

# EYE ON CSI



## PRODUCING SUCCESSFUL CINEMA

Isen Robbins's  
CSI Experience Launched  
His Career as a Filmmaker





# alumni EVENTS

## Second Annual Fall Fest

October 3, 2009  
11:00am to 4:00pm  
The Great Lawn

(For more information see  
page 28.)

## Tasting Event

Save the Date

Sunday, October 11, 2009  
4:00pm to 8:00pm  
CSI Center for the Arts Atrium

In the tradition of our well-known  
past events, "Taste of Italy" and  
"Taste of the Mediterranean,"  
the Alumni Association is proud  
to present a tasting event that  
will feature varied cuisines.  
Many Staten Island restaurants  
will be showcasing their signature  
dishes. It promises to be a feast  
for the senses. More information  
to follow.

## CSI Gala

to raise funds for student  
scholarships

Save the Date

December 5, 2009  
Richmond County Country Club  
(Information will follow.)

# www.csialumniatlarge.org

# EYE ON CSI

Volume 1, Number 2  
Summer 2009

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*Eye on CSI* is a publication of the College of  
Staten Island Alumni Association, provided to all  
alumni of the College of Staten Island and its  
predecessor institutions, Staten Island  
Community College and Richmond College.

If you have any comments, suggestions, or  
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# 10

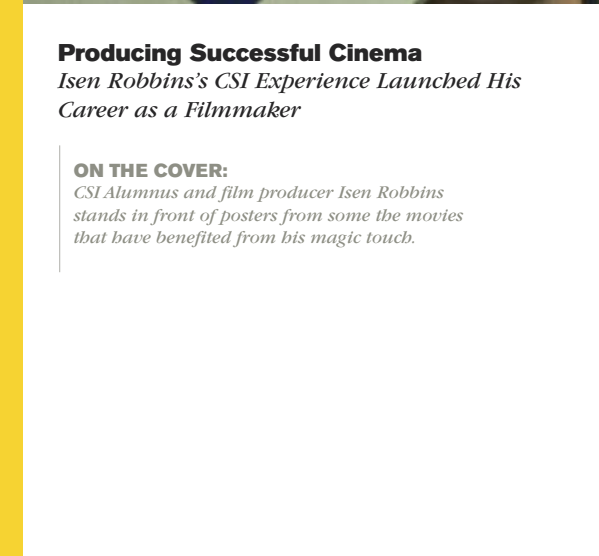
## Producing Successful Cinema

*Isen Robbins's CSI Experience Launched His  
Career as a Filmmaker*

### ON THE COVER:

*CSI Alumnus and film producer Isen Robbins  
stands in front of posters from some the movies  
that have benefited from his magic touch.*

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## from the **PRESIDENT**

On May 28 I told the graduating class of 2009 that they have earned a degree that is second to none; that they were trained by a world-class faculty, and that they are following in a proud tradition and joining an elite group – the alumni of the College of Staten Island.

I told the Class of 2009 that they are following in the footsteps of distinguished alumni who are leaders, thinkers, and good citizens; who are the backbone of the healthcare industry on Staten Island; who are the spine of primary and secondary education on Staten Island; who are journalists, entrepreneurs, bankers, engineers, judges, and elected officials; who are YOU and every profession represented by what you do and every contribution you make to our society.

The College of Staten Island is a college on the move – our Library is expanding; our science facilities are expanding; our faculty are increasing the number of research grants they are receiving, their work is being published in the best peer-reviewed journals, and they are mentoring over 150 doctoral students; more of our new faculty are being drawn from the most prestigious institutions of higher education; more of our undergraduate students are engaged in research and our students are being accepted into highly selective graduate and professional programs.

The value of a CSI degree will only continue to appreciate. CSI is on the verge of a new strategic planning process that is being designed to position our College among the top-tier public universities. It is an exciting time at CSI and I urge you to participate actively – reconnect with classmates and faculty; mentor a student; provide an internship; support our scholarship efforts; return to CSI – learning is a lifelong adventure!

I wish everyone a happy, restful, and enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,

**Tomás D. Morales, PhD**  
*President*



## CSI POWERS DOWN FOR EARTH HOUR

The College of Staten Island joined other The City University of New York (CUNY) campuses and cities around the world on March 28 by participating in Earth Hour, an international effort to save energy around the planet by turning off lights and reducing power consumption for one hour.

Beginning at 8:30pm, the College turned off its informational marquee sign at the campus entrance; lights were turned off in skylit areas of the Campus Center, the Library, and the Center for the Arts (unless classes or events were scheduled there); and Campus Peace Officers (CPOs) used bicycles exclusively for patrol of the campus.

The Sustainable CUNY Project, a University-wide effort to make all CUNY campuses greener, encouraged University students, faculty, and staff to take photos of their campuses' contributions to Earth Hour. Sustainable CUNY posted a slideshow of the photos on its Website ([web.cuny.edu/about/sustainable.html](http://web.cuny.edu/about/sustainable.html)), and created an electronic newsletter, *Where Were You When the Lights Went Out?* in an effort to inform the public of CUNY's contributions to the event.

## CSI Announces State Funding of **FERRY SHUTTLE SERVICE**

The College of Staten Island was awarded \$410,000 in a Job Access and Reverse Commute Grant from the New York State Department of Transportation for the operation of the New CSI - Staten Island Ferry Shuttle. The ferry shuttle operates direct service from the College's Willowbrook campus to the St. George ferry terminal. This service currently operates and runs every half hour from 7:00am until 11:00pm on school days and hourly on non-school days.

"I am so pleased that President Morales initiated this program," says Jonathan Peters, Associate Professor of Finance at the College of Staten Island and a Research Fellow at the University Transportation Research Center. "Every day that classes are in session, over 1,430 students and staff will arrive on campus, each having saved over 15 minutes each way in their daily commute. I have ridden the bus numerous times and it is a true joy to reach the terminal

without extensive delay and to have a shuttle with a high frequency of service – it really reduces the stress of the commute." Peters adds that he expects the shuttle to move approximately 217,000 riders this year.

This project was pilot tested in March of 2008 and funding for the service was pursued by the College for full implementation of the program for the 2008-2009 academic year. This grant allows the College to pursue additional funding sources for acquisition of equipment and support of operating costs in future years. The College expects that this service will significantly reduce traffic on Staten Island roads, lower demand for parking services on campus, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Staten Island, with the longest average commute in the nation, has numerous challenges in terms

of mass transit services. This project was designed to directly address transportation needs that were identified in the Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan produced by the New York State Department of Transportation in 2006. In that report, the West Shore of Hylan Boulevard/West Shore of Staten Island (Zip Codes 10302, 10309, and 10314) was identified as a rapidly developing area that was designated a Priority Employment Market in need of alternative transportation. In large measure, the strong growth has created a geographic mismatch in terms of employment centers and low-income worker households. People from 109 Zip Codes in the region are currently using the shuttle service, with a large number of riders traveling on other forms of transit prior to boarding the shuttle.

## CSI's Campus **GETS GREENER**



The College of Staten Island has received about 1,550 new residents—trees that were planted around the campus to add to those that already thrive on the 204-acre site.

According to James Pepe, Assistant Vice President for Campus Planning and Facilities Management, the trees were planted under the auspices of MillionTreesNYC, an effort launched by NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg and New York Restoration Project (NYRP) founder, Bette Midler. The City of New York Parks & Recreation Department has partnered with the NYRP to plant trees throughout the five boroughs, with a goal of one million trees by 2017.

The first phase of the CSI planting took place last April, Pepe says. Colored flags, identifying a specific species of tree, that had been

placed around campus, were replaced with approximately 800 large trees. Pepe notes that consideration for aesthetics, as well as the safety of the campus community, was taken into account, as the placement of the trees was chosen. Mentioning the, sometimes, large spaces between the buildings on the CSI campus, Pepe says, "In an effort to break up some of the vast spaces between buildings, the new trees flank the major sidewalks and were placed in clusters in other areas with the hope of giving the campus more of a park-like setting." However, Pepe points out that the full effects of these plantings will be felt in a few decades, once the trees have matured.

The second phase took place on Friday, May 1 during "Dig in," a CUNY volunteer planting day, where University students, staff, and faculty helped plant about 750 smaller trees, in an effort to reforest the area between the retention pond and the electrical substation near the front of the campus. Volunteers simply placed the trees in pre-dug holes; contrary to the event's name, no digging was required. Pepe states that all 750 were planted on May 1.





**John J. Marchi** (May 20, 1921 – April 25, 2009)

## CSI Mourns the Death of **SENATOR JOHN J. MARCHI**

The College of Staten Island mourns the death of Senator John J. Marchi, consummate statesman, tireless leader, and staunch friend. The legacy of Senator Marchi is unmatched and no institution benefited more than CSI. His unwavering support was the foundation of the College of Staten Island and his continued advocacy built our world-class campus. Senator Marchi's influence and steadfast encouragement infused every milestone and achievement the College has reached. His presence on the campus and the Island will be missed, but he will always be remembered at CSI as a founding father. The College community sends its deepest sympathy to Maria Luisa, his children, and family.

CSI has had the privilege of counting Senator Marchi as a friend for many decades. His intelligence, probity, and dedication have been of particular inspiration, and his commitment to public service has been of immense value to the people of Staten Island, New York City, New York State, and beyond.

Throughout the 1970s, Senator Marchi was at the forefront of issues such as reform of the New York City school system and educational change. His position as Chairman of the Finance Committee made him instrumental in dealing with New York City's mid-1970s fiscal crisis.

Senator Marchi made education, from elementary to college, an important focus. He sat on, or chaired, committees that examined a variety of educational issues from school decentralization to public school funding. He was a crucial factor in the formation of the College, and played a role in the oversight of CUNY operations. Perhaps his crowning achievement was securing the College of Staten Island's 204-acre campus, the land of the former Willowbrook State School. Throughout the years, he has ensured that CSI received the funding that it needed to improve its services, expand its course offerings, and conduct vital research. Over 50,000 alumni have graduated from CSI and most have remained in the greater New York area. CSI remains the only state-funded college in the borough.

In 2006, Senator John J. Marchi, a native Staten Islander, received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the College of Staten Island for his lifelong endeavors to improve the quality of life for everyone in the borough.

### **THE SENATOR JOHN J. MARCHI VISITING PROFESSORSHIP IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

The retirement of John J. Marchi from the New York State Senate prompted CSI to honor his service and continue the Senator's approach of thoughtful, vigorous analysis of public affairs with the creation of this endowed visiting professorship. Across a range of subjects—fiscal policy, education reform, and local governance,

among many others—Senator Marchi maintained a commitment to judge issues, in his words, “on the merits.” The Senator paid close attention to the facts, and placed a high premium on careful, dispassionate analysis. The distinguished scholars appointed to the John J. Marchi Visiting Professorship will continue this vital tradition.

With the selection of the first Marchi Scholar, Professor Cameron Gordon from the University of Canberra, Australia, CSI has begun to recruit nationally recognized senior scholars to apply expertise in a policy area of importance to the Staten Island community for a one- or two-year term.

Staten Island faces public policy challenges that require the application of the very best ideas from around the nation and the world. The Professorship will bring scholars to the College who can research, teach, and write about fresh, new approaches in fields of local importance such as transportation, environment, community-building, public health, and housing policy.

In addition to teaching and research duties, the holder of the Marchi Visiting Professorship will work closely with the Center for the Study of Staten Island—the public affairs arm of the College—to plan conferences and develop community projects. Much like Senator Marchi himself, holders of the Marchi Visiting Professorship will in the truest sense bridge the gap between the academy and the community by analyzing ideas of practical importance “on the merits.”

### **THE SENATOR JOHN J. MARCHI PAPERS**

The Marchi Papers in the CSI Library Archives & Special Collections include correspondence, reports, news clippings, press releases, legislative bills, and subject files from 1965 to 1998. The donation of his collection prompted Former Assemblyman Eric Vitaliano and the late Former Assemblywomen Elizabeth Connelly to do the same. Current sitting elected officials have also committed this type of donation to the Special Archives at the CSI Library. The Senator's donation of his papers to the College in 1999 and his subsequent support has established the Archives & Special Collections as the most important resource for the study of Staten Island's political history.

The subject files document the activities of Senator Marchi and closely reflect his leadership roles. The Senator's commitment to education is well documented in the subject files. Many of these files provide an insight into the inner workings of the state legislature, but the legislative files provide the most in-depth coverage. They consist of correspondence, bills, bill action registers, memoranda of support, and press clippings. There are several boxes of transcripts of debates on important bills and a wide collection of photos tracing his career and accomplishments.



FRIEND OF THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND





## CSI MARKETING STUDENTS INVADE MADISON AVENUE



Members of the Marketing Club at CSI took a proactive approach to their studies with a winter break trip to Young & Rubicam (Y&R), one of the leading marketing and communications firms in the U.S.

Vitaliy Isikov, the president of the Marketing Club, who is majoring in Business with an emphasis in Marketing, says that “I think that the trip went phenomenally [well]. The students were all very inquisitive.”

Prof. Daniel Gagliardi of CSI’s Business Department and the faculty advisor for the club, notes that Vitaliy had the opportunity to intern at Y&R as part of his CSI internship class, BUS 598, and thanks to his connections there, he was able to arrange for his clubmates to get a first-hand look inside a large advertising agency.

Gagliardi recalls that he and the students met with Matt Belson, who is an account executive at Y&R. “[Belson] sat down with the students and went over what it’s like to work in an agency, how he got his job, and he also showed a reel of Y&R’s best commercials. The students talked with him for a good hour about careers in the advertising business, about the commercials, and about a lot of different things...It was a good give and take between him and the students and the students finally saw what an accounts supervisor does in an agency. When you hear from a person who’s doing it, rather than from a person who’s teaching it, it means a lot more to the students.”

As for Vitaliy’s previous experience at Y&R, he says, “My experience at Y&R was fantastic. I loved working there. It was a really great atmosphere and I worked with some really amazing people.”

## VERRAZANO SCHOOL MENTORS BRING HOLIDAY CHEER



As the economy continues to slide, affecting families nationwide, two Peer Mentors at The Verrazano School at the College of Staten Island decided to do something to bring some holiday cheer to Staten Island children in need, last December.

Christina Rossi and Stephanie Vlismas organized a Toys for Tots Drive to coincide with the Peer Mentor team’s end-of-semester holiday party and by the time the collecting was complete they had received approximately 50 toys, donated by freshman, sophomore, and junior students.

Rossi and Vlismas then arranged for the toys to be picked up by the Marine Corps League for distribution to local children.

Katie Geschwendt, Coordinator of The Verrazano School and the FIRST Program at CSI notes that this is the second community outreach effort that has been organized by the Peer Mentors, commenting that Mentors collected school supplies for PS. 16 during New Student Orientation before the fall 2008 semester.

As for the toy drive, Geschwendt says that “this was the first Toys for Tots drive run through the program, but ...the Mentors are enthusiastic about making this a recurring event.”

Explaining one of the reasons for their hard work and commitment, Geschwendt explains, “The Mentors felt that it was important to engage new students through giving back to the Staten Island community. Many of the Verrazano students grew up on Staten Island and feel a strong connection to the local schools, so the Toys for Tots drive was one way to show their support for Staten Island youth. Through the efforts of

the Mentors as well as the generous contributions of Verrazano students, the drive was a success. It is a great privilege to work with students who are conscientious and motivated, and I am grateful to the Peer Mentors for their service to the program and for organizing the Toys for Tots Drive.”

Verrazano School Peer Mentors work in teams of two during the fall semester to provide mentoring for incoming freshmen within a Verrazano School learning community. They help freshmen with the transition from high school to college in some of the following ways: assist with navigating the CSI campus, organize social events for students, communicate with faculty, keep students updated on program events and information, organize study groups for classes, and generally serve as a resource for new CSI students in The Verrazano School.



## CSI NAMED TO PRESIDENTIAL HONOR ROLL FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Corporation for National and Community Service honored the College of Staten Island (CSI) with a place on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to America’s communities.

“The College of Staten Island is continuing to strengthen its longstanding tradition of public service. The latest national recognition is a reflection of the great work that CSI students, faculty, and staff do every day in service to their community,” said Dr. Matthew Goldstein, Chancellor of The City University of New York.

“We are honored by this prestigious distinction,” said Dr. Tomás Morales, President of CSI, “and I am proud of the hard work and dedication of our students, as well as the visionary leadership of our student support professionals who helped make this possible. As a senior college of The City University of New York, and the only institution of public higher education on Staten Island, CSI is committed to serving the rich diversity of our community and city.”

Launched in 2006, the Community Service Honor Roll is the highest

federal recognition that a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement. Honorees for the award are chosen based on a series of selection factors including scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

CSI’s Emerging Leaders Program earned the College high ranks, especially the student participation in the New York City Department of Homeless Services’ Project HOPE survey. The HOPE survey is conducted annually in January to produce an accurate estimate of the total number of unsheltered individuals on the streets and in the subway system.

CSI students also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity to help build the interiors of several housing units for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. Habitat is known throughout the world for its unique building model, in which volunteers work alongside the families who will own the completed homes. In this exciting project, CSI students

partnered with members of other colleges in the NYC area as well as community volunteers during a holiday break. As the first large-scale building undertaken by Habitat, this project will house 41 families in need – double the number of homes they produce in a typical year.

“In this time of economic distress, we need volunteers more than ever. College students represent an enormous pool of idealism and energy to help tackle some of our toughest challenges,” said Stephen Goldsmith, vice chair of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees the Honor Roll. “We salute the College of Staten Island for making community service a campus priority, and thank the millions of college students who are helping to renew America through service to others.”

Overall, the Corporation honored six schools with Presidential Awards. In addition, 83 were named as Honor Roll with Distinction members and 546 schools as Honor Roll members. In total, 635 schools were recognized. A full list is available at [www.nationalservice.gov/honorroll](http://www.nationalservice.gov/honorroll).

The Honor Roll is a program of the Corporation, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation. The President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll is presented during the annual conference of the American Council on Education.

“I offer heartfelt congratulations to those institutions named to the 2008 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. College and university students across the country are making a difference in the lives of others every day – as are the institutions that encourage their students to serve others,” said American Council on Education President Molly Corbett Broad.

Recent studies have underlined the importance of service-learning and volunteering to college students. In 2006, 2.8 million college students gave more than 297 million hours of volunteer service, according to the Corporation’s *Volunteering in America 2007* study. Expanding campus incentives for service is part of a larger initiative to spur higher levels of volunteering by college students in the U.S. The Corporation is working with a coalition of federal agencies, higher education and student associations, and nonprofit organizations to achieve this goal.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. The Corporation administers Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America, a program that supports service-learning in schools, institutions of higher education, and community-based organizations. For more information, go to [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov).



## CSI HILLEL Lends Helping Hands in New Orleans



As many students around the country were using their winter breaks to take a breather from the books, seven members of the CSI chapter of Hillel, the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, joined approximately 92 other Hillel members from colleges and universities around the U.S. to go down to New Orleans and help to rebuild the damage left behind by Hurricane Katrina.

The CSI students participated in an eight-day Alternative Break (January 4 through 11), and worked eight-hour shifts side-by-side with the owner of a house that had been damaged in the hurricane that had devastated much of the Gulf Coast in August 2005. The students' work was coordinated by Rebuild New Orleans, an organization that reports that one out of every 25 New Orleans residents has been made homeless by Katrina.

Loren Lemberg, one of the CSI participants, says that she went to New Orleans "to actually see what Hurricane Katrina had left behind and try to make a difference in fixing up someone's home." She adds, "I was impressed that even though there were many students at this site that three of the homeowners openheartedly decided to join us in helping rebuild their home. We scraped together, we primed together, and we even formed a bond together."

Amy Posner, Executive Director of Hillel at CSI, notes that the project was funded through a grant from Hillel International. Initially, the CSI students were only responsible for covering a registration fee and their airfare to and from New Orleans, but the Richmond County Bank Foundation generously stepped in with a \$3,500 grant to pay for the plane tickets.

CSI Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Sociology, and Social Work, John Arena, a New Orleans native who experienced Katrina firsthand, briefed the group on what to expect before they left.

This trip to help those in need in New Orleans isn't the first good deed that CSI Hillel has done. Posner notes that "we do a lot of different things locally. For instance in the winter, we did a hat and glove drive, we sponsored a multifamily Thanksgiving dinner on campus, and we helped the domestic violence coalition in collecting items for the women's shelter. Community service is a big part of Hillel."

In the case of the New Orleans effort, Lemberg sums up that spirit. "A quote [from Rabbi Hillel] that we like to follow by is 'If Not Now...When?' People believe that there is a future for New Orleans. We as college students are the next generation of successful individuals, therefore it is our obligation to make the world a better place. If not now...when? If our group of 100 can change a few families' lives in a week, then I can just imagine the change we all can make in the world starting now."

## NURSING Pinning Ceremony



The College of Staten Island honored its January 2009 Associate of Applied Science Nursing graduates last January in the Center for the Arts Concert Hall.

A diverse and eclectic group of 81 graduate nurses received their CSI Nursing Pins and took the International Council of Nurses Pledge during the traditional Nightingale lamp ceremony.

The student speaker was Francis McCarthy, who was chosen for this honor as a result of her sterling academic record. Christian Narducci, the student chairperson and master of ceremonies for this event, moderated the ceremony and Senator Andrew Lanza addressed the graduates as the guest speaker.

The graduates dedicated this ceremony to autism awareness and made a donation in the name of the class of January 2009 to the Little Miracles Preschool for Autism. The class members also wore flowers with an autism-awareness ribbon.



## NYS Honors PHYSICAL THERAPY Doctoral Candidate

Blanca Moreno, part of the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Class of 2009, has received the 2009 Minority Affairs Award from the American Physical Therapy Association, New York Chapter. This award, given to only one student in New York State who is currently enrolled in a physical therapy educational program, recognizes outstanding contributions to the physical therapy profession.

"It is with great respect and admiration that I thank the College of Staten Island, especially the Physical Therapy Department, for selecting me as the candidate for the APTA Minority Award," Moreno says. "It would not have been possible without their support and trust in my character and abilities as a minority student. All the teachers, staff, and students have been an integral part of my learning and personal development as a student. I personally thank Dr. Maureen Becker and Dr. Jeffrey Rothman for giving me this opportunity to represent the College of Staten Island. It is a great honor and I am very happy to be the recipient of this award."

In addition, as a result of the award, Moreno has received \$180 toward her American Physical Therapy Association membership dues.

The Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy, which awards the DPT through The City University of New York Graduate Center, is designed to prepare students to become clinician-scientists who can perform all aspects of physical therapy practice and conduct clinical research.

## CSI President Appoints NEW VP FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS

Following a nationwide search and extensive campus participation, College of Staten Island President Dr. Tomás Morales has announced the appointment of Dr. Jerald Jones-Woolfolk as the new Vice President for Student Affairs at the College of Staten Island, effective July 15, 2009.

Dr. Jones-Woolfolk has worked at Mississippi Valley State University since 2004, serving as Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and prior to that, as Assistant Vice President. Dr. Jones-Woolfolk also served in a number of senior-level positions at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff including Dean of Student Life, President of Faculty/Staff Senate, Associate Dean of Students for Residential Life, and Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Dr. Jones-Woolfolk holds a PhD in Urban Higher Education from Jackson State University, a Master of Science degree in Counselor Education from Iowa State University, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Jackson State University. Her external



extraordinary service and dedication to our College in assuming the responsibilities of the division. In this position, as in all positions he has held at the College, Michael Daniels has served with great distinction. When Dr. Jones-Woolfolk assumes her new duties, Michael Daniels will resume his responsibilities as Associate Dean for Student Affairs."

activities include presentations at professional conferences and leadership seminars, and participation in several community and professional development activities. In addition, Dr. Jones-Woolfolk is the recipient of many professional awards and honors.

"I commend the outstanding work of the search committee chaired by Senior Vice President/Provost William Fritz," Dr. Morales notes. "The Committee's diligence and insight produced an impressive pool of applicants, and its hard work assured a successful outcome of this important search."

Dr. Morales adds, "I also want to thank Interim Vice President Michael Daniels for his

## Borough President Joins CSI Experts for New Dorp's Final Tune-up before NATIONAL COMPETITION



Two teams of students from New Dorp High School won first and third place in the U.S. Network of Virtual Enterprises (VE) state-wide competition for New York last winter. As the teams, VE Law and VE Management & Insurance, prepared to head to the 2009 National Business Plan Competition in Manhattan, Staten Island Borough President James Molinaro, CSI President Dr. Tomás Morales, and others joined together last March to recognize this achievement and provide feedback, strategies, and insights as a last-minute fine-tuning to help increase the students' preparedness before

heading to the national competition.

New Dorp High School student Teddy DeVitto, CEO of VE Management & Insurance Co., says, "from the [VE] program, I've gotten leadership skills and I've learned the value of teamwork. I've always been an independent person, but working in VE has taught me to rely on others because there is only so much that one person can do." DeVitto also mentions that VE has instilled a sense of patience in him as he serves as the mediator among the different personalities in his enterprise.

"The Virtual Enterprise Program has been a great success at teaching students leadership skills, teamwork, and educational concepts," said Molinaro while distributing certificates of accomplishment and "magic" pens to the students. "I congratulate all of the participants, and am confident that with the skills they have learned as part of VE, they will be successful in their future endeavors. I also would

like to wish them much success at the 2009 National Business Plan Competition."

"I am extremely proud of the student teams from New Dorp High School, as they represent my alma mater. And as an alumnus of CSI, I am also proud of the College's commitment to helping them achieve their personal best," said Herman Dawson, Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel with New York City's Department of Juvenile Justice. "Given my line of work, I am also especially proud to see young people take this direction and perform so well. These teams exemplify excellence, and their dedication to success is evident. They are a source of pride for New Dorp, CSI, and Staten Island. They represent all that our young people can be, and are winning examples of what students can achieve."

Noting that CSI and New Dorp High School have a close relationship, Dean Balsamini, Director of the Small Business Development Center at CSI, and

one of the tune-up event's guests, says "We decided to give them a Staten Island send-off...and give them an appropriate honor and acknowledgment of what they've accomplished."

According to Balsamini, Virtual Enterprise competition involves students in creating business plans for virtual businesses, presenting those plans to a panel of experienced judges, and fielding rigorous questions from them.

The tune-up also gave the students much-needed practice so that they could compete most effectively in the nationals. Commenting that the guests could "judge the students' presentations from a different perspective and for the very first time," DeVitto says that this would add a new and important dimension of insight as the teams competed in the nationals.

In the end, the tune-up paid off as VE Management & Insurance had an outstanding second-place finish and VE Law placed in the top six in the national competition.





Isen Robbins during  
a recent visit to CSI

# Producing Successful Cinema

*Isen Robbins’s CSI Experience Launched  
His Career as a Filmmaker*



When Isen Robbins ‘91, ‘93, son of CSI Engineering and Physics Professor Irv Robbins, left Tottenville High School to come to CSI, he decided to study psychology. That plan soon became sidetracked after he took an elective class in filmmaking.

Robbins recalls, “I’d done a lot of high school plays with my interest in drama, and I love movies. I decided that it would be fun to take an elective class with

Buddy Giovinazzo at CSI. Buddy put a camera in my hand, which is the first time that I held a Super 8 camera, and, as I held it in my hand, it felt a lot like a hammer, like a tool...I fell for the power of the camera very quickly at that moment and I think within a week, changed my major to Cinema. He introduced me to the indie spirit, which I got at the College of Staten Island, that you can be from anywhere and anybody, you can be an absolute

nobody in the film industry, but you have the power in yourself to accomplish whatever it is you want to accomplish, which is an unfolding lesson that I’m still learning.”

After he earned a Bachelor’s degree in Cinema from CSI, Robbins continued on to pursue a Master’s degree in the subject at the College, but decided, mid-stream, to switch to New York University (NYU). Although he says that NYU was “an





Isen Robbins looks through the lens of a camera that he used as a CSI student.

interesting experience,” and that he “made a lot of friends there,” he reports that he “decided that this wasn’t what I wanted either. After a little roundabout, I came back to the College of Staten Island with an academic focus and finished a Master’s degree at CSI.” What brought him back? “I had more access to equipment, there were fewer people, and it was more tailored for me, as opposed to stepping into some machine that just cookie-cuttered people out,” he says.

After he produced his first film, *The Sticky Fingers of Time*, Robbins decided to develop a corporate identity, launching Intrinsic Value Films in 1997 with his colleague Aimee Schoof. The duo set out to produce low-budget, mostly arthouse films and, lately, genre thrillers of high quality, and the company’s Website notes that Intrinsic Value “is active in script development and packaging, physical production and post production, domestic and international sales, and finance.” To date, Intrinsic Value has produced over 20 films, including *Brother to Brother*, *The Hebrew Hammer*, and *XX/XY*. Robbins has worked with stars such as Eartha Kitt, Danny Glover, Eliza Dushku, David Strathairn, Marc Ruffalo, Andrew McCarthy, Chloë Sevigny, Dominic Monaghan, and Ron (Hellboy) Perlman, to name a few. Intrinsic Value films have also gained a considerable amount of recognition, with premieres at prestigious film festivals like Sundance, Toronto, Berlin, Venice, and Tribeca. *Brother to Brother* was also nominated for four Indie Spirit Awards. This year Intrinsic

has had two films distributed in theaters, in January *The Alphabet Killer*, by Anchor Bay, and in May *The Skeptic*, by IFC Films. Both films are currently available on Time Warner on demand.

As Robbins and Schoof continued to make films under the Intrinsic Value brand, they took another step forward in 2008, teaming up with writer/producer Kevin Fox (another Tottenville HS alumnus) to form Red Giant Media. Red Giant’s objective is “to develop and produce original, comic book- and novel-based science fiction properties for studio distribution, including cellular and Webisode digital content.” Robbins says that among the works that Red Giant will bring to film are the Deepak Chopra series *The Angel Is Near* and *The Lords of Light* under the title *The 36*.

Now that he has forged a successful career in cinema, what does Robbins find most rewarding about the path that he has chosen? “There’s a bunch of things that I really like about what I do for a living. One of them is that it’s extremely rare that a day seems familiar to another. Every day is different, a whole new set of challenges and triumphs, and victories, and defeats. There’s a tremendous amount of new experience coming at me, always. I like being independent. If things happen in my world, they happen because of me or one of my partners. I love movies, too, and always have, and feel that the medium we’re working in is one of the most powerful, creative tools on the planet and can be used for a lot of different reasons, both good and bad.”

Turning to the importance of the messages that he and his partners impart, Robbins adds, “We’ve taken on some of the characteristics of the shaman, telling stories that move and change the world a little bit. Entertaining is really important too. I love telling a good yarn just for the sake of it. I like moving people.”

Recalling one instance of moving someone, Robbins says that, after a screening of *The Sticky Fingers of Time* at Venice, a woman approached him in tears, which he found odd because the film was about time travel. She told him that the movie had such an impact on her that she had intended to commit suicide before she saw the film, but now she had changed her mind because of her viewing experience.

What does the future hold for Robbins? Intrinsic Value and Red Giant Media will continue to produce and distribute, but, Robbins notes, things will be on a wider scale than before, with larger budgets and bigger audiences.

## Keeping Tabs

### CALLING ALL ALUMNI!

Did you recently?....

- Change careers
- Land a new job
- Get married
- Have a baby
- Adopt a child
- Relocate
- Win an award
- Start a business
- Travel to a faraway destination
- or do you just have some piece of news you’d like to share with our alumni family?

If so – we want to know!

Send your class notes to [www.alumni@mail.csi.cuny.edu](mailto:www.alumni@mail.csi.cuny.edu)

## Reception for all CSI ALUMNI FACULTY AND STAFF

President Dr. Tomás Morales and the CSI Alumni Board of Directors held the second annual reception for all CSI faculty and staff who are also CSI alumni, last April at the Park Café. The mixture of the great atmosphere, great weather and, of course, strong alumni bonds made the event a complete success.

The guest speakers, Ms. Gloria Garcia, the director of the SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) program at CSI, and Dr. David Traboulay, the director of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program, shared their CSI experiences with the guests, leaving the alumni with different perspectives on how the College of Staten Island fosters a strong sense of community and a desire to reach out to others.



## ALUMNI TOUR THE MET with Fran D’Atria

Once again, alumna and artist Fran D’Atria Romano ’70 led a special tour at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City for CSI alumni and friends. The Egyptian Galleries were featured this year with discussions centering on the art, culture, and history of the era, beginning with the Mastaba Tomb of Perneb and ending with the Temple of Dendur. Fran was able to add her own personal stories, having recently returned from a trip to Egypt. Hearing these stories was a definite highlight of the evening and made this tour more special.



# CSI SENIORS WEIGH OPTIONS FOR GRAD SCHOOL



## SAADYAH AVERICK

Until just recently, CSI senior and Biochemistry/Chemistry major Saadyah Averick faced a tough choice. Prior to his graduation last May, he had to decide whether he wanted to attend Carnegie Mellon, Tufts, Penn State, Brown, Case Western University, or University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Ultimately, he decided on Carnegie Mellon.

Recalling the role that his CSI education played in creating this

bevy of choices, Averick notes, "The education I received at CSI has enabled me to be exposed to subjects and concepts that are essential for graduate school and has allowed me to understand various and complex subjects presented by professors at the graduate schools that I visited. The experience I have gained in the laboratory has yielded a publication in a prestigious chemical journal and this was of great importance in my application and acceptance to graduate school."

Averick's mentor, Dr. Krishnaswami Raja, Assistant Professor of Chemistry at CSI, calls him "the best undergraduate researcher I have encountered in my career as a scientist" and adds that "he is full of creative ideas, which are workable, and is passionate about chemistry, a rare trait in an undergraduate."

Averick admits that his "love of all things outdoor and scientific" gained him a reputation as a "science kid" when he was

younger. In fact, he declared a Biology major when he first arrived at CSI, with the intent of becoming a doctor. Things eventually changed, however. "Though my love of the biological sciences developed early in my life," Averick explains, "I only discovered my passion for chemistry later on in my college career, when I began to conduct research in Dr. Raja's laboratory. I was fortunate enough to meet Dr. Raja in my General Chemistry 1 class. During the course of the



**Benjamin Hui and Saadyah Averick celebrate prior to CSI's Second Annual Honors Convocation.**



semester, Dr. Raja noticed my interest in and understanding of chemistry and informed me of research opportunities in his lab. In Dr. Raja's lab, I received my first taste of the wonders of chemistry. Nothing paralleled the dynamic and ever-changing world of chemistry, and the rewards of creating my very first molecule, which had never previously been observed in nature. After three semesters of fascinating research, I was absolutely certain of what to do with the rest of my life. In light of my altered academic ambitions, I

promptly changed my major to Chemistry and Biochemistry." Under Dr. Raja, Averick says that his "research experience to date has been fairly broad, spanning many disciplines and fields of chemistry and biochemistry" from his first study, which "involved assisting with the synthesis of mono-functionalized derivatives of curcumin, a small natural product that exhibits powerful antioxidant, anticancer, and anti-Alzheimer's activity" to his latest research "the synthesis of unique protein-polymer hybrids for in-vivo

imaging and drug delivery. This project involves the synthesis of polymers, the functionalization of the polymers, and their subsequent conjugation to proteins."

His work in the lab has also focused on helping to acclimate "new students to the research environment and teaching them how they can gain the most out of college," as well as teaching and tutoring Chemistry students.

Now that his time at CSI is at an end, Averick notes that he looks "toward graduate school to strengthen my knowledge and

understanding of chemistry and its applications in life. PhD training will grant me access to various skills necessary for success in the industrial and academic worlds. The years spent in pursuit of my PhD will expose me to many unique scientific problems. I will gain the knowledge and problem-solving skills that I will need as a future researcher. Most importantly, I feel that through chemistry I can help improve the quality of life and the environment in which we live by creating new and useful materials."



## CHIN MING HUI

The story of former CSI Chemistry major and recent grad Chin Ming (Benjamin) Hui is one of perseverance and commitment, and one of great success. He has recently reported that he has gained acceptance to Doctoral Chemistry programs at Carnegie Mellon University, Stony Brook University, Binghamton University, and Temple University, but he faced many obstacles on his road to success.

Benjamin came to the United States from Hong Kong at the age of 17, barely able to speak English and unfamiliar with U.S. culture, but with a hope to someday find a cure for smallpox. The death of his father from cancer eventually energized his goal of pursuing a career in science. Benjamin recalls that his father was skilled in engineering, particularly when it came to fixing electronics in his family's home, but his father never received a college education because he had to work to support his family. After his father's death, Benjamin eventually came to realize that his

own "tirelessness, studiousness, and intelligence were inherited from my father. I believed he would want me to use my talent to help people, instead of grieving. Therefore, I promised to save people from illness, and help everyone stay healthy. That's why I am interested in researching in chemistry and medical technology."

Eventually, Benjamin, who gained experience in engineering in his teens at a computer company, where he had to work to help support his family, came to CSI. "My enrollment at CSI turned my life 180 degrees. While attending school here, I have enjoyed many opportunities to gain the experimental knowledge and theoretical techniques, which have satisfied my interest in the mathematics and science fields. I have also broadened my knowledge and improved my language skills by attending scientific conferences. In addition, hands-on experiences in the laboratory, field work, and lectures from graduate students and leading researchers have

engaged my mind and captured my interest. I believe that studying science is the only way to save the world from global warming and defend human beings against diseases. That's why I am always curious about every matter that is happening in the science field, which could not be demystified by other fields."

Benjamin also received a scholarship from STEAM, which is short for Science & Technology Expansion via Applied Mathematics, a comprehensive, National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded program that expands and supports undergraduate education in all areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Benjamin recalls, "During the summer semester of 2006, I began a research project in chemistry, namely, the synthesis and characterization of large-pore silica under the direction of Dr. Michal Kruk who is an Assistant Professor at CSI. We proposed materials that were

appropriated in drug delivery and catalysis in pharmaceutical science, as well as low-k insulating material, which is useful in the engineering industry. I want to thank Dr. Kruk especially for babysitting me for more than three years. He has taught me a lot of knowledge in chemistry, and above all, in research. He does care about my study and future. He made me feel confident again as a foreign speaker, foreign student."

As Benjamin pursued his studies at the College, he still didn't have an easy time of it, having to work many jobs to support his family. In fact, he was often so tired from working that he was often drowsy in class. However, he carried on and gained the knowledge and expertise to make a number of graduate schools take notice.

As for the future, Benjamin looks forward to a career as a researcher and to contributing to academic society, after he receives his PhD.



## CSI GRADS RECEIVE PASSPORT FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES

CSI President Dr. Tomás Morales told 2,263 students at the College of Staten Island that "the degree you receive may say 'College of Staten Island, The City University of New York', but it has the power to take you anywhere you want to go. It is a passport for the rest of your life."

The student speaker, Besim Mehmedovic, who graduated with a Baccalaureate degree in Science, Letters, and Society with high honors, also earned his New York State Teaching License in Elementary Education.

Beyond his academic achievements, he is a veteran of the United States Air Force and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and has earned the Air Force Achievement Medal for outstanding achievement and/or meritorious service.

In his heartfelt speech, Mehmedovic called "the current economic climate... the prime issue that faces our graduating class," but he called on his fellow graduates to view the challenges that the depressed financial situation brings as opportunities—"the opportunity to see what we are made of... the opportunity to rediscover what is most important

in life... and the opportunity [to think] of our lives in comparison to others around the world" who have far less than we do.

While acknowledging the success of the students' accomplishments, President Morales acknowledged the CSI faculty for their "extraordinary scholarship and research," and how their high academic caliber has attracted more funding and recognition from state and federal agencies.

Describing CSI as an institution on the move, with graduates "going on to the most prestigious graduate and professional schools,"

Dr. Morales highlighted the College's record enrollment of 13,000 and improved infrastructure, with such innovations as the new High-Performance Computational and Visualization Center and the shuttlebus that runs between the Staten Island Ferry and the CSI campus.

In addition to the presentation of the degrees to CSI students, Dr. Morales and Dr. William Fritz, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, bestowed the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters on author, humanitarian, and Vietnam expert Lady Borton.







Elena Solitario and some of the Pilo Arts Day Spa facilities.

*I was extremely happy with [my education at CSI].*

# Making the World a More Beautiful Place

*Elena Solitario's Pilo Arts Day Spa Helps People to Relax and It Gives Back to the Community*

CSI alumna Elena Solitario '83 has had a long journey to her present-day career as co-owner and president of Pilo Arts Day Spa in Brooklyn. She came to the United States from Italy in 1955 and studied cosmetology at Clara Barton High School. Because she had a good grasp of the English language, Solitario recalls that she wanted to pursue a college degree, but she accepted an offer to become a partner in a salon, instead. While she ran the salon during the day, Solitario eventually enrolled at the College of Staten Island to study economics, part-time. Remembering her experience at CSI, Solitario says, "I was extremely happy with [my education at CSI]. Most of my professors were people in the business world and they did this at night and they came with richness and experience in the topic... So, majoring in economics gave me an idea of how the monetary world works... I feel very fortunate because my professors gave me an understanding of how everything affects the economy and how you can battle it or reinvent yourself. It gives you a tremendous understanding of the business world, which is so needed in business, especially small business."

Solitario used that knowledge to open the Pilo Arts Day Spa in 1978, along with her partner from her first salon, Paul Pastore. Since that time, Pilo Arts has gained

admission into a number of prestigious associations, such as the International Spa Association; Intercoiffure, a world-renowned spa organization; and Salon Today 200, receiving recognition as one of the top 200 North American spas.

One of her goals in opening this full-service day spa, according to Solitario, was to help women, who, at that time, were increasingly finding themselves in the workplace, as families had to rely on two incomes to maintain their standard of living. "When we opened, women were going back to the workforce and they had many jobs—their job, the rearing of their children, taking care of the household, and even though the husbands contribute somewhat to taking care of those things, it [still mostly falls to the women]. I wanted to create a place where, for one or two hours, someone could say, 'Would you like a glass of water or a cup of coffee?' and someone is doing something for you to relax and de-stress. When we opened, that was the beginning of women really going into the workforce and I felt that. I felt that it was a change and it was something that we could do for them. Of course, later, it became men and women, but it was predominately to give women the feeling of someone doing something for them."



Beyond helping women to relax and feel pampered, Solitario has been extremely charitable through her business, donating services, such as a day of beauty (including a massage and make-over) and hair stylings to area charities so that they may raise funds by offering the services as door or raffle prizes.

A personal experience when she was young helped to reinforce the importance of giving back. "When I first came from Italy, I got a phone call from the [American] Cancer Society to go around on my block and ask for donations. It was such a humiliating experience because people look at you and say 'Okay, who is this girl who could hardly speak English?' and I'm asking for money for this organization. I remember that I collected \$17.50," she says with a chuckle. "I realized," Solitario continues, "that this was a good cause, but people are skeptical about giving. So when we opened our doors, because all of our clients are involved in different organizations, I couldn't give them money because I just couldn't afford it, I decided to give them a service so that it could be affordable. Also because I realize the importance of it and how they get doors closed right in front of their eyes when they go asking, I promised myself that I

would never turn anybody away. I would never give them the feeling that I had when people didn't give me anything."

The College of Staten Island has been one of the many beneficiaries of Solitario's good works, as she has donated numerous days of beauty to the College over the years, including to last spring's Nursing reunion, and gift certificates for services, as she did for this year's CSI Foundation Golf Outing, and as graduation gifts to students who received diplomas from CSI. She has also partnered with the CSI Alumni Association over the last three years to host "Spring into Beauty" spa events that treat attendees to a night of pampering. In recognition of her generous support of the College, CSI recognized Solitario with a College Award in 2005.

Going beyond her experience with the American Cancer Society, Solitario discusses a revelation about what is really important about giving back. "I realized the importance of what a community really is. How could you tell one of your clients who's doing such fabulous work that you're not going to donate? I realize the importance of what they're doing because a neighborhood is as good as its people. If all these people are involved in charitable work and doing good things for the neighborhood, that means the neighborhood is going to stay sound and people are taking care of each other."





# CSI Nursing Reunion *A Huge Success*



The College of Staten Island Department of Nursing and the CSI Alumni Association hosted CSI Nursing graduates; faculty, past and present; and staff to celebrate all generations of CSI nurses on May 12, the last day of National Nurses Week and, coincidentally, the birthday of nurse Florence Nightingale. The evening honored the 25th Anniversary of the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, 42 years of the Associate in Applied Science, and seven years of the Master of Science degree in Nursing at CSI.

Dr. Mary O'Donnell, Chairperson of the Nursing Department, remarked "Everybody that I speak

to tonight is thanking us for doing this... everyone is thrilled. It's wonderful... we are so happy about it." She was not alone; most of the 235 guests who attended the reception at Li Greci's Staaten, felt the same way, as did Peg Kittle, who graduated in the Class of 1984. "I owe CSI everything," she said. "It opened up a new world for me and started me down a path I never expected. I entered college at age 43, with six children. CSI has given me something that has lasted to this day; I have learned so much, and it has kept me going."

The evening included warm remarks from CSI President Dr. Tomás Morales on behalf of

the College, expressing how impressed he was. "I think this is a wonderful affinity program for Nursing alumni... the turnout tonight has been phenomenal and I look forward to a wonderful evening," he commented.

Current faculty provided updates on various programs for the attendees. Dr. Arlene Farren, Deputy Chair of the Nursing Department, spoke for the department; Dr. Margaret Lunney '73 discussed the Master's in Nursing; Dr. Eileen Gigliotti represented the Doctor of Science in Nursing; and Dr. Marianne Jeffreys gave an update on the Cultural Competency in Nursing program.

Alumni enjoyed a decadent buffet dinner, great raffle prizes, and a 50/50 drawing, but most importantly the company of their fellow classmates and professors. Since this had been the first nursing reunion at CSI, many guests admitted that they were nervous about attending and wondered if they would run into old friends. However, many of the guests remarked on how happy they were to be there. Beth Blisenback, from the Class of 1976, stated, "I was the last class to graduate before the merger [between Richmond College and Staten Island Community College, CSI's predecessor schools]. It was so nice to come here tonight; I actually wasn't sure if I was

going to come....but I've bumped into so many people here tonight that I've touched lives with and didn't even know went to CSI" The second part of the evening brought more speeches and memories. First from Marion Hudson '99, President of Mu Upsilon Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau. Judith O'Donnell spoke about her memories of the First Associate's of Applied Science Class of 1967. Lorraine Pellechia-Strusinski '84 spoke on behalf of the 25th Anniversary of the First Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Coleen Kumar spoke for the first Master's Class of 2002. She stated, "It is an honor and a privilege to be here tonight with nursing's finest."

Dr. Gail Simmons, Dean of Science and Technology, had the privilege of speaking about the Joanne D'Amato '67 Nursing Scholarship Fund. This scholarship was recently established by the family of Joanne D'Amato and they were present at the dinner that evening.

A wonderful evening was had by all; people enjoyed themselves right up until the very end. The excitement of reconnecting with old friends and acquaintances, and even just the air of camaraderie among the nursing alumni made the event a true success.



## Alumni Association Hosts ALUMNI STIMULUS PACKAGE

In light of the tough economic times that many Americans face today, the CSI Alumni Association hosted an evening for its members and friends to offer them some help in the job market. The event's host, nationally recognized motivational speaker Eric Barron, shared his techniques and tips for interviewing and marketing oneself in today's job climate. Barron offered advice to the attendees so that they could better define who they are and how to brand themselves, while emphasizing the importance of

networking and using the Internet to help in the job search. The interactive event energized the audience. Irene Liang felt "grateful" for this presentation and she learned new techniques for job searching. Sabeen Khan thought Eric Barron was "excellent" and was happy that she attended. After Barron's presentation, Phil Jonas, the Alumni Career Coach, was introduced. Mr. Jonas, was available last semester to help alumni with employment and career concerns.



## Alumni Association Hosts MOHEGAN SUN TRIP



Mohegan Sun was the setting for a recent excursion by the CSI Alumni Association. Over 50 alumni and friends met on campus and relaxed during the trip to the casino. Participants were treated to a day of shopping and fun, and one lucky alumna hit the jackpot.



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## DOLPHINS SOAR through Spring Season

The spring sports lineup at the College closed with a bang, as a pair of CSI squads scored CUNYAC Championships and a host of athletes were honored as all-stars in their respective sports.

CSI's first spring sport to wrap-up was Men's Tennis, and the Dolphins netters turned in one of their most impressive seasons in recent memory. Under third-year head coach Paul Ricciardi '04, the Dolphins finished 11-6 and ran through a 7-1 CUNYAC record. The season was a marked improvement from last year's 4-10 season, one that saw the Dolphins slip in as the conference No. 7 seed in the Postseason Championship Tournament.

The year 2009 was kind to the Dolphins, especially on April 25, when the team notched a 5-4 win over Hunter College, breaking a first-place tie, and giving CSI their first CUNYAC Regular Season Championship since 1999. The win gave the Dolphins the No. 1 seeding heading into the conference playoffs, and CSI scored a 5-0 win over York College before falling to defending champion Baruch College 5-3 two days later. Still, the Dolphins laid the groundwork for what would be a continued run toward a postseason title.

The individual accolades also mounted up for the Dolphins. No. 1 Singles ace Konstantin Trofimovich capped a perfect 11-0 singles campaign by winning CUNYAC Player of the Year honors, and was later named CSI's Male Athlete of the Year. Robert Hargraves's 8-3 season earned him first-team all-star kudos, while teammates Joe Taranto (11-5, Fourth Singles) and Georgio Dano (9-3, Fifth Singles)

were named to the CUNYAC second-team all-stars.

Over on the baseball diamond, the Dolphins were coming off their fifth CUNYAC Championship in 2008 and were looking for a repeat performance in 2009. Unfortunately, the Dolphins fell on the CUNYAC Championship Tournament's final day, a 6-2 defeat at the hands of Mitchell College. Still, the team has a lot to be thankful for after a 19-20 campaign.

For one, the Dolphins are a team comprised predominantly of young, budding talent. This year's installment featured just three graduating seniors and a hefty 16 new faces, all of whom intend to make a bigger splash in 2010. The Dolphins were operating under new skipper Michael Mauro, who enjoyed a great rookie season by earning CUNYAC Coach of the Year honors. Mauro took over for Bill Cali, who closed a 14-year coaching stint with the Dolphins in 2008. As part of a rousing season from start to finish, Cali was honored during midseason with the retirement of his No. 6 jersey.

Joining Mauro for yearly honors was frosh Henry Roman, whose .393 average and great glove in the field earned him CUNYAC Rookie of the Year honors. Joining him as all-stars were seniors Michael Madalone and Jon Reyes, juniors Thomas DeWaters and Tom DiPietro, sophomores Pat Gale and James Mardikos, and freshman Steve Hession.

Finalizing the spring season was CSI's women's softball team, and the ladies on the diamond

did not disappoint. After falling just short of a conference title in 2008, the Dolphins took the CUNYAC Postseason Championship back home to Staten Island for the fourth time in the last six years, defeating Hunter College on the final day, 4-2, to clinch the championship.

Under head coach Dr. Stella Porto, the Dolphins enjoyed their fifth straight 20-win season, going 23-14 overall and becoming one of only 64 schools nationally to make it to the 29th Annual NCAA Postseason Softball Championships. Unfortunately, CSI fell in its only two games in the tourney, but did send a message, taking a 0-0 tie into the sixth inning against National Champion Messiah College before falling just short in the end.

A total of seven players were honored with postseason awards. The most notable was freshman standout Katie Flynn. The power-hitting infielder batted .350 with five home runs and 33 RBIs and was named CUNYAC Rookie of the Year. Joining her as all-stars were junior Jennifer Volpe; sophomores Raechel Strobel, Joanna Tepedino, and Michelle Ferraiuolo; and freshman Danielle Ponsiglione. Lone senior Nicole Estrada also took all-star honors, and her exploits on both the diamond and the basketball court this winter earned her CSI Female Athlete of the Year honors at the conclusion of the academic year.

One thing that all three spring squads share is a vision for the future. Even after banking a pair of championships, 20 postseason all-stars, and a yearly citing by the CUNY Athletic Conference, all three squads stand poised to do more damage in 2010.





## CSI SWIMMERS Do It Again at Nationals

Dreams came true, records were broken, and new goals were set as three of the College of Staten Island's finest male swimmers participated in the 2009 NCAA Division III Swimming and Diving Championship at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center in Minneapolis, MN in mid-March. Pavel Buyanov took his third national championship after making history last year with the first-ever national championship win for the College of Staten Island since it became a four-year Division III institution in 1976. Buyanov was joined by Nikolay Shevchenko, who also participated last year, and by freshman Vlad Romanov.

The three Russian-born swimmers all have inspirational stories. Buyanov came to the U.S. for new chances and new opportunities. Shevchenko made the decision to leave Russia to get an education and fulfill his dreams of swimming in the U.S. when he was 19 years old. Romanov left behind his family and friends at the age of 16 for the dream of swimming in this country.

In a preliminary race that had just a four-second difference from top to bottom time, defending champion Buyanov came up on top for the 100-meter breaststroke. In the medal round, Buyanov touched the wall with a time of 54.27, taking his third gold medal

and breaking his own NCAA record from last year. The following day, he placed third in the 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 1:59.99.

Shevchenko participated in the 2008 Nationals along with Buyanov. On the first day of competition this year, Shevchenko placed fourth in the 200-meter individual medley with a time of 1:50.38, breaking his own school record. The following day he finished the 100-meter butterfly in 49.34, placing him in tenth place. Following that, he finished in fourth place in the 200-meter butterfly event with a time of 1:48.42.

Excited with his first experience in the NAAs, Romanov performed in his signature backstroke events. He finished 18th in the preliminary round of the 100-meter breaststroke and, although he didn't qualify for the final round because they only take the top 16, he finished third among the 38 freshmen with whom he competed. Making it to the final round of the 200-meter backstroke, Romanov finished in 14th place with a time of 1:51.32.

Totaling up the weekend effort, CSI earned one national championship, a third-place finish, and two fourth-place finishes in a total of eight events. As a team, among the 52 colleges represented at the nationals, CSI placed 14th overall with 92 team points. Kenyon College took the championship with 602 points.



## CSI HONORS STUDENT-ATHLETES with Annual Gala

The College of Staten Island honored a host of its student-athletes, coaches, and distinguished staff members with its annual Athletics Awards Banquet held at the Sports and Recreation Center on May 22. A total of over 70 award winners were highlighted as part of the gala, among them members of CSI's 13 intercollegiate sports teams in 2008-2009.

After greetings from Interim Athletic Director David Pizzuto, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Michael Daniels, and CSI President Dr. Tomás D. Morales, awards were given for each sport in chronological order beginning with teams last fall, and ending with women's softball, which finalized its season by celebrating a CUNYAC championship.

Major awards were then presented to Female Athlete of the Year Nicole Estrada, a senior on both the women's basketball and softball teams. Estrada was a CUNYAC all-star every season in both sports during her career at CSI. She scored a game-high 25 points against Lehman College, helping the team to clinch its

first-ever ECAC Championship, and she was named Most Valuable Player in the CUNYAC Softball Tournament, helping CSI to clinch its fourth conference title in six years. Men's tennis ace Konstantin Trofimovich was named Male Athlete of the Year. Trofimovich finished an impeccable junior campaign by posting an 11-0 singles record, never relinquishing a set along the way, helping CSI to nail down its first CUNYAC Regular Season Championship since 1999.

CSI Scholar-Athlete of the Year honors were given to soccer star and senior Fiosa Begai. A CUNYAC soccer champion in every year that she played, Begai sported a 3.85 GPA, majoring in History and Adolescent Education. The senior is CSI's all-time career leader in goals scored, assists, and shots taken. She was ranked 19th nationally in scoring in 2007, and was named a CUNYAC/Hospital for Special Surgery Scholar-Athlete of the Month in 2008.

Tina Bellocchio, a senior on both the women's soccer and basketball teams, was awarded the Fourth Annual Bill Cali/John

Scrivani Sportsmanship Award, named after CSI's baseball skippers who earned similar honors from the *Staten Island Advance* in 2005.

Throughout the course of the evening, other notable awards were handed out. Distinguished Service to Athletics awards were given to Jason Fein, former Director of Athletics at the College; Erika Hellstrom, principal fundraising coordinator for athletics through the CSI Foundation; and Marianne McLaughlin of the CSI Association for her tireless dedication to working with the athletics administration on budget concerns. Klepp Flooring's John McCrudden was also honored for his assistance in CSI's purchase and installation of its current temporary gym floor.

Apart from the actual ceremony, members of the CSI Student-Athlete Advisory Committee presented their inaugural SAAC Inspiration Award, given this year to Interim Vice President Michael Daniels.

In sum, the rousing event was a great success, according to Pizzuto, who assumed director

duties in late August 2008.

"The athletics year went by with such a blur, but we have a lot to be proud of," he said. "Tonight is a night we get to take in all of those accomplishments and give them their proper due. This is the highlight to our athletics year, and to see it so well attended by students, coaches, and the esteemed staff and administration is terrific."

The CSI academic year came to a close with Commencement on Thursday, May 28. At the Honors Convocation, which took place on Tuesday, May 26, graduating seniors Nick Levintov (Men's Swimming) and Begai were named Male and Female Athletes of the Year, respectively.





## CSI SALUTES BILL CALI with Number Retirement

In September of 2008, 14-year head baseball coach Bill Cali announced his retirement. As the College of Staten Island's most beloved and winningest coach, the staff, team, and coaches decided to do something big in his honor. On April 19, in a pre-game ceremony, Cali was surrounded by his family, his former players, the CSI Athletics Program, and Baseball Program, along with CSI President Dr. Tomás Morales. Everyone helped Cali to unveil his retired jersey and a baseball-shaped sign with his name and number that was to be displayed on the centerfield wall of the CSI Baseball Complex. The number 6 worn by Cali over

the past 14 years will never be assigned to anyone else on the CSI baseball team.

The longest-tenured coach in CSI baseball history, Cali's list of accomplishments gathered with each passing year. His teams tallied 20+ wins eight times, playing in the CUNYAC championship game in 13 out of his 14 coaching years. CSI teams played in five ECAC tournaments during his tenure and the 2001 championship team was the last to win an ECAC title at the College. In a fitting end, CSI rallied in a pair of thrilling one-run victories to win another CUNY title in 2008, wresting the championship away from



defending champs John Jay College.

Like he had promised after announcing his retirement, Cali attended just about every game during the 2009 season to cheer on his Dolphins. "I must thank

the College for giving me the opportunity to work at one of my passions for the last 14 years," said the humbled Cali at the event.

## Sixth Annual Grace Hillery **BREAST CANCER AWARENESS NIGHT**



The College of Staten Island men's baseball team was on the down side of a 7-6 decision at the hands of Monroe Community College for the Sixth Annual Grace Hillery Breast Cancer Awareness Night on May 6, but the real winner was the money raised in the name Mrs. Grace Hillery for the Staten Island Breast Cancer Research Initiative, which totaled at more than \$5,400, the highest ever in the event's six-year history. What made the event even more remarkable was that the game was halted after only seven innings with rain spoiling the final two innings.

Originating in 2004, the special evening serves to honor the memory of Grace Hillery, mother to former CSI student-athlete and baseball star Anthony Hillery, who passed away from the illness prior to the 2004 baseball season. Hillery went on to play for the Dolphins through the 2005 campaign and has since graduated CSI with a degree in History and Education. He is currently a teacher and baseball coach at New Dorp High School.

## FUTURE CSI LEADERS Have Breakfast with the CSI Foundation Board



Members of the CSI Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) had the chance to meet seasoned business professionals at the CSI Foundation's Mentoring Breakfast last April at the Hilton Garden Inn. CSI President Dr. Tomás Morales, College officials, and members of the Foundation Board were on hand for the event, which gave each ELP student a chance to pair up with a Foundation Board business leader whose career was the same or similar to their major. The business professionals then shared their vast business knowledge and experience with the students.

## CSI Foundation **ANNUAL GOLF OUTING**



The CSI Foundation held its Annual Golf Outing last April in which 100 golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the links. The real winners were CSI students, as the proceeds benefited CSI scholarships and athletics.



## NEW VICE PRESIDENT for Institutional Advancement and External Affairs



College of Staten Island President Dr. Tomás Morales has announced the appointment of Barbara R. Eshoo as the new Vice President for Institutional Advancement and External Affairs at the College of Staten Island, effective June 15, 2009, following a nationwide search and extensive campus participation.

Ms. Eshoo is a strategic advancement professional with broad experience in all aspects of development. She is also an experienced manager and leader whose recent positions include Senior Vice President for Association Advancement, YMCA of Metropolitan Hartford, Inc; Vice President for Institutional

Advancement and Executive Liaison to the ECSU Foundation, Eastern Connecticut State University; Chief Development Officer, Daniel Webster College; and Chief Public Relations Officer, The Currier Museum of Art.

Ms. Eshoo received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater from New England College. She participated in training programs through the National Society of Fundraising Executives and is an active member of various professional associations including the Association of Fund Raising Professionals (now, the American Association of Fundraising Professionals), and the American Council on Education, Office of Women where she represented Connecticut.

“I commend the outstanding work of the search committee chaired by Vice President Milton Santiago,” Dr. Morales said. “The Committee’s diligence and insight produced an impressive pool of applicants, and its hard work assured a successful outcome of this important search. I especially want to thank the College community for its participation and feedback; for giving its valuable time in support of the search for this important position.”



## SECOND ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL Promises a Day of Family-Friendly Fun

After its successful inaugural year, the CSI Foundation will hold its Second Annual Fall Festival on the Great Lawn of the College of Staten Island. The event, which will be held on Saturday, October 3 from 11:00am to 4:00pm, will feature a wide assortment of vendors, live entertainment, and raffles, with the proceeds benefiting the Staten Island Breast Cancer Initiative. It will be a great way for the community to get together, have fun, and support an important cause.

For more information, call the CSI Office of Institutional Advancement at 718.982.2365.

## Alumni Answer the Call for **SPRING 2009 PHONATHON**



Each year, CSI conducts a phonathon, in both fall and spring, on behalf of our Annual Fund, to raise much-needed dollars to assist our students with scholarships and research stipends, and to

support new Library acquisitions and much more.

Last spring eight student and staff callers took to the phones, under the enthusiastic supervision of Debra Santulli-Barone '07, who is an experienced caller of previous phonathons. Santulli-Barone knows first-hand how important raising Annual Fund dollars is for our students. “As a scholarship recipient [during her undergraduate days], I am grateful for the generosity of our alumni. If it wasn’t for their pledges, my fellow students and I would find it hard to continue our education...my enjoyment comes from training

new callers, watching their delight when they obtain a donation, and by being part of making CSI a success.”

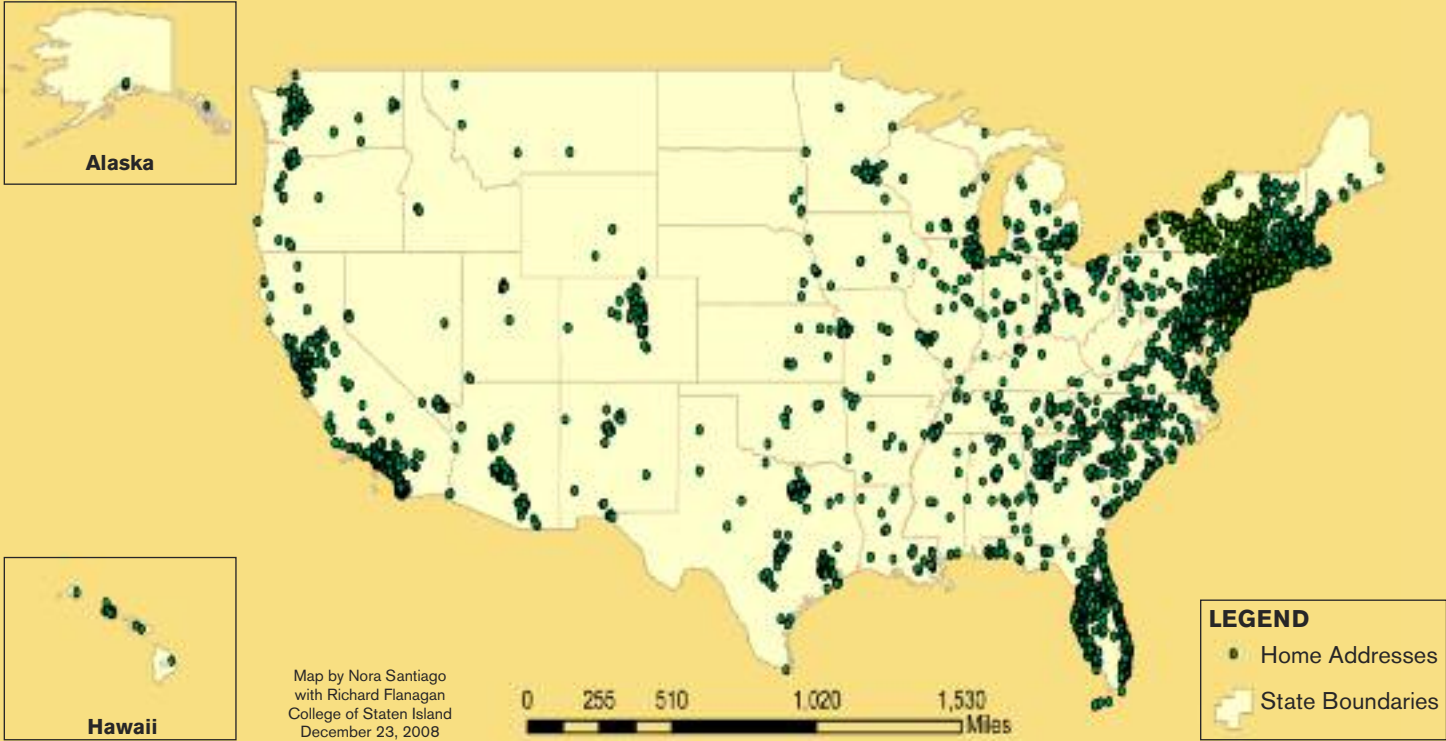
The phonathon effort spanned nine nights during April and May, raising close to \$12,000. While many alumni give each year when they are called, it is always a bonus when first-time alumni donors pledge to help. This spring 86 new donors joined our ranks in making a difference for our students. What impressed our student and staff callers most was that even new alumni, some just starting in careers, gave what they could. Our student and staff

callers especially enjoy contacting a wide spectrum of our alumni—getting to know what’s new with them, while letting them know what’s new on campus.

Pledges made to the CSI Annual Fund contribute so much and we thank our alumni for the legacy they give to a new generation of students.

It’s never too late to make a donation. For more information about how to donate to the Annual Fund to benefit our students, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at 718.982.2365.

# CSI NATIONAL ALUMNI MAP



## CSI Alumni Association **MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

- **NEW! Alumni Online Community**  
**www.csialumniatlarge.org**  
Create your profile, post on the message board, submit a class note, register for events, and learn what’s new with fellow alumni and your alma mater! For first-time log-on information, contact the Alumni Relations Office at 718.982.2290 or alumni@mail.csi.cuny.edu.
- **Educational, cultural, social, and athletic programs and events throughout the year.**
- **Home base for alumni connections** Connect with professional associates, faculty, classmates, and friends.
- **Library privileges** Present your CSIAA permanent alumni photo ID membership card at the College Library for access and borrowing privileges.
- **Visitor pass for parking** Present your CSIAA permanent alumni photo ID to the security guard at the entrance for your pass.
- **Career Center** Continued service and access for alumni presenting permanent CSIAA photo ID. Résumés, career counseling, interview skills, and job databank. Call 718.982.2300.
- **25% tuition discount for courses offered by the Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development**  
For course information and to register, call 718.982.2182.
- **CSI Sports and Recreation Center alumni discount membership** Present your permanent alumni photo ID for discount. For more information, contact the membership desk, 718.982.3161.
- **CSI Center for the Arts ticket discount**  
Receive a \$2 alumni discount for CFA performances (limit two per ID per performance). For information about upcoming shows, contact the box office at 718.982.ARTS/2787.
- **Barnes & Noble CSI College Bookstore 10% alumni discount** Present permanent alumni photo ID for applicable items (excludes textbooks).
- **Bank of America MasterCard/Visa**  
Call 800.847.7378 and indicate that you are an alumnus/alumna of the College of Staten Island for applicable credit card offer. Telephone Priority Code: FABHR4
- **Auto and homeowner insurance program** through Liberty Mutual Savings Plus/American Insurance Administrators. Call 800.524.9400, follow the prompts, and indicate that you are an alumnus/alumna of the College of Staten Island.
- **Group Term Life Insurance and Health Insurance** through NEATrust/American Insurance Administrators. Call 800.922.1245 and indicate that you are an alumnus/alumna of the College of Staten Island. For a complete listing of programs and availability in your state, visit **www.alumniinsuranceprogram.com/csi**.  
Note: Short-term health insurance coverage is not available for residents of NY, NJ, MA, and VT. Major medical insurance is not available in NY, NJ, RI, WA, and AZ.





# CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2009!

Thank you Professor Gordon DiPaolo and Lorraine DiPaolo for making Commencement a reality for many of our students. Look for an article on the DiPaolo's good works in the next issue.



*Professor Gordon DiPaolo*