

# eye on CSI

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND • Fall 2016

## CSI Returns to St. George



### Seeing the Light

Alan Lyons Explores the Future  
of Superhydrophobic Materials

### CSI Professor Dan McCloskey

Receives Nation's Highest Honor  
for Early Career Researchers

ALUMNI  
PROFILE

Chairperson  
of the Department  
of Computer Science

**Susan  
Imberman, '89**



# RinZhi Larocque rose to challenges by seeking opportunities

“Being able to attend CSI and becoming a National Grid Scholarship recipient were not only just personal aspirations, but also great sources of pride for a fisherman’s daughter and first-generation immigrant to the United States.”

The National Grid Scholarship helps to make it possible for students pursuing majors in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) like RinZhi Larocque, Class of 2016, to attend the College of Staten Island and go from little opportunity to every opportunity.

“If you ask me, ‘How’s your experience at the College of Staten Island?’ I would answer, think of the dolphin, our school mascot. Like

dolphins nurture their young, CSI has nurtured me by giving me opportunities to...”

- improve English-speaking skills through the CUNY Language Immersion Program
- conduct Bioinformatics research, analyzing genes, under faculty mentor Dr. Jianying Gu
- become a high-achieving student in The Verazano School Honors Program, majoring in Biology with a minor in Business and overall 3.99 GPA
- tutor students in math and serve as a hospice volunteer
- prepare for and realize her dream of being accepted to dental school for fall 2016.

“Without your generosity and the scholarships that I have received, my college experience would not have been as meaningful as it is. Words cannot really describe my appreciation. Because of the College of Staten Island and your generosity, I became who I am today.”

**Annual giving has a far-reaching impact on CSI students. Most importantly, it helps the College change lives. Can you rise to the challenge?**

# eye on CSI

Volume 7, Number 1  
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*Alan Lyons, Professor of Chemistry at the College of Staten Island, and his colleague QianFeng Xu have been researching superhydrophobic materials (materials that repel water).*

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends:

In this issue of *Eye on CSI*, we share the exciting news of the College of Staten Island's return to St. George with the opening of its newest facility, this academic year. As you might recall, CSI traces its beginnings back to St. George with the opening of Staten Island Community College (SICC) there in 1956. Richmond College, which united with SICC to form CSI, also resided in St. George when it opened in 1965.

The new CSI St. George location seeks to carry the College's proud legacy into the future. Now, people in St. George and surrounding areas will no longer have to make the long, and often difficult, journey to CSI Willowbrook to take classes. It will bring easy access to courses in big data analytics, among others, to approximately 18,000 college-age residents in the area who are not enrolled at CSI. In addition, with the facility's close proximity to the Staten Island Ferry, Staten Islanders who work in Manhattan will now have the option of taking graduate certificate and continuing education courses at CSI St. George in an effort to improve their marketability and competitive edge in the job market. These new educational opportunities will work in tandem with CSI's participation in the 30,000 Degrees initiative, a partnership with St. John's University and Wagner College that will increase the number of college-educated Staten Islanders by 30,000 in ten years, fully supporting and extending accessibility to a quality higher education.

Looking further into the future, CSI St. George will eventually partner with the new CSI Technology Incubator, which is located in St. George at 60 Bay Street, giving Borough residents the opportunity to create technology-related businesses. The two facilities, together with the outstanding expertise of the College's faculty, will drive economic growth and technological advancement in St. George.

As we are celebrating our 60th anniversary of educational excellence, access, and service to the people of Staten Island and New York City, which make us a destination campus in the region, the opening of CSI St. George could not have come at a more appropriate time.

Best wishes,

William J. Fritz, PhD  
President

# eye on CSI

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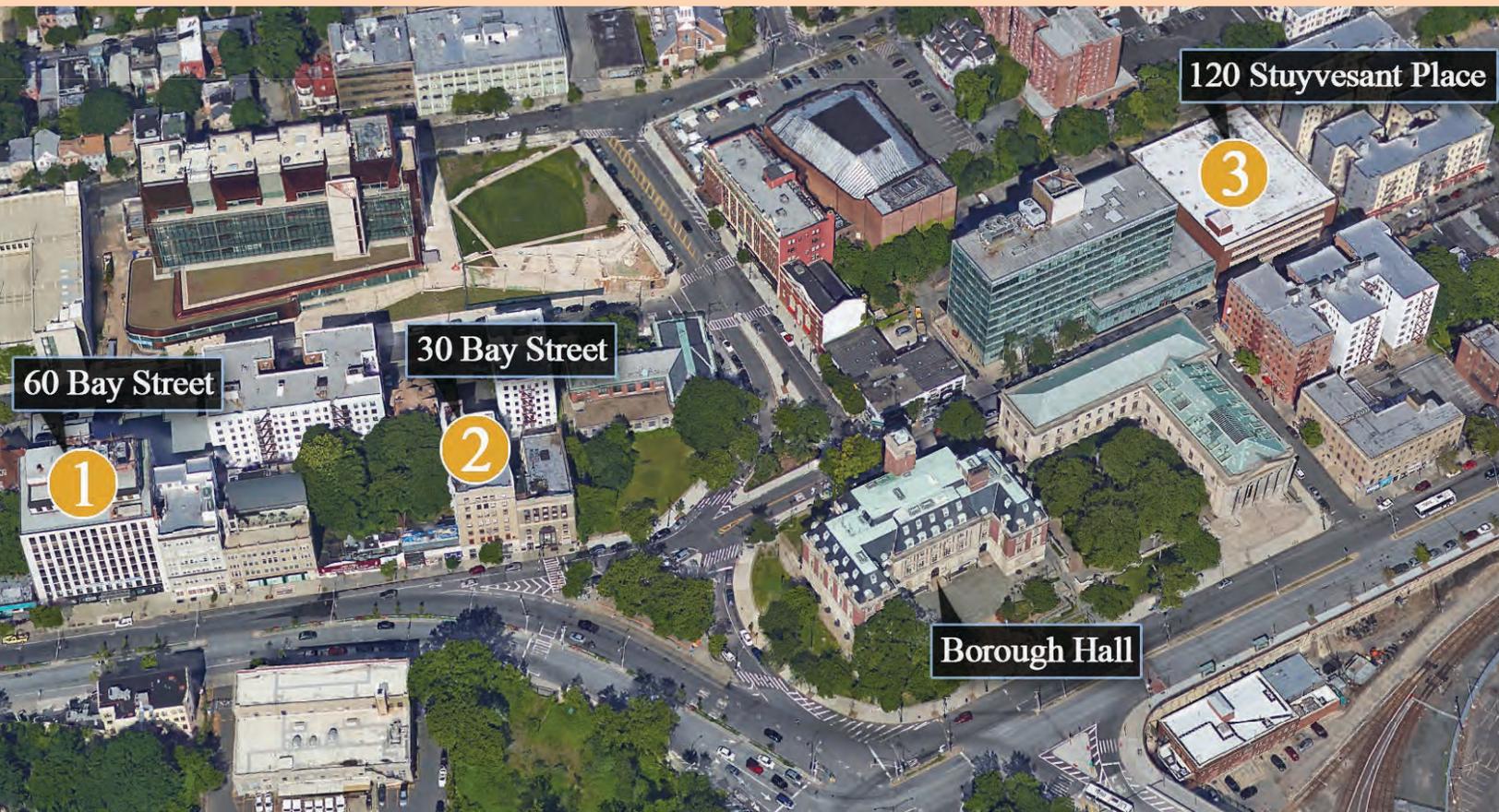
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If you have any comments, suggestions, or information for "Keeping Tabs," please contact the Alumni Relations Office at 718.982.2290, alumni@csi.cuny.edu, or 2800 Victory Boulevard, Building 1A, Room 110, Staten Island, NY 10314.

# CSI Returns TO ITS ROOTS IN ST. GEORGE



This academic year, the College of Staten Island will come full circle with the establishment of its new 16,000-sq.-ft. location in St. George at 120 Stuyvesant Place. CSI's two predecessor institutions, Staten Island Community College and Richmond College, were also located in St. George at 50 Bay Street and 130 (and 120) Stuyvesant Place, respectively. When it

opens, CSI St. George will join with CSI Willowbrook and CSI Merrill as another location for students to take classes and improve their marketability.

Commenting on CSI's return to St. George, CSI President Dr. William Fritz said, "The opening of CSI St. George underscores our proud legacy, particularly as we celebrate

our 60th anniversary as the only public institution of higher education on Staten Island. It also represents opportunities for workforce development to enhance our students' career potential, as well as to help revitalize the St. George area."

CSI St. George can be traced to an effort to better serve Staten Island residents who rely



**“I see St. George being the center of innovation and development in technology, and it will provide the opportunity for the College to fully participate in that economic development activity.”**

**DR. MICHAEL KRESS**

on mass transit to come to CSI, according to Dr. Michael Kress, former CSI Vice President for Information Technology and Economic Development, and former Executive Director of the CUNY High-Performance Computing Center, who was instrumental in the establishment of CSI St. George. “We did a demand study and found that there were over 18,000 college-ready students between the ages of 18 and 25 who are not attending any CUNY campus who live in the corridor along Richmond Terrace, Bay Street, past the Ferry, and into South Beach. These students would save almost an hour a day in mass transit commuting time to go to St. George rather than the Willowbrook campus,” Dr. Kress reported. In addition, he noted that “these students are in the lower-socioeconomic strata, in terms of household income, and don’t have access to automobiles.”

St. George seemed like the perfect location, as the area is the transit hub of Staten Island.

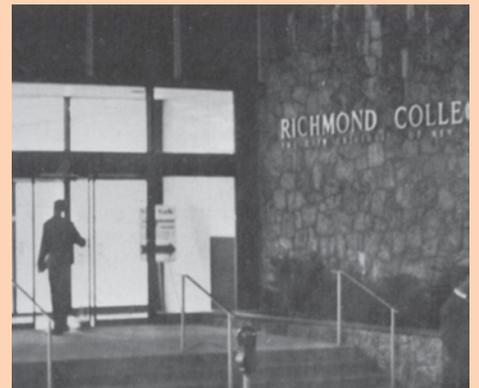
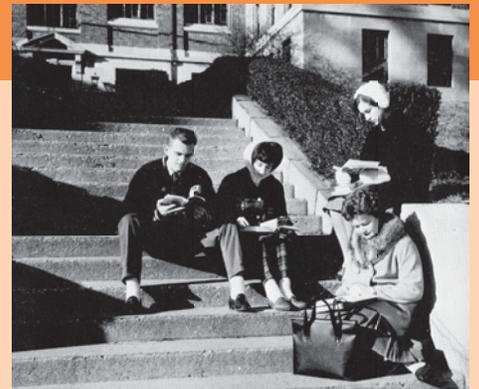
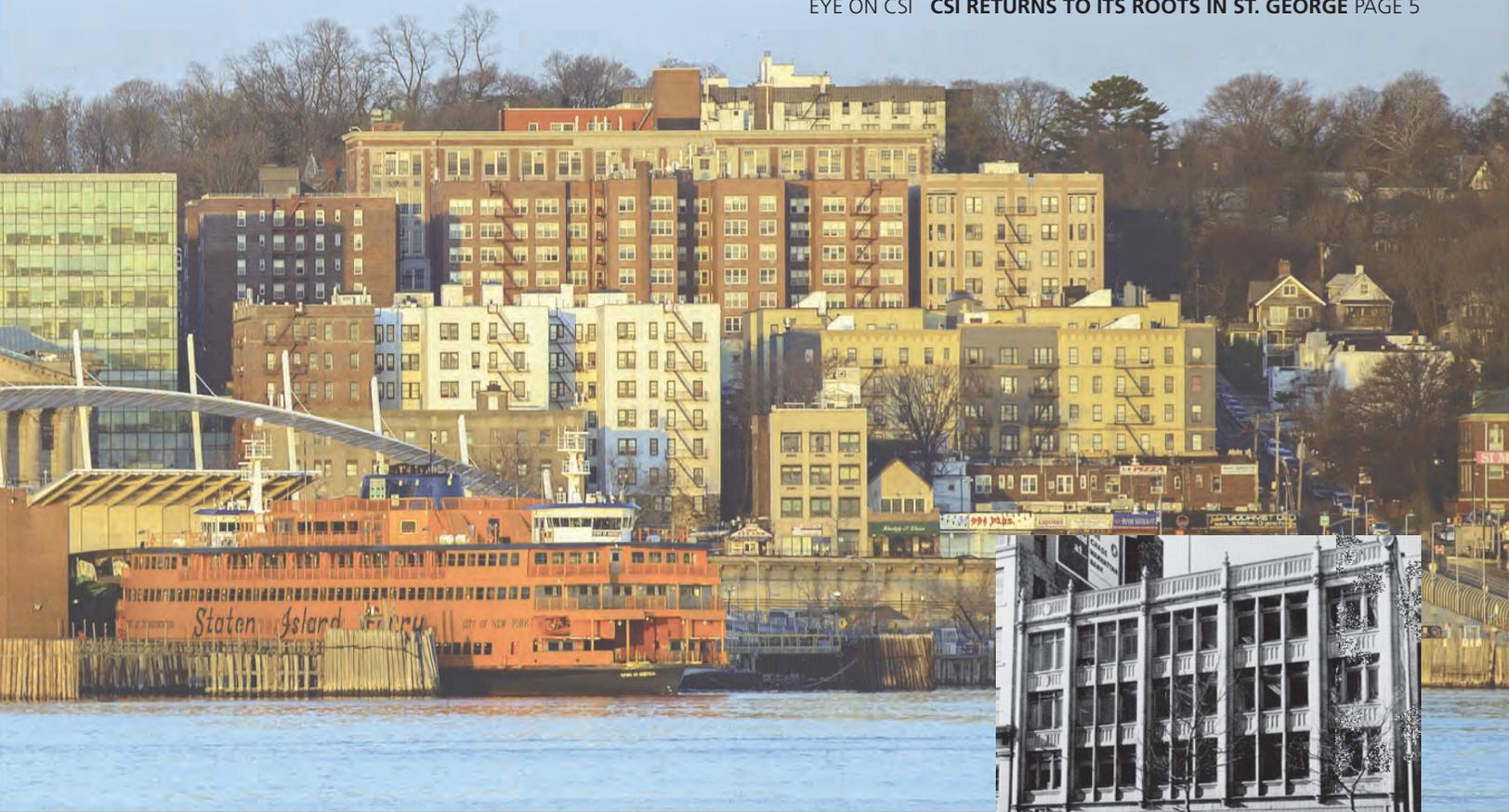
“Essentially, every key bus route on Staten Island has a stop in St. George,” Dr. Kress said.

The Staten Island Ferry’s close proximity to the area makes it possible for CSI St. George to target two other key demographics— Staten Islanders with bachelor’s degrees who work in Manhattan, and former CSI students who left the College to take jobs in Manhattan’s improving job market. Both groups can very easily take classes in St. George, where it would be much more difficult to come to Willowbrook to take a class—the former being able to take advantage of the College’s expertise and excellence in big data analytics to pursue master’s degrees and graduate certificates in order to improve their marketability, and the latter having an opportunity to reconnect with CSI and earn a degree.

In addition to courses in big data analytics, Dr. Kress stated that classes in business analytics and high-performance computing

are under consideration. He added, “we feel that that location will enable us to offer programs and courses in our continuing education and development areas that again will facilitate public transportation to the location. So, in times when credit-bearing courses may not be scheduled at the location, we can offer continuing education courses to help complement the activities that are currently going on at CSI Merrill.”

Once CSI St. George is established, Dr. Kress sees an impressive future for the location. “I see St. George being the center of innovation and development in technology, and it will provide the opportunity for the College to fully participate in that economic development activity. In addition to our space at 120 Stuyvesant Place, the College has developed the CSI Technology Incubator at 60 Bay Street, with funding from Councilmember James Vacca and the City Council, and support from the Staten Island delegation,



to provide an opportunity for Staten Islanders to be entrepreneurs and to develop businesses related to technology. We feel that the opportunity to have classes at 120 Stuyvesant Place as well, just up the street from 60 Bay Street, will enable us to bring the rigor and expertise of the College's faculty to the potential entrepreneurs at the Incubator and contribute to the growth of the technology industry in St. George. This vision is also shared and supported by our Borough President in his sense of the future of St. George."

In summing up the importance of CSI St. George, Dr. Kress said, "We want to make sure that all Staten Islanders know the value of the College of Staten Island's educational opportunities and we think that the presence at St. George will help us promote our College and the wonderful opportunities that it offers."

Once a cornerstone of educational opportunity in St. George, the College's return to the region will improve students' lives and bolster the Island's economy. It is also an appropriate way to honor CSI's 60th Anniversary.

*Inset photos: SICC and Richmond College in the earlier days of the College's history in St. George.*



## President Obama Awards CSI Professor Dan McCloskey with Nation's Highest Honor for Early Career Researchers

President Barack Obama named College of Staten Island Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Daniel McCloskey a recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, granting him the U.S. government's highest award for scientists and engineers in the early stages of their independent research careers.

Dr. McCloskey, who is one of 105 researchers awarded this national distinction, was selected for his research that combines "modeling, neurophysiology, and systems biology/network science that will transform the field of social neuroscience by providing a comprehensive approach towards understanding the role of neuropeptides in complex behavioral systems," according to the National Science Foundation (NSF).

"These early-career scientists are leading the way in our efforts to confront and understand challenges from climate change to our health and wellness," President

Obama said. "We congratulate these accomplished individuals and encourage them to continue to serve as an example of the incredible promise and ingenuity of the American people." The purpose of the award is to encourage and accelerate American innovation to grow the economy and tackle the country's greatest challenges.

"I am humbled to receive this recognition," commented Dr. McCloskey. "It represents the hard work, creativity, and support from a team of students and colleagues who share my enthusiasm. I am also proud that our efforts have been considered 'promising' by the White House, as this confidence recognizes the progressive combination of resources and brain power at CSI to not only conduct cutting-edge research, but also to see it succeed. We look forward to delivering on that promise, by continuing to find new approaches to study the social brain."

Dr. McCloskey will deliver on that promise

by studying the African Naked Mole-rat, a unique and highly social fossorial rodent, and harnessing the power of the CUNY Interdisciplinary High-Performance Computing Center on the College's campus, one of the region's most powerful supercomputers. The computer center allows Dr. McCloskey to track the behavior of each of more than 100 animals in his colony with high resolution as they navigate their way through a complex system of tubes and cages. The animals are implanted with transponders similar to the ones used to pay tolls on bridges. Each time an animal passes through a tube with a sensor, the identity, location, and time of that event are stored in a database that receives hundreds of thousands of events each day. Analysis of these large datasets requires the power of a high-performance computer to manage them and ask questions about animal behavior. In this manner, insights into the organized social community will help the

researchers to understand how individual differences in social behavior are influenced by physiological and environmental factors, and understand the role of social behavior brain systems in health, as well as develop deeper insights into diseases such as epilepsy and autism.

The complex research being conducted “includes researchers from postdoctoral scientists to high school students, and all levels in between,” Dr. McCloskey noted with pride.

“The College of Staten Island has received numerous national accolades this year, highlighting the transformative educational opportunities provided to our students and the professional prospects of our alumni,” said Dr. William J. Fritz, President of CSI and Fellow of the Geological Society of America. “Dr. McCloskey’s recognition by the National Science Foundation and President Obama is a testament to the high-caliber research that our students are exposed to in Dr. McCloskey’s lab, and indicative of the overall cutting-edge research being conducted at CSI. I extend my sincerest congratulations to Dr. McCloskey and his research team.”

“Dan McCloskey is a CSI faculty superstar who is deserving of this enormous honor in every way,” added Dr. Gary W. Reichard,

**“Dr. McCloskey’s recognition by the National Science Foundation and President Obama is a testament to the high-caliber research that our students are exposed to in Dr. McCloskey’s lab...”**

DR. WILLIAM J. FRITZ

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at CSI. “He not only conducts highly significant, cutting-edge research with real-world implications, but also serves as a mentor and role model daily for undergraduates and graduate students alike. We are proud of him, and deeply grateful for his contributions to science and to our students.”

Dr. McCloskey is one of 21 Presidential Award recipients whose research was nominated by the NSF. Foundation Director France Córdova congratulated the “teacher-scholars who are developing new generations of outstanding scientists and engineers and ensuring this nation is a leading innovator. I applaud these recipients for their leadership, distinguished teaching, and commitment to public outreach.” Dr. McCloskey was awarded a five-year Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) grant from the NSF in 2012, one of approximately 500 nationwide.

The White House held a ceremony last

spring recognizing the honorees.

For more information, visit The McCloskey Laboratory online at <http://mccloskey.neuro.nyc>.

For more information on naked mole-rats, visit the *National Geographic* Website.



## FACULTY FOCUS

Alan Lyons, Professor of Chemistry

# SEEING THE LIGHT: EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF SUPERHYDROPHOBIC MATERIALS

ALAN LYONS, Professor of Chemistry at the College of Staten Island, and his colleague QianFeng Xu have been researching superhydrophobic materials (materials that repel water) and they have found a solution to a problem that is plaguing the emerging solar energy industry—dirty solar panels, as dirt on the panels lets less light through, reducing electrical output.

In order to grasp the significance of this new solution, we need to understand the physics of superhydrophobic materials. First of all, water reacts differently to different types of surfaces. If it has an attraction to the surface, the surface is called “hydrophilic.” In this case, water will spread out and wet the surface. However, if it is repelled by the surface, it will ball up to form a small drop, but will still adhere to the surface. In the case of superhydrophobic surfaces, the balls of water will look and act like drops of mercury and they will roll off easily with a slight tilt. When this happens, the water drops take dust with them in a phenomenon called the “lotus effect.”

Although this sounds like something that would be very popular for people who want to keep surfaces, like solar panels, clean, superhydrophobic materials aren't omnipresent for a number of reasons. One challenge is that superhydrophobic surfaces need to be very rough, somewhat akin to a



bed of nails. When someone lies on a bed of nails, no one nail pierces the skin because the weight is distributed over many nails. In the case of water, a similar effect is observed. The surface tension of water keeps drops suspended on top of the rough surface. When the size of these rough features is too large, the surface will reject light. However, if the rough features can be made much smaller than the wavelength of light (smaller than 1/100th of a human hair), then the surface will be transparent to light while still maintaining its superhydrophobic properties. Serendipitously, these same tiny surface features reduce reflections from the surface,

further increasing the amount of light transmitted to the solar cells. As a result of these properties, the coating maximizes the amount of electricity generated from the sunlight while making the surface self-cleaning. Dr. Lyons's and Xu's discovery has the potential of being used for solar panels, but also for applications such as automotive back-up cameras and architectural glass.

Another challenge is manufacturing. Not only must the surface be transparent and superhydrophobic, it must be easy to manufacture coated glass in large volumes.

The process that these two CSI researchers developed is inexpensive and can be easily scaled to coat the large, two-square-meter plates of glass used in solar panels. They can coat glass plates up to 8" x 8" in their laboratory in Building 6S and they have produced hundreds of test coupons for an international field trial with NREL (National Renewable Energy Laboratory).

The researchers have received plenty of attention and support for their new product, including prestigious grants such as an SBIR and Technology Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships grant from the National Science Foundation and a 2015 National Innovation Award. The co-creators also presented data on the material at NREL's 2016 PV Module Reliability Workshop.

In addition, the company that Dr. Lyons created to produce this material, ARL Designs LLC, is now part of the iHUB, a CUNY technology incubator in Manhattan that provides opportunities for CUNY entrepreneurs to develop businesses related to technology.

Dr. Lyons says that he is "very appreciative of the support from [CSI President] Dr. William Fritz, [former Vice President for Information Technology and Economic Development] Dr. Michael Kress, [Science and Technology] Dean [Alfred] Levine, and

**The researchers have received plenty of attention, and support for their new product, including prestigious grants such as an SBIR and Technology Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships grant from the National Science Foundation and a 2015 National Innovation Award.**

many other CSI faculty colleagues and administrators, for their support and community that they provide. I especially appreciate the excellent graduate students and undergraduates who conduct research in my 6S laboratory."

Looking to the future, Dr. Lyons and his colleagues are seeking to commercialize this transparent self-cleaning coating, as well as other superhydrophobic materials, and are currently looking to connect with customers with the goal of adapting the product to better meet their needs.

# AROUND CAMPUS

## Friends of CSI to Celebrate 40 Years of Service



The Friends of CSI are celebrating their 40th anniversary, this year. With the group's goal of providing scholarships to CSI students and supporting the College, a lot has happened over those four decades since then. President Dr. Edmond Volpe extended a hand of friendship to members of the Staten Island community to garner their support for the institution, according to Friends Acting President Carol Berardi.

Noting that Founding President Norma D'Arigo ushered the Friends into existence, serving in that role for 15 years, Berardi recounts the progression of leadership and events that followed. "During Giovanna Scano's reign as President, a new campus was built from the former Willowbrook State School and in 1993 was officially dedicated.

The Friends hosted a reception. Also, at that time, the artwork of Angelo B. Zari, (Giovanna's father), representing the 52 seals of the United States of America was contributed to CSI, and hung in Buildings 1A and 2A. Each member of the Friends contributed \$250 to defray the cost of installation. In 1997, I became President of the Friends of CSI and served for four years. Mary Regan followed, and then Christine Cea, each for four years. Beverly Garcia Anderson served for one and a half years. Here I am serving as its Acting President until a new President can be elected."

Recalling the impressive list of fundraising events that the Friends have held over the years, she says that "the Friends established the Starlight Ball [the predecessor to today's Celestial Ball]. We also

established the Literary Brunch, which we continue to hold each year at the College. We have had dinner theater events for several years. We hosted the annual International Festival at the old campus, which is now the Petrides School. We held musical events, bringing in high-caliber entertainment. We also did a trip to Sicily and Rome, Italy with the Alumni Association, which I had planned, since I have always been the Program Chair for the Friends."

Shedding some personal light on why the Friends volunteer their time, Berardi comments that "I volunteer my time to the Friends because I feel that it is important for students to obtain a college degree and pursue a Master's and perhaps a PhD, which are offered at CSI. It is very rewarding to receive letters from

students thanking the Friends who have helped them achieve their goals."

She adds that the organization is always on the lookout for new Friends. "We are always looking for new members to join. They only need to call me at 718.448.1398 or email to [rber05@aol.com](mailto:rber05@aol.com). It would be especially nice if some of the students that we have helped in the past come forward and help in this regard."

Berardi concludes by stating that the Friends are planning another Literary Brunch in celebration of their milestone anniversary on September 18. The event will feature CSI Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Gary Reichard. For more information and tickets, call 718.982.2365.



## 67th Commencement Celebrates Student Achievement



*Graduating members of the CSI Student Government*

Sunny skies and a pleasant temperature near 70 degrees greeted the 2,546 January and June graduates of the College of Staten Island, their families, friends, and supporters, as well as members of the College community on June 2 at the College's 67th Commencement ceremony on the Great Lawn.

After opening remarks from CSI Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Gary Reichard, CSI President Dr. William J. Fritz came to the lectern. In his remarks, Dr. Fritz focused on the legacy of place of the College's Willowbrook campus and launched the College's 60th Anniversary celebration. He outlined the progression of the campus from farmland to the site of Halloran General Hospital, a state-of-the-art medical facility that provided treatment to more than 162,000 wounded soldiers during World War 2, to the horrors of the Willowbrook State School, to the many extraordinary achievements of CSI's Willowbrook campus.

Later in the ceremony, Dr. Richard Flanagan, Professor of Political Science and Global Affairs, offered the graduates some words of encouragement on behalf of the faculty. After pointing out some of the many challenges that members of this graduating class have

faced, such as the economic recession, Superstorm Sandy, and having to work and attend classes, he had two requests: "We hope we have made you believers in this messy, extraordinary enterprise, public higher education. The genius of the College of Staten Island and The City University is its mission to challenge the most talented students while simultaneously providing opportunity for anyone who is willing to put in the hard work. We, the faculty, are proud of it. Please share our pride." He also urged the graduates to stay connected to the College and former mentors.

This year's student speaker was 2016 valedictorian RinZhi Go Larocque. The daughter of a fisherman in Malaysia who had trying encounters with pirates as he worked, she came to the U.S. to face language barriers, immigration problems, and eventual homelessness. Comparing her past life to being adrift in a leaking boat, RinZhi explained, "For me, my rescue boat turned out to be the CSI-CUNY Language Immersion Program."

Now an academic success, as well as a Verrazano School student, a dedicated volunteer who helps others in need, and now a graduate student at SUNY, Buffalo,

studying dentistry, RinZhi imparted her example and encouragement to the other graduates. "Despite my circumstances, I held my head high and kept sailing, laboring mightily to repair my leaking boat by assimilating into a new society. Just as the pirates did not deter my dad from fishing in the ocean, nothing should discourage us from pursuing our dreams and giving our all to humanity's underserved, globally as well as locally. There will always be storms ahead of you in the ocean. Do not lose hope! Find something you believe in because all of the challenges that you will face are in fact lessons that will go on to form your legacy, based on the beautiful life that you will have after reaching the shore."

During the ceremony, the College bestowed two honorary degrees: Dr. Khalid Iqbal, Professor and Chairman, Department of Neurochemistry at the New York State Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities, received a Doctor of Science degree, and Shakespearian actor John Douglas Thompson received the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

Also in attendance to celebrate the Class of 2016 were U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, CUNY Trustee Dr. Jill O'Donnell-Tormey, and Brian Cohen, CUNY Vice Chancellor and University Chief Information Officer.

Near the conclusion of this year's Commencement, Dr. Fritz recognized 88-year-old William Carey, who was graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History.



*President William J. Fritz presents his remarks at the 2016 Commencement ceremony.*

## Frederick Binder



Professor emeritus Frederick Binder passed away, last January. He was 84.

Prof. Binder had a positive impact on many aspects of CSI during his 24-year tenure

with the College (from 1974 to 1998). Beyond teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels, for which he won a Dolphin Award for teaching in 1983, and chairing the History Department, he founded the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies [MALS] program, was instrumental in gaining approval for the MA in History program, helped to establish the General Education program, assisted in bolstering the number of faculty in the History Department, and served on the College Council and University Senate. He also was an Associate Dean for five years prior to the merger of Staten Island Community College and Richmond College.

Prof. Binder was co-editor of a two-volume social history called *The Way We Lived: Essays and Documents in American Social History*, a work that joins the five books that he wrote while he taught at CSI.

Dr. Eric Ivison, Associate Professor and Chairperson of the CSI Department of History, recalled Frederick Binder.

“Professor Binder was a distinguished historian of early American history, and was a beloved colleague, friend, and mentor to history students and faculty alike. Even in retirement, Fred showed his generosity of spirit, endowing two CSI awards for the History Department—one being a History faculty research award, and the other an award to support History MA students. Fred is deeply missed by his colleagues in the History Department, and it is fitting that these two awards will perpetuate his memory at CSI for years to come.”

## New Food Pantry to Help Students

Last February, the College of Staten Island hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil its new food pantry for students who do not have adequate access to food.

Food insecurity is a significant problem on campuses across the U.S. According to Feeding America, a network of food banks across the country, “... nearly half (49.3%) of its clients in college must choose between educational expenses (i.e., tuition, books and supplies, rent) and food annually, and that 21 percent did so for a full 12 months.” Closer to home, in a 2010 CUNY Undergraduate Student Survey administered to 1,086 students via phone and email, 39.2% of students (about two in five) reported experiencing food insecurity in the previous 12 months. Twice as many students reported that they worried about having enough money for food (45.1%).

CSI Vice President for Student and Enrollment Services Jennifer Borrero stated at the event that “CUNY is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure students remain in school and are successful in their studies. Today is about coming together as a community in support of students and to encourage one another to become part of the solution to this growing epidemic.”

The pantry, which officially opened to currently enrolled CSI students on February 26, will be staffed by fellow students and provide nonperishable food items.

CSI students are no strangers to volunteering, as they have been collaborating with Project Hospitality (PH) for the past nine years in an effort to assist Staten Island residents who are food insecure. Project Hospitality serves 26,000 impoverished and marginalized individuals annually. In addition, between 25 to 30 CSI students volunteer for the three to four food collections held each semester, soliciting nonperishable food items from area shoppers at the local supermarkets, collecting approximately 300 to 400 bags of groceries in each drive. This ongoing food collection will help to supplement CSI’s Food Pantry, while also assisting Staten Island residents. New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) also hosts a sandwich-making event each year, enlisting volunteers from the general student population. Sandwiches are then delivered to area shelters and individuals in need.

Also in attendance at the ribbon-cutting event were CSI President Dr. William J. Fritz, his wife Dr. Bonnie Fritz, and members of his Cabinet; CUNY Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Frank D. Sanchez; Community Activist and Donor Jean Roland; Zach Williams of the Food Bank for New York City, and members of the College community.



Jennifer Borrero, Vice President for Student and Enrollment Services; Jean Roland; CSI President William J. Fritz; Frank Sanchez, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs; distinguished guests; and student volunteers cut the ribbon of the new food pantry at CSI. (Staten Island Advance/Kristin Dalton)

## Insight into Infant Development beyond the Lab

College of Staten Island Professor of Psychology, Dr. Lana Karasik, and her research colleagues published a study last year in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* in which they describe group differences in infants' sitting ability, opportunity to practice sitting, and mothers' support of infants' skills in five-month-olds from six cultures: Argentina, Cameroon, Italy, Kenya, South Korea, and the United States. Instead of testing babies in a psychology lab, researchers observed the infants in their homes: A researcher local to each of the six cultures visited mother and baby pairs in their homes for one hour.

According to Dr. Karasik, "Infant sitting is a very important skill—it frees their hands to explore objects and interact more easily with adults." According to standard norms, only about 25% of infants achieve independent sitting by 5.5 months; typically, infants sit independently by seven months. However, according to Dr. Karasik's research, these ages may be misleading because they are derived solely from research on Western babies.

Although Dr. Karasik and her colleagues Dr. Karen Adolph, Dr. Catherine Tamis-LeMonda (NYU), and Dr. Marc Bornstein

(NICHD) discovered that one third of the infants were able to sit independently, they also noticed significant cross-cultural variation. For example, only two U.S. infants and none of the Italian infants displayed independent sitting, but eight Kenyan and 11 Cameroonian infants were able to sit. Many inferences can be made based on these early results, although no conclusions can yet be drawn. "It's tempting to infer that the cultural parenting practices in Kenya and Cameroon may have encouraged some of the infants in those cultures to acquire more precocious sitting abilities," explained Christian Jarret, writer for *BPS Research Digest*, "but of course this was a purely observational study with small samples, and we don't know whether the infants' abilities influenced their parents' behavior or vice versa."

More broadly, findings from this study offer new insights into the remarkable range of ability, varied opportunities for practice, and contextual physical and social factors that influence the proficiency of infants' skills. "Had we not looked beyond onset ages, ventured beyond the laboratory, and studied samples of infants from six cultures across the globe," Dr. Karasik said, "we would

never have known that at five months, some infants can safely sit on high benches for extended periods without the support of adults nearby."

Funded by her second National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, Dr. Karasik and co-principal investigators Dr. Adolph and Dr. Tamis-LeMonda continue their cross-cultural work. The aim of the project is to examine effects of early experience and restricted movement on infant and child development. The \$600,000 NSF award for the project entitled "RUI: An Investigation of Short and Long term Effects of Cradling on Development," runs through July 2018. The project uses longitudinal sampling to examine concurrent effects of restricted movement on motor skills in infancy in 12- to 20-month-olds and long-term consequences at three to five years of age. This work will also provide insights into cascading effects of infant motor skills on development in other domains such as interactions with objects and people.

Dr. Karasik's expertise includes perceptual-motor development, social-cognitive development, parenting, and cross-cultural issues around infant development.



Dr. Lana Karasik (left) is joined by undergraduate researchers working on independent projects in her lab: (L-R) Andrew Russo, Roseana Jolly, Tamara Moseley, Juliana Zaloom, and Andrew Garafalo (not pictured) have earned many accolades for their work.



In project meetings, undergraduate researchers discuss behavioral coding and, under Dr. Karasik's mentorship, score video records of infant assessments. On the other side of the one-way mirror is the CSI Infant Development Laboratory space.

# SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENTS

## MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

*Deadlock and Disillusionment: American Politics since 1968 (The American History Series)*, by **Gary W. Reichard**, Wiley-Blackwell, 1st edition, 2016

*The Cosmopolitans*, by **Sarah Schulman**, The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2016

*A Moral Defense of Recreational Drug Use*, by **Rob Lovering**, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015

*Christophe Honoré*, by **David Gerstner** and Julien Nahmias, Wayne State University Press, 2015

## PUBLICATIONS AND AWARDS

President Barack Obama named College of Staten Island (CSI) Associate Professor of Psychology **Daniel McCloskey** a recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, granting him the U.S. government's highest award for scientists and engineers in the early stages of their independent research careers.

**Dr. Maria Knikou** was recently awarded a \$400,000 grant by the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation to develop strategies in treating people who suffer from serious spinal cord injuries, and bringing sensation and mobility back into their lives.

## FACULTY GRANTS

**Barbara Montero**, (PEP), "Post Physicalism and the Mind Body Problem," University of Cambridge, \$360,512, 4/13/2016

**Sarah Berger** (Psych), "RUI: NSF/SBE-BSF: The Role of Sleep in Infant Motor Learning," NSF, \$375,000, 3/14/2016

**Michael Kress** (MultiDisc), "30,000 Degrees: College Readiness for a Stronger Staten Island," Northfield Bank Foundation, \$50,000, 2/9/2016

**Zaghloul Ahmed** and **Maria Knikou** (PhysTher), "Effects of Spinal Cord Stimulation," NYSDOH, \$337,218, 1/29/2016

**Tobias Schaefer** (Math), "Collaborative Research: Computation of Instantons in Complex Nonlinear Systems," NSF, \$99,554, 1/29/2016

**Wilma Jones** (Libr), "Library Collection Aid," NYSE, \$15,367, 1/28/2016

**Zaghloul Ahmed** (PhysTher), "Spinal Sciatic Direct Current Stimulation Normalizes Muscle Tone in Spinal Cord Injured Animals with Spasticity," DHHS/NIH, \$183,100, 1/21/2016

**Hilliard, C. Chapman** and **Sirin, L. Rogers** (Psych), "CUNY Office of Academic Affairs RFP - The Mental Health through Social Justice Community Clinic," CUNY, \$25,000, 1/13/2016

**Gary Reichard** and **Debra Evans** (Admin), "CSTEP," NYSED, \$223,500, 1/11/2016

**Vadim Oganessian** (EngSci/Phys), "Theory of Metallized Superconductors," Binational Science Foundation, \$10,116, 12/21/2015

**Angelo Bongiorno** (Chem), "Collaborative Proposal: Controlling the Chemistry at the Nanoscale: Parallelization, Robustness, and Registration," NSF, \$52,000, 12/21/2015

**Donna Gerstle** (EnvSci), "SIBCRI," CUNY Misc, \$5,000, 12/17/2015

**Dean Balsamini** (SBD), "NOAA Fisheries," NPORG/Research Foundation/SUNY, \$33,100, 12/8/2015

**Chris Cruz Cullari** (ContEd), "Funding for Public High School Equivalency (HSE) Test Administration," NYSED, \$15,460, 12/7/2015

**Gary Reichard** (Admin), "Perkins Funding for Career and Technical Education," NYSED/TEA, \$163,260, 12/1/2015

**Alejandra Alonso** (Biol), "Alzheimer Research," CUNY Misc, \$5,000, 12/1/2015

**Gary Reichard** and **Shawn Landry** (Provost), "Liberty Partnerships Programs," NYC City Council (Rose), \$6,000, 11/16/2015

**Dean Balsamini** (SBD), "Small Business Development," NYC City Council (Rose), \$5,000, 11/16/2015

**Donna Gerstle** (EnvSci), "SI Breast Cancer Study and CSI's Breast Cancer Month Activities," NYC City Council (Rose), \$6,000, 11/16/2015

**Ken Gold** and **Gloria Garcia** (SEEK), "Strategies for Success Program," NYC City Council (Rose), \$3,500, 11/16/2015

**Michael Kress** (MultiDisc), "Evaluation of City Services on Staten Island," NYC City Council (SI Delegation), \$20,000, 11/16/2015

**Donna Gerstle** (EnvSci), "SI Breast Cancer Program," NYC City Council (SI Delegation, Ignizio, Matteo), \$50,000, 11/16/2015

**Donna Gerstle** (EnvSci), "SI Breast Cancer Study," NYC City Council (Matteo), \$10,000, 11/16/2015

**Gary Reichard** and **Shawn Landry** (Provost), "Liberty Partnerships Program," NYSED, \$360,512, 10/14/2015

**Robert Freedland** (Admin), "Improvement of Pre-Post Doctoral Education," NYS/OPWDD, \$120,000, 10/6/2015

**Alfred Levine** (EnvSci), "Environmental Science Program" IEC, \$26,250, 9/30/2015

**Maria Knikou** (PhysTher) "Transspinal Stimulation to Increase Neuroplasticity and Recovery after SCI," Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, \$150,000, 9/30/2015

**Jonathan Peters** (Business), "CUNY CIRG Round 22: The Impact of Data on Travel and Transportation Systems: Shared Mobility Big Data Center," CUNY, \$15,000, 9/29/2015

**Charles Liu** (EngSci/Phys), "SDSS-IV Fast: Faculty and Student Galaxy Evolution Research," Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, \$44,179, 9/25/2015

**Charles Liu** (EngSci/Phys), "REU Site: Collaborative Research: "Earth and Planetary Science and Astrophysics REU at the American Museum of Natural History in Collaboration with The City University of New York," NSF, \$26,391, 9/16/2015

**Sharon Loverde** (Chem), "CIRG Round 22: Molecular Modeling and Design of Chemical Herders for Oil Spill Remediation," CUNY, \$15,000, 9/8/2015

**Susan Imberman** (CompSci), "CIRG Round 22: Establishing Measurement Dimensions for Assessing Learning during Collaborative Problem-Solving in Computer Science at the Secondary School Level," CUNY, \$27,754, 9/8/2015

**Jane Coffee, Nelly Tournaki, Susan Sullivan,** and **Irina Lyublinskaya** (Math), "Robert Noyce Teacher Academy at the College of Staten Island," NSF, \$799,630, 9/4/2015

**Vadim Oganessian** (EngSci/Phys) "Quantum and Semi-Classical Dynamics of Random Spin Chains: Models and Methods for Quantum Non-Ergodic Statistical Physics," NSF, \$300,000, 9/3/2015

**Qiao-Sheng Hu** (Chem), "Development of Controlled Palladium(0)-Catalyzed Suzuki Cross-Coupling Polymerizations," NSF, \$315,000, 9/1/2015

**Chris Cruz Cullari** (ContEd), "1199 HC4 Program," Hospital League/1199, \$115,729, 8/31/2015

**Kenneth Gold** (Educ), "Strategies for Success Program," NYSED, \$32,000, 8/28/2015

**David Lindo-Atichati** (EngSci/Phys), "The Role of Submesoscale Eddies from the Florida Current System on Productivity of King Mackerel and Other Coastal Pelagic Stocks in the South Atlantic Bight," NOAA, \$98,322, 8/25/2015

**Lana Karasik** (Psych), "RUI: An Investigation of Short and Long Term Effects of Cradling on Development," NSF, \$593,706, 8/10/2015

## VP for Student and Enrollment Services



Jennifer Borrero is the College of Staten Island's new Vice President for Student and Enrollment Services.

With nearly 20 years of experience in higher education, Borrero has distinguished herself as a highly effective administrative leader providing strategic long-term direction at both the Central Office and campus level. She previously served as the Dean of Recruitment and Diversity at The City University of New York and has a highly successful record of commitment to issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity, including spearheading the creation and implementation of the University's Diversity Action Plan. Borrero has made many valuable leadership contributions to CUNY and has earned the reputation of an efficacious collaborator with deep knowledge of compliance and other legal issues that affect the academic and professional lives of all CUNY students, faculty, and staff. Her advocacy has been acknowledged through her receipt of many awards, such as the University's Inclusive Excellence and Diversity Award, the Award for Minority Access, and the Award for Facilitating Student Success.

Borrero holds a Juris Doctor from Creighton University, a Master's in Business Administration from Baruch College, and she received her undergraduate degree in Political Science from Hampton University.

This appointment follows the reorganization of the divisions of Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs. All academic support services previously reporting to Enrollment Management and Student Affairs have been moved to Academic Affairs including registrar, testing, academic advisement, and remedial support programs. The remaining offices from Enrollment Management and Student Affairs will now report to the new position of Vice President for Student and Enrollment Services. This reorganization will strengthen faculty voice in the delivery of services to students, and utilize Borrero's expertise in strategic planning and operational management to effectively integrate Student and Enrollment Services with an increasingly diverse student population.



## AVP for Finance and Budget

Carlos A. Serrano has been appointed Assistant Vice President for Finance and Budget. Serrano has more than 24 years of budget and finance experience, most recently as the Assistant Vice President for Budget and Finance at Hunter College. Prior to his position at Hunter College, Serrano served as the Senior Vice President for Leased Housing and Director of Budget and Financial Planning for the New York City Housing Authority, Deputy Commissioner for Administration for the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice, and Assistant Director at the New York City Mayor's Office of Management and Budget.

Serrano is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Accounting, Accounts Payable, Budget and Financial Planning, Fiscal Systems and Part-Time Payroll Services, Bursar, Property Management, and Purchasing. As a member of the Finance and Administration Division, Serrano said he will "prioritize enhancement of customer service to the campus community and leverage my years of financial and management experience to maximize resource allocations consistent with and in support of the CSI strategic vision."

Serrano holds a BS in Business Administration from Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus.

# ALUMNI NEWS

## “Savor the Flavors” Spotlights Island Cuisine and Helps Students



Judges Eddie Canlon and Rob Burmeister taste food prepared during a cook off.

Attendees at this year’s “Savor the Flavors,” last April, had a rare opportunity to sample some of the Island’s best food, while helping some of CSI’s best students. Commenting on the Seventh Annual event, which was presented by the CSI Alumni Association and held in the College’s Center for the Arts, CSI Alumni Board President Carole Gervasi, ’02 said, “Savor

the Flavors is an event that brings together the restaurant community of Staten Island, CSI alumni, current students, faculty, staff, and food lovers all over Staten Island to promote our wonderful College and provide needed scholarships to our students.” In fact, the event has netted enough money over its first six years to support 32 new scholarships.

As in the past, this year’s “Savor” featured celebrity guest judges Rob Burmeister, Eddie Canlon, and John Sierp from The Food Network’s *Chopped*, who presented awards to the best dish, dessert, and décor.

This year’s winners were:

### **BEST DISH:**

First Place: Ho’ Brah Taco Joint  
Second Place: Port Richmond High School Culinary Arts Program  
Third Place: Leo’s Deli

### **BEST DESSERT:**

First Place: Caramelo  
Second Place: Beans and Leaves

### **BEST TABLE DÉCOR:**

Pepper Jack Grill

### **PEOPLE’S CHOICE:**

Aunt Butchie’s of Brooklyn

There was also a long list of restaurants and other businesses that generously donated food and beverages to “Savor,” including Afternoone’s, Aunt

Butchie’s of Brooklyn, Bayou, Beans and Leaves, The Beer Garden, Beso, Blue, Cake Chef, Canlon’s, Caramelo, Cookie Jar, Delish Dishes, Ho’ Brah Taco Joint, J’s on the Bay, Jimmy Max, Leo’s Deli, Liberty Tavern, Mother Mousse, Oriental Plaza, Pepperjack Grill, Portobello Café, and the Port Richmond High School Culinary Arts Program.

The event also featured the soft launch of the “Where’s Danny” photo contest, where participants can win prizes for creative photos featuring replicas of the CSI mascot, Danny the Dolphin.

“Savor the Flavors” was sponsored by Liberty Mutual and Kohl’s, with music provided by Feel the Beat Productions. The event chair was James McBratney, ’05, current Alumni Advisory Board member and President, Staten Island Restaurant and Tavern Association.

## Class Reunions at the Sixty-seventh Commencement



CSI Alumni marking graduation years ending in 1 or 6 assembled to march in this year’s Commencement procession.



## Alumni Feature: Anita Grasso '75

Since she graduated from the College of Staten Island with a degree in Engineering Science in 1975, Anita Grasso's life could serve as an inspirational example to young women who, she notes, "may not have the luxury of obtaining their education during the day." In the beginning, she faced the enormous obstacles of working during the

day at the Department of Traffic on Bay Street and attending classes as an undergraduate student at night. She was also a working mother.

Anita's triple existence continued as she pursued her MBA at Wagner College (which she received in 1982) while she worked for one of the Johnson & Johnson family of companies (Ortho Diagnostics) as a Process Engineer. After she received her MBA, she worked for a small company in NYC, conducting surveys for transportation companies, financial institutions, and healthcare providers.

Today, Anita is still in the healthcare industry, working for Spectra Labs, a division of Fresenius Healthcare (a German-based multinational healthcare provider) and she has found greater happiness in her career. She says, "I best appreciate this position because it gives me an opportunity to integrate marketing, sales, and the skills acquired during my years as a manufacturing engineer."

Looking back on her college days, Anita states that CSI made all the difference, not only in her life, but in those of her kids. "Attending CSI was the biggest game changer. I was a mother of three children with a high school degree destined to most

likely get a position in a firm as (at best) an office manager. I started school when my youngest son started first grade. Because of the education I received, I was able to support them—although we lived on a tight budget in the early years; I have been able to educate my children who are all successful in their chosen fields. I also believe that they acquired a strong work ethic as a result of my determination to complete my studies. CSI opened doors for me that would otherwise have been closed, both professionally and personally.

"I am not the only woman with children and meager means who dared to pursue an education," she adds. "I'm proud to be sharing this space with women like Senator Elizabeth Warren. Also, I think giving credit to the Civil Rights Movement is important. I came from an era when the only professional positions opened to women were teaching and nursing. My point being, when the cards are stacked against you because of gender or race – don't give up."

Now that Anita is close to retirement, she looks forward to making a difference in other ways. "I'm hoping to be able to teach, to get involved in politics, to make a difference—simply to give back."

## Friday the 13th Murder Mystery Dinner

*More than 140 alumni and friends were in attendance for a 1920s-themed night.*

*Angela Caliendo and Gina Caliendo-Ocasio '00 and '04*



# KEEPING TABS

**Miriam Perez-Lai '76** has been employed at the College of Staten Island for 17 years, and she received her 15 year pin last year. She is thinking about possibly retiring in 2016-2017. She says, "It's been a great run working for CSI and I owe it all to the SEEK Program. I will always be grateful to the staff and students.

**Ann Marie Quinones '73, '76** is a chemistry teacher at Curtis HS and a grandmother.

**Kathryn Candelario '81** worked at Goldman Sacks for 21 years. She married a few years after she graduated and has three daughters (twins + one). One of the twins will be attending CSI in the fall of 2016.

**Clare Bonafede '84, '87** turned 50 years old, married, and is pursuing an EdD in Educational Leadership. She became a principal after being a teacher. She also joined the CSI Alumni Association two years ago.

**David Close '89** is currently working as a psychologist at an outpatient clinic at Pilgrim Psychiatric Center, LI, NY.

**Sheila Lampert '90** is currently retired. She was a substitute teacher for four years then became a substance (CASAC) abuse counselor (continuing ed) at CSI.

**Vincent Durante '91** is currently employed as a Sergeant with the NYC Police Department.

**Ermell Abdul-Halim '80, '91** is currently retired as of February 2015, and worked at CASC for the past six years. Ermell is now "enjoying my great grandchildren (13) seven boys and six girls."

**Cynthia Murphy '88, '91** is the manager of a private beach club, QuickBooks Consultant, and fitness instructor.

**Beatrice Whitehead '81, '86, '91** became a first grade teacher and worked for 21 years at PS 3, which happens to be the school she went to as a child.

**Frank Truncali '97** received a Juris Doctor (JD) degree from Faulkner University in May 2015.

**Jonathan S. Weissman '97** is an Associate Professor of Computing Sciences and IT Program Coordinator at Finger Lakes Community College. He is also a full-time lecturer in the Computing Security Department at Rochester Institute of Technology, and a Lecturer in the School of Management at Nazareth College. He was awarded the 2014 RIT Outstanding Teaching Award for excellence in teaching and ongoing devotion to enhancing the classroom experience and student engagement. He coauthored two recently published books by McGraw-Hill Education.

**Maria Mathieu '00**, who received an AAS in Nursing, is currently working with disabled children at the Hungerford School – Department of Education as a staff RN.

**Lisa Marie Basciano '01** is a Special Ed Teacher of preschool children in their homes, who teaches applied behavior analysis and life skills.

**Heather Campo '01** earned two Master's degrees since graduating, in Writing and Education. She is a special education teacher.

**Peter Mazes '01** retired from the Department of Education in 2013. He traveled to Hawaii, Alaska, and Florida, and took a cruise to Alaska and the Panama Canal. He lived for a year in Maui, Hawaii and highly recommends retirement.

**Jamie Depaolo '03** has been a radiologic technologist for nine years.

**Gina Caliendo-Ocasio '00, '04** is a kindergarten teacher at PS 41 and has two beautiful children—a boy, Jason, and a girl, Angelina. Her sister is a graduate of CSI and her other sister has worked for CSI for 18 years. Her mother is also a retired CSI employee. It's a family affair.

**Dawn Bryce '06** went on to complete her MSW at Kean University and now runs two housing programs for Project Hospitality that serve individuals and families in recovery from drugs and/or alcohol.

**Dina Tolba '06** graduated with an International Business degree and then worked for Lehman Brothers until 2009. After she was laid off, she received a Master's in Education from Hofstra University and has been teaching business classes in high school for the last four years.

**Suzanne Lutz '07** recently became the Associate Director of Development for Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights after serving for four years as an Executive Director and Major Gifts Officer for the American Red Cross in northern New Jersey.

**Dana V Miller '07** reports, "Over the past eight years since I got out of school, CSI has helped me become a leader in

my community. I am a proud advocate for people with developmental disabilities."

**Linda Notaro '07** is a fourth grade special education teacher in an Integrated Co-Teaching classroom at PS 50 on Staten Island.

**Peter DeCrescenzo '08, '09** was hired, in fall 2014, by the University of Maryland, College Park as an Advisor for Retention Initiatives. In November 2015, he married his wife, Lauraluz Reyes Alvarado.

**Kourtney Franzese '09, '11** was hired as a marketing assistant for the Center for the Arts at CSI after she graduated in 2011.

**Melanie Langworthy '12** notes that since she graduated from the Macaulay Honors College at CSI, she has achieved her Master of Science in Publishing degree from Pace University and worked for two years as a Foreign Rights Assistant at Janklow and Nesbit Associates, a literacy agency. She is currently employed at Hachette Book Group, working as a Subsidiary Rights Associate.

**Meghan Proscia '12** might go back to school to be a teacher.

**Maria Meister '04, '14** is an Adjunct Teacher in the English Department teaching English III (comp). She is now pursuing her TESOL Advanced Certificate.

**Alisa A. Serio '14** is in her second year of graduate school at The University of Scranton in The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. She is starting practicum this fall, which means that she will be counseling students.

# SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS



Photo credit: CSI Sports Information

## Men's Basketball Alumni Game

*The Sixth Annual Matty White Men's Basketball Alumni Game was held on Saturday, January 30, prior to CSI's basketball doubleheader against Brooklyn College. More than 40 alumni took part in the event, championed by alumnus Craig Sleep. The annual game serves to honor the memory of the late Matty White, who spent 17 years as an Assistant Coach with the Dolphins' Men's program.*



Photo credit: CSI Sports Information

## Sweeney Basks in Honors

*CSI junior and Macaulay Honors College student Timothy Sweeney enjoyed a sensational 2015-2016 season for the Men's Swim team. Tim was named the CUNY Athletic Conference's Player of the Year and Championship MVP, and was named the conference's Scholar-Athlete of the Month for December. On top of that, Tim was most recently selected as a Scholar-Athlete All-America by the College Swimming Coaches Association of America.*

## Basketball Teams Collect Major Awards

*At the conclusion of the Men's and Women's Basketball seasons, a total of five Dolphins were awarded post-season accolades from the CUNY Athletic Conference. The awards included the second straight Player of the Year honor for senior forward Will Fonseca, who finished his career as the fourth highest scorer in school history, and Rookie of the Year honors for women's star Nicole Vierno, who finished third on the squad in points per game. All five honorees collected their awards at the conference's annual postseason kick-off luncheon, held at The Water Club in Manhattan.*

*In Photo (l-r): Samantha Flecker, Christina Pasaturo, Will Fonseca, Frank Schettino, Nicole Vierno*



## Cross-Country Completes Three-peat

The Men's Cross Country program made history this past November, with their third-straight CUNYAC Championship held at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx. The team followed their victory lap with an entrance in the ECAC Regional Championship and then the NCAA Division III National Championship Regional Finals held at SUNY-Geneseo.



## Women's Swimming Team Earns National Honor

The College of Staten Island Women's Swimming and Diving Team earned an award with national distinction, last winter, when they were tabbed as an academic school of excellence by the College Swimming Coaches Association of America, earning Scholar-Athlete All-America Team honors. This award is the first in the school's history. Each year, the coaches organization honors several colleges, spanning all NCAA Divisions with this honor. The teams compile a 3.2 cumulative GPA or better while also excelling in the pool.



Macaulay Honors College student and CSI freestyler Naomi Gaggi.



## Women's Soccer Wins CUNYAC Championship in Thriller

After three-straight frustrating seasons that ended with losses in the CUNYAC Final, the Dolphins finally got back on top in 2015, thanks to a 2-1 overtime victory over top-seeded Lehman College. Samantha Wysokowski scored the game-winner. With the win, the Dolphins advanced to the NCAA Division III National Championship Tournament for the first time in program history.

## FOUNDATION NOTES

### Celestial Ball Raises Much-Needed Funds to Support CSI

Enthusiasm was in the air as faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of the College of Staten Island broke attendance and contribution records, last December, at the Sixth Annual Celestial Ball. The gala, at the Richmond County Country Club, was hosted by the CSI Foundation. This year's Ball honored with the President's Medal notable citizens who have made significant contributions to CSI and our community. The honorees were Edward Burke, Dr. Christine D. Cea '88, Cesar J. Claro, and Dr. Wilma L. Jones. After he received his award, Mr. Claro graciously presented a \$250,000 check to the College on behalf of the Richmond County Savings Foundation to name the atrium in Building 2M.

As state funding for higher education in New York State continues to decrease, Khatmeh Osseiran-Hanna, CSI Vice President for Institutional Advancement and External Affairs, emphasized the goal of the evening when she began the festivities by comparing the Ball to the new life that comes each spring. "The Celestial Ball is much like that waking spring in providing crucial renewal of

programs and scholarships for our students, dollars for faculty research, and funds for improvement of our campus."

CSI Foundation President Sam Farag explained the vital role that the Foundation plays at the College and expressed his gratitude to the Ball's attendees. "Our mission at the CSI Foundation is to secure philanthropic support for CSI to reach its highest level of academic excellence as one of CUNY's senior colleges and the institution of public higher education in the Borough. As the success of the CSI Foundation, and the College, is rooted in the generosity of the College family and the Staten Island community, I'm grateful that you are all here tonight."

CSI President Dr. William Fritz highlighted the College's vast achievements, its growing national recognition, and its increasing reach. "The College has always served its students and its community, but today, that potential is limitless, thanks to recent advancements to our academic programs, our extraordinary faculty, and our beautiful, 204-acre campus. This potential drives the success of our students

who are making the College of Staten Island a destination campus. Our student body is comprised not only of people from the Island, but from the other boroughs of New York City, from states across the U.S., and from countries around the world."

That impact of donor contributions was exemplified by student speaker RinZhi Larocque who compared her metamorphosis at CSI to the College's mascot, the dolphin. "Like dolphins nurture their young, CSI has nurtured me by giving me opportunities to improve my English through the CUNY Language Immersion

Program, and allowing me to do research in the biology lab, as well as be part of the prestigious Verrazano School honors program at CSI, which has prepared me, very successfully, to apply for dental schools." RinZhi is now attending the Doctor of Dental Surgery program at SUNY Buffalo.

This year's Ball included a live and a silent auction, where attendees competed for prizes such as a painting donated by 101-year-old alumna Margaret Ricciardi and a guitar signed by Richie Sambora of Bon Jovi, among many other wonderful items and exotic getaways.



*The 2015 President's Medal winners, (sitting L-R:) Cesar J. Claro, Dr. Wilma L. Jones, Dr. Christine D. Cea '88, and Edward Burke with President William J. Fritz*



## SAVE THE DATE

**2016 Celestial Ball  
CELEBRATING OUR 60th ANNIVERSARY  
December 3, 2016, Richmond County CC!**

You can support the event through a contribution or ad in the Ball's journal. Contact the Division of Institutional Advancement and External Affairs at 718.982.2365.

## RCSF Grant Set to Change Face of Building 2M

The Richmond County Savings Foundation (RCSF) has presented a grant of \$250,000 to the College of Staten Island to transform the entrance of Building 2M with a state-of-the-art modern atrium. RCSF President and CEO Cesar Claro presented the check at last December's Celestial Ball.

The new Richmond County Savings Foundation Atrium will be part of the renovation of Building 2M, providing a modern and welcoming entrance to the 75,000-cubic-ft. building, which will serve as the new home of classrooms and lecture halls, and faculty offices for the School of Business, and the CUNY Center for Big Data Analytics. The Center, funded by a CUNY 2020 Challenge Grant, will capitalize on the College's expertise and leadership in the area of big data research and analysis, as well as on New York City's growing strength in technological innovation to establish programs in data analytics in collaboration with The Graduate Center, CUNY and several other CUNY colleges.

Commenting on RCSF's gift and its impact, CSI President Dr. William J. Fritz said, "We are grateful for this generous grant from the Richmond County Savings Foundation, which will help the College to construct a bright and inviting entrance to Building 2M that will welcome students, faculty, and business leaders who will collaborate to address pressing economic and social concerns in our Borough. This forward-looking space will represent the promise that Big Data Analytics and our High-Performance Computing Center hold for the future of research and our community."

RCSF, established as part of the conversion of Richmond County Savings Bank to a public institution, is committed to supporting projects that enhance the quality of life in the communities it serves. Since 1999, the Foundation has been a generous supporter of the College, providing a total of \$684,500 in support, which includes this \$250,000 as their largest gift to date.



## CSI Foundation Board Announces Newest Member



Richard A. Marin is the newest member of the CSI Foundation Board.

He is a 40-year finance industry executive who is currently President and CEO of The New York Wheel, LLC. He also is involved in managing private equity investments, consulting on major commercial real estate restructuring, acting as an expert witness in securities litigations, and teaching asset management at Cornell's Johnson School of Management.

He was most recently President and CEO of Ironwood Global, LLC., a distressed residential mortgage investment company, and prior to that, Chairman and CEO of AFI (USA), a major commercial property developer where he negotiated \$2.3B in commercial mortgage restructurings. He is the former Chairman and CEO of Bear Stearns Asset Management, a long-time executive and member of the Management Committee of Bankers Trust Company, Vice Chairman of BT Alex Brown, and Chairman, and CEO of Deutsche Asset Management. He is a founder

and partner of Beehive Ventures, a highly successful venture capital company.

Marin has also been a member of the faculty of the Johnson School at Cornell University for nine years, where he is a Clinical Professor and teaches courses in hedge funds, securities finance, and pension funds. In connection with this, he is the author of *Global Pension Crisis: Unfunded Liabilities and How We Can Fill the Gap*, published by Wiley & Sons in 2013.

He is Chairman of the Johnson School's Advisory Council and serves on the advisory boards of the Cayuga MBA Fund, the Parker Center for Investment Research, the Big Red Venture Fund, and the Cornell Financial Engineering Center. He was elected to the Johnson School Hall of Honor in 2001. A 1975 graduate of Cornell University with a BA in Economics and Government, Marin received an MBA in Finance from the Johnson School in 1976.

Marin is the director of several private technology companies, is on the advisory board for CRA Rogers Casey, is an advisor to Penbridge Advisors, and has been a director of CARE, the global relief and development agency since 2008. He is also the President and CEO of New York Wheel, LLC, which is currently constructing a 630-foot observation wheel near the Staten Island Ferry terminal.

Marin is married to singer Kim Grogg Marin.

## National Grid Partnership Engineers STEM Student Success

Twelve students at the College of Staten Island received scholarships in the STEM disciplines as part of a three-year partnership with National Grid to encourage more college students to study science, technology, engineering, and math.

During a meeting at CSI, Frank Lombardo, Executive Advisor to the President of National Grid U.S. and CSI Foundation Board Member, thanked the students for their earnest and diligent interest in STEM careers. “We are a company with highly skilled employees, our partnership with CSI helps students grow, and ultimately helps to build a pool of diverse and skilled candidates for the future workforce.”

National Grid is committed to working with students of all ages to keep them engaged in science and technology. The company’s goal is to attract, retain, and support a diverse and capable workforce to achieve its vision for bringing the natural gas network into the 21st century.

“Your seeds will definitely become flowers at CSI,” Hassan Fares, a CSI student from Brooklyn of Lebanese descent, assured the team from National Grid in acknowledgment of their generous investment in the workforce of tomorrow.

Fares was joined by his fellow students in sharing their stories, and explaining their passions.

Scott Shouldis, a junior with a cumulative GPA of 3.59, said his destiny was changed in many ways with Superstorm Sandy. He explained that his breakthrough moment between whether to study electrical engineering or mechanical engineering was when his family needed to hook up a generator after the storm-induced power outage. However, there was no adapter for the generator to work at the house. A family member said “No adapter. No problem,” and immediately went to work splicing the wiring and bringing the lights back on.

“I grew up in a broken family, with a broken life. Many of my friends died when I was growing up,” commented Zain Ali, who grew up in Pakistan. “I couldn’t fix those things, but I could fix gadgets, and my cousins encouraged me to study my passion. I quickly learned that the purpose of life is to give life purpose.” It was a sentiment felt throughout the room, and echoed by Nadia Elattar who said, “if you’re not challenging yourself, you’re not accomplishing much.”

“CSI has made me a stronger person,” noted RinZhi Larocque, a fisherman’s daughter who came to the U.S. in 2011 and graduated as CSI’s 2016 valedictorian, while Andrea Gonzalez told of her arrival in the U.S. at 14 years old with no understanding of English.

“It is an honor for CSI, and our department in particular, to have such a great partner in our pursuit of expanding STEM education in our community and our country in general,” noted Neo Antoniades, CSI Professor and Chair of the Engineering Science and Physics Department. Antoniades, who is faculty director of the project, led the effort to select the scholarship recipients. “Thank you, National Grid, on behalf of all of us.”

He added that the department created a Master’s in Engineering in Electrical Engineering (ME in EE) as the logical next step for graduates of a BS in EE. The application, which was approved by CUNY and is pending approval from the NYS DOE, should permit for the program to begin in fall 2017.

Gary Reichard, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at CSI, noted that the Engineering Science and Physics Department “is a model of research and opportunity,” and thanked National Grid for their “invaluable support that is vitally important to ensuring our students’ success.”

In addition to Lombardo, other National Grid representatives attending the meeting were Carol Decina, Manager, Community and Customer Management, and Mauri Myers-Solages, Manager, Corporate Citizenship New York.

“National Grid is committed to enhancing STEM education in our communities and developing the next generation of engineers and scientists,” Lombardo added. “Our partnership with CSI has provided scholarships to support students interested in advancing in math- and science-related careers and supported workshops to engage high school students in the STEM curriculum.”

“CSI has made many headlines with many national rankings this year, and almost all of them recognize the value of a CSI education by noting the College’s commitment to access and quality, while helping our students achieve unprecedented levels of success as alumni,” noted CSI President Dr. William J. Fritz. He added that “these rankings are the result of important partnerships that make our students’ success possible through the independent work of our many departments, divisions, and Schools. I extend my deepest thanks to National Grid for transforming the lives of our students and making the world a better place for all of us.”

## RISING STARS



### AUSTIN KRAUZA '16

*Major:* Computer Science with an interest in business and data analytics.

A former Macaulay Honors College student who worked with Dr. Natacha Gueorguieva to conduct research in the field of Fuzzy Clustering Algorithms for Data Analysis. He also assisted Dr. Jonathan Peters, Dr.

Michael Kress, and Nora Santiago at the CUNY High-Performance Computing Center and CSI's Social Policy Simulation Center.

*A favorite aspect of CSI:* As a Macaulay student, I've had the opportunity to work with some of the best professors at the College, who introduced me, and my peers into an uncharted world.

*Future plans:* He would like to pursue his MS in either Data Analysis or Statistics, and possibly his PhD down the road.



### PIERRE OVALLES '16

*Major:* Childhood Education, Sequence 2, grades 1-6. A former SEEK student, he pursued his Master's degree and completed his 400-hour student teaching requirement.

*A favorite aspect of CSI:* "I consider myself very fortunate to have been provided such a wonderful education. I have learned and experienced a great deal, and for that I am very grateful."

*Future plans:* He wants to become a public school teacher or explore a career in technology.



### RINZHI GO LAROCQUE '16

*Major:* Biology with a minor in Business.

A former Verrazano School student, who conducted research with Dr. Gu Jianying, on Vibrios genomes. She is a former tutor at the CSI Academic Support Center and CUNY Service Corps researcher at the Healthy CUNY Initiative, mathematics and science instructor

for CSI Continuing Education and Professional Development, and volunteer at the CUNY Language Immersion Program.

*A favorite aspect of CSI:* "CSI has nurtured me by giving me opportunities to improve my English through the CUNY Language Immersion Program, and allowing me to do research in the biology lab, as well as be part of the prestigious Verrazano Honor School program."

*Future plans:* She is now attending the Doctor of Dental Surgery program at SUNY Buffalo..



### STEPHANIE SHEEHAN '16

*Major:* Mathematics with concentration in Adolescence Education

A former Teacher Education Honors Academy and Dean's List student, her research examined the effect that different mediums have on the retention of high school students. She was also a Noyce Scholar and co-authored an entry that will be presented at the International Conference for Mathematics Education in Hamburg, Germany.

*A favorite aspect of CSI:* "Over the past four years I have learned and grown as a professional. I have been offered more opportunities than I could have ever imagined that pertain to my field. I can confidently say I will be prepared to go into the world as an effective mathematics teacher."

*Future plans:* She plans to teach in a high school mathematics classroom and pursue a master's in mathematics education at CSI.

## CSI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- ✓ **Library privileges:** Present your alumni photo ID at the CSI Library for access and borrowing privileges.
- ✓ **Use of the CSI Computer Center:** Contact Information Technology, 718.982.3695.
- ✓ **Parking Pass:** Alumni can park in lot 6 only up to three times throughout a semester and must display a completed visitor's pass obtained from the security guard at the entrance of the campus. Any alumni parking on campus more than three times throughout a semester are required to purchase a CSI parking decal. Parking permits and any additional information may be obtained directly from the Office of Parking and DolphinCard Services, 718.982.2294.
- ✓ **The Career Center** offers assistance with résumés through Symplicity – a Web-based career management program designed to deliver career-related services to current students and alumni. Call 718.982.2300 for more information.
- ✓ **15% tuition discount** for select courses offered by the Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development. For course information and to register, call 718.982.2182.
- ✓ **Alumni Travel Program:** Specialized Group Tours for alumni, family, and friends. Contact the office for information on upcoming trips.
- ✓ **Barnes & Noble CSI College Bookstore 10% alumni discount:** Present alumni photo ID for applicable items, excluding textbooks.
- ✓ **CSI Sports and Recreation Center alumni discount membership:** Present your alumni photo ID for discount. Contact the membership desk, 718.982.3160.
- ✓ **CSI Center for the Arts Ticket Discount:** Receive \$2 alumni discount off CFA performances (limit two per ID per performance). For more information about upcoming shows, call the box office at 718.982.ARTS (2787).
- ✓ **Auto and Homeowner Insurance Program Liberty Mutual Savings Plus/American Insurance Administrators:** Call 800.524.9400, follow the prompts, and indicate that you are an alumnus/alumna of the College of Staten Island or visit [www.libertymutual.com/lm/csi](http://www.libertymutual.com/lm/csi).
- ✓ **Group Term Life Insurance and Health Insurance NEA Trust/American Insurance Administrators:** Call 800.922.1245 and indicate that you are an alumnus/alumna of the College of Staten Island. For a complete listing of programs and availability in your state, [www.alumniinsuranceprogram.com/csi](http://www.alumniinsuranceprogram.com/csi).\*
- ✓ **New Insurance Programs:** Alumni Pet Health, Alumni ID Recovery, Alumni Long-Term Care, Alumni Travel. New offers and expanded benefits are continually added, so check out the latest benefits. Visit us at [www.csi.cuny.edu/alumni](http://www.csi.cuny.edu/alumni).

\* Note: Short-term health insurance coverage is not available for residents of NY, NJ, MA, and VT. Major Medical insurance is not available in NY, NJ, RI, WA, and AZ.

# Susan Imberman, '89

## LOOKING BACK



The College of Staten Island is accelerating its efforts to protect the environment and develop sustainable and responsible patterns of development in accordance with CUNY's University Sustainability Council, which is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from all campus buildings by 30 percent over the next decade. If you would prefer to receive an electronic version of this publication or future editions via email instead of a hard copy, please contact the Alumni Relations Office at [alumni@csi.cuny.edu](mailto:alumni@csi.cuny.edu).

### Contact **Eye on CSI:**

COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND  
Alumni Relations Office  
2800 Victory Boulevard  
Building 1A, Room 110  
Staten Island, NY 10314  
Telephone: 718.982.2290  
Email: [alumni@csi.cuny.edu](mailto:alumni@csi.cuny.edu)



On her journey to becoming the College of Staten Island's Chairperson of the Department of Computer Science and a well-respected member of that department's faculty, Susan Imberman's path featured a change of direction, and the challenge of being a parent who returned to school.

At first, Dr. Imberman pursued biology, earning a BA in the discipline from Queens College/CUNY. However, her area of interest started to shift and the College of Staten Island was there to help. "As a young mother living on Staten Island," she explains, "I became interested in Computer Science and decided to get my Master's of Science degree in this area. Since I hadn't any coursework in this field, I decided to 'try it out' with a couple of courses at the local college, CSI. These classes were on both the Sunnyside and St. George campuses. While I was taking these courses, the Computer Science Department created the Master's of Science in Computer Science. I was

proud to be among the first to attend and graduate from this program. These classes were predominately at the St. George campus."

Looking back on what she appreciated most about her time at CSI, Dr. Imberman focuses on the nurturing environment. "As an adult student returning to college, the family atmosphere was the thing that impressed me the most. I didn't feel like 'just' a student. I was a member of something much more holistic." The computer lab was her favorite place for the same reason. "The camaraderie among the students was great!!" she recalls.

In fact, that "family atmosphere" was certainly apparent as she recalls her fondest memory of attending classes at the College. "One time, my babysitter couldn't take care of my then, two-year-old. The instructor was gracious enough to let him come to class. During lecture, the instructor was doing a math example. My son recognized this as a cool version of *Sesame Street* and proceeded to count along with the professor."

Dr. Imberman fondly remembers the impact of other professors, like Dr. Bernard Domanski, whom she remembers as "funny and very knowledgeable." She adds that many of her instructors became "close friends."

Stating that she would do nothing differently if she had her CSI education in front of

her, Dr. Imberman says that her graduate assistantship and the teaching experience that she gained as a result were invaluable "both academically and as an instructor." After she completed her PhD at The Graduate Center, CUNY, she joined the Computer Science faculty full time and she has been making a significant difference ever since.

Dr. Imberman's areas of concentration are in low-platform intelligent robots and artificial intelligence, and data mining, particularly with medical applications. She is also committed to her students, bringing her energetic enthusiasm to the classroom and encouraging her students to participate in extracurricular activities in computer science such as the Computer Science Club, where she serves as the faculty advisor.

The most important aspect of Dr. Imberman's career is passing on what she gained at CSI. "The best part of my job," she notes, "is mentoring our current Computer Science students so that they can enjoy the same fabulous experience that I had when I attended class."



## Make a difference and contribute to the greater good.

For more information on the  
importance of Alumni Support,  
see the ad on the inside of  
the front cover.

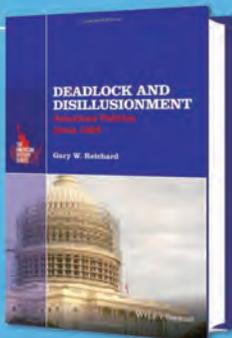
RinZhi Larocque '16



The College of Staten Island's 60th Anniversary logo was designed by Robert Weber '16, the winner of the contest that encouraged participants to create a logo for this historical milestone in the College's history.

The Friends of  
the College of  
Staten Island

## Literary Brunch



Sunday, September 18, 2016  
11:00am - 2:00pm

Featuring  
**Gary W. Reichard, PhD**  
Provost and Senior Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
and author of  
*Deadlock and Disillusionment:  
American Politics since 1968*

For tickets and information call 718.982.2365

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NURSING REUNION

October 19, 2016  
The Staaten

### ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

October 27, 2016, 6:00pm  
The Vanderbilt at South Beach  
Call 718.982.3169 for more info

### MURDER MYSTERY DINNER

November 11, 2016, 7:00pm  
The Old Bermuda Inn

### CELESTIAL BALL

December 3, 2016, 6:30pm  
Richmond County Country Club

### SAVOR THE FLAVORS

April 2, 2017  
2:00pm  
Center for the Arts Atrium

### COMMENCEMENT CLASS REUNIONS

TBA  
Honoring alumni class years  
ending in 2s and 7s  
(1962, 1967, 1972, 1977,  
1982, 1987, 1992, 1997,  
2002, 2006, 2012)

### ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

June 19, 2017, 7:00p

*If you would like to receive  
email announcements of  
upcoming events, please  
send your email to  
alumni@csi.cuny.edu.*



For information on upcoming performances  
at the CSI Center for the Arts, go to  
[www.cfashows.com](http://www.cfashows.com) or call  
718.982.ARTS. Receive a \$2 alumni  
discount off performances. Limit two  
discounts per performance.

Keep up with the latest CSI Athletics news  
at [www.csidolphins.com](http://www.csidolphins.com).

Present your Alumni Photo ID for a  
membership discount at the CSI Sports  
and Recreation Center. Call 718.982.3161  
for more information.