

# CSI in the News

July/August 2009



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# ***Arts***

## AROUND THE TOWN



JANET DUGO/Business Trends

The SINY Film Festival got off to a big start at the College of Staten Island with a screening of "The Flyboys," an adventure film starring Stephen Baldwin and Tom Sizemore. On hand to welcome the crowd were, from the left, Damien Kane of sponsor Northfield Bank, SIEDC Film Festival Ambassador Sandy Krueger of the Staten Island Board of Realtors, Kim Seggio of presenting sponsor Richmond County Savings Bank Foundation and Gina Gutman of sponsor Time Warner Cable.

## Free summer concerts taking place on Staten Island

Posted by [ipvates](#) July 02, 2009 13:00PM



AWE file photoKatie Ballou performs July 22 at Greenbelt Recreation Center.

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- We've got options for weeks.

Raekwon at New Brighton's Mahoney Playground (Aug. 12), Los Amigo Invisibles at Brooklyn's Prospect Park (July 10), Budos Band at Central Park's Summerstage (July 24) -- all of these and more free, high-caliber concerts are part of what makes this summer another awesome season of free music in the city.

But your appetite for tiki torches and music wafting through the balmy ether can be satisfied without going far or battling the crowds. You might even discover your next favorite band. Check out the following concert series starting this week:

### **WSIA Greenbelt Summer Concerts**

*6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesdays at Greenbelt Recreation Center, 501 Brielle Ave., Sea View.*

**July 8:** Therina Bella, Phoebe Blue, Tommy Bones

**July 15:** Sarah Varon, The Great Unwashed

**July 22:** Katie Ballou, The Rabbits

**July 29:** Matt Wilson, Les Vinyl and the Cl-Cl-Cl-Clones

**Aug. 5:** The Seconds

**Aug. 12:** The Melonfarmers

**Aug. 19:** Tanya Gallo, The Headlocks

**More info:** [WSIA.CSI.cuny.edu](http://WSIA.CSI.cuny.edu)

## 'The Godmother' of Staten Island premieres July 10 at Snug Harbor's Veterans Memorial Hall

by Rob Bailey/Staten Island AWE

Thursday July 09, 2009, 10:10 AM



PHOTO BY MICHAEL D. SABATELLE

Fred Gorski (aka Rain Storm) in "The Godmother," a new documentary premiering at 7:30 p.m. July 10 at Veterans Memorial Hall on the grounds of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden in Livingston.

### A native Staten Islander's new documentary aims to give trans culture some Fairplay

**STATEN ISLAND, NY** -- Billed as "The place where any man can become the woman of his dreams," the Fort Wadsworth cross-dressing salon Fairplay is no stranger to local or national media.

But Jeanine Corbet's new documentary, "The Godfather," invites viewers inside the 22-room Victorian house overlooking the Verrazano Bridge, where 60-year-old Fred Gorski (aka Rain Storm) plucks, tucks, paints and primps fellas into femmes.

"The film is sort of structured around his life journey, interweaving the stories of his clients," says Corbet, a 38-year-old Arden Heights native and director of production facilities for the College of Staten Island's Department of Media Culture. "To his clients, Fairplay is a sanctuary and Rain is their godmother and guide."

A former drag performer, licensed hairdresser and cosmetologist, Gorski opened Fairplay ([FairplayTV.com](http://FairplayTV.com)) after the his long time partner died of AIDS, leaving him heavily in debt and with his once thriving hair salon in financial ruin. Armed with left-over wigs, beauty supplies and closets full of

clothes, Fairplay evolved from offering basic beauty services to crafting full fetish fantasies.

We spoke with the film's director on the eve of "The Godmother" premiere at Veterans Memorial Hall.

**Q: With S.I.'s pervasive mafia stereotypes, I can't help but ask: Was the film's title intended to push -- good-naturedly, of course -- a few buttons?**

**A:** Well, it's kind of a mix. It's a little bit of fairy godmother, a little bit of the godfather in there.

**Q: Were there any problems with privacy issues?**

**A:** Fred is an open book, but we had a big problem at the beginning finding other people who were willing to appear on camera. Part of what he offers is privacy, the ability to cross-dress in an environment that's totally supportive and accepting. A lot of them don't leave Fairplay, so it was a big obstacle. The majority would not appear on camera. We had to keep going back and chipping away until we got the few who would discuss their experience. Their stories wind up being very compelling.

**Q: Was this your introduction to the transgendered world?**

**A:** I was familiar with drag culture -- events like Wigstock in East Village, and clubs with drag go-go dancers. But cross-dressing at Fairplay is primarily men who are straight, who are married, who are completely closeted about this. That was interesting to me. I wasn't aware about how true this was. It was interesting to hear their life stories and what they get out of it. I wasn't coming in with preconceptions, but these are not the kind of questions you would bring up in normal conversation. So we all got a real education in some respects.

**Q: Is there a message to the film, or is it just flat-out camp entertainment?**

**A:** We want to dispel some of the prejudice against this. And kind of show that these men are people, too. These guys are doing something they enjoy. There's nothing that mysterious about it. Fred makes them up, does their hair and helps them dress. He allowed us to film him dressing and making himself up so we could watch this transformation happen. So we could understand how he alters his entire body without hormones or surgeries. It's all done with corsets and padding and cosmetics. It was amazing to watch it as an observer.



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE WARD

Director Jeanine Corbet, right, and co-producer Sally Polizzi on the set of "The Godmother." **NOW SHOWING:** "The Godmother"

**WHEN:** 7:30 p.m. July 10

**WHERE:** Veterans Memorial Hall on the grounds of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, 1000 Richmond Terr., Livingston; [Snug-Harbor.org](http://Snug-Harbor.org).

**HOW MUCH:** \$10 suggested donation. Cocktail reception to follow. Visit [FilmFataleProductions.com](http://FilmFataleProductions.com) for more information.

**Q: It seems like there are so many outlets now for this type of niche documentary. What's the next step?**

**A:** As a filmmaker the goal is to get it out by whatever means (laughs). Festivals, distributors, broadcast, DVD -- we're just sort of embarking now on doing all of the above. The YouTube trailer has tons of hits. It's a tough road as an indie to negotiate the process of getting it out there, but we're trying to get the film out there to people.

**Questions or comments?** *AWE editor Rob Bailey can be reached at [bailey@siadvance.com](mailto:bailey@siadvance.com)*



{NOW PLAYING}

# 'THE GODMOTHER'

A NATIVE ISLANDER'S NEW  
DOC AIMS TO GIVE TRANS  
CULTURE SOME FAIRPLAY

BY ROB BAILEY

bailey@siadvance.com

Billed as "The place where any man can become the woman of his dreams," the Fort Wadsworth cross-dressing salon Fairplay is no stranger to local or national media.

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**Q: This borough has an undeniably conservative rep. Were you surprised to find this so-called alternative culture flourishing here?**

**A:** Absolutely. That was a huge reason and motivation to do the project. Once we saw how amazing the house and business was, we said, "This has to be documented." We had to let people know that Staten Island was not just this monolith. Fred is a born and raised Islander from South Beach in the late '40s, early '50s. He chose to stay, to dig in and see things change. He's seen the Island grow so much.

**With S.I.'s pervasive mafia stereotypes, I can't help but ask: Was the film's title intended to push — good-naturedly, of course — a few buttons?**

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL D. SABATIELLE

Fred Gorski (aka Rain Storm) is "The Godmother."

**SEE IT:** "The Godmother" screens at 7:30 p.m. July 10 at Veterans Memorial Hall on the grounds of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, 1000 Richmond Terr., Livingstone, Snug-Harbor.com. \$10 suggested donation. Cocktail reception to follow. Visit Jeanine Corbet's production web site, FilmFataleProductions.com, for more information.

July 12, 2009

## The Week Ahead: July 12-18

By THE NEW YORK TIMES

Classical

Allan Kozinn

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC** fans curious about how the orchestra will sound under the baton of its new music director, **ALAN GILBERT**, have had several opportunities in recent seasons to hear what he can do. But if you missed his handful of guest conducting appearances and don't want to wait until the fall to watch him work, you can catch him this week when he takes the orchestra on its annual tour of free concerts in New York City parks.

His calling cards are some of the most familiar works in the canon: **Mozart's** "Jupiter" Symphony and the **Beethoven** Symphony No. 7 make up his first program, to be heard on Tuesday, with repeats in Brooklyn on Wednesday and the Bronx on Thursday. (An indoor concert on Saturday in Staten Island also includes those works, with the addition of an orchestral arrangement of the Scherzo from the **Mendelssohn** Octet.) On Friday, Mr. Gilbert and company return to Central Park with a second program that includes the Mahler Symphony No. 1 as well as Copland's "Old American Songs" with the superb baritone Nathan Gunn as the soloist. Tuesday at 8 p.m., the Great Lawn, Central Park; Wednesday at 8 p.m., Prospect Park, Brooklyn; Thursday at 8 p.m., Van Cortlandt Park, the Bronx; Friday at 8 p.m., the Great Lawn, Central Park, and Saturday at 8 p.m., the Center for the Arts, College of Staten Island; (212) 875-5709, [nyphil.org](http://nyphil.org); free.

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# About.com New York City Travel

## 2009 Philharmonic Concerts in the Parks Schedule

Experience the New York Philharmonic for Free, Followed by Fireworks

By [Heather Cross](#), About.com

### **Concerts in the Parks - [Great Lawn in Central Park](#) , Manhattan**

*Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at 8 PM*

Program Details TBA

### **Concerts in the Parks - Prospect Park, Brooklyn**

*Wednesday, July 15, 2009 at 8 PM*

Program Details TBA

**Directions:** Enter at Grand Army Plaza, Prospect Park West at 9th Street or Bartel-Pritchard Circle at the intersection of Prospect Park West, Prospect Park Southwest and 15th Street.

### **Concerts in the Parks - Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx**

*Thursday, July 16, 2009 at 8 PM*

Program Details TBA

### **Concerts in the Parks - [Great Lawn in Central Park](#) , Manhattan**

*Friday, July 17, 2009 at 8 PM*

Program Details TBA

### **Free Summer Concerts - College of Staten Island at the Center for the Arts, Staten Island**

*Saturday, July 18, 2009 at 8 PM*

Program Details TBA

### **Free Summer Concerts - Colden Auditorium Queens College, Queens**

*Monday, July 20, 2009 at 8 PM*

Program Details TBA

# Free New York Philharmonic Concerts in the Park

Published : Tuesday, 14 Jul 2009, 5:08 PM EDT

- MYFOX NEW YORK STAFF

MYFOXNY.COM - Every year, Philharmonic in the Parks offers performances at parks in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and Long Island.

Great Lawn in Central Park, Manhattan  
Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at 8 PM

Prospect Park, Brooklyn  
Wednesday, July 15, 2009 at 8 PM

Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx  
Thursday, July 16, 2009 at 8 PM

Great Lawn in Central Park, Manhattan  
Friday, July 17, 2009 at 8 PM

College of Staten Island at the Center for the Arts, Staten Island  
Saturday, July 18, 2009 at 8 PM

Colden Auditorium Queens College, Queens  
Monday, July 20, 2009 at 8 PM

July 17, 2009

## Classical Music/Opera Listings

By THE NEW YORK TIMES

### CLASSICAL MUSIC

Full reviews of recent music performances: [nytimes.com/music](http://nytimes.com/music).

★ **NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC** (Friday, Saturday and Monday) Local music lovers are excited about the impending arrival of the energetic young conductor [Alan Gilbert](#), who begins his tenure as music director of the New York Philharmonic in September, becoming the first native New Yorker to hold the post. This week he's been busy entertaining picnicking hometown crowds in parks around the city. On Friday he conducts Copland's "Old American Songs," with the baritone Nathan Gunn as soloist, and Mahler's Symphony No. 1 in Central Park. On Saturday he leads a performance of Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 at the College of Staten Island. The program is repeated on Monday at [Queens College](#). All are at 8 p.m. Friday, Great Lawn, Central Park; Saturday, Center for the Arts, College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Boulevard, at Route 440, Willets Brook; Monday, Colden Auditorium, Kupferberg Center for the Arts, Queens College, Kissena Boulevard and the Long Island Expressway, Flushing, (212) 721-6500, [nyphil.org](http://nyphil.org); free, but tickets are required for the concerts on Saturday and Monday. (Schweitzer)

## Philharmonic plays to Staten Island audience

Posted by [sclanton](#) July 18, 2009 23:51PM



Staten Island Advance Incoming New York Philharmonic music director Alan Gilbert stands inside the historic opera house in Hanoi, Vietnam, in June in preparation for the orchestra's Vietnam debut in October.

Nearly 1,400 people heard the New York Philharmonic this evening in a unprecedented indoor summer concert debut at the College of Staten Island's Center for the Arts, Willowbrook campus.

Under the revitalizing supervision of incoming music director Alan Gilbert, the musicians played two august war-horses of the classical rep -- Mozart's Symphony No. 41 ("The Jupiter") and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major -- as if they were dangerous, exciting new works.

Even seasoned Philharmonic principals seemed energized playing scores that may be as familiar as their own heartbeats.

The indoor show is atypical. In much of the city this summer, the Philharmonic is giving its regular free outdoor concert-in-the-park.

On the Island, in the past, such concerts have been rained out or hampered by poor weather with depressing frequency.

The college has developed a close relationship with the orchestra in the past few years and lobbied to host a free indoor summer concert as an experiment.

It brought out the largest indoor audience for an orchestral concert in recent memory, bigger even than the healthy crowd that thronged the St. George Theatre last September for a City Opera performance.

But not everyone who attended this evening had quite the same experience. More than 800 people filled the Springer Concert Hall, where the reviews were enthusiastic.

"Great, great, just great! said Carolyn Clark, who is a professional musician and a founder of the Staten Island Philharmonic, the ambitious Island-based orchestra. "You can hear everything. I had no idea this hall could sound so terrific."

Across the hall at the center, in the Williamson Theater, a smaller audience of about 600 was seeing a closed-circuit TV feed of the concert; the sound was piped through the in-house PA system. The reviews weren't so hot.

The sound was fine, Joan Licht of Willowbrook conceded, but "the picture is wretched." Great Kills resident Pat Tedesco concurred, "It would be better live."

Free seats for the concert were made available last month first-come, first-served. Early birds got the live show; late comers, the simulcast.

No one seemed to mind being indoors. It may have lacked the romance of a starlit mid-summer evening, but it also lacked barking dogs, sobbing babies, sirens, mosquitoes and noisy neighbors.

The college is already negotiating to have the orchestra return next summer, according to CSI President Dr. Tomas Morales, who welcomed the audience.

Although this was the full orchestra's CSI debut, various players have performed on campus regularly in the past few seasons, thanks to a benefactor, Prof. Michael Shugrue, who retired some years back from the English faculty.

He has been underwriting concerts by NY Philharmonic members and ensembles and international musicians. His 2009-2010 season will start Oct. 19 with violinist Linus Roth, who plays a Stradivarius, and pianist Jose Gallardo.

--- *Contributor Michael Fressola*

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# NY Philharmonic Invites The Public To Free Open Rehearsal 9/16

[Back to the Article](#)

by BWW News Desk



The [New York Philharmonic](#) will open its doors to the public on Wednesday, September 16, 2009, at 9:45 a.m. for a free Open Rehearsal for the evening's concert, which will launch the Orchestra's 168th season, [Alan Gilbert](#)'s inaugural season as the Philharmonic's 25th Music Director. The program will feature EXPO, a World Premiere-[New York Philharmonic](#) Commission by Magnus Lindberg, the Philharmonic's new Composer-in-Residence; Messiaen's *Poèmes pour Mi*, performed by

soprano Renée Fleming; and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. Further details about the [New York Philharmonic](#)'s free [Open Rehearsal](#) and Opening Night will be announced.

Please note that the free Open Rehearsal replaces the previously announced Philharmonic Open Day, scheduled for [Saturday, September 12, 2009](#), which has been postponed to a future season due to budgetary constraints resulting from the current economic climate. Following is an updated chronological listing indicating all changes and updates to the [New York Philharmonic](#)'s 2009-10 season since the announcement on June 12, 2009.

[Changes and updates](#) include artists and repertoire for the [New York Philharmonic](#) Ensembles Concerts at Merkin Concert Hall, which will take place on November 15 and December 13, 2009, and January 10, February 21, March 14, and May 16, 2010; repertoire for the chamber music concert at the College of Staten Island, The City University of New York, on Monday, November 16, 2009; artists and repertoire for the Chamber Music at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on January 17, 2010, and May 9, 2010. Also included are repertoire and dates for the 2009-10 Very Young People's Concerts at Merkin Concert Hall; repertoire for the School Day Concerts, conducted by [Alan Gilbert](#); and details about the season's Insights Series events and the [Annual Erich Leinsdorf Lecture](#).

<http://nyphil.org/>



*Published: Friday, August 14, 2009 at 3:00 p.m.*

## **GRINDHOUSE AT YOUR HOUSE**

In the 1970s and '80s, Chicago had an impressive range of grindhouse theaters, not just the magnificently decaying palaces in the Loop, but the many neighborhood theaters that operated with a discount policy, as low as 65 cents in one much-loved location.

These theaters, like equivalent establishments along 42nd Street in Manhattan, mixed second-run Hollywood attractions with more disreputable, exploitation movies from small distributors like Hallmark, Bryanston, Dimension (before that name was commandeered by the Weinstein organization), Crown International and Roger Corman's New World Pictures, the MGM of the exploitation industry.

Much of this material was bluntly meretricious, but occasionally you would stagger home after seeing something truly strange and subversive, like Stephanie Rothman's feminist horror film "The Velvet Vampire" (1971), Rene Daalder's pointedly political analysis of revolution at a suburban high school, "Massacre at Central High" (1976), or Abel Ferrara's androgynous addict revenge film, "Ms. 45" (1981). In a way the exploitation scene was Sundance for outsiders, an outlet for visions so fiercely independent that no upscale distributor would touch them.

Some movies were regional releases, like Jack M. Sell's 1980 "Psychotronic Man," the story of a Chicago barber with the power to kill by staring very, very hard at people he doesn't like.

Troma Entertainment (one of the few remaining rough and ready outfits of the old days) has issued a double-disc edition in honor of the film's (almost) 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The disc includes not only the 92-minute version that Troma released but also the director's original 100-minute cut, called "American Nightmares" and presented in a first-generation print that has never been seen on video.

Directed by Buddy Giovinazzo, a graduate of the College of Staten Island's film program, this is one uncompromising picture, a movie so eccentric and so relentless that no mere profit motive could possibly explain it. Lured by garish posters that promised a "Rambo"-style revisionist take on the

Vietnam War, audiences were confronted with a cosmically bleak portrait of a former POW, Frankie Dunlan, living in claustrophobic squalor on the saddest block in Staten Island.

Saddled with a nagging wife and a keening, deformed baby (played by a puppet that resembles the mutant infant of "Eraserhead"), Frankie sets out to find a few bucks to pay the rent on his rancid apartment. Instead he passes the day negotiating flashbacks to his gruesome war experiences and dodging the minions of the local loan shark. The claustrophobic despair only intensifies until Frankie takes matters into his own hands and returns to rescue his wife and baby the only way he knows how, with a loaded gun.

Shot in 16 mm on a budget of a few thousand dollars, "Combat Shock" owes much of its disorienting sense of the familiar made unfamiliar to Giovinazzo's shrewd use of obscure, unhappy corners of Staten Island. They're clearly New York but hard for an outsider to place. The Vietnam sequences were shot in the marshlands around the Fresh Kills landfill, much as the young Stanley Kubrick staged an unnamed war in Prospect Park for his first feature, "Fear and Desire" (1953).

Starring as Frankie is Giovinazzo's younger brother, Rick — a gaunt figure whose burning eyes, long greasy hair and black trench coat make him look like a harbinger of serial killers to come. (One learns with relief from the Internet Movie Database that Rick Giovinazzo has gone on to a successful career orchestrating scores for Hollywood films like "Role Models" and "Angels and Demons.") The movie is channeled completely through Frankie's point of view, as he drifts through refuse-strewn industrial sites and past abandoned storefronts, his interior monologue of shame and resentment churning away on the soundtrack.

"Combat Shock" has clearly been influenced by "Taxi Driver," but there is no mournful Bernard Herrmann score to romanticize Frankie's quest and no sensuous slow-motion shots of the city's mean streets to aestheticize his degraded environment. As one commenter observes in the accompanying making-of documentary, "this film smells" — but not in a metaphorical sense. The entire world of "Combat Shock" seems to have aged beyond its sell-by date, an olfactory metaphor that Giovinazzo drives home with an unforgettable image involving a carton of spoiled milk.

Even Frankie's one point of pride — that he witnessed a My Lai-style massacre in Vietnam but refused to take part in it — comes into question, undermined by his own obsessive afterthoughts. Failed by the state, his family and his own consciousness, Frankie finally, quietly implodes, bringing it all back home in a climactic killing spree that takes the outward form of

preparing a cozy, domestic dinner. It's filmed with the utmost simplicity, and it is very, very hard to take.

After directing a second feature, "No Way Home" (1996), Giovinazzo moved to Berlin, where he continues to teach film and write fiction. He has completed a film adaptation of his 1993 novel "Life Is Hot in Cracktown," starring Kerry Washington and Brandon Routh, that is to be released directly to DVD by Anchor Bay at the end of the month.

Home video has, of course, provided an extension of 42nd Street that runs through millions of American living rooms, and movies every bit as obscure and unruly as "Combat Shock" are now receiving top flight DVD releases through distributors like Severin Films, Dark Sky and Blue Underground.

Despite the disappearance of grindhouses, a sizable public remains for contrarian films that subvert cheerful Hollywood formulas, that challenge the upbeat platitudes of mainstream independent films and that deny the rosy triumphalism of "American Idol" and so much network television. The movies are a constant invitation to escape our everyday existence, but as "Combat Shock" reminds us, but not everyone wants to flee in the same direction. (Troma Entertainment, \$19.95, not rated)

## Julito McCullum: From "The Wire" to NYC's Fringe (and Staten Island)

Posted by [jreifer](#) August 15, 2009 10:00AM



HBO actor Julito McCullum ("The Wire") appears in "Damon and Debra," one of 201 productions in the New York International Fringe Festival. The avante-garde theatrical showcase runs Aug. 14 to 30. McCullum moved to Staten Island in December.

**STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- It's been a year since [HBO](#) pulled the plug on ["The Wire,"](#) but actor [Julito McCullum](#), the critically-acclaimed series' Namond Brice, hasn't stopped working.**

McCullum appears in the [New York International Fringe Festival](#)'s "Damon and Debra," a drama that hits comical notes.

"It's sort of like 'The Wire.' We're touching on topics and subjects that people are afraid to speak about," says McCullum, who moved from Brooklyn to Mariners Harbor in December.

His "Wire" co-star [Tristan Wilds](#) (now on the [CW's "90210"](#)), who grew up in Clifton and Stapleton, had recommended McCullum check out Staten Island when he was ready to move.

"Damon and Debra," one of 201 shows in Lower Manhattan's annual avant-garde theater marathon dropping Aug. 14-30, explores race and the nature of romantic relationships.

It takes place on a stalled NYC subway shortly after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Damon, a distrustful young African-American man, meets Debra, an outspoken, middle-aged white woman. "I love that it's just a conversation," says McCullum.

"Damon and Debra" playwright Judy Chicurel hand-picked 18-year-old McCullum to play Damon. She wrote him a persuasive letter asking him to play the part.

"I was a 'Wire' junkie and loved the season with him and the rest of 'The Wire' boys. I've worked with inner-city kids a lot, and it really resonated," says Chicurel, whose husband, David Kritter teaches in the education department at the College of Staten Island.

McCullum says he felt like the part was made for him. "It's everything I would like to portray," he says.

"Debra and Damon" at The Studio in the Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St., goes on: August 17, 8:30 p.m.; August 18, 7:15 p.m.; Aug. 21, 4:45 p.m.; Aug. 25, 5:45 p.m. (A Q & A with the cast follows that performance); Aug. 28, 7 p.m., and Aug. 29 at 8 p.m.

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## Freestyle music comes to CSI (win tickets)

Posted by [bjohnson](#) August 19, 2009 10:15AM



Provided by the artist **Jonelle** is one of several artists performing at Freestyle Blast! at the College of Staten Island Aug. 22.

**LIVE AID:** Judy Torres, George Lamond, JP Justice, Coro, Fascination, Lydia Lee Love, Jonelle & more.

**When:** 8 p.m. Aug. 22.

**Where:** Center For the Arts at College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd., Willowbrook.

**Tickets:** \$50-\$55.

**More info:** 718-982-2787, [DocoLatinGroove.com](http://DocoLatinGroove.com).

**STATEN ISLAND, NY**--Freestyle music is back -- or did it ever go away?

Noel, the svelte breakdancing hipster who had a hit with lovesick track "[Silent Morning](#)" in 1987 is most definitely ripe for a "Where Are They Now?" episode. But basic elements of this syncopated Latin dance music brought to the mainstream in the late 1980s seems alive and well.

"It died a little bit, but just in the last few years, every time I turn on the radio, some popular artist is doing a track with freestyle influence in it," says Jonelle Aquilino, who signed with freestyle-centric Tazmania records in 1994. "Black Eyed Peas came out with 'Boom Boom Pow,' which I think has a heavy freestyle influence. If you listen, it's everywhere."

Old school one hit wonders and modern freestyle influences aside, Doco Entertainment's "Freestyle Blast" seems poised to prove whether or not the genre still has its fans on Aug. 22 at the Center for the Arts. To enter your name and win a pair of free tickets, [click here](#).

Featuring enduring artists like Judy Torres (aka the "Queen of Freestyle") and George Lamond, local standup comedian JP Justice and popular radio personality Speedy (of 105.9 FM La Kalle), organizers say the concert will offer fans of the genre something to get behind.

"We wanted to bring something of the KTU Beatstock level to Staten Island," says [Doco Entertainment](#) business manager Jason Gomez, a West Brighton native who now lives in New Jersey. "Staten Island and Brooklyn have a very big freestyle fan base."

As a dance beat, Freestyle popped up in the 1980s as a post-disco, pre-house style of music that used synthesizers and drum machines, and even dabbled in samples, gaining it the nickname "Latin hip-hop." Freestyle's love anthems eventually went beyond their loyal Puerto Rican and Latino fan base to a much wider audience. Sure, rap and raggaeton have enjoyed more mainstream chart success in recent years, but devotees say freestyle isn't going anywhere.

"Freestyle is always something about love," says Aquilino, who recently collaborated with freestyle big wig Lil' Suzy on a track for an EP available at [JonelleOnline.com](#). "It's always something positive, and I think people really need that right now."

Categories: [Ben Johnson](#)

## 'Freestyle Blast' to rock College of Staten Island

Posted by [ipvates](#) August 21, 2009 08:30AM



Photos courtesy of the artist Doco Entertainment's "Freestyle Blast," featuring Jonelle, above, will take place Aug. 22 at the Center for the Arts.

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Freestyle music is back -- or did it ever go away?

Noel, the svelte breakdancing hipster who had a hit with lovesick track "Silent Morning" in 1987 is most definitely ripe for a "Where Are They Now?" episode. So is Soul Sonic Force (remember "Planet Rock"?). But basic elements of this syncopated Latin dance music brought to the mainstream in the late 1980s seems alive and well.

"It died a little bit, but just in the last few years, every time I turn on the radio, some popular artist is doing a track with freestyle influence in it," says Jonelle Aquilino, who signed with freestyle-centric Tazmania records in 1994. "Black Eyed Peas came out with 'Boom Boom Pow,' which I think has a heavy freestyle influence. If you listen, it's everywhere."

Old-school one-hit wonders and modern freestyle influences aside, Doco Entertainment's "Freestyle Blast" seems poised to prove whether or not the genre still has its fans on Aug. 22 at the Center for the Arts.





George Lamond

**"Freestyle Blast," featuring Judy Torres, George Lamond, JP Justice, Coro, Fascination, Lydia Lee Love, Jonelle & more**

**When:** 8 p.m. Aug. 22.

**Where:** Center For the Arts at College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd., Willowbrook.

**Tickets:** \$50-\$55.

**More info:** [DocoLatinGroove.com](http://DocoLatinGroove.com).

Featuring enduring artists like Judy Torres (aka the "Queen of Freestyle") and George Lamond, local standup comedian JP Justice and popular radio personality Speedy (of 105.9 FM La Kalle), organizers say the concert will offer fans of the genre something to get behind.

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## Gifts arrive with the dismantling of the Staten Island Chamber Music Players

Posted by [ipvates](#) August 30, 2009 11:00AM



Staten Island AWE/Bill

LyonsDrummer Tim Horner, bassist Bill Moring, trumpet player Michael Morreale and pianist Vinnie Ruggieri finish their final selection, "Confirmation" by Charlie Parker, as the Staten Island Chamber Music Players' Jazz Quartet plays its final concert at High Rock Park last year.

### College of Staten Island and Musical Chairs Chamber Ensemble, among others, accepting music from the group's library

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Despite silence -- the final notes of the last concert floated into the Egbertville woods more than a year ago -- the 35-year-old Staten Island Chamber Music Players still exists, officially.

Its step-by-step dismantling and distribution of assets is not yet finished.

"It takes a very long time to wind down," explained Georgiana DiMauro, founding executive director of the Chamber Music Players and its French horn player.

"We are still waiting for the final, legal/financial approval from the state attorney general's office."

Traditionally, chamber groups retire rather than replace aging, deceased or departing musicians. Two renowned ensembles bowed out last year: The Alban Berg Quartet, founded in Vienna, Austria, in 1971, and the miraculously durable Beaux Arts Trio, retired after 52 years.

The dispersal, a requirement for nonprofits, will benefit many recipients, among them many generations of College of Staten Island students.

The most valuable gifts are music -- the actual sheets. Music isn't free and can represent a prohibitive expenditure, particularly for students.

Island soprano Elizabeth McCullough and clarinetist James Growin have accepted music from the Chamber Music Players' library.

The charts for assorted concertos and other works, a \$300 gift, went to the Staten Island Philharmonic. Another 63 pieces (woodwind/woodwind and strings) went to the Musical Chairs Chamber Ensemble, arguably the players' heir apparent.

Some 279 selections, named the Anthony Perfetti Brass Quintet Collection, in honor of the group's late trumpet player, will go to the Viva Voce Ensemble.

The largest donations of music, more than 750 pieces, will go to the College of Staten Island in honor of the late Edmond Volpe, a past president of CSI, and his widow, Rose Volpe.

The Archives of the Staten Island Museum will preserve the group's scrapbooks, photographs and five congratulatory proclamations.

For much of its history, the Staten Island Chamber Music Players performed fall-to-spring subscription series, in-school concerts and a free, outdoor summer series deep in the High Rock Park Conservation Center in Egbertville.

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# ***Faculty & Staff***

## At home on the sea, despite disabilities

Posted by [eadanna](#) July 02, 2009 12:17PM



Photo/Great Kills Bail & Tackle Great Kills resident John Karl, a paraplegic angler who deploys in a kayak, recently landed a pair of five-pounders -- a codfish and a sea bass.

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- GREAT KILLS -- Kayaking a half-mile from shore for a man-versus-nature battle with some denizens of the deep is a daunting proposition for most.

In addition to the rowing and the angling, there's the added danger of a sudden storm.

Great Kills resident John Karl is undaunted. Nearly every other day, he paddles out from the South Shore coastline to test his mettle. What makes his derring-do so impressive is that the 45-year-old does it all without the use of his legs.

"Being a paraplegic, going out on the kayak really allows me an opportunity to do more than I normally would," said Karl, who lost the use of his lower extremities at age 11 after a rooftop fall. "I've been fishing these waters ever since I was a kid. My father used to take me out all the time. I love it."

A geology tutor at the College of Staten Island in Willowbrook, ironically, he wasn't too keen being stuck on shore.

"I would fish with my friends on the beach, and the tide would come in," he said. "I'd have to move my wheels and try to back away instead of just enjoying the fishing."

About 14 years ago, Karl, who had already mastered a hand-controlled seven-speed bike, discovered that kayaking would allow him the fishing flexibility he was seeking.

"We go out all the time now," said Karl, who often convinces some of his friends, like Great Kills natives Joe Summer and Rob Wieser, to tag along. "I use a two-and-a-half pound anchor to steady myself. Then I fish for striped bass or I can go crabbing. I use it for everything."

They routinely launch from the Lemon Creek Park area in Prince's Bay and other tidal shores that provide easy access.

Karl also takes his kayak on the road with him. He enjoys skimming into the hairier swamplands of the Great Lakes, seeking out bullfrogs that he can catch with his bare hands.

Closer to home, he routinely competes in kayak fishing tournaments, finishing second six years ago in the Jamaica Bay Classic in Queens.

"But it's always a competition," he said. "You always make it a competition for yourself to get out and catch more fish or bigger fish."

Over the years, he's hauled in some prize catches, including a 48-inch barracuda in Key West, Fla., and a five-and-a-half foot terrapin.

Locally, his biggest grab was a giant cownose ray, which pulled him around for hours before he was able to land it.

Weather can be Karl's biggest adversary.

"I check out the Doppler satellite before I go out and watch for clouds while I'm out there," he said. "You try to head back in before you get stuck, but sometimes there's nothing you can do."

Karl recalled about four particularly harrowing experiences -- one that left him beached for two-and-a-half hours before his friends found him, and another where he was completely surrounded by lightning strikes.

Yet, he keeps returning to the kayak.

"When you get the striper bug like I've got, though, nothing's going to keep you from going out," he said with a laugh. "You know, I may be a paraplegic, but I've got a great life. I really do."

# The Berkshire Eagle

Strange But True

## Lightning sometimes does good

By Bill & Rich Sones

Sunday, July 19

Q: Lightning strikes kill thousands of people every year. Does lightning ever do anyone any good?

A: On the planetary scale, lightning may have helped in the early formation of amino acids, precursor to life on Earth, says Colby College's James R. Fleming, historian of science and technology. Long ago, lightning perhaps brought fire to humankind. Today, lightning fixes nitrogen in the air,, creating natural fertilizer, and ignites eco-sound forest-thinning fires. Also, lightning's electromagnetic fields aid scientists in study of the atmosphere.

And every once in a while, says FMA Research, Inc., a consortium of atmospheric scientists, lightning does a few bolt-from-the-blue individual good deeds. In 1856, reported by "Scientific American" magazine, a strike in Kensington, N.H. made a hole a foot wide and 30 feet deep -- a "well" that soon filled with good water.

A Greenwood, S.C., electrician was hit and never again felt cold, even when working outside, in sub-zero temperatures.

There are stories of blind people regaining their sight, and even published claims of victims with improved intelligence. But these are rare exceptions, with lightning deserving from all of us the utmost

respect.

Q: If you were an anthropologist studying kissing customs around the world, where might you be a bit squeamish about visiting? Hemophiliacs, take note.

A: Natives of the beautiful Trobriand Islands of the South Pacific are far more open about showing affection than are most cultures, says College of Staten Island English teacher and attorney Michael Christian in "The Art of Kissing."

When nine or 10 years old, they begin playing communal kissing games in large grass huts, with a couple of couples going in at a time. They rub each other's tongues and suck and bite the lower lips so vigorously these often bleed.

Chin biting may follow, along with eyelash nibbling. For this reason, short eyelashes are a status symbol -- proof of being a sought-after romancer.

Q: What's the U.S. Pentagon's latest version of "bugging" an enemy?

A: It's the first wireless flying-insect cyborg -- a remote-controlled beetle borg by University of California at Berkeley engineers -- which can rise, hover and fly on command, guided by a radio receiver that relays signals to electrodes connected to the insect's optic lobes and flight muscles, says Spencer Ornes in "Discover" magazine.

Researchers recently demonstrated the bug-bot at a conference in Italy With the mind of a machine and the nimble body of an insect, it may be the perfect scout: expendable and strong enough to carry payloads, such as a miniature reconnaissance camera.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

# The Berkshire Eagle

(DARPA) is also sponsoring research on implanting insects with machinery during early life stages. Since butterflies can fly thousands of miles without feeding, a cyborg version might be perfect for long-range missions.

Q: From a Monterey, Calif., reader: "Beethoven was totally deaf when he wrote his Ninth Symphony. Was that a truly astounding achievement, or merely very difficult?

As a gifted creative musician, he 'heard' it in his mind and wrote the notes down. Not quite as amazing as a blind person painting a masterpiece, because wouldn't a visual artist need to see more than a composer needs to hear?"

A: Anyone with musical training can look at the score for a piece of music and "hear" it, says University of Georgia musical composition and theory professor Adrian P. Childs. Deafness does not impair musical creativity or the act of crafting the notated score.

"Nor is the painter's artistic vision impaired by blindness, but lack of sight certainly inhibits the physical creation of the final product."





# **Critical Thinking to Achieve Positive Health Outcomes: Nursing Case Studies and Analyses Paperback (2009)**

## **Product Description**

This book uses the latest research findings to apply critical thinking processes for the development of diagnostic reasoning and the selection of patient outcomes and nursing interventions. Four chapters describe the meaning of intelligence, critical thinking, and application of critical thinking processes within nursing. The case studies and their ultimate resolution to intervention and outcome illustrate these processes by enabling repeated practice. Case studies are organized into four sections; problem diagnoses, risk diagnoses, health promotion diagnoses, and strength diagnoses. A companion website provides on-line resources.

## **Author Biography**

Margaret Lunney, RN, PhD, Professor and Graduate Programs Coordinator, College of Staten Island, Staten Island, NY, Doctoral Faculty, Graduate Center, City University of New York, New York, NY, USA.

## **Astor Family Tears, Trials and Other Troubles**

How a history of dysfunction led to today's legal showdown

By: [Sean Gardiner](#) | Source: AARP Bulletin Today | July 20, 2009



*Illustrations by Jane Rosenberg*

During the first three weeks of his trial, Anthony D. Marshall sat stoically at the defendant's table. The former Marine and diplomat betrayed no emotion as witness after witness—many old acquaintances, some even friends—gave testimony supporting criminal charges that he plundered his senile mother's estate.

Then his twin sons, Alec and Philip, added their voices to the government's chorus of accusers.

Like many witnesses before them, the twins, 56, testified that their grandmother, New York socialite and philanthropist Brooke Astor—"Gagi," they called her—wasn't mentally fit when their father orchestrated an allegedly fraudulent will change that increased his inheritance by tens of millions of dollars. Alec and Philip also described their distant, painstakingly formal relationship with their father. They even detailed Marshall's

demands that his sons make an appointment for the rare occasions they visited him.

The relationship, Philip Marshall recently told the *AARP Bulletin*, "isn't what is typically looked for in a father."

With his sons displaying their father's failings to the world, Marshall's stony countenance crumbled. During a break in testimony, Marshall, 85 and walking with a cane, made his way to a bench in the hallway outside the Manhattan courtroom. He sat and quietly cried as his wife, Charlene, tried to comfort him.

While the twins' testimony about their relationship with Marshall had no direct connection to his criminal charges, it did provide an almost too personal glimpse into the generations of family dysfunction that provide the backstory of this case. Belonging to the family of Brooke Russell Kuser Marshall Astor brings unimaginable wealth, power and privilege. It also comes with a debilitating inheritance of alcoholism, domestic abuse, divorce and parental indifference.

### **Elder abuse: a family issue**

That a member of a family has been accused of abusing an older, more vulnerable relative isn't surprising. Of elder abuse cases reported in a [2003 study by the National Center on Elder Abuse](#), two-thirds were perpetrated by a family member.

Nor should it be surprising that a person accused of committing elder abuse belongs to a family with long-standing interpersonal troubles, according to family therapists and elder abuse experts interviewed for this story. In such families retaliation "can certainly play itself out, particularly later in life when the roles are reversed and the child is in charge and the parent is dependent," says Dan Neuharth, a family therapist in the San Francisco area.

And when it comes to money and family dysfunction, says Ronald Chester, who teaches wills, estates and trusts at New England Law School, there's one basic rule: "The more money, the more dysfunction."

In the case of Brooke Astor's family, the more dysfunction, the more courtroom drama.

### **History of legal battles**

*People v. Anthony Marshall* is at least the fourth family-on-family legal proceeding

involving the defendant in his lifetime. Claiming to be upset that Marshall had adopted the last name of his stepfather, his biological father, J. Dryden Kuser, sued him 60 years ago in an attempt to recoup the trust fund he had provided for his son years earlier. The family of Marshall's second stepfather, Vincent Astor, sued Brooke, claiming she coerced Vincent to change his will while on his deathbed in 1959.

In the summer of 2006, Marshall's son Philip filed a petition in the Manhattan courts to have his father removed as Brook Astor's guardian, claiming his father and stepmother were neglecting his grandmother, allowing her to live in squalor and denying her such essentials as quality food, heat and even medicine. Ultimately, the petition filed by Philip led the Manhattan district attorney's office to open an investigation resulting in Marshall's current elder abuse trial.

### **Tony's early years**

An argument can be made that Tony Marshall owes his existence to family dysfunction. At the age of 16 in 1919, Brooke Russell married J. Dryden Kuser, a drunken, womanizing, wife-beating grandson of a U.S. senator. Five years later she conceived what would be her only child after her husband forced himself on her, Meryl Gordon writes in *Mrs. Astor Regrets: The Hidden Betrayals of a Family Beyond Reproach*.

In her 1980 autobiography, *Footprints*, Astor recorded her reaction to learning she was pregnant: "having not participated very willingly in this future event, I was perturbed." While she was still pregnant, Astor claims, Kuser, a New Jersey politician, broke her jaw during one beating. But she stayed for the sake of her unborn child, whom they would name Anthony Dryden Kuser.

After her son was born, Brooke dealt with the anger of being abused by Kuser "by spending as much time as possible in Manhattan with friends," Gordon wrote. "She professed to love her son but handed off his daily care to nannies." By 1930, she was having an affair with a stockbroker named Charles "Buddie" Marshall. Brooke flew to Reno, Nev., spent three months there to establish residency and divorced Kuser, according to newspaper clips from the time. Buddie Marshall left his wife and handicapped son to marry Brooke. Tony was 8. Marshall didn't like the boy's beloved nanny, so Brooke fired her. Within a year or two, the Marshalls sent Tony to boarding school.

In 2001 Tony Marshall self-published *Dash*, a fictionalized account of his life, Gordon

writes in *Mrs. Astor Regrets*, as a pitiful boy born a “solitary scion of a rich British family with a distant mother and a tyrannical, cruel father.”

Marshall wrote: “As the infant developed into childhood he was regarded in both physique as well as in manner as a hereditary mistake.” Sent to boarding school, the boy “was lonely, friendless, forever hungry and physically exhausted when he rose each morning after a night in the clutch of terrifying nightmares.”



### **The parent “pleaser”**

Children who grow up in dysfunctional families typically follow one of three routes, Neuharth said. They rebel against their parents; they “go away,” often drifting toward alcohol or drugs; or they attempt to “endlessly please their parents.” Prosecutors and defense attorneys in Marshall’s trial have found little common ground, but they agree that Tony Marshall chose a role of “pleaser”—at least for a period.

Though Marshall would later live extremely well off his mother’s wealth, at first it was the other way around. After Brooke married Buddie Marshall, the substantial alimony she had been receiving from her first husband was placed, by divorce agreement, into a trust fund for Tony. When her second husband’s finances took a turn for the worse, Brooke Marshall approached her son with hand out. Tony dutifully gave her money, even paying for an in-ground swimming pool at their summer home and buying his mother jewelry from Cartier and Tiffany, Gordon writes.

And Tony was getting pressure from both sides. By then Kuser, addicted to alcohol and gambling, was broke and chronically borrowed money from Tony until the son had to cut him off. That’s when Kuser unsuccessfully sued Tony for his trust fund. Tony had changed his last name to Marshall, and as a result, his biological father claimed, he

didn't deserve the "Kuser money."

In 1952, Buddie Marshall died of a heart attack after a 20-year marriage described by Astor in a 1980 *New York Times* interview as "perfect." Eleven months later, Brooke married Vincent Astor, who 40 years earlier had inherited an \$87 million estate after his mogul father, John Jacob Astor, went down with the *Titanic*. By then, the 29-year-old Tony was living in Washington, D.C., and working for the CIA when he had his twin boys, Alec and Philip.

Irene Deitch, a professor emeritus of psychology at the College of Staten Island and a practicing family psychologist, says children of emotionally detached parents often treat their own children with similar coolness. "We can only transmit as parents what we know, even if it's all negative, because you don't know anything better," Deitch says.

## **Fatherhood**

Tony Marshall proved to be only marginally better at parenthood than his own parents. In 1961 he divorced his first wife, Elizabeth, when the twins were 8. At first, Tony attempted to maintain regular contact with his boys, though he refused to kiss or hug them because he regarded it as "unmanly," Philip says.

By 1965, the boys, their mother and new stepdad lived in the suburbs of Boston and later in Vermont. The boys would only see their father, who had also remarried, maybe three times a year, Philip said. The fact that the visits always required an appointment didn't strike Philip as being odd at the time because that's the way it had always been.

And so it remained, formal and distant but civil. As Philip and Alec grew into young men in rural Vermont eschewing the Astor money and lifestyle, their father settled into middle age and became completely dependent, both financially and socially, upon a woman who former New York Mayor Abe Beame was saying at the time "has done more for New York City than any other one person."

Vincent Astor had died in 1959, leaving Brooke a \$60 million foundation and a personal estate of about equal value, which she inherited after his relatives' failed lawsuit claiming Brooke tampered with his will. That foundation's principal and the interest earned from it enabled her to give away nearly \$200 million to city charities over the next four decades and position herself atop New York society.

## **The ever-changing will**

During that time, Astor changed her wills “like people change socks,” her son’s defense attorney Frederick Hafetz argued in his opening statement in April. Between 1953 and 2003, Astor changed wills 38 times. At first, many of the changes revolved around the foundation and how much the charities she handpicked were to receive.

As time passed, however, and Astor grew older, she began exerting what is known in the estates and trust business as “dead hand control”—that is, dictating how her family would spend her money after she was gone. Many of Astor’s friends and acquaintances have testified during the trial that one of her primary goals was to make sure that none of the Astor fortune ended up in the hands of her son’s third wife, Charlene, whom she came to openly detest.

“As we get older, we start sensing a loss of control,” says law professor Chester, author of *From Here to Eternity? Property and the Dead Hand*. “Our children go out of our orbit. We feel our bodies deteriorate and we start looking at the day when we’re going to lose total control. We want to grab on to what control we still have, which in this case is basically the money.”

There was a time in the late 1980s when Marshall’s twin sons, then grown men, unexpectedly reconnected with their father. Philip and Tony Marshall took a couple of trips to Bermuda together, went sailing, sat on the beach, ate good food. Alec tagged along on one of these reunions. Tony Marshall was still formal and stiff, Philip recalls, but it resembled at least the beginning of the relationship they never had when the twins were younger.

## **Enter Mrs. Marshall No. 3**

That’s when Charlene entered the picture, leaving her Episcopalian priest husband for Marshall. After that the Marshall twins’ relationship with their father grew increasingly distant. Philip Marshall recalls his father visiting him once after his first child was born in 1991 and then never again, not even after the birth of a second child. Eventually, Philip says, Charlene came to dominate his father, and there was no father-son contact whatsoever.

“My grandmother was such a dominant force in my father’s life,” Philip, a professor of historic preservation at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island, told the *Bulletin*. “And just when her influence waned along with her fading mental capacities, along

came Charlene to fill the void."

Prosecutors have charged that Marshall coerced his mother into changing her wills long after she was mentally capable of doing so and, with the aid of his codefendant, lawyer Francis X. Morrissey Jr., even forged her name on a will change. The will amendments shifted total control of the entire \$185 million Astor estate into the hands of Marshall and his wife.

Though the mother-son relationship was complicated, Marshall's attorneys have claimed, Astor loved and relied on Tony. The will changes near the end of her life—she died in 2007 at age 105—were an attempt to do right by her dutiful only child. "The fact that these people are not huggers in public doesn't mean anything," Kenneth Warner, Marshall's trial attorney, told the *Bulletin*. "Ultimately it came down to a decision of Brooke to let Tony decide."

Whether it's a case of Astor finally relinquishing her "dead hand control" or Marshall taking through deceit is still to be determined by a jury. But one thing is for sure: The final will alterations not only shortchange Astor's chosen charities out of tens of millions of dollars but virtually cut Marshall's sons and subsequent generations out of the will.

### **New alliances**

Around the time that he was losing newly found contact with his father, Philip Marshall rekindled his relationship with his grandmother based on her desire to spend time with Philip's kids, her great-grandchildren. This "was really something," testified Astor's attorney and dear friend, Henry Christensen, because everyone knew "Brooke Astor did not like children."

Astor had spent some time with her grandkids at her sprawling Maine summer home, Cove End, and discussed with Christensen the possibility of leaving the \$5.5 million property to Philip and his children. When Marshall learned of the plans, he reacted angrily. He eventually gained control of the property through a suspicious will change and then quietly deeded it to the wife his mother despised.

In his courtroom testimony, Christensen recounted Marshall's words on the subject: " 'I can't be in a position that Philip has a vested interest. I won't have him breathing down my neck and waiting for me to die.' "





Henry Christensen (center), Astor's attorney and close friend, was among the witnesses who testified that she "didn't want to see money go to Charlene."

*Sean Gardiner is a veteran journalist who most recently covered the criminal justice system for the Village Voice.*

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## **A Rat Model of Epilepsy in Women: A Tool to Study Physiological Interactions between Endocrine Systems and Seizures**

**Helen E. Scharfman, Gauri H. Malthankar-Phatak,  
Daniel Friedman, Patrice Pearce,  
Daniel P. McCloskey, Cynthia L. Harden and  
Neil J. MacLusky**

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Epilepsy in women is influenced by endocrine status and antiepileptic drugs, but without an animal model, the effects of endocrine variables and antiepileptic drugs cannot be easily dissociated from the influence of epilepsy itself. Animal models have had limited utility because experimentally induced seizures typically result in reproductive failure. This study was conducted to develop an improved animal model. The muscarinic convulsant pilocarpine was used to elicit status epilepticus (SE) in adult female Sprague Dawley rats. The selective estrogen receptor modulator raloxifene was administered 30 min before pilocarpine. An anticonvulsant barbiturate, pentobarbital, was injected 5–10 min after the onset of SE and at least once thereafter to minimize acute convulsions. Mortality, morbidity, estrous cyclicity, and the ultimate success of the procedure (*i.e.* induction of recurrent, spontaneous seizures) were monitored. The combination of raloxifene and pentobarbital led to significantly improved estrous cyclicity compared with previous methods. Animals treated with raloxifene and pentobarbital became epileptic, as defined by the recurrence of spontaneous convulsions in the weeks after SE. The results of this study provide an improved animal model to examine the interactions between seizures and ovarian hormone secretion. The results also suggest that treatment of SE with raloxifene may benefit women with SE.

THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2009

# The basics of health care reform

What Islanders need to know about the president's game-changing plan

President Barack Obama made a prime-time appeal last night to sell his massive 10-year, \$1 trillion health care reform bill to skeptical Americans. Still confused? Here's a primer of what it all means for you.

## What is the president's goal?

Obama is trying to provide coverage for the nearly 50 million uninsured Americans without increasing costs in the future.

"Primary health care is the entry level of care that no United States citizen should be denied because of an inability to pay," said Prof. Patricia Tooker, an assistant professor of nursing at Wagner College. "Our health insurance system, unlike our



ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Barack Obama responds to questions during a news conference on his push to reform health care.

foreign counterparts', does not allow for all to be able to access it. It's a very fragmented system."

## How would it work?

Obama's plan would allow individuals to choose between a gov-

ernment plan — being called the "public option" — and private insurance companies. The details of the public option have not been made final but likely would provide a benchmark of quality coverage with a basic package of comprehensive benefits at lower rates than private insurers.

## Can I keep my own health insurance?

Yes, the president's proposal allows individuals to keep the insurance they have, if they like it, and preserves their choice of doctors, hospitals and treatments.

## What if I am enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid?

The public programs will remain intact but costs could rise to pay

SEE QUESTIONS, PAGE A 6

## QUESTIONS FROM PAGE A 1

# The basics of health-care reform

for Obama's plan.

### **Will my employer have to offer me insurance?**

The Senate version of the bill says most employers would have to offer either the public option or private insurance.

### **What's all the fuss?**

Republicans fear the cost will swell an already swollen deficit and devastate consumers and small-business owners. They also counter that employers will drop their private carriers in favor of the cheaper public option, taking choice away from their employees.

The GOP also says the government has no place in the health care market, though Richard Flanagan, a professor of political science at the College of Staten Island, calls that argument "absurd," since Medicaid and Medicare cover 35 to 40 percent of the population while the states pick up the costs of the uninsured in hospital emergency rooms.

"Republicans across the board object to the cost at a time when the federal deficit is skyrocketing," Flanagan said. "Invariably, it will lead to higher taxes. If you want

to cover more people, it's going to cost more money."

The lack of support for the president's plan reaches across party lines: Fiscally conservative Democrats, known as the Blue Dog Democrats, oppose any health care reform that doesn't "substantially bring down costs."

Although the American Medical Association has endorsed the bill, some doctors and private insurers are lobbying against the plan, fearing their bottom lines are at stake: Doctors worry about how they will be reimbursed; insurers that they won't be able to compete with the public option.

"They are all jumping up in arms that this can't happen," said Prof. Tooker, the Wagner nursing professor. "I think we know why. It's typical of the way our society works. It's all a power struggle. Nobody wants to give up the purse strings."



## Angewandte Chemie

See Also:

Angewandte Chemie International Edition

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## Zuschrift

### Counterion Distribution around Hydrophilic Molecular Macroanions: The Source of the Attractive Force in Self-Assembly

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## He's overcome obstacles to reap great rewards

Posted by [nrizzi](#) July 23, 2009 11:43AM



Advance photo/Jamie LeeA paraplegic since age 11 after a fall from a roof, John Karl has not let his disabilities hinder any aspect of his life. He has many pastimes, including fishing, crabbing, caring for animals and his back-yard garden.

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- GREAT KILLS -- To say John Karl loves to be outside would be an understatement.

His love of fishing and crabbing is well known throughout the Great Kills maritime community.

Karl builds his own traps, which he says he's finally perfecting after years of variations.

He loves to take his family and friends kayaking in the waters off the South Shore coast.

An animal lover, he has helped raise, rescue and treat wildlife in need of assistance. (There's currently a duck being nursed back to health in his shed.)

And when he gets home at the end of a long day on the ocean, he works his garden.

Cultivating fruits and vegetables in a back-yard field may seem like a common hobby for Staten Islanders, but Karl has taken it to the next level.

A stone's throw from Jack's Pond, he has developed what equates to a small farm on his property -- growing tomatoes, peppers, asparagus, parsley, kohlrabi, cabbage, apples, pears, gooseberries and nasturtium flowers, among other things.

He does it all confined to a wheelchair.

A paraplegic since age 11 after a fall from a roof, Karl has not let his disabilities hinder any aspect of his life. He is more active than some that are fully able because of his perseverance and determination, traits that he says come from his parents.

"My father was a sculptor and a carpenter, and my mother was a potter," said Karl. "So I guess that's why I [like to work] with my hands."

Karl's father, Hans, and mother, Renate, emigrated to the United States in the 1950s from Germany, taking their skills with them.

The elder Karl, who passed away 18 years ago, made a career in construction. He transformed a Great Kills shack into a beautiful home where his family still lives.

It wasn't easy, his son said, and involved the removal of a gigantic boulder, pieces of which now serve as a protective wall around the home.

After his son's accident, Hans Karl set to work making the home wheelchair accessible, constructing external ramps and a 30-foot mechanical lift to help his son move from floor to floor in the house.

The lift proved so problematic, though, that the elder Karl, who also hand-carved the sculptures seen today in the St. Clare's Cardinal Cooke Center, eventually built an indoor elevator instead.

That resolve rubbed off on the younger Karl.

"I always went to regular school," said John Karl, who works as a geology tutor at the College of Staten Island. "And with the chair, I would always do 'wheelies' as a kid, but my mom never told me to stop. They wanted me to be independent, and if I fell out of the chair, I'd just get back up and in."

The younger Karl eventually scored a job on Wall Street and moved to Manhattan, staying there for seven years and playing Frisbee in the park during his down time.

But when his father was diagnosed with cancer, it was time to come home.

During the latter years of her husband's life, Mrs. Karl instituted a macrobiotic diet in the house; a teeming garden in the back yard made this easier.

"We eat fully organic meals," said the younger Karl. "That means no pesticides, no chemicals and no processed foods."

He began tending daily to the crops, going so far as to breed insect-eating guppies for small ponds around the fields and hundreds of worms in a specially-constructed compost shed to help with soil regeneration.

With the combination of a green thumb and some TLC, the garden has grown and grown.

Today, the Karl back yard is loaded with everything from grape vines that stretch for yards and yards to fruit trees.

"I have a really great life," said the younger Karl. "I have a great family. I've had a great girlfriend, [Anna Traland], for the last nine years. I've got great friends. And I've got a great home. What more can you ask for?"

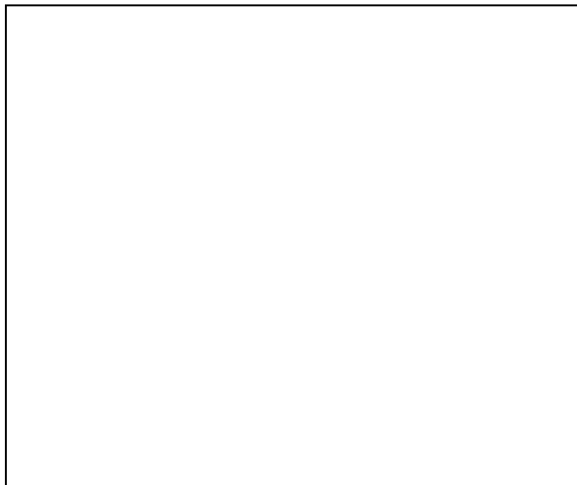
*Jamie Lee is a reporter for the Staten Island Advance. He covers the West and South Shores and may be reached at [jamielee@siadvance.com](mailto:jamielee@siadvance.com).*

## McMahon May Elude 2010 Target List

By Emily Cadei, CQ Staff

Back in 2008, it seemed unlikely that Democrat [Michael E. McMahon](#) would be the freshman representative for New York's 13th District.

But with little fanfare, McMahon established such a grasp on the Republican-leaning Staten Island seat that the GOP's hopes of flipping it back are now seen as a long shot.



"He's pretty strong," conceded one Republican party aide, noting that he ran a tough race in 2008 and has good name identification in the district, thanks to his seven years on the City Council.

As a result, the 13th District, which last elected a Democrat 30 years ago and voted for [Republican presidential nominee John McCain](#), has dropped down the list of races Republicans are targeting.

While the GOP is aggressively pursuing challenges to first- and second-term New York Democrats like Rep. [Eric Massa](#) in the 29th District and [John Hall](#) in the 19th, McMahon has thus far attracted just one likely challenger — first-time candidate [Michael Allegretti](#), a former campaign aide to New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Allegretti has not officially declared his candidacy, but he has met with the National Republican Campaign Committee and has a fundraising committee already set up.

His family owns Bayside Fuel Oil Corp, a prominent wholesale heating oil terminal operator, and Allegretti "has the ability to raise some serious money," said Jerry Kassir, chairman of the

Conservative Party in Brooklyn. "His family has been active in the Brooklyn district."

Indeed, Allegretti already has the New York Oil Heating Association, of which Bayside is a member, soliciting funds for him. In an e-mail from to "friends of the oil industry," NYOHA called Allegretti a "dynamic leader" and said his candidacy creates "an unprecedented opportunity to send 'one of our own' to the annals of the United States Capitol."

But Richard Flanagan, associate professor of political science at the College of Staten Island, said Allegretti's political and business ties won't be able to help him overcome a key structural disadvantage — he's not from Staten Island.

"Anybody coming out of Brooklyn is more or less a sacrificial lamb," Flanagan said of the sliver of Brooklyn included in the 13th District.

In 2008, that section of the district accounted for just over a quarter of all congressional votes. Staten Island voters, meanwhile, made up 72 percent of the electorate.

GOP officials say it's likely other local officials will get in the race to challenge McMahon, but those on the ground say they've heard little talk of that thus far.

"No one has been making any noise. No one has been making any moves," said Thomas Wroblewski, political editor of the Staten Island Advance.

A name that pops up now and then is the Republican who held the seat for five terms, Rep. [Vito J. Fossella](#). He resigned in 2008 after an arrest for [driving under the influence](#). A week after the traffic stop, the married father of three acknowledged also having a 3-year-old daughter from an affair with a former Air Force officer.

Fossella is now employed at the Manhattan-based Superfund Investment Group, and has denied interest in running for the seat, though has not entirely ruled it out. Appearing on the Joe Scarborough's morning radio show on July 22, Fossella said he had "no plans" to run for Congress again.



Flanagan said Fossella's public appearances have felt like "he's testing" a return. "Certainly not this time around, maybe 2012," Flanagan said.

McMahon, meanwhile, continues to inoculate himself from a strong Republican challenge, earning glowing headlines for delivering on parochial interests and building bridges to local officials of all party stripes, helping burnish his image as a nonpartisan problem solver.

"He's in a very strong position because I think he's found the right of center pocket and that's a great spot to be in in that district," said Flanagan.

Thanks to a moderate record in the City Council and a reputation for "playing well with others," McMahon earned endorsements from Michael Bloomberg, the Republican-turned-Independent mayor, and Staten Island Borough President James P. Molinaro, a member of the New York Conservative Party, for his 2008 election.

McMahon said he is hopeful to have Molinaro's support in 2010 as well.

McMahon has also been boosted by the Democratic leadership, which put him on the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, a prime spot that allows him to bring home federal money for much-needed infrastructure projects, and blessed his election as freshman whip.

Among his early accomplishments, McMahon points to the \$175 million in stimulus money (PL 111-5) he helped obtain to rebuild the Staten Island ferry terminal ramps and bridges, close to \$50 million for long-needed improvements on the Staten Island Expressway, and over \$200 million to rebuild subway stations in the Brooklyn portion of the district.

McMahon has also earned plaudits locally for defending the financial industry, not a popular position nationally but an important source of jobs in the district.

He was one of six Democrats in the House to vote against the taxation of [bonuses for executives](#) of foundering insurance giant AIG amid the backlash against the company — [which received federal bailout money](#) — and its executive bonuses in March. He also is fighting attempts to regulate the derivatives market by creating a central exchange, which he argues would compromise "the ability of businesses to manage financial risk."

McMahon has opened himself up to future attacks from the GOP for his votes supporting the stimulus package, and the energy bill calling for a cap-and-trade program to regulate carbon emissions (HR 2454).

Should worries about the Democrats' economic agenda continue to grow, he could be dragged down, too.

In the meantime, said Wroblewski, McMahon "hasn't done anything to make people second-guess" him.

CQ Politics rates the general election race as [Democrat Favored](#).

To see how all the 2010 House races are shaping up, check out the [CQ Politics election map](#)

*Cecily Wu contributed to this story*

# Council candidates get endorsements

Mitchell backed by FDNY unions, Rose supported by health-care workers in Democratic primary

By TOM WROBLESKI  
ADVANCE POLITICAL EDITOR

With balloting set for Sept. 15, candidates in the Democratic primary for the North Shore City Council seat yesterday picked up endorsements in the race.

Councilman Kenneth Mitchell was backed by a quartet of Fire Department and public-safety unions, while opponent Debi Rose got the endorsement of Local 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East.

Speaking at Engine Co. 155/Ladder Co. 78 headquarters in New Brighton, fire union officials praised Mitchell



ROSE



MITCHELL

for working to keep Engine 161 in South Beach open, and for helping to open Engine 168 in Rossville.

"He didn't waste any time in standing up and fighting the fight," said Donald Ruland, borough trustee of the Uniformed Firefighters Association.

Officials also lauded Mitchell for working with them while he served for seven years as chief of staff to former North Shore Councilman Michael McMahon, who is now a U.S. congressman.

"Kenny was always the go-to guy," said Capt. John Dunne of the Uniformed Fire Officers Association. "Now that he's the incumbent, he's

already shown his capacity for hard work."

Mitchell, who won the Council seat in a February special election, said he was "gratified" by the endorsements.

"I will continue to stand with the unions to ensure adequate fire protection for the City of New York and the people of the North Shore," he said. "It is a basic right for every citizen."

Mitchell also has been backed by the Fire Alarm Dispatchers Benevolent Association and by Emergency Medical Service EMTs and paramedics.

If re-elected, Mitchell said he would work to pass pending Council legislation mandating that fire personnel receive increased fire-prevention training.

Local 1199 SEIU represents more than 250,000 health-care workers in the city. The union also backed Ms. Rose in the February special Council election.

"During these difficult

economic times, we need strong leaders who can help working families meet the challenges of living in this city and providing for their families," union president George Gresham said in announcing the group's city endorsements. "We are confident that each and every candidate we've endorsed will fight hard for all working New Yorkers."

"I'm really excited about their vote of confidence," said Ms. Rose, "that I'm a candidate who will represent their members' issues and will work hard for the North Shore."

Mitchell has been backed by the Democratic and Conservative parties in the race. Ms. Rose has the support of the Working Families Party.

Education activist Rajiv Gowda is also in the Democratic primary. Retired Air Force veteran Timothy Kuhn is on the GOP line.

Tom Wroblewski may be reached at [wroblewski@siadvance.com](mailto:wroblewski@siadvance.com). Read his [politics](http://www.silive.com/newslogs/politics/) blog at <http://www.silive.com/newslogs/politics/>.

REPORTED FIRST ON SILIVE.COM  
YESTERDAY, 4:41 P.M.

## Is the python hunt all hype? Scientists try to squeeze some truth into snake search

By [PAUL QUINLAN](#)  
Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

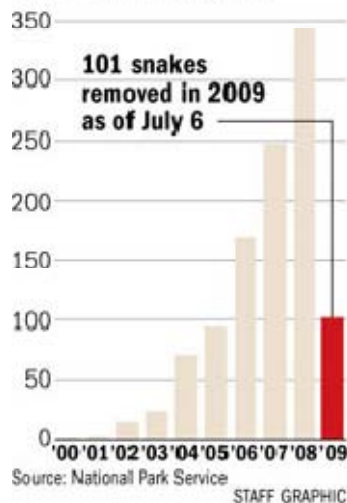
Thursday, July 30, 2009

One week after a pet python escaped its terrarium and strangled a 2-year-old girl in Sumter County, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson unfurled a 16-foot python skin at a congressional hearing and warned, "It's just a matter of time before one of these things gets to a visitor in the Florida Everglades."

The next week, he called for forming a python posse to hunt and kill the beasts, citing the "estimated 100,000 or more pythons now roaming the 'Glades." So began the Great Florida Python Hunt, with a special media kickoff in the Everglades during which, miraculously, hunters captured one of the elusive snakes.

### Snake captures

The number of pythons found in or near Everglades National Park since 2000 has risen sharply, as search efforts have intensified.



Afterward Nelson told The Associated Press: "One down, 99,999 to go." And as recently as this morning, NBC reporter Kerry Sanders – reporting hip-deep from a swamp west of Boynton Beach - announced on the *Today Show* that "it's estimated there are more than 150,000 wild Burmese pythons on the loose."

Well, not exactly.

The idea that scientists estimate the number of pythons living in the Everglades at 100,000 – or 150,000, according to a news release from U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney of Tequesta - is one of several questionable facts and statistics that have helped propel the Everglades' five-year-old python problem into headlines around the world this month.

Other claims include the fear that pythons, if ignored, will come to dominate the everglades food chain, wiping out whole species, and eventually spread across the Southern third of the United States and into our back yards.

In fact, the number of pythons in Everglades National Park is probably closer to around 30,000, park biologists say.

What's more, pythons face numerous predators in the Everglades, raising the possibility that the population growth could plateau well before significant numbers of the snakes find their way into our back yards. And new research has cast doubt on an oft-cited government study that says pythons could spread well beyond South Florida latitudes.

Nobody disputes that pythons pose a threat to the ecosystem – in particular, to wading birds and the dozens of other threatened or endangered species that live in the Everglades.

What is debatable is how much damage they could do. Biologists and snake experts note that some facts have been skewed in the fun-house mirror of sensational politics and news coverage.

"We've got a lot of politicians that are looking to get elected, and in this type of story, things get exaggerated," said Greg Graziani, one of the original licensed python hunters and a professional breeder from Venus, in Highlands County.

Most scientists agree that the non-native pythons arrived in the Everglades when careless pet owners released them or allowed them to escape as they grew too large. Another suspect is breeders whose cages were destroyed by Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Estimates that 150,000 pythons live in the Everglades are loosely based on "guesstimates" by Skip Snow, an Everglades National Park wildlife biologist and resident python expert, of how many could live in the Everglades, based on available habitat. In fact, Snow offers a wide range: 5,000 to 138,000.

"We don't know how many are out there," said Snow, who estimates the true number at around 30,000. "We know that it's not hundreds, and clearly, everyone is comfortable saying there are thousands."

Experts, including researchers at the University of Florida, cite the exponential rise in the number of pythons caught as evidence of population growth. But those statistics may be skewed by improved intelligence and intensified efforts to locate and track the stealthy reptiles, concedes Bill Hallac, the park's chief of biological resources.

From 1979 through 2001, park biologists never saw more than three snakes captured in any given year. Since then, captures have risen sharply, jumping from 14 in 2002 to 343 last year - for a cumulative total of 1,074 as of early July.

The numbers "really took off in 2003 and 2004, where we started to do road surveys and get the word out," Snow said. The park has also run a trapping program with help from volunteers and begun researching techniques, including attracting pythons using pheromones.

Consider the "Judas snakes."

In 2005, the park began implanting snakes with \$250 radio transmitters, each the size of a lipstick tube with a foot-long wire antenna. They released the snakes and tracked them back to the first python "nest," the existence of which confirmed the reptiles were breeding. In its first two years, the program led to the capture of at least 25 snakes.

Dissections have turned up all manner of wildlife in the bellies of pythons, including the remains of white-tailed deer, alligators and even a bobcat. But that's not to say that pythons are not themselves prey - to raccoons, wild pigs, birds and, of course, bobcats and alligators, say experts and scientists.

Graziani, the python breeder, said he suspects that large animal remains found in the stomachs of pythons may have belonged to critters already dead when the pythons came upon them.

"The fact that one of these things was found with a bobcat claw doesn't mean these things are out killing bobcats," he said.

Some say predictions that pythons will overrun the Everglades ignore another, equally likely outcome: the population plateaus.

"I can't imagine that it won't," said Harry Greene, an ecology professor and snake expert at Cornell University. "At some point, every population reaches its carrying capacity and it levels off or crashes."

Of course, that point may not be reached until the Key Largo wood rat or some other endangered species has been gobbled out of existence.

But what of the danger to humans?

Pet pythons of various types have killed 12 people in the United States since 1980, according to the Humane Society of the United States. Documented cases of wild pythons killing humans exist, although they are rare. None has occurred in this country.

The Miami Herald has cited two cases: One in Indonesia, in which a teenager was devoured by a 31-foot reticulated python, and another in the mid-1990s in which a 23-foot python killed and tried to swallow a rubber plantation worker in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Some Web sites show photos of humans being cut out of the stomachs of snakes, although some experts believe the photos were faked.

In February 2008, the U.S. Geological Survey released a study warning that the python invasion of South Florida could spread far north - even across the entire Southern third of the United States, in part because of projected global warming.

But the USGS "didn't do a very good analysis," said Cornell's Greene. Frank Burbrink, an associate professor of biology at the City University of New York's College of Staten Island, examined a much wider range of ecological factors in his own study released six months later, concluding that pythons could roost only in South Florida and the southern tip of Texas.

"There's a lot of hype on various sides of this, but I do think there really is a problem," said Greene. "If you have an exotic, vertebrate predator that weighs well over 100 pounds, is thriving in a national park and can possibly extend its range into the Southeastern U.S., it certainly deserves to be addressed."

Find this article at:

[http://www.palmbeachpost.com/localnews/content/local\\_news/epaper/2009/07/30/0730pythons.htm](http://www.palmbeachpost.com/localnews/content/local_news/epaper/2009/07/30/0730pythons.htm)  
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## ON THE JOB

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**CHRISTINE FLYNN SAULNIER**

College of Staten Island

The College of Staten Island announced the appointment of Dr. Christine Flynn Saulnier as the Dean for Humanities and Social Sciences at the College of Staten Island.

Dr. Saulnier is the author of "Feminist Theories and Social Work: Approaches and Applications" as well as several book chapters. Her publications also include editorials and numerous peer-reviewed journal articles.

She has presented at national and international symposia and conferences, and is the co-editor of *Affilia*, a scholarly journal in social work and women's studies.

Prior to joining CSI, Dr. Saulnier held the position of full professor at Simmons College in the School of Social Work. Previous positions include Dean of Graduate School of Social Work at Simmons College; Academic

*please see ON THE JOB, page 19*



Saulnier

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## ON THE JOB

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*Continued from page 8*

Planner in the University of Wisconsin System Administration, Office of Academic Affairs; Director of Advanced Standing Program, Director of the MSW Program, and Assistant Professor at Boston University, School of Social Work; and Assistant Professor at University at Buffalo, SUNY, School of Social Work.

Dr. Saulnier also worked in human services, serving as Director of Social Services at Quigley Memorial Hospital/Soldier's Home, as a Clinical Social Worker at Perkins School for the Blind; in various positions at the Department of Mental Health in Quincy,

Massachusetts; and as a Resident Counselor for Moore Living Centers.

Dr. Saulnier received a PhD from the University of California, Berkeley; an MSW from Boston University; a BS from Michigan State University; and an AA from Lansing Community College.

FLORIDA

## **Hyperbole squeezes Everglades python problem**

**Some exaggeration has slithered into snake debate, experts say.**

By Paul Quinlan  
THE PALM BEACH POST  
Saturday, August 01, 2009

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — One week after a pet python escaped its terrarium and strangled a 2-year-old Florida girl, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson unfurled a 16-foot python skin at a congressional hearing and warned, "It's just a matter of time before one of these things gets to a visitor in the Florida Everglades."

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Other claims include the fear that pythons, if ignored, will come to dominate the Everglades food chain, wiping out whole species, and eventually spread across the southern third of the United States.

In fact, pythons in Everglades National Park probably number closer to 30,000, park biologists say.

What's more, pythons face numerous predators in the Everglades, raising the possibility that the population growth could plateau well before significant numbers of the snakes move into residents' backyards. And new research has cast doubt on an oft-cited government study that says pythons could spread far north.

Nobody disputes that pythons pose a threat to the ecosystem — in particular, to wading birds and the dozens of other threatened or endangered species in the Everglades.

But snake experts note that some facts have been skewed.



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"We know that it's not hundreds, and clearly, everyone is comfortable saying there are thousands."

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**Find this article at:**

<http://www.statesman.com/news/content/news/stories/nation/2009/08/01/0801snake.html>

## Prospect of gambling coming to A.C. impacts Staten Island

Posted by [dbalsamin](#) August 02, 2009 22:38PM



Advance file photoD.A. Daniel

Donovan (above) is not thrilled with the prospect of legal sports betting coming to Atlantic City Casinos. "It could create a new group of gamblers," he cautioned. "People who participate in their [office] Super Bowl pools, may say, 'Wouldn't it be more interesting to put a bet on the game?' Those newly created gamblers may [ultimately] become customers of illegal sports betting" on Staten Island.

Staten Island will feel the impact if Delaware's recent legalization of sports betting survives court challenges, and if efforts succeed to bring similar wagering to Atlantic City casinos.

There's no movement afoot to sanction sports wagering in New York state, which allows casinos on upstate Indian reservations and slot machines at about eight horse-racing tracks, including Yonkers Raceway.

But if New Jersey politicians can overturn the federal ban on sports betting, borough residents might make the two-plus-hour trip to Atlantic City to plunk down 50 bucks on the Super Bowl, the NCAA college basketball tournament, or even that day's Yankees-Orioles game.

"If you don't have gambling and people want to do it, they'll migrate," said Jonathan Peters, associate professor of finance at the College of Staten Island in Willowbrook. "It would make betting options available to them."

District Attorney Daniel Donovan isn't thrilled by that prospect.

"It could create a new group of gamblers," he cautioned. "People who participate in their [office] Super Bowl pools, may say, 'Wouldn't it be more interesting to put a bet on the game?' Those newly created gamblers may [ultimately] become customers of illegal sports betting" on Staten Island.

Earlier this spring, Delaware legalized sports betting and table games.

Delaware is one of four states -- Montana, Nevada and Oregon are the others -- that had forms of sports betting grandfathered in under a 1992 federal law outlawing sports wagering nationally.

Delaware officials predict an additional \$55 million in annual revenue for state coffers, if its sports betting plan proceeds. Sports wagering would be permitted only at the state's three racinos (racetracks and casinos) -- Delaware Park, Dover Downs and Harrington Raceway.

The nation's four major professional sports leagues -- Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, the National Football League and the National Hockey League -- oppose the move, saying broad-scale legalized betting could create incentives to cheat and fix games.

The four pro leagues along with the NCAA filed suit in Delaware federal court July 24 in an attempt to block the plan.

The sports betting market is lucrative.

An estimated \$380 billion a year is illegally gambled on sports. About \$90 million is bet on the Super Bowl alone.

Hoping to take a chunk of the betting pie -- and fend off threats to the nation's second-largest gambling market, after Nevada -- New Jersey state Sen. Raymond Lesniak, filed suit in Trenton federal court in March to eliminate the federal sports-betting ban. Gov. Jon Corzine supports the action.

The prime beneficiary would be Atlantic City, a convenient getaway for Staten Islanders.

Each day, hundreds of borough residents board buses that whisk them to the south Jersey casinos. Most are senior citizens, who enjoy the slot machines and gaming tables, said Laura Cagnetta, sales manager for the Port Richmond-based Atlantic Express, which runs buses seven days a week to Atlantic City.

Based on such clientele, she doesn't anticipate an uptick in ridership to Atlantic City if sports betting is legalized.

"It might help a charter [bus]company," Ms. Cagnetta said, adding that bars or other groups could sponsor New Jersey junkets to wager on big games.

Assuming the Nevada model holds true -- sports betting comprises only 1.2 percent of that state's gaming revenue -- Peters, the CSI professor, said Staten Islanders aren't likely to flock to Delaware or Atlantic City in droves.

But they might head the 100 miles or so south to lay down a few bucks for major sporting events such as the Super Bowl, World Series and the NCAA's Final Four tournament.

"It might serve as a catalyst at certain times of the year, but I don't think it would have a huge impact," he said.

Donovan, the district attorney, said legalized gambling will never eliminate illicit wagering.

For one thing, bookmakers offer better odds than the state. And, in many instances, it's more convenient to bet with the local bookie than travel to a legitimate establishment.

For those and other reasons, the district attorney doesn't think legalized out-of-state sports betting would greatly impact illegal wagering here. Illicit gambling on Staten Island is not a major problem, occurring "not more or less than it is in any community in America," he said.

But Donovan expressed concern that legalized sports wagering could become the equivalent of the biblical apple that tempted Adam in the Garden of Eden.

"Gambling is an addiction, like drugs and alcohol," he said. "It might create a bigger universe of potential customers for bookies."

--- *Contributed by Frank Donnelly*

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# Dynamics differ in North Shore Council race

February special election allowed all registered voters; September primary is restricted to Dems

By TOM WRÓBLESKI  
ADVANCE POLITICAL EDITOR

They're back.

Six months after battling for the North Shore City Council seat, Democrats Ken Mitchell and Debi Rose are facing off again, this time in a party primary that also features Rajiv Gowda.

Mitchell defeated Ms. Rose by more than 300 votes in the February special election, a race in which Gowda got bounced from the ballot.

They were competing to step into the City Council seat left vacant when Rep. Michael McMahon was elected to Congress last year. Mitchell had served as chief of staff and legal counsel to the former councilman.

This time the dynamics of the North Shore campaign are different, leading all the Democratic candidates to think that they have the upper hand in the race.

All registered voters were allowed to cast ballots in the winter race, but the Sept. 15 primary is limited to Democrats only.

Ms. Rose and her supporters think that that gives them the edge because they believe she got more Democratic votes overall in the special while Mitchell benefited from the votes of Republicans and Conservatives who took part in the election.

"We're confident we'll be able to get a good number of Democratic votes to win this," said Ms. Rose, who is looking to become the first African-American to be elected to public office on the Island. "We feel we have a better shot at winning."

On top of that, the Rose camp believes that she might have triumphed in February if the Rev. Dr. Tony Baker, who is also African-American and got 844 votes in the special, had not been in the race. They believe that most of his Democratic votes will fall their way in the primary.

Ms. Rose will also again have the benefit of the city's matching-fund program, which will give her roughly \$7 for every \$1 she raises. That will help her close an expected fund-raising gap with Mitchell.

As in February, Ms. Rose has the support of Local 1199 SEIU, which should help with her Democratic get-out-the-vote efforts. She has been backed by the Working Families Party in the race, so she will be on the November ballot regardless of what happens in the primary.

## 'GREAT OPPORTUNITY'

"This is a great opportunity for me," said Ms. Rose a longtime member of Community Board 1 and the executive director of the Liberty Partnership program at the College of Staten Island.

All that being said, Ms. Rose also had the help of former GOP chair Leticia Remauro in February, and there was an outreach aimed at Republican women, which may have boosted Ms. Rose's numbers. Those voters will not be available to her this time.

It is also Ms. Rose's third time seeking the seat, and her vote total has remained in the same ballpark over the years, no matter who took part in the election. Some believe that she has already hit her ceiling.

The Mitchell forces also believe that their hand is stronger now than in February.



GOWDA

ROSE

MITCHELL

As the incumbent, the councilman now has greater name recognition, and his status helps him command free media attention and automatically ups his visibility.

A sitting lawmaker, Mitchell can also make a positive impression as he allocates funds to community groups and neighborhoods throughout the district in the ordinary course of Council business.

Mitchell also has the support of the Democratic county committee, party chairman John Gulino and the Island's Democratic elected officials. The party stayed officially neutral in the special.

More importantly, perhaps, Mitchell, a protégé of former councilman, has the benefit of McMahon's political operation, a crew of experienced and loyal hands which has turned out the vote, Democratic and otherwise, in a number of North Shore and Islandwide races since 2001.

"A primary actually narrows the focus," Mitchell said. "I believe my campaign will bring out those voters and, hopefully, we'll be successful."

But Mitchell has also stumbled in his brief time in office.

He acknowledged that he voted for Rayann Besser to be placed on the City Planning Commission without realizing he was doing so. Con-

trovery ensued when it was later revealed that Ms. Besser is the sister of Borough President James Molinaro's daughter-in-law. Ms. Rose has already made hay out of the episode and is expected to keep doing so.

Mitchell also voted against a bill aimed at curbing harassment at abortion clinics, a vote that some say will hurt him with hard-core Democrats.

## 'GRASSROOTS PERSON'

While it's not clear where Gowda's votes will come from, Gowda said that the fact that he was able to gather more than 3,000 nominating-petition signatures in order to get on the ballot "proves that I am a grassroots person."

"People are tired of what they are seeing in the political world," said Gowda, a civil engineer and the former president of the borough's Community Education Council. "They want to see a change, and they're going to make that change. I see a clear victory in this."

Tom Wroblewski is the Advance political editor. Read his polit.bureau blog at <http://blog.silive.com/politics>.



## NO MORE 'SCHOOL'S OUT FOR SUMMER'

By **THOMAS W. CARROLL**

*August 4, 2009 –*

ANYONE who came of age during the 1970s likely remembers the Alice Cooper hit song "School's Out," featuring the refrain "school's out for summer." Kids today most likely know the song from the Guitar Hero III video game.'

Yet, with US test scores continuing to lag behind other nations', and New York's scores lagging the national ones, *should* school still be out for summer?

In March, Education Secretary Arne Duncan noted: "What I worry about a lot is summer reading loss. You have kids who don't have a lot of books at home and aren't read to . . . You get kids to a certain point in June, and when they come back in September, they're further behind than when they left you three months ago."

Although disadvantaged students learn at almost the same rate as other students, they start out further behind and give up substantial ground every summer -- when more advantaged students reinforce their skills through informal access to books, and various educational and enrichment activities.

According to Karl Alexander, the John Dewey professor of sociology at John Hopkins University, "About two-thirds of the ninth-grade academic achievement gap between disadvantaged youngsters and their more advantaged peers can be explained by what happens over the summer during the elementary-school years."

The summers-off school year hasn't always been the standard. As College of Staten Island Professor Kenneth Gold explains, "Public education in 1840s New York [City] was a year-round affair, as urban schooling had been for many years." At the time, school was broken into four quarters, and no drop in student attendance was recorded during summer.

With three weeks off in August, the school year averaged around 245 days in 1842, dropping to 224 after the Board of Education took over the city public schools in 1853 -- and then to just over 200 days in 1892, with summer vacation newly starting on July 3. It wasn't until the 1960s that virtually the entire nation had switched to today's standard of 175- to 180-day school years, with 6.5-hour days.

What is often ignored, however, is that long summer breaks don't affect all students equally. Almost two thirds of households now include either two working parents or are headed by a single custodial parent who works -- meaning that most children home during summer days aren't in the care of their parents. For middle- and upper-income families, students are often enrolled in educationally enriching summer camps and programs and have access to books and libraries, computers and trips to museums and concerts.

For less advantaged students, unsupervised settings with little or no academic content are more common -- with predictable setbacks in their academic progress.

Public-charter schools offer a glimpse of the potential impact of lengthening the school year. High performing urban charter schools almost uniformly offer longer school years to the disadvantaged students they serve, much to their benefit. These schools often post proficiency rates of 90 percent or more in mathematics, science and English.

The state Board of Regents last year authorized the two Brighter Choice Charter Schools in Albany to become the first New York public schools to move to a year-round school calendar.

The move is already starting to pay dividends. This year was the first year that Brighter Choice (which *only* admits economically disadvantaged students) posted 100 percent proficiency rates in math.

Brighter Choice had already posted the highest math scores in Albany for three years in a row, but the move to year-round schooling is clearly allowing it to move from "good to great." The extra time offered by a year-round calendar also allows these schools to provide more extensive liberal-arts offerings, academic projects and field trips.

New York has moved toward universal pre-K to begin addressing the early-year gaps disadvantaged children face. But that's not enough. To prevent disadvantaged students from sliding further behind throughout their school years, the best answer might be: No more "school's out for summer."

*Thomas W. Carroll is president of the Foundation for Education Reform & Accountability and chairman of the Brighter Choice Foundation.*



## NATURE NOTES ~ Burrowing Beetles

Posted by [Interactive Desk](#) on Aug 05 2009, 10:10 AM

When my wife went to bring in the laundry after dark, she called me to identify a two-inch-long beetle that was crawling on a shirt. It was a male stag beetle (*Lucanus capreolus*) with jaws almost 1/3-inch long.

It looked dangerous, but the jaws are used for sexual display rather than eating. She was amazed at the size of this beetle and asked me why we don't see its young anywhere. I told her it is because they burrow into and feed on decomposing trees and stumps.

### Types of Burrowing Habits

Many beetle larvae and some adults burrow and are rarely seen unless one purposefully goes looking for them. These beetles burrow underground, in punky wood, bore into trees, burrow beneath the bark of trees, bore into the stems of herbs, or produce galls.

Carnivorous ground dwellers, such as found in the family Carabidae, may be monochromatic like the ground beetles that can be found beneath logs and rocks as both larvae and adults. These feed on many species of injurious pests and should be returned to the soil without injury when found. The larvae of the brightly colored caterpillar hunters feed below ground, while the adults comb foliage after dark searching for caterpillars and many pest insects.

The herbivorous beetles, such as click beetle wireworms and scarab grubs, are among the most destructive crop pests. They eat seeds, cut off roots and stems, and bore holes in larger stems, roots, and tubers. Adult click beetles also feed on plant materials, but are less destructive than the larvae.

Most lawn grubs are scarab beetle larvae that were introduced from Asia and Europe: Japanese beetles (*Popillia japonica*), Oriental beetles (*Exomala orientalis*), Asian garden beetles (*Melolontha castanea*), and European chafers (*Rhizotrogus majalis*). While underground larvae eat plant and grass roots—sometimes producing bald spots in otherwise well manicured lawns, the adults eat pollen, nectar, leaves, and stems—often becoming pests as they damage flowers and defoliate entire plants.

### Punky Wood Feeders

The stag beetles and bess beetles (*Odontotaenius disjunctus*) lay their eggs in punky wood of logs or stumps. The larvae are grub-like and take several years to grow to full size, which could be as long as two and a half inches and a half inch in diameter. After pupating over their last winter, the adults emerge in spring or summer, mate, and reproduce. Adults often feed on plant saps and fruits.

### Tree Borers

Long-horned beetles of the family Cerambycidae produce flattened grubs that bore through live or dead trees, eating the wood, and riddling it with their tunnels. There are many native wood-boring beetles, but the recently introduced Asian long-horned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) is extremely aggressive, attacking and killing trees in residential neighborhoods as well as forests. New York City has quarantined several portions of the city by requiring that wood cut in these areas be burned, thus restricting the spread of the beetle larvae.



## **Bark Borers**

Many beetle species bore beneath the bark of trees leaving tunnels filled with frass (their \*\*\*) in place of the live cambium that produces new bark. These beetles damage the trees' ability to grow and expose their living tissues to bacterial and fungal infections. The elm bark beetles (*Scolytus multistriatus* and *Hylurgopinus rufipes*) transmit the fungi (*Ophiostoma ulmi* and *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*) causing Dutch elm disease. Our Southern pines are attacked by at least six species of bark beetles that damage the phloem of the plant and also transmit a blue wood fungus that destroys the crown of the trees.

## **Stem Borers and Gall Makers**

The omnivorous larvae of most tumbling flower beetles of the family Mordellidae bore into stems and eat the pith and other larvae they may encounter. Most of the gall-making beetles are of little importance in the world. Some of the Mordellidae and beetles of a few related families make galls, and those that do produce galls do not damage the host plants to any large degree. The beetles that live inside stems and enter galls made by other insects often eat their hosts as well as utilize the gall itself for food. Many of these beetle larvae are parasitized by wasp larvae that help control gall makers and stem borers.

Below ground as above it, insects play out their ecological roles in the same fashions, with the same needs, food choices, predators, and parasites. They are just hidden from the casual observer. There's a whole world out there and we often overlook most of it.

*I am leading a walk to identify plants and animals along the Niantic Boardwalk on Saturday, Aug. 15. E-mail me for directions and time. This walk will be limited to 20 people.*

*Albert Burchsted is a field biologist recently retired from the College of Staten Island, part of the City University of New York. He lives in Niantic and can be reached via e-mail at [al.burchsted@gmail.com](mailto:al.burchsted@gmail.com).*



[About Interactive Desk](#)

The Interactive Desk is staffed by Melissa Babcock (Desk Chief) and Joyce Conlon (Desk Coordinator).

# Challenger assails councilman

Rose hits Mitchell for opposing a bill making it a crime to block health clinics, harass patients

By TOM WRÓBLESKI  
ADVANCE POLITICAL EDITOR

With about a month to go until the primary, Democrat Debi Rose yesterday lambasted City Councilman Kenneth Mitchell for voting against a bill that makes it a crime to block the entrance to a health clinic or follow and harass patients there.

"It meant that he did not think that the constituents who utilize those services should be safe to be able to access those services unfettered," Ms. Rose said outside Bayley Seton Hospital, Clifton, where she also touted her recent endorsement from Local 1199 SEIU, which represents health-care workers.

Ms. Rose and Mitchell are



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE FILE PHOTO

Activist Debi Rose, running against Councilman Kenneth Mitchell and civil engineer Rajiv Gowda in the Democratic primary Sept. 15, trumpeted her backing by health-care workers.

squaring off in a Sept. 15 Democratic primary for the North Shore seat, a campaign that also includes Rajiv Gowda.

The "Clinic Access" bill mandates that anti-abortion protesters observe a 15-foot "buffer" around health clinics

and keep entrances and access to health care facilities clear.

Critics claim the stricter measures will curtail free speech. The bill passed the Council, with all three Staten Island councilmembers voting against it.

Mitchell "has actually voted to reduce protection for women, specifically, [those] trying to access health care," Ms. Rose said. "That's not the direction we need to take."

Mitchell, a former legal assistant in Staten Island Civil Court, contended yesterday that the bill was "legally vague and ultimately unenforceable."

Said Mitchell: "I, in good conscience, could not vote for a bill that I believe will ultimately not pass legal muster. As a supporter of women's reproductive rights, I would vote for a revised, legally enforceable version of this bill should it come before the Council in the future."

Standing with about two dozen supporters outside Bayley Seton, Ms. Rose also decried the lack of a city hospital on the Island, and said the city Health and Hospitals Corp. needs to spend more money here, especially when it comes to treating the poor and uninsured.

Ms. Rose also questioned those who say that the Island doesn't need a new, stand-alone hospital because the borough has enough empty beds available to serve the population.

"Maybe we need to look at that [formula]," she said. "The formula says we have enough beds, but you can't sell that to anybody on Staten Island when you have to stay in the emergency room for 13 hours or more waiting for a bed, regardless of your condition. Maybe the formula needs to be revisited."

Tom Wroblewski is the Advance political editor. Read his political blog at <http://blog.silive.com/politics>.

## NATURE NOTES ~ Dragonfly Days

Posted by [Interactive Desk](#) on Aug 13 2009, 12:11 PM

By Albert Burchsted:

Picture this without laughing if you can. On the evening of Aug. 1, there were between 30 and 40 adults of ages between 20 and 80 walking, running, and twisting around in a quarter acre clearing in the woods, swinging insect nets over their heads. Most of the attempts resulted in empty nets.

Similar events involving groups of four to 10 people had occurred during the day along lakesides and in meadows in several towns across southeastern New Hampshire. These people were not novices. Many have been studying their prey for three to five decades. Yet, the frequency of capture was less than five percent, and most of the animals captured were released without injury.

I spent a long weekend catching and identifying odonates, dragonflies, and damselflies, with the Dragonfly Society of the Americas. We were participating in the Northeast Regional Odonate Survey in Southeastern New Hampshire, trying to increase the known number of species to 75 for several towns. We only reached that level for one of the towns, and raised several other towns' counts.

As there are just under 150 species of odonates known for New Hampshire, 75 represents more than one half of the state's known odonates. Connecticut's inventory of known odonate species is 153. New London county has 119 known species of dragonflies and damselflies—just over 80 percent of Connecticut's total, making New London the most completely surveyed county in the state. Yet the known number of dragonflies and damselflies in any town in New London county falls far short of that number.

As I have not spent much time studying odonates, I expected my role in the survey to be minimal. Yet, of the 40 or so species of odonates that my group of four collected, three species that I captured were first records for that town, as well as for me. By the end of the weekend, my group had captured seven species new to the towns we were working in and 14 species that were new to me.

### **Why Do People Hunt Odonates?**

There are hundreds of reasons people chase and catch dragonflies.

Many are beautiful—odonates are sometimes called the jewels of the insect world.

We do not yet know how many species there are, and two probable new species in the Northeast are currently being examined. One of these has widespread distribution, the other is found only along a short stretch of the Hudson River in the state of New York.

Other reasons why folks examine dragonflies is odonate distribution changes in different weathers and climates—some require cool weather, others need warmer days.

Also the presence of dragonfly larvae indicates habitat quality—pollution, predators, and filling in wetlands often eradicate them. As insect hunters, reductions of dragonflies increases the probability of transmitting mosquito-vectored diseases.

Capturing dragonflies is a challenge—almost impossible to do while they are hunting; and some are extremely arduous to identify as their colors are variable and usually change dramatically within a week of emerging, seemingly insignificant differences distinguish some species.

Just finding some dragonflies may be challenging—the names of bog hunters, stream cruisers, the pine barrens bluet, and seaside dragonlet describes their preferred habitats.

### **What Good Are Dragonflies?**

Adult dragonflies and damselflies are among the best aerial insect predators during the day (replaced by bats at night). Swallows and swifts may capture as many insects (including many dragonflies), but these birds do not have the agility and finesse of the odonates. Dragonflies often stop in mid flight, drop their tail, and fly 90 degrees upward to capture a mosquito.

Larval dragonflies (nymphs) live underwater and breathe via gills. They are equipped with a hinged lower jaw that shoots out, pierces a small fish, tadpole, or other insect, and pulls it back to be eaten. Some lie in ambush, others crawl or swim through submerged vegetation. Odonates may stay in the nymphal stage from two months to five or six years depending on water temperatures and the size of the adult, feeding their entire life, even under the ice in winter.

### **How Dangerous Are Dragonflies?**

Although a successful hunt spells death to the unwary insect, and despite being called darning needles, devil's needle, snake doctor (because people thought they brought snakes back to life) and other dangerous sounding names, dragonflies pose no problems to humans. They do not sew your lips or eyelids shut, sting (even though they curl their tails around as if to do so, their "stinger" is used to hold the female while mating), or even bite humans. They attempt to bite if a finger is pushed into their mouths. The bite of the largest is a slight pinch that feels like someone scratching the surface of your skin. Large nymphs pinch only slightly harder.

You can learn more about dragonflies at <http://www.dragonflies.org/faq.htm#faq5>, and I have posted more pictures of them at [http://picasaweb.google.com/al.burchsted/Dragonfly\\_Days#](http://picasaweb.google.com/al.burchsted/Dragonfly_Days#). I will be leading a walk to look at dragonflies and butterflies with the East Lyme Library on Saturday, Sept. 26. Sign up with Lisa Timothy at the library (860-739-6926) or at [ltimothy@ely.lioninc.org](mailto:ltimothy@ely.lioninc.org).

*Albert Burchsted is a field biologist recently retired from the College of Staten Island, part of the City University of New York. He lives in Niantic and can be reached via e-mail at [al.burchsted@gmail.com](mailto:al.burchsted@gmail.com)*



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## ARRIVALS

### Bloomberg's resurrected panel is a mix of old and new

Posted By [Maura Walz](#) On August 14, 2009 @ 7:45 pm In [Newsroom](#) | [2 Comments](#)

The citywide board that became a hotly-debated issue in the fight over mayoral control is back with a mixture of old and new faces.

Mayor Bloomberg [announced](#) <sup>[1]</sup> his eight appointees to the Panel for Educational Policy on WOR Radio's The John Gambling Show this morning. Of the people he named to the board, four will return to their previous positions, while the other four will join the panel for the first time.

Bloomberg said that the new panel will complete the process of restoring mayoral control. "It is the last step in re-establishing the school governance that has led to all of these improvements over the past seven years," he told Gambling.

The newly-formed panel will not be an exact replica of the previous one, but the changes are more modest than some had hoped. Going into this summer's school governance fight, critics who charged that the PEP was little more than a rubber stamp for the mayor's policies had hoped to give members fixed terms and to prevent the mayor from appointing the majority of its members. Though neither of those changes happened, the new panel will have some [increased oversight](#) <sup>[2]</sup> of things like contracts and school utilization.

The mayor's appointees have close ties to his administration. One new PEP member, Gitte Peng, spent five years as a senior education policy adviser to Deputy Mayor for Education Dennis Walcott. Peng helped craft the original school governance legislation that consolidated the mayor's control of the schools.

Walcott briefly served as president of the Board of Education this summer before mayoral control was reauthorized. Bloomberg said today that Peng's appointment would permit Walcott's presence "live on" at the board.

Obligated by the new law to appoint two public school parents, the mayor named [Linda Lausell Bryant](#) <sup>[3]</sup> and [Joe Chan](#) <sup>[4]</sup>. Bryant heads Inwood House, a family support center that has contracted with the city's Department of Education to work with pregnant students.

Chan was formerly a policy advisor to Deputy Mayor Daniel L. Doctoroff and more recently was appointed by the administration to head a council on the redevelopment of downtown Brooklyn.

Rounding out the new additions is [Tomas Morales](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, president of the College of Staten Island. Morales "looks forward to working with his fellow appointees, each of whom are respected leaders in their fields," a spokesperson for the college wrote in a statement.

Though the mayor's office did not offer reasons for previous board members' decisions not to return, at least two seats were vacated by former appointees who are barred from the panel by the new law. One is Joel Klein who, as chancellor of the city's schools, can only be an ex-officio, non-voting participant.

PEP members can no longer be employed by a board or agency where the mayor has the majority of appointees, a rule that may have [excluded](#) <sup>[6]</sup> former panel member Alan Aviles, who is president and CEO of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation.

Bloomberg also replaced panel members Dr. Edison Jackson and Marita Regan. Jackson [announced his resignation](#) <sup>[6]</sup> in June, just before the last meeting of the panel before mayoral control lapsed.

Spokesmen for Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. and Queens Borough President Helen Marshall both said that they will reappoint Anna Santos and Dmytro Fedkowski, respectively, to the panel.

They will join Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's appointee, Patrick Sullivan, who was [re-named to the panel](#) <sup>[2]</sup> earlier this week.

A spokesman for Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz said the president is still interviewing candidates for the position and hoped to announce a decision before the school year begins.

A DOE official said he did not know when the panel would officially reconvene.

The mayor's new appointees did not return calls for comment today.

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URL to article: <http://gothamschools.org/2009/08/14/bloombergs-resurrected-panel-is-a-mix-of-old-and-new/>

URLs in this post:

[1] announced: [http://www.wor710.com/topic/play\\_window.php?audioType=Episode&audioId=3950578](http://www.wor710.com/topic/play_window.php?audioType=Episode&audioId=3950578)

[2] increased oversight: <http://gothamschools.org/2009/08/11/back-from-the-recent-past-citywide-panel-gets-first-member/>

[3] Linda Lausell Bryant: <http://www.inwoodhouse.com/about.html>

[4] Joe Chan: <http://mycrains.crainsnewyork.com/40under40/profiles/2008/10089>

[5] Tomas Morales: <http://www.nysun.com/new-york/from-the-south-bronx-to-staten-island-college/62733/>

[6] excluded: <http://gothamschools.org/2009/06/23/one-pep-member-resigns-assembly-bill-could-boot-another/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PR- 378-09**

**August 14, 2009**

**MAYOR BLOOMBERG APPOINTS EIGHT MEMBERS TO THE NEW YORK CITY PANEL FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today appointed eight members to the Panel for Educational Policy, which was re-established when Governor Paterson signed the New York City school governance legislation into law on Tuesday. The eight members, whom the Mayor announced on his weekly Friday morning radio show on WOR Radio, are Philip A. Berry, Linda Lausell Bryant, Joe Chan, David Chang, Tino Hernandez, Richard L. Menschel, Tomás D. Morales, and Gitte Peng. The Panel's primary responsibilities include approving educational policies proposed by the Chancellor as well as the Department of Education's budget, the school capital plan, certain contracts, labor agreements, proposals for closing failing schools and other significant changes in how schools are utilized. Each Borough President has one appointee to the Panel, and members will elect a chair at the first meeting. The Panel previously existed from 2002 until the school governance legislation lapsed earlier this summer.

"The work of the Panel for Educational Policy is critical to maintaining the bold reforms we have initiated since gaining control of schools in 2002, and to making sure that each student has access to a quality public school education," said Mayor Bloomberg. "This marks the last step in re-establishing the school governance that has allowed our schools and students to make so much progress over the last seven years and will allow us to keep working to improve our schools."

The eight members appointed by Mayor Bloomberg are:

**Philip A. Berry** is the President of the management consulting firm Philip Berry Associates LLC and the Vice Chairman of CUNY Board of Trustees. He brings more than 25 years of experience in human resources management to a school system with more than 136,000 employees. Berry previously served in a variety of human resources positions at Colgate-Palmolive, including Vice President, Global Workplace Initiatives. Prior to that, Berry worked in human resources at Proctor & Gamble, Digital Equipment, and the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority. He was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York by Governor Pataki in 2006, and Governor Spitzer appointed him Vice-Chairman in 2007. A product of the New York City public school system, Berry attended Manhattan Community College and received his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Queens College. Berry also earned a Masters of Business Administration from Xavier University and a Masters of



Social Work from Columbia University. Berry served on the first Panel for Educational Policy from 2002 through 2009.

**Linda Lausell Bryant**, who has a child in a public middle school in Brooklyn, is the Executive Director of Inwood House, a nationally-recognized innovator in teen pregnancy prevention, youth development and family support programs. She manages and directs the nonprofit's day-to-day operations, including the 36-bed maternity residence and other programs helping some 4,000 youth annually. Bryant was previously Associate Commissioner in the Office of Youth Development at the New York City Administration for Children's Services, where she developed initiatives and partnerships for strengthening child welfare practice with adolescents to improve educational, social, and economic and health outcomes. A cum laude graduate of Pace University, Bryant has a Masters of Social Work from Hunter College, and has completed coursework toward a Ph.D. in Clinical Social Work at New York University.

**Joe Chan**, who has one child in a public Pre-K program in Brooklyn and a second in a Brooklyn public elementary school, was appointed as the first President of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership in September 2006. As President of the Partnership, Chan works closely with City agencies, elected officials, businesses, cultural organizations, and the real estate industry to spur new and continued investment in Downtown Brooklyn's growth. Chan oversees the revitalization of Downtown Brooklyn's core including the development of new office and retail space, mixed-income housing, cultural facilities and public open space and streetscape improvements. He previously served as Senior Policy Advisor to New York City Deputy Mayor Daniel L. Doctoroff and was his liaison for Brooklyn and long-term strategic land use and infrastructure planning issues. Prior to serving in City Hall, Chan had been Director of Real Estate and Business Services for the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce and Director of Economic Development for the Local Development Corporation of East New York. A magna cum laude graduate of New York University's Metropolitan Studies Program, Chan also holds a Masters degree in Urban Planning from NYU's Wagner School of Public Service. He also taught public school in the South Bronx for three years as part of the Teach for America Program.

**David C. Chang**, the Chancellor of the Polytechnic Institute of New York University, is an internationally-recognized scholar in the fields of engineering, science, and electromagnetics. As President of Polytechnic University in Brooklyn prior to its reorganization, Chang increased enrollment by sixty percent. He is a member of the Mayor's Committee on Appointments and served as a member of Mayor Bloomberg's Transition Team. Chang, who also teaches Electrical Engineering at Polytechnic, earned his Ph.D. in Applied Physics from Harvard University. Chang served on the first Panel for Educational Policy from 2002 through 2009.

**Tino Hernandez** is President and Chief Executive Officer of Samaritan Village, Inc. one of the largest nonprofit providers and community-based, substance abuse treatment services in New York. He is responsible for the administration and oversight of the Agency's ten facilities which include drug-free residential, methadone-to-abstinence and out-patient modalities, as well as homeless and senior services. From 2001 to 2008, he served as Chairman of the New York



City Housing Authority. Prior to his service at NYCHA, Hernandez was Commissioner of the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Mayor for Education and Human Services, and Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Department of Homeless Services. A licensed social worker, Hernandez earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Adelphi University in 1986, and holds a Masters of Social Work from SUNY Albany's Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy. Hernandez served on the first Panel for Educational Policy from 2004 through 2009.

**Richard L. Menschel** is Senior Director of Goldman Sachs, a firm he joined in 1959. He is Director and President of the Charina Endowment Fund, a member of the Dean's Council at the Harvard School of Public Health, Chairman Emeritus of the Board of Trustees for the Hospital for Special Surgery, and a Vice President and Trustee of the Morgan Library & Museum. He has also served as Co-Chairman of New York City's 1977 Transitional Government Search Panel, Director and Treasurer of the Fund for Public Schools, among many other positions. Menschel earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Syracuse University and an MBA from the Harvard Graduate School of Business. Menschel served on the first Panel for Educational Policy from 2002 through 2009.

**Tomás D. Morales** was appointed by the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York to serve as the third President of the College of Staten Island in June of 2007. An educator and administrative leader in higher education for over 32 years, Morales is one of the few higher education administrators in the United States who have held senior administrative positions at the three largest public university systems in the nation: the California State University system, the State University of New York, and the City University of New York. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in History (Secondary Education) cum laude from the State University of New York at New Paltz, and earned his MS and Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Policy Studies from the State University of New York at Albany.

**Gitte Peng**, a new mother and an independent documentary filmmaker and field producer for Better Than Fiction Productions, served for five years as the Senior Education Policy Advisor to Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott. There she played a lead role in crafting and implementing the school governance reform legislation establishing mayoral control of the schools, advised on all issues of education policy and reform, and developed and oversaw education strategies and initiatives throughout the system. Previously, she directed parent engagement efforts and the support of School Leadership Teams at the New York City Board of Education's Chancellor's District, a district of low-performing schools. Peng graduated from Yale College and Yale Law School, where she taught law to high school students as co-director of the Street Law project, and helped to found the Amistad Academy charter school.

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**MEDIA CONTACT:** Gh...@YgYf...#8Uk b`K U`\_Yf...f&%&L'+, , !&- ) ,`

## Bloomberg appoints College of Staten Island president to education panel

Posted by [nrizzi](#) August 14, 2009 10:09AM



Advance file photo/Hilton FloresDr. Tomas Morales, president of the College of Staten Island, was appointed by Mayor Bloomberg to an education panel today.

The president of the College of Staten Island has been appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to a panel on education policy.

Dr. Tomas Morales, who became president of CSI in June 2007, was one of eight members appointed to the Panel for Educational Policy, which was re-established Tuesday after Gov. David Paterson signed the New York City school governance legislation into law.

The panel's primary responsibilities include approving educational policies proposed by the chancellor as well as the Department of Education's budget, the school capital plan, certain contracts, labor agreements and proposals for closing failing schools.

It existed from 2002 to last summer.

Each borough president picked one member and the names were announced this morning on Mayor Bloomberg's radio show. At their first meeting, members will elect a chair.

The other appointees are Philip Barry, Linda Lausell Bryant, Joe Chan, David Chang, Tino Hernadez, Richard Menschel and Gittie Peng.



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08/15/2009 01:15 PM

## **College Of S.I. President Joins City Education Panel**

By: Mara Montalbano

**NY1 VIDEO:** Dr. Tomas Morales, the president of the College of Staten Island, is one of eight people appointed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg to serve on the city's Panel for Education Policy.

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## SCHOOL BOSS BLOOMY FLEXES POLICY MUSCLE

By YOAV GONEN, EDUCATION REPORTER

*August 15, 2009 --*

Mayor Bloomberg announced his eight appointments to the 13-member Panel for Educational Policy yesterday -- a board whose composition was at the heart of the debate over renewing mayoral control of the schools system.

The panel is charged with approving school budgets, construction, contracts and other public-school issues.

The mayor's proposal this week to abolish the social promotion of students in the fourth and sixth grades, for example, must go before the panel for a vote.

A number of critics sought fixed terms for board members in order to give them greater freedom from the sway of City Hall. But the mayor argued and convinced the Legislature that such a move would dilute his oversight to the point of irrelevance.

"The work of the Panel for Educational Policy is critical to maintaining the bold reforms we have initiated since gaining control of schools in 2002," said Bloomberg, who announced the appointments during his weekly radio show.

Changes to the school governance law now require two of the mayor's panel picks to be public-school parents and no longer grant the schools chancellor a vote.

Newly appointed members were: public-school mom Linda Bryant, director of a family services nonprofit; public-school dad Joe Chan, an urban planner and former teacher; Tomas Morales, president of the College of Staten Island; and Gitte Peng, a former City Hall education policy adviser.

Reappointed were: businessman Philip Berry, vice chairman of the CUNY board of trustees; David Chang, chancellor of the newly merged Polytechnic Institute of New York University; former city Housing Authority chairman Tino Hernandez; and Goldman Sachs executive Richard Menschel.

Of the five borough president appointees, three members have already been tapped to stay on: Patrick Sullivan in Manhattan, Joan Correale in Staten Island and Dmytro Fedkowskyj in Queens.

The Department of Education is planning to release a report on the effects of social promotion on the city's third- and fifth-graders, conducted by the RAND Corp., before the policy committee votes.

In recent years, social promotion was ended for seventh- and eighth-graders.



## **Court Expected to Send Runaway Teen Home Despite Muslim Honor Killing Fears**

Updated: Friday, 21 Aug 2009, 3:46 AM CDT  
Published : Thursday, 20 Aug 2009, 4:46 PM CDT

A 17-year-old girl who fled to Florida after converting from Islam to Christianity will almost certainly be forced to return home to Ohio, experts say -- despite her fears that she will become the victim of an honor killing for abandoning her parents' faith.

Rifqa Bary, who hitchhiked to an Ohio bus station earlier this month and took a charter bus to Orlando, remains in protective custody with Florida's Department of Children and Families. A judge is expected to rule Friday on the jurisdiction of the case, but several legal experts contacted by FOXNews.com say the girl is bound to be sent back to Ohio.

"She'll be returned to the original jurisdiction," said Katherine Hunt Federle, professor of law and director of the Justice for Children Project at Ohio State University's Moritz College of Law.

"She probably doesn't have a lot of options other than to return home."

Bary, a native of Sri Lanka who turned 17 earlier this month, is neither a U.S. citizen nor a resident of Florida, so if her parents want her returned to their home in New Albany, Ohio, that likely will occur, experts said.

"She's living and residing in Ohio," Federle said. "Typically, what happens is, if a child runs away and goes to another jurisdiction, she'll be returned to the original jurisdiction."

If she is sent back to Ohio, Bary will not be allowed to live on her own, since the state does not have an emancipation statute.

Florida has such a statute, but it requires parental consent, according to Fred Silberberg, a family law expert based in California who is familiar with the case.

Given that legal hurdle, Bary likely will be returned to Ohio, where authorities could intervene if they believe there is a threat or a basis to act, Silberberg said.

Rifqa fled to Florida after her parents, Mohamed and Aysha Bary, learned that she was baptized earlier this year without their knowledge. The parents reported her missing to Columbus Police on July 19. Weeks later, using cell phone and computer records, police tracked the girl to the Rev. Blake Lorenz, pastor of the Orlando-based Global Revolution Church. FOXNews.com's calls to Lorenz were not returned.

In an emotional six-minute interview with WFTV in Florida, Rifqa, who met Lorenz through an online Facebook group, said she expects to be killed if she is forced to return to Ohio.

"If I had stayed in Ohio, I wouldn't be alive," she said. "In 150 generations in family, no one has known Jesus. I am the first — imagine the honor in killing me."

"There is great honor in that, because if they love Allah more than me, they have to do it. It's in the Koran," said in the interview, which has been posted on [YouTube](#).

Rifqa, who is seen wearing a large diamond cross during the interview, said she had to hide her Bible "for years," and she repeatedly "snuck out" to attend Christian prayer meetings. She referred to previous victims of so-called honor killings, in which young Muslim women were murdered for bringing dishonor to their families.

"They love God more than me, they have to do this," Bary told WFTV. "I'm fighting for my life. You guys don't understand. ... I want to worship Jesus freely, that's what I want. I don't want to die."

Contacted by FOXNews.com, Mohamed Bary said he has no intentions of harming his daughter.

"I love my daughter and I want her to come back to the family," he said, declining further comment.

The Barys reportedly emigrated from Sri Lanka in 2000 to seek medical treatment for Rifqa, who lost the sight in her right eye following an accident at home.

Barbra Joyner, Mohamed Bary's lawyer, declined to comment on Rifqa's interview with WFTV but said transferring the case back to Ohio will be in the "best interest" of the girl.

Craig McCarthy, an attorney for Aysha Bary, agreed that the case should be moved back to Ohio and added that the girl's mother is afraid for her safety.

"[Aysha Bary] has shifted to downright frightened, scared of what might confront her publicly on Friday," McCarthy told FOXNews.com. "She is scared for her family, of losing her daughter, of never knowing the truth of what happened and for her own safety."

McCarthy said Rifqa's account of how she traveled to Florida has "holes in it," but declined to elaborate. He also declined to respond to allegations that Bary's father abused the girl when he learned of her conversion to Christianity.

Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of the City University of New York, said she believes Bary will be in danger if she is sent back to her parents.

"Anyone who converts from Islam is considered an apostate, and apostasy is a capital crime," Chesler wrote FOXNews.com. "If she is returned to her family, if she is lucky, they will isolate her, beat her, threaten her, and if she is not 'persuaded' to return to Islam, they will kill her. They have no choice."

Chesler, who wrote "Are Honor Killings Simply Domestic Violence?" for Middle East Quarterly, said the tradition of such slayings is not fully understood by most Americans, including those in law enforcement.

"She escaped from her family's brutal tyranny and shamed her family further through public exposure," Chesler said. "Muslim girls and women are killed for far less."



## Court Expected to Send Runaway Teen Home Despite Muslim Honor Killing Fears

Friday , August 21, 2009

By Joshua Rhett Miller

**FOX NEWS**

A 17-year-old girl who fled to Florida after converting from Islam to Christianity will almost certainly be forced to return home to Ohio, experts say, despite her fears that she will become the victim of an honor killing for abandoning her parents' faith.

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In an emotional six-minute interview with WFTV in Florida, Rifqa, who met Lorenz through an online Facebook group, said she expects to be killed if she is forced to return to Ohio.

"If I had stayed in Ohio, I wouldn't be alive," she said. "In 150 generations in family, no one has known Jesus. I am the first — imagine the honor in killing me."

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Rifqa, who is seen wearing a large diamond cross during the interview, said she had to hide her Bible "for years," and she repeatedly "snuck out" to attend Christian prayer meetings. She referred to previous victims of so-called honor killings, in which young Muslim women were murdered for bringing dishonor to their families.

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"I love my daughter and I want her to come back to the family," he said, declining further comment.

The Barys reportedly emigrated from Sri Lanka in 2000 to seek medical treatment for Rifqa, who lost the sight in her right eye following an accident at home.

Barbra Joyner, Mohamed Bary's lawyer, declined to comment on Rifqa's interview with WFTV but said transferring the case back to Ohio will be in the "best interest" of the girl.

Craig McCarthy, an attorney for Aysha Bary, agreed that the case should be moved back to Ohio and added that the girl's mother is afraid for her safety.

"[Aysha Bary] has shifted to downright frightened, scared of what might confront her publicly on Friday," McCarthy told FOXNews.com. "She is scared for her family, of losing her daughter, of never knowing the truth of what happened and for her own safety."

McCarthy said Rifqa's account of how she traveled to Florida has "holes in it," but declined to elaborate. He also declined to respond to allegations that Bary's father abused the girl when he learned of her conversion to Christianity.

Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of the City University of New York, said she believes Bary will be in danger if she is sent back to her parents.

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## Runaway Christian Convert to Stay in Florida for Now, Judge Rules

Friday , August 21, 2009

### FOX NEWS

A 17-year-old runaway who claims she fled her Muslim family's home in Ohio because she feared becoming the victim of an "honor killing" will stay in Florida — temporarily — a judge ruled Friday.

Rifqa Bary, a Christian convert whose parents are Muslim immigrants from Sri Lanka, will remain in foster care in Florida until another hearing is held Sept. 3.

Rifqa fled to Florida after her parents, Mohamed and Aysha Bary, learned that she was baptized earlier this year without their knowledge. The parents reported her missing to Columbus, Ohio, Police on July 19. Weeks later, using cell phone and computer records, police tracked the girl to the Rev. Blake Lorenz, pastor of the Orlando-based Global Revolution Church.

Florida's Gov. Charlie Crist weighed in on the matter Friday with the following statement: "I am grateful to Circuit Judge Daniel Dawson for his decision to grant Fathima Rifqa Bary the right to remain in Florida. ... We will continue to fight to protect Rifqa's safety and wellbeing as we move forward."

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In an emotional six-minute interview with WFTV in Florida, Rifqa, who met Lorenz through an online Facebook group, said she expects to be killed if she is forced to return to Ohio.

"If I had stayed in Ohio, I wouldn't be alive," she said. "In 150 generations in family, no one has known Jesus. I am the first — imagine the honor in killing me."

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Rifqa, who is seen wearing a large diamond cross during the interview, said she had to hide her Bible "for years," and she repeatedly "snuck out" to attend Christian prayer meetings. She referred to previous victims of so-called honor killings, in which young Muslim women were murdered for bringing dishonor to their families.

"They love God more than me, they have to do this," Bary told WFTV. "I'm fighting for my life. You guys don't understand. ... I want to worship Jesus freely, that's what I want. I don't want to die."

Contacted by FOXNews.com, Rifqa's father Mohamed Bary said he has no intentions of harming his daughter.

"I love my daughter and I want her to come back to the family," he said, declining further comment.

If sent back to Ohio, Rifqa would not be allowed to live on her own, since the state does not have an emancipation statute.

The Barys reportedly emigrated from Sri Lanka in 2000 to seek medical treatment for Rifqa, who lost the sight in her right eye following an accident at home.

Barbra Joyner, Mohamed Bary's lawyer, declined to comment on Rifqa's interview with WFTV but said transferring the case

back to Ohio will be in the "best interest" of the girl.

Craig McCarthy, an attorney for Aysha Bary, agreed that the case should be moved back to Ohio and added that the girl's mother is afraid for her safety.

"[Aysha Bary] has shifted to downright frightened, scared of what might confront her publicly on Friday," McCarthy told FOXNews.com. "She is scared for her family, of losing her daughter, of never knowing the truth of what happened and for her own safety."

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*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

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## Christian Convert Update

POSTED BY TOM MCFEELY

Friday, August 21, 2009 12:40 PM

According to Fox News, it's almost certain that a 17-year-old Ohio girl who converted from Islam to Christianity will be sent home from Florida to her parents — despite the girl's fears **that her father intends to kill her** because of her apostasy from Islam.

Fathima Riqfa Bary, who fled to Florida in late July to obtain sanctuary in the home of a Christian pastor, is not a U.S. citizen or a resident of Florida.

**Reported Fox News,**

*Rifqa Bary, who hitchhiked to an Ohio bus station earlier this month and took a charter bus to Orlando, remains in protective custody with Florida's Department of Children and Families. A judge is expected to rule Friday on the jurisdiction of the case, but several legal experts contacted by FOXNews.com say the girl is bound to be sent back to Ohio.*

*"She'll be returned to the original jurisdiction," said Katherine Hunt Federle, professor of law and director of the Justice for Children Project at Ohio State University's Moritz College of Law.*

*"She probably doesn't have a lot of options other than to return home."*

A psychologist interviewed by Fox News said Bary's fears that she could be killed for her apostasy are well founded.

*Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of the City University of New York, said she believes Bary will be in danger if she is sent back to her parents.*

*"Anyone who converts from Islam is considered an apostate, and apostasy is a capital crime," Chesler wrote FOXNews.com. "If she is returned to her family, if she is lucky, they will isolate her, beat her, threaten her, and if she is not 'persuaded' to return to Islam, they will kill her. They have no choice."*

*Chesler, who wrote "Are Honor Killings Simply Domestic Violence?" for Middle East Quarterly, said the tradition of such slayings is not fully understood by most Americans, including those in law enforcement.*

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## [Hillary's Uphill Fight Against Sexual Violence](#)

Posted 8/22/2009 8:04 PM CDT

Hillary Clinton has arguably done more to combat sexual violence in Africa in her short time as Secretary of State than the entire U.N. has in the last decade. [Mrs. Clinton had this to say](#) about visiting the Congo and witnessing the aftermath of the brutality of life there:

While I was in the DRC, I had very frank discussions about sexual violence with President Kabila. I stressed that the perpetrators of these crimes, no matter who they are, must be prosecuted and punished. This is particularly important when they are in positions of authority, including members of the Congolese military, who have been allowed to commit these crimes with impunity.

There are lessons that people in the U.S. and the rest of the civilized world can learn simply from reading this single paragraph. We do not have to visit Africa and see the mauled and maimed women first-hand to realize that, whatever our differences politically, we really have a minimal number of problems to deal with in our lives and that it is our general adherence to the rule of law, with all of its compulsions and flaws, that creates the sense - and more than that, the reality - of security most westerners enjoy day in and day out. Yet even here freedom and safety is not universal. I'll discuss below the latest court case regarding the practice of Islamic honor killings.

While abroad, Mrs. Clinton had some good news to offer the women of the Congo:

The United States will stand with these brave people. This week I announced more than \$17 million in new funding to prevent and respond to gender and sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We will provide medical care, counseling, economic assistance and legal support. We will dedicate nearly \$3 million to recruit and train police officers to protect women and girls and to investigate sexual violence. We will send technology experts to help women and front-line workers report abuse using photographs and video and share information on treatment and legal options. And we will deploy a team of civilian experts, medical personnel and military engineers to assess how we can further assist survivors of sexual violence.

This is an achievement that deserves to be recognized. Unfortunately, \$17M will not go far in Africa and it will not go far enough to bring justice to the men who deserve its wrath.

Mrs. Clinton's struggle for funds and for achievements on the ground is, if she hopes to win it, just beginning. We should all wish her luck. Of all the billions of dollars the Democratic Congress is spending on their pet projects and will continue to spend, none of them are more deserving than these few.

Such a fight is necessarily an uphill battle, [as Riqba Bary seems almost certain to learn](#). Bary, who is 17 and a former Muslim, ran away from her Ohio home in fear of her life after embracing Christianity and being baptized. Now a court that surely must know better is apparently poised to force her to return to Ohio despite her desperate pleas to remain away from her parents.

Riqba's reason? She believes her parents will make her the latest victim of an Islamic honor killing.

"If I had stayed in Ohio, I wouldn't be alive," she said. "In 150 generations in family, no one has known Jesus. I am the first — imagine the honor in killing me.

"There is great honor in that, because if they love Allah more than me, they have to do it. It's in the Koran"

I'll leave the issue of Islamic theology aside for the moment to focus on the reality of Ms. Bary's situation, which is that women and girls who reject their Muslim faith to live as they see fit in their new homes are frequently the subjects of horrific forms of ritualized violence at the hands of the men in their lives.

(It is immaterial whether the revenge beatings, rapes, and murders conducted by their fathers, brothers, uncles, and friends are mandated by the Koran. The fact is that these misguided brutes believe that they are entirely justified in doing the worst possible things to women and girls who spurn their faith and their authority.

This pattern has been well established and documented by many sources, including [the PoliGazette.](#))

Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of the City University of New York ... said the tradition of such slayings is not fully understood by most Americans, including those in law enforcement.

That's wrong. Dead wrong. Western law enforcement personnel understand the problem clearly, as does every American capable of reading a newspaper. The issue is that the legal system lacks both the tools and the conviction to deal with this issue on the correct level, that of a defective sub-culture.

"She escaped from her family's brutal tyranny and shamed her family further through public exposure," Chesler said. "Muslim girls and women are killed for far less."

As are so many of the women in war-torn Africa. Hillary Clinton's mission there is one that deserves our full-fledged support. But we should also recognize that the same problem exists right here at home in the west.

The question is, what are you personally going to do about it?



## Runaway Christian Convert to Stay in Florida for Now, Judge Rules

Updated: Saturday, 22 Aug 2009, 11:46 PM CDT  
Published : Friday, 21 Aug 2009, 3:46 PM CDT

A 17-year-old runaway who claims she fled her Muslim family's home in Ohio because she feared becoming the victim of an "honor killing" will stay in Florida — temporarily — a judge ruled Friday.

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Florida's Gov. Charlie Crist weighed in on the matter Friday with the following statement: "I am grateful to Circuit Judge Daniel Dawson for his decision to grant Fathima Rifqa Bary the right to remain in Florida. ... We will continue to fight to protect Rifqa's safety and wellbeing as we move forward."

In an emotional six-minute interview with WFTV in Florida, Rifqa, who met Lorenz through an online Facebook group, said she expects to be killed if she is forced to return to Ohio.

"If I had stayed in Ohio, I wouldn't be alive," she said. "In 150 generations in family, no one has known Jesus. I am the first — imagine the honor in killing me."

"There is great honor in that, because if they love Allah more than me, they have to do it. It's in the Koran," said in the interview, which has been posted on [YouTube](#).

Rifqa, who is seen wearing a large diamond cross during the interview, said she had to hide her Bible "for years," and she repeatedly "snuck out" to attend Christian prayer meetings. She referred to previous victims of so-called honor killings, in which young Muslim women were murdered for bringing dishonor to their families.

"They love God more than me, they have to do this," Bary told WFTV. "I'm fighting for my life. You guys don't understand. ... I want to worship Jesus freely, that's what I want. I don't want to die."

Contacted by FOXNews.com, Rifqa's father Mohamed Bary said he has no intentions of harming his daughter.

"I love my daughter and I want her to come back to the family," he said, declining further comment.

If sent back to Ohio, Rifqa would not be allowed to live on her own, since the state does not have an emancipation statute.

The Barys reportedly emigrated from Sri Lanka in 2000 to seek medical treatment for Rifqa, who lost the sight in her right eye following an accident at home.

Barbra Joyner, Mohamed Bary's lawyer, declined to comment on Rifqa's interview with WFTV but said transferring the case back to Ohio will be in the "best interest" of the girl.

Craig McCarthy, an attorney for Aysha Bary, agreed that the case should be moved back to Ohio and added that the girl's mother is afraid for her safety.

"[Aysha Bary] has shifted to downright frightened, scared of what might confront her publicly on Friday," McCarthy told FOXNews.com. "She is scared for her family, of losing her daughter, of never knowing the truth of what happened and for her own safety."

McCarthy said Rifqa's account of how she traveled to Florida has "holes in it," but declined to elaborate. He also declined to respond to allegations that Bary's father abused the girl when he learned of her conversion to Christianity.

Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of the City University of New York, said she believes Bary will be in danger if she is sent back to her parents.

"Anyone who converts from Islam is considered an apostate, and apostasy is a capital crime," Chesler wrote FOXNews.com. "If she is returned to her family, if she is lucky, they will isolate her, beat her, threaten her, and if she is not 'persuaded' to return to Islam, they will kill her. They have no choice."

Chesler, who wrote "Are Honor Killings Simply Domestic Violence?" for Middle East Quarterly, said the tradition of such slayings is not fully understood by most Americans, including those in law enforcement.

"She escaped from her family's brutal tyranny and shamed her family further through public exposure," Chesler said. "Muslim girls and women are killed for far less."

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

## Runaway teen fears an honor killing in the USA

Will her family kill her as she claims her father promised? According to an August 21, 2009 article, "[Court Expected to Send Runaway Teen Home Despite Muslim Honor Killing Fears](#)," published online by Fox News, "a 17-year-old girl who fled to Florida after converting from Islam to Christianity will almost certainly be forced to return home to Ohio, experts say, despite her fears that she will become the victim of an honor killing for abandoning her parents' faith." Read the article, "[Are Honor Killings Simply Domestic Violence?: Middle East Quarterly](#)."

The article, "[Are Honor Killings Simply Domestic Violence?: Middle East Quarterly](#)" contains a lengthy table of names of women killed in the USA, Canada, and elsewhere, under the title of "honor killings" with some details of why they were killed and how honor killings differ from domestic violence. In domestic violence, usually, it's spontaneous, and one person is the perpetrator. With honor killings, it is planned rather than spontaneous, and the perpetrators may be numerous family members rather than an estranged ex-spouse.

Who believes the girl? It's her word against her parent's word. Will the law side with the parents or the teenager?

Recently, Rifqa Bary boarded a charter bus to Orlando, Florida. But she remains in protective custody with Florida's Department of Children and Families. She emphasizes that her family members have vowed to kill her for changing her religion without their permission. But a local judge is expected to rule Friday on the jurisdiction of the case. Several legal experts contacted by FOXNews.com say the girl is bound to be sent back to Ohio.

The problem is, if she is sent back home and her male (or female) relatives kill her, who will be responsible for her torture and death as she claims would happen?

"She'll be returned to the original jurisdiction," Katherine Hunt Federle, professor of law and director of the Justice for Children Project at Ohio State University's Moritz College of Law told Fox News. "She probably doesn't have a lot of options other than to return home."

Why can't she become a ward of the court and remain in a foster home or become an emancipated teen? She's 17. In one year, when she's 18, she'll be considered an adult who can rent an apartment on her own if she finds a job that pays enough or gets a full scholarship to a boarding school, but how likely is that to happen?

The teenager lives in America, but is a native of Sri Lanka who turned 17 earlier this month. She wasn't born here and is not a U.S. citizen. She has no residence in Florida.

The law is not protecting the 17-year old. If her parents want her returned to their home in New Albany, Ohio, that likely will occur, experts told Fox News.



"She's living and residing in Ohio,. But who's supporting and feeding her? Lawyers in Ohio emphasize that when a child runs away and goes to another jurisdiction, the law says the child will be returned to the original jurisdiction.

The problem is, when she is forced to return to Ohio, at age 17, the law says she won't be able to live on her own. The state of Ohio has no emancipation statute. But other state do have emancipation statues for 17-year-olds.

Florida's emancipation statue still requires parental consent. What is likely to happen is that Bary will be returned to Ohio. She has one law on her side, though. The police and social workers could intervene if they see evidence of a threat a basis to step in.

What the adults aren't looking at in this case is that Rifqa Bary ran away to Florida after her parents, Mohamed and Aysha Bary, learned that she was baptized in the Christian religion earlier this year without their knowledge.

The teenager claims if she is returned her parents will kill her. But her parents say that they only want her back and reported her missing to Columbus Police on July 19. Weeks later, using cell phone and computer records, police tracked the girl to the Rev. Blake Lorenz, pastor of the Orlando-based Global Revolution Church. FOXNews.com's calls to Lorenz were not returned.

If she's in hiding under the protection of her church pastor, why can't authorities let her stay there until she's 18, finished with high school, and working on her own or going away to college?

In an emotional six-minute interview with WFTV in Florida, Rifqa, who met Lorenz through an online Facebook group, said she expects to be killed if she is forced to return to Ohio.

"If I had stayed in Ohio, I wouldn't be alive," she told Fox News. "In 150 generations in family, no one has known Jesus. I am the first — imagine the honor in killing me.

She told Fox News, "There is great honor in that, because if they love Allah more than me, they have to do it. It's in the Koran," Rifqa told Fox News in the interview, which has been posted on [YouTube](#).

Rifqa Bary wears a cross and told Fox News that she had to hide her Christian Bible "for years." The teenager emphasized to Fox News that she had to attend Christian prayer meetings without the knowledge or consent of her family.

The young woman referred to numerous victims of honor killings in which young Muslim women are murdered if they bring dishonor to their families and made it clear in the news interview she seriously felt that her family would do the same to her if they caught her.

"They love God more than me, they have to do this," Bary told WFTV. "I'm fighting for my life. You guys don't understand. ... I want to worship Jesus freely, that's what I want. I don't want to die."

Her father absolutely denies he has any intention of harming his daughter. He and the family only want her back home. According to the article at FoxNews.com, "Mohamed Bary said he has no intentions of harming his daughter."

"I love my daughter and I want her to come back to the family," he told Fox News.com, declining further comment.

According to the article, "The Barys reportedly emigrated from Sri Lanka in 2000 to seek medical treatment for Rifqa, who lost the sight in her right eye following an accident at home."

Barbra Joyner, Mohamed Bary's lawyer, declined to comment on Rifqa's interview with WFTV but said transferring the case back to Ohio will be in the "best interest" of the girl. Craig McCarthy, is an attorney for Aysha Bary. According to Fox News.com, he "agreed that the case should be moved back to Ohio and added that the girl's mother is afraid for her safety."

This is a fight between a 17-year old girl's rights for her own safety and the rights of her parents. The lawyers are looking on the side of how her family feels losing a daughter who runs away. There's a question of whether the daughter's story is the way she says it is and what's happening to her where she's living for the time being. There's also the concern of the girl's protection and safety as a minor. And the family is concerned how she arrived in Florida, whether she's telling the entire story as it happened.

It's about believing the girl versus believing the parents. The problem is that she met the people she's with on Facebook, and that scares her family and the lawyers.

The issue is about how her family feels regarding her conversion to Christianity and the girl's safety. Who's there to really help the girl protect her rights and her safety?

Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of the City University of New York, told Fox News.com that she believes Bary will be in danger if she is sent back to her parents. Chesler noted that apostasy is a capital crime under Islam.

On the other hand, does it matter whether the family lives in the USA? Those who side with the girl worry that she will be isolated or harmed if the family no longer can persuade her to return to her religion. Who will protect the girl from possible violence? And is the family that says they love her willing to accept her unconditionally when and if she returns home? What do you think?

Will she be safe at home or harmed? Would you put your life in the hands of your family? Can she? There's no way to tell until it happens. It's a frightening possibility. But then again, why would the girl run away from a loving home in the first place, unless she really thought she'd be killed? And why would she think that if her family publicly noted they love her? Whatever the outcome, who's going to protect her wherever she is sent?

## Staten Island's McMahon in health care hot seat

Posted by [eadanna](#) August 23, 2009 08:05AM



Advance photos/Jan Somma-

HammelRep. Michael McMahon listens to a question during a recent meeting with the Advance Editorial Board and community members.

Rep. Michael McMahon (D-Staten Island/Brooklyn) said that the 1,017-page House health-care bill tries to do too much at once and needs to be "streamlined."

Speaking to the Advance Editorial Board and community members at the newspaper's Grasmere headquarters, McMahon said the package seeks to reform the insurance industry and Medicare while also offering Americans preventative care, all in a bid to drive down health-care costs.

*(A video of the Editorial Board meeting will be available on SILive.com and will be broadcast by Time Warner Cable on Channel 1111 at 5 p.m. tomorrow.)*

Saying that "there were some mistakes made" in crafting the legislation, McMahon said those issues should be tackled in three separate bills.

"It should be streamlined," he said. "It should be taken down and it should be a more direct and focused attempt to initiate change in the health-care system, not dramatically change it overnight."



"We do need a public plan to level the playing field with the insurance companies," said Rebecca Telzak, a member of Small Business United for Health Care.

McMahon said the House bill is "very much in flux," and that members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee will begin considering it when lawmakers return in Washington next month. Because of that fluidity, McMahon is still undecided on the bill.

"It would be less than honest for me to say where the final proposal is going to end up," McMahon said. He said there would likely be a "push on the House side to get something done by the end of the year." With health care continuing to be the hottest of hot-button issues in America, McMahon said he wouldn't hold a public town hall meeting on the subject until he's sure that cooler heads can prevail.

"What I won't do is hold a meeting where a very select few will try to hijack the proceeding because of some other agenda, or because they just want to yell and scream," he said.

McMahon has met with seniors and other groups about Obama's plan, but has not experienced the contentiousness seen at gatherings hosted by other House members.

He said that he would hold public forums when more information about the final bill emerges. Said McMahon, "When I feel that we can have the type of meeting that allows for both sides to be heard, we will do that."



"By doing this [the proposed public option] , they will bankrupt the private [insurance] industry," said Dr. Philip Otterbeck, endocrinologist at the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center.

But McMahon dismissed critics who say that the Obama plan will lead to "death panels" and rationed care for the elderly.

"People screaming about death panels and euthanasia," said McMahon. "That is so not in this bill." Displaying his own, marked-up copy of the hefty legislation, McMahon said that the bill allows seniors to consult with doctors about living wills and health-care proxies.

"Look it up," he said, adding that that section will likely be removed from the bill.

## **'PUBLIC OPTION' VS. CO-OPS**

The question for many is whether the federal government should form a new health-care system, the so-called "public option," to compete with private insurance companies in order to cut costs.

The alternative is health-care co-ops, which would consist of non-profit, member-owned groups that would negotiate pay rates with providers.

The Obama administration has sent mixed signals over the last week about which approach it favors, which McMahon acknowledged has caused "confusion."



"This is a very important subject for the country, [but] the whole debate has become polarized and politicized," said Patrick McDermott, chairman of the board of trustees of Staten Island University Hospital.

Patrick McDermott, chairman of the board of trustees of Staten Island University Hospital and a principal in McDermott & Thomas Associates, a Bloomfield-based employee benefits consulting firm, said that the public option could reduce hospital reimbursement payments, potentially costing hospitals hundreds of millions of dollars.

McMahon said the Obama administration shouldn't sell the public option as a way to increase competition. "You don't bring competition to the system by providing more government guarantees," said McMahon, who has said that co-ops should be looked at first.

But Richard Currie, a Rosebank resident and retired English professor at the College of Staten Island, said it would be a "serious loss" to remove the public option. Currie, who is covered by Medicare, said he would support tax hikes in order to fund the public option.

## **SMALL-BUSINESS FEARS**

While details differ in House and Senate bills, most employers would have to provide health insurance or contribute to their employees' cost of coverage. Some small businesses would be exempted.

Advance Editor Brian Laline raised the issue, and a community member attending the meeting said many Island companies are already choking on those costs.

"I'm scared our businesses will close" because of rising health-care premiums, said Rebecca Telzak, who was speaking on behalf of Sherriann Cumberbatch, a Port Richmond Laundromat owner who could not attend the session.

She said Ms. Cumberbatch, a leader in Small Business United for Health Care, a non-profit coalition, favors a public plan to compete with insurance companies. Such competition could force private insurers to slash employers' health-care costs, she said.



"I'm disappointed with the president waffling on the public option," said Richard Currie, a retired English professor from the College of Staten Island.

McMahon expressed doubts, saying that he was concerned about whether a public plan could stand on its own and pay for itself.

And McMahon said bill doesn't address a key issue for countless small businesses: Their obligation to offer health-care even if the employee's spouse has family coverage through another plan.

## **BANKRUPTING INSURERS?**

Dr. Philip Otterbeck, of Richmond, said he feared a government-run plan could drive private insurers out of the market, and could lead some seniors to be denied procedures because they are "too old or too sick."

Dr. Otterbeck, a specialist in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism, said Obama also needs to discuss tort reform, which includes capping medical malpractice awards, as a way to cut medical costs.

McMahon said he supports such talks, but noted that similar caps in Texas have not lowered costs there.

Meanwhile, he said the debate often overlooks a critical issue: Educating consumers about medical costs, coverage options and preventive care.

Currie, 67, said he recently underwent knee-replacement surgery, with Medicare covering nearly all of his costs.

"How did that sit on the hospital's ledger?" said McMahon, who noted that Medicare doesn't reimburse hospitals penny for penny, so the institution must make up the difference.

McMahon said a system that removes nearly the entire payment burden from consumers doesn't give them an incentive to take better care of themselves or choose less expensive -- but equally effective -- medical options.

"When you walk out of the hospital, you should know how much it cost, how much Medicare paid and how much you owe," said McMahon.

No matter what, McMahon said, U.S. health care needs to be reformed.

"How do we get a more efficient system that covers more people," he said, "and are we moving in that direction or not?"

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## Council candidate disputes former aide's claim she is owed money

By JUDY L. RANDALL  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Debi Rose, a candidate in next month's Democratic North Shore City Council primary, yesterday disputed a claim by a former campaign worker that she is owed money.

The worker, Caroline Cole, told the publication City Hall that Ms. Rose failed to pay her \$12,000 from September through December 2008 leading up to Ms. Rose's unsuccessful run in the February special election for the Council seat.

Ms. Rose said her campaign paid Ms. Cole "what she was owed." She said the matter is now before the city's Campaign Finance

Board.

Ms. Rose said Ms. Cole did "set-up work" for the campaign. She said she did not know how much Ms. Cole was paid or the precise period of time Ms. Cole worked for the campaign.

Ms. Rose referred specific questions to Steve Harrison, who she said was her campaign's attorney.

But Harrison said he is functioning in that role only on an informal basis, and had no direct knowledge of Ms. Cole's involvement in the prior Rose campaign.

Ms. Cole could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Judy L. Randall is a news reporter for the Advance. She may be reached at [randall@siadvance.com](mailto:randall@siadvance.com).



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE/JAN SOMMA-HAMMEL

Caroline Cole, right, with North Shore Democratic primary candidate Debi Rose, told the publication City Hall that Ms. Rose failed to pay her \$12,000 leading up to February's special Council election. The candidate denies the claim.



# The Bolivar Commercial

August 26, 2009

## OPINIONS

### Florida governor goes to bat for 17-year-old runaway

Tuesday, Aug 25, 2009

Florida Gov. Charlie Crist, his office inundated with e-mails, recently stood up for a 17-year-old runaway who fled her Muslim family's home in Ohio because she was afraid she might become the victim of "an honor killing."

Rifqa Bary, a Christian convert whose family immigrated to the United States from Sri Lanka, fled to Florida after her parents, Mohamed and Aysha Bary, found out that she was baptized earlier this year without their knowledge. The parents reported her missing to police in Columbus, Ohio, on July 19. Using cell phone and computer records, police tracked the girl down weeks later.

"Anyone who converts from Islam is considered an apostate, and apostasy is a capital crime" in the Muslim world, explained Dr. Phyllis Chesler, an author and professor of psychology at the Richmond College of City University in New York. Chesler said she believes Rifqa would be in danger if she were sent back to her parents.

In an tearful interview with WFTV in Florida, the teenager said she expected to be killed if she was forced to return to Ohio. The interview was picked up Friday morning by Fox News, which urged viewers to e-mail Gov. Crist and urge him not to extradite Rifqa back to Ohio.

Rifqa referred in the interview to previous victims of so-called "honor killings," in which young Muslim women were murdered for bringing dishonor to their families.

"I'm fighting for my life. You guys don't understand. ... I want to worship Jesus freely. That's what I want. I don't want to die."

Crist quickly weighed in. At 9:10 a.m. Friday his office replied to the sender of an e-mail that "Due to the volume of e-mails sent to the governor, there may be a delay in responding to your e-mail."

That was followed by another e-mail, sent out from Crist's office at 12:36 p.m. In it, Warren Davis, of the Office of Citizen Services, said that the governor is committed "to protecting Ms. Bary's health, safety and welfare," and that Crist directed George Sheldon, secretary of the Florida Department of Children and Family Services, to petition the court to place Rifqa in a shelter under protective custody by the department.

The court granted the request, sending Rifqa to a licensed foster care home, Davis said.

A third e-mail, which was also written by Davis, arrived at 6:42 p.m.

"Governor Crist today expressed his gratefulness to Circuit Judge Daniel Dawson for his decision to grant Fathima Rifqa Bary the right to remain in Florida," it said.

"In this case, the first and only priority of Governor Crist's administration is the safety and well-being of this child ... Please be assured Governor Crist will continue to fight to protect Ms. Rifqa Bary's safety and well-being as this case moves forward."

Rifqa's story is one of those "only in America" kind of stories.

Where else would a political leader of Crist's status go to bat for a runaway? And where else

## Campus community welcomes new faculty members

08-26-09

Misericordia University recently welcomed the addition of nine new fulltime faculty members to campus for the 2009-10 academic year during a special orientation program in the Catherine Evans McGowan Room of the Mary Kintz Bevevino Library.

In the College of Arts and Sciences, Evelyn Neunteufel, Ph.D., has been named an assistant professor of biology. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from St. John's University, N.Y., a Master of Science in animal science from Rutgers University and a doctorate degree in biology from The City University of New York. Dr. Neunteufel was an adjunct instructor at County College of Morris, N.J., and Kean College of N.J., and an instructor at the College of Staten Island, N.Y. Michael Turner, Ph.D., has been appointed as an assistant professor of religious studies. Dr. Turner has a Bachelor of Arts in religion and philosophy from Emory & Henry College, Va., a Master of Divinity from Emory University, Ga., and an MA in religious studies and doctorate in religion from Vanderbilt University, Tenn. He was a teaching fellow at Vanderbilt Divinity School and Vanderbilt University, and was a visiting professor at Volunteer State Community College, Tenn.

In the College of Health Sciences, Amy Gerney, O.T.D., has been named an assistant professor of occupational therapy. She holds a Bachelor of Science in occupational therapy and psychology from Utica College of Syracuse University, N.Y., a Master of Science in OT from Temple University College of Allied Health Professions, Pa., and a doctorate in OT from Jefferson University, Pa. Dr. Gerney has worked as an occupational therapist at Manor Care in Williamsport, Pa., and an assistant professor and program chair at Misericordia University. Michelle Hawkins has been appointed as an assistant professor of nursing. She holds a Bachelor of Science from Wilkes University, Pa., and an MSN from Misericordia University. She has served as a visiting assistant professor of nursing at Misericordia University and as a registered nurse at Moses Taylor Hospital, Scranton, Pa., and Wesley Village, Pittston, Pa.

Kathleen Scaler Scott, Ph.D., has been named an assistant professor of speech-language pathology. Dr. Scott holds a BA in speech-language-hearing sciences from Douglass College, Rutgers University, N.J., a Master of Science in communication disorders from Emerson College, Mass., and a doctorate in applied language and speech sciences from the University of Louisiana Lafayette, La. She has been a research assistant and clinical Supervisor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, La., and a speech-language pathologist and consultant in private practice. Elizabeth Senczakowicz has been named an assistant professor of nursing. She holds an AAS in nursing from Northampton Community College, a BSN from Misericordia University and an MSN from Drexel University, Pa. She recently served as director of surgical technology and as an adjunct faculty member at Luzerne County Community College and worked as a registered nurse at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center. Kathleen Sheikh has been appointed as an assistant professor of nursing. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Villanova University and a Master of Science degree in nursing from Misericordia University. She has been an assistant professor at Wilkes University and an adjunct professor at Misericordia University, and was employed as a nursing practitioner.

In the College of Professional Studies and Social Sciences, Sungick Min, Ph.D., has been named an assistant professor of business. Dr. Min holds a BA in international trade and history from Ajou University, South Korea, a Master of Science in sport administration from St. Thomas University, Fla., and a doctorate in sport administration from the University of Northern Colorado. He recently held several sport related positions for sports organizations and was a writer for The Korean Daily. Dr. Min has also been an adjunct faculty member at several institutions of higher education. John Sumansky, Ph.D., has been named professor of business and chair of the business department. He has a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Youngstown State University, Ohio, and received both his Master of Arts and doctorate degrees in economics from The Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Sumansky previously served as the chief planning officer at Misericordia University and is also the director for the Center for Economic and Entrepreneurship Education at MU.

### Caption:

Misericordia University recently welcomed the addition of 9 new full-time faculty members to campus for the 2009-10 academic year. Participating in a special orientation program, seated from left, are Kathleen Scaler Scott, Ph.D.; Michelle Hawkins, M.S.N.; and Evelyn Neunteufel, Ph.D.; standing, Elizabeth Senczakowicz, M.S.N.; Kathleen Sheikh, M.S.N.; Sungick Min, Ph.D.; Michael Turner, Ph.D.; and Amy Gerney, O.T.D. Missing from photo is John Sumansky, Ph.D.



**New faculty members pose for a picture.**

# Candidate calls for road-repair program

Rose, a Council hopeful, describes borough officials as 'complacent' about disruptions

By JUDY L. RANDALL  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Calling borough officials "complacent" about the daily disruption of constant road repairs, North Shore City Council candidate Debi Rose yesterday called for an "ongoing program" of filling potholes, milling and paving streets and the money to do it.

"The quality of our roadways is abysmal," said Ms. Rose, standing near the corner of Castleton and Oakland avenues in West Brighton, which has withstood months of being dug up and smoothed over, only to be dug up again, in part by utility companies doing work in the neighborhood.

With that in mind, Ms. Rose said the city has an obligation to ensure utilities and private contractors go through a rigorous permitting process and do the work

expeditiously with the least disruption to homeowners and businesses, especially where parking is often at a premium.

"You come home from the [Jersey] Shore, from upstate, from any of the other five boroughs, and nowhere are the roads in the condition they are here," she said.

The location Ms. Rose chose for her press conference is just down the block from the home of Councilman Kenneth Mitchell (D-North Shore). She called it a "classic example," noting the steel plates in the street which have become a permanent fixture. (Ms. Rose is in a Sept. 15 Democratic primary with Mitchell and education activist Rajiv Gowda. She finished second to Mitchell in a special election for the seat in February).

Disruptions caused by continuous work on Castleton Avenue and a long stretch of Richmond Terrace have been overshadowed by the never-ending reconstruction and ensuing traffic mess on Clove Road in Sunnyside, she said.

"You can pick almost any



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE FILE PHOTO

Debi Rose, a candidate in the Democratic primary for the North Shore Council seat, asserts the "quality of our roadways is abysmal."

street," said Ms. Rose. "It has fueled the tire industry on Staten Island, which is probably the only business that is booming. Our people have to drive to work, to school, to shop, because we have few mass transit alternatives. We don't want potholes patched with substandard material; we want a permanent solution."

She said the complacency of elected officials on this topic mirrors their "not being in tune with the real needs of the community, like overcrowding of our schools, a ferry terminal with no amenities and a waterfront with no waterfront development."

Judy L. Randall is news reporter for the Advance. She may be reached at [randall@siadvance.com](mailto:randall@siadvance.com).



Brooklyn Campus



What's New

### **Press Releases**

#### **"Believe in Yourself" Is the Theme of Convocation Day at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus, September 3**

*– The campus welcomes freshmen and launches voting registration effort*

Brooklyn, N.Y. – "Believe in Yourself... It Matters!" is the theme of Convocation Day—the celebration of the start of the academic year for freshmen at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus. Taking place on Thursday, September 3, the event's purpose is to give students a shared foundation of understanding with professors and fellow students that will last through their college years and beyond.

From 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., in the Campus's Arnold & Marie Schwartz Athletic Center in Metcalfe Hall, students will hear welcoming words from Brooklyn Campus Chancellor Joel Press, Long Island University President David J. Steinberg, Brooklyn Campus Provost Gale Stevens Haynes, faculty, staff, and fellow students, including the president of the Student Government Association (SGA).

The guest speaker will be George Emilio Sanchez, a writer, performer and director, as well as the chair of the department of performing and creative arts at the College of Staten Island. Sanchez is known for his teaching of techniques associated with Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed, and for demonstrating how the arts can be utilized in education across the disciplines.

From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., students will experience the 10-acre Brooklyn Campus with its trees, flowers, fountains and expansive lawns. It will be easy to make friends in this upbeat atmosphere where campus and community groups will perform and give demonstrations.

All 68 campus clubs, including sororities and fraternities, and five student organizations such as Seawanhaka the campus student newspaper and Sound, the yearbook, will be present and open to attracting new members. The acclaimed Mark Morris Dance Company will give a performance and Urban Glass will give a glass-blowing demonstration. Music will be furnished by WLIU-Brooklyn radio.

A voter registration drive will encourage new students to register and have a voice in their communities and country with their vote.

Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus, with its 11,000 students is located in the heart of downtown Brooklyn, ten minutes from Wall Street.

Fall semester begins Tuesday, September 8. Please visit [www.brooklyn.liu.edu](http://www.brooklyn.liu.edu) or call Admissions at (718) 488-1011.

Posted: August 31, 2009

**Long Island University**

**Brooklyn Campus**

**Press Releases**

# ***Sports***



## **Staten Island sports bulletin board for July 11, 2009**

Posted by [doleary](#) July 12, 2009 12:27PM

### **Staten Island Sports Bulletin Board**

#### **CSI alumni baseball game**

The College of Staten Island will hold its inaugural alumni baseball game on Sept. 12 on its Willowbrook campus. Registration (the cost to play is a \$50 donation) will be held at 10 a.m. along with batting practice; the game, which features odd-year grads against even-year grads, will follow at noon. Players will receive an alumni hat and T-shirt and refreshments will follow the game. Contact head coach Mike Mauro at [knubby7@aol.com](mailto:knubby7@aol.com) or associate head coach Neil Barbella at [nbarbella@aol.com](mailto:nbarbella@aol.com).



## Great Kills tops Hillside in recent diving meet

Posted by [nrizzi](#) July 16, 2009 13:17PM



Great Kills Swim ClubThe Great Kills Swim Club diving team gathers for a photo on the boards at the swim club.

WILLOWBROOK -- The showdown was set for high noon last Friday. But the face-off wouldn't take place, cowboy style, on a dusty Main Street with weapons at the ready. Instead, it came at the College of Staten Island's aquatic center, and the combatants were divers ranging in age from 8 to 18.

What made this meet so dramatic was that it pitted, arguably, the two top swim teams on the borough's summer club circuit -- Great Kills Swim Club on the South and Hillside Swim Club from the West. The two-hour test of skill among close to 50 divers ended in Great Kills' favor this time, but tensions always rise when these two squads compete for bragging rights. (By the way, Hillside came out on top in the swim portion of the head-to-head.)

"The league is still pretty similar to when I first started, in terms of competition," said Great Kills Swim Club diving coach Jim Cooney, who can't recall a single loss for the Great Kills diving team during his three decade-long tenure. "There are a lot more kids involved now, though."

Diving is a precision skill that is as much art and grace as it is athletics. Top divers must be strong and sculpted; their timing must be dead-on; and their eye for line and balance finely honed. Their repertoire must include any number of breathtaking combinations which are built around five basic entries -- forward, back, twisting, reverse and inward.

Yet for most people, this spectacular sport lands on the radar screen just once every four years -- when the Summer Olympic games feature the best in the world.

Staten Island has five teams that offer youngsters the opportunity to try the sport each summer. In addition to Great Kills and Hillside, diving and swim teams are fielded by Village Greens, South Shore and the Richmond County Country Club.

Divers compete in age groups, just like the swimmers in amateur meets, starting with 8 and under; that group is followed by 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18. Each competitor performs seven different dives at each meet. As the athletes get older, the dives get more complicated, with some competitors, like Steve Crea, in the 15-18 bracket for Hillside, performing two-and-a-half twists that make the diving board rattle and the water explode upon entry.

For youngsters like Stephanie Quinn, 14, of Westerleigh, who also dives for Hillside, the sport is part and parcel of her life come summer.

"I never liked swimming, so I tried diving," said Stephanie, who has been competing for six years.

She said concentration is key. And practice a must.

Right now, she likes doing a back dive best.

Conor Kelly, 13, a Sunnyside resident who will start at St. Peter's Boys High School this fall, dives for the Great Kills Swim Club during the summer. A baseball player first and foremost, Conor said he kind of likes diving because "it's fun."

Although he described himself as just "alright" as a diver, Conor is experienced enough to have a favorite dive: A front flip full twist.

According to Casey Jost, who along with James Styles, works as the diving coach at Hillside, diving these days is a sport that requires year-round training, if an athlete wants to break into big-time competition; Staten Island's club circuit doesn't last nearly long enough. It begins in late June and is really just about a month long, with championships scheduled for the first week in August. Still, it gives kids a chance to work on their technique and be part of a team working toward a common goal.

Adam Bavaro, 14, a rising sophomore at Monsignor Farrell High School and a resident of West Brighton, is happy for the opportunity. He loves the "feeling you get when you're on the board. It's just like a rush of energy.

MacKenzie DeRosa, 13, of Westerleigh, an eighth-grader at Blessed Sacrament, competes on Hillside's swim team as well as the diving squad. While she likes to swim the 50-yard butterfly race -- and usually finishes well, she, like Adam, feels that diving provides a lift that doesn't come from simply churning through the tank.

"I like, sort of, the feel of it. It feels like flying or whatever."

*Jamie Lee contributed to this story.*

Marjorie Hack edits the Shore sections. She can be reached at [hack@siadvance.com](mailto:hack@siadvance.com).



## **Naming new track for Bill Welsh a fitting tribute**

**Posted by [mhanley](#) July 21, 2009 09:45AM**

On July 5, we celebrated the 80th birthday of iconic track coach and running legend Coach Bill Welsh.

The day before (July 4) he celebrated his birthday by completing his 31st consecutive Pepper Martin Five-Mile Run, a remarkable achievement for a runner of any age.

Coach Welsh's reputation is indelibly written in the books by the state, national and international athletes and the consistent string of great teams he produced.

What is not immediately seen is the character and integrity he instilled in all those under his tutelage. He has opened doors which helped turn legions of teen boys into fine, successful gentlemen. Many of these men (and ladies) were at the College of Staten Island July 5 to pay homage to "Coach" and many I have been privileged to call friends for many, many years.

As we seek to build an indoor track in Ocean Breeze in the next two to three years, and we consider his lifetime of service and achievements, may I suggest we name the track the "William Welsh Track and Field Facility."

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## Staten Island sandlot baseball roundup for July 28, 2009: Muche League no-hitter for Reyes

Posted by [doleary](#) July 28, 2009 10:31AM



Staten Island Advance file

photoJon Reyes, shown here pitching for the College of Staten Island, had a little help while throwing a no-hitter for Victory Sports Monday night.

Jon Reyes got an assist from Mother Nature as he pitched a no-hitter in Victory Sports' 8-0 Fred Muche League victory over the Rebels Monday night.

Reyes faced just two batters over the minimum over the first six innings. The Rebels collected back-to-back hits to start the bottom of the seventh, but the game was halted one batter later by darkness and reverted to the sixth inning.

Dennis Barrett paced Victory with two doubles, a single and five RBI. Reyes had two hits, and Matt Martino had an RBI triple.

**BamBooBat 5, Design Plumbing 4:** John O'Hara knocked in the winning run. Rich Rainero singled, stole second and third, and came home on O'Hara's eighth-inning hit. John Previti posted the win in relief.

**Athletics 17, J.L. Wegenaar Cubs 4:** Winning pitcher Jeff Giza (four RBI) homered and added a pair of doubles. Jason Grasso went 3 for 4 and Rob Kenney 2 for 2. The Cubs' Kenny Olsen cracked a two-run double.

**Siegel Family 11, NYS Blue Sox 2:** Julie Hernandez collected three hits and three RBI. Frank Bracato went 3 for 3. Winning pitcher Hal Grossman struck out five.



## **Staten Island sports bulletin board: Adult baseball and softball registration, Willis 3-on-3 and CSI alumni baseball game info**

Posted by [blaugust](#) August 06, 2009 10:18AM

### **TabEEK registration**

The James and Joann TabEEK Memorial Softball League is hosting final registration Sunday at the Dugout Pub on Forest Avenue at 6 p.m. Anyone interested in joining the men's or coed leagues, which plays doubleheaders on Sundays, can call Al TabEEK at 718-987-2818.

### **Willis Tournament**

Saturday will be final registration for the Richard Willis Memorial 3-on-3 Tournament, being held Aug. 15-16 at Our Lady Star of the Sea. The fee is \$60 per team which includes a two-game guarantee, entry in the free-throw competition, T-shirt and souvenirs to all participants. Boys and girls brackets are: 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18-and-under. To register, visit [www.RWillis3on3.org](http://www.RWillis3on3.org) or call 917-692-8570. Also, a registration table will be at Clove Lakes Park on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the Nike Basketball Tournament.

### **Alumni baseball**

The College of Staten Island will hold its inaugural alumni baseball game on Sept. 12 on its Willowbrook campus. Registration (the cost to play is a \$50 donation) will be held at 10 a.m. along with batting practice; the game, which features odd-year grads against even-year grads, will follow at noon. Players will receive an alumni hat and T-shirt and refreshments will follow the game. Contact head coach Mike Mauro at [knubby7@aol.com](mailto:knubby7@aol.com) or associate head coach Neil Barbella at [nbarbella@aol.com](mailto:nbarbella@aol.com).

### **SSBRL team needed**

There is room for one B team to fill out the South Shore BRL men's schedule. An 8 p.m. meeting will take place Tuesday at the loop's Tottenville complex. Call Steve Berkins at 917-841-1253.

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[Home](#) > [Athletics](#) > [Women's Soccer](#) > Women's Soccer Announces 2009 Schedule

## Women's Soccer Announces 2009 Schedule

### Season opens September 2 against Vassar

8/11/2009 - **Riverdale, N.Y.** – The College of Mount Saint Vincent Department of Athletics announced the 2009 game schedule for the women's soccer program on Tuesday afternoon. The season opens on September 2 with a home date against Vassar.

The Dolphins will open the 2009 campaign by playing four of their first five games at home. After the season opener with Vassar the Dolphins will play a road game at City College of New York on September 22 before playing three straight at home from September 24-28. The Mount will open the home stretch against Polytechnic and will also tangle with Maritime and Medgar Evers.

After the three game home stand, Mount Saint Vincent will alternate home and road games over the next four contests. The Mount will play at Skyline rival Old Westbury on September 30 and then host Purchase on October 3. Following the matchup with Purchase, the Mount will travel to Mount Saint Mary for a midweek night match on October 6 and then will play host to Mills (Calif.) College on Sunday, October 11.

The Mount will close the 2009 slate by playing six of its final eight games on the road. After taking on Mills, the Dolphins will play two straight on the road when they travel to the College of Staten Island on October 12 and then to Sage on October 14. The Mount will then host Yeshiva on October 15 before traveling to Patchogue, N.Y. for a league match with St. Joseph's.

Mount Saint Vincent will host Bard on October 22 in its final home contest of the season before closing out the campaign with a three game road trip that includes games at Trinity (D.C.) on October 24, Saint Elizabeth on October 29 and Farmingdale St. on Halloween.

At the conclusion of the regular season the top six teams in the league will compete for the Skyline Conference Championship and the right to represent the league in the NCAA Tournament. Farmingdale St. has captured the league championship the past two seasons.



BA

*Pat Gormley is entering his second season as head women's soccer coach.*

### 2009 Mount Saint Vincent Women's Soccer Schedule

#### September

**2 Vassar** 7:00 p.m.

22 at CCNY TBA

**24 Polytechnic (club)** TBA

**26 Maritime \*** TBA

**28 Medgar Evers TBA**

30 at Old Westbury \* 4:00 p.m.

**October**

**3 Purchase\* TBA**

6 at Mount Saint Mary\* 7:00 p.m.

**11 Mills (Calif.) 10:00 a.m.**

12 at Staten Island 12:00 p.m.

14 at Sage \* TBA

**15 Yeshiva\* 8:00 p.m.**

17 at St. Joseph's-LI\* 1:00 p.m.

**22 Bard\* TBA**

24 at Trinity (D.C.) 12:00 p.m.

29 at Saint Elizabeth 3:30 p.m.

31 at Farmingdale St.\* 1:00 p.m.

**November**

3 Skyline Quarterfinals TBA

5 Skyline Semifinals TBA

7 Skyline Championship TBA

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The College of Mount Saint Vincent, 6301 Riverdale Avenue, Riverdale, New York 10471  
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## **Staten Island sports bulletin board for August 14, 2009**

Posted by [doleary](#) August 15, 2009 16:52PM

### **SSBRL fall registration**

South Shore BRL is holding registration for its 2009 fall league. Registration is open to all players ages 12 (2009 Little League graduates) to 18. The cost is \$200 per player to play. Registration will be held on Saturday, August 15th and tomorrow Sunday, August 16th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and August 18th and August 19th from 7 to 9 p.m. Call the clubhouse at 718-948-0016 or visit [www.ssbrl.com](http://www.ssbrl.com).

### **Fall ball registration**

Snug Harbor LL will hold registration for its fall ball season on Monday from 6-8 p.m. at its clubhouse. Call 718-273-0651 for more information.

### **Basketball intramurals**

The Holy Child basketball program is hosting registration for its fall intramural league Monday and Wednesday from 7-8:30 p.m. at the gym. The league plays on Saturdays in Sept. and Oct. and is for children entering grades K-8 this fall. The cost is \$100 per child (for parishioners and non-parishioners) and you must sign up if you wish to play CYO basketball in the winter. Cash will not be accepted at registration. Call Lou Iosue at 718-317-8128.

### **CSI alumni baseball game**

The College of Staten Island will hold its inaugural alumni baseball game on Sept. 12 on its Willowbrook campus. Registration (cost to play is a \$50 donation) will be held at 10 a.m. along with batting practice; the game, which features odd-year grads against even-year grads, will follow at noon. Players will receive an alumni hat and T-shirt and refreshments will follow the game. Contact head coach Mike Mauro at [knubby7@aol.com](mailto:knubby7@aol.com) or associate head coach Neil Barbella at [nbarbella@aol.com](mailto:nbarbella@aol.com).

### **Varsity ASA fall league**

The Varsity ASA Saturday and Sunday fall softball league is holding registration for teams Sunday and Aug. 23 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the RC Youth Complex. The league begins Sept. 12. Contact John Gino at 718-979-7801.



# CSI TABS BOBB AS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Veteran administrator says he'll only be on the job for one year

By JIM WAGGONER  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Paul Bobb, one of the founding fathers of the CUNY Athletic Conference, has been lured out of retirement to accept a one-year appointment as Interim Athletic Director at the College of Staten Island, it was announced yesterday.

Bobb's position officially begins Sept. 1, but the former professor and athletic director at both City College, his alma mater, and Medgar Evers, was busy getting acquainted with staff yesterday at the Willowbrook campus.

Bobb, a Manhattan native who resides in the Bronx, replaces long-time employee David Pizzuto, who served as Interim Athletic Director for one calendar year. Pizzuto will remain within the department at his

SEE CSI, PAGE B 3

CSI FROM PAGE B 1

## CSI tabs Bobb as Athletic Director

previous position of Associate Athletic Director.

Bobb brings a wealth of experience to his new job, which will include a complete evaluation of CSI's athletic department, which has suffered in recent years from a competitive standpoint. Tougher academic requirements, the repeated delay of projected on-campus dormitories, and a below-average operating budget have combined to take a toll on the Dolphins' combined win-loss records.

Bobb, who retired in 2003 from a lengthy CUNY career that included eight years as City College's Associate Dean of Students, has a long-term working relationship with third-year CSI president Dr. Tomas Morales.

"It would be appropriate to say that the president would like to see growth in the athletics department," Bobb told the Advance. "He (Morales) would like to see the program resume its rightful place among the premier NCAA Division III programs on the national level.

"It's a role that's really designed to allow the president to get a handle of some of the issues involving the athletic program. He is very, very committed to promoting athletics, and since we had worked together in the past, he felt that I was seasoned and experienced enough to give him some objective opinions on how the program might be enhanced."

Bobb said he has no intentions of staying on past one calendar year.

"One of the valuable assets of being in this position is

that I can be very objective," he said. "I am not pursuing continuous employment beyond the one-year appointment. I have come out of retirement to accept this job. I'm thrilled to be back in the AD's chair and I'm looking forward to a very productive year."

Bobb was one of the officials who launched the CUNY Athletic Directors Association in 1972, a forerunner to the present-day conference. Athletic directors of the 10 charter member institutions, including CSI, ratified a constitution which brought the CUNYAC into existence in 1978.

"It was a challenging task, to be sure, because each institution had its own philosophy as well as its own goals and objectives," said Bobb, a member of Medgar Evers' original faculty as director of the Health and Physical Education department as well as athletic director.

He added: "But that was then, and this is now."

Bobb said he needs no introduction to CSI's rich sports tradition, which includes a three-decade track record of fielding championship teams in various men's and women's athletics.

"CSI has such strong roots to the community," he said. "I think that's one of the strengths of the institution and of the athletic program. I hope in some small way to be able to build on that tradition."

Bobb is the recipient of numerous honors, including the prestigious Ellis Bullock Jr. Award, sponsored annually by the CUNY and Con Edison.



BOBB



# CSI baseball reunion a big hit

Buttermark and Miceli appear to have bright futures on the golf course

By JIM WAGGONER  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

The years may have mellowed **Fran Hirschy**, but the fiery former College of Staten Island baseball coach can take heart that his legacy lives on.

A group of Hirschy's former players from the most successful CSI teams in school history hosted a recent reunion party at Bridget's Public House in West Brighton, and the coach was surprised to discover what his 30-something ex-ballplayers had to say.

"I was tough on them ... real tough. I worked them so hard," said Hirschy, in his 18th year as a crisis intervention counselor at Perth Amboy (N.J.) HS. "They used to ask me why I was so hard on them, but now they say they're using the same coaching techniques on their own kids and their own teams."

Hirschy's name resounds in CSI's record book: He compiled a 11-40 record in five seasons, including a three-year run of 26-5, 29-7 and 29-4 in his first three campaigns beginning in 1990. The Dolphins reached the NCAA Division III regionals twice (1991-92), and made a strong run at the national finals before falling short.

Many of the old faces showed up at Bridget's: **Brian Coakley** was one of the ringleaders pushing the reunion. **Kevin Richter** arrived from Florida with a CSI uniform that he had ex-teams-mates sign. **Anthony McSherry**, a policeman in Washington, D.C., paid a visit, as did former pitching standout **Kevin Crombie**.

**Mike Mauro**, preparing for his second year as CSI's head coach, joined another ex-Dolphin, current Tottenville HS head coach **Tom Tierney Jr.**

"I remembered them as 18- to 21-year-old college kids and to see them as grown men with occupations and



There were a lot of smiling faces at a reunion of many of former coach Fran Hirschy's CSI baseball players.

families was very interesting," said Hirschy. "I'm really proud of these guys. It was a heartwarming event and brought back a lot of great memories."

Hirschy has remained active in baseball. He's a co-owner of a Frozen Ropes franchise near the home ballpark of the minor-league Lakewood (N.J.) BlueClaws. The 18,000-square foot facility offers baseball and softball instruction.

Hirschy also has been involved in Little League baseball. His 12-year-old son, **CJ**, was a top pitcher/shortstop for the Tom Rivers (N.J.) team that lost in the district tourney finals, falling short of its goal of the Bristol, Conn., regionals and the Little League World Series.

"We've been following the South Shore (National) team's success with great interest," said Hirschy. "That would have been some story if CJ's team had faced them up in Bristol. We thought we were going."

Instead, the old coach settled for a reunion party in West Brighton.

And it sounded like a good time was had by all.

**BUTTERMARK, MICELI SHINE AT AMATEUR**



MICELI



BUTTERMARK

**James Buttermark**, at 17 is perhaps the most matured junior player in these parts and he went about his business of working the ball in all the right directions against another talented newcomer in **James Edgeworth** at the Staten Island Junior Amateur.

The Monsignor Farrell senior and Advance All Star opened his match with four consecutive pars and held a 1-up lead.

Buttermark moved to 4-up at the par 5, 10th hole with a par and remained in command through the 13th hole. Edgeworth wasn't about to give up and showed the gallery as well as his opponent that he had some fight left in him. He birdied 14, halved 15 with par and added another birdie at the 16th from 6-feet to stay alive in the match. Buttermark was dormie going to 17 and both players hit the green in regulation. After barely missing his bid

for birdie and a chance to keep the match alive, Buttermark showed just why he is the defending champion by lagging his birdie putt to within inches and ending the contest with halving pars and a 2 and 1 victory.

The winner was even par for the match and added another victory to a good season where he won the Jody, the Lowney, the Junior Amateur and a fourth place finish in the North Central Kiwanis.

In the girls division it was **Natalie Miceli** of St. Joseph by the Sea High School facing **Lauren Suarez**. Suarez took an early lead with a bogey at the first hole when Miceli three-putted. When Miceli hit her tee shot at the par 3 third dead at the flag her par would even the match.

Miceli, who strikes the ball with authority, went on to win the 4th, 5th and seventh holes for a 3-up lead. Miceli added another win at the ninth hole and made the turn at 4-up in an abbreviated 14 hole contest. Miceli's bogey 6 at the 458 yard 10th hole proved to be the final hole of the match when Miceli slammed the door shut for a 5 and 4 victory.

(Tom Flannagan contributed to this report)

Published Tuesday, August 25, 2009

# Monday's Sports Transactions

COMPILED BY

The Associated Press

COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND—Named Paul Bobb interim athletic director and David Pizzuto associate athletic director-sports information director.

Also featured on:    The Hawk Eye   -   Journalnow.com   -   baltimoresun.com



# CSI cheer team to host car wash on Sunday

Come out and support the squad, who will wash your car for only \$5

By JAMIE LEE  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

**WILLOWBROOK** — The College of Staten Island cheerleading squad is trading its pom-poms in for sponges and soap this weekend.

On Sunday, the Dolphins' cheer team is hosting their first annual CSI Cheerleaders Bikini Car Wash at the Motor Tech garage at the corner of Clove Road and Castleton Avenue in West Brighton.

Aside from being a way for local residents to support the Willowbrook institution's fledgling team, the fund-raiser — running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. — is also an affordable way to get your wheels washed.

The cost for a cleaning is just \$5.

Those looking to grab a bite to eat while they wait can also purchase a hot dog or a bottle of water for \$2 apiece. A frankfurter-water combo costs just \$3.

(Additional donations are also appreciated.)

Proceeds from the event will go towards covering the cheerleading squad's costs for the upcoming season, which includes competition entry fees and uniforms.

Re-started just last season after a six-year hiatus, the team has already made great strides and hopes that, with the help of some fiscal support, it can continue to build on its inaugural successes.

"CSI Cheerleading started as a group of persistent student-athletes who were united with a cause," said **David Pizzuto**, the college's associate athletic director. "And they have flourished so much in such a short period of time."

The team had all but disbanded after 2003, but CSI student **Camello Vanloo**, who was pre-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND

The College of Staten Island cheerleading squad will be holding a bikini car wash fundraiser at the Motor Tech garage in West Brighton this Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

sented with the CSI Cheerleading Distinguished Service Award at the college's annual athletic awards banquet in May, decided to reorganize the group.

With Vanloo's persistence and the direction of coach and advisor **Alexandria Theten**, the college saw its cheerleading team rise up from the ashes.

Things began simple enough as the contingent worked on their routines in practice and rooted on the men's and women's basketball teams.

By the end of last season, however, it was their time to shine.

For a rookie team, the CSI cheerleaders took the 2009 City University of New York Athletic Conference (CUNYAC) Cheerleading Championship by storm at Baruch College gymnasium in Manhattan back in March.

After performances by the Riverbank Recreation Center Cheer Squad and the Crusader All-Stars and the annual CUNYAC "Mascot Dance-Off," the Dolphins faced off against teams from four other city institutions.

Matching up with Brooklyn College, which had won three straight titles, proved to be a bit too much, but the CSI cheer team gave the perennial cheerleading power a run for its money, wowing the crowds with a dazzling three-minute routine.

The chants, stunts, jumps and tumblers were so impressive that the Dolphins were awarded runner-up honors for the event — a "tremendous"

accomplishment for first-year computers, according to Pizzuto.

"They deserve a tremendous amount of credit for what they achieved," he said, noting that the squad sent the nearly 1,000 fans in the gym to their feet several times during their routine. "And it was a pleasure to be at their side when they earned their trophy."

And as the summer break calls to a close, the group is preparing to defend their silver medals — and maybe even give Brooklyn College another run for the gold.

# ***Stories***

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2009

# Here's who gets city \$\$ on S.I.

Island's city councilmen  
defend the dole that  
aids worthy causes

By **PETER N. SPENCER**  
ADVANCE CITY HALL BUREAU

Some disparagingly call it pork-barrel spending, but Staten Island's city councilmen refer to the millions of discretionary dollars they garner and dole out each year as the great equalizer.

While the borough's larger siblings usually hold sway over the city's budget process, the relatively smaller amount allocated for individual districts is usually tipped in the Island's favor.

This year, that money will

help fill a variety of needs that are not otherwise met with city services: A breast cancer study at the College of

Staten Island; a health care conference sponsored by the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation; food pantries; after-school programs for autistic youth; free summer drive-in movies; PTAs at dozens of Island schools; an undercover police car in the 122nd Precinct; a brain tumor detection van, and an aquarium at Wagner College.

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES

Pages A 8-9

## 300 ISLAND PROGRAMS

The \$2.77 million allocated by the borough delegation will go to more than 300 borough programs and organizations. All told, the 51 City Council members were allotted \$48.8 million in discretionary spending — about the same as last fiscal year. That's largely due to the federal stimulus funds that help to fill a multibillion-dollar budget shortfall.

Once again, the three Islanders were among the Council's top discretionary distributors. Mid-Island Re-

SEE FUNDING, PAGE A 9

## FUNDING FROM PAGE A 1

# Here's who gets the city \$\$ on Staten Island

publican James Oddo placed second among all 31 members, with \$1.2 million in allocations, followed by North



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Shore Democrat Kenneth Mitchell, with \$894,000 (ninth on the list), and South Shore Republican Vincent Ignizio, with \$677,000 (17th on the list). The numbers include \$108,750 for aging programs and \$51,714 for youth programs that each Council member receives.

Council discretionary funding has come under fire

in recent years, as a slush-fund scandal touched several of its members. The Council Speaker disburses the funds



MITCHELL

based on a variety of factors, including leadership positions and seniority. But it is no secret that politics plays a significant role:

Those who have played nice with the Speaker are usually the biggest beneficiaries.

Critics say the process is wide open to waste and corruption. Still, "It's the only instance in city government when Sta-

ten Island gets more than its fair share," demurs Oddo. "Ask the school principals, ask the senior centers, ask



IGNIZIO

the people who receive these dollars if this is wasteful." Not all of the money allotted to Council members is included in the discretionary list. They are also allocated tens of millions to fund capital projects. This year, \$2 million of that money will be used to repair Island roads — adding more than 10 percent

to the \$15 million dedicated in the city budget; \$250,000 will purchase two high-tech ambulances for Richmond University Medical Center; \$750,000 will start the rehabilitation of Mahoney Playground in New Brighton, and \$1.5 million will go toward acquisition of the 38-acre Goodhue Center in New Brighton, which the city plans to transform into a public park.

Ignizio also was awarded a \$100,000 grant for The After School Corporation (TASC) to bring programs to his district.

Peter N. Spencer covers city government for the Advance. He may be reached at [spencer@siadvance.com](mailto:spencer@siadvance.com).

## Island councilmen's 2009-10 budget list ...

Organization	Councilman	Amount	Purpose of funds
College of Staten Island	Oddo	\$5,000	The funds would be used to provide support for the Staten Island Project Breast Cancer Research Initiative.
College of Staten Island	Oddo	\$60,000	



July 2, 2009

## Facing Deficits, Some States Cut Summer School

By SAM DILLON

COCOA, Fla. — A year ago, the [Brevard County Schools](#) ran a robust summer program here, with dozens of schools bustling with teachers and some 14,000 children practicing multiplication, reading [Harry Potter](#) and studying Spanish verbs, all at no cost to parents.

But this year Florida's budget crisis has gutted summer school. Brevard classrooms are shuttered, and students like 11-year-old Uvenka Jean-Baptiste, whose mother works in a nursing home, are spending their summer days at home, surfing television channels or loitering at a mall.

Nearly every school system in Florida has eviscerated or eliminated summer school this year, and officials are reporting sweeping cuts in states from North Carolina and Delaware to California and Washington. The cuts have come as states across the country are struggling to approve budgets, and California's governor, [Arnold Schwarzenegger](#), declared a fiscal state of emergency on Wednesday.

"We're seeing a disturbing trend of districts making huge cuts to summer school; they're just devastating these programs," said Ron Fairchild, executive director of the [National Center for Summer Learning](#) at [Johns Hopkins University](#). "It's having a disproportionate impact on low-income families."

The federal stimulus law is channeling [\\$100 billion to public education](#), and Education Secretary [Arne Duncan](#) has repeatedly urged states and districts to spend part of the money to keep schools open this summer.

But thousands of districts have ignored Mr. Duncan's urgings. In Florida and California, for example, government revenues have fallen so precipitously that, even after receiving federal stimulus dollars, local officials have been forced to make deep cuts to school budgets. Officials in many other states, considering summer school a frill, despite research showing it can narrow the achievement gap between poor and affluent children, have spent their stimulus money elsewhere.

An Education Department spokeswoman, Sandra Abrevaya, said the agency did not yet know how many of the nation's 15,000 school districts had cut summer school this year.

Large districts still offering robust summer programs include Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis and Seattle, according to the [Council of the Great City Schools](#), which represents large districts.

New York City has made modest cuts to its summer program, which last year served 120,000 children, said William Havemann, a spokesman for the city's Department of Education. This year, classes will be offered in 369 schools, down from 562 in 2008, Mr. Havemann said, and the city expects fewer children to enroll, too, although all children who need extra work for promotion to their next grade are eligible.

Some systems have spent federal stimulus money to invigorate summer school. These include Montgomery County, Md., and [Cincinnati](#), where officials have used \$1.5 million of the city's stimulus dollars to offer full-day summer school at its 13 lowest-performing elementary schools, nearly doubling enrollment to 1,700 students.

Mornings are devoted to math and reading, and afternoons to camp-like activities including environmental science and gardening, ballroom dancing and [yoga](#), said Janet Walsh, a Cincinnati schools spokeswoman. Twelve other Cincinnati schools are offering half-day summer programs, Ms. Walsh said.



But thousands of districts have made cuts. In Los Angeles, where school officials are still working to remove hundreds of millions of dollars from a \$5.5 billion annual budget, [they cut \\$34 million](#) last month by canceling summer school for all elementary and middle school children except the disabled. That left 150,000 students without summer classes, and parents scrambling for child care.

Hundreds of other California districts, including San Diego, Long Beach and Sacramento, have also trimmed or eliminated summer school. An [online survey](#) in late April by the California State PTA found that about 40 percent of responding school districts had reduced summer programs and about 20 percent had eliminated them entirely.

The North Carolina School Boards Association did a similar survey of the state's 115 districts. Three-quarters of those that responded said they would [eliminate summer school](#) or reduce its scope, said Leanne Winner, a director at the association. "Things have gotten worse since we did the survey," Ms. Winner said.

Wayne Blanton, executive director of the [Florida School Boards Association](#), said, "Nearly all districts in Florida have cut summer school down, and about half have eliminated it altogether."

In Rutherford County, Tenn., school authorities cited not only money troubles but also [swine flu](#) in explaining why they cut elementary summer school after the district lost some state financing.

All the cuts nationwide have put into jeopardy an institution that has turned summertimes past into nostalgic memories for millions of Americans.

"I remember as a child growing up, summer school was enriching and fun," said Tamara Sortman of Sacramento, where cuts have left her three children with no summer school option. "I took guitar one summer, creative writing another. I remember an arts class where we did tie-dying. I had a single working mom, and summer school kept me out of trouble."

Kenneth Gold, an education professor at the College of Staten Island who wrote [a history of summer learning](#), said that in the 19th century, many American schools offered their regular classes in summer and winter, with recesses scheduled for spring and fall to allow planting and harvesting. By 1910, however, that cycle had been largely displaced by the September-to-June, 180-day calendar common today, in which summer school is an optional addendum.

Since the 1970s, however, the value of rigorous summer school has gained increasing recognition because of [research](#) by a Johns Hopkins professor, Karl Alexander, and other sociologists showing that the academic achievement gap widens during summer vacations.

Low-income students who hold summer jobs or are idle, the research has demonstrated, forget more math and reading skills over the summer than their affluent classmates, who often receive intellectual stimulation in the summer from canoe trips, language camps or ballet lessons.

Richard DiPatri, schools superintendent here in Brevard County, leaned on those findings in recent years as he made free summer school classes available to all students, both for remedial work and for languages and other electives.

"We built it up, but last year here in Florida, our funding just went over the cliff," Mr. DiPatri said.

Adrimel Marlasca, 12, who just finished sixth grade, said that in previous years, she had enjoyed summer classes at Discovery Elementary in Palm Bay, Fla.. But this summer, she is marooned at home.

The other day, Adrimel was up at midmorning, ate some cereal, then watched a show on the Disney channel. She played with her pet cockatiel and her dog, Princess, ate lunch and watched some more television. Later, she went shopping with her mother, picked up her room and read a mystery book for 45 minutes.

After dinner, her mother used flashcards to drill her in multiplication for a few minutes.

“I like the math because it’s challenging, but sometimes it’s like, ‘Oh my gosh, I can’t answer this,’ and you get nerve-racked,” Adrimel said.

“We’re working with her at home, but its not the same,” said her father, Jose Marlasca. “She ends up watching TV. The best scenario would be to have her at school.”

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Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand  
U.S. Senator from New York  
Posted: July 8, 2009 07:01 AM

## New York's Nursing Shortage

As Congress focuses on comprehensive health care reform, one thing needs to be clear: We cannot fix health care if we do not address America's nursing shortage. If we're going to be able to provide access to quality, affordable health care to every American - we need to have the trained health care professionals inside hospitals to provide that care.

We have a serious nursing shortage in New York State and right here in New York City. Hospitals and other health care providers are experiencing vacancies today, and over the next 10 years, we're on a path for the problem to only get worse as the need for nurses grows.

The numbers are startling. My office recently released a report showing that in New York City, we'll need 59,694 more nurses over the next 10 years to provide quality care for our families.

Part of the problem is that our nurses population is getting older. When we studied the boroughs we found that in Brooklyn and Queens, almost 19 percent of the nurses are over the age of 55 and will likely enter retirement over the next decade. But we lack a sufficient number of incoming nurses to take their place upon retirement and there is already a 7.5 percent vacancy rate across the city.

New York is not alone. Communities in every corner of America struggle to fill nursing vacancies to provide care for everyone who needs it.

According to the Center for Health Workforce Studies, New York has substantially fewer registered nurses per capita than the national average. The root of the problem is that nursing institutions just do not have the faculty and physical space available to train the nurses we need.

When my office reached out to the College of Staten Island in Staten Island, they reported that their college admits about 125 out of 400 applicants. While many applicants are not qualified, many other applicants are turned away because there is a lack of classroom space and inadequate faculty supply.

In fact, Brooklyn's own Kings County Hospital has not graduated a class of nursing students since the late 1970s. This fall will mark the first class of nursing students the institution has had in decades.

Earlier this month, I unveiled my plan to make sure we have the amount of trained nurses we need to be able to provide quality care to children and families for the long term.

First, we'll increase nursing faculty by offering 100 percent loan repayment for nurses who choose a faculty role and train the next generation of nurses.

Second, we'll provide grants to nursing institutions so they can accept more qualified students -- and we'll make sure these institutions have the space to train them.

Third, we'll incentivise nurse practitioners and other providers to work in underserved areas. President Obama's economic recovery plan included \$300 million for the National Health Service Corps to recruit more nurses. I'll continue the charge in the Senate and work for more investments, and encourage more nurses to work in areas that need new nurses the most.

And as the last step in my plan, we'll make smart, long term investments to develop a robust nursing workforce to make sure we're on a sturdy path to our health care future.

Nurses are on the front lines of our care. And they need to be at the foundation of health care reform. Let's get health care done - and done right - by ensuring the amount of nurses we need to provide quality care for all.

## YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WEEKLY

BLOOMFIELD BULLS HEAD CASTLETON CORNERS CHELSEA GRANITEVILLE  
MEERS CORNERS NEW SPRINGVILLE SEA VIEW TRAVIS WILLOWBROOK

WEST SHORE NEWS ALL DAY ON [SILIVE.COM/WESTSHORE](http://SILIVE.COM/WESTSHORE)

THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2009

PUBLISHED SINCE 1886 | 75 CENTS

### WEEKLY WATCH



#### FIND IT

Tell us where this mural is located and you could win a prize. Log onto [silive.com/contests](http://silive.com/contests) and leave your guess, along with your name, community, telephone number and e-mail. You must be 13 years old to play.

## YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WEEKLY

BLOOMFIELD BULLS HEAD CASTLETON CORNERS CHELSEA GRANITEVILLE  
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#### FOUND IT!

Hilary Alvo of Bulls Head was one of 30 who correctly identified the mural on the grounds of the College of Staten Island. Her name was randomly chosen from among them. We'll offer a new Find It next week.

## Whistle-blowers at CSI seem to pay a stiff price

Posted by [hwsiner](#) July 16, 2009 18:54PM

"Our Colleagues at The City University (CUNY) have been chronically abused by a corrupt administration. Freedom of speech is but only one of the basic academic protections which has been and is currently under attack by right-wing ultra-conservative groups. Please help me in contacting the Chancellor to ask that CUNY respect academic freedom and stop in its organized campaign of harassment and intimidation of liberal scholars and scholarship."

The above excerpt was written and published (not by me) by The Transformative Studies Institute on July 6, 2009.

At the College of Staten Island, a president "retired"; the head of Grants and Research has decided to "retire"; the Provost is gone, and our former Finance Director, who stepped down, is none other than our secretary of the state Senate, Mr. Angelo Aponte.

A director announced his retirement only to unretire.

The public needs to understand what happens to those who report wrongdoing and how retaliation is needed to allow the ego, greed, and lies to continue.

On Dec. 23, 2005, a whistle-blowers' hotline was established on the CUNY Web site regarding theft.

"Shut up or else" and "I warn you what WE will do" is standard operating procedure on campus.

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## Red lights: Bad timing nothing but frustration

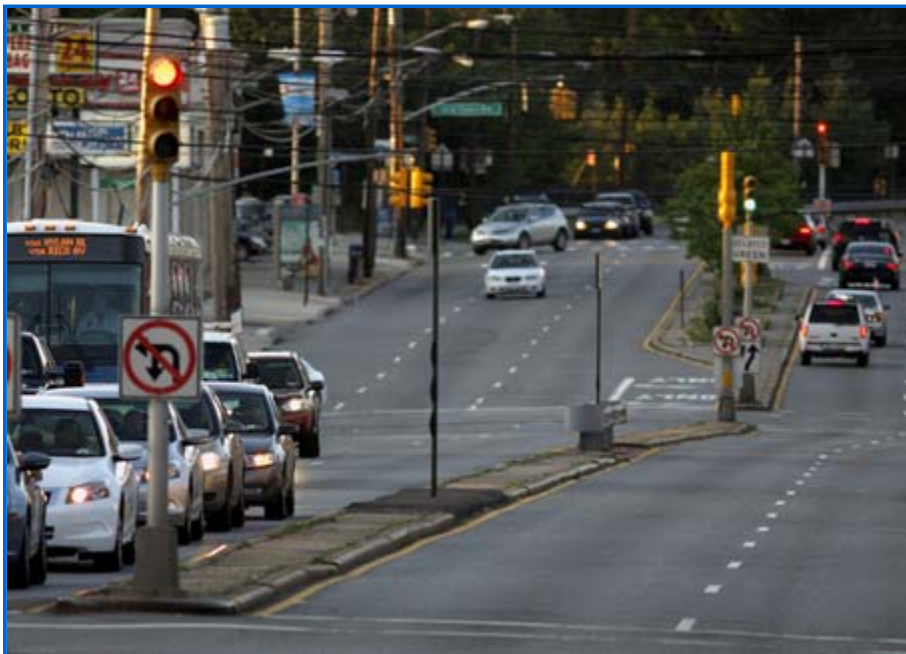
Posted by [mdonnell](#) July 26, 2009 07:00AM

STOP AND GO -- NO RHYME OR REASON

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Too much traffic, crumbling roads and rude drivers already drive Staten Island motorists crazy.

Add to the list of frustrations all the hours of life wasted while sitting at badly timed traffic lights.

At certain times of the day, drivers may find nothing but green lights for a mile or more on major thoroughfares, but at other times random red lights pop up just blocks apart, bringing traffic to a halt.



Hilton Flores/Staten Island

AdvanceTraffic backs up Hylan Boulevard as cars pass through one green light only to sit at the next light, which is red.

On Slosson Avenue in Castleton Corners for example, months can go by with a string of predictably green lights coming down from Todt Hill toward Victory Boulevard. Then one day, a light in the sequence will be inexplicably red, slowing down progress.

Getting stuck at traffic lights is not only a maddening waste of time, but it's costing you, whether in burned up gasoline or lower productivity.

The city's Department of Transportation is examining the timing of traffic lights along Hylan Boulevard, as part of a federally funded signal-retiming project that involves 33 high-traffic arteries throughout Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. The study will determine if making changes would improve traffic flow, reduce fuel consumption and cut down on pollution.

The study will evaluate more than 1,500 traffic signals along those streets to see if retiming them would improve traffic flow, reduce fuel consumption and cut down on pollution.

The Institute of Transportation Engineers found that in Texas, retimed lights resulted in a 24.6 percent reduction in delays, and a 9.1 percent drop in fuel consumption. In California, traffic light tweaks resulted in a 7.2 percent drop in travel time, the institute found.

Synchronized traffic lights, which form a progression of greens to keep traffic flowing, cut down on delay and driver frustration, and also reduce emissions and fuel consumption. Emergency vehicles can respond faster, too, according to the Institute.

It works on Hylan in the mornings, for example, funneling traffic toward the Verrazano Bridge, and toward Tottenville during the evening commute. Other arteries are synched during rush hours, too, to keep cars moving toward business districts or commuter destinations like the Staten Island Expressway, a DOT spokeswoman said.

Most signal cycles fall between 45 and 120 seconds, with patterns varying at mid-day and overnight, depending on traffic in the area and allowing ample time for pedestrians to cross.

"As with all major corridors citywide, we do monitor the roadways and make adjustments on an as-needed basis to ease congestion and expedite traffic," a DOT spokeswoman said, adding the agency has received no formal complaints regarding light timing along Hylan.

New technologies are being considered here, including Smart Lights, which Borough President James Molinaro discovered while vacationing in Florida. Smart Lights use cameras to detect cars that are waiting to proceed, and change the light accordingly.

Molinaro allocated \$1 million for a study of how the lights would work here, and he believes they could do wonders for traffic along Richmond Avenue between Arthur Kill Road and Victory Boulevard, where he often gets stuck at red lights. Signals are often synched to stop traffic around store parking lots along the stretch, he said, whether there are cars waiting to exit or not.

A Smart Light is currently undergoing a test at the Victory Boulevard entrance to the College of Staten Island.

When it comes to considering new technologies, "we've got to come out of the Dark Ages," Molinaro said. "We're supposed to be the cutting edge."

The DOT also plans to introduce wireless lights, which offer improved communication between signals on streets like Hylan. The new wireless signals can be modified in the future based on recommendations from the light-retiming study.

The DOT monitors more than half of the city's 12,300 signals, including about 60 percent of the Island's traffic lights, through the Traffic Management Center in Long Island City, Queens. Problems with lights wired through the center can be detected and corrected remotely. Problems with the city's "freestanding" lights not connected to the center are found by inspectors or through calls to the 311 system. Contractors usually make repairs within two hours of notification.

TAIL:Maura Yates covers transportation news for the Advance. She may be reached at [myates@siadvance.com](mailto:myates@siadvance.com).



# High marks for Wagner's theater program

New survey ranks it third best in the land and it's also the 19th most beautiful campus

By AMISHA PADNANI  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

With its proximity to museums, theaters and cultural experiences in Manhattan, and with one graduate after another making it to Broadway, it's no wonder Wagner College once again has been recognized by Princeton Review as one of the top colleges in the nation.

Wagner is known for its



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE/FILE PHOTO

With its picturesque ivy-covered Main Hall, it's no wonder Wagner College was recognized as the 19th most beautiful campus.

liberal arts program, and a number of alumni have gone on to successful acting careers.

The Grymes Hill school ranks as the third-best college theater program and the 19th most beautiful campus

in "The Best 371 Colleges," which was released yesterday.

Now in its 18th year, the book comprises surveys of 122,000 students across the country, who were asked about everything from campus food to financial aid packages.

Although a number of other New York-area colleges were included in the review, St. John's University and the College of Staten Island were not among those who met the criteria for a screening.

Wagner also made the list last year, when it was named the second-best college theater program and the fourth most beautiful campus.

29 July 2009

## New York City DOT to study traffic signal timings

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) is examining the timing of traffic lights as part of a federally funded signal-retiming project that involves 33 high-traffic arteries throughout Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. The study will evaluate more than 1,500 traffic signals along those streets to see if retiming would improve traffic flow, reduce fuel consumption and cut down on pollution. Most signal cycles fall between 45 and 120 seconds, with patterns varying at midday and overnight, depending on traffic in the area and allowing ample time for pedestrians to cross.

New technologies are being considered, including 'Smart Lights', which Staten Island Borough president, James Molinaro, discovered while vacationing in Florida. Smart Lights use cameras to detect cars that are waiting to proceed, and change the light accordingly. Molinaro has allocated US\$1 million for a study of how the lights would work in the borough. A Smart Light is currently undergoing a test at the Victory Boulevard entrance to the College of Staten Island. The DOT also plans to introduce wireless lights, which offer improved communication between signals. The new wireless signals can be modified in the future based on recommendations from the light-retiming study.



**Left:** *New Smart Lights are hoped to have a positive effect on congestion, emissions and fuel consumption*

The DOT monitors more than half of the city's 12,300 signals, including about 60% of the Island's traffic lights, through the TMC in Long Island City, Queens. Problems with lights wired through the center can be detected and corrected remotely. Problems with the city's 'freestanding' lights not connected to the center are found by inspectors or through calls to the 311 system. The ITE found that in Texas retimed lights resulted in a 24.6% reduction in delays and a 9.1% drop in fuel consumption.

July 31st, 2009

## **\$11.3 Million To Support Limited-Income Commuters**

**Albany** - Governor David A. Paterson today announced the award of \$11.3 million for projects that promote transportation services for limited-income individuals or improve transportation accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The grants will support 13 projects throughout the New York metropolitan area and are distributed through two Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs: more than \$7.3 million in Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grants and \$3.9 million in New Freedom Program funds. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) will administer the funds.

“The New York metropolitan area has one of the greatest transit systems in the world, but many people have difficulty accessing it because of financial or physical limitations,” Governor Paterson said. “The funding we announce today will provide assistance and additional services to thousands of individuals, supporting their careers and promoting independence. I am pleased these federal funds will support needed projects that will improve the quality of life for many New Yorkers and their families.”



Governor David Paterson

NYSDOT Acting Commissioner Stanley Gee said: “This federal funding will be used in New York, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley to enhance pedestrian safety, improve transportation connections between economically distressed communities and employment opportunities and expand transportation services for individuals with disabilities or limited mobility. These projects will make our transportation system even more accessible to the people it serves.”

The FTA launched the JARC program in 1999 to promote and preserve affordable transportation access for many New Yorkers who otherwise could not afford to commute to and from work. The JARC program funds will provide critical transportation information to job-training services for the unemployed. The funds also are being used to make discounted commuter fares available to limited-income individuals who are looking for work or seeking to remain employed and to establish cooperative arrangements with major employers for transportation services that move employees directly to and from work 24 hours a day.

The New Freedom Program started in 2006 as a means to reduce transportation barriers facing individuals with disabilities or limited mobility, empowering them to enter to workforce and participate in community life. The improvements must be beyond those required by the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. The New Freedom funds are being used to provide critical mobility information and other assistance to individuals with disabilities, promote access to transit and other transportation through infrastructure safety improvements and establish cooperative arrangements with human-service agencies and other transportation services to expand travel assistance for individuals in order to improve mobility options.

The funding allocated is based upon a competitive solicitation process conducted by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council. The projects, which require a local funding match of either 50 or 20 percent depending upon the project, are expected to be approved by the FTA and implemented throughout the next year. This is the second year of these project awards, part of an annual apportionment to the metropolitan area for improving mobility by coordinating human service and public transportation needs.

The selected projects provided clear evidence of needs that would benefit from new or expanded services. Additionally, the selected proposals demonstrated strong local financial commitments necessary to sustain the services and to support ongoing job-access efforts.

The transportation providers, local governments and not-for-profit agencies scheduled to receive JARC funding are:

- **Metro North Railroad - \$2 million** to support improvements to the platform and access at Fordham Station. This project will widen the outbound platform and construct additional canopies at the entrance to the platform and make other improvements for pedestrians to facilitate better pedestrian flow and faster loading and unloading of passengers. The total project cost is \$13.8 million;
- **Westchester County Bee Line Bus - \$1,540,542** to increase service on Routes 2 and 20. For Route 2 weekday trips, service will be extended 1.1 miles from its current terminus at Tutor Woods in Yonkers to the 138-acre South Westchester Executive Park in Yonkers. For Route 20, expanded service will provide three additional weekday trips between Tuckahoe Road/ Central Park Ave. and the Bedford Park New York City Subway Station in the Bronx, northbound at 5:40 a.m. and southbound at 12:34 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. The total project cost for three years is \$3,081,083;
- **New York City, Job-Access Screening Tool Project - \$1.54 million** for a project that will complement the New York 511 travel information system by providing 45 travel information kiosks at employment centers through the New York City area. It also will provide promotional and training materials, enabling job seekers to obtain transportation information and utilize state-of-the-art transit planning tools to travel to employment and training opportunities. The total project cost is \$1.925 million;
- **Westchester County Bee Line Bus - \$1,489,887** to continue JARC-funded service for Routes 8, 13, 45, 55 and 78. These transit services connect communities of individuals with limited incomes with prime employment opportunities. The total project cost for three years is \$2,979,775;
- **Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp., Hunts Point Clean Air Transit Shuttle - \$363,022** to provide peak-hour shuttle service from Bronx subway stations to the industrial quarter of the Hunts Point Peninsula. The service will be targeted for individuals with limited incomes not served by the Bronx 6 bus. Service for this two-year program will be provided by four alternate-fuel vehicles. The total project cost is \$726,044; and
- **College of Staten Island, Shuttle System – \$187,364** for the continuation of existing JARC- funded shuttle service from the Staten Island Ferry terminal to the College of Staten Island in Willowbrook, providing a 6.8-mile service with limited stops. The total project cost \$1.675 million.

The New Freedom funding will be allocated to seven local transportation providers and agencies as

follows:

- **New York City, Safe Routes to Transit Initiative - \$915,404** to support a project that will improve pedestrian and vehicle movement at the Buhre Avenue and Middletown Road bus stops in the Bronx, providing improved accessibility for individuals with disabilities and making mass transportation safer, easier and more convenient. The total project cost is \$1,144,255;
- **New York City Department of Aging, Senior Transportation Investment Program - \$750,400** to help fund a mobility manager and five part-time, local-mobility coordinators, provide travel training workshops, purchase five wheelchair-accessible vehicles and fund five drivers (one for each of the city's boroughs) to expand existing transportation services addressing the needs of the frail and elderly. This two-year program has a total cost of \$1,366,914;
- **Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) - \$744,000** to support a project to make accessibility improvements at six LIRR stations: Central Islip, Deer Park, Oceanside, Little Neck, Douglaston and New Hyde Park. Work will provide tactile strips along station platform edges, ADA curb-cut improvements and ADA signage. The total project cost is \$930,000;
- **New York City - \$526,000** to help fund sidewalk and roadway improvements, addressing conditions that create mobility challenges for the elderly and disabled and improving access to transit, paratransit and other transportation services in the city. The total project cost is \$657,500;
- **Putnam County - \$472,000** to support the construction of sidewalks at four locations that connect communities of people with disabilities or limited mobility to existing bus routes along the Route 6 corridor. The locations include senior housing and group homes for individuals with disabilities. Currently, these locations connect to local transit routes by local roadways that do not have sidewalks or shoulders for walking or wheelchair use. The total project cost is \$590,000;
- **Town of Brookhaven - \$180,000** to support the Equal Access to All and Mobility for All programs. The funds will help continue the existing mobility management program for the town of Brookhaven and expand its scope and focus to improve the coordination and integration of human-services and transportation providers and customers. The total project cost is \$225,000; and
- **Association of Travel Instruction, Inc., Mobility Management in New York City - \$118,000** to support a project that will provide one-on-one travel training and travel training workshops for individuals with disabilities in the five boroughs of New York City. The total project cost is \$147,500.

MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2009

# Sports betting on way to N.J.?

Feeling the coming  
competition from  
Delaware, state seeks  
to overturn ban

By **FRANK DONNELLY**  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Staten Island will feel the impact if Delaware's recent legalization of sports betting survives court challenges, and if efforts succeed to bring similar wagering to Atlantic City casinos.

There's no movement afoot to sanction sports wagering in New York state, which allows casinos on up-state Indian reservations and slot machines at about eight horse-racing tracks, including Yonkers Raceway.

But if New Jersey politicians can overturn the federal ban on sports betting, borough residents might make the two-plus-hour trip to Atlantic City to plunk down 50 bucks on the Super Bowl, the NCAA college basketball tournament, or even that day's Yankees-Orioles game.

"If you don't have gambling and people want to do it, they'll migrate," said Jonathan Peters, associate professor of finance at the College of Staten Island in

**SEE GAMBLE, PAGE A 5**



**GAMBLE** FROM PAGE A 1

## Sports betting in N.J.?

Willowbrook. "It would make betting options available to them."

District Attorney Daniel Donovan isn't thrilled by that prospect.

"It could create a new group of gamblers," he cautioned. "People who participate in their [office] Super Bowl pools, may say, 'Wouldn't it be more interesting to put a bet on the game?' Those newly created gamblers may [ultimately] become customers of illegal sports betting" on Staten Island.

Earlier this spring, Delaware legalized sports betting and table games.

Delaware is one of four states — Montana, Nevada and Oregon are the others — that had forms of sports betting grandfathered in under a 1992 federal law outlawing sports wagering nationally.

Delaware officials predict an additional \$55 million in annual revenue for state coffers, if its sports betting plan proceeds. Sports wagering would be permitted only at the state's three racinos (racetracks and casinos) — Delaware Park, Dover Downs and Harrington Raceway.

### OPPOSED BY LEAGUES

The nation's four major professional sports leagues — Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, the National Football League and the National Hockey League — oppose the move, saying broad-scale legalized betting could create incentives to cheat and fix games.

The four pro leagues along with the NCAA filed suit in Delaware federal court July 24 in an attempt to block the plan.

The sports betting market is lucrative.

An estimated \$380 billion a year is illegally gambled on sports. About \$90 million is bet on the Super Bowl alone.

Hoping to take a chunk of the betting pie — and fend off threats to the nation's second-largest gambling market, after Nevada — New Jersey state Sen. Raymond Lesniak, filed suit in Trenton federal court in March to eliminate the federal sports-betting ban. Gov. Jon Corzine supports the action.

The prime beneficiary would be Atlantic City, a

convenient getaway for Staten Islanders.

Each day, hundreds of borough residents board buses that whisk them to the south Jersey casinos. Most are senior citizens, who enjoy the slot machines and gaming tables, said Laura Cagnetta, sales manager for the Port Richmond-based Atlantic Express, which runs buses seven days a week to Atlantic City.

Based on such clientele, she doesn't anticipate an uptick in ridership to Atlantic City if sports betting is legalized.

"It might help a charter [bus] company," Ms. Cagnetta said, adding that bars or other groups could sponsor New Jersey junkets to wager on big games.

Assuming the Nevada model holds true — sports betting comprises only 1.2 percent of that state's gaming revenue — Peters, the CSI professor, said Staten Islanders aren't likely to flock to Delaware or Atlantic City in droves.

But they might head the 100 miles or so south to lay down a few bucks for major sporting events such as the Super Bowl, World Series and the NCAA's Final Four tournament.

"It might serve as a catalyst at certain times of the year, but I don't think it would have a huge impact," he said.

Donovan, the district attorney, said legalized gambling will never eliminate illicit wagering.

For one thing, bookmakers offer better odds than the state. And, in many instances, it's more convenient to bet with the local bookie than travel to a legitimate establishment.

For those and other reasons, the district attorney doesn't think legalized out-of-state sports betting would greatly impact illegal wagering here. Illicit gambling on Staten Island is not seen as a major problem.

But Donovan expressed concern that legalized sports wagering could become the equivalent of the biblical apple that tempted Adam in the Garden of Eden.

"Gambling is an addiction, like drugs and alcohol," he said. "It might create a bigger universe of potential customers for bookies."

## LOOKING COOL ON CAMPUS



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE/IRVING SILVERSTEIN

Fountains bubble up at the College of Staten Island in front of the Center for the Arts, in Willowbrook.



## 'Great friends' form a potent alliance

Posted by [egmcinto](#) August 15, 2009 20:39PM



Staten Island Advance /

Michael McWeeney City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, left, and Councilman James Oddo have a laugh together during Staten Island University Hospital's Elizabeth A. Connelly Emergency and Trauma Center Dedication Ceremony in June.

The Island, from non-profits to small businesses, has benefited from the unlikely friendship between Quinn and Oddo

When City Council Speaker Christine Quinn came to the College of Staten Island to announce funding for a borough-wide breast cancer study last October, it was supposed to be a triumphant moment for her and Minority leader James Oddo, who had been working together for years on an issue that had affected them closely.

But the two were at odds over the controversial vote to extend term limits that was to take place in City Hall the next day. Facing the biggest battle of her political career, Ms. Quinn did not have the support of her closest friend and ally.

### A SIMPLE GESTURE

Ms. Quinn, who had lost her mother to breast cancer when she was 16, started to choke up during her speech, tears streaming down her cheek. Oddo placed his hand on her shoulder for comfort.

That gesture, both have said, encapsulates a 28-year relationship. Somehow, this political odd couple - a straight, conservative Republican from the Mid-Island and a liberal Democrat lesbian from the West Village -- have managed to overcome labels and philosophical differences to form one the most potent alliances in city government.

"It was clear in that moment that we would get through this. At the end of the day, Jimmy Oddo and Chris Quinn are always going to be great friends and great allies in most of our battles," said Ms. Quinn, who keeps a photo of that CSI event on her BlackBerry.

The unlikely friendship has helped the Island as well. It's no coincidence the Speaker has been generous with discretionary funds for the borough's three Council members -- money that has been used to keep dozens of non-profits in the borough afloat; or that Oddo has passed more bills in the Council than any Republican before him -- bills which would have never made it to a vote unless they were supported by the Speaker; that Ms. Quinn, prompted by conversations with Oddo, pushed for tax breaks and legislation to help small businesses; or that Quinn's office released the only city-funded report to acknowledge the borough faces a significant shortage of primary care services.

And their relationship could have even more far-reaching impact for the Island's future, as Ms. Quinn positions herself for a run at mayor and Oddo for borough president. But political strategy and convenience are not the ties that bind these two. They seem to genuinely love and respect each other.

"We have a lot of similarities in our personalities. We are both micro-managers to a fault, we both tend to demonstrate obsessive/compulsive traits, we both are workaholics and we both fell in love with women named Kim," Oddo said.

Ms. Quinn added "loud, pushy and excessive" to that list of common traits. "But in a good way," she quipped.

## **MEANT TO BE**

As far as they are both concerned, the relationship was "meant to be." The two met in 1992 as Council staffers (Oddo worked for former Mid-Island Councilman John Fusco and Ms. Quinn for Tom Duane, now a state senator from Manhattan).

They discovered they were both friends with Staten Island Assistant District Attorney Mark Palladino, who went to Monsignor Farrell High School with Oddo, then to Trinity College in Connecticut with Ms. Quinn. Then they were both elected to the Council on the same day, in a special election on Feb. 16, 1999.

They worked together on the Council's Health Committee, which Ms. Quinn eventually chaired. Tackling issues such as nurses in non-public schools brought her to Staten Island.

Ms. Quinn admits now she was intimidated the first time she came to the borough as an elected official. She feared that a liberal lesbian from Manhattan would never be accepted in a place that has a reputation not just for being conservative, but intolerant. Her warm reception convinced her otherwise.

"For me, to assume that the conservative party members or Republican party members are not going to like me or my family, it's just not true," Ms. Quinn said.

## **GIVES ODDO CREDIT**

She credits Oddo for helping her get over what she called her "internalized homophobia" and opening up her political horizons. She now counts Borough President James Molinaro, a Conservative, and GOP state Sen. Andrew Lanza among her friends.

"I am a better elected official because of it, and I think that I am a better person because of it," she added.

Oddo underwent a similar transformation. After a somewhat sheltered upbringing on Island, he said his time on the Council has helped him "shed some ignorance."

"The best thing about the Council is my best friends aren't white, aren't Catholic and aren't straight," he said.

Under Ms. Quinn's influence, Oddo has become more sensitized to issues of race, gender and sexuality. He even appears to be softening on his stance against gay marriage -- an issue Ms. Quinn has been championing for years.

"It takes on a different context. It isn't about two random people living on the West Coast of the country. There's a face to it now," Oddo said.

Quinn, conversely, authored and successfully passed a bill in July that reduced the city's general corporation tax into a single sales factor -- a move projected to save businesses here \$2.7 billion over the next 10 years. Hardly an accomplishment that would bring praise from her liberal base, Oddo called it "the most creative idea in this year's budget."

They will have to continue to be creative to meet challenges the Island, and the city as a whole, will face during their presumptive third terms. According to several analyses, the city budget gaps over the next three fiscal years will be even larger than this year, with no federal stimulus money to fill them.

At the same time, Oddo and Ms. Quinn hope to utilize a public-private partnership to open a breast health center on the Island, and find ways to alleviate the borough's massive traffic problems.

## **HAVE LOFTY GOALS**

Beyond that? It's no secret Ms. Quinn wants a crack at Mayor Michael Bloomberg's job. Oddo is the heir apparent to Molinaro. If it works out, they would continue the recent legacy of closely tied mayor and borough president tandems, following Molinaro and Bloomberg and Guy Molinari and Rudolph Giuliani before them.

"That would be great for Staten Island," Oddo said.

Peter N. Spencer covers city government for the Advance. He can be reached at [spencer@siadvance.com](mailto:spencer@siadvance.com).

## MTA will not extend Staten Island bus routes

Posted by [dbalsamin](#) August 16, 2009 23:22PM



Staten Island Advance/Maura

Yates If Staten Island officials have their way, city buses -- not school shuttle buses like the one pictured above -- would drop off CSI students and staff in the center of campus rather than at the Victory Boulevard entrance.

Shoppers and employees who take the bus to the Bricktown Centre in Charleston must walk a quarter-mile up Veterans Road West, including a stretch with no sidewalks, to get to the shopping center.

Students and staff at the College of Staten Island get off city buses at the Victory Boulevard entrance to the Willowbrook campus, and must either hoof it to class, or hop on another loop bus that rounds the sprawling grounds.

South Shore City Councilman Vincent Ignizio and Assemblyman Lou Tobacco have pushed for years to get the S74 bus to extend its route to loop around Bricktown to make it more convenient for Islanders. And there is a new push to get the MTA to do the same for the S62 at CSI.

New York City Transit has contended for years that there are no funds available to extend the route of the S74 to make the bus more convenient for riders.

And with CSI providing a wildly successful shuttle bus between the center of campus and the St. George ferry terminal, students have had another option to get to and from class more quickly, with travel times averaging about a half hour.

But, Ignizio said, as far as public transit service goes, "If you want to get people out of their cars, the buses have to take people where they want to go."

With a new executive director and chairman set to come on board at the MTA, Ignizio hopes the authority will "take a look at what we're talking about and give it a fresh eye."

Routing S62 buses onto the campus and adding a stop at the central Center for the Arts would create a 1.7 mile diversion tacking on some five to 10 minutes in additional travel time, said Transit spokesman James Anyansi.

"We think it would be a major inconvenience for the customers who live west of the college," he said.

In addition, the S62's schedule was designed to meet ferries arriving and departing from St. George, and changes in its timetable would result in missed connections, he said.

On top of that, extending the route would increase operating costs.

College officials have made no official requests to extend the route, according to a CSI spokesman.

At the Bricktown shopping center, another no.

"There are no funds available at this time for expanding service," Anyansi said.

"In a multibillion-dollar budget, I'm hard-pressed to accept that a 1/4-mile alteration to a bus route will bankrupt the agency, and I think it's just insulting to the people of Staten Island," Ignizio said.

And with easier access to jobs and more convenience for shoppers with money to burn, "We can't afford not to do it," Tobacco said.

"It's too easy to say no in government," Ignizio said. "This is an obvious fix, and an easy one."

--- *Contributed by Maura Yates*

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## Stephanie Gaskell WAR ZONE



### Top Military Friendly Schools

August 18, 2009

G.I. Jobs magazine just released its annual list of military friendly schools and several New York colleges, universities and trade schools are on the list.

The list reflects the top 15 percent of schools across the nation that “are doing the most to embrace America’s veterans as students.” This includes things like on-campus veterans programs, credit for service and military spouse programs.

“This list is especially important now because the recently enacted post-9-11 GI Bill has given veterans virtually unlimited financial means to go to school,” said Rich McCormack, publisher of G.I. Jobs, which also publishes a list of the nation’s military friendly employers.

Some of the New York schools on the list are Albany Technical College, SUNY-Binghamton, Bryant & Stratton College, CUNY College of Staten Island, Empire State College, ITT Technical Institute, Metropolitan College of New York, New York Chiropractic College, New York Institute of Technology, Pace University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY College at Brockport, SUNY College of Technology at Delhi, SUNY Learning Network, SUNY Ulster County Community College, Syracuse University, The Art Institute of New York City and Utica College.

For the complete list, visit [www.militaryfriendlyschools.com](http://www.militaryfriendlyschools.com).



## Two East Coast Colleges Order Azure Dynamics Shuttle Buses

OAK PARK, MI, Aug. 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ - Azure Dynamics Corporation - ("Azure") or (the "Company"), a leading developer of state-of-the-art green technologies that address environmental and cost issues for the commercial transportation industry, today announced that its shuttle buses will service student and faculty needs at both the College of Staten Island and the University of Fairfield. The two CitiBuses will be delivered in late September for the fall semester.

"We believe that our CitiBuses will be welcomed additions to campus life at the two schools," said Jay Sandler, Azure Dynamics Vice President of Sales. "Students will have access to our innovative transportation technology that reduces emissions thereby protecting air quality at the serene campus locations. The schools will also benefit from the hybrid electric drive train's reduced fuel usage and lower maintenance costs."

The College of Staten Island is working to set a green example for its community. The College is working with the New York Power Authority for grant money to aide in its purchase of the Azure CitiBus.

"We support the college's effort in securing grant money to help offset the cost of the hybrid electric shuttle," said Sandler. "Our vehicles have a demonstrable payback. Under typical operating conditions, and depending on the variable cost of fuel, our products can offer a return on investment in approximately four years. The average lifecycle of a shuttle bus is closer to twelve years, making a compelling economic case for our technology independent of incentive and grant contributions."

The second CitiBus will be delivered to J R Tours which will manage the bus on behalf of the University of Fairfield in Fairfield, Connecticut. Fairfield's campus spans 200 rolling acres just one hour from New York City and minutes from Long Island Sound. The University's administration is eager to add the convenience of a new campus shuttle while safeguarding its air quality.

Arcola Bus Sales in Carlstadt, New Jersey, managed both sales. For over a quarter of a century, Arcola has been providing solutions for virtually every type of transportation and mobility need. Arcola Bus Sales is one of the largest mini-bus distributors in the country and represent the nation's premier vehicle manufacturers.

For more information about Azure Dynamics and its products, please visit [www.azuredynamics.com](http://www.azuredynamics.com).

### About Azure Dynamics

Azure Dynamics Corporation is a world leader in the development and production of hybrid electric and electric components and powertrain systems for commercial vehicles. Azure is strategically targeting the commercial delivery vehicle and shuttle bus markets and is currently working internationally with various partners and customers. The Company is committed to providing customers and partners with innovative, cost-efficient, and environmentally-friendly energy management solutions. For more information please visit [www.azuredynamics.com](http://www.azuredynamics.com).

The TSX Exchange does not accept responsibility for the adequacy or accuracy of this release.

### Forward-looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements. More particularly, this press release contains statements concerning Azure's business development strategy, projected commercial revenues and product deliveries.

The forward-looking statements are based on certain key expectations and assumptions made by Azure, including expectations and assumptions concerning achievement of current timetables for development programs, target market acceptance of Azure's products, current and new product performance, availability and cost of labour and expertise, and evolving markets for power for transportation vehicles. Although Azure believes that the expectations and assumptions on which the forward-looking statements are based are reasonable, undue reliance should not be placed on the forward-looking statements because Azure can give no assurance that they will prove to be correct. Since forward-looking statements address future events and conditions, by their very nature they involve inherent risks and uncertainties. Actual results could differ materially from those currently anticipated due to a number of factors and risks. These include, but are not limited to, the risks associated with Azure's early stage of development, lack of product revenues and history of losses, requirements for additional financing, uncertainty as to commercial viability, uncertainty as to product development and commercialization milestones being met, uncertainty as to the market for Azure's products and unproven acceptance of Azure's technology, competition for capital, product market and personnel, uncertainty as to target markets, dependence upon third parties, changes in environmental laws or policies, uncertainty as to patent and proprietary rights, availability of management and key personnel, and acquisition integration risk. These risks are set out in more detail in Azure's annual information form which can be accessed at [www.sedar.com](http://www.sedar.com).

The forward-looking statements contained in this press release are made as of the date hereof and Azure undertakes no obligation to update publicly or revise any forward-looking statements or information, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, unless so required by applicable securities laws.

SOURCE Azure Dynamics Corporation

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RT/ECPCFC0gv





## Staten Island : l'endroit qu'il faut visiter à New York

Staten Island, en plus d'être l'un des 5 Borough (circonscriptions au nombre de cinq avec [Manhattan](#), le Bronx, [Brooklyn](#) et le Queens) de [New York City](#), dans l'état de New York, aux États-Unis, prend aussi la forme d'une île : l'île de Staten Island. Staten Island, se recoupant aussi avec le comté voisin de "Richmond County", faisant également partie du découpage administratif de l'État de New York, compte environ 445 000 habitants. Placée face à l'extrémité sud de Manhattan, sa superficie s'étend sur 265 km<sup>2</sup>, et, malgré ses 150 km<sup>2</sup> de terres immergées, le point culminant de l'état de New York se trouve à Staten Island, il n'est autre que Todt Hill surplombant les environs à 125 mètres de hauteur. Il est possible d'atteindre le New Jersey, donc le continent depuis Staten Island par 4 ponts : le pont Goethals, le Pont Bayonne, le Pont Verrazano de Brooklyn et le Pont Outerbridge Crossing. Staten Island compte 2 "provinces" : North Shore & South Shore reliées par la Staten Island Expressway.

L'histoire de State n Island est passionnante; tout d'abord peuplée par les tribus Algonquins, elle devient comptoir néerlandais, puis sera cédée aux Anglais en 1667, pour par la suite être unifiée avec New York City en 1898. Bastion républicain de New York, ville essentiellement démocrate, les maires qui s'y sont succédés furent pratiquement toujours républicains, à l'instar du maire actuel de Staten Island, James Molinaro, un conservateur de la première heure.

A noter que pour se rendre à Manhattan, le ferry assure la liaison régulièrement, ainsi que la ligne ferroviaire reliant les "iliens" au continent, il s'agit du MTA Staten Island Railway. A visiter, voir et à faire à Staten Island : Alice Austen House : Ancienne maison d'Alice Austen, l'une des premières photographes féminines les plus accomplies d'Amérique; Borough Hall ou Mairie d'arrondissement qui abrite le Président de l'arrondissement de Staten Island, les peintures murales dans le hall d'accueil retracent l'histoire de Staten Island; CSI Center for the Arts & College of Staten Island : Le lieu de spectacle idéal de Staten Island ainsi que pour les communautés voisines, on y dénombre 5 cinq théâtres sous le même toit; Conference House Park : Site historique retraçant la conférence de la paix 1776 entre les représentants du Congrès continental et le commandant des forces britanniques pendant la guerre d'Indépendance; Fish Tanks at the St.

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George Ferry Terminal : Calme et élégant, le Terminal Ferry à Saint-George est le lieu de rêve, pour les pêcheurs, puisqu'il propose des étangs foisonnants de poissons d'eau de mer; Fort Wadsworth - Gateway National Recreation Area : L'un des plus anciens sites militaires des États-Unis, Fort Wadsworth veillait sur New York pendant près de 200 ans; Garibaldi Meucci Museum : La maison historique d'Antonio Meucci, le véritable inventeur du téléphone et de Giuseppe Garibaldi, qui a soutenu l'unification de l'État italien; et bien d'autres curiosités et lieux de découvertes historiques et actuelles à visiter comme : Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art, National Lighthouse Museum, New York Chinese Scholar's Garden, Noble Maritime Collection, Richmond County Bank Ballpark, St George Theatre, Sandy Ground Historical Museum, Snug Harbor Cultural Center, Staten Island Botanical Garden, Staten Island Children's Museum, Staten Island Museum, Staten Island September 11 Memorial, Staten Island Zoo. Staten Island vaut vraiment la peine d'être visité, si vous vous rendez à New York ! Il reflète aux yeux des visiteurs, un

lieu à mi chemin entre histoire et modernité; Borough contemporain, où se mêlent harmonieusement mémoires et avant-gardisme, Staten Island ne laisse certainement pas, ses visiteurs indifférents !.

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Le [Samedi 29 Août 2009](#) à 09:20  
Article écrit par Toli



## Funding secured by Schumer, McMahon for shuttle between Staten Island colleges, ferry terminal

Posted by [gnyback](#) August 31, 2009 16:26PM



Staten Island Advance/Jan

Somma-HammelSen. Charles Schumer announces the new shuttle service at St. John's University today. Dave Martin, left, presidential chief of staff for Wagner College, the Rev. Patrick J. Griffin, executive vice president for St. John's University's mission and branch campuses, Schumer and Brian Browne, assistant vice president of government relations at St. John's.

The campus shuttle buses that climb steep and curvy Grymes Hill and bring students at Wagner College and St. John's University to and from the Staten Island Ferry have been smiled on by Uncle Sam, thanks to Senator Chuck and Congressman Mike.

U.S. Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Rep. Michael E. McMahon (D-Staten Island) collaborated on the \$260,000 in federal funding, which will cover the cost of running the shuttle for two years. The funds will ease the burden on the two schools, which have been sharing the expense of running Wagner's 11-passenger vans and were seeking help footing the bill in the current belt-tightening climate.

The shuttles, which have been running for six years, and carry about 200 students a day, are a perk Schumer says reduce traffic and improve safety for students who otherwise would walk to other bus routes.

"This is a very good, worthwhile purpose," Schumer said.

And the shuttles might even improve students' love lives, he said, helping students at St. John's campuses in other parts of the city connect after class and on weekends.

"There might be someone you want to date, and you live in Queens," Schumer said. "We want a happy group of students as well."

McMahon's spokeswoman, Lauren Amendolara, said her boss worked very closely with St. John's in preparing the initial request that led to inclusion of the shuttle funds in an omnibus bill that passed the House on July 23.

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved the expenditure and the full Senate will vote on the omnibus bill when it reconvenes.

"This funding will provide for a convenient way for students to get to school without burdening their budget," McMahon said. "It is also an environmentally friendly program - getting more cars off our roads and alleviating the congestion in our already crowded parking lots. This shuttle service will provide a long-awaited benefit for Staten Island students."

Schumer extolled McMahon as "a leader in the House. ... I am happy to work with him to get this done. I couldn't have a better partner."

When she lived on campus, St. John's senior Fortune Attardo of New Dorp said the shuttles were more convenient than transferring between city bus routes. Plus, the trip can take less than 10 minutes, depending on traffic. "This was my way to get to the city, and pretty much get off the hill," she said.

"In this ever-tightening economy, and given the increased transportation costs faced by our students, faculty and staff, I applaud Sen. Schumer for his support of our collaborative efforts to move more Staten Island campus students around in a quick, cost-efficient and environmentally friendly manner," St. John's President the Rev. Donald J. Harrington said in a statement.

Schumer pledged to do whatever he can to make the funding permanent after the two years are up.

Wagner President Richard Guarasci said in a statement that the shuttles will help students experience "the best of both worlds: A traditional campus on a beautiful park-like borough and easy access to Manhattan."

The College of Staten Island runs its own shuttle bus between its Willowbrook campus and the ferry, and also has benefited from federal funding, granted through the state Department of Transportation, though this year's grant was smaller than the year before, and doesn't cover the entire cost of operating the buses, said CSI professor and transportation expert Jonathan Peters. CSI, like Wagner and St. John's, is also seeking a more permanent funding source. Schumer said CSI need only reach out to his office to get in the running for other federal dollars.

The CSI shuttle was initially given a \$410,000 Job Access and Reverse Commute Program grant to get the service up and running, but received just \$187,000 this year, Peters said, "reducing the amount when we were actually looking for more."

The CSI shuttle buses carry between 1,400 and 1,600 riders a day, with a large chunk of those newcomers to transit, Peters said.

*-Contributed by Maura Yates*

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## Obama brings back GI Bill

By Cynthia Via

Contributing Writer

**Published:** Monday, August 31, 2009

**Updated:** Monday, August 31, 2009

In the beginning of August, President Barack Obama unveiled a new post-9/11 G.I Bill that will offer college tuition assistance to veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The reinstated G.I Bill plans to offer \$78 million in benefits to veterans and their families nationwide. It's a significant upgrade to the original, which was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt for WWII veterans.

The legislation has been broadly praised by veterans groups, but there are concerns that universities and the Department of Veterans could be overwhelmed, in part, because of the complexity of the benefits.

The Department of Veterans affairs has already processed more than 100,000 applications, and more than 25,000 service members have applied to use the transfer benefit.

According to [newgibill.org](http://newgibill.org), the new legislation also gives veterans the option to transfer benefits to their spouse or children with eligible service members needing to have served at six years active duty, National Guard or select reserves and agreeing to commit to four more years of service.

The benefits range from 40 percent of the state tuition for those with at least 90 days but less than six months of service since 9/11, to 100 percent for those with at least three years of aggregate service, or 30 continuous days and a discharge because of a service-related disability.

For those attending a private institution or graduate school, the Yellow Ribbon Program, a provision under the G.I Bill, will offer scholarships from 1,100 schools. The schools may enter into an agreement to fund up to 50 percent of the tuition and the Department of Veteran Affairs will match every dollar funded by the schools. This program is only available to individuals who served an aggregate of three years of active duty service or who were released for a

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disability.

The new program was passed and signed into law last year by former President Bush, but only became effective this month. President Obama co-sponsored the new program when he was a senator.

In a statement delivered in George Mason University, President Obama called the benefits not just a “debt” to be repaid to service men and women, but also “an investment in our own country.”

CUNY is expecting a large number of military veterans. To combat this occurrence, the College of Staten Island is adding to its program of support for these student heroes, according to CUNY newswire. The Core program at the College of Staten Island will offer a special section of the course called “Core for Veterans.”

BMCC also hosted a Veteran’s College fair a month after the new law was signed last year. Admission officials from all 23 CUNY universities attended. The college fair served as a way to aid military veterans in their transition to a classroom setting and society in general. The benefits under the law became effective on Aug. 1. Some of the benefits include full tuition coverage at public colleges or universities for eligible veterans, a monthly housing stipend and as much as \$1,000 for books and supplies is also being offered.

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# ***Students & Alumni***



## AROUND THE TOWN



Special to Business Trends

Students from the College of Staten Island presented the findings of a three-month research project to the executive committee of Staten Island's SCORE chapter. Led by their instructor, Bill Dubovsky, their assignment was to do an awareness study of the local SCORE organization in order to determine client perception and to make suggestions on improving services and increasing Web site traffic and participation in seminars, workshops and free business counseling. Pictured, from left, are students Vincent Fabiani and Frank Buscarnera, Jerry DeLucca of SCORE, Chamber President and CEO Linda Baran, Jack Vokral, Samir Farag, and Anthony DeFazio of SCORE, and student Siegfried Prieto.



# Brooklyn Daily Eagle

## Community News

### CSI Student Turns to Law After Drafting Legislation as Intern

by Brooklyn Eagle ([edit@brooklyneagle.net](mailto:edit@brooklyneagle.net)), published online [07-02-2009](#)

When Jessica Scarcella first went up to Albany in January as an intern to Assemblywoman Janele Hyer-Spencer (D-Staten Island/Brooklyn), she was considering pursuing a career in nursing. Now, just a few months later, the College of Staten Island (CSI) student, who is completing her sophomore year, has switched gears — she is now a political-science major — and is looking into attending law school after she graduates.

The ingredients in her transition were diverse, but Scarcella, who lives in Dongan Hills, New York, credits Hyer-Spencer with having opened her eyes to what she could accomplish through getting involved in the legislative process. After Scarcella proposed the idea of drafting legislation that would give pregnant women in their third trimester the ability to utilize handicapped parking spots, Hyer-Spencer encouraged Scarcella to shepherd the proposal through the bill-drafting process.

The resulting legislation, A8703, would enable women in their third trimester to qualify for temporary permits, under the state's Vehicle and Traffic Law, under a clause that creates such permits for individuals who are “temporarily unable to ambulate without the aid of an assisting device.”

Scarcella said she came up with the idea after hearing from a friend in Florida that the state offered maternity parking. When she discussed the subject with Hyer-Spencer, they brainstormed, and, she says, “came up with the idea of having a temporary parking permit for women in their third trimester” that would also be valid during the first three months of motherhood, since parking permits are valid for six months.

The bill, which was introduced on June 9, already has 28 co-sponsors, said Scarcella. "I couldn't believe so many people signed on, so quickly," she remarked. Assemblywoman Hyer-Spencer said it was wonderful to have the opportunity to mentor a young woman like Scarcella. "She really took a liking to politics," the Assemblywoman stressed.

With respect to the maternity parking legislation, "Jessica did everything. She did the research. She wrote the justification memo. She went to bill drafting and sat with the bill drafters and told them what we wanted to do. She came up here, as a student, and she actually drafted a piece of legislation," Hyer-Spencer said.

As she looks ahead and analyzes her future goals, Scarcella credits Assemblywoman Hyer-Spencer with helping her redefine the direction her education would take. "When I first came to Albany," Scarcella said, "I didn't think I was going to be interested in law school, but I spoke to Janele, and she always pushes you to do the hardest thing. Working for her was great."

Questions? Comments? [Sound off to the Editor](#)

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## GOOD NEWS

# CSI prepares for influx of veterans

CUNY school adds to program for returning service personnel

By MAURA GRUNLUND  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

If Uncle Sam wants you, so does the College of Staten Island.

CSI is expecting an influx of military veterans this fall thanks to the new G.I. Bill that goes into effect next month. CSI is adding to its already extensive program of support for these student heroes.

The Core program at the College of Staten Island will offer a special section of the course called "Core for Veterans." Core 100 is one of the required general education courses that all freshmen attend.

Recently, the program has begun designing special-interest sections to meet the needs of the diverse student population that attends CSI.

"In recent months, much attention has been paid to the difficulties confronting the returning vets as they transition back to civilian life," said Donna Scimeca, Core coordinator.

"An awareness of this, and a deep desire to help in some way prompted the Core program to invite students from the veterans group on campus to meet with Core faculty to ask for their input on creating the course and how it might benefit this student population. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive."

The course is intended as an informal support group for the students. The teacher will be Vito E. Zajda, veterans adviser, certifying officer and deputy registrar.

The CSI Student Veteran Center already has a one-stop-service approach for the 132 veteran students who were registered as of the spring semester.

"We see the students through from admission to graduation," Zajda said.

"We want to make sure



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE/IVING SILVERSTEIN

Veterans gathered at the College of Staten Island, Willowbrook, are, from the left: John Hathaway, Greg Daly, Ahmed Kargbo, Besim Mehmedovic, Yoon Jang, Okon Okon, Erica Cano and George Young Jr.

## Do you have good news?

If you have good news to share, send it, with your name, address and telephone number, to Staten Island Advance, 950 Fingerboard Rd., S.I., N.Y. 10305. Or send an e-mail to [grunlund@siadvance.com](mailto:grunlund@siadvance.com).

that they're connected to all the services they are eligible for and the more information we can offer, and the more connected they are with their peers we feel the easier the transition will be," said Urszula Echols, veterans coordinator.

The center, located in

room 219 of building 1C, offers a broad range of academic and social services. Zajda is the go-to guy for assistance with practical matters like admissions, financial aid, military benefits and academic advisement.

Ms. Echols mentors the vets by offering them information and referral for disability services, mental health screenings and treatment, academic assistance or tutoring and a wide range of community resources.

"We provide a safety net for the students who come back with conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)," Ms. Echols said.

"Some of our veteran students are under a lot of stress

and PTSD surfaces under pressure."

Veterans can connect with each other at the Armed Forces Club, which meets at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesdays when school is in session in room 001 of building 2N.

The Armed Forces Club participates in college club functions and hosts a variety of guest speakers and workshops.

The Student Veteran Center hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday, when school is in session in building 1C, room 219. For information, call Zajda at 718-982-2129 or [rajda@mail.csi.cuny.edu](mailto:rajda@mail.csi.cuny.edu), or Ms. Echols at 718-982-3108 or [echois@mail.csi.cuny.edu](mailto:echois@mail.csi.cuny.edu).

## Kamor Olayokun Jr. graduates from the College of Staten Island

Posted by [mdstein](#) July 12, 2009 07:41AM



Kamor Olayokun Jr.

Kamor Olayokun Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Olayokun of Mariners Harbor, graduated from the College of Staten Island with a bachelor's degree in economics and business.

He graduated from Port Richmond High School in 2004.

He is currently employed as a paraprofessional for the New York State Department of Education and plans to pursue a master's degree.

-- Reported by Nicholas Rizzi

## Cynthia A. Karczewski graduates from the College of Staten Island

Posted by [mdstein](#) July 12, 2009 07:39AM



Cynthia A. Karczewski

Cynthia A. Karczewski, daughter of the late Joan and Irv Long of Port Richmond, graduated with honors from the College of Staten Island with a master of science degree in adult health nursing.

She received her post-graduate certificate in advanced cultural competence and was the speaker at the nursing ceremony.

She graduated from CSI in 1995 with a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

Ms. Karczewski earned her AAS degree in nursing in 1976 from Staten Island Community College.

She is currently employed as the Manhattan Borough Nursing Director at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Office of School Health.

-- Reported by Nicholas Rizzi

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## Jill A. Rini graduates from the College of Staten Island

Posted by [mdstein](#) July 12, 2009 07:19AM



Jill A. Rini

Jill A. Rini, daughter of Anthony and Elisa Rini of Huguenot, graduated from the College of Staten Island with a bachelor of arts degree in psychology with a minor in sociology.

While at CSI, she was on the dean's list.

She graduated from Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music and Performance Arts in Manhattan in 1994.

She is currently interning at Freedom From Fear and plans to pursue a master's degree in mental health.

-- Reported by Nicholas Rizzi

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## Dana Moody graduates from the College of Staten Island

Posted by [mdstein](#) July 12, 2009 07:20AM



Dana Moody

Dana Moody, daughter of Joseph and Donna Albanese of Eltingville, graduated from the College of Staten Island with a bachelor of arts degree in English language arts with a concentration in creative writing.

While at CSI, she was on the dean's list, served as the commissioner of finance for the Student Government, the deputy commissioner of the Academic and Curricular Affairs and Student Center commissions. She also served on the Campus Activity Board, where she was the deputy chair and trip coordinator.

She will pursue a master's degree in adolescent education from CSI. She also plans to become a public school teacher and pursue her Ph.D. in either administration or student activities.

-- Reported by Nicholas Rizzi

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July 26, 2009

COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND

## A Dillar a Dollar, a 12 O’Clock Scholar

By BRIGHID CASTACIO

Class ended early on our last meeting of the semester before summer break, and I felt completely at odds as to what to do with myself. The stress of the past few weeks had become so intense; it seemed as if sheer madness was not very far off. In that moment, as I left the classroom, the singleminded purpose of finishing these courses, which had driven me day and night for so many weeks, simply dissipated and left me aimless as I drove away from the campus. I called my husband to check in and see if the children were sleeping.

My daughter had fallen asleep waiting for me — her personal vigil to stay awake “until mommy comes home” was unsuccessful. But of course, I thought to myself, she had been getting up with the sun to begin our mad dash: walk the dog, get the baby ready, eat some breakfast, search for missing keys that, for some reason or other, were always missing.

As I pulled the door shut that morning, I realized I hadn’t brushed her hair. With a sigh, I momentarily debated whether to go back inside. Stay? Go? It was already 5 after, and my class was about to start. She would have to go as is. Poor kid. To make matters worse, I had recently extended her daycare schedule to a full 35-hour week. I had held off as long as I could, but there would have been no way to finish the semester without it. I was angry at myself the other day, when I sat down at the end of the night and realized I had spent a grand total of one hour with her. That was completely unacceptable.

There had been no room in the daycare center for my son, which was probably better anyway, since he had a weak immune system and had already been hospitalized twice, including right after the semester started, much to my chagrin. He had been staying with my sister, who fortunately enough was unemployed. We joked about how she was my nanny-fairy. She had spent her day playing blocks, reading books, walking the baby and dog to the park, washing the dishes, doing the laundry — well, sort of, and when the baby took his nap, she would study for her G.R.E.

As I left campus that evening, I wasn’t headed anywhere in particular, and just seemed to follow one street to another, wherever they led, until finally I found myself on the other side of Staten Island, on a hill overlooking the Narrows. I sat there for a while and looked out at the bridge, watching the ships coming and going.

My thoughts reverted to last December. I was not a student then, just a mom, with little plans to return to school just yet. I had started my master’s two years before, but took a break when my son was born last year. But with the economic downturn making it increasingly difficult to keep up with the payments on my already-existing [student loans](#), and at my husband’s absolute insistence, I found myself in the classroom one evening in late January.

There had been little available except for daytime classes.

“Great! Now I need to find daycare again,” I remember thinking. The mere thought inflicted wounds on my soul as I relived images of my daughter last time I had been in school, clawing at the doorposts, thrashing wildly and screaming each morning when we arrived at her daycare. It was agonizing. I used to drop her off in the morning and spend the next 15 minutes in the hallway wondering what was wrong with me, if I should rush in and rescue my child. There had been days when I felt so paralyzed standing there, not knowing what to do. Her teachers had reassured me that as soon as I left she was generally fine.

Fortunately, this semester started off much better. She was put in a room with a teacher she had had previously, and that small bit of familiarity made such a difference. Granted, she still cried during naptime the first few weeks, but the teacher was accommodating, allowing her a bear or a book, as long as she sat quietly. Her teachers would leave pictures for me in her cubby, of her on the slide, or painting or playing with blocks. Even still, I question whether I made the right decision to go back so soon.

She still asks me if she can stay home in the mornings, and I smile at her and tell her, “next week.” Yes, next week, we will take a long nap, and maybe my eye will finally stop twitching uncontrollably. Next week, we’ll sleep in and then go for a walk around the lake, look for some turtles and fish and maybe even some ducklings, and well, who knows, but there will be ...no mad dash...(at least until next semester).

*Brigid Castacio, College of Staten Island (CUNY), M.S. candidate, 2011, education*

# CSI students focus on S.C.O.R.E.

Their marketing study spurs changes in the way the Island's chapter does business for businesses

By BARTON HOROWITZ  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

The results of a recent student-research project at the College of Staten Island, Wil- lowbrook, are being put to good use by a local business-counseling organization.

The Island's S.C.O.R.E. chapter was the focus of a project undertaken by CSI students Vincent Fabiani, Toniann Ligamari, Frank Buscamera and Siegfried Prieto as part of their studies in a marketing research course taught by CSI adjunct instructor Bill Dubovsky of Comtel Information Services, Eltingville.

The outcome of the students' work made so much sense that some of their suggestions already have been implemented by the S.C.O.R.E. chapter since being unveiled last month, said Samir Farag, chairman of the local business group.

"We already were aware of some changes that needed to be made, but the students made it very clear in terms of what we need to do to follow up," Farag said. "They put a lot of energy and thought into their research, and their presentation was great."

Working under a fictitious company name created with the first letter of each of their names, the four students, aka



Standing left to right, first row: CSI student Vincent Fabiani; Frank Buscamera, recent CSI graduate; Linda Baran, president and CEO of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce; Samir Farag, executive director of S.C.O.R.E.; and Siegfried Prieto, CSI junior. Chamber and S.C.O.R.E. members in the second row: Jerry DeLuca, left, Jack Vokral and Anthony DeFazio.

"VTFS Research Group," developed a questionnaire that went out to about 1,200 Island-based businesses. The survey found that most respondents were men between the ages of 35 and 64. Those who used S.C.O.R.E.'s services had more education than those who did not, ranging from some college experience to advanced degrees. Of clients using S.C.O.R.E.'s services, client satisfaction with counselors was rated highly.

Included in the recommendations made to S.C.O.R.E.'s executives were: To bring the group's Web site more in line with the organization's national and city sites; to charge a small fee for seminars in order to increase marketing exposure, and to update the survey each year, using a large business gather-

ing — such as the Staten Island's Economic Development Corporation's annual conference — to involve a wider variety of businesses and trends.

As a result of the findings, the local S.C.O.R.E. chapter has reviewed its Web site and already has begun to make changes, Farag said. In addition, he said, S.C.O.R.E. plans to implement a campaign to educate business and professional people Islandwide about the advantages of belonging to the organization.

Barton Horowitz is the Advance senior business writer/columnist. He may be reached by e-mail at [horowitz@siad- vance.com](mailto:horowitz@siad- vance.com).





PHOTO COURTESY COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND

## WILLOWBROOK

## NOTABLE NEIGHBOR

Visually challenged student, single mother of 3, is rewarded with 4 scholarships for academic and leadership skills. **E 3**

## NOTABLE NEIGHBOR

## High-achiever rises above a visual challenge

CSI student, legally blind and a single mother of 3, rewarded with 5 scholarships acknowledging her skills

By DIANE C. LORE  
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

**WILLOWBROOK** — College of Staten Island sophomore **Marybeth Melendez** has been one lucky lady lately, collecting a number of scholarship awards for her academic success and leadership skills.

She recently won the 2009 Michael D. Solomon Scholarship Award, the 2009 Women's Opportunity Award, and the \$5,000 North Atlantic Regional Award from the Staten Island Chapter, Soroptimist International. She also received a scholarship from the American Association for University Women. And just this week she received a fifth academic scholarship for more than \$3,500 from CSI itself.

The awards are even more remarkable when one considers that Ms. Melendez, 42, a Willowbrook resident with a double major in clinical psychology and sociology, is blind — and raised three children on her own.

"When I came to CSI," Ms. Melendez recalled, "I had my goals set, but I wasn't entirely sure how I was going to meet the challenges. You have to stop and think: How does a blind person become a student in the classroom with other (sighted) students?"

"I remember walking into a classroom," she continued, "and as the professor was writing on the blackboard, it looked like hieroglyph-



Marybeth Melendez, a sophomore at the College of Staten Island, recently received five scholarship awards, including one from the American Association for University Women.

ics to me. All I heard were the sounds and smell of chalk. And there was the business of writing and the textbooks I couldn't read.

"For one moment, my heart stopped," she confessed.

Then, Ms. Melendez was referred by friends and professors to CSI's Office of Disability Services.

"That was one of the definitive factors in my success here. They had all the tools that I needed to become a productive, visually impaired student."

The combination was "explosive" she said.

In her year and a half at CSI, Ms. Melendez has flourished as a student in the Verrazano School, which is an honors program offered by the college. She also has a lengthy list of other accomplishments, including an appointment as CSI's representative to the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities. She serves as president of the OUI Club, for students with disabilities, and is a member of the Psychology Club and the American Sign Language Club.

A full-time student, she plans to apply to law school when she graduates from CSI, and

hopes to combine a law degree with her background in psychology and sociology to work with battered women and abused children.

She credits her children, **Monica Perez**, 20; **Daniel Perez**, 18, and **Nicholas Perez**, 16, for inspiring her to return to school. "They are my heroes; they keep me grounded," she said.

Born and raised in Spanish Harlem, she moved to Willowbrook in 2001, seeking a more suburban setting for her family after 9/11. As her children grew, her vision gradually deteriorated, she explained, as a result of a genetic disease of the retina inherited from her father.

But even before she decided to earn a college degree, Ms. Melendez was never one to let her deteriorating vision get in her way. She also is skilled in the martial art of judo and trained in vocal performance.

She competed and won a bronze medal in judo during the 1998 World Games in Madrid, and won an Olympic gold medal in the Olympic qualifying games the same year, although she did not compete in the Olympics.

A graduate of LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts, where she was trained in voice and classical performance, Ms. Melendez wowed the crowd at the Richmond County Ballpark at St. George on July 20 with her vocal performance of the National Anthem before the Staten Island Yankees game.

Ms. Melendez said she's proud to have been nominated for her academic honors. "The fact that this isn't something I had solicited spoke volumes to me. I was touched," she said.

For her Soroptimist Award, Ms. Melendez

traveled to Albany and met women from throughout New York State who occupy leadership positions in professional and business circles.

"I'm a lucky woman; I have a guardian angel looking over me," she said.

"I'm grateful that every time I needed assistance, there was someone there to shed a little light and give me a hand to where I had to go. I worked hard for this. I have determination and perseverance. I know where I've been; I know where I am now, and I know where I want to go," she said.

Ms. Melendez also said she's happy to serve as a role model for others who might be in the same position. "I have a disability; it's who I am," she said, "but if I can do this now in my life, can you imagine what others in my shoes can do?"



## Sharon Geidel graduates from Excelsior College

Posted by [mdstein](#) August 02, 2009 07:05AM

Sharon Geidel, daughter of Larry Hartnett and the late Diane of Tottenville, graduated with high honors from Excelsior College in Albany, N.Y., with a master's degree in nursing.

She received her associate's degree in nursing from the College of Staten Island in 1994 and her bachelor's degree in nursing from Warwick College.

She is a 1981 graduate of Tottenville High School.

She is currently on the teaching staff of Anthony's Hospital in Warwick, N.Y.

-- Reported by Nicholas Rizzi

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## A lot of garbage and red tape for New Brighton family

Posted by [calzolari](#) August 05, 2009 15:23PM



Anthony DePrimoThe owners of this house on York Avenue have been plagued by city violations because of the vacant lot next to it.

New Brighton homeowner Mark Lara, 69, is frustrated, furious, and does not know where to turn next. He has already handed over \$1,400 in fines to the city for Health-Department violations on property that he does not own, and last week received a written warning that he owes the city another \$800.

It's a bizarre tale of an incorrect property address that started seven years ago, and remains unresolved until now.

Lara, a retired NYC Transit Authority carpenter, came to the U.S. in 1960, from the town of Caraz in northern Peru, where spectacular mountains and glaciers mark the landscape. He has lived in his house at 338 York Ave., since 1974, and also owns the adjoining lot with a one-story garage. Fig trees from the former Italian owner still fill in the spacious, meticulously maintained back-yard perennial and herb garden that his wife Shirley tends.

"On the other side of us was a house that went on fire and was torn down a few years after we moved in," Mrs. Lara explained. That site, still an overgrown vacant lot often littered with garbage, is the apparent reason for the costly bureaucratic nightmare that the couple has endured for years.

The first sign of a mix-up came in 2002, when Lara applied for a home equity loan from HSBC bank, to help his son Harold, a 1996 graduate of the College of Staten Island, pay off his student loans. "It was approved, but then the lady from the bank called me, and said that the city had a \$1,399.50 lien on my house that I had to pay so the loan could go through," he told the Advance.

The lien represented fines for three violations, plus accumulated interest, for "dirty sidewalk" conditions at 340A York Ave., the address of Lara's street-front garage. The violations were recorded in October and December 1995, and October 1996. The couple said it was the first time that they learned about the citations, and they were astonished.

"I'm always sweeping, picking up garbage, keeping everything clean," said Mrs. Lara. The garbage-filled vacant lot next door was the problem.

Lara reluctantly paid the lien, not wanting to jeopardize his bank loan, but since then he has been unable to challenge the city to recoup his money.

"They kicked me from one place to another," he said. He visited the borough president's office, and

was sent from there to two other city agencies in St. George, another in Manhattan, and one in Astoria, Queens. No one was interested and stepped up to help, he said.

The next sign of trouble was Lara's quarterly real-estate tax bill for November 2005 to February 2006. He showed a reporter the original document, pointing out the Statement Details that included three separate charges for city exterminating services.

"The city came and put rat poison in the vacant lot [next door], and posted a warning sign. But I got the bill," he said, shaking his head.

It was not until last year that the Laras felt certain that careless city inspectors were incorrectly identifying the overgrown, often-littered, vacant lot on the other side of their house, as 340A York Ave., the address of their garage.

Based on an inspection on Nov. 13, 2008, the Laras received a Notice of Violation (NOV) from the city's Health Department, citing two conditions at the 340A York Ave. address:

"High weeds exists [sic] in that dense weeds approximately three to four feet high observed inside the left fence and exterior of the garage."

"Rubbish conditions exists [sic] in that discarded lumber, cut tree wood, and scattered recyclables observed inside the left exterior garage, creating harborage conditions conducive the rodent infestation."

The couple was dumbfounded because the violations described conditions on the vacant lot adjacent to their home, not on their property. The NOV required an appearance on Jan. 21, 2009 at 1 p.m. for a hearing before the health department's administrative tribunal at 66 John St., in downtown Manhattan.

"I had to take the day off," said Lara, who now works part-time for Access-A-Ride. He and his wife arrived on time, waited an hour to be called, and were told to reschedule another appointment because the inspector who wrote the violations was not present.

The new appointment coincided with a date when the Laras were away on vacation. Back home, Lara traveled again to John Street to explain and, he said, was told that another appointment date would be sent to him in the mail.

Nothing came until last month, when he received a letter from the tribunal, warning him about the additional \$800 in fines. The \$800 fine can be traced back to two official documents that Lara showed to a reporter last week.

A health department Pest Control Services inspection on Sept. 29, 2008 identified 340A York Ave. - where the Laras' garage is located -- as a public area with a "vacant lot or exterior" with "rubbish/high weeds." Partially illegible handwritten comments on the one-page form noted "dense high vegetation," and "condition for rodent."

The Lara garage is not a public area: The building occupies the entire front lot, separated from their home by a walkway leading to a covered concrete patio and, beyond that, a mature garden.

August 9, 2009

DVDS

## Grindhouse at Your House

By [DAVE KEHR](#)

IN the 1970s and '80s I spent a lot of time in Chicago, where I lived and worked, haunting the city's still impressive range of grindhouse theaters, not just the magnificently decaying palaces in the Loop, but the many neighborhood theaters that operated with a discount policy, as low as 65 cents in one much-loved location.

These theaters, like equivalent establishments along 42nd Street in Manhattan, mixed second-run Hollywood attractions with more disreputable, exploitation movies from small distributors like Hallmark, Bryanston, Dimension (before that name was commandeered by the Weinstein organization), Crown International and [Roger Corman](#)'s New World Pictures, the MGM of the exploitation industry.

Much of this material was bluntly meretricious, but occasionally you would stagger home after seeing something truly strange and subversive, like Stephanie Rothman's feminist horror film "[The Velvet Vampire](#)" (1971), Rene Daalder's pointedly political analysis of revolution at a suburban high school, "[Massacre at Central High](#)" (1976), or [Abel Ferrara](#)'s androgynous addict revenge film, "[Ms. 45](#)" (1981). In a way the exploitation scene was Sundance for outsiders, an outlet for visions so fiercely independent that no upscale distributor would touch them.

Some movies were regional releases, like Jack M. Sell's 1980 "Psychotronic Man," the story of a Chicago barber with the power to kill by staring very, very hard at people he doesn't like. If "[Combat Shock](#)," made in New York in 1983-84 and released by Troma Entertainment (in an edited, rescored version) in 1986, ever made it to Chicago, I missed it. But I'm grateful to Troma (one of the few remaining rough and ready outfits of the old days) for having issued a double-disc edition in honor of the film's (almost) 25th anniversary. The disc includes not only the 92-minute version that Troma released but also the director's original 100-minute cut, called "American Nightmares" and presented in a first-generation print that has never been seen on video.

Directed by Buddy Giovinazzo, a graduate of the College of Staten Island's film program, this is one uncompromising picture, a movie so eccentric and so relentless that no mere profit motive could possibly explain it. Lured by garish posters that promised a "[Rambo](#)"-style revisionist take on the Vietnam War, audiences were confronted with a cosmically bleak portrait of an ex-P.O.W., Frankie Dunlan, living in claustrophobic squalor on the saddest block in Staten Island.

Saddled with a nagging wife and a keening, deformed baby (played by a puppet that resembles the mutant infant of "[Eraserhead](#)"), Frankie sets out to find a few bucks to pay the rent on his rancid apartment. Instead

he passes the day negotiating flashbacks to his gruesome war experiences and dodging the minions of the local loan shark. The claustrophobic despair only intensifies until Frankie takes matters into his own hands and returns to rescue his wife and baby the only way he knows how, with a loaded gun.

Shot in 16 millimeter on a budget of a few thousand dollars, “Combat Shock” owes much of its disorienting sense of the familiar made unfamiliar to Mr. Giovinazzo’s shrewd use of obscure, unhappy corners of Staten Island. They’re clearly New York but hard for an outsider to place. The Vietnam sequences were shot in the marshlands around the Fresh Kills landfill, much as the young [Stanley Kubrick](#) staged an unnamed war in the San Gabriel mountains for his first feature, [“Fear and Desire”](#) (1953).

Starring as Frankie is Mr. Giovinazzo’s younger brother, Rick — a gaunt figure whose burning eyes, long greasy hair and black trench coat make him look like a harbinger of serial killers to come. (One learns with relief from the Internet Movie Database that Rick Giovinazzo has gone on to a successful career orchestrating scores for Hollywood films like [“Role Models”](#) and [“Angels and Demons.”](#)) The movie is channeled completely through Frankie’s point of view, as he drifts through refuse-strewn industrial sites and past abandoned storefronts, his interior monologue of shame and resentment churning away on the soundtrack.

“Combat Shock” has clearly been influenced by [“Taxi Driver,”](#) but there is no mournful [Bernard Herrmann](#) score to romanticize Frankie’s quest and no sensuous slow-motion shots of the city’s mean streets to aestheticize his degraded environment. As one commenter observes in the accompanying making-of documentary, “this film smells” — but not in a metaphorical sense. The entire world of “Combat Shock” seems to have aged beyond its sell-by date, an olfactory metaphor that Mr. Giovinazzo drives home with an unforgettable image involving a carton of spoiled milk.

Even Frankie’s one point of pride — that he witnessed a My Lai-style massacre in Vietnam but refused to take part in it — comes into question, undermined by his own obsessive afterthoughts. Failed by the state, his family and his own consciousness, Frankie finally, quietly implodes, bringing it all back home in a climactic killing spree that takes the outward form of preparing a cozy, domestic dinner. It’s filmed with the utmost simplicity, and it is very, very hard to take.

After directing a second feature, [“No Way Home”](#) (1996), Mr. Giovinazzo moved to Berlin, where he continues to teach film and write fiction. He has completed a film adaptation of his 1993 novel [“Life Is Hot in Cracktown,”](#) starring Kerry Washington and [Brandon Routh](#), that is to be released directly to DVD by Anchor Bay at the end of the month.

Home video has, of course, provided an extension of 42nd Street that runs through millions of American living rooms, and movies every bit as obscure and unruly as “Combat Shock” are now receiving top flight DVD releases through distributors like Severin Films, Dark Sky and Blue Underground.

Despite the disappearance of grindhouses, a sizable public remains for contrarian films that subvert cheerful Hollywood formulas, that challenge the upbeat platitudes of mainstream independent films and that deny the rosy triumphalism of [“American Idol”](#) and so much network television. The movies are a constant invitation to escape our everyday existence, but as “Combat Shock” reminds us, but not everyone wants to flee in the same direction. (Troma Entertainment, \$19.95, not rated)



**SCHOLARS:**Time Warner Cable public affairs manager, Karen LaCava, left, awarded \$2,000 in scholarship funding to offset the costs of pursuing higher education to, from left, Tottenville High School graduate Lauren Bricker, soon to be a freshman at the University of Delaware; Petrides High School graduate Bennie Su, who'll enter Hunter College next month; and Staten Island Technical High School graduate Maria Kamenetskaya, who'll attend CUNY's Macaulay Honors College.

Monday, August 17, 2009 10:52:24 AM

## Marian Renta Is All About Business...Literally.

August 16, 2009

Yolanda Marie Sullivan



All celebrities, with the exception of the ever-famous Jacksons, have pre-fame memories and stories to tell, from family experiences and growing pains to school and adolescence. While some A-listers like Mariah Carey have obtained hours of Beauty Schooling, other stars have very little to tell of what their career plans were. Could they have realized their fate of stardom early? Perhaps. But singer-songwriter **Marian Renta** has never steered his eyes from the prize; after all, he's all about *business*, and of the most meaningful *degree*...literally.

While Marian has spent the past six years in the studio songwriting, producing, and recording gut-busting vocals, higher education has never been the least of his concerns. Despite a demanding routine of deadlines, promotional campaigning, and relenting shows, Marian has continued his education beyond high school parameters, and has continued to attend the City University of New York's very own College of Staten Island in pursuit of an Associate's of Applied Science in Business Accounting. Though not stated by Marian, his concentration in the Accounting spectrum of Business could probably be attributed to his late mother (Jacqueline Rentas) having obtained a Bachelor's degree in Accounting.

So while Marian is running his show and presenting audiences and fans with tasty music, it's quite reasonable to anticipate a rather commercial side of him with knowledge of business relations and monetary communication. In this fashion, he can only be benefited, and it should surely place him in a position that allows him to maintain control of his music career, including the background scenes where revenue and business affiliations dwell.

For more information and updates on **Marian Renta**, visit: [marianrenta.com](http://marianrenta.com)

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{SIDE BAR}

## Q-SINY

S.I.'s first openly gay club in more than a decade is up &amp; running

BY JODI LEE REIFER  
reifer@siadvance.com

House beats blaring on the sound system, the brunette in the leopard skin tank top works her way onto the sunken dance floor. A silver-haired woman follows closely. Disco lights scramble.

The silver-haired woman wraps her lasso of choice — a cotton, white sweater — around the brunette's waist, pulling her close.

The pair groove like it's nobody's business. And it isn't — especially not here at Q-SINY, the first openly gay nightclub and restaurant on Staten Island in more than a decade.

Officially open since July 4, the spacious Midland Beach spot has worked out the inevitable new-business kinks to become an oasis for a crowd tired of trooping to Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey for gay-friendly scenes.

"It's about time that I can come to a place and feel comfortable," says Elaine McAndrew, 55, an educational administrator who lives in the neighborhood.

McAndrew and her partner, Alice Valesquez, 53, blend into a diverse Saturday night crowd of lesbians, gay men and a handful of straights, both female and male. Their ages span from 19 — patrons must be 18 to enter and 21 to drink — to 60-something, with many falling in the 30- and 40-something middle.

Q-SINY's owners Jim McKernan, 44, and his partner of 16 years, Ray Carr, 48, say they opened their venue in response to the LGBT community's gaping need for a regular place to rock out. "They've been screaming for it," says McKernan.



Q-SINY's dance floor during the club's grand opening. AWE PHOTOS / BILL LYONS

The Castleton Corners couple picked up the call, after bumping into old friends at recent dance parties hosted by a gay-friendly travel agency in West Brighton and a new LGBT wellness center in Tompkinsville.

"Our community really needs something like this to support ourselves," says Carr.

McKernan, who has never owned a bar, but managed and worked in several throughout Florida, remembers a gay bar that operated in South Beach under the names "Brazil," "Abracadabra" and "Sand Castle." But that establishment closed about 15 years ago.

A short-lived gay-friendly bar, Krave, operated in Rosebank several years ago, and the now-defunct Hush, a Tottenville nightclub, devoted at least one night to gay crowds.

Q-SINY operates as a restaurant on Sundays, and Wednesday through Friday afternoons, seating up to 130 patrons for dinner.

Roy Emanuel, the sous chef at Bally's in Atlantic City for 15 years, mans the kitchen, preparing grilled baby lamb chops (\$26), Kobe beef burgers (\$26) and Alaskan King crab (\$22).

But it's after 10 on Friday and Saturday nights that Q-SINY adds a new flavor to Staten Island.

Cross-dressers casually sip cocktails at the ample, rectangular bar. A male stripper defies the laws of gravity by lifting patrons, small and large. And Luscious Lola, a drag queen, holds court regularly.

"It's nice in a way because it's laid back," says Steve Novello, 19, of Eltingville, an

out and proud College of Staten Island junior. "But it's also hard," he says, sizing up the estrogen-heavy dance floor. "I'm waiting for all the guys."

That could happen. Maybe. DJ Haydes, spinning house and classics on a recent Saturday, was booked by Anthony Caggino, who promotes clubs across NYC. He sees a burgeoning, young and proud crowd on Staten Island that needs outlets. "Why make them cross the bridge?" asks the 31-year-old Caggino, who works by day as an executive assistant at a private equity firm.

He says he can envision his crew trekking from their Queens base to the S.I. spot at least once a month because of its intimate feel and solid sound system. "We want to spread our love everywhere."

## Q-SINY

**Where:** 632 Midland Ave., Midland Beach; 1-800-QSINY22; qsiny.com.

**Hours:** 4 p.m.-4 a.m. Wednesday through Friday; 2 p.m.-4 a.m. Saturday; 2 p.m.-2 a.m. Sunday.

**Happy hour:** 4-8 p.m. Wednesday-Friday.



Rain Storm of Fort Wadsworth, Alex Carr of Grant City, Jim Sullivan of West Brighton and Lorena Redd of Willowbrook at the bar's official grand opening.

**AWE ACCESS:** See Music & Nightlife calendars pages 13-15 for more bar event listings.



## Hair salon gives back in patriotic style

Posted by [nrizzi](#) August 20, 2009 16:34PM

NEW DORP - Giving back is part of the culture at the Academy of Cosmetology & Aesthetics on New Dorp Lane, and on Aug. 29, the students and staff will be at it once again. This time it's a fashion show and dance party to raise money for U.S. Army soldiers, at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, who will be shipping out in a few weeks for tours of duty in Iraq.

The event kicks off at 7 p.m. on the Academy's spacious and lavishly-mirrored first floor, and continues until midnight.



Photo courtesy of Michael

Schaab The staff at the Academy of Cosmetology and Aesthetics in New Dorp will host a fashion show on Aug. 29 for U.S. Army soldiers from Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, who will be deploying to Iraq.

A highlight of the evening will be a fashion show, with close to a dozen students modeling creative, military-themed outfits of their own design. Other young professionals studying at the Academy will take on the models' makeup and hairstyling.

"We'll have a cover band, DJ, dancing, food, a non-alcohol cash bar, and raffles," said staffer Rachel Seamon. Donations from local businesses are expected to defray some of the expenses, she added.

The driving force behind the fund-raiser is St. George resident Besim Mehmedovic, 23, a U.S. Air Force veteran who was an active-duty airman from 2003 to 2007; his service included a 3-month stint in Bilad, Iraq, 40 miles north of Baghdad. Mehmedovic has worked at the Academy as a facility leader since February, and graduated from the College of Staten Island, Willowbrook, with high honors this month.

"Right now, the country is focused on health-care reform," said Mehmedovic. "But I don't want anyone to forget the troops who are working every day and need our appreciation."

At the Academy, "everyone I work with has tremendous love and support for the troops," he added. "It's near and dear to us. Some of them have family members over there."

The funds raised will be used to send care packages to the soldiers in Iraq, and to provide help to their families.

Admission is a suggested donation of \$10. For more information, call 718-979-9001, ext. 16.

## 'Combat Shock's' cult status surprises former Staten Island filmmaker

Posted by [jpyates](#) August 30, 2009 09:00AM



Photo courtesy of Buddy Giovinazzo  
Buddy Giovinazzo, Ron Cosentino and Brandon Routh on the set of Giovinazzo's new film, "Life is Hot in Cracktown."

### 25 years after making movie, Buddy Giovinazzo is still stunned by its success

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- In the early 1980s, student filmmaker Buddy Giovinazzo wrote and directed a feature film about a grievously damaged Vietnam veteran who snaps and executes his wife and infant son.

Twenty-five years later, "Combat Shock" has a cult following and, in some circles, it's considered a classic of 1980s movie making.

Re-released this month, the deluxe anniversary DVD includes the original film, a director's cut (titled "American Nightmares") and interviews with Giovinazzo and some of his admirers.

After a stint teaching film at his alma mater, the College of Staten Island, the Port Richmond native moved to Berlin, Germany, in 1998.

He loves Berlin ("Anything goes here. It's anarchy! I love that."), where he writes and directs his own projects and directs for television.

Giovinazzo's new film, "Life is Hot in Cracktown," based on his own 1993 novel, is on the European festival circuit. The American DVD was released earlier this month.

Last week via e-mail, he recalled making "Combat Shock." Many scenes were shot in Port Richmond, where the protagonist lives in squalor. For the Vietnam flashbacks, he used some bad-smelling

swampland across the road from the Staten Island Mall.



Photos courtesy of Clyde Folley/Troma Entertainment

**Q. The film has a cult following on both sides of the Atlantic. Does it surprise you? Are you comfortable with its pervasive "horror film" categorization?**

A. Yes, it surprises me no end.

Who could have expected such a thing from this film?! You remember the humble beginnings of it all, having nothing tangible except the desire to tell a story that no one at the time was telling.

I'm not sure how I feel about the "horror film" categorization of the film. The film was never conceived as a horror film, but over the years the film was embraced as such by the horror audience.

I think there is a crossover effect in that "Combat Shock" is a hard-as-nails depiction of life that is in some ways more horrifying than most horror films.

**Q. Didn't the film come out before the term "combat shock syndrome" became common usage?**

A. At the time of the release, the term "post traumatic stress disorder" was just coming into use. I first became aware of this syndrome during the editing of the film; that might have been the moment when I thought that the film was about something bigger than I originally planned.

I was making a dark little drama at first; no-holds-barred, no filter to clean anything up. I wanted it to be as raw as can be; I never anticipated how raw it would actually come across to an audience.

**Q. Today, it looks complicated and ambitious. Could a student afford to make such a film today? What was your budget 25 years ago?**

A. I think it would be easier today to make such a film. With contemporary technology and computer editing systems, it would be considerably easier.

"Combat Shock" was made in every way as a film, with 16-mm cameras, sound equipment, editing consoles; these things were not easily obtainable and were very expensive as well.

As a student at the College of Staten Island and later as a film instructor, I had access to this equipment. Without that support I could never have made the film, or any film for that matter.

My budget 25 years ago turned out to be \$40,000, which at the time was a lot of money to me. I financed it pretty much out of pocket; I didn't have a budget when I started, I simply thought when I ran out of money I would just make it a short film, but once I started, I couldn't stop.

At the time I had a few jobs (teaching filmmaking at CSI being one of them) and I would save up my money for a few months, then shoot another part of the film, then work, save and shoot; this went on for two years.

I also had favors from the lab, J&D Labs, who had done my earlier student films, so they gave me a tremendous break on the developing costs; sometimes refusing my money when I went to pay them.



A scene from "Combat Shock."

**Q. Did "Medea" occur to you when you wrote the script? She killed her kids rather than leave them to suffer.**

A. I can't say that Medea had any influence on my thinking back then. I knew the story from mythology, and even from film. I was trying to understand what could cause someone to murder their family and then themselves.

These incidents that I'd read about in the papers weren't violent crimes in the traditional sense, they didn't seem to be caused by anger or hatred, or greed or jealousy.

The motivation for these acts was something different, and I tried to put myself in the mindset of someone who had lost everything and had no hope: What would they do?

And did it explain or enlighten their situation to know what they would do? I'm still not sure.

**Q. What drew you to Germany? What kind of work are you doing these days?**



A. I live in Berlin, which is not the same as living in Germany. Berlin is to Germany what New York is to America. It's almost a separate place. I love living in Berlin because it's a tremendously creative city filled with unique, some would say crazy, people.

Anything goes here. It's anarchy! I love that.

I was surprised to find that my work was well-known and respected here as well. I think the Europeans in general really find an alternative view of American life fascinating. It's something they don't see very often, as the Hollywood films are also very popular here.

Last year, I completed the filming of my book, "Life is Hot in Cracktown," shot in downtown L.A. It's out now on DVD in the U.S. and is playing in festivals in Europe before being released theatrically.

I've also been working in Germany as a director, making feature films for German TV, which is great fun. The crime film is a staple of German television and I'm fortunate to have found a home here where I can work regularly and practice my craft as a filmmaker.



Giovinazzo on the set of "Combat Shock" back in the 1980s.

**Q. Do you think that as long as there are wars, "Combat Shock" will remain timely?**

A. In some ways, "Combat Shock" is more timely than ever. The level of poverty and hopelessness in America seems to be rising, people are afraid, they don't know how they're going to pay their bills; plus the returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan have a whole new adjustment to make coming back into society, although there are clearly major differences between Vietnam and now.

I think, in some ways, "Combat Shock" can serve as a sort of warning, sort of a wake-up call: "Watch out, this can happen here again."

Although my intention was never to lecture or teach a moral story, I just wanted to show the truth as I saw it and let the audience come away with something they would remember.



August 31, 2009

## Franklin, Somerset, principal heading to Red Bank school district

By *LARRY HIGGS*  
*GANNETT NEW JERSEY*

After a five-month search, the principal of a large Somerset County high school was named the next superintendent of the Red Bank Regional High School District.

Howard Lucks, principal of Franklin Township High School, will take over as Red Bank Regional superintendent Nov. 1. He was appointed by the regional Board of Education on Aug. 26 to succeed Edward D. Westervelt, who has been with the district 11 of his 43 years in education.

Lucks, a Jackson resident, has 36 years of experience, which includes serving as principal of two schools in Brooklyn and in Franklin.

"He's coming on board in the second week of October, and I'll overlap, although I'm officially retired on Nov. 1," Westervelt said. "The state requires anyone who's a new superintendent to go through a yearlong mentoring process, and I'll be mentoring him."

Lucks served as principal of the 3,000-student New Utrecht High School in Brooklyn from 1997 until he retired from the New York City school system in 2006. He joined the Franklin district as principal of the 2,000-student high school there.

Lucks restructured both schools into smaller learning communities, similar to an initiative being undertaken at Red Bank Regional, school officials said.

In Franklin, Lucks developed a program to address deficiencies in meeting federal No Child Left Behind annual progress standards. State Department of Education reports showed that Franklin High School met the average yearly performance requirement in mathematics and language arts literacy for the past five years.

"The board believes that Dr. Lucks' many attributes, including his vision and passion for education, coupled with his collaborative approach, will complement our incredibly talented administrative team to continue the trajectory of RBR's substantial success," said John Garofalo, board president.

The board hired Leadership Advantage, a search firm, to screen 30 to 40 applicants and submit seven names to the board, Westervelt said. The board interviewed them between June and July, and narrowed the field to two candidates. The board conducted a second round of interviews with the pair and did site visits to their schools, he said.

Lucks holds a master's degree in guidance and counseling received from Long Island University in 1978, and received an administration and supervisor professional diploma from the City University of New York at the College of Staten Island in 1985.

He was awarded the competitive Chancellor Doctoral Scholarship to St. John's University and earned his doctorate in 2002.