

Empire State College

ALUMNI AND STUDENT NEWS

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**PRESERVING A
PRECIOUS PAST**
A Dream to
Save History

PEOPLE'S CHOICE
Alumni Engaged at
All Levels of
Government

**AN URBAN
FAIRY TALE**



C o n t e n t s

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UPFRONT

Educating for Democracy

By Roy Speckhard

Faculty Mentor, Northeast Center



Roy Speckhard

Traditionally, the term “civic engagement” has been used to refer to individuals becoming involved, as citizens, in the overall political life of their nation or city. Increasingly, however, the term has also come to represent a much broader voluntary service type of involvement within the ongoing social life of the community, particularly among the poor and needy. This distinction was clearly evident following 9-11 when there was a marked increase in service forms of civic engagement but no increase at all in its political forms which, though they lie at the very heart of a democratic political system, have been in a state of steady decline for the past several decades.

The decline has been particularly evident among the better educated and younger segments of the population and has been characterized by an increasing sense of isolation and alienation from public life; a growing disinterest and disdain for public institutions and those who operate them; a decreasing trust in strangers, especially “politicians;” and an overall growing sense of civil helplessness.

The sources and causes of the decline are many and varied. Attention has increasingly focused on the changing nature of civic education and its almost total disappearance from programs of public higher education, which have come to be perceived primarily as personal, private benefits designed exclusively for the well-being of the individual, rather than as a public good designed for the preservation and strengthening of a democratic society. According to Benjamin Barber in the prologue of his landmark book, *An Aristocracy of Everyone: The Politics of Education and the Future of America* (Oxford University Press), this puts the whole matter completely backwards and, hence, is inevitably destructive.

Democracy is less the enabler of education than education is the enabler of democracy. There was a time when the relationship was taken for granted. Public, private and religious schools in America’s earlier days expressed a common commitment to education as a concomitant of democracy. Historically, the meaning of “public” education was precisely education into what it meant to belong to a public. ... Can we afford to privatize the only public institutions we possess?

Ten years earlier, the Carnegie Foundation, in a report titled *Higher Education in the Nation’s Service*, written primarily by Ernest Boyer, the late SUNY chancellor, “founding father” of Empire State College and then president of the foundation, sounded the alarm within higher education.

As a nation, we are becoming civically illiterate. Unless we find better ways to educate ourselves as citizens, we run the risk of drifting into a new kind of Dark Age – a time when small cadres of specialists will control knowledge and thus the decision-making process ... For those who care about government “by the people,” this replacement of democratic government by a technocracy or the control of policy by special interest groups is not tolerable.

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The News Man

Brian Shields, Senior Correspondent, WAMC Public Radio, Albany



Brian Shields '00 on the job

Brian Shields '00 tracks his passion for news back to the time he was in sixth grade and his teacher asked the class to write a letter to someone famous. While other classmates picked people like football star Joe Namath and music legend Paul McCartney, Shields wrote to Chet Huntley and David Brinkley, then the co-anchors of NBC's *The Huntley Brinkley Report*. He recalls being thrilled when he got a response – from both of them.

Reporting on Local Life

After high school, Shields, 45, a native of Schenectady, who attended Niskayuna public schools, went on to attend the New School of Radio and Television in Albany, a trade school. He first worked for a local radio station in Amsterdam, before moving on to WGY, and finally, assuming his current post at WAMC, Public Radio in Albany in 1989, where

he serves as a senior correspondent. He graduated from the Northeast Center in 2000.

Over the years he's covered such stories as the collapse of a bridge over the thruway in 1987, due to heavy rains and flooding. Several motorists lost their lives, and Shields remembered having to hike through a flooded marsh to get to the location, and upon arrival, finding that the entire road and bridge were gone, save one strand of guard rail. The governor was helicoptered in, and the story went national, with Shields filing an onsite report for CBS News.

All of his assignments have not been so dramatic. He regularly covers the New York State government, including the daily workings of the legislature and the

passage of the state's budget. He is also a contributor and rotating host to the stations call-in shows, *Vox Pop* and *Midday Magazine*, as well as the *Health Show*, which is nationally syndicated. He has covered such stories as the discovery of West Nile virus in donated blood, and the push to modernize voting machines as part of the federal Help America Vote Act in New York.

One of his memorable interviews was with the late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, whom he interviewed “four or five times,” finding the senator always “very intelligent and fascinating.”

Among his favorite assignments are those he does for the *Health Show*. He recently wrapped up a series about the impact of HIV on local people's lives.

The Passion Continues

“I guess I have always loved radio, even though radio doesn't get the attention it used to. We're in a TV age.” But, working for public radio, as opposed to commercial radio, where news is now usually brought in from a network, allows Shields to continue pursuing his passion. “I am really happy with what I'm doing right now. If you're in radio news, it's really the place to be.” ♦

Educating for Democracy

(continued from page 1)

Interestingly, Empire State College was one of the early SUNY institutions to take a positive and concrete step in the direction of developing a greater civic commitment within its educational program. Under the direction of then President Jim Hall, the Public Affairs Center was established in Albany in order to expand and improve public affairs education within the college, particularly for public employees. In his opening remarks at a 1983 Empire State College sponsored SUNY-wide conference on public affairs education within SUNY colleges and university centers, President Hall welcomed attendees with the following:

Throughout the world the leadership and management of public affairs is a major issue. Times of rapid social change, periods of increasingly stringent fiscal resources, and eras of high tension between competing sectors put special pressure upon those who would be the leaders and managers of society. As a consequence, programs in public affairs education have a special relevance and timeliness.

Unfortunately, within just a few years of its creation, the Public Affairs Center was formally abolished, though a number of its programs continued for many years thereafter. The Albany Semester Program, for example, had been one of its endeavors.

But, as they say, time marches on and perhaps the time has come for the college to revive its educational interest and commitments in the area of civic/political engagement. Perhaps, 9-11; the accelerating information revolution; the military conflicts in the Middle East; growing international terrorism; and the economic, technological, social and political instability and change that seems to pervade every corner of the globe will present the college with a “window of opportunity” that it simply cannot ignore.

The articles in this issue of *Empire State College Alumni and Student News* highlight these concerns and issues in a variety of intriguing and important ways. ♦

– *Mentor Roy Speckhard specializes in policy studies, public affairs, government, political theory, and religion and politics.*



Ginny Brown-Waite '76

COURTESY PHOTO

Straight-talking Congresswoman Votes From the Heart

Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite on the Move

Congresswoman Ginny Brown-Waite '76, who, in November 2002, won a hotly contested election to represent Florida's Fifth District, which encompasses Hernando, Citrus and Sumter counties along with sections of several other counties, remembers how she was introduced to the electoral system. Her mother became a Republican "just to aggravate my father," a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat. As a child, she saw her father accept payment to cast his ballot, and "I remember thinking how terrible that was."

the Florida Senate, she chaired the Health Committee. That longstanding concern has been reinforced, she said, because her district has one of the largest concentrations of senior citizens and retired people in the nation. Two of her major concerns are creating a prescription drug benefit for the elderly and ensuring that veterans receive timely health care. She also supports the president's tax cuts, which she says will stimulate the economy.

When it came time to choose parties, the congresswoman registered Republican, although she had no real interest in the political process. At least, not "until I became employed by the New York State Legislature" as legislative director. She spent 18 years as a staffer in the legislature – where, despite her early disillusionment, politics proved a natural for the Albany native. In a phone interview last July at her Washington, DC offices, she now describes herself as being "addicted to politics."

Brown-Waite has seemingly had a knack for rising to the top, no matter what the venue. As a three-term Florida State Senator, Brown-Waite served as chairwoman of several committees, and her leadership abilities led to her being named Senate Majority Whip in 1999. The following year, she was elected president pro tempore of the Florida Senate.

As a U.S. representative, she has been tapped to serve on two subcommittees of the House Financial Services Committee. She feels her service will give her a voice in combating the corporate scandals that have wracked the nation's leading companies in the last 18 months. According to the official biography on her web site, "Congresswoman Brown-Waite felt a need to be involved in ensuring that fraud and deception of that scale could no longer bankrupt American companies and the hard-working individuals who work for them."

She also sits on the Veterans' Affairs Committee's Benefits and Health Subcommittee and holds two leadership positions in the 108th Congress: vice chair of the Speaker's Prescription Drug Action Team and of the Congressional Women's Caucus.

During her years with the NYS legislature she specialized in healthcare, and in

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Just Do It

Assemblyman Luis Diaz's credo brings him to the New York State Legislature

Marching in the Dominican Day parade on a Sunday afternoon, attending a legislative hearing, making a quick trip to the Dominican Republic to speak at a community college, standing by as Democratic presidential hopeful John Kerry (D-Mass) drops in on the Bronx to talk about homeland security, visiting the neighborhood Head Start to discuss how to respond to a drop in federal funding, and then proceeding to the local senior citizen center to let the elderly know they are still on his radar screen, topped off by a reception at Gracie Mansion – any of the above are all in a day's work for Assemblyman Luis M. Diaz.

Diaz, a 1988 graduate of Empire State College's Long Island Center, defeated two challengers for the right to represent the 86th District, more commonly known as University Heights, Morris Heights and West Fordham in the Bronx.

The 86th District was created through redistricting last year, and, as a wide-open assembly district with no sitting incumbent, was the focus of both primary and general election battles, as well as some acrimony concerning the racial makeup of the district. The district was redrawn at the behest of the New York State Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment to reflect shifting demographics in the Bronx. According to Diaz, the district essentially replaced the 78th Assembly District. The NAACP had proposed a district whose footprints, continuing to the north, would have



Assemblyman Luis Diaz '88

COURTESY PHOTO

encompassed areas primarily inhabited by African Americans. Yet the task force rejected that plan for one in which the district bears south, which makes the 86th a predominantly Latino demographic, and therefore, in the political arithmetic of New York politics, favored a Latino candidate.

When asked whether harmony had been restored between the two communi-

“Everything is possible if we are willing to just take that first step.”

ties, Diaz insisted that a rivalry between the Hispanic and black populations was not a correct reading of what had occurred. Rather both the black and Hispanic communities objected to the fact that there were still “three Anglo seats,” unaffected by the redistricting, despite the decline of the white population – only 14.5 percent of the entire population of the Bronx, according to the 2000 census.

Diaz is a realist when questioned about the back and forth of racial politics. Maybe in “a utopia” race would not make any difference when electing representatives, but this is, after all, New York City, where reality is as gritty as the sidewalks beneath one's feet.

Efforts Focused on Schools, Healthcare, Neighborhoods

Born in Puerto Rico, but having spent most of his 50 years in the Bronx, Diaz attended NYC public schools, and then college in the State University system. Described in one pre-election article as “the polished director of a nonprofit who has the backing of the Bronx Democratic Party organization,” the former executive director of the social service agency NETS, Inc. (Neighborhood Enhancement and Training Services) feels suited to represent his constituents. His major concerns, he says, are pre-K to 12 education, the betterment of which, he believes, will impact every other area of the city's life. He is proud of the fact that the Democrats succeeded in pushing

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The oldest known remnants of the 19th century black settlement of Weeksville, the Hunterfury Road historic houses have been restored and developed as the Weeksville African American Museum, located at 1698-1708 Bergen Street, Brooklyn, New York. Weeksville was named for James Weeks, a black man who purchased land there in 1838 from the Lefferts family estate.

Preserving a Precious Past

Joan Maynard Named “Restore America Hero”

By Hope Ferguson

When Joan Maynard '94 first heard from a neighbor in 1970 about the four clapboard pre-Civil War era homes tucked away in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn, she was naturally intrigued. Maynard, a commercial artist by training and vocation, grew up in a home in Brooklyn where education and culture were esteemed. Her family held membership in the Universal Negro Improvement Association, an international organization founded by Marcus Garvey. She remembers trips to museums and a home filled with books and love of learning. Her parents taught her that black history did not, in fact, begin with slavery, as was frequently mistaught, but that African culture and civilization stretched back through the millennia.

A Dream to Save History

A nascent group, The Society for the Preservation of Weeksville and Bedford-Stuyvesant History had been formed to develop an idea – originally dreamed up by a group of school children from Public School 243 – to restore the homes and make them a permanent museum to black history and culture.

Soon after, Maynard, a Bedford-Stuyvesant Unit graduate, was tapped as the executive director. Although it took three decades, Maynard said she could hardly have imagined then the success of bringing the dream to fruition.

In October 2002, Maynard, now the executive director emeritus of the society, was there with the current executive director, Pamela Green, when Sen. Hillary Clinton, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz and former State Comptroller H. Carl McCall, dropped by to break ground for what is slated to be a \$15 million restoration of the four homes, plus a new education center. Most of the funds came in the form of grants, many of them from the Brooklyn Borough president's office,

and private corporations like Goldman Sach and the Independence Community Foundation.

On June 4, Maynard was honored as a Restore America Hero in a televised award program sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Save America's Treasures and Home & Garden Television (HGTV).

The award ceremony took place during a gala dinner at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC. Other restoration projects of the trust's Save America's Treasures program,

“Weeksville is a beacon for self determination, a symbol of developing one's own community, and thus, able to participate in the mainstream.”

include Mark Twain's home in Connecticut; the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta; and The Mount, Edith Wharton's home in Lenox, Mass. Save America's Treasures contributed \$400,000 to the Weeksville Historic Landmark endeavor.

According to a letter notifying Maynard of the honor, “You were selected for this award because of your 30-year commitment to preserving

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In collected photographs, the lives of Weeksville residents speak of another time. Here community members gather to share musical talents, circa 1900.

Precious Past

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Weeksville’s four historic Hunterfly Road homes. Even without official training as a preservationist, your vision and boundless energy have rescued an irreplaceable piece of our past.”

Besides the museum and interpretive center, the \$15 million raised will cover a full-time curator for education, and a host of school- and teacher-friendly programs for the expected tours of schoolchildren from across New York and eventually the nation.

Hidden in Plain Sight

It all began when a historian and a pilot flying over Bedford-Stuyvesant discovered the houses in 1968. Deemed to be part of a pre-Civil War community called Weeksville, after James Weeks, a former slave and longshoreman who first settled there, Weeksville became a thriving center for blacks fleeing from the draft riots in Manhattan and former slaves who had migrated from the South. However, with the push for public housing and urban renewal, most of the homes were demolished over the years, leaving just the four-home remnant, overshadowed by the towering Kingsborough public housing development. Maynard said in a recent interview that the homes were treasures, “hidden in plain sight.”

Although one home, 1698 Hunterfly Road, is readily apparent from the street, the others were tucked away on a side alley. “A family who had also believed in keeping history alive then inhabited the home at 1698,” said Maynard.

“When I first saw the house, a wonderful lady, Mrs. Muriel Williams Brown, lived there.” Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. David C. Williams, Sr. had come in the 1930s and settled on Buffalo Avenue, after living in a camp settled by both black and white veterans of the Civil War. Mrs. Brown’s father managed to earn enough money working as a handyman to buy the home. And, in fact, the heating system that he originally had installed served the home well until the Weeksville Preservation Society was able to replace it as part of the restoration.

Mrs. Brown and her husband had furnished the home with antiques – “they had beautiful things, still in the family” – and many of those items have been returned to the home as part of the museum project. The couple also valued education – three of their children became school teachers, and one grandchild is a judge in civil court in the Bronx. “Education is the key to so many problems,” Maynard notes.

The family originally was not ready to sell, but after the death of Mrs. Brown, the family decided to allow the home to become the centerpiece of the project.

The other homes were owned by an investor on Long Island who agreed to let the homes be purchased by the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, which held the homes in trust for three years until the Weeksville Preservation Society was able to purchase the homes outright.

Awards and accolades are coming fast and furious. In May, Maynard was given an honorary doctorate by the Banks Street College of Education, in honor of her preservation work, in addition to her other recent honors. “If you really believe in something, you have to have enough faith that the thing is good in and of itself. You have to start. You have to make the first step.”

But it doesn’t hurt to have something else in the mix as well.

“I believe that larger forces of history are playing into it,” Maynard explains. “This is an idea whose time has come.” ♦

Photos reprinted with permission from the Society for the Preservation of Weeksville and Bedford-Stuyvesant History.



In front of the historic 1700 Bergen Street, Patricia Singleton, former trustee of Weeksville Society, poses with schoolchildren to celebrate the home’s restoration, 1982.

Bosnian Refugee Takes Office

Deana Smiljic '02, arrived in this country speaking virtually no English. Today, she is bilingual, has served as an interpreter for refugees in family court, and works for the Oneida County Health Department as an administrative assistant. Last fall, Smiljic found herself on an accelerated path to the American Dream with the surprise announcement by Mayor Tim Julian that he had appointed her to an open at-large seat on the Utica Common Council. She was sworn in November 14, 2002, at City Hall and attended her first meeting as council member the following week.

Refugees from Bosnia flooded into the Utica area after war devastated the former Yugoslavian republic. Many were already professionals or semi-professionals in their native country but were unable to capitalize on their accomplishments here. It was not uncommon for them to be forced by necessity to take entry-level and minimum wage jobs.

As the first refugee to gain political office in Utica, Smiljic's appointment sent a ripple of excitement through that community. A fellow Bosnian refugee was quoted by the *Observer-Dispatch*, Utica's daily newspaper, as saying, "Now we'll know what's going on in the city firsthand. We are a young community. We need to establish roots. This decision by the mayor is something we appreciate."

Refugees are credited with revitalizing the city of Utica by furthering their education, finding jobs, buying homes and having families. Smiljic, 32, a married mother of three (she just had a baby last summer), who earned her associate degree in human services from

Empire State College's Utica Unit, credits her speedy adjustment and consequent appointment, in part, to the education she earned through the college.

"After my family and my friends convinced me that I could do it, I finally started thinking about going back to college," Smiljic explains. "Today, when I look back on the day that I made that decision, I am happy to realize that it was the right thing to do. Despite the language barrier, my full-time job, and being a mom of two young children, I tasted a little bit of the American Dream."



Deana Smiljic '02, whose appointment is a first in her community.

COURTESY PHOTO

Empire State College faculty member Reed Coughlan met Smiljic and her husband Goran when they were among 100 refugees he interviewed while researching the area's Bosnian refugees as an Imperatore Scholar, a faculty fellowship at

the college. He notes that, "about 10 percent of Utica's population are recent refugees/immigrants. In the last year at Empire State College, we have had five Bosnian graduates and one from Poland, and we currently have another five enrolled, along with two Russians and one Polish immigrant."

Many of the Bosnian immigrants arrived in the United States through the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, which has been resettling refugees in the Utica area for the past 22 years. More than 9,500 refugees have been resettled in the Utica area, with more than 5,000 in the past five years.

As for Smiljic: "I am thankful to the staff of Empire State College for their enormous support every time I thought that I would not be able to make it. I am thankful for the one-to-one attention that I received every time I needed help. My mentor, Professor Coughlan, was always available. I took every piece of advice and followed every shown direction, in order to balance between school, career and my family. It paid off. It was worth it." ♦

Environmental Activist Among College Graduates Last Spring

Edie Keasbey, who graduated at 73 from the Hudson Valley Center last June, has become known as an outspoken environmental activist in the Hudson Valley. Because she grew up near a dairy farm, was interested in farming and loved animals, she attended a small college in Pennsylvania that offered a two-year program in agriculture.

After working on a dairy farm for a little more than a year, she packed her bags, budgeted \$1,000 and spent a free-wheeling six months in Europe. She continued a life of adventure, serving as a hotelier in the Caribbean with her husband, whom she met when they both volunteered for Youth for Eisenhower.

However, upon return to her hometown after retirement in the 1980s, she was shocked and dismayed by how the small rural community of Patterson had become crowded with huge developments. For one large development, "We forced the town to do an environmental impact statement, and they did cut down on the number of houses being built. They also had to be aware of the wetlands." In 1987, as a result of her grassroots activism, she was appointed to the local Environmental Conservation Commission, which succeeded in helping to prevent the proposed siting of a 500-acre garbage dump in town. She ended her tenure in 1994 as co-chair. She later joined the Citizens Environmental Coalition based in Albany, which was grappling with statewide issues related to waste management and conservation.

One of Keasbey's latest projects is advocating for the protection of the Great Swamp, a 7,000-acre wetland, as a member of Friends of the Great Swamp (known by the acronym FrOGS). ♦

Guest Essay



An Urban Fairy Tale

By Michael Raab

You see them every day on the streets of New York, bicycles that have been stripped as if vultures have swept in and picked on the carcass until all that is left is the frame or in some cases, a single wheel imprisoned to a pole.

In that sense I have been lucky. They never stripped my bike; they simply stole the entire apparatus.

My bike was not just a hunk of metal: it was a bond between father and daughter, a memory bank of my daughter's childhood. I had ridden Naomi all around town, first as a baby in a seat on the back, then on the crossbar that I specially covered with foam. This took place from the time she was one to her early teens.

I would pick her up at school at 15th Street and Third Avenue and off we would go. To the dentist, to a friend's birthday party, to meet her mom at a restaurant. Naomi and I were an item; the father and daughter who arrived with helmets in hand. She sat in front of me making believe the handlebars were ray guns and blasting any cars in our path. I may be a freelance photographer who lives in a loft in Union Square, but in my mind, I was a modern knight who would throw his daughter upon his black bike and take her to the ends of the city: Sorry dear, I do not have a white horse. This will have to do.

So you may understand what it meant when my bike was stolen.

And here is what really makes my bike story kind of a fairy tale: Three times my bike was stolen and three times I got it back.

The Homeless Helper

The streets of New York can be dangerous for bikes, with potholes, broken glass and oil slicks. So when my daughter was one and we started riding together, my wife bought me a present: a new mountain bike, with fat, nubby tires.

One beautiful fall day, after I dropped my daughter off in her first grade class, I came home and locked my bike to a pole across the street.

A few minutes after I had gone upstairs, I heard screaming from the street. I ran to my front window and saw the homeless woman who had taken over the southeast corner.

"Stop thief!" she yelled, pointing her finger. I saw a man running down the sidewalk, pushing a bicycle. It took several seconds to realize that it was mine.

I ran down the stairs and around the block but saw nothing. I was panting badly. The homeless woman came over screaming advice. "Go to Tompkins Square! That's where they sell them. Check out the park."

I took off, running down Broadway. A block later I spotted a police van with four cops inside, and I gasped my story. "Get in," one said.

As we headed for the park, I described the details of my bike, like the scars and marks on a missing person, so that if we found it, they would believe it was mine.

At the boundaries of the park, we slowed to a crawl. There was only the usual Tompkins Square mix: Old Ukrainians talking on park benches. Young Hispanic men shooting hoops. A white woman dressed in Chinese clothing, holding a metal sword that was almost as tall as she was, doing a martial art.

Suddenly I saw it. My bike, kickstand down, standing alone on a pedestrian path, like a statue that had been removed from its pedestal.

"There it is! That's my bike!" The doors swung open and three of the police jumped out with badges flashing and started to question everyone in the surrounding area.

"They know nothing," the youngest cop said. "This bike must have ridden itself over here and put down its own kickstand."

I thanked them, took my bike and pedaled home. When I got to my corner, I looked for the homeless woman.

"You got it back! Was it where I said?" she asked proudly. Homeless people don't get to be right too often, I thought. She was entitled to gloat.

One from Pole A

When my daughter was nine we rode over to 19th Street and Broadway to see "The Muppets Take Manhattan," and I locked the bike to construction poles. When we came out of the theater the bike was gone. My daughter burst into tears. I gave her a hug, told her I would replace it, and we walked home, hand in hand, in silence. I reported it to the police. "Forget it," they said, "We never recover stolen bikes."

The next morning I researched purchasing a used bike but got nowhere. I decided it was time to walk over to my local city cycle shop and see how much a new bike was going to cost me. Now, normally on a walk of eight blocks or so, I would see a lot of bicycles and pay little attention to them. But as I walked past my local Chinese restaurant, something special caught my eye. My bike!

I could not believe it.

I also didn't know exactly what to do. The owner of the restaurant, Peter, knew my daughter by name. Should I just go in and accuse one of the people who worked there of stealing my bike? I decided to talk to Peter and see where it went from there.

He greeted me with his typical warm smile which disappeared the moment I said my stolen bike was chained to a pole in front of his restaurant. He was shocked. He gathered his workers together and spoke to them in Chinese. Then he gestured me to come outside with him and point out my bike. After a few more exchanges in Chinese, he told me the man standing next to him bought the bike from someone near Tompkins Square Park a few days ago, for \$35.

(continued on next page)

Urban Fairy Tale

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I explained to them, with Peter translating, how the bike had a special meaning to my daughter. I said I would reimburse the man plus an additional \$10 for his inconvenience.

As I counted out the money, I realized that I had an old, dog-eared picture of my daughter, all bundled up, helmet on her head, sitting in the baby seat of the bike. Peter and his worker laughed as they pointed at the picture. I handed him the money, and he unlocked the bike from the pole. I could not wait until it was time to pick my daughter up at school. That day I really felt like a knight in shining armor. I slew the dragon and came home with the prize.

Strangers in the Night

I was meeting some people on Mercer Street, at 6 p.m. on a weekday night. I chained my bike to a parking meter directly across from the window of a coffee shop. The shop was busy, the bike was locked ... what could happen?

Returning later I saw a bike parked at the meter but there was something unfamiliar about it. It was flimsy and rusty compared to the tank of a bike I owned. Then I noticed two women sitting in the window of the coffee shop and went in to see if they could help.

"Yes," one of them said, "There was a young man fooling around with a bike out there. He was young, maybe early 20s. He had on a purple sweatshirt and a yellow hat."

This was amazing! People who are held up face to face can't identify their assailants. I thanked her and went off.

As I walked back to the meter where my bike had been stolen, I noticed that



Michael Raab and daughter Naomi: brave knight and young princess on their trusty steed.

my \$100 Cobra motorcycle lock was still on the pavement next to the bike. As I bent down to examine it, something unusual caught my eye. This other bike was not locked to the meter at all. A realization hit me: This must be the work of a bike thief who was trading up. Discarding one bike as he found a better one to steal. A bike thief trying to better his lot in life and pursuing the American dream of upward mobility. This made me, stuck with this crummy bike, downwardly mobile.

I picked up the lock, placed it in the front basket of the replacement bike and headed for home. Cars were blocking the streets so at 12th Street I rode slowly on the sidewalk.

Suddenly I saw a bike coming in my direction! Something clicked: A purple sweatshirt? A yellow hat? Oh my God, is

that my bike? It looks like my bike, but is it really? I didn't know what to do. This wasn't in my script.

We approached each other slowly, and when we got close enough, I reached out, grabbed the handlebars of his bike, brought the lock over my head and started to scream obscenities at him. The thief jumped off the bike and ran, as I continued to scream, straddling one bike and holding the other.

Somehow I managed to maneuver the two bikes home and once again I was able to tell my family a story of loss and recovery, of what I have begun to call "my magical bicycle."

The next day I saw a sign in a take-out restaurant: Used Bicycles Wanted. I sold them my extra bike for \$25, which I put towards the purchase of a new lock, which so far, has remained unbreakable.

My daughter is now 20 and living in Hawaii. I still have my bike, complete with the foam-covered

crossbar. There are newer models on the market that weigh a lot less and would be much easier to pedal around town. I am tempted to retire this one, but there are moments, when I trudge up Murray Hill or gather some speed on a long, flat section of Second Avenue, that I still feel that my daughter is sitting there, between my arms, clearing the path ahead of us. How can I give that up? ♦

Michael Raab, a freelance photographer who takes many of the Purina pet food package photos, is a photojournalism student at the Metropolitan Center. This story originally appeared in The New York Times.

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Straight-talking Congresswoman

(continued from page 3)

It was because the incumbent at the time did not support those issues that Brown-Waite determined to challenge her – something she calls a “monumental” task. But Brown-Waite prevailed, bringing her straight talking, down-to-earth style to the halls of power in Washington.

Style Born of Experience

Brown-Waite describes herself as a “compassionate conservative” whose worldview has been shaped in part by

her own personal up-by-the-bootstraps history: “growing up in poverty, putting myself through college, and at one point being a single mother.” She returned to college as an adult juggling family and career, with the strong encouragement of her boss at the state legislature. She earned a bachelor’s from Empire State College’s Northeast Center, and a master’s degree from Russell Sage, both in public administration. She also holds a labor studies program certification from Cornell University.

Yet the struggles she has gone through in her own life have not only drawn her into the political process, but they have taught her the importance of not taking

life so seriously. “You never get through life without a sense of humor,” she maintains.

Asked to describe her style, she quickly and firmly explains, “I am not a pushover. I ask so many questions I know I drive people crazy. I am no-nonsense, and have always been very upfront. I stick by my word.”

Case in point: She has not been afraid to disagree with the president, a fellow Republican, voting against his plan to give \$15 billion in aid to African and other countries hardest hit by the AIDS epidemic. Instead, she said she believes that the healthcare needs of Americans should be looked after first. “Charity begins at home,” she asserts.

Looking toward the future, the wife, mother of three adult daughters and grandmother, is feeling heightened interest in foreign affairs. “As a result of 9-11, we now realize how vulnerable and trusting our country was,” she says. The government needs to “protect constitutional rights while protecting us from terrorists who seek to do us harm.” She concedes this will take a fine balance.

During an interview with National Public Radio, fellow freshman congressman and former Clinton aide Rahm Emmanuel described being a first-term congressman as being at the bottom of the food chain.

However, this freshman doesn’t quite see it the same way. She dismisses Emmanuel’s complaint with the quip: “Mr. Emmanuel (a Democrat) is in the minority party, and maybe that’s how the minority party treats *their* freshman.”

She said she feels freedom to make a difference and disagree, even as a freshman representative. “As long as you’re not a flamethrower, just disagreeing for the purpose of throwing flames, I think you will rise to the top,” she explains. Then, in keeping with her down-to-earth reputation, she adds with a laugh, “I tell my daughters if I ever let all this go to my head, slap me around a little, and, believe me, they would.” ♦

Just Do It

(continued from page 4)

Gov. George Pataki to restore “billions of dollars of cuts the governor planned last year, which would have devastated the schools. We were able to put the money back in.”

He also points to the importance of healthcare, and the need to “find ways to assure that those who can least afford it can access healthcare. As we get older as a society, the more healthcare we will need, so we need to make sure that that is strongly in place.”

Diaz also is focusing on economic revitalization in the predominantly lower and lower-middle class neighborhoods of the 86th District. He and other community leaders are in consultation with several of the “big box” stores, two of whom he feels pretty sure will make a commitment to do business in the Bronx. He is also working on restoring, with city, state and federal funds, numerous storefronts and residential properties – the latter of which he hopes will provide shelter for 400-500 families. Many new residents are moving into the area, and he is certain that the combination of population growth and economic growth will prove beneficial, providing workers for employers and those all-important jobs for the residents.

Success

Diaz finds that, as a part of the majority party in the assembly, he really is able to get things accomplished. And, as the Kerry trip showed, the importance of a politically growing segment of the population – Latinos – gives his hometown some added clout. Diaz noted that both NYS Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer, both Democrats, have credited the Bronx with being a key ingredient in their electoral success.

Diaz returned to school at Empire State College to complete his bachelor’s degree in political science in the 80s. He fondly recalled his mentor, Jim Robinson, as a “terrific professor” who urged Diaz to “just do it,” when it came to completing his education. “He taught me that sometimes you have to go out and just do it. In everything I have done – I have gone out and just done it. Too many people spend a lot of time thinking of what they could do and nothing ever gets done. Everything is possible if we are willing to just take that first step.” ♦

College and Student News

College Appoints Two New Deans

Empire State College has appointed two new deans. Deborah Amory took the helm of the Central New York Center in August. She replaces former dean John Adams. Peter Perkins served as interim dean while the college searched for someone to fill the position on a permanent basis. Nan DiBello started work at the Niagara Frontier Center in July, following the retirement of longtime dean Anne Bertholf, who retired in June.

Dr. Amory earned her Bachelor of Arts in African studies from Yale University, through the Scholar of the House Program, and her Ph.D. in anthropology from Stanford University. Most recently, she was director of instructional technology and faculty presiding officer at SUNY Purchase. At Purchase, she had previously served as head of the Liberal Studies Program and holds a tenured associate professor appointment in anthropology. She has directed Fulbright-Hays group study and curriculum projects in East Africa, and has held adjunct positions at the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco State University and Stanford University. She has conducted research in East Africa, with fieldwork in Kenya and Tanzania, and has presented and published on the history of African studies, and issues of gender, sexuality, ethnicity and power in the U.S. and Africa.

"Empire State College's mission, to serve working adults, is more important than ever in New York State," said Amory. "I very much look forward to working with the excellent faculty and staff of the center and the college, who have earned such a distinguished reputation with students and alumni."

Dr. DiBello was, most recently, associate dean and associate professor of political science at Wells College in Aurora, New York. At Wells, she had special responsibility for planning, outcomes assessment and the first-year program. She previously served as assistant director of the Women's Studies Program at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Prior to that, she directed staff support for the Illinois Job Training Coordination Committee, while serving on the staff of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

Said DiBello: "I am enthusiastic about Empire State College's unique learning opportunities and looking forward to working with the faculty and staff to meet the diverse educational needs of communities in Western New York."

New Teaching Program: Fast Track to Classroom

Empire State College's **Master of Arts in Teaching** program is coming to a center near you. The new program is geared to working adults who would like to switch careers and teach in urban school districts, offering them a "fast track to the classroom." In the first year of study, students fulfill the introductory requirements while continuing in their current employment; in years two and three of the program they will be working full time as certified teachers under the direction of mentor teachers and M.A.T. faculty members. The first phase of developing the program, slated to admit students in September of 2004, started last spring with a search for an associate dean/director and the program's first seven faculty members.

Getting in line to go online. Graduate Studies is moving to a new calendar. Beginning this fall, all of the programs

will have the same begin and end dates. This will result in some program modification because the program year will now have distinct fall and spring semesters and a shortened summer session. As this is happening, graduate faculty are beginning to adapt their program's courses to online formats, joining the M.B.A. program that is already primarily web based. While there will be some variation between programs, it is clear that all of them will be featuring online instruction as a standard feature of their programs.

Student News

Jennifer Leone, a student at the Niagara Frontier Center, received an Allentown Village Society scholarship, given to one "sophomore" student majoring in art at each of the Western New York colleges and universities. The scholarship takes the form of \$1,000 worth of credit in a local arts supply shop for two consecutive years.

John Locke '95, a current graduate student, web designer and cartoonist, traveled to Cuba as part of a Global Exchange "Realty Tour" and exhibited photographs taken on the trip at the Bristol Valley Theater. He produced a two-hour multimedia documentary, *Strait Talk: Politics, Propaganda and Perceptions Across the Florida Straits* as part of his thesis.

Elba Sierra, a student at the Hauppauge Unit, recently completed a grant writing study with Mentor Judith Rockway, which resulted in a grant from Verizon to the Suffolk County Office of Womens Services. She proposed a Lock-Help Program for women in Suffolk County that focuses on protecting victims of domestic violence by securing their homes after obtaining an order of

(continued on next page)

Student and Alumni News

exclusion from the court and preventing any further trauma to their children who witnessed this abuse.

Brenda Simmons, a community and human services student at the Riverhead Unit, was honored with a “Person of Distinction Award” by the Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk on April 17. This award was presented during the “Million Woman Community Development of Long Island” awards ceremony. It recognized her extensive and consistent involvement in the community over many years.

Alumni News

International Programs Graduate Publishes Novel to Acclaim

With a new baby in the house and a brand new novel on the bookstore shelves, **Ruchama King '88** says she feels as if she's just had twins. St. Martin's Press published *Seven Blessings*, her first novel geared to a general audience, last summer. And it's already winning rave reviews – Kirkus Reviews likens King to “a Jewish Jane Austen,” and *Publisher's Weekly* calls her description of Jerusalem so rich that “the reader can almost smell the falafel frying.”



Ruchama King '88

COURTESY PHOTO

The novel at the center of the praise grew from a series of short stories and a novella she had written as part of her final Brooklyn College M.F.A. project. Several of the characters from the previous works kept resurfacing in her thoughts, King explained from the home in New Jersey that she shares with her husband and four children. She finally gave in and decided to begin a longer work to tell their stories more fully. “I loved working on a longer piece ... Every time I wrote, it was like coming home to a set table with food in the oven.”

Although the novel is about match-making (the title refers to a ritual that takes place under the *chuppah* or bridal canopy), it also explores deeper themes. The narrative centers on Beth, a single American woman approaching middle age who has made *Aliyah* (relocation) to Israel; Binyamin, a rather egotistical artist who cannot find a woman who meets his ideal; Akiva, a housepainter with yearnings for transcendence; and the matchmakers – Tsippi, a holocaust survivor and Judy, a beautiful and efficient homemaker who desires to develop her spirit and mind, as well as her home-making skills. King uses the backdrop of Jerusalem and Orthodox Judaism to explore the great universal themes of life – the search for God, the importance of community, the pain of displacement, and the centrality of living life in relationship with others.

King calls the process of writing the novel a series of small “destructions” since she basically had to tear down her shorter works and rework them into the broader novel. The character Beth, she said, was partly a composite of many women she had known when she herself lived in Israel for a decade, spending a few of those years in the household of a prominent matchmaker. Beth was also “about 50 percent pure creation,” King says. The idea for the man Beth falls in love with, but feels she can't marry

because of “an insurmountable flaw,” was sparked by someone King once met whose temporary disability, a result of illness, severely discolored his face. He told her how people either reacted to him “quite violently or with great honor.”

King was involved with some *shidduchs* (blind dates with an eye toward marriage), as a matchmaker as well as going on dates herself, but she actually met her own husband (also a writer) in the synagogue where she was dating the rabbi after her return to the United States. They eventually helped form a writers' group where they got to know each other better, and later traveled back to Israel to marry. She attended Empire State College while in Israel studying and teaching the *Torah*, figuring that getting her B.A. would be helpful to her if she intended to go on for graduate study.

Although she was quite excited to find her book on the shelf of a local Barnes & Noble bookstore last summer, “It will really hit me when I have my first reading on the Upper West Side; when I can see the impact on people's faces.”

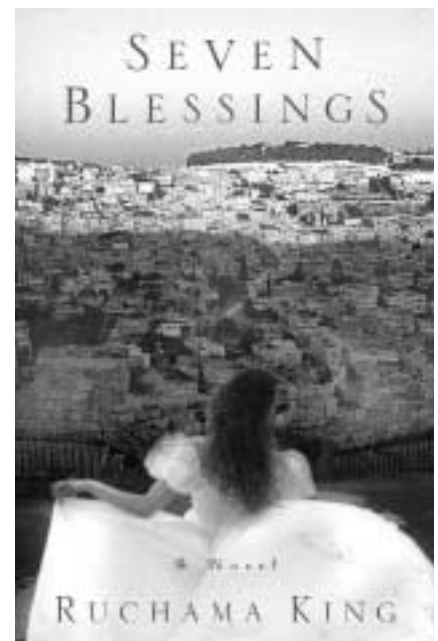


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Center for Distance Learning

Sheryl Heinle '01 is director for site support quality process improvement with Cigna Healthcare in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Kathleen M. Pepin '94, director of facilities planning with the University of Michigan – Dearborn, earned a master's in urban planning from the university and is a member of the Society for College and University Planning.

Erin Porter '03 is a member of the U.S. National and Olympic short-track speed-skating teams.

Denise Szalkowski '02, who has worked at SUNY Fredonia for over 16 years, has relinquished her position as secretary to the vice president of administration and accepted that of assistant to the president. While undertaking her studies at Empire State College, she was awarded the Professional and Business Women of Polonia Scholarship.

Mary Ward '96, who earned an M.S. from the New School for Social Research and an M.P.A. from Marist College, is administrative coordinator with the Duke University Eye Center, Durham, North Carolina. She is an advisor to the elderly health services newsletter and an executive committee member of the American Society of Public Administration.

Edward Winans '96 is owner of Edwards Electroplating and Finishing.

Central New York Center

Gerard Gallagher '94, president and chief executive officer of the OnCenter Complex, was named executive of the year by the New York State Hospitality and Tourism Association and recognized at their Stars of the Industry Gala.

Erica Simon Jones '98, poet, writer and teacher with EmazingWords Enterprises, also holds an M.S.T. from SUNY Potsdam. A 2003 New York State Council on the Arts grant recipient, she is a featured poet at area venues and volunteer speaker at Jefferson Community College as well as the National Guard.

Earnestine Walk '95, master sergeant and chief instructor for the Army Reserve Health Service Battalion, is studying

healthcare administration at St. Joseph's College of Maine.

The Structure of Thinking by **Laura Weed '77**, associate professor with the College of St. Rose, has been published by Imprints Academic UK.

Rev. Ruth Wendt '88, who married in 1998, is enjoying retirement following 27 years of service to the United Methodist Church.

Genesee Valley Center



Carolyn Barnett-Bryson '99 is owner and president of Accord Mediation Services of the Finger Lakes. Her memberships include the Association for Conflict Resolution, NYS Dispute Resolution Association, NYS Council on Divorce Mediation, Rochester Association of Family Mediation and the Finger Lakes Association for Professionals, of which she is founder and president. She is a NYS unified court administration mediator, volunteer arbitrator for the seventh judicial district Matrimonial Fee Arbitration Program and volunteer mediator for the Center for Dispute Settlement.

Judy S. Braiman '90, a consumer advocate, is co-author of Consumer Reports books *Toy Buying Guide*, host of WXXI television's Let the Buyer Beware and WGGG radio's program of the same name. She is an advisor to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Underwriter's Laboratories; a member of the American Society of Testing and Materials; and president of the Empire State Consumer Association. Braiman is very active with the crib/car seat project.

Pauline Burnes '87, who earned a master's degree in landscape architecture, is a registered landscape architect with the New York State Department of Transportation, a licensed professional in landscape architecture as well as certified professional in erosion and sediment control. She is a member of the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards and the American Society of Landscape Architects.

K'Mara Clare '74 received her M.S. from the University of Rochester and is a nurse practitioner. Her daughter, Hannah Craig-Kuhn, is following in her mother's footsteps and has enrolled in Empire State College.

Congratulations on the outstanding academic work done by **Deborah Eby '95** as she earned an M.S. Ed. from SUNY Brockport. In December 2002, her master's thesis was awarded first prize in SUNY Brockport's Celebration of Writing competition and in April 2003, her thesis, "Career Awareness for Elementary Students," passed the 2002 national counselor's exam. Eby, a school counselor with Ginther Elementary School, has been awarded nationally certified counselor status by NBCC.

Sandy Edwards '95 has been elected town justice for South Bristol. Sandy has just joined the Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors representing the Canandaigua Unit.

Rebecca Gamba '95, who worked her grant-writing magic with the Marcus Whitman school district with an outstanding success rate of an estimated 80 percent, now brings her expertise to the Lyons school district.

Deacon Richard J. Lombard '87, a pastoral associate with Our Lady of Mercy Church, was recognized "for leadership to the diaconate community and commitment to social justice ministry for God's people at home and abroad" by Saint Stephen's Diaconal Community Association. He also received the Legion of Honor Award from the Chapel of Four Chaplains, a nonprofit organization established to encourage cooperation and selfless service among all people. Deacon Lombard is co-founder of Journey Home Comfort Care Hospice and founder of S. Iannacone Medical Clinic, Trinidad, West Indies.

Sarah McCarthy '81 earned a B.S.N. from Syracuse University and became a licensed massage therapist following study at the Florida School of Massage. She now resides in that state and has her own massage practice, Advanced Bodywork Massage.

Music teacher **Chuck Monachino '96** developed the first Rochester Area Interactive Telecommunication Network connecting schools with a Rochester

Philharmonic musician. Monachino holds an M.S. in interdisciplinary arts for children from SUNY Brockport where he is working towards a degree in elementary education.

Anthony Mullen '77 was department head of cardiopulmonary services and then vice president of clinical services with St. Joseph's Hospital while studying for his degree. He has since earned an M.S. from Elmira College, a Ph.D. from Concordia and is chief executive officer with Kinston Community Health Center. Among his many accomplishments, Mullen has served as president of the North Carolina Hospital Association – District 6, vice president of the North Carolina Primary Care Association, president elect of the Texas Society of Respiratory Therapy, as well as being president of the chamber of commerce and two Rotary International Clubs. He received a distinguished service award from the Joint Review Committee for Respiratory Therapy Education and board certification by the American College of Healthcare Executives and the American College of Medical Practice Executives.



Jerome A. Piepenburg '01, chemical dependency counselor with United Medical Center Hope Haven and Wyoming County Substance Abuse Treatment Program, is the recipient of the 2002 appreciation award for counseling Wyoming County Jail inmates.

Jessica Raimi '75 is the author of *Affirmations for Cats*.

John Robortella '01 is associate director of public affairs and director of publications at The William E. Simon Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Rochester.

Gladys Santiago '96, senior vice president of the Ibero-American Action League, Inc. and vice president of the Rochester City Council, is the recipient of the 2003 Humanitarian Award from the New York State Association of Black, Puerto Rican and Hispanic Legislators. Assemblyman David F. Gantt nominated Santiago, citing her willingness to fight on the behalf of poor people.

“Spencerport ... Pathways to the Past,” a walking tour of the canal areas of the village and business district, is the brainchild of **Patty Uttaro '95**, librarian for the Ogden Farmers' Library and member of the Spencerport Chamber of Commerce. Photos of the village as it was 100 years ago will enable visitors to compare the village of today with that of the past.

Graduate Studies

David Capone '92 leaves his position as senior financial consultant for Cambio Health Solutions of New Jersey to become chief financial officer at St. James Mercy Health, which also marks a return to small town life. He is certified as a fellow with the Healthcare Financial Management Association, a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a C.P.A.

Jo Galante Cicale '99 was inducted into Ulster County Community College's Alumni Hall of Fame in 2002 and, this year, was asked to deliver the main address at UCCC's 39th commencement exercises. Cicale, community and government affairs director with Ulster-Greene ARC, is known for her dedication to expanding the right to community inclusion for people with disabilities and is a member of the Ulster County Chamber of Commerce and Mental Health Association.



JoAnne Spoto Decker '97, director for community service programs with the Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth, is the recipient of the Onondaga County Martin Luther King Jr. Employee Recognition Award as well as the Auburn/Cayuga NAACP Millennium Award.

Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) has honored **Lawrence P. Doyle '94** with its Alumni Achievement Award for Excellence. He earned an A.A.S. degree from SCCC; a bachelor's degree, with a triple major in finance, management and marketing, from Pace University and an M.A. from Empire State College. Doyle's career began on Wall Street at the American Stock Exchange, followed by a

position as an account executive with Merrill Lynch and then as first vice president/regional manager for Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC, the second oldest member of the New York Stock Exchange. Enjoying much success, he launched, and is chairman of, Kinetics Asset Management, which has been the number one performing mutual fund for the last five years. He is active in the West Babylon Good Scholarship Association and serves on Pace University's Athletic Advisory Board.

Kathleen Eagan '95, an adjunct and professional tutoring program coordinator with Dutchess Community College, has simultaneously had a career with the military that includes the Naval Reserves, the Army Reserves and, currently, the New York State Army National Guard. Among the accolades she has garnered are the New York State Defense of Liberty Medal awarded by Gov. Pataki for her contribution to the state following the attack on America on September 11, 2001, and the New York State Meritorious Service Medal. She is a member of the Civil Air Patrol as well as the Dutchess Fencing Academy.



Thomas W. Garrett Jr. '98, novelist and author of *Against A Brick Wall* (Writers Club Press), spoke before the Consortium Information Technology Executives at Verizon, New York

City. His educational background includes degrees from Medgar Evers College and Hunter College – his corporate experience includes managerial positions with Fortune 500 companies. Garrett serves on the board of directors of the Hansel and Mildred McGee Foundation which provides scholarships to inner-city high school students.

“We Will Dance/Glory and Honor,” a sacred dance piece, was choreographed by **Suzanne Gorman '01** and performed by a multicultural, interdenominational group of women at the Colgate Chapel in Hamilton, New York. The program, designed to unite faiths under one roof, was part of Suzanne's studies of movement as a healing tool for mind, body and spirit. She is a member of the Sacred Dance Guild and the Christian Dance Fellowship.

Greg Gulbrandsen '02, retired from SUNY New Paltz where he was director of the media center, has moved to Oregon and started Cascade Creative Video.

Kathe Healy-Adams '03, coordinator of adult and dual services with Westfall Associates, has authored *The Inner Links*, which is in the museum and archive of the National Golf Association, as well as at St. Andrews Golf Club, Scotland.

Rosemary Jenkins-Varela '00, has been promoted to manager of operational support and compliance with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Deborah Putnam, '92, '95, '02, the Graduate Studies representative to the college's Federation Board of Governors, was selected as one of three recipients from Empire State College of the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence earlier this year. Putnam, who earned a Master of Arts in business and policy studies in 2002, is director of computing services at Alfred State College.

Paul Sandy '02 has been named detective lieutenant with the Cortland Police Department.

Having taught advanced placement and Regents chemistry at Brooklyn Technical High School for over 13 years, **John Tom '95** has been promoted to advanced placement chemistry coordinator. Earlier this year he received a professional diploma in school leadership and policy from Long Island University's Brooklyn campus and had the added honor of being presented the Graduation Award for Excellence in Leadership from the School of Education, Department of Human Development and Leadership. He has also completed the requirements for the advanced certificate in bilingual education.

Michael Weber '90 is owner and president of Thomas and Galbraith Heating and Cooling, Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio. His past experience includes 17 years with General Electric and as vice president of operations with Best Buy Company and Sharp Electronics. He is a member of the Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, Air Conditioning Contractors of America and the Home Builders Association.



Karen West '84, '95, who has been with SUNY Fredonia for 18 years, has been named interim vice president for development and college relations and as such will oversee the

Fredonia College Foundation, alumni relations, development, media relations and college information services. She is involved with the Chautauqua Leadership Network, Success by Six advisory board, Festivals of Fredonia, the Chautauqua County Girl Scout Council and the Fredonia Chamber of Commerce.

The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (PAF) has bestowed its highest honor upon CWA President **Morton Bahr '83** for his "exemplary dedication to children and longtime support of the foundation." He is one of only four individuals to receive the Commitment to Children Award since the foundation began in 1988. Bahr serves on the PAF board of directors and has made the foundation the Communication Workers of America's charity of choice.

Harold Hershenson '77 has been retired for more than 14 years from the New York City school system, having taught at Brooklyn Technical High School for 26 years. On occasion, he substitute teaches in the schools of Ocean County, New Jersey.



Bernard B. Kerik '02, former New York City police commissioner, was put in charge of improving security in Iraq, serving a four-month tour that ended in September. As senior allied advisor to the Iraqi Interior Ministry, he was charged with rebuilding the police force in Baghdad and across Iraq. According to *The New York Times*, under Kerik's watch, which began at the end of May, patrols were increased from 75 per day to 1,100 by mid-July. He was also responsible for the training of Iraqi police recruits. Kerik took a leave of absence from the lucrative law enforcement consulting firm he founded with former

NYC Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. But as he explained to Tom Brokaw in a June interview, he views it as an opportunity to bring freedom to the Iraqi people.

Kerik hopes to build the Baghdad force up to 18,000 and police force for the country up to 65,000-75,000. He told Brokaw, "I am sort of the interim minister of the interior. I don't only have the police. I have borders, customs, immigration, citizenship, passport, emergency management, civic defense. That all falls within the ministry. It's a task. But I think it's all for a good cause."



self portrait

Arthur Salzberg '83, a graduate of the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies, says he has turned to two different undertakings: cycling and photography. He has also exhibited his photography, Political Art, for the fourth time this year, twice in City Hall of San Diego. "All of us must have a dream to sustain our spirit ... My dream is to have a one-person showing of my photography," he writes.



Hudson Valley Center

Carol Marie Davis '80, who holds a Master of Science degree from Iona College, worked as an art therapist after

graduating. She is now a photojournalist for *Venice Gulf Coast Living Magazine*.

Peter Diaferia '97, who worked in the production area of the motion picture and television industry for most of his career, has just served his 14th year as a blue ribbon panelist for the National Academy of Televisions Arts and Sciences Emmy Awards. He was asked to judge graphic design, production design and art direction for the 2002 National Sports Emmy Awards. Diaferia's personal credits include art direction of animation and graphics for two International Olympic Winter Games.

Emergency room staff nurse **Patricia Halo '00** went on to earn a M.S. in nutrition from Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, a B.S. from

Columbia's School of Nursing and is currently enrolled in the family nurse practitioner M.S. program, also at the School of Nursing. She is a member of the Nursing Honor Society and the American Nurses Association.

Congratulations to **Christine Jacobsen '93**, who works at Middletown High School, on being named Orange County Student Assistance Counselor of the Year, 2003.

Eileen MacAvery Kane '86, a designer with Bear Brook Design, has been selected as a contributor to *Idea Revolution* (HOW Design Books), a collection of over 120 brainstorming activities and creativity anecdotes for and by creative professionals.

Betsy Faden-Qureshi '92, who holds an M.S.Ed., is a recreation therapist supervisor and drug counselor at Greenburgh ATS of St. John's Riverside Hospital.

Robin J. Hammer '02 has been named director of community relations with Willow Towers Assisted Living. She is a member of the Alzheimer's Association as well as the Action Committee for the Elderly.

In 1996, **William Osborne '77** started his own law firm, Law Offices of James Osborne and Associates, in Los Angeles, California. His areas of specialization are insurance bad faith and medical malpractice.

Andrew Smith '96 has earned his Ph.D. in archaeology from the International Studies program of the University of Dublin as well as a post-doctoral D.Sc. in botany and mycology. Following 26 years with the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, he is planning to retire and turn his attention to home instruction of history and science for the Mahwah, New Jersey Board of Education. He also plans to increase his public speaking appearances and establish his own business, Dutchway Archaeological and Environmental Consulting. Smith is a member of the Botanical Society of North America, North American Mycological Association, Archaeological Institute of America, Center for Archaeological Studies, Council for Independent Archaeologists, American Forestry Association and the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

Marie F. Smith '96, a certified research administrator, is manager of grants and contracts administration with the Institute of Ecosystem Studies. She is a member of the Society of Research Administration as well as the National College and University Research Administrators and has been published in *Journal of Society of Research Administrators*. Smith is a member of both the New York and American Library Associations and is a trustee of the Beekman Library and Mid-Hudson Library System.

Martha Taylor '80 incorporated as Taylored Write 4U which produces legal documents, custom correspondence and personalized children's books and gifts.

Henry James Thernal '82 is retired from the U.S. General Services Administration and counts writing poetry and calligraphy among his endeavors.

Long Island Center

Barbara Dickerson '01 is an investigator with Child Protective Services, Department of Social Services of Suffolk County.



Joan Hertz '79, who received her Ph.D. from The Union Institute and is certified in psychoanalysis, has a private practice and is co-director of the Long Island Institute for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies.

Diane L. Ilkiw '98, school library media specialist with Willets Road Middle School, has received her M.L.S. degree from the Graduate School of Library and Information School, Queens College.

Rosemary Skye Moritt '81, who also holds an M.A. from Queens College, resides in Lugano, Switzerland, where she is researching Jewish life (up to the 17th century) in the Blenio Valley, an ancient Alpine passage in Switzerland. She would welcome hearing from fellow Empire State College graduates or students with expertise in medieval Jewish archaeology.

While working toward the Bachelor of Science degree in elementary and special education awarded her by Dowling College, **Eileen Ratto '01** made the dean's

list in fall 2001 as well as spring 2002 and received the Academic Honor Scholarship. A special education teacher with Babylon Village Schools, she is also a member of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Juanita Torrence-Thompson '83 read and signed copies of her book *Celebrating a Tapestry of Life* at the Summer Festival in the Square, New York City. She frequently reads her poetry, and that of others, on television programs such as Celebrating Black History Month and Honoring Langston Hughes. Most recently she read her poetry before the American Association of University Women.



Sonia Usatch '97 is an administrative assistant, workshop facilitator, producer and founder of Playing aRound Repertory Company. *The Journal of Poetry Therapy* published

her article, "Making a Case for the Use of Nontraditional Courses in Educating Medical Students on Issues of Mental Illness."

Kathleen Valerio '99 has accepted the position of health educator and counselor with the State University of New York at Stony Brook. She writes to Empire State College that, "... this is what I had been working towards when I first walked into your office."

Marianne Wagner '03, executive director of Mercy Center Ministries, Inc., has been named to *Who's Who in Executives and Professionals*. She is an associate of Brooklyn Regional Community Sisters of Mercy and a member of the Shelter Providers Association.

Audrey Wahl '93 earned an M.P.S. in gerontology from Long Island University - Southampton and launched a new career as coordinator of the geriatric assessment interdisciplinary team seminars offered by the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center. The seminars are designed to give health career students in the University of Maryland system exposure to rural health care delivery and to recruit them into areas in which there are health professional shortages.

(continued on page 18)

BACK TO YOU

Alumni and Student Events Around the College



FORUM West Director Bob Gerulat '93 (second from left) welcomed back alumni to the reunion dinner at the summer residency at Beaver Hollow Conference Center. From left are Michele Ladouceur '03, Dr. Gerulat, Jim Cornell '02 and Tim Holden '03.



This past summer, alumni and students attended a wine tour and tasting at Widmer Wine Cellars in Canandaigua. After the reception, they attended a performance of *California Suite* at Bristol Valley Theater.



Our annual alumni student dinner in New York City gathered the college community at Tavern on the Green in early May. From left to right are: Carol Castaldo '88, Tom Castaldo, Sally and Milt Adams, Michelle and Danny Castagna.



A record number of alumni and students attended our annual Day at the Races in Saratoga Springs. Making the winner's circle presentation for the *Empire State College Race*, (from left to right) are trainer, D. Wayne Lukas; Beth Chiquoine; Sue Turben '72; jockey, Cornelio Velasquez; President Joe Moore; Barbara O'Connell '76 and Jack Turben.



The Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors met in Saratoga Springs for its spring meeting where they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the first federation board meeting. From left to right are: Deborah Putnam '92, '95, '00; Jon Darche '00; Kathleen Swift '96; Ed Jackson '87; Janet Falk '94; Eleanor Stanton '01; Tom Sergent '96; Cindy Furman '99; Fran Chambers '97; Cindy Zaky '98, '99; Joyce Gilbert-Layman '92; Yvonne Straker '78; Dave Morrell '96; Kathleen Maxion '94, '98; Eric Farbman; Maureen Winney, director of alumni and student relations.



In August, alumni and students gathered at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center for opening night of the Philadelphia Orchestra. From left to right are Linda Koblenzer, Allen Koblenzer '75 and Patricia Gioia '75

Metropolitan Center

Artist **Nancy Azara '74**, recently published a new book, *Spirit Taking Form: Making a Spiritual Practice of Making Art* (Red Wheel/Weiser), LLC. Among the prominent reviews, is one from Gloria Steinem who writes, "Nancy Azara tells us how to meditate our way into our imaginations and give our thoughts and feelings visible form. Reading *Spirit Taking Form*, the life lessons of a pioneer feminist artist, could release the artist in each of us, and create a vision of art in which everyone matters." Azara also curated a show, *The Lily – Loosely Seen*, featuring 20 other artists, at the Byrdcliffe Arts Colony in Woodstock, New York, through September 7. The 20 artists in the show presented many diverse pieces representing the form of a lily. Azara's monumental piece is titled *Lily Hand*.



La Verne Davis-Boyd '03, who has worked at Mary Immaculate Hospital for 22 years, writes, "Since entering and completing my course of study at Empire State College, I have advanced in my career goals. From rehabilitation counselor, to being the clinic director of one of the outpatient clinics within SVCMC at Mary Immaculate Hospital's Substance Abuse Clinic."

Terracotta Soldiers and Horses of Xian, an art photography exhibition by **Sidney Gluck '79**, was held at the Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum in Bratislava, Slovakia. A preview was held at the Asian Cultural Center Gallery in New York City. This art form combines photographic and decorative textile techniques with computer technologies printed on canvas to simulate paintings.

Paintings and Photowork from the late 1960s and 1970s by **Eunice Golden '78** were exhibited at the Mitchell Algu Gallery last spring.

In the spring of 2003, **Annette Johnson '00**, a social worker with C.U.C.S., was awarded a Master of Social Work from Adelphi University. A volunteer and mentor at Hammels Community Center, she is a member of the National Association of Social Workers.

Michael Johnson '91, who served as superintendent in Community School District 29 in Queens, will now apply his expertise to his new position as superintendent of Albany's school district.

Art, Myth & Dreams, a collection of digital images to stimulate the imagination of creative minds, by **George R. Malave '90** is available at www.xlibris.com/book-store.

An assistant professor of history at the University of Chicago, **Mae M. Ngai '92** has written *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, which is being published by Princeton University Press. She has been named a Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Fellow, 2003-2004. Her study, *Immigrant Incorporation and the Interpreter Class: The History of a Chinese-American Family, 1870-1950*, will examine such things as ethnic and social class formation.

L'Araignee is a novel by **Milton Parrish '90**, published by Black Eye Jack Press, Inc.

Chrysanthos Petsilas '02 is deputy director for the Greek National Tourist Organization.

Maud N. Pollock '82, a human potentials consultant and author of *From the Heart*

Through the Hands, developed an emotion health method called "feeling dissolve," which she shares through workshops and lectures. She is a member of the Nurse Healers Professional Association and the Association of Humanistic Psychology.

Rabbi Elaina Rothman '88 has retired from the congregational rabbinate after serving a community in Cardiff, Wales for 12 years.

Stephen Rueff '94, production manager of the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, has served in the same capacity for the national tour of *Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story*, as well as having toured with composer/singer Meredith Monk. Other activities include membership on the Bill of Rights Defense Committee and the neighborhood board of directors in Minneapolis where he makes his home.

Strings is the latest CD released by **Jim Snidero '03**. He was also featured on the cover of *Downbeat Magazine*, the largest and oldest jazz magazine.

Joanne Toran '86, who holds a graduate degree in public administration from Wagner School of Public Administration at New York University, has been named a fellow, Class of 2003, National African-American Women's Leadership Institute, Inc., at Bennett College. Toran is associate director of the Pediatric School-based

Nancy Azara's Lily Hand



Health Center and faculty member in the Division of General Pediatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Betsy Wilson '84 earned an M.S. degree from Bank Street College in 1990. Presently a teacher of the inmate population at Arthur Kill Correctional Facility, her prior experience includes being a federal ranger at Ellis Island and Staten Island as well as a creative writing teacher. Since 1991, she has been the foster parent of a special needs son and her memberships include the social concerns committee and board of trustees for the Unitarian Church of Staten Island.

Niagara Frontier Center

M. J. Brzeczowski '93, who became an agent with State Farm Insurance in 1987 and has had her own agency since 1994, was named Businessperson of the Year by the Wheatfield Business Association.

Jim Cornell, a 2002 graduate of the FORUM Management Education Program, has joined the Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors representing FORUM. Jim will also begin his Ph.D. at Walden University this fall.

Kelly Hallinan '91, business manager of East Coast Operations for Anacom, Inc., writes, "Empire State College was key in helping me get my degree while I was at home raising three young daughters."

Nadine Hawkins '00, human resources specialist with United Parcel Service, was named outstanding loaned executive by the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County. Her volunteer activities include BOD Friends to the Elderly Center, Meals on Wheels and Girl Scout Troop #235.

In the summer of 2003, **Joan M. Houck '87** marked her 16th year as executive director of the Dunkirk-Fredonia Meals on Wheels program.

Bradshaw Hovey '80 earned his Ph.D. in urban design and planning at the University of Washington and is associate director of The Urban Design Project, School of Architecture and Planning, University of Buffalo.



Barbara Keough '89, who holds an M.A. in communication design/human factors engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo, joined the staff of Flynn & Friends

Advertising in 1993, has served as production manager since 1999 and was recently named vice president of operations.

This past February, **Cheryl Kirisits '91** became a private pilot for a single engine land airplane.

Jacqueline Mines '02 has been named president and CEO of St. Augustine Center, a Buffalo area community center with numerous human service programs.

Deborah Naybor '02, a land surveyor/planner, is very involved with helping women and children in Uganda, Malawi, and South Africa to build better lives for themselves. She writes, "I don't give handouts but I do give a hand up to people who are looking for ways to improve the future for themselves and their families. I've been able to focus on one village at a time and make a big difference to hundreds of people in just a couple of years." Her most recent endeavor has been a first-ever secondary school providing an education to 80 children in a small village near Dumasi, Malawi, in Central Africa. Village officials, as a show of their appreciation, named the school Amayi (mama) Debi Naybor's House, made her an honorary member of the local clan and granted a piece of land on which she may build a home. She has also supported the village orphanage through donations of clothes and medical supplies and next hopes to raise funds to build a small clinic.

Dennis Richards '01 has been elected secretary of the Buffalo Police Command Officer Association. In addition, he is a delegate and executive board member of the Police Benevolent Association, recording secretary of the Police Emerald Society and president of the Parish Council, St. Rose of Lima.

Northeast Center

Having completed her master's degree this summer, **Desiree Croteau '01** has been accepted to Rensselaer's Lally School of Management and Technology where she will begin doctoral work this fall.

Karen Cuccinello '97, a membership specialist and records clerk with Girl Scouts Indian Hills Council, has attained her goal of more than 600 girl and 200 adult Girl Scout memberships. Cuccinello is also involved with the ONC BOCES, is captain of the Summit Rescue Squad and a board member for the Schoharie County Youth Bureau.

Kathleen Kiernan '03, who recently completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in cultural studies, and **Jill Lein '03**, who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in interdisciplinary studies, were recipients of The Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence for 2003. Kiernan is employed as a permanent substitute at the Gardner-Dickinson School in Wyantskill. She was also appointed faculty advisor for the student-led Builder's Club, a community service organization for middle school students, sponsored by the local Kiwanis. Lein is a registered nurse who currently works for Community Maternity Services in Albany as a health care coordinator conducting educational outreach for the community on HIV and other health topics.

Nancy Persse Langdon '91, who has been agent with State Farm for 10 years and received their Legion of Honor Bronze Tablet, is also an elder and Sunday school teacher at Fonda Reformed Church, a member of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and a volunteer for the Partners in Reading Program at Fonda-Fultonville Central School.

Daniel Sidebottom '96, director of administrative computing, was among those recognized at SUNY Cortland's faculty and professional staff awards luncheon for the "many extraordinary technological advances that have transpired on the SUNY Cortland campus."

Deborah Kinney '98 is owner of, and has successfully run, The Honored Guest Bed and Breakfast for the past five years.

Have you recently published an article, paper or book? We would love to hear about it for our next issue. Please contact Maureen.Winney@esc.edu.

PHILANTHROPY & SCHOLARSHIPS

Kay Boyer Recounts Family History with Empire State College

Kay Boyer '77, widow of the late Chancellor Ernest L. Boyer, who was instrumental in founding Empire State College, was a special guest at the All College Conference in March. She spent time with President Joseph Moore and others answering questions and reminiscing about the early days of the college.

Boyer recounted a personal history that was fairly typical of Empire State College students. She was already an R.N., but, as the mother of four, had not completed a degree program. She took courses at several institutions, but was unable to bring her nursing experience and other credits together for a cohesive degree program.

She recalled her husband telling her, "There have to be many more like you!" He was always thinking about ways people could earn degrees – at home, not sitting in a classroom." When he became chancellor, he had the opportunity to do something about it, and now not only his wife, but also a son and a grandson have studied at Empire State College.

Boyer recalled her husband's rise to the position of chancellor. The long shadow of the Vietnam war stretched across the nation, and it was a time of continuing upheaval on college campuses. The previous chancellor "was not enjoying the unrest," and was ready to step down. Ernest Boyer was approached to take the position.

As part of the selection process, he and his wife were called to Albany, and were waiting in a nearby room while State University representatives held a discussion behind closed doors. Boyer remembers her husband whispering, "What am I in for?" and she reassuring him, "You don't have to do this, you know." No sooner were the words out of her mouth than the big door opened and "everyone was clapping."

"I guess it's too late," Ernest Boyer deadpanned.

Not that he ever regretted the choice. Kay Boyer, who has had a distinguished career as a nurse-midwife and advocate of quality care for infants and mothers, remembered her husband as a highly disciplined, caring chancellor, with a special burden for those who were underrepresented and left behind. Despite his accomplishments, Ernest Boyer

was a humble and unaffected man. Early in the marriage he overheard his new wife bragging about his accomplishments, and told her in no uncertain terms that she was not to do so again.

In character, his papers were not left to a large university, but rather to Messiah College, the small Christian liberal and applied arts and



Kay Boyer

sciences institution where the Boyers met. To honor and to continue the work on issues championed by Ernest and Kathryn Boyer, Messiah College established the Boyer Center in 1997. The center's mission is to facilitate renewal in school and community by conducting research on critical education issues; to provide resources, which advocate integrated approaches to teaching and learning; and to offer services that connect educational and social institutions.

The Boyer legacy extends to Empire State College where The Boyer Society, established by the Empire State College Foundation in 1994, recognizes alumni and friends who have informed the college of their intent to contribute to the college via a bequest or other estate planning technique such as a charitable trust, gift annuity or gift of life insurance.

As part of her visit, Kay Boyer announced that she would become an official member of The Boyer Society by making a \$25,000 bequest to endow the Boyer Lecture to be presented annually as the opening address at the All College Conference. Until the endowment is funded, Kay will underwrite the lecture with an annual gift. The Boyer Lecture will set the tone for the annual meeting and will also remind faculty, staff and students of the ideals upon which the college was founded, and the people who brought those ideals to life.

For more information on ways to join The Boyer Society, please contact Kim Berry, director of gift planning, at 800 847-3000 ext. 413 or via e-mail at Kim.Berry@esc.edu.

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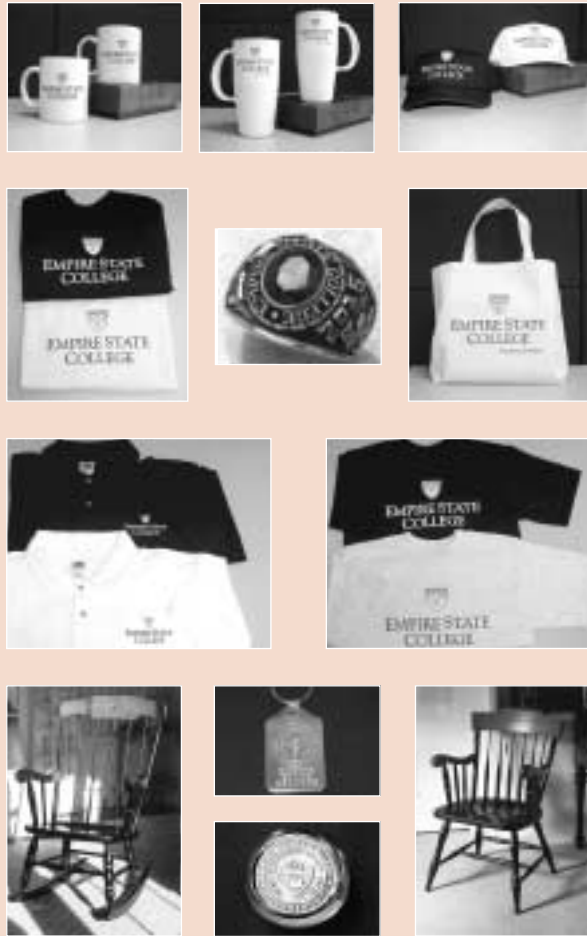
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