



Commons

The Newsletter of Borough of Manhattan Community College *Winter / Spring* **2014**

Stars Shine *for* BMCC

BMCC hosts the Steinway Soiree, a fundraiser featuring Roberta Flack, Art Garfunkel, Paul Shaffer, Lew Soloff and Peter Cincotti.

(Story on **page 4**)

Inside:

A SCULPTURE

UNFOLDS

Guided by Professor Sarah Haviland, students create a sculpture for public display.

FINDING

THE RIGHT PATH

Alumna Alexa Pomales goes from student teacher to assistant director, at Rockefeller University's Child and Family Center.

DEFYING

LIMITS

Alumni Natalia Sorokina and Nechama Gluck left the homes they knew, for the future they wanted.



Borough of Manhattan
Community College
199 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Commons Knowledge

Items of interest to the BMCC Community



Early Childhood Center Receives over \$1.3 Million

It's challenging to attend college, parent a small child, and in many cases, hold down a job at the same time. Aware of these pressures, BMCC opened its on-campus Early Childhood Center (ECC) in 1984, giving student parents "the peace of mind that comes from knowing their children are in a nurturing and enriched environment," says the Center's

Executive Director, Cecilia Scott-Croff. "Parents can attend classes without having to worry about the care of their children."

Now, thanks to a Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the BMCC Early Childhood Center will receive over \$1.3 million—\$324,558 per year for four years—to expand its student parent services.


Nationally recognized as a model for on-campus childcare programs, the ECC serves

preschoolers seven days a week and children up to age 12 on weekends. In addition to childcare, the Center provides educational and development activities, including music, art, dance and literacy.

The children's activities are led by New York State-certified teachers and artists and are "supported by a BMCC administrative team that fosters parent involvement and student engagement," says Scott-Croff. "The grant will enable us to continue offering a diverse and enriched curriculum

for children. It will also allow us to provide additional parent-training sessions for students."

The writing of the grant was a collaboration between the BMCC Offices of Student Affairs, Admissions, Registrar, Financial Aid, and Grants & Development. "Everyone pulled together and invested an enormous amount of energy and time," Scott-Croff says. "Needless to say, we're delighted."

 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=10511

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Please address any queries or comments to brosen@bmcc.cuny.edu

BMCC Administration

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PRESIDENT

G. Scott Anderson
VICE PRESIDENT FOR
ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING

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VICE PRESIDENT FOR
STUDENT AFFAIRS

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DEAN OF CONTINUING
EDUCATION & WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

Doris Holz
VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT

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Louis Chan
PHOTOGRAPHER,
EDITOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

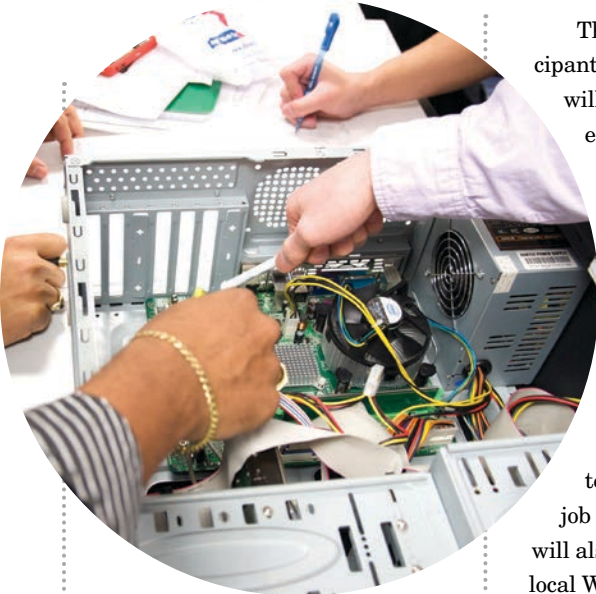
Thomas Volpe
DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS

Rachel Sokol
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Mariusz Kaczmarczyk
VIDEOGRAPHER

Nina Ovrin
ART DIRECTION

Kniangeles Anderson,
Peter Dinh, Robert Gizis
STAFF




IT Training Wins 2-Year Funding

Recently, BMCC's Center for Continuing Education and Workforce Development was awarded \$860,000 to provide computer repair and networking training through a Sectorial Workforce Proposal granted by the NYC Small Business Services.

This means that 120 participants over a two-year period will have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, and take part in paid internships and job placement services.

Participants will first complete A+ training in computer repair with Per Scholas, a national nonprofit organization that provides technology education and job placement services. They will also receive training from local Workforce 1 Career Centers, and once they pass the A+ certification exam, they will enroll in a 10-week Cisco Certified Network Associate training course.

The certifications are "stackable," Dean Sunil Gupta explains. "They're part of a sequence of credentials and relate to higher-paying jobs. They're also recognized all over the country."

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BMCC Hosts Fed Challenge Orientation

BMCC students are tackling economics and monetary policy in a prestigious annual competition, the College Fed Challenge. "Each student team presents on four topics: economic outlook, forecast, risks, and recommendations for policy," explains Adrián Franco, Program Director for Economic Education at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. ♦ The Challenge began with a Fall 2013 orientation, hosted for the first time at BMCC. Suri Dutch, University Dean for Continuing Education, CUNY, welcomed the audience in Theatre I, including 34 college teams from Federal Reserve District 2: New York, Northern New Jersey and Connecticut. ♦ "The orientation gave us ideas on how to measure the economy, and provided useful statistics," said BMCC business major Qinzeng Zheng. "The most important aspect is the process, not the outcome," says Franco, "and for students to become familiar with the aspects and complexities of economic policy."

 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=9827



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Do the Liberal Arts Still Matter?

Time and again, we're told that the role of community colleges is to train workers for the jobs of tomorrow. Indeed, it is. But I fear that in viewing community colleges in that light, we lose sight of their role in providing a well-rounded liberal arts education.

Check out the news archive on our website and you'll see stories about students and faculty engaged in a dazzling array of endeavors in virtually every area of the arts, sciences and humanities. Recently, the BMCC Foundation Board's Steinway Soiree Benefit, headlined by a line-up of world-renowned recording artists, raised money to provide student scholarships and purchase a Steinway grand piano for the college. The arts are still front and center at BMCC.

But given today's realities, how much does a liberal arts education really matter? At a time of constrained resources and heightened competition from abroad, should community colleges be underwriting the cost of art exhibits, theatrical productions and grand pianos?

Isn't our mission, as Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel has said, "to train the workforce of today for the jobs of tomorrow [and] to provide our companies with the skilled workers they need"?

Of course it is. But that mission may be the strongest argument of all for a liberal arts education. As reported by *Inside Higher Ed*, two recent national surveys found that a large majority of the American public and nearly three-quarters of business leaders say it is more important for job candidates to be well-rounded, with a range of abilities, than to have industry-specific skills. Those abilities, such as writing and problem-solving, are part and parcel of BMCC's Liberal Arts program.

"No one is suggesting that community colleges don't play a key role in training the workforce," writes Rob Jenkins, a professor at Georgia Perimeter College, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. "But we're not just churning out workers—we're also developing future leaders."

I couldn't agree more. At BMCC, that makes our commitment to the liberal arts more important than ever.



ANTONIO PÉREZ, PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



STARS SHINE *for* BMCC

A remarkable line-up of talent—internationally renowned recording artist Roberta Flack; iconic singer/songwriter Art Garfunkel; jazz trumpeter Lew Soloff of *Blood, Sweat & Tears* fame, and sensational new pianist/songwriter Peter Cincotti—came together in support of BMCC recently, their cameo performances emceed by jazz musician and popular sidekick to David Letterman, Paul Shaffer, who also sang to the packed house.

The Steinway Soiree Benefit, hosted by the BMCC Foundation Board, took place September 25 in the spacious new Shirley Fiterman Art Center of the Miles & Shirley Fiterman Hall, BMCC's newest campus building. Proceeds of the event support the BMCC Foundation—which funds student scholarships and initiatives aimed at building student success—and helped toward the purchase of a new Steinway grand piano now on loan to the college.

Before the evening's elegant celebrity showcase, guests enjoyed a festive h'ordeurves-and-champagne mixer in the Shirley Fiterman Art Center, and viewed the college's premiere exhibit of visual art, sculpture and installation pieces by BMCC faculty Simon Carr, Betty Copeland, Pat Genova, Xico Greenwald, Sarah Haviland, Ann Hjelle, Thaddeus Radell, Jessica Ramirez, Jerrold Schoenblum, Anthony Sorce and A.C. Towery.

The evening also featured a stirring performance by The Fiterman Trio: BMCC music professors Maureen Keenan on flute; Robert Reed on cello, and Howard Meltzer on piano; as well as singers Christine Free, mezzo, and Eugenia Oi Yan Yau, soprano.

The Soiree's special guests included Steven Fiterman, whose parents,

Miles and Shirley Fiterman, donated the original Fiterman Hall to BMCC, and who flew in from Minnesota with his wife Susan Fiterman for the event. Cathy Shaffer was another special guest, one whose impetus made the evening happen. "Thank you for bringing us your friends," BMCC President Antonio Pérez told Ms. Shaffer in his welcoming remarks, "the wonderful artists who are here to perform tonight."

BMCC Foundation Board member Elizabeth Butson also spoke. "BMCC is a mirror of New York City, which is a diverse student body that includes the first of many families to attend college," she said. "The personal success of our students is also the success of their families, the larger community, and the nation."

BMCC alumnus Michael Hattem, a BMCC Foundation Scholar who went on to attend—on full fellowship—the doctoral program in history at Yale University, shared that, "BMCC was the only place that would take a 32-year-old, GED-holding, high-school dropout," he said. "BMCC is truly the gateway to CUNY, one of the most remarkable public university consortiums in the country and perhaps the most cost-efficient opportunity in American higher education today."


 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=10432



Lew Soloff



Peter Cincotti



“BMCC is a mirror of
New York City ... The personal
success of our students is
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families, the larger community
and the nation.”

Elizabeth Butson, BMCC Foundation Board Member



Faculty & Staff

Items about the faculty and staff of BMCC



BMCC student artists Anthony Espinosa and Vanessa Medina with Prof. Sarah Haviland and MEOC Director John L. Graham

A Sculpture Unfolds

Guided by Art Professor Sarah Haviland, advisor to the Sculpture Club, BMCC students Vanessa Medina, Harold Tandjung and Anthony Espinosa handcrafted a commissioned piece of artwork, “Life Unfolding,” for display in the SUNY Manhattan Educational Opportunity Center (MEOC), in Upper Manhattan.

Donating their time, the Sculpture Club members com-

posed the initial design, put together a 3D model, and constructed the sculpture from amendable birch plywood and acrylic. They even returned to complete it, after graduating from BMCC.

“It was a carefully planned, ambitious design that required many hours of labor to finish, but we are very proud of the final results,” said Professor Haviland. The sculpture remains on display at MEOC, an educa-

tional center which helps students—many of whom next attend BMCC—obtain their GEDs, or high school equivalency diplomas. Dr. John L. Graham, MEOC’s Executive Director, thanked the student artists “for being so creative and authentic,” and added that the project “accentuates the value and virtue of the MEOC in full support and partnership with BMCC.”

📺 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=10512

FACULTY PROFILE

Game Changer

Carlos Hernandez, BMCC English professor and now, a game designer, just created *Meriwether*, based on the 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition. It all started when he and fellow professor Joe Bisz, with CUNY funding,



designed a curriculum using the board game *Diplomacy*. Next, Sortasoft, a video game company, approached Hernandez to design and write *Meriwether*, which he researched in depth—inviting students and gamers alike to “Come for the gameplay, stay for the history.”

📺 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=10248

Alumni News

Items for and about BMCC Alumni



Finding the Right Path

“I went straight from high school to City College,” says BMCC alumna Alexa Pomales, “but I didn’t know where I fit in, so I took a couple years off, worked at K-Mart and lived at home.”


Returning to school, she chose BMCC, and found her direction.

“I saw these pamphlets about early childhood education,” she says. “I thought to myself, ‘You can teach babies? How does that happen?’”

After earning an A.S. in Early Childhood Education from BMCC (‘03), she went on to earn a B.A. in Psychology

from Hunter College, and an M.S. in Early Childhood Education from City College—all the while, working at the Child and Family Center at Rockefeller University, where she had started as a student teacher from BMCC, and was recently promoted to Assistant Director.

Now, she says, “Professor Rachel Theilheimer is one person I remember vividly from BMCC. She welcomed our ideas—and that’s the kind of assistant director I’m trying to be.”

 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=10268



ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Key Moment

At BMCC’s Steinway Soiree, donors signed a poster of piano keys. “I’m getting a key for my wife,” said alumnus Luke Moore (‘74). “Her name was Dorothy Moore, and we met at BMCC. She was Phi Theta Kappa and on the Dean’s List.” Mr. Moore next earned his bachelor’s degree at Baruch College and master’s at NYU. “My son and daughter were at BMCC, too,” he said, and of the Soiree, added, “believe you me, I wouldn’t have missed it for the world.”

 www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=10432



Request for Success

BMCC Alumni—send us your success stories! Write Barry Rosen, Executive Director of Public Affairs at brosen@bmcc.cuny.edu

Keep in Touch

with the BMCC Alumni Affairs Office at www.bmcc.cuny.edu/alumni

Defying Limits

Natalia Sorokina and **Nechama Gluck** majored in Communication Studies at BMCC. Now pursuing a bachelor's degree in Media, Culture and Communication Studies at NYU, Gluck holds CCTOP (Community College Transfer Opportunity Program) and Phi Theta Kappa scholarships, while Sorokina earned Columbia University's coveted New Student Scholarship. Each left home—Russia for Sorokina; Upstate NY for Gluck—to defy gender-based limits on her potential. "My dream," says Sorokina, "is to affect policy regarding the LGBT community, and women," and "I'd like to pursue a career in broadcast journalism," says Gluck.



Commons Calendar

Upcoming events and performances

Through the Cinema Lens

Comedy Teams on Film: The Whole Is Greater Than the Sum of the Parts.

Choice moments in cinema history feature Burns and Allen, Laurel

and Hardy, the Ritz Brothers, Abbott and Costello, the Marx Brothers, and a few surprises. March 11 @ 7:30 p.m., FREE.

Happy Birthday, Duke.

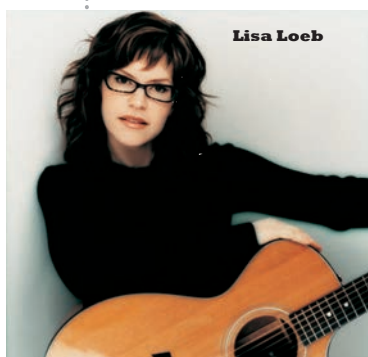
Born 105 years ago, the Duke's legacy lives on in historic footage of Ellington and his orchestra going back to 1929, as well as his appearances as an actor in *Black and Tan* and *Anatomy of a Murder*. April 15 @ 7:30 p.m., FREE.

Curated by SUNY Stonybrook professor Krin Gabbard, these retrospectives include an informal Q&A.

Duke Ellington

Music

Kathy Mattea, beloved country and bluegrass artist, brings folk, Celtic and traditional country sounds to her music. She has recorded 17 albums and charted more than 30 singles including



Number One hits "Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses" and "Come From the Heart." March 29 @ 8 p.m. \$55, \$45, \$35.



Lisa Loeb, Grammy®-nominated singer/songwriter, launched her career with the platinum-selling Number 1 hit song "Stay (I Missed You)" from the film *Reality Bites*. Her acclaimed studio CDs include the Gold-selling *Tails*, the Grammy nominated, Gold-selling *Firecracker*, and her latest, *No Fairy Tale*. May 22 @ 8 p.m. \$55, \$45, \$35

Family Series

Leo Lionni's Swimmy, Frederick & Inch by Inch. Mermaid Theatre reimagines Caldecott Honor books by Leo Lionni. *Swimmy*, a tiny fish; *Frederick*, a poetic mouse, and

Inch-by-Inch, a lovable inchworm are brought to life through innovative puppetry and an original score. March 15 at 1:30 p.m. \$25. Ages 3 & Up.

Circus Incognitus.

Jamie Atkins, an eclectic clown, juggler, balancing artist and "100% poet" joined Montréal's Cirque Éloize and is delighted to present his newest creation, *Circus Incognitus*, an unforgettable one-man circus comedy. May 18 @ 1:30 p.m. \$25. All Ages.

For more listings, go to www.tribecapac.org

ILLUSTRATION: DANNY SCHWARTZ

