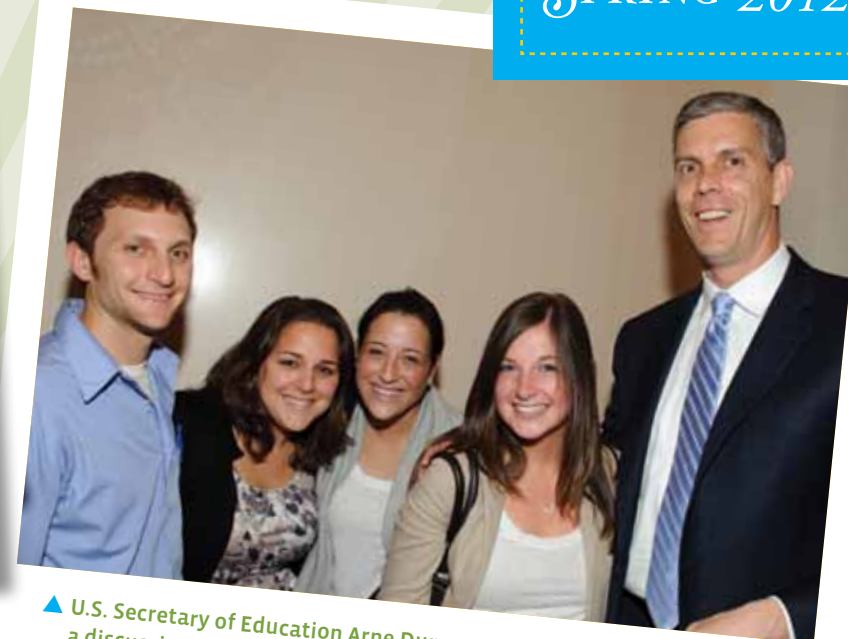
▲ President Raab (l) and FDR Visiting Fellow and interim director of Roosevelt House Jonathan Fanton joined civic leader Agnes Gund at Roosevelt House in March, where Gund spoke about her work as an arts advocate.



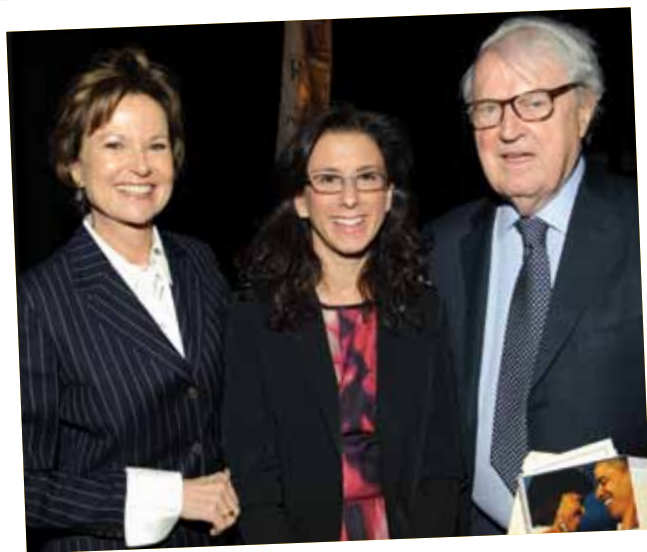
▲ The *New Yorker's* Patricia Marx (l) and Pulitzer Prize winner Elizabeth Strout (c) were among the acclaimed authors honoring novelist Meg Wolitzer at the second-anniversary celebration of Hunter College's Writing Center, directed by Lewis Frumkes.



▲ Artist/author/musical legend Patti Smith introduced her exhibition *9.11 Babelogue* at Hunter's Leubsdorf Art Gallery in September.



▲ U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan met with Hunter students after a discussion on campus in May.



▲ Jodi Kantor (center), author of *The Obamas*, discussed her book with author Kati Marton at Hunter's Kaye Playhouse in February. Ambassador William J. vanden Heuvel gave introductory remarks.



▲ *New York Times* writer Bill Keller (l) and former *Times* writer Gay Talese (r) joined their former *Times* colleague John Darnton at a reading of Darnton's new memoir, *Almost a Family*.



▲ Husain Haqqani, Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, (with economist and philanthropist Marie-Josée Kravis and Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab) spoke at Roosevelt House in September about Pakistan's role in the war on terror.



▲ Peter Carey, Distinguished Professor and executive director of Hunter's MFA Program in Creative Writing, celebrated the release of *Dangerous Ambition*, a biography of Rebecca West and Dorothy Thompson by Hunter alumna Susan Hertog (also pictured here). Hertog discussed the book at Roosevelt House in November.

## David Steiner Returns as Dean of School of Education



▲ Dean Steiner settles back into life at Hunter.

Hunter's School of Education began the 2011-2012 academic year on an auspicious note.

After two years away from a post he first assumed in 2005, Dr. David Steiner returned to the school as its Klara and Larry Silverstein Dean.

"More than any school at Hunter College, the School of Education represents the most direct link to Hunter's roots as a teacher training institution," said Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab. "I can't imagine a better person to carry that tradition forward than David Steiner."

Steiner left Hunter in 2009 to accept an appointment as New York State Education Commissioner. In that office, he oversaw New York's successful application for \$700 million in federal Race-to-the-Top awards for educational reform. He also moved the Education Department toward more openness and accountability in its reports to the public, resulting in the first announcement of district-by-district statistics on the college-readiness of high school students.

And he proceeded to revamp the state requirements for teacher education, basing those changes partly on approaches already taken at Hunter.

One major advance is the use of digital video to assess student teaching. Under the leadership of President Raab, and supported by a \$1 million gift from Bobbi and Lew Frankfort ('67), Hunter has become a pioneer in the development of this evaluative tool. The faculty of the School of Education now uses video to analyze the content delivery and classroom technique of all graduating students.

Starting in 2014, every student teacher in the state will undergo this process.

At Hunter, after the video is analyzed jointly by the student and a supervising faculty member, it is indexed by content, level, technique and pedagogic purpose, and then archived in a searchable online database.

"We have created the largest video library of this type in the world. And we have developed new performance rubrics that are being used in national initiatives," Dean Steiner said recently.

Using videos is just one element of the School of Education's increased emphasis on developing and refining the classroom skills and practice of every student, and on putting the individual student at the center of Hunter's preparation programs. Steiner stressed how important it is to define the skills possessed by the best teachers, to do whatever is necessary to enable each degree candidate to acquire those skills, and to focus intently on each student's progress toward becoming a highly effective teacher.

During the last few years, the School has seen the inauguration of eight new master's programs and 10 new courses of study for advanced certification. Meanwhile, on the undergraduate level, Hunter is introducing a new course open to honors students not majoring in education, and to others receiving special permission to enroll. The course will offer the rich experience of learning all about the teaching



▲ Steiner with his successor as New York State Education Commissioner, John King

profession, with outside experts joining Hunter faculty in leading the classes, and students will be informed of the many options available in graduate studies in education.

Steiner and his colleagues have overseen higher admission standards and major changes in the curricula in childhood education and the teaching of English as a second language.

Steiner also spoke very positively about a new residency program for teacher preparation being implemented in partnership with New Visions for New Schools. In this program, teacher candidates are given an unprecedented amount of time in New York City public schools to learn their craft and experience school cultures before they start their own teaching.

"We especially look forward to working with New Visions and the New York Hall of Science to expand our residency program in high school math and science because we need to address the critical shortage of effective teachers in those subjects," said Dean Steiner.

"It's all very exciting. As we continue to raise the quality of our clinical preparation, deepen our relationship with the public schools, and refine our curriculum, we are building on a position of tremendous strength."

He continued, "We have a responsibility to our students to ensure that they're absolutely ready to teach on day one in the classrooms of New York, and a responsibility to the students of the New York City public schools to help provide them with the best teachers we possibly can. I know the Hunter College School of Education is up to the task."

"We have a responsibility to our students to ensure that they're absolutely ready to teach on day one in the classrooms of New York."

— David Steiner,  
Klara and Larry  
Silverstein Dean  
of the School  
of Education

## School of Education Alumna Champions Frankfort Digital Video Project

Sarah Rorimer (MA '09) earned her graduate degree at Hunter during the inaugural days of the Frankfort Digital Video Project. Rorimer was enrolled in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program, and her class was one of the first to meet an added degree requirement: that all students record a video of a lesson they teach in a New York City classroom, and then consult with a supervisor to analyze and learn from that video. Afterward, students excerpt short clips that illustrate particular skills or challenges, and submit those clips to an online library accessible to all faculty members at the School of Education.

Rorimer quickly became a huge

fan of video as a tool for evaluation and improvement.

"What's really powerful is when you use a small clip to examine what's going on in your classroom. It's very revealing," she said on a recent day off from her job at P.S. 33 in Manhattan. "Teaching is such a dynamic process, and so many things can happen in an instant. You benefit from being able to view it and break it down."

She also commented on how important it is to be in an academic community where there is trust and a common belief that the videos will be used to reflect and learn, not to judge. Because the School of Education is such a community, Rorimer said, she and her classmates were happy to use the new technology "to become



▲ Sarah Rorimer and her elementary school students at P.S. 33

more aware of what our teaching habits were, and how we could work with them or change them."

Rorimer was so happy with the tool, she introduced it to colleagues at Long Island City High School, where she taught last year. Under the guidance of Laura Baecher, assistant professor of TESOL at Hunter, she organized a video-based group in which membership was voluntary, everyone was expected to

be nonjudgmental during discussions, and participants received professional-development pay for their time.

"Teachers often work in isolation," she said. "We use video as a window into our teaching. When someone is struggling with a classroom management issue or with motivating students, working with others to analyze a short clip from a lesson can turn a closed environment into a very open one."

## Graduates Launch Careers in Education as Teach for America Pioneers

have those studies fully funded.

With her Hunter education, New York energy and Teach for America training, Zannikos was a welcome shot of adrenaline for Bodine. Before graduating *cum laude* with a major in political science, she had served as president of Hunter's Undergraduate Student Government. And she became an instant leader in her new profession.

Recognizing Zannikos's talent at imparting the fundamentals of reading to pre-K students, the principal assigned her to train other teachers in methods of instruction. Even a local TV station took note, airing a story about how thrilled the principal was with the young teacher's arrival.

Zannikos hopes to become a principal herself, and this summer she will start pursuing a master's in education administration at the University of Oklahoma.

Looking back on her previous plans to attend law school, she praised the elite teaching corps for setting her on a meaningful path she had not considered.

Also setting out on that path, but traveling fewer geographic miles, is political science major Christine Battiloro, who graduates from Hunter this spring. Battiloro will be a special education teacher at a school in New York City, reporting to work shortly after she receives her summer Teach for America training in Queens. She plans to return to Hunter in the fall, when she will split her days between her teaching job and the pursuit of a master's degree in education. Like Zannikos, she is delighted to be chosen for the corps of idealistic young professionals.

"Teach for America is more of a movement than anything else," Zannikos said. "I would recommend it for anyone thinking of changing children's lives."



▲ Jessica Zannikos with her class in Oklahoma City

Shortly after graduating from Hunter, Jessica Zannikos ('11) arrived for work at Bodine Elementary, a low-performing school in a poor neighborhood in Oklahoma City. Raised in Hell's Kitchen and Greenwich Village, Zannikos had headed west as a present-day pioneer, a member of the first Teach for America corps to serve the capital of Oklahoma.

Highly competitive in its admissions,

Teach for America recruits top graduates from colleges and universities across the country. For the first six weeks of the program, corps members receive intensive training in classroom instruction. They then spend at least two years at a school in an impoverished urban or rural community. In return for this two-year teaching commitment, corps members who choose to pursue a master's degree in the field



# Those Who Can, Teach: Mastering the Teaching of ...

## Dance

Dance education at Hunter will take an exciting leap in fall 2012. For the first time, the School of Education will offer a gradu-



ate program for teacher certification in dance, grades pre-K to 12.

"The new Arnhold MA in Dance Education is designed for ambitious artists who want to be leaders in their field," said Hunter's Kathleen Isaac, director of The Arnhold Dance Education Programs, who is playing a central role in creating the curriculum.

A broad course of study and practice will reflect Hunter's deep ties to the city's cultural community. Students will have the opportunity to perform, work with distinguished artists and hold internships, and will graduate with a variety of career choices. They will be able to work in the growing number of public schools that offer comprehensive

dance classes, many in fully equipped studios, and they will be qualified for positions in private studios, independent schools and institutions devoted to performance, research and outreach.

As students develop their skills and work toward realizing their goals, they will be supported not only by the mentoring and nurturing of a vibrant faculty, but by the laboratory of New York City itself. "We're also looking at how dance technique and technology intersect," Isaac said. "This program is going to be where innovation happens."

## Chinese

Public schools are facing a fast-growing demand for classes in Chinese, but the pool of educators qualified to lead those language classes is small.

"Because of the shortage, many states rely on teachers



from abroad, who experience culture shock. They don't understand the American education system, don't know how to reach students, and can't communicate with parents," said Professor Der-Lin Chao, director of Hunter's Chinese Division and the MA program in the teaching of Chinese. "Hunter is educating home-grown teachers of Mandarin."

At the same time, those Hunter students are being trained by professors who are specialists in Chinese pedagogy. So rather than focusing narrowly on their own knowledge of Chinese, the aspiring educators become versed in the historically proven methods of teaching a difficult language.

Hunter's focus on pedagogy stands out among this country's Chinese teacher-certification programs. As a result, Professor Chao said, "Our teachers are better trained and better prepared, and our program is a national model."

## Music

It's a tradition at every major-league sports event: singing "The Star Spangled Banner." It's also a tradition at every audition for Hunter's music education program: "The Star Spangled Banner" tests the skills and self-assurance of each candidate.

All applicants to Hunter's Teacher Education Program in music must demonstrate a proficiency in musicianship, music theory, and history, and are expected to perform, on their primary instrument or by voice, two or three representative works from different styles.

And whatever their special talent, chosen instrument or preferred genre may be, all applicants must play the national anthem on the piano, and play it well.

"You never know when that's going to come in handy," said the program's director, Victor Bobetsky. "If you teach music in a public school, you will very likely be called upon to play the anthem at assemblies or other events."

Professor Bobetsky knows this from personal experience. Trained

as a concert pianist with a doctorate in piano performance, he transitioned into education, first teaching music at a junior high school and later serving as a city- and district-wide supervisor of music teachers. Then he came to Hunter.

"Of all the positions I've ever had, this is the one I love most," Bobetsky said. "The program is small enough for me to get to know each student, and I enjoy working with them and watching them grow into excellent teachers."

This year, the program has 13 student teachers, "all very talented," he noted. The students include a viola player with an interest in Afro-Peruvian music, a professional jazz trumpet player, and several choral specialists—two with a love for musical theater and another who spent several years teaching in South Korea.

Graduates of Hunter's Music Education Program receive an MA in music education and New York State certification in music (Pre-K-12). They will fill positions teaching music and/or directing school bands, orchestras, or choirs.

"Even though economic conditions are challenging, New York City continues to maintain some first-rate music programs taught by wonderfully talented and dedicated teachers," Bobetsky said.

"Our graduates continue to find full-time positions in the city and suburbs. They impress administrators because our program emphasizes practical skills as well as educational theory. When they arrive at a school, they already have a very good idea of what to do in front of a class."



# McNulty Family Helps Women Advance in the Sciences

Hunter has a proud history of sending women into the sciences. Besides being the only college in the world with two women graduates who have won the Nobel Prize in medicine, it is one of the top ten schools in the nation to graduate women who became members of the National Academy of Sciences.

This distinguished record promises to get even stronger, thanks to the John P. McNulty Scholars Program for Excellence in Science and Math, which supports high-achieving science and math students, not only with full scholarships, but also with paid laboratory research internships, mentoring and professional development.

"We are looking for those young women who dare to be the best," notes Anne Welsh McNulty, who is generously supporting this program in honor of her late husband, John P. McNulty. John's parents immigrated from Ireland; he was the oldest child and the first in his family to go to college. He became a senior partner at Goldman Sachs, mentoring many young women along the way. Said McNulty, "John exuded energy, creativity and ambition. Through this program we

hope to ignite the same extraordinary spirit in others."

President Jennifer J. Raab called the program "a wonderful addition to Hunter's strong efforts in this field," adding, "The McNulty Foundation is helping the American Dream come true and we are so grateful."

Seven undergraduates have been named the first recipients of McNulty stipends. All have been working on the cutting edge of their fields—which range from astronomy to psychology—and all are headed for graduate school and advanced degrees. Among the seven are these:

**Kathleen McGovern** is the first-ever Hunter student to major in physics with a concentration in biophysics together with a major in mathematics with a concentration in quantitative biology, plus a minor in chemistry. Her work has taken her to Mount Sinai School of Medicine to research drug-induced cardiac arrhythmias.

Another biophysics student, **Mariola Szenk**, has been working in a lab at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center exploring the decision-making process in certain kinds of cells.

**Elena Guskova**, a member of the Thomas Hunter Honors program, is a future MD who has been helping to



▲ Aprile Age (far left), the John P. and Ann Welsh McNulty Foundation director, and Foundation trustee Johnny McNulty (far right) congratulate the inaugural winners of the McNulty Scholarship: (l to r) Valentyna Erstenyuk, Mariola Szenk; Elen Gusman, Kathleen McGovern, Vivienne Baldassare, Elena Guskova, and Ann George.

develop new synthetic methodologies in organic chemistry.

Future astronomer **Vivienne Baldassare**, a Macaulay Honors College student, was just awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. She has been studying brown dwarfs—star-like objects that, unlike stars, lack an energy source in their core.

Two of the seven students are psychology majors: **Valentyna Erstenyuk**, a senior from Ukraine who is concen-

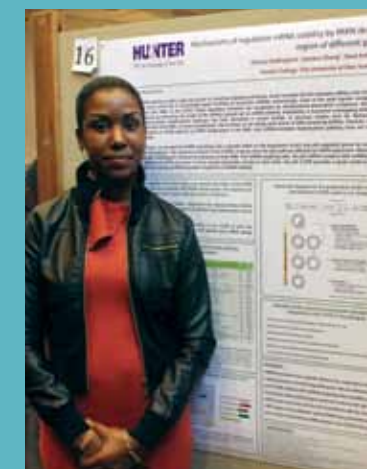
trating in behavioral neuroscience, and **Ann George**, a Thomas Hunter Honors Program student, who is investigating

ways to improve the screening and treatment of toddlers with autism.

**Elen Gusman**, a biological sciences major, is researching protein interactions in certain cells and the efficacy of a surgical procedure for breast cancer at Weill Cornell Medical College.

Thanks to these young women and future McNulty Scholars, we confidently foresee a bright future for many significant medical treatments—and a stronger foundation of basic scientific knowledge.

## Future MD/PhD, Top Neuroscientist



**Kelissa Shillingford**, one of the many Hunter women who excel in science, is a biochemistry major; she expects to graduate in June 2013. This summer, she will intern at the University of Pennsylvania in their Summer Undergraduate Internship Program, conducting cancer research. After graduating next year, she plans to pursue a combined MD/PhD.



**Vanessa Ruta ('99)**, assistant professor at Rockefeller University, is the founder of the Laboratory of Neurophysiology and Behavior at Rockefeller. A neuroscientist, she studies how circuits in the brain

can be modified by experience. Her research focuses on clarifying a fundamental aspect of brain function that could lead to new treatments for mood, behavioral and memory disorders. She received her PhD from Rockefeller and was a postdoctoral candidate at Columbia University. Once an aspiring ballerina, Ruta had studied ballet for four years after high school, but then enrolled in a chemistry course and was taken with the logic of the physical principles that govern chemical reactions.

## Honor Roll of Donors 2009 – 2011

We remain grateful to these donors for their generous support. Their names were regrettably omitted from the 2009 - 2011 Honor Roll. This list reflects contributions in the range of \$1,000 - \$2,499 received by The Hunter College Foundation between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2011.

The Leo Model Foundation  
 Belkis Leong-Hong  
 James Lepanto  
 Carl Leubsdorf and Susan Page  
 John Leubsdorf  
 Bernice Levetown  
 Mrs. Aclen B. Lewis  
 Dorothy Lichtenstein  
 Carole Lindsay Lipp  
 Douglas M. Lublin  
 Nancy S. MacMillan  
 Judith Mahler  
 Ursula D. Mahoney  
 Geraldine Major  
 Manhattan Beer Distributors, LLC  
 George Marks  
 Shelia S. Martin  
 Anneliese C. Marx  
 Alice Masze  
 Estate of Kiyo and Mitsuo Matsuo  
 Sarah Mc Kearnan  
 Gerard A. McCallion  
 Aline McCann  
 John McDonough  
 Patricia McElhone  
 McMaster University  
 Merck Company Foundation  
 Milbank Memorial  
 Lori Milken  
 Ruth Miller  
 Sylva Dee Millinger  
 Erthel D. Mitchell  
 Montclair State University  
 Dorothy D. Moore  
 John Morning  
 Lynda Mullen  
 Emily L. Murawski  
 James P. Murphy  
 Kathleen Murphy  
 Bettye Martin Musham  
 Gift in memory of Irene Samuels

## Happy Mother's Day

For the past eight years, proud families have honored the Hunter alumnae in their lives and benefited new generations of students by contributing a total of more than \$3 million to the Hunter College Mother's Day Scholarship Fund. Every Mother's Day, Hunter places a full-page ad in *The New York Times* naming the major donors and honorees. This year, the Fund received a record number of gifts. For more information, contact Elsa Piña at 212.396.6566 or [mothersday@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:mothersday@hunter.cuny.edu).



◀ Samantha Bass thanks her Mother's Day Scholarship donors, George and Joanne Bundschuh ('58).



◀ Hunter students (l to r) Hanna Kim, Anne Chen and Anicie Buite meet their Mother's Day sponsors, Nellie Gipson ('83) and her husband, Robert, at a reception honoring Hunter women. Also attending was Shikuan Hunag, (third from left), whose scholarship donor, Joseph Blank, has been contributing to the Fund since 2007 in memory of his late wife, Blanche D. Blank ('44).

## A High Note for Hunter



▲ (l-r) Martina Arroyo, Frayda Lindemann, Jennifer J. Raab

At its annual gala in November, the Martina Arroyo Foundation honored President Jennifer J. Raab for her role in promoting opera and the arts at Hunter. Frayda Lindemann ('60), vice president of the Metropolitan Opera Board and a former Hunter professor, joined in the celebration. Arroyo ('56), a legendary soprano whose career was launched when she was a student at Hunter College High School and Hunter College, has partnered with the College to train opera singers.



▲ Lauder received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Hunter College High School in 2010.

The Hunter community lost one of its most loyal and illustrious alumnae on November 12, 2011 with the death of Evelyn H. Lauder at the age of 75.

A graduate of Hunter College High School ('54) as well as Hunter College ('58), Lauder found time throughout her busy life as a wife, mother and business executive to support both alma maters.

At the College she made the Dean's List while majoring in anthropology with a minor in elementary education, and her love for both subjects shaped her extracurricular activities. She was treasurer of Hunter's Anthropology Club and a student member of the Association for Childhood Education International.

Later in life, as an executive at the Estée Lauder Companies, she credited her anthropology major at Hunter for her success in what she humorously called the "cosmetics-counter field work" of observing, analyzing and engaging with department store customers. She credited her education minor for her expertise in training salespeople and other staff members.

As a devoted Hunter alumna,

## Evelyn Lauder, Distinguished Humanitarian, Generous Alumna

Lauder focused on supporting students and faculty as well as classrooms and labs. Among her many activities was her service on the College's Visioning Board and the Leadership Committee of the high school's endowment campaign.

After being diagnosed with breast cancer in 1989, she became an ardent supporter of the search for a cure. She established the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center, a diagnostic and treatment facility at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, which has raised more than \$350 million so far. She also co-founded the Pink Ribbon campaign, now the worldwide symbol of breast health.

Characteristically, she made certain Hunter was a part of the search for a cure through her generous support for the College's breast cancer research lab. And she and her husband, Leonard A. Lauder, were generous contributors to a long succession of Hunter projects and programs.

She was born Evelyn Hausner in Vienna in 1936. Soon after Austria's annexation by Germany in 1938, her parents fled to England to escape the Nazis, eventually making their way to New York.

During her freshman year at Hunter, she met her future husband on a blind date. He was a son of Estée Lauder, the fabled founder of the international cosmetics company. Evelyn's introduction to her future mother-in-law was startling, to say the least. It was only Leonard and Evelyn's second date, but Estée insisted that Evelyn serve as hostess for a birthday party she was giving her son. "What could I do?" Evelyn later said. "She was like a steamroller."

Evelyn clearly succeeded in impressing this formidable matriarch, because soon after her marriage in 1959, she was brought into the family



▲ Lauder took great pride in the cancer-research laboratory she supported at Hunter. On a visit, she was joined by Professor Jill Bargonetti (c) and her research team.



▲ Lauder received an honorary doctorate at Hunter's spring 2004 commencement.

firm to serve as an executive alongside her husband (who is now chairman emeritus of Estée Lauder Companies). It was an era when few women entered the business world, but Evelyn skillfully managed the demands of raising her sons, William and Gary, while handling a series of increasingly important positions.

Years later she told *The New York*

*Times*, "I was very strong. Having had a childhood like the one I had, I was much tougher than a lot of people. I was one of the few people who spoke their mind to Estée."

Evelyn Lauder was inducted into Hunter's Hall of Fame in 2002.

**Obama Names Alumna Mildred Dresselhaus Winner of Scientific Achievement Award**



President Obama has named Dr. Mildred S. Dresselhaus (BA '51) as one of two recipients of the Enrico Fermi Award, a prestigious award for scientific achievement. The award, honoring the memory of Nobel Laureate Enrico Fermi, is administered on behalf of the White House by the U.S. Department of Energy. Dresselhaus shares the honor with Dr. Burton Richter of Stanford University.

She was selected for her "scientific leadership, her major contributions to science and energy policy, her selfless work in science education and the advancement of diversity in the scientific workplace, and her highly original research."

Dresselhaus was inspired at Hunter College by future Nobel Laureate Rosalyn Yalow, who recognized her talent and encouraged her to pursue science. Dresselhaus graduated *summa cum laude* from Hunter and received a PhD from the University of Chicago in 1958. Her extensive portfolio of research accomplishments includes many discoveries leading to fundamental understanding of various condensed-matter systems.

A professor of physics and electrical engineering at MIT, Dresselhaus has held many scientific roles, including the presidencies of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

## CLASS NOTES

### 1930s

**Rosalyn Kane ('35)** is a professor emerita of environmental science at Montclair State University in New Jersey. She is co-author of the textbook *Biology for Survival*.



**Audrey Felberbaum (BA '37)** (l.) and Hunter College Foundation chair **Klara Apat Silverstein (BA '54/MA '56)** enjoy coming back to campus for the annual holiday party.

### 1940s

**Beatrice Mintz (BA '41)**, a professor and the Jack Schultz Chair in Basic Science at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, received the Ninth Annual American Association for Cancer Research Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research. Mintz's pioneering work involving chimeric and transgenic mice, stem cells and tumor microenvironments has had a profound effect on cancer research.



**Ruby Dee (BA '45)** and **Norma Ginsberg (BA '40)** join President Jennifer J. Raab at the Summer Garden Party at Hunter.

### 1950s

Philadelphia mayor **Michael Nutter** named **Sonia Sanchez (BA '55)** the city's first official Poet Laureate.

Sanchez, a playwright, author, and former professor, will hold the title for two years.

In her new book, *African American Women Chemists* (Oxford University Press, 2011) **Jeanette Brown (BS '56)** focuses on the contributions of African-American women to the field of chemistry.

### 1960s

**Jeffrey S. Senzer (BA '64)** was installed as president of the New York County Dental Society, the largest division of the New York State Dental Association, serving approximately 2,300 members.

**Daniel Domenech (BA '67)** has been named to the Board of Trustees of CNA, a not-for-profit research and analysis organization. Domenech is also the executive director of the American Association of School Administrators.

Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum has appointed Hunter College Foundation Board member **Judy Francis Zankel (BA '67)** as secretary of its Board of Trustees. Zankel also serves on the Board of Trustees of Carnegie Hall and is the former president of the Society of Illustrators in New York.



**Joel Bloom (MA '69)** has been named the next president of the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

Previously, Bloom was the school's vice president for academic and student services and its interim president.

### 1970s

Artist **Alan Sonfist's (MA '70)** current project, *Ancient Olive Grove*, is being created on a five-acre plot in Florence, Italy. Sonfist, who planted a grove of trees in the shape of an olive leaf, used only those with a 5,000-year lineage to replicate the look of an ancient Tuscan forest.

**Earl Brown, Jr. (MA '73)** has joined Livingston College to establish the school's study abroad/global engagement program, which seeks to increase minority participation in overseas educational opportunities.

**Phillip P. Rosenthal (BA '73)** has joined the Jewish Guild for the Blind as chief operating officer. Rosenthal first worked for The Guild in the mid-1970s as a teacher and then as coordinator of mental health.

### 1980s

**Nancy Lane (BA '81)** has been named executive producer of CBSNews.com, where she will oversee all editorial work for CBS News' digital properties, social media, and mobile applications. Previously, Lane was vice president and news director of CNN/U.S.



*The Bell, the Flower and the Wash*, a freestanding series of abstract sculptures, was created by **Ilan Averbuch (MA '84)** to accompany the renovation of Fire Station No. 1 in Scottsdale, Ariz. A portion of the sculpture is made of recycled stones from New York bridges. The work was installed in December 2011.

**Burt Kimmelman (MA '87)** has published his seventh poetry collection, *The Way We Live* (Dos Madres Press, 2011). He has also written several essays and book-length literary studies on medieval, modern, and postmodern poetry.



**Wendy Li (BS '88)** has joined City National Bank in the private client services department as a senior vice president and senior relationship manager. Before moving to City National, Li spent more than a decade with J.P. Morgan, most recently as a senior private banker. She was also an institutional sales marketer in the Global Credit Derivatives Group at J.P. Morgan's investment bank.

### 1990s

Former deputy assistant to President Obama and director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs **Adolfo Carrion, Jr. (MUP '90)** has joined CSA Group as senior advisor for corporate development. CSA is the nation's

largest Hispanic-owned firm in its field, which includes architectural, engineering, and environmental services. Prior to assuming his White House post, Carrion was serving his second term as Bronx Borough President.

**Carina Castro Suba (MSN '90)**



was appointed director of the Clinical Documentation Improvement Program at Lenox Hill Hospital. In her new role, Suba will educate staff and physicians on best-practice documentation.

Two of **Keith Duncan's (MFA '93)** paintings were on view at The New Orleans Healing Center as part of *Prospect.2 New Orleans*, a biennial exhibit that seeks to promote the visual art community in New Orleans.

At age 64, **Cecilia Harriendorf (BA '93)**, now known as Sister Ciel, became a nun in 2008 after seven years of training. She had previously retired from a 30-year career as a spiritual-affairs television show producer. She is now the director of campus ministry at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, N.Y., where she oversees student community service and spiritual programs.

**Pam Lins (MFA '94)** combined new sculptures with past and remade works for her exhibition *Opener 23 Pam Lins: Denver Gold*. The exhibition was on view at The Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., through April 22.

**Emily Allison-Francis (MA '95)** has authored her first book, *Correct-*

*ing the Vitamin D Deficiency Epidemic: Strategies to Fight Diseases and Prolong Life for Black People* (Dare Books, 2011).

**Arlene Gonzalez-Sanchez (MSW '95)** was confirmed on March 1 as commissioner of the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. Gonzalez-Sanchez last served as the commissioner of community services for Nassau County.

**Diana Miller (MSW '96)**, recently ordained as a rabbi, has assumed the pulpit at Kehilat HaNahar, a synagogue in New Hope, Pa.

**Margarita Cabrera (BFA '97, MFA '01)** has been selected by the Museum and Cultural Affairs Department in El Paso, Texas, to beautify newly proposed traffic circles. Cabrera, a sculptor, has shown her works at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, and El Museo del Barrio in New York. She now has 11 pieces on display at the El Paso Museum of Art until August 2013.

Vermont native **Brent Raymond (BA '97)** was named director of the Vermont Global Trade Partnership, where he will assist Vermont businesses in their efforts to access international markets.

### 2000s



The Stevens Cooperative School in Hoboken, N.J., appointed **Sergio Alati (MS '00)** as its new head of school.

**Margarita Aguilar (MA '03)** is the newly appointed director

of El Museo del Barrio, the Latino cultural institution in East Harlem. She comes to El Museo by way of Christie's, where she was vice president and senior specialist in Latin American art.

**Andrew Nowick (BA '03)** has been named to the Board of Directors of The Lambertville (N.J.) Area Education Foundation, which provides support to local educators and administrators.

**Lillian Agbeyegbe's (MPH '05)**



first book, *Speaking My Daughter's Mind: A Collection of Blog Entries* (AuthorHouse, 2011), is a narration of a growing toddler's actions as seen through a mother's perspective.

*Freedom from Want*, an exhibition of new paintings by **Aaron Johnson (MFA '05)**, was featured at The Stux Gallery in New York City this fall. This is Johnson's second solo show at The Stux, and his fifth in New York.

**Lindsey Lindberg (BA '05)**, also known as Mama Lou, has been named one of the 50 strongest women in the United States by *More Magazine*. Lindberg says she developed her strength performing as a trapeze artist.

**Lucas Joaquin (BA '06)** produced



his first feature film, *Keep the Lights On*, which premiered at the Sundance and Berlin Film Festivals this winter.

**Maia Efrem (BA '07)** is the editor of a new group blog for Jewish high school and

## CLASS NOTES CONTINUED

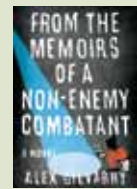
university students, *Blognik Beat*. Launched on forward.com, the blog includes observations from recent immigrants with roots in the former Soviet Union.

**Brittany Gleixner-Hayat (BA '07)** has been awarded the Robertson Foundation for Government 2012 Fellowship. Gleixner-Hayat, a master's student at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, will receive a full scholarship.

The Charleston, S.C., law firm of Schutjer Bogar has named **Julia Daly (BA '08)** one of four new associates to join the firm immediately after graduating from Vanderbilt Law School.

Registered dietitian **Shira Isenberg (MPH '08)** offers her readers advice on healthy eating, often within the bounds of a religious diet. Her articles, such as, "A Kiddush Conundrum" and "Taking Chanukah to Heart," can be found in the magazine *Jewish Action*.

**Yeon Jin Kim's (MFA '08)** first solo museum exhibition, *Spaceship Grocery Store*, will be held at the Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton, N.J., from April 1 through June 3.



Fashionistas and G-men clash in **Alex Gilvarry's (MFA '09)** debut novel, *From the Memoirs of a*

Photo: Julie Lemberger



Albanian folk dancer **Olsi Gjeci (BA '10)** is one of three new dancers to join the New York-based BALAM Dance Theatre. Gjeci previously toured the world as a principal dancer with the folkloric group Laberia.

*Non-Enemy Combatant* (Viking Penguin, 2012).

### 2010s

**Robert Bloom (BA '10)** has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship, allowing him to study in Germany for the 2011/2012 academic year.

**Esther Kläs's (MFA '10)** first solo exhibit in New York City, *Esther Kläs: Nobody Home*, appeared at the Peter Blum gallery. Her sculptures have been exhibited in Berlin and Venice.

**Sarah Walsh (BA '11)**, who began training in January for a two-year tour with the Peace Corps, will work with several Panamanian agencies to address environmental degradation.



▲ Members of the Class of 1961 Marcia Zess Buonnanno (l.), Fran Dresner Cherashore (c.), and Louise Geller Wydra reunite at the 2011 Alumni Luncheon.

## Join Us to Celebrate Hunter's 142<sup>nd</sup> Birthday

The Alumni Association of Hunter College cordially invites you and your guests to celebrate the 142nd birthday of Hunter College and the 140th birthday of the Alumni Association of Hunter College at a reunion luncheon on Sunday, May 20, 2012, at The Grand Hyatt (42nd St. at Grand Central Station, New York City).

Milestone Roll Call: **1932, 1937, 1942, 1947, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007**

\$95 in advance, \$125 at the door  
For tickets or more information, please email [alumniofhunter@gmail.com](mailto:alumniofhunter@gmail.com) or call **212.396.6537**.

## HUNTER REMEMBERS...

Goldie (Popkin) Warren '33  
Florence Wolfson Howitt '34  
Natalie Lipton '35  
Olga Rosoff '35  
Edith Schick Engel '36  
Helen T. Maguire '38  
Edith Prostkoff '38  
Josephine English '39  
Elinor Green Hunter '39  
Alicia Baro '40  
Evelyn Nissen '40

Claire Cohen Jacobs '41  
Dorothy Grebelsky Meltzer '41  
Lucy Pearce '41  
Ruby Cohn '42  
Dorothy V. Fischer '42  
Selman Kaplan '42  
Dora Stein '42  
Amy Swerdlow '42  
Lucille Katzman '44  
Josephine Cornacchio '45  
Delia De Santis '45

Bernice Goldin '45  
Helen Stark Cross '46  
Winifred Keller '46  
Esther (Richter) Grunwald '47  
Rosette Lamont '47  
Phyllis Schwartz Tandlich '47  
Grace Marino '52  
Diane May '53  
Teresa Hughes '54  
Violet Weichlein '55  
Carol Ackerman '62

Ruth S. Hanft '63  
Constance E. Thomas '66  
Mariquita Mullan '69  
Catherine Gotti '75  
Hector Gesualdo '76  
Michael Conway '93  
Cynthia Pierce '95  
Jenni Jenkins '10

## IN MEMORIAM

**Eleanor Cendali ('49)** died in July, 2011 after a valiant battle with lung cancer. She never smoked a cigarette in her life. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate, Cendali



taught English for more than 30 years. She later became the dean of students at Evander Childs High School in the Bronx, where she was so adored by her students that they nominated her for Cousin Brucie's "Good Guy" radio award — which she won. After retiring in 1986, she read voraciously and spent time with her children, grandchildren and husband, John, whom she met in kindergarten. John was the administrative superintendent of buildings and grounds for City College and, before that, chief electrician.

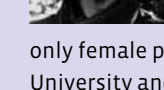
**Hadassah Gold (BA '46)**, a valued member of the Hunter and CUNY communities, died on November 12, 2011. She represented her class on the Executive Council of the Alumni



Association in 1956, served as president of the Alumni Association from 1975 – 1990, and co-chaired many of the Association's Birthday Luncheons. From 1999 – 2004, she was president of the Scholarship & Welfare Fund. A member of the Council for Public Higher Education, Gold was a member of the search committee to select CUNY's deputy chancellor in 1982. In recognition of her years of work for the Alumni Association, a position that once included serving as managing editor of the *Alumni Quarterly*, she

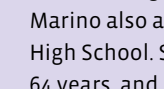
was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1979. An English major who began her career in publishing, she went on to become a freelance writer and editor and was often sought after for her editorial expertise.

**Evelyn Handler (BA '54)**, a professor of biological sciences and the dean of science and mathematics at Hunter from 1977 to 1980, died on December 23, 2011. Dr. Handler was the



only female president of Brandeis University and was the first woman president of the University of New Hampshire. She received master's and doctoral degrees in biology from New York University and was an expert on myelogenous leukemia. Her research on blood cell formation in the leukemic state was supported by five major grants from the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health.

**Betty T. Merino ('45)** died on September 8, 2011. She was active in the Queens Chapter of the Alumni Association for more than 50 years and when she moved to Florida, she became involved in the North Broward Chapter — never forgetting her Queens roots.



Marino also attended Hunter College High School. She was married for 64 years, and is survived by her two daughters, Jane and Emily, and two grandchildren. She worked as a school secretary for the New York public schools for many years.

Professor **Alex E. Alexander**, head of the Russian and Slavic Studies program from 1974 to 2010, died on January 10, 2012. A member of the Hunter faculty for 45 years, he will be greatly missed by his colleagues and students. His family held a memorial service at Hunter on March 30, and has set up the Professor Alex E. Alexander Memorial Fund, which welcomes donations to benefit the College and honor his life's work. Please go to [www.hunter.cuny.edu/donatenow](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/donatenow) and select the **Prof Alex E. Alexander Memorial Fund** as the Designation to make a contribution.

## Jacqueline Wexler, Leader of Hunter in the '70s, Left Lasting Legacy



Jacqueline Wexler, the visionary president of Hunter from 1970 to 1979, died in Orlando, Fla., on January 19, 2012, at the age of 85. She successfully guided the College through an era that saw the end of free tuition at CUNY campuses as well as the New York financial crisis. Despite the challenges, Wexler achieved a record that permanently enriched the College. She brought the Bellevue School of Nursing to Hunter. She helped launch the Brookdale Center on Aging and established Hunter's School of Health Sciences. And she created the Women's Studies program along with other pioneering initiatives.

President Jennifer J. Raab expressed the Hunter community's admiration for its former president, as well as a deep sense of personal loss, saying: "Jacqueline Wexler has been an enormous inspiration to me, beginning with my student days at Hunter High. I was pleased that we were able to become reacquainted when I became president 10 years ago. I will be forever grateful for her mentorship, just as all of us at Hunter are grateful for her lasting impact on the College."

Wexler's path to Hunter was as extraordinary as the person. She was born Jean Grennan on a farm in Illinois in 1926. After graduating in 1949 from Webster, a college run by Catholic nuns, she joined the religious order, taking the name Sister Jacqueline. She became Webster's president, but her strong views about educational independence and the role of women in the Church led to conflicts with the hierarchy. In 1967, after Webster won its battle for separation from the Church, she renounced her vows. Two years later she married Paul Wexler, a New York recording executive, and adopted his two children.

Contributions in her memory may be made to The Jacqueline Grennan Wexler Fund, c/o The Hunter College Foundation, 695 Park Avenue, Room E1313, New York, NY 10065.



## Foundation Board Member Ada Peluso

*From Student to Professor to Generous Supporter and Tireless Advocate*

Ada Peluso (BA '60) has enjoyed a uniquely fulfilling life and made extraordinary contributions during her 50-plus years at Hunter College – from undergraduate to professor of mathematics (starting in 1966 after earning her PhD from NYU), to chair of the Math and Statistics Department from 1999 to 2010, to Hall of Fame inductee in 2001, to member of the Foundation Board of Trustees since 2010.

How does she see her beloved alma mater today, and how does she assess its progress over the decades she has dedicated to ensure to its growth and success? “Hunter has always been great,” she said emphatically, “but this is its greatest era. The leadership is more dynamic, the academic opportunities are more diverse, and the students are more dedicated.”

She shares something in common with

many of the students: an immigrant childhood. Her father was an Italian diplomat posted in Antwerp, Belgium, during WW II, and the family was in frequent danger from the heavy shelling of the city. When the Pelusos arrived in America in 1948, she did not know a word of English.

Technically, Peluso is retired. In fact, she is as busy as ever, serving at President Raab’s request on several college committees as well as the Foundation Board, working at both Manhattan Hunter Science and Hunter College High Schools on programs to inspire students in math, and organizing the first of the College’s new Soup and Science seminars.

Reflecting on Peluso’s extraordinary background, Klara Silverstein (BA '54/MA '56), chair of the Hunter Foundation Board, said, “With her amazing history as a top-flight mathematician, a caring and brilliant teacher, and a dedicated and farseeing supporter of

the College, Ada brings to the Foundation a combination of vision, energy, and devotion that will unquestionably help propel this College – which she so deeply loves – to ever greater heights.”

Ada and her brother, Romano Peluso, are among Hunter’s most generous supporters. She has funded a visiting math professorship in her name. The Pelusos’ joint endowment provides scholarships in mathematics and statistics. They underwrote the Wexler Library’s circulation desk and the new faculty center that will be installed when the library’s modernization is completed. Their recent gift to Roosevelt House supports programs and facilities and honors their parents, Assunta and Ignazio, with a permanent plaque. Romano is a member of the Roosevelt House advisory board as well as a regular contributor to the Mother’s Day Scholarship Fund in Ada’s name. “I’ve turned him into a member of the Hunter

family,” she said with a laugh.

Asked what inspires such generosity to Hunter, she paused to reflect on the college that has been central to her life for more than half a century and that has done so much to shape her personally, intellectually and professionally, and then she replied simply, “It’s a joy to give back to Hunter and to work with a great president like Jennifer Raab.”

The Pelusos’ philanthropy extends well beyond Hunter. They have given the Metropolitan Museum many art objects and acquisition funds, endowed the museum’s research journal and contributed to the installation of a new Venetian Gallery. The New York Society Library’s skylight and exhibition gallery have been restored, thanks to Ada and Romano. The gallery now bears their names as well as those of their beloved parents. Ada has been a trustee of the library since 2010.