

CONNECTIONS

THE EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2016





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FUN FOOD FACTS

A tomato is a fruit that's most often used in savory cooking. Rhubarb is a vegetable that is used mostly in sweet dishes. A banana is both a fruit and an herb.

Fun Food Facts written by
Donna Moriarty '96



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CONNECTIONS

The State University of New York
Empire State College Magazine

Volume 41 • Number 2 • Summer 2016

Produced by the
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Cover Photo:

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From left, Ethel Blitz '90, Kate Nelson, student, and Richard Hendricks '99 at President Hancock's networking event in Boca Raton, Fla.; John and Marion Brown '82 enjoying themselves at the annual Culinary Institute of America dinner; President Merodie Hancock, right, joined at the Black History Celebration in New York City by, left, Faculty Member David Fullard, College Council Member G. Angela Henry and distinguished alumni honorees Ted Bunch '94 and Nell Baxton Gibson '82.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

“ As I read these stories, I am again reminded of the tremendous job Empire State College does in bringing academic studies to the lives and passions of our students.”

A Passion for Food and Learning

If ever there was an Empire State College publication that shows how successfully we integrate the learning interests of our students into their studies, it is this issue of Connections.

The editors decided to devote a good part of the magazine to food in all its wonderful complexities after a particularly exciting alumni event at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., where attendees learned about the nuances of matching wine with food, while enjoying both.

The stories presented here are about members of our college community engaged in a variety of different ways with one of humankind's most basic and enjoyable needs – food. They are not just eating food, they are growing it, preparing, serving it and sharing it, in addition to photographing and selling it.

I found these stories particularly interesting, not just because they are about food – although that is a wonderful subject – but also because they are about how the interests and passions of our students and alumni find their

way into their course work. While educators long have known that we learn and retain information more readily when we are personally interested in the subject, accomplishing that bond across the curriculum is often a challenge. As I read these stories, I am again reminded of the tremendous job Empire State College does in bringing academic studies to the lives and passions of our students.

I suspect many of us who were not science majors wish our undergraduate science requirements could have matched with our own personal interests, such as The Science of Food and Nutrition course with Mentor Kevin Woo. Years after I filled my science requirement with Astronomy, I find myself fascinated by the role science plays in how we prepare food, as well as how our bodies take advantage of the foods we eat.

While this issue of Connections focuses on food, Empire State College faculty and students have many similar stories. From the arts, to history, to beer and wine (of course), to firefighting and

beyond, the Empire State College experience empowers students to actively integrate their professional and personal passions with their courses of study.

During our dinner conversations at the Culinary Institute and at many other alumni events that always magically seem to involve good company, good food and good drink, I hear over and over again from you, our alumni, about how Empire State College's individualized approach to learning was transformational in your lives. We have enjoyed your stories for the last 45 years and look forward to hearing them in the years to come. It should come as no surprise that other alumni and students whom you'll meet in this magazine embody that same central tenant of the transformational nature of the Empire State College learning experience. I hope you enjoy their stories. Bon appetite!

Merodie A. Hancock
President

PROFILE

by Karen Nerney

Cathleen Sheils

Position: Executive Director of Enrollment Management

Education: Associate degree, SUNY Morrisville; B.S. in Economics and Master of Professional Studies in Policy Analysis and Management, Cornell University.

Experience: 20-plus year career in admissions and outreach, most recently as director of admissions at New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

Job philosophy: The entire student experience is the focus: from initial inquiry, the admissions process, enrollment and academic support, engagement with faculty to graduation and maintaining relationships with alumni. "You can't underestimate the importance of that first interaction with a prospective student, as that sets the tone of their experience with ESC."

What she's passionate about: Access to education for first-generation college students and minority students.

Where she grew up: On a dairy farm in Portsmouth, R.I. "The barn was my second home."

What she gained: Creativity. "My sisters and I would be outside from early morning till sundown."

Childhood memories: Showing cows at county fairs; connecting to her Portuguese heritage and ancestral roots in the Azores.

Early influences: "I value the way we were raised and what my mother and father did for us. They never said we couldn't accomplish something."

Path to education: Mentors encouraged her to pursue higher education. "Being a first-generation college student never leaves you; it's always part of who you are."

What that gave her: Empathy for her target population.

Current home: A 1,000-plus acres farm near the Finger Lakes with husband Michael, a full-time farmer, and in-laws, nieces and nephews nearby.

PHOTO CREDIT: RACHEL PHILIPSON



Cathleen Sheils

What's growing: Corn, soybeans and hay, predominantly for animal feed.

On the side: Marketer and "chief bagger" for Cozy Corn, a biofuel business she runs with her husband.

Travel preference: Off the beaten path. "My husband and I like to see agriculture wherever we travel, so we visit diners, farm supply locations and local farms."

Great reads: Historical fiction.

Favorite sports team: Boston Red Sox.

Favorite food: Rhode Island seafood: lobsters, clams, fresh fish.

Go-to menu item: Vegetables in season.

Road trip: Visiting family and Portuguese markets in Rhode Island.

Supportive role: Chairwoman of the Southern Cayuga Agricultural Advisory Committee, which supports student leadership and applied educational experiences, including growing fresh greens and tomatoes for the school cafeteria.

Words to live by: Serenity prayer. "I try to focus on what I can control and what role I can have in the big picture."

ACHIEVEMENTS

Northeast region Mentor **Robert Congemi** has published his 12th book, "The Spirit Travels Wonderful Distances." In Congemi's words, "This book moves away from my customary realistic literature to writings of magical realism."

Kymn Rutigliano, mentor in Business, Management and Economics, has been named associate editor of the International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology.

Mark Soderstrom, associate professor and chairman of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program, published "Speculating a Better Future" in Jacobin magazine, discussing speculative fiction and politics.



Kristin FitzSimons

Kristin FitzSimons has been named interim director of the Student Information Center. Previously, she was the assistant director of admissions. She has been part of the ESC community for nine years. FitzSimons has a B.S. from the College for Human Development at Syracuse University.

Mentor **Peggy Tally's** proposal for a book, "Difficult Women and the Rise of the New Anti-Heroine in Television's Third Golden Age," has been accepted for publication by Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Tally is with the School for Graduate Studies.

Francesca Cichello has been named interim director for International Programs. She has worked in IP since 2006 as director of student services.

Gayle Stever, associate professor, was recognized by both the American Psychological Association and several encyclopedias for her research on parasocial attachment theory, which has sparked a huge number of hits on her posts on "Research Gate."

Cark Burkhardt, Danielle Boardman and James McMahon presented "Making Time: Co-Curricular Engagement and Non-Traditional Students," at the Student Affairs Conference at New York University. The presentation explored the value of co-curricular engagement for nontraditional students, so they could gain the financial rewards of a degree, even if that meant missing out on other parts of the college

experience. This presentation focused on efforts at SUNY Empire to make college "worth it" outside, as well as inside, the classroom.

Provost **Alfred Ntoko's** article on adult students, "Scaling Up for Adult Students Requires Focus and Creativity," was published in The EvoLLLution, an online newspaper dedicated to postsecondary education. It asserts that nontraditional students have different objectives and goals than traditional-aged students and describes how Empire State College provides the access and services that enable them to meet their goals.

The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies Instructor **Syreeta McFadden** published an article in the Manchester Guardian about presidential candidate Bernie Sanders and the black Democratic vote. She also published an article in The New York Times Magazine, "Teaching Disobedience," on the civil rights movement.

Mentor **David Fullard** published his seventh article on Rikers Island, part of a series for City Limits. He also was quoted in The New York Times about the possibility of closing the prison, where he was formerly a captain.

Joanne Levine, interim associate dean at the Center for Distance Learning, published an article in Child and Family Social Work, "The Plight of International Child Support Enforcement," which describes the negative impact of increasing rates of mobility and divorce on the enforcement of child support.

Mentor **Heidi Nightengale** was interviewed about her writing in the children's books genre for syracuse.com. She talked about being inspired to write "What Fragrance is the Moon?" by a conversation with her niece, then a toddler.

Faculty member **James Rose**, who teaches sustainability and agro-ecosystems at the college's Genesee Valley location, wrote a piece for The Daily Messenger that contends that if, "Given the choice between betting on the five-day weather forecast in upstate New York or the veracity of any poll at any given time, the smart money goes with the meteorologist every time."

Interim Director of the Office of Veteran and Military Education **Desiree Drindak** has been appointed president-elect for the New York State Advisory Council on Military Education, a national organization with individual state ACME affiliations committed

to addressing military education issues within their respective states.

Sybil DeVeaux, instructor of Business, Management, and Economics in the Manhattan location, was selected as one of 25 Brooklyn Women of Distinction for 2016 by Brooklyn Daily magazine.

"The Ecopolitics of Consumption: The Food Trade," co-edited by Brooklyn Mentor in Cultural Studies **Karyn Pilgrim**, has been published by Lexington Books/Rowman and Littlefield. The book is a collection of essays that examine the ways current food systems exert control over human lives, while deepening the global ecological crisis.

Brooklyn Mentor **Jacob Remes**, who teaches Historical Studies, Public Affairs and Labor Studies, has published his first book, "Disaster Citizenship: Survivors, Solidarity, and Power in the Progressive Era," with the University of Illinois Press.

Mentor **Rebecca Bonanno** was awarded the Imperatore Fellowship. Her work is in the area of mental-health literacy. The goal of her fellowship project is to focus on child mental-health issues among families in the town of Huntington, Long Island, by developing and delivering a mental-health literacy curriculum for parents of children age 4 to 18.

Two different projects will share the \$2,500 annual Keep-Mills Research Grant. Mentors **Lorraine Lander** and **Gayle Stever**, of the Genesee Valley region, will work with a student on a research project focusing on the use of Twitter by celebrities and environmental organizations to promote and share environmental and sustainability messages and information. The second project, undertaken by Mentor **Nataly Tcherepashenets** of the Center for Distance Learning, will continue her research on second-language acquisition and teaching methodologies by engaging in a joint project with Pedagogical University in Krakow, Poland.

Richard Wells, assistant professor and mentor at The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies, has published an article in LABOR: Studies in Working Class History of Americas. "The Labor of Reality TV: The Case of 'The Deadliest Catch'" examines how the content of that TV program masks the world of labor by romantically envisioning life at sea.

Professor **Robert Carey** was the Martin Luther King Jr. Day speaker at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City. When Carey was doing theological studies at Union Theological Seminary, he had an opportunity to work as an assistant pastor at

Ebenezer Baptist Church, King's home pulpit in Atlanta, where he also served as the acting chairman of the Atlanta Council on Human Relations.

Mentor **Mindy Kronenberg**, who teaches writing, literature and the arts on Long Island, has joined the board of directors of the Inspiration Plus Foundation, an arts organization that nurtures creativity and facilitates artistic practices while educating through science and ecological awareness. Additionally, her poetry was included in the "Poets4Paris" chapbook, published by Local Gems Press, an effort to raise money to assist in healing/rebuilding after the terrorist attacks in Paris.

Assistant Professor of Public Affairs **Bill McDonald**, who teaches emergency management in Staten Island, has accepted a seat on the National Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education Committee. McDonald also is a paramedic.



Ann Becker

Ann Becker, Historical Studies mentor and Riverhead coordinator, published a review of Richard F. Welch's "General Washington's Commando: Benjamin Tallmadge in the Revolutionary War" in the Long Island History Journal. She also co-authored a photo-history book, "Miller Place and Mount Sinai

Through Time," with **Edna Davis Giffen**, which looks at these two North Shore enclaves, as they changed from small farming hamlets to thriving suburban communities.

President **Merodie A. Hancock** has joined the United Way of the Greater Capital Region of New York Board of Directors. As a member of the board, Hancock will be responsible for promoting and guiding United Way of the Greater Capital Region as it works to improve lives and advance the common good and diverse community needs throughout the Capital District region.

Anita DiCianni Brown '15, collegewide career development coordinator, and **Anastasia Pratt**, mentor, presented at the New York State Cooperative & Experiential Education Association in Troy, N.Y. Their presentation focused on the college's efforts to provide experiential education opportunities for its students and build upon the work done by the Applied Learning Team chaired by the college's **Gina Torino** and **Pat Isaac**. Additionally, Pratt published her fifth book, "Winooski," co-authored with **Al Blondin** and the Winooski Historical Society, which focuses on Winooski, Vt., a small industrial city just north of Burlington.

Mentors **Alan Belasen** and **Roxana Toma**, published "Confronting Corruption in Business: Trusted Leadership, Civic Engagement" with Routledge. The book focuses on the contextual issues that trigger corruption and destructive leadership. Belasen is professor and chairman of the graduate Business, Management and Leadership programs. Toma is assistant professor of Policy Studies at the college.

David Starr-Glass, a mentor with International Programs, contributed an article to the Journal of International Students, "The Self, the Other, and the International Student." He also was named to the advisory editorial board of the Journal of International Education in Business.

Vice Provost for Academic Programs **Thomas Mackey's** book, "Metaliteracy in Practice," co-edited with **Trudi Jacobson**, of SUNY Albany, was published by ALA Neal-Schuman and offers a structure for moving information literacy into real-world practice, highlighting the work of librarians and faculty who are applying the metaliteracy model in teaching and learning settings.

Decision Support staff members **Joe King** and **Kate Ostroot** presented their paper, "Zoltar Speaks: Will You Complete Your Online Course?" at the 42nd annual North East Association for Institutional Research conference. Their research utilized data collected from an online readiness survey administered to new students taking undergraduate online courses during the summer term.

Mentor **Patricia Isaac** was selected by the American Psychological Association's Committee on Children, Youth and Families to join its working group of practitioners and researchers with experience working with African-American, Latino-Hispanic and Native American youth to address racial/ethnic disparities in youth mental health services. The group's goal is the development of a resource guide for practitioners.



Lisa D'Adamo-Weinstein

Newly named Dean of Academic and Instructional Services **Lisa D'Adamo-Weinstein**, Northeast region, has been named one of six National College Learning Center Association appointees to an expert reviewer panel. D'Adamo-Weinstein also serves as one of the core committee members and a lead reviewer for the NCLCA Learning Centers of Excellence

Program and co-presented a post-conference institute at the 30th annual NCLCA conference on developing learning centers of excellence.

Master of Arts in Adult Learning Mentor **Dianne Ramdeholl** co-edited, with **Tom Heaney**, a new volume of *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education*, "Reimagining Doctoral Education as a Practice of Adult Education," in which she also authored a chapter. The work looks at graduate education, specifically doctoral programs, through the lens of adult education practice.

A paper by Mentor **Justin Giordano**, co-authored with student **Emmanuel Tabone**, was recognized at the Northeast Business & Economics Association 2015 conference with the Overall Best Paper Award. The paper was based on their research about "Minimum Wages and Low-wage Workers: Correlational Evidence." Giordano also has released "No Escape," a new CD album of his original compositions, written and performed by him.

Mentor **Gina Torino** published "Examining Biases and White Privilege: Classroom Strategies that Promote Cultural Competence" in a special edition of the *Journal of Women and Therapy*.

Nicole Hoyt, financial aid advisor, received the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association Region IV Service Award at the NYSFAAA conference, which recognizes individuals who have provided a significant contribution to the association at the regional level. Hoyt is the elected co-chairwoman of the region.

CDL Instructor **Mark Peters** has published a book, "Bullshit: A Lexicon," which includes illustrations by New Yorker cartoonist **Drew Dernavich**. It is described by the publisher, Three Rivers Press, as a handy guide to identifying and calling BS in its many forms, from "bunk" and "claptrap" to "applesauce" and "gobbledygook."

Mentor **Jordan Wright** and Manhattan undergraduate student **Suzanne Stern** had a paper published in the *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, that grew out of a research project to investigate the impact of spirituality on sexual minority identity.

Director of Financial Aid **Kristina Delbridge** received the Sister Bernadine Hayes and Rusty Hopkins Service Award for her contributions to the New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association. Delbridge has been on the executive council of the organization as region IV's representative since 2011, is a leadership coach for the SUNY Empire Leadership Institute and a member of the Interagency Task Force on TAP.

Mentors **Nadine Wedderburn** and **MaryNell Morgan** presented at the centennial annual meeting and conference of the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History. Their panel, "Reading and

Teaching 'The Souls of Black Folk,' centered on an examination of W.E.B. Du Bois' classic text.

"Baba Yaga's Assistant," a graphic, young adult novel by CDL Instructor **Marika McCoola**, and illustrated by Emily Carroll, debuted as No. 3 on The New York Times bestseller list to critical praise. Published by Candlewick Press, the novel is the 2015 New England Book Award winner, 2015 Junior Library Guild selection, shortlisted for the 2015 Autostraddle Comic and Sequential Art Awards in the Favorite Graphic Novel/Book category and nominated for the 2016 YALSA Great Graphic Novels for Teens list in the fiction category.

Long Island mentor and contributing editor to the Daily Kos **Ian Reifowitz** was interviewed on France 24, an English-language news channel, where his opinion is sought regularly, on the Oregon mass shooting, President Obama's reaction and the politics of gun control in the U.S.



Nadine Fernandez

Mentor **Nadine Fernandez**, at the Syracuse location, presented papers based on her research on Cuban migration to Europe at two conferences abroad. The first was the European Association of Social Anthropology Mobility Network conference, titled "Grounding (im) mobility: embodiment, ephemera, ecologies," in Lisbon, Portugal.

The second was an invited workshop sponsored by the International Gender Studies Centre at Lady Margaret Hall at Oxford University, England.

Outreach and Recruitment Specialist **Heather Howard** was lead presenter, along with her recruiter and outreach colleague **Kate Colberg**, as co-presenter, at the 14th annual National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students conference in Atlanta. They discussed "Identifying and Addressing the Unique Needs of the Nontraditional Transfer Student."

SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor and Mentor **A. Tom Grunfeld** was the keynote speaker at a conference in Freiburg, Germany, themed the International Symposium on Cultural Inclusion in China and the World. His talk was titled "Cultural Security for China's Ethnic Minorities: The Case of Tibet."

Gohar Marikyan, associate professor, and convener of the Science, Mathematics and Technology area of study at the Manhattan location, was invited to participate and present at the 22nd International Learning Conference in Madrid. She presented the results of her research topic, "Interrelation Between Mathematics and Common Sense."

Associate Professor **Cindy Bates** directed "The Commons of Pensacola," a play by Amanda Peet, at Curtain Call Theatre, in Latham, N.Y. The show is based on the Bernie Madoff scandal and imagines what it might feel like to be the wife, child or grandchild of someone who commits crimes like those committed by Madoff.

Richard Savior, assistant professor, Business Management and Economics, Metropolitan region, has authored a chapter, "Leadership Practice in Mentoring," in a new book, "Mentoring With Meaning," which explores the role of leadership in academic mentoring, examines the benefits and impact of effective mentor leadership and discusses the principles that guide effective mentorship.

Jason Russell '02, assistant professor of labor studies, was appointed editor of the "Fabriks: Studies in the Working Class" book series published by Athabasca University Press. This series provides a broad-based forum for labor studies research.

Hate crimes were discussed at forum at the college's Manhattan location with featured input from **Letitia James**, New York City public advocate, and adjunct faculty with the college, and Deputy Inspector **Mark Magrone**, commanding officer of the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force. The ESC Human Services Collaborative sponsored the event with the college's Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies.

Students in Associate Professor **David Gechlik's** group study on hate crimes came up with the idea of organizing and hosting the forum. Gechlik moderated and **Lisa Whiteside**, an instructor with the college, who is retired from the New York City Department of Corrections, spoke.

Mentor **Michele Forte**, Academic Advisor **Diana Hawkins** and Senior Recruitment and Outreach Specialist **Kelly Mollica** delivered "Team-Based Approaches to Attract, Recruit, and Successfully Retain Adult Learners" at UPCEA's national marketing and enrollment management conference in Denver, Colo.

Empire State College Professor of Business, Management and Economics **Julie Gedro** has been named associate dean of business for the college, effective June 15. She will be located in Rochester. Also, she has been elected by her peers as president-elect of the Academy of Human Resource Development, the leading voice among HRD scholars globally. She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources by the Society for Human Resource Management.





Cultivating ideas for sustainable communities

by Mary Caroline Powers

In devoting much of the space in this issue of Connections to food, we thought we could tap into New Yorkers' regional pride about certain dishes.

You know, salt potatoes in Syracuse and beans and greens in Utica, Coney Island hot dogs and Binghamton's Spiedies, Rochester's Garbage Plate and North Country poutine. And street food, oh, street food!

But the state and its citizens, including the many thousands who have graduated from Empire State College or who are currently attending, are an eclectic group open to trying new foods and combining the flavors of one cuisine with the tastes of another. To say that all you can get to eat in Flushing is dumplings and duck would be very, very far from the truth.

So, we decided to steer away from the downstate pizza wars, the unending debate about which roast beef on weck joint is the best in Buffalo, and whether the potato chip really was invented in Saratoga.

Instead we reached out to our faculty and staff, our alumni and current students and what we found was a treasure trove of foodies. These are not just people who like to eat, they like to cook for themselves and others, they want to ensure a safe food supply and protect the land where we grow the food we eat. They are genuinely concerned about the increasing fragility of the earth. They are working to produce and save organic and pure-strain seeds.

They are supporting farmers markets by the scores and engaging in the community supported agriculture movement. They are tapping maple trees and creating community connections with their restaurants. They are writing about food, photographing food, growing food, cooking food and eating it. And they are studying it.

Our faculty have taken some deep dives into the history, science and nutritional value of food and are sharing what they've learned with our students; our alumni are attending college-sponsored events, gathering to share fine food and wine and their ESC experience, all the while celebrating the extraordinary agricultural riches the state of New York has to offer.

The bounty seems endless: Long Island's fruits de mer and all those Hudson Valley apples, the rich milk products – cheeses, yogurt, ice cream – produced in the stretches of rolling farmland between Albany and the shores of Lake Erie, the lovely and luscious wines of the Finger Lakes region.

If there is a message we really want to deliver it is this: the passion of New Yorkers about their food and drink will drive the momentum-gaining effort to preserve, protect and promote our food, our farms and our fertile soils for generations to come. And the more we know about this, the more we can learn and study and integrate these ideas into our knowledge base, the greater the chances these goals will be achieved.

Photography by Samantha Seeley



Dining ...

Under the Five-Star Heavens

by Helen Susan Edelman

A night out at the Culinary Institute of America, in Hyde Park, N.Y., is by all standards an exceptional experience. Beyond the cornucopia of fresh foods and spectacular flavors, the meal is a multi-sensory learning opportunity, where diners take pleasure in the bounty of virtuosic chefs exploring all aspects of the menu – from aromas to aesthetics. Every fall since 2002, 100 or more alumni, students, board members, donors and the president of Empire State College, have gathered for dinner at the prestigious C.I.A. The sell-out event features a comprehensive, interactive presentation on topics such as wine and food pairings, cooking with wine, how to buy and serve wine, as well as a guided tasting of selected wines.

It all started with Joan Altman '81, former assistant to the Hudson Valley dean and a graduate from

that location. She was attending a retirement luncheon at the C.I.A. and thought, "This would be a wonderful venue for an alumni event." Altman contacted the director of sales for external events at the C.I.A. and, with support from the Office of Alumni and Student Relations, the two of them worked together planning and executing the event for the next 10 years. Each year, a different pre-dinner event is planned. The first year, guests were treated to a cheese-making demonstration. The second year, a tour of the C.I.A. was included. The third year, there was a cocktail hour in the outdoor herb garden of Ristorante Caterina de' Medici. The following year, a wine-and-food pairing was presented by Michael Weiss '91, a professor of wine studies at the C.I.A. and author of two best-selling, seminal books in the field: "Exploring Wine," for industry

professionals, and "WineWise," for consumers. (*See more on Michael Weiss '91, pg. 12*)

Weiss was such a hit that the wine-and-food pairing became the highlight for each dinner going forward. While Altman has retired from the college, she still looks forward to attending the C.I.A. dinner events.

"It's become a Hudson Valley tradition for our college community," says Maureen Winney, director of alumni and student relations at the college. "Inquiries come in for the C.I.A. event a year in advance – people don't want to miss it, especially if they've been before."

A unique menu of appetizers, entrées and desserts is planned for Empire State College guests by the innovative experts at the C.I.A., an internationally acclaimed, nonprofit college with a mission to provide

the world's best culinary education in cooking, baking and pastry arts, culinary science and applied food studies. All foodies are welcome to study there – novices who wish to become a chef, professionals who want to build on their honed talents to advance their careers, and enthusiasts with a passion for cooking, who simply seek to enhance skills in their home kitchens.

“It’s a perfect opportunity for engagement,” says SUNY Empire President Merodie Hancock. “It’s a venue that draws face-to-face interaction and I enjoy the opportunity to go table to table in this intimate setting to meet college supporters. I also enjoy watching Michael Weiss so freely sharing his knowledge of wine pairing. My goal is to discover at least one new tip at each event.”

Hancock adds that the evening is an opportunity for those advanced C.I.A. students who staff it to “learn as they work, a hands-on approach to gaining valuable knowledge that is fundamental to our philosophy and practice at the college, supporting and aligning both study and career.”

The C.I.A. dinner is one of many successful, high-profile regional events Winney’s office plans across New York and, reasonably priced, it’s “both a good value and a good time,” she adds. Although Winney interacts

directly with the C.I.A. throughout the planning of the evening and the menu of fresh, seasonal foods, she says that she doesn’t know exactly what will be on the plate until the group is seated.

“When we get there, it’s ready,” she says, “right down to the place settings. The service is attentive, the food is, of course, out of this world and the wine tasting is fabulous. People take notes whenever Michael Weiss talks.”

She adds that there are a number of SUNY Empire alumni who work at the C.I.A., as the college at one time had a program on the Hyde Park campus, where students could be immersed simultaneously in culinary training and study for an ESC undergraduate degree. The C.I.A. now offers its own associate and baccalaureate degrees, but some students do cross-register with Empire State College for liberal arts studies and other academic options.

“It’s very special in this way,” Winney says, adding that the night at the C.I.A. is one of her personal favorites among college events. “Our alumni at the C.I.A. have stayed connected to the college and it shows in the way this occasion is planned and executed. We can assure those who love this event that there are more to come.”

Photography by Marty Heitner '92



FUN FOOD FACTS

Prickly pear is the edible inner flesh of a cactus plant that produces a citrusy, nutrient-rich juice. Removing the stinging glochids requires using thick gloves and a knife or shaking the cactus pads in a pan of hot coals.

A rose is not a fruit, a nut or a weed. But apples, strawberries, pears, almonds and roses are all part of the same family of flowering plants known as rosacea. If you look closely at the blossoms of each, you can see the similarities.

Empire State College at the CIA: left, alumnus and CIA Chef Robert Perillo '12 who was instrumental in the execution of the alumni dinner; right, Michael Weiss '92 shares his wine expertise at the college's annual CIA dinner event.



More Content Online



The Weiss Way to Perfect Pairing

by Helen Susan Edelman

According to Michael Weiss '92, "If it grows together, it goes together," is a basic tenet of appreciating wine. "That means, Tuscan food goes with Tuscan wines, or Greek wines with Greek food," he explains. "Same with Spain, Portugal and France. Pair the wine with complementary food. Wine culture evolved to partner well with the foods in the particular regional diet. There's a real joy in exploring that. The wine doesn't have to be pricey. There's a perfect local wine for tapas, beef bourguignon, falafel or pasta. Beer is never the answer."

Weiss also recommends either complementing or contrasting the flavors of the food with the flavors of the wine. "For example," he says, "the hint of sweetness in a Riesling can contrast with the spiciness of a seafood curry and complement the chutney served with it."

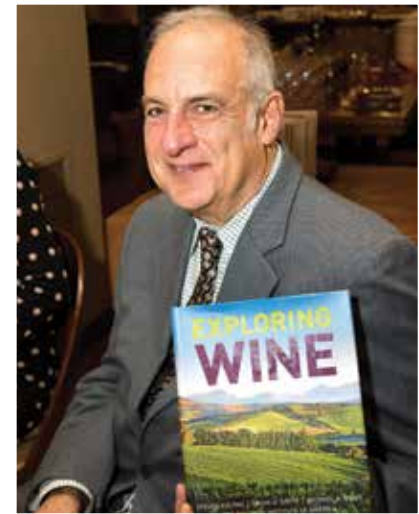
Nevertheless, he admits, with a Montreal smoked-beef sandwich, there's nothing like a Dr. Brown celery or black cherry soda.

These are words to the wise worth heeding from Weiss, a professor of wine studies at the world's premier college for cooking and food studies, the Culinary Institute of America, in Hyde Park, N.Y. During his career, Weiss has savored wines that cost

thousands of dollars for a single bottle, yet he reveres the spirit in which wine is shared as deeply as the specially cultivated grapes that yield it.

A much-lauded oenophile, esteemed journalist and author, international wine judge and chef-sommelier, Weiss waxes poetically about sipping wine in romantic Greece with his wife, where art and music contribute to the ambiance and evoke his positive response to the experience. He confides that he would rather have a \$20 bottle of wine with her than a \$200 bottle of wine in unpleasant company.

Weiss is the descendant of a Polish Jewish grandfather who was captured during World War II and spared death because of his talents as a chef. He dynamited his way out of prison, returned to fight in the Resistance and finally escaped to Montreal, where he opened a kosher deli. Weiss was raised there at his elbow, later spending weekends with his grandfather on Long Island, where the pair catered weddings and bar mitzvahs. Driven to study more formally, Weiss earned a two-year degree in liberal arts and literature at Dawson College in Montreal, a diploma at the Hotel School of Management in New York City, an



Michael Weiss '92

advanced certificate from the Court of Master Sommeliers, a degree in Culinary Science from the Culinary Institute of America and his B.S. in Wine Education from Empire State College in 1992, the first C.I.A. graduate to complete the program.

"I was working 70 to 80 hours a week, moonlighting in the food industry and going to school," he recalls. "My parents were Holocaust survivors and there was no financial support to be had. We were just glad to be alive – but, I, myself, lived like a refugee. It wasn't a straight and easy path."

Married, he now lives east of Rhinebeck, where his wife is an art therapist. When he's not in the classroom, hosting wine pairings, writing about wine, judging food and wine competitions, or traveling to wine growing regions across the United States and abroad, Weiss immerses himself in playing the guitar, at least 15 hours per week, especially classical, flamenco and bossa nova. Sometimes, he integrates guitar music and his wife's art into tasting dinners or festivals.

Weiss' reflections on wine are both broad in substance and focused in depth, whether he's discussing how much to spend on wine, where to buy great wine in locations from



France to New York's Finger Lakes, whether a wine's name refers to the kind of grapes it's produced from or its region of origin, what part chemistry plays in pairing or, the most popular topic, how to pair wine with food.

An arm's-length list of global honors pay homage to Weiss' expertise. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the Italian Trade Commission, was an inductee of the Confraria do Vinho do Porto, received a Lifetime Special Achievement Award from the European Wine Council and was awarded a Diploma of Honor from the Corporation des Vignerons de Champagne.

As sophisticated and nuanced as Weiss' knowledge is, he still deals with universals. If someone asks a guest to bring wine to dinner, but doesn't share the menu, Weiss suggests "a sparkling Spanish rosé, usually under \$20, which works as a cocktail and with most food – duck, salmon, vegetables, pasta with red sauce and lamb." He is a fan of Chateau Frank from New York's own Finger Lakes region and wines from the Iron Horse vineyard in California. He praises the wines of the Hudson Valley region, Finger Lakes and Long Island, which he says have improved over the last two decades as growers and producers use better techniques. He's particularly partial to New York Rieslings, both semi-dry and sweet.

"You generally pay more for better-known wines, but you can get better value if you're willing to go off the beaten path," he advises. "There's more bad wine out there than ever before, but you can find a good one, even an excellent one, if you do some research."

Weiss estimates he's mentored close to 19,000 students in the 29 years he's been teaching and "every one of them could learn how to taste the differences in the flavors of grape types, whether a wine is fruit-forward, spicy or earthy. You don't have to be born with a special skill to learn how to do it."

Weiss notes that as ancient a tradition as wine has been in human culinary experience, "Things are changing with global warming, what can be planted and what will thrive. Vineyards are experimenting – you can think of this as exciting or scary. There is a politics of wine."

As for the art of drinking wine well, Weiss does not equivocate. "Wine can be life enhancing for those who pace themselves and learn to control portions and timing," he says. "It's not to get drunk on. When wine class students sip the wine, they can recognize the flavors, then spit it out, and still pair it with foods. Wine can enhance or ruin a meal. You can love it or hate it, depending on whether you serve it with the right or wrong food. For example, if you serve a salty Virginia ham with a Cabernet, it will result in a metallic flavor – disgusting. Rich fish dishes can be served with a Pinot Noir or Gamay, but not Cabernet, because the omega 3 fatty acids in the fish will clash with the tannins – it would be like having aluminum foil rubbed on your tooth fillings."

Wine is a pleasure, not just a career for Weiss, who is both an aficionado and an expert. He concludes, "It's very humbling to study wine science, learning its complexities. For me, it's an infinite quest with many gratifying relationships and experiences."

Tips and More

- Balance the delicacy or richness of a dish with the equivalent body/texture of a wine. (Tawny port with milk chocolate and ruby reserve or late-bottled vintage port with dark chocolate, for instance.)
- Purchase American or Australian wine for something fruity.
- Avoid full-bodied Cabernet or Chardonnay with spicy food, because the combination is uncomfortably hot.
- Don't drink heavy white wine with spicy Asian, Tex Mex or Moroccan food, because the taste of the food will be overpowered.
- Sample tart wines with goat cheese and Shiraz with meats.
- Rieslings' hint of sweetness contrasts nicely with smoked salmon.
- If you're a beginner, try something sparkling, like a Riesling or one of the native white grapes of Portugal, Spain or Italy.
- Don't overspend.
- Beginners should look for wine with low-alcohol content, in either red or white, for under \$20.
- Buying a bottle of wine at dinner is usually more cost effective than buying by the glass, if diners plan to drink more than one glass.
- Don't be afraid of screw tops. A cork can be infected and moldy and ruin wine by stripping it of character and giving it a bad smell.
- Finally, keep the wine cellar at 55 degrees F.

The Right Recipe for Sharing and Caring

by Helen Susan Edelman



There's food and then there's community. And then there's food as the springboard for community. In Laura Serway's world, they're inextricable. The 2009 graduate, who earned a bachelor's in Business, Management and Economics at SUNY Empire's Syracuse location, Serway has undertaken interconnected enterprises ranging from creating restaurants to raising money for The QCenter, a safe place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth, their families and allies. Together with Cindy Seymour, her partner in life, career and volunteering, Serway has become a major force for feeding her Syracuse neighbors, body and soul.



Laura Serway '09

In the past, before she had even attended college, Serway was a Georgia-based corporate trainer for fast-food chain Wendy's, working with 180 restaurants in the Northeast. In '91, she realized that to move up to a more senior position, she would need further education, so the Syracuse native enrolled in Bryant and Stratton College for an associate degree. Even at graduation, she was already sure she wanted to advance further to support her professional goals, but needed to continue to work to pay her bills. When she learned that SUNY Empire students could receive credit for college-level learning outside the classroom, she enrolled at the Syracuse location.

"It was brilliant," she recalls. "I could get college credit for my senior-level experience in the business world and

it only took me a year and a half to get my bachelor's. It was cool! I am a huge fan of ESC." Now, she is seriously considering enrolling in the college's MBA program.

Studying wasn't Serway's only focus. Starting in 2003, the dynamic Serway-Seymour duo began to build restaurants in Central New York, where they have launched several, each a success. Ultimately, they have come to roost in a red-brick Victorian landmark on Hawley Avenue as the co-owners of Laci's Tapas Bar, which specializes in diverse appetizer-portion delectables. The establishment has become the magical and magnetic centerpiece of the Hawley-Green Historic District.

"We've had to do some educating," Serway says. "People don't necessarily know what tapas are."

They also co-own nearby Laci's Lunchbox, for light fare during the day, jar and sell their popular Laci's Luscious Sauce, as well as operate Laci's Real Estate, all under the Laci's brand (named to blend their names, Laura and Cindy.)

"The restaurant business is very difficult," Serway says. "When I'm in the dining room, it's always show time. I'm on my feet all the time, building the ambiance, which is part of our brand, and promoting our motto: 'Eat small, live large.'"

"Small" may refer to healthy portion sizes, but "large" is clearly a reference to the depth and breadth of Serway's and Seymour's generous involvement in the community. Through sponsored and hosted events, they have raised significant dollars – more than \$70,000 – at occasions such as Laci's Annual Giveback Party, and redeployed the funds to support causes including The QCenter, David's Refuge, a bed and breakfast for parents and guardians of children with special needs or life-threatening medical conditions, Priscilla Mahar Animal Welfare

Foundation and the AIDS Community Resources Inc. The community nominates nonprofit organizations to be recipients and then votes for the winners. Serway is thrilled about the engagement and enthusiasm this has generated among her neighbors.

“People love to be involved and to contribute to causes they believe in,” she observes, gratified to have a role in facilitating the generosity.

In addition, Serway and Seymour personally support Susan G. Komen, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending breast cancer; the American Heart Association; Vera House, a domestic and sexual violence service agency; the Ronald McDonald House, which houses the families of critically ill children; and the Brain Injury Association.

Also, to grow and enhance the Hawley-Green neighborhood, they bought boarded-up homes to rehab, which now house new businesses, and they inaugurated a street festival.

“Our customers are about 80 percent female,” Serway notes. “You get to know your demographic and what works. We have sold-out nights when people can’t even get reservations. What Cindy and I have done through the Laci’s brand is create a platform for philanthropy.”

She is proud that Laci’s Tapas Bar gets more Facebook “likes” than any other restaurant in Syracuse and that the community understands and backs the corporate efforts to feed the hands that feed them.

“Still, we have to make money to sustain ourselves, so we can continue to help someone else,” Serway explains. “We are multidimensional, we do a lot, we work hard at having the two ends meet in the middle and we’re having fun in the process. But we never open on Sunday or Monday. The extra money from more open hours does not interest me. I need time away, too.”

Laci’s Tapas Bar also doesn’t cater, because, Serway pointed out, she thinks it’s harder to control food quality off site and doesn’t want to compromise her brand of either food or philosophy.

Laci’s Tapas Bar serves up scrumptiousness on a plate, to be sure, but underpinning the menu is another kind of sustenance, one of “community and conversation,” Serway says. “You put your cellphone away at the front door. My restaurant, my rules. Have fun, eat well. The good food is one reason to come back, but, when you look around, you see that’s not the only thing being shared here.”

Learning to Serve Up the Sweetness in Life

by Hope Ferguson

Working under the head pastry chef at the fine Italian eatery, Osteria Cicchetti, MacKenzie Clements creates confections for five of the top restaurants in Wilmington, N.C. Besides Osteria Cicchetti, the chefs bake for Osteria Cicchetti II, Boca Bistro, Circa 1922 and Brasserie. Clements, originally from Waterford, N.Y., moved south this year, after earning her culinary degree at Schenectady County Community College. She continued to take courses for a bachelor’s degree in food management through Empire State College’s Center for Distance Learning.



MacKenzie Clements '16

“Pastries were not my initial career choice,” she explains. “I attended SUNY Oneonta with a double major in psychology and nutrition to be a nutritional therapist. After one year in the program, I felt I was moving in the wrong direction and decided to try culinary school, because I had always baked when I needed an outlet. I was attracted to pastries instantaneously. I knew this would be my dream career by the end of my first Elements of Baking course. The science and precise nature of pastry is appealing to me, as well as the aspect of always having something more to learn, even when you have been in the industry for a lifetime.”

Clements began to learn the craft at a local bakery in Clifton Park, N.Y., called Dolce and Biscotti. “They took me in and agreed to train me while I was attending culinary school, even though I had no previous experience. My degree from Schenectady County Community College and training from Dolce and Biscotti gave me an incredible entrance into the industry.”

A year after graduating from culinary school, Clements was looking to earn a degree in Business, Management and Economics, so she could run her own enterprise someday. Her mother, who knew about Empire State College’s flexibility and the availability of online courses, suggested it to her. This was especially appealing “because I knew I would want to travel to gain pastry experience as well.” She especially noted how her mentor, Sue Epstein, spent time discussing her future plans, helping her design “the exact degree program for me. She took time to understand what I wanted and how I would benefit most from the programs the college offers. The decision to go to SUNY Empire was a great one,” she says. The proof is in the pudding as she graduated in June 2016 with a degree in food business management.



Petra Page-Mann

Saving the Food Chain One Seed at a Time

by Mary Caroline Powers



Matthew Goldfarb and
Petra Page-Mann

Petra Page-Mann is studying Ecological Agriculture at Empire State College's Canandaigua location, southeast of Rochester in New York's fertile

Finger Lakes region. Like so many other Empire State College students, her professional life is the laboratory for her academic pursuits.

Together with her partner, Matthew Goldfarb, she founded Fruition Seeds in 2012. They have grown the endeavor to what is considered a "cutting-edge" seed company that produces certified organic, local seeds regionally adapted for the Northeast and open-pollinated. The selection of different seeds includes vegetables, herbs,

flowers, grain and cover crop seed for the Finger Lakes bioregion.

The couple brought to the effort an effective blend of passion, social commitment, experience and good advice from friends, neighbors and experts.

Goldfarb had been committed to sustainable agriculture since the early 1990s, beginning with a career in farm-based education and sustainable food production and distribution systems. He has



since worked on the design and management of diversified farming, consulted farms and farm-education organizations, conducted small farms research at Cornell University, taught high school biology and agriculture, completed academic work in Rural Sociology, and earned his MBA from Babson College with a focus on entrepreneurship and creativity.

Page-Mann is a lifelong gardener, seed saver and native of the small rural community of Naples, N.Y., where their Fruition Seeds' operation thrives on two leased acres located on Hickory Bottom Road. They describe the land as "predominantly silt loams with more than 5 percent organic matter and a pH between 6.2 and 6.9." Another leased acre nearby in Branchport provides more opportunity for growing, as does a third planting area just beginning on muckland on the edge of Naples, which is isolated from other produce operations, a big plus when you're

trying to produce pure and viable strains of organic seed.

"I first became enamored with seed as a child in my father's garden, witnessing the miracle of seed, sun and soil that sustained us all through the seasons," Page-Mann says.

She spent more than a decade working for organic seed growers as well as regional and international seed companies. From that experience, she says, she recognized the extreme peril threatening our current food system and came to believe that cultivating a diverse and resilient genetic foundation for the world's food system can address its most systemic problems.

Together, she and Goldfarb set out to revitalize the regional seed supply in the Northeastern United States.

"Fruition Seeds offers resilience to our food system at its most fundamental level, growing over 300 varieties of certified organic seeds that are regionally adapted to thrive in the short seasons of the Northeast," says Page-Mann. "We collaborate with farmers, chefs, plant breeders, schools, food banks and the wider community to bring greater resilience to all."

Farming is hard work. Seed farming, which in addition to growing involves collecting seeds and seed heads, then careful drying, sorting and packaging them, is particularly challenging. But a perusal of the Fruition Seeds website would suggest that Goldfarb and Page-Mann, while working hard,

are having fun saving the earth's food supply.

"New This Season," the Fruition Seed website boldly declares, "Organic Mad Dog (official Skullcap!)" What follows is just about all the information a grower would need to sow Mad Dog Skullcap seeds, including this tidbit: "called Mad Dog for its use as a traditional folk remedy for rabies."

The Fruition Seeds website is chockablock with planting strategies, climate information, including what to plant when, and information on plant growth and behavior, such as, "Mad Dog Skullcap spreads best by stolons underground so keep the bed well weeded."

They've got seeds for 20 different varieties of tomatoes, some of which are rated, like the five-star organic Gelbe von Thun yellow heirloom that's touted as possessing "outstanding flavor" and being "perfect in salads and on kabobs."

There are seeds for herbs that are medicinal and herbs that are edible, seeds for edible flowers, as well as those meant for vases, and seeds for plants best grown in containers. And the photos of what their seeds grow makes experienced and amateur gardeners alike want to order every single one of them, suddenly infected with Fruition fever. But beyond the joy, Page-Mann wants to remind us of the seriousness of her pursuit.

"I'd like to offer you this thought: seeds are the foundation of food. There is no food without seeds. And not just carrots. There is no steak, no tea, no medicine," says Page-Mann of the strongly held belief that underlies her work and studies. "Our lives are deeply intertwined with seeds, whether we sow a seed in our lives or not."

Photography provided by Fruition Seeds



Samantha Seeley '16

The Samantha Seeley Brand: A Feast for More Than the Eyes

by Hope Ferguson



FUN FOOD FACTS

Order a mayo jaga in Japan, and you'll get a pizza topped with mayonnaise, bacon, corn, potatoes and onion.

Like a lot of stories of reinvention, Samantha Seeley's began with loss. In Seeley's case, it was the loss of her job in 2009. To distract herself and make good use of her time while she looked for employment, "I threw myself into baking." She started selling baked goods – cupcakes, brownies and cookies – at a farmers market in Pine Bush, N.Y. "From there I needed photos of the products I was selling, so I decided to start taking photos of the food I created," she explains. "I learned as much as I could about photography and food styling to make my photos stand out. I created a blog to promote my farmers market booth and it slowly turned into a recipe and photography blog."



A few delectable examples of Samantha Seeley's photography, from her website at samanthaseeley.com



That blog, SamanthaSeeley.com, where one can view luscious food photos and grab recipes, is just one item on Samantha Seeley's menu. She began teaching digital photography and digital storytelling at SUNY Orange in the spring, is planning to offer food photography workshops in the Hudson Valley next year, and eventually wants to shoot food for cookbooks. She also blogs at SweetRemedy.com, a food and lifestyle blog with a focus on whole-grain baking and recipes.

Seeley's path began with a love of photography. When she started baking, the food and the photography proved a natural pairing. The possibilities for her brand can only expand.

Seeley, a 2016 graduate of the college's Newburgh location, credits the college's flexibility and online courses for allowing her to earn her degree in multimedia production. She received an associate degree in liberal arts from SUNY Orange County Community College in 2013. "I knew I needed to continue, but had trouble balancing my blog, other work obligations and freelance photography jobs. A long commute to a four-year university was almost out of the question for me. I needed a SUNY school that would accept my transfer credits and that offered online courses that would be flexible with my schedule. I'm extremely grateful that I found Empire State College and that these types of

degrees are available and more widely accepted."

Her next educational step is to earn a graduate degree in instructional design or media studies. "Nowadays, I find that I am truly passionate about eLearning," she adds. "I'm sure I owe that in part to Empire State College."

On a personal note, Seeley is newly engaged and planning a wedding. "We are looking into having our wedding at a cider house or a brewery in the Hudson Valley," she says. Not surprisingly, "The food and photography were the first vendors I searched for!"

Photography by Samantha Seeley



It's a Fact: Blueberries Today Keep the Doctor Away

by Helen Susan Edelman



Kim Stote

Growing up Italian, with family meals a joyful centerpiece of her childhood, Associate Professor Kim Stote says she “learned to love food.” Her grandparents had a garden and her grandmother was committed to “putting a healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner on the table. Lots of fruits and vegetables.”

From this nucleus of nourishment – both physical and spiritual – emerged Stote’s natural trajectory: a B.S. in Dietetics at SUNY Oneonta, a dietetic internship at the prestigious Cleveland Clinic Foundation, a Master of Public

Health at the University of South Florida and a Ph.D. in Nutrition Science at Syracuse University. There she wrote a dissertation on the “Cardioprotective Effects of Chocolate and Almond Consumption in Healthy Women,” finding that it’s no myth – a bit of dark chocolate actually can have a salubrious effect.

Flash forward and Stote, now coordinator of Health Science studies at SUNY Empire, has become a staunch advocate for wild blueberries. In fact, she dedicated a Fulbright Scholarship experience on Prince Edward Island, in Canada, to investigating their health effects, concluding that an 80-calorie cup of the dark, tiny, sweet superfruit packs “a serious nutritional punch.” Low in fat, high in fiber, the daily consumption of blueberries, “has promising effects on the cardio-metabolic biomarkers of women at risk for type II diabetes.” That means, in her short-term study, measurements improved for blood pressure and insulin sensitivity for these women, reducing their

glucose, insulin and inflammation by taking stress off the body’s cells. Risk factors for diabetes may include being overweight, a family history of diabetes or having had gestational diabetes.

The same polyphenols that provide the blueberries’ dark color exist in cranberries, pomegranates, blackberries, strawberries and red and purple grapes, also both delicious and healthy, possibly helping to guard against heart disease. “Eat a cup of berries a day,” Stote advises, “half in the morning, half in the evening. Frozen ones will do, too.” (A connoisseur, Stote prefers berries off low bushes to berries off high bushes for their sweeter flavor.)

According to data Stote cited, blueberries have the potential to boost cognitive function, help prevent cancer and cardiac disease and alleviate hyperglycemia.

A registered dietitian and certified dietitian-nutritionist, Stote also has explored the health effects of nuts, cocoa, coffee, tea, whey protein and alcohol. She has applied her

broad-ranging expertise in both hospital-based clinical practice and in academic settings, teaching at SUNY Oneonta prior to Empire State College. Additionally, Stote performed influential research through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Research Service, Beltsville Human Nutrition Center, which partnered with her in the P.E.I.-based Fulbright.

The point of studying the efficacy of blueberries was not purely theoretical, Stote points out. “The question is, will women do something about it, once they have the knowledge? Will they take better care of themselves? It’s no magic bullet – there is none – but maybe they’ll walk more, incorporate fruits and vegetables into their diets, be more aware.”

Stote confesses she loves to go to the grocery store to see what people are buying.

“Think about fast food. Isn’t it just as fast to grab a banana or a bunch of cut-up carrots ...”

“We live in a culture of convenience,” she observes. “Think about fast food. But, isn’t it just as fast to grab a banana or a bunch of cut-up carrots, or, if you’re going to have that hamburger, okay, but what about eating an apple, too?”

She says people eat primarily for what food tastes like, not to satisfy hunger, or maybe because it’s the time of day they usually eat. However, she says, data shows people only eat about half the fruits and vegetables they need for a healthy, sensible diet that improves insulin levels, kidney performance or bowel motility, among other body functions.

“When I teach about human nutrition, I ask students to look at what the popular diets are, then we talk about what a healthy diet should be and ask this question: Is it sustainable? One of the joys of life is eating, so can you find a way of eating that a person is willing to stick with for life? I ask people what they want to do, I give them information, but you can’t force it.”

Food: Always an Excellent Table Topic

by Robert B. Carey



Robert B. Carey

Raymond Sokolov once wrote a column about food and the many things that humans have used to feed themselves for “Natural History,” a publication of the American Museum of Natural History. He was the immediate inspiration for the first Food in History learning contract that I wrote.

Food is, once you begin to explore the term, an endlessly inviting topic. We invented agriculture, figured out how to domesticate grains and a range of animals, and, as a result, from those Neolithic days to the present, have been busy rearranging and mining the habitat that we call home.

When Empire State College had to come up with General Education studies, food seemed a natural way to go to introduce students to what is involved in historical thinking – what cause looks like in its clustered gathering of adaptive behavior and cascading consequences. And, as it turns out, the history of food is linked in intimate ways, early and late, with the history of disease and things that bite us back.

The literature is rich and deep: what happens to soil, to the land itself, the rise of the grain empires; food, temples and religious and cultic requirements or excess; the deadly history of sugar, how Americans became the children of corn.

As we get into the 19th and 20th century, the industrialization of food takes on a new meaning – with the mixed consequences of convenience and caloric overkill. As a topic it keeps unfolding and posing deeply troubling and interesting questions, all worth studying.

Bob Carey, a historian, is a professor and mentor at the college’s New York City locations. He recently developed and taught a course using the college’s Immersive Cloud Learning technology on the History of Food.

Getting Your Hands Dirty: A True, Growing Experience

by Himanee Gupta-Carlson



Himanee Gupta-Carlson

Five years ago, my husband Jim Gupta-Carlson and I made a down payment on an 1840s farmhouse with three acres of land on Squashville Road in Upstate New York's Saratoga County. We had little awareness of what that would mean. The land was a desert, decimated by dirt bikes, chemical fertilizers and virtually no care. But there was a barn, southern exposure to open space, and hope. We dubbed our new place Squashville Farm.

Today, we are raising more than 100 chickens. We are getting ready to brood ducks and just celebrated the births of three healthy goats (two more of our does are pregnant and due as I write). We raise about 80 percent of the vegetables we eat and slowly are bringing back to life the apple and pear trees that a previous owner planted in honor of his grandchildren, but neglected.

I have a full-time job as a professor, so my husband does the bulk of the work. Still, growing food is a partnership to which we both fully commit.

When we first looked at our three acres of land, our neighbors advised us to hire a landscaper or purchase a tiller to bring the earth back to life. We could not afford such extravagances, so we chose instead to try working with our hands. We found farmers who were willing to give us bags of goat manure, if we filled them ourselves. We found a sheep farmer who brought us truckloads of compost for \$140 a dump. We read up and talked with vegetable farmers and learned that potatoes – by virtue of needing to be hilled – could help replenish topsoil, that beans and squash were good sources of green manure,

and that if we just kept working the land with our hands, good things would follow.

Over five years, I have learned to live with the rhythm of seasons, and that that rhythm is irregular. A mild winter in 2015-16 raised hopes for an early start to spring planting, hopes that were curbed by repeated frosts through mid-May. Asparagus spears that began to poke their way out of the ground in late April shriveled and went limp.

Yet, the irregularities of rhythm also produce surprises. For instance, last summer as I worked the soil of Squashville Farm, I found myself pondering what was to be learned from digging one's hands deep into soil? What might help the people with whom I interact feel healthier and less hungry, both in a literal and a figurative sense? What might create new nourishment, new value, and

“ We chose instead to try
working with our hands.”

new knowledge? What was it that I was learning from noticing a beetle famous for destroying tomato plants ignoring those plants in favor of a neglected weed? What might be gained from appreciating the fact that when I pried open an accidentally picked okra that had not quite matured, I discovered that furled inside its outer skin was the flower from which it had fruited? I know there is knowledge – perhaps even wisdom – in these moments. How to articulate it so that others can comprehend the real fruits of such labor is an open question.

The soil in the adjacent photo might appear to be tilled. It is not. It was hand-turned. We had hoped eventually to purchase a tiller, until we learned – via books on soil growth provided to my husband via the granddaughter of a longtime farmer – that it actually was better for soil health not to till. Tilling evens out soil and makes it look pretty. In the process, it can kill the worms that reside deep in the earth and keep it alive and fertile. Hand turning is hard and laborious. And it means that your planting fields are uneven and sometimes besieged by weeds.



Greenfield Center: Planting

Poem by Himanee Gupta-Carlson

Arms and legs
dig wells in dry soil
for seedlings
to prosper.
Fingers, nails, and hand
shovel
make space for new food.

Himanee Gupta-Carlson, working on her three acres of land on Squashville Road in Saratoga County, N.Y.

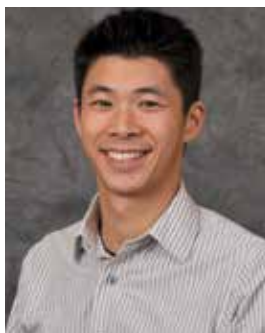
But hand turning also means that your soil is alive and full of hope. Today, we plant to feed ourselves, and others. We sell eggs, seasonal vegetables and, hopefully, meat to a network of friends and colleagues, as well as at a farmers market in our community. The soil is alive and prospering, and with it are we.

Himanee Gupta-Carlson is a mentor and area coordinator of Historical Studies at the college's Center for Distance Learning. Her teaching and research interests include South Asian Americans, hip hop as a community-building practice and local farming and food.

Photography by Jim Gupta-Carlson

Really Learning What's On the Menu

by Kevin L. Woo



Kevin L. Woo

Good food is important. Whether we enjoy the cooking aspect of the culinary arts, or simply love to consume food, it is an essential part of our daily survival. However, as salient as it is for maintaining our physical and mental health, many of us take for granted our access to a broad array of food and too easily neglect the importance of its quality and nutrition. We have spent several decades succumbing to the conveniences of processed foods and year-round, out-of-season products. However, the notion of quality in our food is becoming increasingly popular as we are more informed about the diversity in the food system. Nonetheless, our understanding of “quality” is also naïve.

I offer a study called On the Menu: The Science of Food and

“ We have spent several decades succumbing to the conveniences of processed foods and year-round, out-of-season products.”

Nutrition, where I introduce students to the biology of food and the chemistry of nutrition.

We start by learning the basic terminology used in nutrition. We then examine the main building blocks of food (proteins, carbohydrates, fats, amino acids), cover the digestive system, and discuss the constitution of vitamins, minerals and supplements found in food.

However, it is impossible to discuss food without considering our behavioral attitudes toward food, the choices we make, the diets we follow and the economic impact of our decisions. As scientific achievements advance the production of consumables in our food system, it is important to constantly remind ourselves of the biological, ecological, cultural and economic costs of

artificially accelerated change. Thus, the study also introduces students to a snapshot of important concepts in the biological, social and global understanding of nutrition and food.

As we migrate toward the conclusion of the study, we consider sustainable approaches to traditional agriculture and how our actions may support practices that improve local ecology and encourage conservation.

In New York City, there are many innovative projects using urban agroecology practices to utilize highly modified spaces typically unsuitable for large-scale agriculture. Our students are provided opportunities to visit such project as the Brooklyn Grange and volunteer to assist with its mission, or work with the Youth Farm High School for Public Service. Thus, the study incorporates an interdisciplinary and theoretical framework, introducing the biological and chemical foundations of nutrition, while also allowing for applied learning opportunities.

Kevin Woo is a mentor and assistance professor at the college's New York City locations. He recently taught his course about the science of food using the college's Immersive Cloud Learning technology in Manhattan to instruct students at the college's Staten Island location.

Photography by Therese Bosse





John Hughes '81, master sapper

John Hughes '81 says, "In a perfect world, everyone would contribute to feeding themselves. Knowing how to grow your own food is a good idea. You can control the purity, you know where it comes from and it's delicious. As I have become increasingly aware over time of the worldwide population crisis and the food crisis that goes with it, my commitment to serious gardening has evolved."

A native and current resident of the Albany, N.Y. region, Hughes has a B.S. in Video Production from the college and an M.S. in Technical Communications from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where he was a founder of the Rensselaer Satellite Video Program. He joined the staff at Empire State College in 2005 and now serves as director of media production and resources in the Office of Communications and Government Relations.

When he's not at work, he's in the garden – two acres on his own property and additional space in a community garden. Hughes grows cucumbers, beans, tomatoes,

How Does Your Garden Grow? Sweetly

by Helen Susan Edelman

cantaloupes, pumpkins, potatoes, carrots, herbs and "every kind of pepper imaginable, including Cubans, which are a 10 on a one-to-10 scale for being hot."

He tends to his rural "hobby farm," as he refers to it, at night and on weekends throughout the growing season to keep up with the weeds and the harvest. In fact, the effort begins even before the plants are in the ground, in his house, under lights.

The process can be tricky. One year, he produced an unplanned 500 pounds of tomatoes by using rabbit droppings as fertilizer, instead of horse or cow manure. "I made a lot of tomato sauce, tomato soup and canned tomatoes and ate them for dinner every night for months," he recalls, somewhere between a laugh and a grimace. "I gave a lot away, too. Fresh food is a gift everybody loves to get."

More recently, Hughes' imagination was ignited by another food-related pursuit: maple-sugaring. Along with a couple of friends, he has been tapping maple trees on both a friend's forested land and a smaller tract behind his own house, gathering the sap, lugging it to an evaporator in a shed built just for the purpose, boiling it to exactly the right temperature for exactly the right amount of time and bottling it

for immediate use or storage. They make about 40 gallons of the golden liquid a season, tapping 120 trees.

"You've got to tap the tree at just the right time, when it's 40 degrees in the day and 20 at night, and boil it carefully, so it's neither too watery, nor burned," he explains. He also makes cookies and candy and once, when he wasn't vigilant, he overcooked the syrup, accidentally producing maple sugar. Another time, when he decided to test his technique in his kitchen, he almost burned down his house, confirming, "You can't leave the sap to boil on its own."

Hughes actually loves the flavor of the tree sap "as is," before he cooks it. "It's indescribably sweet," he says, "except it is very sticky." Some people like amber syrup, some like it dark, he notes. "Neither is 'better'. It's strictly a matter of taste." (He prefers amber.)

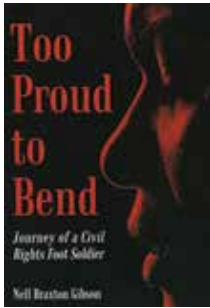
The work is grueling and time-intensive, stretching over weeks in the right weather: drilling, attaching plastic tubes, carrying sap and making up batches.

"I love the transformative nature of it: raw sap plus heat becoming food," says Hughes. "It's a renewable way to harvest resources without destroying them."

Photography by Dee Hughes

PORTFOLIO

by Hope Ferguson



Nell Braxton Gibson '82

Too Strong to Bend: Journey of a Civil Rights Foot Soldier
New York City Region

All her life, Nell Braxton Gibson '82 was haunted by a recurring dream. She and her family were fleeing their hometown while buildings burned, people sobbed and screamed, and fear hung so thick you could slice it. She decided to investigate further. As it turned out, Gibson was remembering a terrifying night in 1943, when she was only 14 months old, and the town of Beauford, Texas, went up in flames in race riots. White mobs commandeered buses, murdered a convenience store clerk and shot up the YMCA. The unrest, started by an unfounded rumor, was traced back to anger over the hiring of blacks in good-paying technical jobs in a shipyard. Gibson went on to become

“a foot soldier” in the civil rights movement. She participated in sit-ins and other acts of civil disobedience, served the Episcopal Church on race issues, and, later, advocated for the abolition of apartheid in South Africa. Archbishop Desmond Tutu appointed her to his steering committee of international religious leaders, who developed a five-year plan to end apartheid. This is her captivating story.

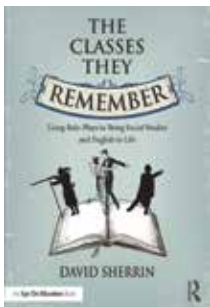


Rain Worthington '91

Dream Vapors: Selected Works for Orchestra
New York City Region

Composer Rain Worthington '91 is not afraid to take music places it has never been before. She released her first full-length CD, “Dream Vapors,” this year. Her work has been performed by orchestras worldwide, including in Belgium, Brazil, Italy, Iceland,

India and Spain. Her compositions have proved very versatile and have been performed everywhere from loft performance spaces to dance clubs in New York City, in addition to more conventional chamber concert venues. As one reviewer wrote, listening to the CD is like “taking a walk in a familiar, but very different park. We recognize the instruments, but they are used in new, modern and unexpected ways.” Besides the release of the CD, Worthington premiered an orchestral work this year, “Tracing a Dream.” Worthington’s website says that world music, minimalism and romanticism have influenced her compositional style. She has been awarded grants from Meet the Composer, ASCAP, the American Music Center, NYFA and the American Composers Forum. Proceeds from the sale of the album will be donated through PARMA Recordings to the Cure Alzheimer’s Fund.



David Sherrin '09

The Classes They Remember: Using Role-Plays to Bring Social Studies and English to Life
Master of Arts in Teaching, School for Graduate Studies

What the surprising and unprecedented success of the Broadway show “Hamilton” teaches us is that history can be a real crowd pleaser, a lesson not lost on master teacher David Sherrin '09. His book, “The Classes They Remember,” is a manual for using role playing, mock trials and primary sources to bring history and literature to life. The book shows that when students take on the roles of historical or literary figures, they develop a greater understanding of characters’ identities and motivations, and

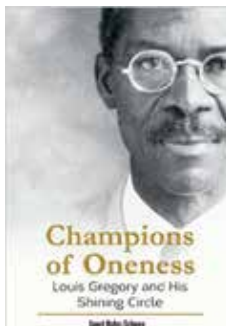
are able to more deeply explore and reflect upon key issues and themes. Sherrin has spent years in his classroom refining these methods. He teaches social studies and English at Harvest Collegiate in New York City, where he was a founding teacher and is department chairman. He was named a New York City Master Teacher for 2014-2015, and is the recipient of the 2014 Robert H. Jackson Center National Award for Teaching Justice. A second Sherrin book is due out soon, “Judging for Themselves: Using Mock Trials to Bring Social Studies and English to Life.”



Michael B. Coyle '95
Tales of the Black Lion
Niagara Frontier Region

In his first book, "Tales of the Black Lion," Michael Coyle '95, resurrects two of Charles Dickens' characters, Blathers and Duff, from "Oliver Twist," where they investigated a robbery. Coyle says that they were later forgotten, but he's given them new mysteries to solve: missing jewels, political intrigue, cryptic messages, criminal gangs, slavery and murder. Reviewers have called the book a vintage detective novel in the spirit of Holmes and Watson. The romp begins on Charles Dickens' birthday, when a grisly murder occurs at the Black Lion Public House. The two, both London bobbies, are called on to investigate. To write perfect English dialect, the author told Goodreads

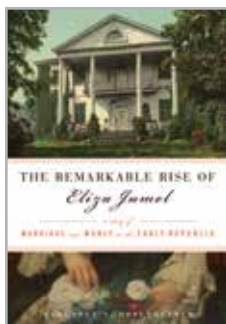
that, "English friends from Barbados and my Irish ancestors were the most help in getting the dialects as right as I could." The detectives do their sleuthing with the help of Charles Dickens and others. Coyle plans a sequel with detectives of the same names, who are the offspring of the original Blathers and Duff, with the story taking place during the 1939 World's Fair in New York.



Janet Ruhe-Schoen '97
Champions of Oneness: Louis Gregory and His Shining Circle
Hudson Valley Region

Most people are familiar with the outlines of the American civil rights movement and most certainly have heard of civil rights icons Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. But Louis Gregory? Journalist Janet Ruhe-Schoen '97, a Baha'i Faith follower since 18, tells the little-known story of how Gregory, an "indomitable, African-American lawyer," pioneered the integration of the Baha'i community in the early years of the 20th century. The book follows Gregory as he travels "fearlessly through the deep south, braving murderous Jim Crow conditions," according to the author. A journalist, Ruhe-Schoen has lived in Peru and Chile, as well as on the Mescalero Apache homelands in

New Mexico. She traveled through Europe and the Middle East before settling in New York state. All of her major books to date are biographies of outstanding Baha'is. Ruhe-Schoen says she has "been fascinated with its deep history and the many-faceted personalities of its greatest adherents." She also is the author of "Rejoice in My Gladness: The Life of Tahirih," published in 2011, a biography of Iranian poet-mystic Tahirih Qurratu'l-Ayn.



Margaret A. Oppenheimer '86
The Remarkable Rise of Eliza Jumel: A Story of Marriage and Money in the Early Republic
Genesee Valley Region

Margaret Oppenheimer's biography of Madame Eliza Jumel tells the story of an enterprising woman who transformed herself from a child living in a brothel with her mother to one of the richest and most talked-about women in New York City. Jumel proved a master of reinvention, meeting and marrying a wealthy Frenchman from Haiti by way of her work in the theater. Through sheer wits and sawy, this former indentured servant increased her husband's fortune over the span of her long life, dying at 90. She became a bride again at 58 by marrying Aaron Burr, famous for killing

Alexander Hamilton during a duel. She invested in real estate in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., just as the town was on the cusp of a boom, building a mansion on Circular Street that still stands. Her primary residence in New York City is now a museum.

Correction: In the Portfolio section of the Winter 2015 issue of Connections, the number of solo shows photographer Steve Sabella '07 has exhibited in was incorrect. He has had 11 solo shows.



Northeast Region

Joseph Corra '15 has begun his work in the STRIVE (Stream and River Ecology) Lab with Dr. Mazeika Sullivan. His research will focus on the conservation of river-dwelling aerial insectivorous bird. STRIVE is based out of the Olentangy Wetland Research Park in Columbus, Ohio. Corra is an ESC graduate with a B.S. in environmental science.

James F. Glynn '98 was promoted to Marine brigadier general while serving as the senior aide to Gen. John M. Paxton, the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, in Washington, D.C. Glynn has served in a variety of command and staff billets in the U. S. and overseas, including commander of Marine Special Operations School at the Marine Corps Special Operations Command at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

New York Army National Guard Maj. **Christopher Jensen '98**, a former infantry officer, combat veteran of the Iraq War and a Kingston resident, has taken command of the 104th Military Police Battalion. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1988, before transferring to the New York Army National Guard in 1991 and graduating from the Officer Candidate School in 1998. He graduated with a B.A. in criminal justice.

Maria Lull '11, '12 was elected supervisor of Chatham, N.Y. Lull

has lived in Columbia County for 40 years. She is a Republican, but was endorsed by the Democratic, Conserve Chatham Now and Chatham First parties. In addition, Lull is the principal, licensed real estate broker and owner of Schoenfeld French & Lull Real Estate.

Gayle Petrillo '91 joined the Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce as its director of business development. Petrillo brings more than 30 years of diverse background in marketing and sales from several arenas, including health care, human resources, retail and financial services. She will oversee membership recruitment and retention, event sponsorship and ticket sales.

John Prividera '91 is vice president and retail market manager for NBT Bank Capital Region. He is responsible for managing sales and performance of the bank's 13 branches in its greater Albany market. Prividera formerly worked for Berkshire Bank in Albany, First Niagara Bank, M&T Bank, Fleet Bank and Key Bank.

Janice Stewart '00, '03 has been named the CIO of Berkshire Farms. She is currently earning her Advanced Certificate in Project Management, which may later be applied to the college's MBA program.

Toni Tuttle '08 was appointed as McPhillips Insurance Agency's sales executive for Warren,

Washington and Saratoga counties in New York. She is focusing on growing the company's personal insurance base and meeting the insurance needs of existing clients. She has more than 19 years experience in insurance and sales. Tuttle also serves as ambassador for the Adirondack Regional Chamber of Commerce and is secretary for the Glens Falls Collaborative.

Cheryl Winslow '03 joined Northeast Association Management, Inc. as an accounting manager. The organization is an association-management company specializing in providing management services and staffing to nonprofit associations and government-related entities. She is responsible for the fiscal management of two NEAMI clients, PERMA and AGRIP. Winslow has worked for more than 10 years in the financial field. Before joining NEAMI, she served as director for Hudson Headwaters Health Network and was a senior financial consultant for Travelers Insurance.

Melanie Whinnery '09 was promoted to deputy comptroller of the New York State and Local Retirement System. She earned her degree in Business, Management and Economics at the college.

Leza Wood '14 has been hired as executive director of the Hudson Mohawk Area Health Education Center. Wood

provides leadership, day-to-day management, and fiscal oversight of the HM AHEC. Previously, she held the position of workforce and professional development administrator for SUNY Adirondack's Office of Continuing Education. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Business, Management and Economics, with a concentration in training and development.

Center for Distance Learning

Sulé-Joel Adams '15, who earned a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in community arts management, is a native of New Orleans and a talented dancer, choreographer and performing artist. Trained in African, modern and contemporary dance styles, he also is the founder and executive producer of Whole Hearts Management, based out of Brooklyn. The company aims to design and produce entertainment spectacles through dance production and arts management.

Kevin Cady '03, '04 has been appointed head coach for the Central Maine Community College men's hockey team that is slated to begin play next fall. Cady spent 11 years in hockey operations with the Philadelphia Flyers and Buffalo Sabres organizations. He served as trainer for the 1978 and 1979 American Hockey League Maine Mariners Calder Cup

Champions, the 1985 NHL Stanley Cup finalist Philadelphia Flyers and the 2010 AHL Atlantic Division Champion Portland Pirates.

Kathleen (Kit) Hughes '09 was appointed a senior manager with a focus on clinical operations consulting by Simione Healthcare Consultants, a leading consulting firm specializing in home care and hospice.

Mark Iannucci '09 has been hired by Varta Microbattery Inc., a global energy leader, to oversee its battery storage systems in North America. Iannucci is owner and operator of Emergency Management Consulting and Training, LLC, a fire safety and first-response consultant firm. Iannucci retired from the City of Yonkers fire department in 2014 and founded his firm. He holds a degree in emergency management from the college.

Jay Ropietski '06, '07, a 32-year veteran of the retail food industry, was named vice president of retail for Riesbeck Food Markets in St. Clairsville, Ohio. He was regional vice president for store operations of Weis markets in Sunbury, Pa. Earlier, he worked for Price Chopper Supermarkets in Schenectady, N.Y. He earned his bachelor's degree in business from the college.

Brooklynn Ann Welden '06 has been appointed faculty team leader and adjunct professor at

Southern New Hampshire University.

Guy Van Benschoten '82, has retired from the Ithaca Fire Department after 41 years. He joined the department in 1975. Five years later, he became a lieutenant, and in 1987, he became assistant fire chief, a position he held until his retirement in February.

Joshua Parkinson '10, '12 was appointed an advisement specialist in the advisement center at Herkimer County Community College. Parkinson will advise and assist students with course registration and changes in academic plans. He served as a substance abuse prevention specialist and adjunct instructor at Herkimer County Community College. He earned his bachelor's degree in Community and Human Services, with a concentration in chemical dependency.

Melissa Taylor '13, was named 911 director for Seneca County. Taylor served in the Air Force from 2002-06, including a stint in the Middle East in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. She was an emergency manager during her time in the military, and has handled several major incidents, including Hurricane Katrina.

Central New York Region

Jacob (Jake) Dowker '16, who attended the Utica location, has been promoted to senior specialist, new media and visual arts, at the

Paige Group. He joined the firm in 2014 as its new media and visual arts specialist. He earned his associate degree in graphic communications and photography from Mohawk Valley Community College, and his bachelor's degree in new media design from Empire State College in January.

Elizabeth Foster, a student, has been hired by Teracai, a core networking, data center infrastructure and virtualization company, as an account manager, responsible for sales and new business development and providing technology solutions to organizations throughout Central New York. Foster is earning her bachelor's degree in Business, Management and Economics.

John Lombardo '78 was inducted into the Auburn Athletic Hall of Fame in November 2015. Lombardo was described as an outstanding athlete, earning 11 varsity letters prior to graduating from West High School in 1969. He earned four varsity letters in football and was co-captain his senior year.

Toni Maxwell Martin '97 was named president of the Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science & Technology in Syracuse last September following a six-month search. The MOST is a hands-on museum with geology, space, flight, life sciences and nanotechnology exhibits, a five-story climbing gym, a domed IMAX theater and

planetarium. She came to the position from Catholic Charities of Onondaga County.

Stephen Siracusa '15, who attended the Auburn location, has started writing for Sports Life magazine. His first article, published last winter, was titled, "The Revolving Door of the NFL."

Julie Merritt '15, a graduate of the Auburn location, has been promoted to vice president/loan operations at Fulton Savings Bank. She holds an associate degree in accounting from Cayuga Community College and her B.A. from SUNY Empire, also in accounting.

Norman Goldschmidt '96, who graduated with a B.S. in Business, Management and Economics, has been named to the board of directors of Genesis, where he is vice president of engineering, as well as a principal. Genesis is a 120-person, full-service firm of architects and engineers that performs design, construction management, commissioning and validation of facilities for organizations in the life-sciences, higher education and healthcare industries.

Elaine Morgan '06, an emergency management technician, was promoted to the position of human resources coordinator for Rural/Metro Medical Services.

Azira Tabucic '03, who graduated from the Utica location, was recognized by the Oneida Chapter of the National Society



"The decision to return to college after a 30-year hiatus was not taken lightly. Thank you for helping make my 'second dream' come true."

— Natalie Brown, student

Making Dreams Come True

Like many students, Natalie chose SUNY Empire State College with a plan: to gain the knowledge and skills she needs to help make her dreams come true. An Adirondack Trust Co. Scholarship is helping her do just that.

Scholarships can bring a SUNY ESC degree within reach. Generous annual gifts from alumni and friends to The Fund for Empire State College support our robust scholarship program, as well as faculty and staff development, a rigorous yet flexible academic program, and whatever is needed across our statewide campus to help students like Natalie succeed.

For more information, or to make a donation, please visit www.esc.edu/giving or call Jeff Walton at 518-587-2100, ext. 2337.



"Empire State opened doors to creatively completing my undergraduate education and preparing for graduate study. It seemed appropriate to demonstrate my appreciation through financial support."

– Jean Wright '79

A Life-Changing Experience

The Rev. Dr. Gloria Jean Wright '79 recognizes that her experience at SUNY Empire State College was life changing. Becoming a member of the Boyer Legacy Society was for her a fitting way to show her appreciation.

The Boyer Legacy Society honors Dr. Ernest L. Boyer and his vision of accessible and affordable higher education for students of all ages and backgrounds. The society also honors Kathryn G. Boyer '78, an adult student whose needs were mirrored in her husband's vision.

Membership is open to all who notify us of their decision to include the college in their estate plans.

To explore ways you can join Jean in supporting the future of Empire State College, email Toby Tobrocke at Toby.Tobrocke@esc.edu or call 800-847-3000, ext. 2372.



of the Daughters of the American Revolution with the 2015 DAR Americanism Medal and Certificate. Tabucic emigrated to this country and became a refugee from Bosnia/Croatia in 1994. In her homeland, she was studying law at Sarajevo Law School. When she arrived in the U.S., she earned her bachelor's degree at Empire State College. She is the manager of the immigration and citizenship services at Mohawk Valley Resources for Refugees.

David Turan '99 became a CPA in 2003, and was recently admitted as shareholder/partner at DiMarco, Abiusi & Pascarella, CPAs, where he has worked since 1999.

Marcia Waffner '05, an Ithaca location graduate, was awarded the 2015 SUNY Chancellor's award for Excellence in Adjunct Instruction for her work at Tompkins-Cortland Community College. She is very active in organizing the Ithaca alumni group and helping with scholarship fundraising.

Rita Worlock '12 played a lead role, Adelaide, in the Oswego Players production of "Guys and Dolls" last summer, which was staged in the Oswego Civic Arts Center.

School for Graduate Studies

Narisa Adams '12 is the director of talent acquisition and retention with Mazzone Hospitality. Adams leads organizational efforts to obtain new talent for all departments and helps new employees acclimate

and learn company culture. She also works with the human resources department to improve the recruitment process.

Jeremy Bagley '14 was named executive director of the Greater Rochester Chapter of the American Red Cross. An Army veteran who saw combat in Iraq and was honorably discharged in 2004, Bagley served as coordinator of veteran student services/director of the Office of Veterans Affairs at Nazareth College in Rochester, as well as director of information technology and new media at the Veterans Outreach Center. He received a Graduate Certificate in Veterans Services in 2012 and an M.A. in Liberal Studies in 2014.

Lori Jiava '12, '13, '16 was appointed town supervisor of Wappinger Falls. She also is the student representative to the College Council and a member of the Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors. She has been a New York state licensed realtor since 2004. Jiava is president of the Wappingers Council of PTAs, which consists of 14 units, and associate director of the Taconic Region PTA, where she oversees 27 PTA units. She has served on the Wappingers Central School District Board of Education, the eighth largest district in New York, including two years as president. Jiava earned her master's degree in education at Empire State College.

Obed Figueroa '97, '00, a Doctor of Education candidate at Northeastern

University, has published a paper, "The Influences of Impacting Staff Turnover in Higher Education," in the Journal of Management and Sustainability. In addition, he received an appointment at Northeastern University, where he is manager of fellowships and scholarships for the National Medical Fellowship, Inc., and will be managing and promoting opportunities for U.S. medical students across the states.

Rick Heames '15, who earned his M.A.T. degree from the college, was profiled in the Glens Falls Post-Star newspaper. He began his career in environmental consulting, but started taking courses at SUNY Empire, and then began a yearlong internship at Ballston Spa High School. Last August, he was hired by Glens Falls High School to teach earth science and astronomy.

Joanna Loomis '15 was named executive director of The Watertown Urban Mission's board of directors. Loomis is still the mission's director of development and also has served as its critical needs coordinator. She is co-president of the North Country Council of Social Agencies, recently completed a three-year term on CAPC's Head Start Policy Council and is active in the Emerge Professional's Group. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from St. Lawrence University and her Master of Arts from SUNY Empire.

Jeromy McFarren '11, '14 published in Voices: The

Journal of New York Folklore. His article was based on his graduate work at the college and is excerpted from his nonfiction manuscript, "Buy Me: The Economic and Cultural Implications of the Objects We Purchase." McFarren is a public historian.

Carole Plant '10, '13, who earned both a bachelor's in Business, Management and Economics with a concentration in business administration, and her MBA at the college, has been honored as a CFO of the Year by the Albany Business Review for her role as chief financial officer of Auto/Mate Dealership Systems. Plant is one of 10 CFOs in the New York Capital Region to receive the award.

Liz Seegart '10 was featured on a panel discussing, Free Speech: Should There be Limits, hosted by the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island. The discussion came in the wake of last year's Charlie Hebdo shootings. Seegart has spent more than 30 years reporting and writing about health and other topics for print, broadcast and digital media. She is co-producer of HealthStyles on WBAI-FM, N.Y. and a senior fellow for the Center for Health, Media & Policy at Hunter College.

Mitchell Wood '02, '06 received the 2015-2016 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Adjunct Teaching. Wood is an adjunct professor of humanities in the Center for Distance Learning.

Genesee Valley Region

June Castle '11, was appointed to the board of the Homecare Association of New York State. Castle is the chief financial officer at VNA Homecare in Syracuse. She studied at the Canandaigua location.

Joyce A. Chizick '01, an adjunct instructor of art and business, received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Adjunct Teaching. Since she began teaching at Genesee Community College in 2000, Chizick has taught in a variety of disciplines including art, business administration, fashion merchandising management and tourism and hospitality management. Chizick earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in education from SUNY Buffalo and also obtained a bachelor's degree in international business from SUNY Empire.

Timothy Cosgriff '93, exhibited at the Rochester Central Library's Lower Link Gallery. His exhibit, Images and Objects of Interest, presented a broad range of film, digital images and found objects. His works have been displayed at the Eastman House, the Central Library and the Memorial Art Gallery, among other places.

Mark Diamond '79, exhibited his photographs and gave a gallery talk, Limitless World, the Greenhouses at Russell's Garden Center presented by the Mary L. Fifield Art Gallery at Bunker Hill Community College

from Aug. 24 to Oct. 16, 2015.

Hudson Valley Region

Brenda Adams '04 recently won election to the Walden Village Board of Trustees. She graduated from the Newburgh location.

Henry deVries '93, a financial adviser in Morgan Stanley's Kingston wealth management office, has been awarded the certified financial planner certification. A graduate of the FBI National Academy, deVries holds a master's in public administration from Marist College, Poughkeepsie. He also is a volunteer emergency medical technician for the Rhinebeck Fire Department rescue squad.

Suzanne Garc '95 has been appointed senior underwriting counsel for Coastal Land Services. After earning her bachelor's degree from SUNY Empire, she went on to earn her J.D. from the City University of New York School of Law in 1999, and is barred in New York. She is past chairwoman of the education committee of the New York State Land Title Association, and continue to serve on that committee.

Long Island Region

Joanne de Simone '03 has added chapters, illustrations and a new cover to a new edition of her book, "The Metro Cats: Life in the Core of the Big Apple." It is available on Amazon Prime, Kindle, Kobo, Nook and through retail outfits.

Amy LaGrange '05, practice administrator of Ellis Bariatric Surgery and Ellis General Surgery, became credentialed as a certified practice management executive. LaGrange has worked at Ellis Medicine in Schenectady, N.Y., for five years. She obtained a fellowship in practice management from Medical Group Management Association. ACMPE Fellowship is the highest level of distinction that can be earned in the medical practice management profession.

Neva Setlow '75 continues to show and exhibit her unique art work and sculptures. Much of her work is inspired by science, since she is a retired scientist who spent nearly 20 years of her career working in the biology department at the Brookhaven National Laboratory. Though she retired in 1996, she notes that some of her artistic creations were influenced by her work in the lab. Her artworks have won many awards. She secured a spot in the Best in Show gallery at East End Arts in Riverhead, which features the winners from every show held at the gallery since 2014.

New York City Region

Bianca Jones, a student enrolled at the Brooklyn location, and **Paulette Bellins '15**, from the Manhattan location, presented an Imperatore Fellowship event with film screenings and a discussion on media activism and violence targeting communities of color, in the fall of 2015.

Jeff Pascal '90, '92 had his poem, "The Glass God," published in the competitive City Room Blog.

Juliana Pata '88 has been a prolific journalist since 1974, and recently published her memoirs, "Parts of Me: A Collection of Letters." The introduction was written by her mentor, Richard Butler, who says that this book can be used as a model in writing our own memoirs. To learn more about her journey, go to Amazon.com.

Dr. Deri Joy Ronis '83 continues teaching English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at Sarasota Technical College, with more than 800 immigrants from around the world. She also does peer mediation at New College and writes a blog at Dr. Deri.com, focusing on issues of health, spiritual well-being, conflict resolution and stress reduction.

Terry Reilly '12 was awarded a Fulbright grant to study the aboriginal people of Taiwan. He says that genetic and linguistic linkages establish a connection between the 'Yuánzhùmín' of Taiwan to other groups, from Madagascar to New Zealand, Easter Island, the Philippines and greater Polynesia. Competing models of a "slow boat" or an "express train" to Polynesia are used by anthropologists to model these connections. He published "Contemporary Aboriginal. The Mixing," to the Fulbright website last fall.

Thomas Sammons '92 was promoted to chief financial officer by TechPrecision Corp. The company is a leading global manufacturer of precision, large-scale fabricated and machined metal components and tested systems, with customers in the defense, energy and precision industrial sectors.

Niagara Frontier Region

Roxanne Braxton '13 was named a Buffalo Financial Leader by Business First of Buffalo. She is the president of Schroeder Braxton & Vogt, and is a certified financial planner. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Business, Management and Economics.

Pamela Brown '01, who graduated from the Jamestown location, was recognized with the Robert Arnold Award for Distinguished Service. Brown is a records management coordinator with the Jamestown Public Schools. She holds a degree in history from the college and a master's degree in library science from the State University at Buffalo.

Melissa Dunlap '08 discussed her great-grandfather Edward Thorn's Wild West circuit career in January at the Niagara County Historical Society.

The family tales of his adventures and the sight of his traveling trunks encouraged a lifelong love of history in Dunlap, who is the executive director of the Niagara History Center.

Tonya Edwards '00, '05, lead buyer for Cutco Cutlery Corp., was promoted to purchase manager. Edwards joined the company in 1987 as a receptionist and worked her way up to manufacturing secretary, purchasing/production clerk, junior buyer and buyer. From Olean, she earned her bachelor's degree from SUNY Empire.

Sharon Hamilton '93 was recognized in May 2015, with the Distinguished Alumna Award by Jamestown Community College. Hamilton retired in October 2014 as vice president of Lutheran Senior Housing at Lutheran Social Services, where she worked for 30 years. She is a 1989 alumna of JCC, and has a degree in human service administration from SUNY Empire.

Gary Maha '78 has served as sheriff for 28 years, running unopposed for his current term, in Batavia, N.Y. He began his law enforcement career as a deputy in 1967, advancing through the ranks to captain

and chief deputy. He earned a degree in police science from Genesee Community College in 1976, and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration from SUNY Empire. In 1988, he was appointed by Gov. Mario Cuomo to be interim sheriff. He also is a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

Kate Rolf '09 was recognized by the Homecare Association of New York with its Advocacy Award. She is the president and chief executive officer at VNA Homecare.

Carol Coniglio '91 had her watercolor paintings on display in a show, *A Retrospective in Color, Style and Substance*, at the Burchfield Nature and Art Center in West Seneca last summer. Coniglio has been creating art since 1988. She generally works from photographs and draws inspiration from landscapes and seascapes, architecture, exotic places and the people who live there.

Julianne M. Yates '04 was appointed director of learning and development for Catapult Partners.

In Memoriam

Bob Connolly '97, a long-time sports columnist, died on Dec. 23, 2015, due to complications from post-polio syndrome. Connolly, who wrote a column, *Pipe Dreams*, was described as "an insightful sports writer with a fighter's spirit that continues to inspire hope after his recent passing." Born in the

Bronx Oct. 28, 1942, he was an avid sports fan, whose passion for writing helped him overcome his physical disability. A Little League coach, he served as president and chaplain for more than 20 years with a volunteer firefighter department and as president of both the St. Raymond's High School for Boys' Parent Association and Preston High School's Parent Association. At age 50, Connolly graduated from SUNY Empire, with a B.A. in English.

Patricia Vasabinder, an employee at the college for many years, died Feb. 16, 2016, at age 77, in Concord, N.H. Her long and varied career included service as a reading teacher, as the executive director of a youth services program in Virginia and as director of development at the college, where she also met her future husband, Victor Montana, one of its founding administrators. She also served as a Citibank vice president and as vice president and chief operating officer of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

James Case, former dean of the Hudson Valley Center, passed away on Nov 9, 2015, at the age of 80, at his home in Clemmons, N.C. Case also was the former associate commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Education. Once a teacher of high school English, Case trained teachers at Harvard Graduate School of Education, served as director of the

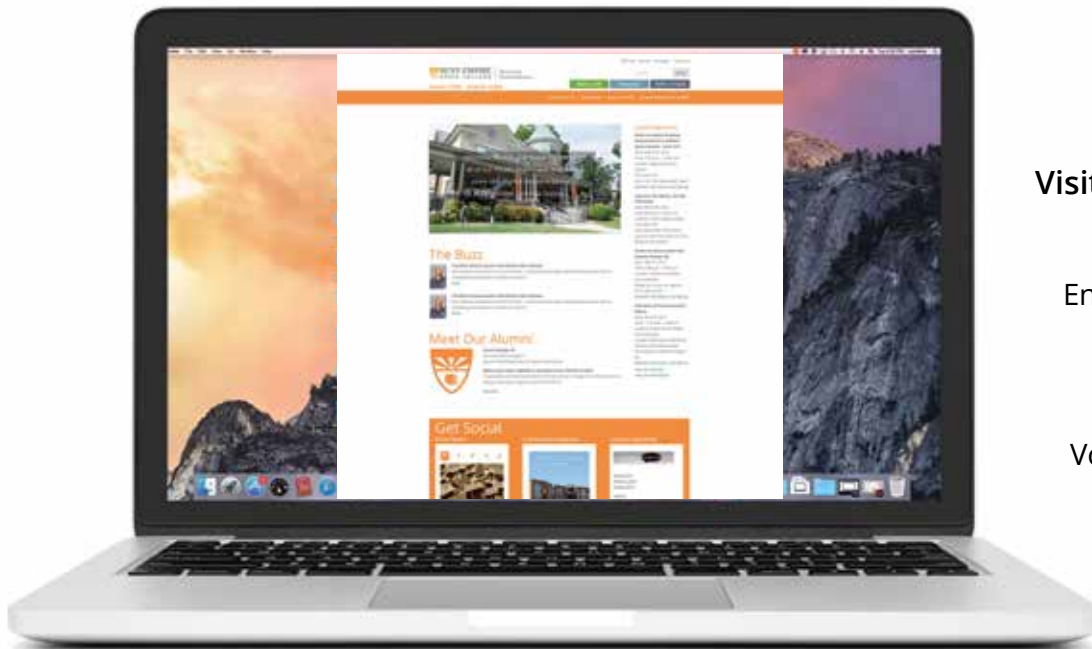
Institute for Learning and Teaching at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, and as the commonwealth's director of teacher certification. Born in New York City in 1935, Case was the grandson of Owen D. Young, former chair of General Electric and the founder of Radio Corporation of America. His father was Everett Case, who was the president of Colgate University and a former chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and his mother was Josephine Young Case, who was on the board of trustees at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., in the 1960s and served as interim president there.

Robert Seidel, a faculty member in Historical Studies from 1974 until his retirement in 1999, at the Genesee Valley Center, died Nov. 18, 2015. In 1998-1999, he was on leave as the recipient of the Imperatore Scholar Award, his second. During this time he created the community project: "Restoring Keystones to Rochester's Community: A Progressive Photodocumentary Exhibit." He was the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education Professor of the Year in 1986. He was named a SUNY distinguished professor and an author, writing such books as "Neighborly Affection and the Common Good," about volunteerism, with Shirley Thompson.

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2016 ALUMNI Awards

Coming Fall 2016 | New Alumni Awards Program

In an effort to recognize the accomplishments of our alumni, we are excited to announce the following awards:

- Emerging Leader
- Community Impact
- Distinguished Leader

The purpose of the Alumni Awards Program is to recognize the college's exemplary alumni who have made a lasting impact on society and on Empire State College through outstanding professional, philanthropic or volunteer accomplishments.

Nominations will be accepted online at www.esc.edu/alumni.

Nomination period begins Nov. 1, 2016



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A scene from one of the eight commencement ceremonies held across the state of New York for the SUNY Empire State College Class of 2016, which was 3,400 strong. Pictured here at the Hudson Valley region graduation held at Purchase College, left to right, are Michael Kushnir '16, Master of Arts in Teaching, Professor Jelía Domingo, School for Graduate Studies, and Georgina Scardino '16, Master of Arts in Teaching. Both Kushnir and Scardino were Domingo's students.