



PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE: SELECT STORIES OF CUNY BACCALAUREATE DEGREE GRADUATES, 2008

This year, two hundred sixty students are graduating from the CUNY BA/BS Degree; twenty, representing diverse experiences from around the University, the city and the world, are featured here.

About the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree

Established in 1971, the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies is a University-wide individualized degree where students create one or two areas of concentration under the guidance of a faculty mentor. Students are encouraged to incorporate independent studies, internships and study abroad into their degrees, and can earn up to 15 credits for life experience; they may also use online courses and earn credits by exam. Program students stay matriculated at one CUNY college but can take courses at the other CUNY colleges and at The Graduate Center. The degree is awarded by The City University of New York.

The Degree is intended for self-directed, academically strong students who have well-formulated academic and career goals. CUNY BA, as it is commonly known, has an annual enrollment of 600 students and over 6,000 alumni. Most students in the Program are working adults and many are also raising families; 75 percent are over 25 years old; 35 percent are over 35 years old. A significant number are returning to school, sometimes after a long hiatus; more than half are minorities.

CUNY BA/BS students are regularly recipients of John F. Kennedy, Jr. Fellowships, Thurgood Marshall Scholarships, Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Research Fellowships, Fulbright Fellowships, Mellon Mays Fellowships, Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Fellowships, CUNY Women's Coalition Scholarships, CUNY Pipeline Fellowships, Women's Educational Forum Scholarships, Minority Access to Research Careers Program Scholarships, CUNY Student Senate Awards, CUNY Alumni Scholarships, CUNY Study Abroad Travel Grants, Phi Beta Kappa and other honor society memberships.

On average, CUNY BA students graduate in 2.2 years. The graduation rate

over the years has been between 65 and 72 percent. Approximately 50 percent graduate with honors. Since 1991, 47% of the Degree's graduates have gone on to graduate school, more than the national average (40%). Graduates have gone on to schools ranging from Washington University in St. Louis, to the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, to Yale University; many also continue within CUNY. Not only do more than half of the graduates report receiving promotions or raises in their current positions or starting new careers upon earning the degree, the majority report that they are now in careers *directly related* to their areas of concentration.

CUNY BA has received grants from the Diamond and Ford Foundations, the CUNY Consortium for the Study of Disabilities, and the CUNY Workforce Development Initiative. CUNY BA has its own academic fellowship program, established by the Thomas W. Smith Foundation. The following scholarships have also been established for the Program: the Harriet Brows Scholarships, the Diego Hidalgo Scholarships for Political Science/International Affairs, the Diego Hidalgo Scholarships for the Arts, the Daniel E. Smith Scholarships for Returning Women, the John F. Kennedy, Jr. Scholarships, the Memorial Scholarships for Students in Education or Human Services, and CUNY BA Alumni Association Scholarships.

For further information, contact Beth Kneller, Deputy Director, 212-817-8238 or bkneller@gc.cuny.edu.

SELECT STORIES OF CUNY BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM GRADUATES, 2008

JENNIFER ARNOLD

*COSTUME ARCHIVING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY WITH
COMPUTER AND VIDEO*

B.S. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

DRAMA DESK NOMINATION

DEAN'S LIST

Jennifer Arnold entered Mills College in 1980 as a Theater Design major but returned home to New York after two years. She worked in the garment center as a design assistant, taking night classes at SUNY/F.I.T. After the company she worked for closed, she went on to design for off-off Broadway shows and was bitten by the theater bug. She started working as a "dresser," helping actors get into their costumes during quick changes, and maintaining and repairing the costumes between shows. *Phantom of the Opera* was her first Broadway show as a dresser. Over the next 18 years, she worked her way up the ladder, assisting designers such as William Ivey Long,

Suzie Benzinger and Fabio Toblini on productions including *Swing!*, *Sopranos*, *Sex and the City*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Jeckyll & Hyde* and *Some Like it Hot*. In 2000, she designed a revival of *West Side Story* that played at La Scala in Milan and in 2001 she was first assistant on the film *Unfaithful* starring Richard Gere and Diane Lane. Then came 9/11: the theater industry crashed and most filming moved to Canada.

Several years earlier, she worked on the film *Critical Care* starring James Spader and Anne Bancroft. Her job was to research the nun's costume for Ms. Bancroft. This took her to the Daughters of Charity-St. Vincent DePaul House in upstate New York and an 88 year-old nun named Sister Elaine. The order was founded in France in 1633 and their hats were adapted from traditional sunbonnets worn at that time in the provincial regions. Working from a video made by Sister Elaine, Arnold helped faithfully recreate the habit.

This research led her to consider general costume mysteries: How exactly do you create and put on a sari? A kilt? A Sikh turban? And how and where is that information retained? Her new academic goal became adding the specialty of video preservation to the field of costume archiving.

Working with Prof. Kelly Anderson, Film and Media, Hunter College, Arnold took advanced courses in Theater, History and Media at Hunter, Brooklyn and FIT; she included an internship at the Museum of the City of New York and an independent study in Hunter's Theater Department. Her next goal is a Master's degree in Museum Studies.

MARINA CHERNYAK

*INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: POLITICS AND
POLICY ANALYSIS / MATHEMATICAL ECONOMICS*

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

ROSENBERG-HUMPHREY PUBLIC POLICY FELLOW

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

Marina Chernyak has broad interests and aspirations in the fields of international development, public policy and social change. Recognizing that "the field of public policy and international development is inherently multidisciplinary, requiring immersion in Anthropology, Political Science, History, Sociology, Economics and Philosophy," she chose the CUNY Baccalaureate Program to pursue her studies.

After being named a Rosenberg-Humphrey Public Policy Fellow at City College, she interned at the Center for International Earth Science Information Network, part of Columbia University's Earth Institute. One of the most important projects she worked on involved conducting research and data analysis on indoor air pollution (IAP) from solid fuels in developing nations for the U.N.'s fourth Global Environmental Outlook Report. This project and related ones led her to become acutely aware of the ways development bears on social welfare policies. Her research took her to Rwanda with the Columbia University Biomass Working Group to collect data on emissions of IAP associated with traditional three-stone fires and

other improved stoves. Here she saw the intersection of public health, energy, poverty and global development up front. Her International Development area was comprised of City and Baruch courses supervised by Prof. John Krinsky, Political Science, City College, who calls Chernyak "among the most intellectually curious and mature students with whom I have ever worked."

After making significant progress on her first area, Chernyak decided to add a second, Mathematical Economics, working with Prof. Kevin Foster, Economics, City, and taking courses at City, Baruch and Hunter. In summer 2007, she spent ten weeks at Duke University, participating in the American Economic Association Summer Program, a program replicating the demands and pace of a first year graduate degree in Economics. The program included a trip to Washington D.C. visiting the Federal Reserve Board, the Inter-American Development Bank, the IMF, the Congressional Budget Office, the RAND Corporation and the Brookings Institution.

Chernyak is a member of the American Political Science Association and the American Economic Association. Originally from Belarus, her native tongues are Russian and Hebrew; recently, she has been teaching herself Spanish. She is currently researching a variety of Ph.D. programs.

PAUL DANA

COMMUNITY STUDIES

B.A. JANUARY 2008, CUM LAUDE

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

DIEGO HIDALGO SCHOLARSHIP IN POLITICAL
SCIENCE/INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

In his application to the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree Program, Paul Dana wrote "For as long as I can remember, I have been an independent learner and thinker. In middle school, I chose to be home-schooled to pursue my passion for the environment. In high school, I was given special privileges to attend part-time and travel the country registering youth to vote in the 2004 presidential election. As a student at the University of California, Santa Cruz, I started an international organization to bring U.S. youth to Israel and

Palestine to learn about the conflict there." Some of his other experiences include serving as president of a social justice organization, traveling across the U.S. working for the Sierra Club, and starting his own international peace organization.

At the time of his application, Dana was enrolled in a Queens College program called Union Semester, combining classroom study of the labor movement with a 32 hour-per-week internship at the Service Employees International Union. The CUNY BA Program was his next logical step, allowing him an opportunity to create an individualized interdisciplinary program related to social justice and community-based organizing.

Dana's area was designed with courses from the University of California and Baruch, Queens and Hunter Colleges in History, Philosophy, Sociology, International Studies, Labor Studies, Urban Studies, Political Science, Arabic, Hebrew, Religion and Women's Studies, under the direction of Dr. Kim J. Hartswick, Academic Director of the CUNY BA Degree. He completed an internship organizing a social justice delegation of students to Israel and Palestine, fieldwork documenting how terrorism affects the daily lives of Israelis, Palestinians and New Yorkers, and an independent study about how non-profit organizations can work better with the populations they serve. In addition, he received 15 life experience credits from CUNY BA for Community Organizing, Managing Volunteers and Speech Communication.

In 2007, Dana was named a finalist for the Harry S. Truman Scholarship. This February, he started a new job as a Research Analyst for the labor union UNITE HERE.

GEORGE FARNUM

*BLACK LITERATURE IN A GLOBAL CULTURE /
CREATIVE WRITING*

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

In George Farnum's application essay to the CUNY Baccalaureate Program, which he entitled *The Scenic Route to Academia*, he detailed a rich personal history, beginning with his birth in

Barbados in 1938. He always wanted to be a writer, but felt that career option was impossible in his homeland where Caribbean writers were rare and most available books were written by British authors. Inspired by stories he read, he wanted to see the world, so at the age of 17, he got a job on a freighter as a cabin boy, which took him to Europe, Africa, Asia, North and South America, Mexico and the Caribbean. For ten years he continued working on ships earning various promotions and by 1965 had visited almost 50 countries. He considered his journey fun and enlightening, while being "offended and angered by Apartheid in South Africa, the Caste System in India and racism in the U.S., protesting against them whenever" he could. All along the way, on various ships, he continued to write, especially poetry and song lyrics; some of his poems were published and some of his songs made it to college and commercial radio.

Farnum emigrated to the U.S. in 1966 and, needing to support a new family, attended school for dental technology, working in dental labs until 1970. His next position would be as a company trained auditor for the American News Company (now Hudson News). In 1977, he and his brother opened a boutique in Barbados which he ran until 1979. Then he joined the Merchant Marines as a chef and later became an engineer/mechanic, retiring in 2003. Throughout his journeys "the desire to pursue a college education never waned."

He enrolled in the Borough of Manhattan Community College in 2003. "The environment and support provided me by the faculty, staff and diverse student body kept me hungry for knowledge and stimulated to learn." He entered the CUNY BA Program, making Brooklyn College his home college and choosing Brooklyn College Professors George Cunningham, Africana Studies and Roni Natov, English as his faculty mentors. With their help, he carved out two areas made up of advanced level work. His goal is to become "a good writer of fiction, memoirs, and hopefully an autobiography." Farnum turned 70 in February. He has applied to Hunter's MFA program.

CARLOS GALINDO

ECONOMICS / STOCHASTIC METHODS IN FINANCE

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION MINORITY
SCHOLARSHIP, DUKE UNIVERSITY

EDNA AND HAROLD KAUFMAN ALUMNI

ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP, CITY COLLEGE

SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE EXCELLENCE IN

ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS, CITY COLLEGE

HSB ACADEMIC MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

CITY COLLEGE FELLOWSHIP FELLOW

Carlos Galindo attended the National and Autonomous University of Chapingo in Mexico where he studied Economics; he came to the US to continue his this work. First having attended graduate level classes at NYU and Columbia University, in 2003 he was accepted to City College. While his academic experiences at City were fruitful, Galindo realized that it was impossible to fulfill all his interests in economics, operations research, computer science, mathematical modeling and financial engineering except through the flexibility and individualized areas of concentration he could create through the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree. According to Galindo, "The CUNY BA Degree constitutes a tailor-made solution to a rapid and proper fulfillment of my goals and a great platform from which I can reach out and succeed."

Galindo is realizing his academic dreams by having created a program of study with his faculty mentors, Prof. Jay Jorgenson, Mathematics, City College and the Graduate Center, and Prof. Kevin Foster, Economics, City College, spanning not only different disciplines, but also undergraduate and graduate courses at City, Baruch and Hunter Colleges, plus Duke University. According to one of his mentors "Carlos is extraordinary not only in his intellectual abilities and talent but also in his energy, fierce interest in the discipline and his commitment to independent work." His independent studies have included *Evidence of Contrarian and Momentum Effects in Bond Security Markets*, *Estimation of Volatility Models for Interest Rates in Mexico*, and *Investigation of the Normality Assumption in the Valuation of*

Financial Securities, and he has presented his research at conferences at CUNY and beyond (i.e., the Northeast Business and Economics Association Annual Conference and the Einsteins in the City II International Conference). He has also served as a Teaching Assistant for CCNY's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Institute.

Such commitment was rewarded in 2006 and 2007 by his acceptance to the American Economics Association's Summer Program at Duke that selects approximately 35 superb minority students from the entire country to study economics in preparation for a Ph.D.

KELLY GOLA

PSYCHOLOGY AND LITERATURE

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOW

DEAN'S LIST

"My educational history has been a kaleidoscopic array of missteps and accidental fortune. I look back at all of my failures and accomplishments and occasionally indulge the inner self-effacing voice that laments, if I knew then what I know now. However, I would never know what I know now if I hadn't screwed it up so much then."

Prior to applying to the CUNY BA Program, Kelly Gola was a hairstylist employed on fashion photo shoots for magazines such as *W*, *Vogue*, *French Vogue*, *Italian Vogue* and *Bizarre*, working with the likes of Madonna, Britney Spears, Cameron Diaz and Muhammad Ali. "I looked into the face of Body Dysmorphia, Narcissistic Personality Disorder, Histrionic Personality Disorder and Substance Abuse...I saw how ugly beauty can be." On applying to CUNY BA, Gola was interested in studying writing "to get back," as she wrote "at the glitterati that had offended me. It was only later after a number of psychology classes that I realized that I was part of that set. I had quixotic notions about the fashion world that left me disillusioned and it begged the question, why? All this questioning and self-reflection washed me up onto the shores of Narrative Psychology — the psychological study of how we narrate our lives.

This field speaks to both my love of story and my pragmatic nature. It combines them in a way that is no longer entirely introspective and selfish, but produces generativity that, after all my years in fashion, I suddenly thirst for." Working with Profs. Elaine Kauvar, English, Baruch and Suzanne Ouellette, Psychology, the Graduate Center, Gola's coursework has been done at Brooklyn, Hunter and the Graduate Center.

In winter 2007, Gola traveled to Argentina to learn Spanish and to study the country's rich history and social evolution. Since her return, she has been assisting David Frost in his dissertation research on the narratives of gays and lesbians in rural and urban areas.

CHARLES GREENE

HUMAN SERVICES: ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE

ABUSE COUNSELING

B.S. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

Charles Greene was born in Harlem in 1964, the youngest of 5 children. While he grew up with a strong sense of family and community and graduated high school with a Regent's diploma, a place in the College Bound Program and election to the National Honor Society, the pressure he felt supporting his pregnant fiancée and the rest of his family since his father's death led him to sell drugs for the fast money that could be made. In 1990, at the age of 25 and with three young children, he was arrested and sentenced to 25-to-life under the Rockefeller drug law.

Greene did his time in such a way that he "would be prepared to re-enter the world at the moment of my release." At Sing Sing, he tutored with Literacy Volunteers of America. At other facilities where he was held he became an HIV/AIDS peer educator, a nurse's aid, a facilitator in substance abuse programs and an assistant to the supervisor in the prison textile factory. He took courses through Clinton Community College, receiving an Associate of Arts degree in Humanities and Social Science with high honors.

In 1995, when funding for prison college programs was cut, he continued to educate himself.

In 2004, the Rockefeller reform legislation came out and he successfully petitioned the court; the judge declared "Your change and transformation is genuine. I believe you and give you time served." Upon his release, he got a job as a maintenance technician at Yeshiva University, enrolled in New York City College of Technology for 15 credits and decided he would choose a career working with youth in the field of HIV/AIDS.

In the CUNY BA Program, under the direction of Prof. Martin Garfinkle, Human Services, NYCCT, Greene constructed his area using courses in Human Services from NYCCT and Psychology and Sociology from John Jay College. In his senior year he completed a one year internship with the Brooklyn AIDS Task Force First Steps Program, a medically supervised substance abuse treatment program which gave him valuable hands-on experience assisting with intake counseling, group and individual counseling, and preparing reports to parole and probation officers.

Since September 2007, Greene has been working as a Program Coordinator/Case Manager at Claremont Neighborhood Centers, Inc. in the Bronx, in their Young Fathers Program. He says "Most of my clients are from 16 to 25 years and my primary goal is to foster and reinforce fathering behaviors in these young men, and to get them to become involved in the personal, social, emotional, spiritual and economic parts of their children's lives. I accomplish this through individual and group counseling, case management and assisting these men with employment and educational services." Prior to his work with Claremont, he worked at the Doe Fund as a case manager, assisting homeless men reclaim their lives. Concurrently with full-time work, full-time school, and his internship, Greene is applying to graduate programs in Social Work and for the Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor in Training (CASAC-T) certificate.

SARA INGRAM

DISABILITY STUDIES

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

JOHN F. KENNEDY FELLOWSHIP

Since the age of 15, Sara Ingram has been involved in a variety of human rights activities in social and political movements. The origin of her interest in disabilities as a discipline, specifically in Deafness, came in 1997 with her first American Sign Language class at Seattle Central Community College, where she later earned an Associate's degree. Ingram was employed for almost three years with SoundBytes at the League for the Hard of Hearing, a non-profit organization serving the needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. Her other related activities include involvement in Deaf social events and volunteer fundraising efforts for a Deaf filmmaker. With her CUNY Baccalaureate degree and Graduate Certificate in Disability Studies, she is focusing on an academic path toward disability studies, specific to Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals as a minority group viewed through a cultural anthropological lens.

Working under the guidance of faculty mentor Prof. Glenn Peterson, Sociology and Anthropology, Baruch College/The Graduate Center, Ingram's concentration includes courses in Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology and Disability Studies from Baruch, Hunter and Medgar Evers Colleges, as well as graduate level courses through the CUNY School of Professional Studies. In her "Research Design in Anthropology" course, the assignment was to write a research proposal; Ingram found there was no research in the area of stigma related to deafness as a physical state in regards to social anxiety and avoidance of social situations; this became her proposal which received an excellent review from the professor and encouragement to pursue the project.

An amateur artist for over 20 years, Ingram took her first formal studio art course at Hunter as an elective. She found the class so engaging and rewarding that it informed and inspired a research project for one of her courses on disabled imagery in contemporary art as created by "non-disabled"

artists. She went on to expand this paper as an independent project with Prof. Barbara Katz Rothman, Sociology and Anthropology, Baruch College/The Graduate Center. Through her employment as Assistant to Distinguished Professor Leith Mullings in the Ph.D. program in Anthropology at the CUNY Graduate Center, her interest in medical anthropology has further expanded.

Ingram has been accepted to Baruch's School of Public Affairs for her Masters degree; she looks forward to career in advocacy and research.

KAYHAN IRANI

THEATER AND SOCIAL CHANGE

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

SUMASIL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

DIEGO HIDALGO SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE ARTS

FEZANA ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

ZAGNY SCHOLARSHIP

WESTON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

KAYE ARTS AND HUMANITIES FELLOWSHIP

FALI CHOTHIA CHARITABLE TRUST SCHOLARSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

Kayhan Irani considers herself an "artist," fusing theater with activism and social change to activate audiences and transform society.

After graduating from the High School of Performing Arts, Irani longed for a way to combine her passion for the theater with her desire to make the world a better place. She dropped out of college after her first year to try to find a field that would satisfy her. In 2003 she created a one-woman show, *We've Come Undone*, which highlights the lives of immigrant women post 9/11, combining contemporary performance with participatory theater to engage audiences in political and social change. She has performed the show nationally and internationally for universities, non-profit organizations and at theater festivals. She then became a practitioner and trainer of the techniques of Theater of the Oppressed, a participatory form of social change theater developed by the Brazilian director and activist Augusto Boal. In 2004 Irani led theater workshops in occupied Iraq with Childhood's Voices and

Happy Families, two organizations teaching and healing children through the arts. After this immersion in using the arts for social change, Irani decided to return to the university to integrate her experiences with scholarship and research.

While in CUNY BA she was awarded an Asia Pacific Performance Exchange Fellowship at UCLA where she worked with artists from Asia and the U.S. She was awarded a grant from the International Center for Tolerance Education to train ESL teachers in how to use interactive theater to support ESL learning. Working with The Point, a community organization and cultural center in the South Bronx, she wrote and developed a children's play about asthma and civic pride called *Jackie 'n' the Beanstalk* which combines theater with circus and aerial acrobatics. She was part of a team of educators and artists working on a three-year project with the Barnard College Education Program that created a curriculum to teach about race and racism through storytelling and the arts.

In 2007 Irani was awarded a certificate of recognition by Mayor Bloomberg as part of Immigrant History Week for her work in immigrant communities. She has led theater programs at public schools, for community groups, at juvenile detention facilities, for government agencies and with the general public and is often invited to present her work at major conferences.

She recently co-edited a volume of essays entitled *Telling Stories to Change the World: Global Voices on the Power of Stories to Build Community and make Social Justice Claims*, about projects around the world that use storytelling as a way of creating social justice, to be released in May 2008 by Routledge. Currently she is a writer and the Director of Outreach for an ESL TV show produced by the Mayor's Office of Adult Education and CUNY; this is a project she volunteered for through her Weston Fellowship.

Irani's degree was constructed with courses in Theater, Political Science, Media Studies, Anthropology and Urban Studies at Brooklyn, Hunter and City Colleges and CUNY's School of Professional Studies, working with Profs. John

Krinsky, Political Science, City and Dale Byam, Theater, Brooklyn.

MICHAEL JACOBS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

B.S. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

DEAN'S CERTIFICATE FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

BRIGADA INTERNACIONAL DE RESCATE, MEXICO

RECOGNITION IN PROMOTION OF TRADE,

GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO

U.S. CONGRESS CITATION

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Michael Jacobs left Queens College to serve in the military during the Vietnam War. Upon his return, he graduated in 1970 with an Associate's degree and received an honorable discharge from the Navy in 1972. For the next 35 years, he built businesses, both domestic and internationally, employing thousands of people in the textile and apparel sector. One of his most significant contracts was for the manufacturing of uniforms for the 1992 U.S. Olympic Team, judged best in the world in Barcelona. He has received numerous recognitions from private organizations and the U.S. and foreign governments for his civic work in Latin America in the promotion of trade and social relations, as well as his humanitarian efforts during the 2004 Indonesian Tsunami and the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Among many significant posts he has held as chairman or president of various companies and trade organizations, he is the former Co-Chairman and Treasurer of the U.S.-Mexico Chamber of Congress. Along with Nelson Mandela, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the King and Queen of Spain, he sits on the International Board of Advisors of the Wheelchair Foundation, distributing thousands of wheelchairs globally to those in need. He is a former member of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. and a former member of the U.S. Senate Business Advisory Group during the Reagan Administration.

All this without a bachelor's degree.

In his application to the CUNY Baccalaureate Program he wrote "I have interacted with Heads of State, worked on multi-national issues with our government and foreign governments, lectured on

NAFTA, and participated in discussions on free trade and border issues in Washington, D.C., but in my resume of life, one component is missing: the completion of my education.

With the guidance of Peter Liberman, Political Science, Queens College/The Graduate Center, Jacobs has studied international relations at Baruch, Hunter and Queens. Of course, he received 15 credits for his extensive life experience. He writes: "I would recommend that anyone with time in the workforce chose the CUNY BA Program. The life credit portion gives one tremendous incentive as their work is recognized." Jacobs hopes to teach as a CUNY adjunct in the future.

TENNESSEE JONES

THE RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN LITERATURE

B.A., JANUARY 2008, MAGNA CUM LAUDE

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

"I grew up in the Appalachian mountains of East Tennessee. Our water came from a creek spring, and my backyard was uncut wilderness. Three generations of my family lived on top of each other in a little holler, and my parents grew a tobacco crop to supplement their incomes as a sheet metal mechanic and seamstress. It was a place steeped in tradition, and though we lived on the top of the oldest mountains in the world, the horizon of opportunity was very limited." So wrote Tennessee Jones in his application to the Thomas W. Smith Academic Fellowship.

After he finished high school, Jones hitchhiked around the country and produced self-published magazines for four years; after exploring "every major city," he knew New York was where he wanted to make his mark. By the time he came to Hunter and the CUNY BA Program, he had considerable accomplishments to his name – publication of a book of short stories, *Deliver Me From Nowhere* (2005), praised in *The New York Times Book Review* and elsewhere, and a full-time job as an editor at Soft Skull Press. Soft Skull's publisher credits Jones with helping take the company from "a scrappy, hit-or-miss

operation to one of the more culturally significant independent publishers in the U.S.," adding that he was delighted to learn of Jones' plan to apply to the CUNY BA Program because he "would be a perfect individual for a self-directed plan of study."

Jones' concentration uses the lens of literature and the practice of creative writing to examine the dynamics of oppressed communities. Under the direction of Prof. Barbara Sproul, Religion, Hunter, Jones' area was made up of courses in Africana Studies, Religion and English. He included an independent study in religion and an individual tutorial with Prof. Harriet Luria, English, Hunter; both were for work on his current novel in progress, an exploration of the lives of three working class girls growing up in eastern Kentucky. Jones has been accepted to the MFA program at Hunter College.

EMILY KAPLAN

ECOLOGICAL IDENTITY / JEWISH STUDIES

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

DEAN'S LIST

"No other CUNY program will allow me the flexibility and structure to build on my life experiences and create a specialized degree in a unique area of concentration. My proposed field of study, 'Ecological Identity,' will integrate social and natural scientific approaches to current environmental and human crises."

Before applying to the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree, Emily Kaplan had already worked with several different environmental organizations in different bioregions around the world: a cross-border peace and justice organization in the Sonoran Desert in Tucson, AZ and Nogales, Mexico, an international community practicing sustainable agriculture in a reforested Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest in rural South India, an educational "Eco-Village" in the fertile farming area of Western Massachusetts' Connecticut River Valley, and here in New York, with WildMetro, a growing environmental non-profit devoted to "protecting nature where people live," starting in this country's densest metropolis; her role with WildMetro at the time of her application

was conducting research projects to protect the city's wildlife.

Kaplan has successfully completed her academic goal in the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree, taking courses in Nature Writing, Sustainability, Environmental Politics, Animal Behavior, and Philosophy of Evolution at City and Lehman Colleges, as well as at Haverford College and the University of New Hampshire. Once enrolled in CUNY BA, she decided to add a second concentration in Jewish Studies, focusing on Jewish film, music and mysticism. She has achieved a near-perfect grade point average. Her mentors were Profs. Sherrie Bayer, Political Science, City College/The Graduate Center and Roy Mittleman, Jewish Studies, City College. Kaplan has been active in two campus environmental organizations at City College: a coalition of clubs called Sustainable CCNY and the Global Planet Society, a hiking and camping group, as well as two campus Jewish organizations, Hillel and Chabad. Kaplan continues involvement with WildMetro as a volunteer, participating in clean-up projects and nature walks in the greater metropolitan area. Her vision now is to help New York City succeed as a model for large-scale sustainable design. Additionally, Kaplan has been published in both the City College literary journal, *Promethean* and the Hunter College literary journal, *The Olive Tree*.

Kaplan plans to work on a small-scale organic farm in the upstate New York area this summer, furthering her dream of sustainable agriculture along the urban-rural gradient. She is exploring a possible International Masters in Agriculture, Environment or Public Health through the Peace Corps, or a Masters in Sustainable Desert Ecology with AIES (Arava Institute for Environmental Studies) and Ben Gurion University in the Negev, Israel.

SARAH LIPPEK

*ETHICAL HISTORY OF THE 20TH CENTURY /
CREATIVE WRITING*

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

DIEGO HIDALGO SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE ARTS

DEAN'S LIST

Sarah Lippek started college and earned her Associate's degree at Seattle Central Community College while she was employed as an outreach worker with Seattle 45th Street Homeless Youth Clinic. She relocated to New York in 2003 and entered the CUNY BA Program in 2005.

Lippeck's goal in returning to school was to embark "on a multidisciplinary study of history, theory and creative practice, to work on my abiding interest in how historical and philosophical knowledge function as the skeletal framework of fiction and to fully consider the upheavals and transformations of thought and order that have been occurring since World War I." Taking on this ambitious task, she chose Professors Jenefer Shute, English, Hunter and Jonathan Rosenberg, History, Hunter/The Graduate Center as her mentors. In Creative Writing, her courses included advanced seminars in Fiction and Poetry Writing, as well as Honors Seminars in Literature and Culture. In her Ethical History area, her courses spanned History, Religion, Philosophy and Political Science, and included an independent research paper, *Pronatalism, Eugenics and the Politics of State Health in Weimar Germany*, for which she won second place in the Paul LeClerc Best Library Research Paper Award.

Lippeck is completing her final year of college at the Central European University in Budapest, an elite study abroad program designed for advanced undergraduate students. CEU is a graduate university with almost 1000 M.A. and Ph.D. students from nearly 70 countries. Study abroad students there enroll in graduate studies with CEU M.A. students. Lippek was one of a small group of students accepted for CEU, all coming from top U.S. universities and colleges including Princeton, Cornell, Columbia, Harvard, John's Hopkins, Bard, Swarthmore, Sarah Lawrence and Scripps. Students who maintain a B+ average during the program are admitted to the CEU; Lippek was accepted for her M.A. degree which she is completing with her final thesis this year, an examination of the role of German propaganda in the formation of Nazi-sympathetic groups in the United States in the 1930s.

Lippeck has many recognitions to her name. Her short story, *The General and the Lottery Winner*, was a finalist in NYU's Washington Square fiction contest; another, *Dead Wasps*, was published in *Olive Tree Review*. She has had book reviews published in *The Internationalist* and the *LA Alternative Press*, and music reviews in *Caustic Truth* and *Snaggletooth*, two Canadian magazines. She co-authored an article on *Healthcare and Street Youth* for the *Journal of Transcultural Nursing* and she authored a chapter on the history of American radio for the transmission-arts organization free104point9 in their *Wave Guide*, a resource manual for microradio broadcasters. She curated a web-show for Visual AIDS, an organization for artists with HIV/AIDS.

These academic pursuits were conducted while she simultaneously worked as the Syringe Exchange Supervisor of the AIDS Center of Queens County, running the very first legal syringe exchange program in the city.

KRISTA MARTOCCI

PHYSICS / MATHEMATICS

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

Some day, electric cars may drive further and longer thanks to Krista Martocci's research with Hunter College Professor Steven Greenbaum. Her work might also give us deeper insights into the cosmos.

Martocci returned to college to change her career from technical theater to physics. She writes "a few years ago, while working in the theater, I would run shows six nights a week and I began reading physics paperbacks. I became curious about the math behind all of the ideas, so I re-learned calculus, then I learned calculus-based physics." Martocci wants a career in theoretical physics focusing on general relativity and applying it to gravitation and black hole research.

At Hunter, her physics professor, Prof. Steve Greenbaum (who also teaches at the CUNY Graduate Center), offered her a position in his lab. She has been working there 10-25 hours per week every since. The lab specializes in X-ray and UV

Absorption Spectroscopy, researching ways to improve batteries for NASA projects and implantable cardiac defibrillators that will extend the range and life cycle of electric cars. Martocci conducts experiments there and at the Brookhaven National Laboratory and the National Synchrotron Light Source. She has been involved in several projects, all of which have papers published or in progress. The first is observing the atomic structural charge in silver vanadium oxide cathode material as it discharges lithium. These non-rechargeable batteries are used in internal batteries (e.g., pacemakers). Dr. Greenbaum and Martocci have published a paper on in the *Journal of Power Sources*. The second is studying the mechanism of absorption of CO on platinum-ruthenium thin films to stimulate the contamination of CO on platinum and platinum-ruthenium alloy catalysts in fuel cells. Martocci's abstract on this project was published by the Electrochemical Society and she presented the group's results at the 109th Electrochemical Society's Meeting in Denver in May 2006. One of her more recent projects involves looking at the structure of the cathode material of manganese nickel oxide batteries during its charge and discharge.

Martocci also works with the Gravity Group at Princeton University. One of her projects there was characterizing multiplexer chips for the Atacama Cosmological Telescope which is now in Chile. This telescope will detect cosmic radiation and dark matter. Now she is in charge of assembling the 32x32 arrays of detectors for the Millimeter Bolometer Array Camera (MBAC), the largest detector array ever built to observe millimeter wavelengths; the MBAC is the telescope component that collects and out-puts usable data about cosmic microwave backgrounds. A publication has just started being put together by collaborators from the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton about MBAC.

In preparation for applying to graduation school, Martocci has taken the General GRE and Physics GRE Subject Test and has submitted applications to Princeton University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Chicago, Carnegie Mellon University, Tufts University, University of

Maryland, University of Florida and University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

Her studies on the graduate and undergraduate levels were done at Hunter, City and the Graduate Center with Prof. Jane Matthews, Mathematics, Hunter and Steve Greenbaum, Physics, Hunter/The Graduate Center, who writes of Martocci, "She is a true renaissance person...a natural experimentalist...she participates at a level expected of experienced graduate students...she has all the skills and drive to become a successful scientist."

DAVID MORGANTE

TERRORISM STUDIES / INTERNATIONAL CRIME

B.S. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

HARRIET BROWS FELLOWSHIP

DEAN'S LIST

David Morgante is a Marine Corps Veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom who chose the CUNY Baccalaureate Program to build his unique areas in Terrorism Studies and International Crime as a way to continue to protect the people of the United States through a career in federal law enforcement.

As a Marine, Morgante was stationed in a variety of overseas locations and developed a love of living, traveling and learning with people of different cultures. He received a Marine Corps Certificate of Commendation for his exceptional work building positive relations among American forces, Iraqi forces and Iraqi civilians. As a result, he desires a career with the U.S. Department of State, ideally as a criminal investigator. He says, "My studies include courses such as 'Terrorism and International Relations' and 'The United Nations and International Politics'; Special Agents make decisions based on foreign policy and knowledge of terrorism and so my academic preparation ties directly into my career goals."

Morgante's local and national community service started in high school when he volunteered with the Putnam County Sheriff's Office and the Lake Carmel Fire Department (where he continues to serve). The catastrophic events of September 11th inspired him to further service and so he

enlisted in the Marine Corps. Because of his high aptitude scores, he was offered a position in Security Forces and was deployed to Spain on anti-terrorist security missions.

Morgante's coursework has been in History, Government, Political Science and Interdisciplinary Studies at John Jay College under the direction of Profs. Peter Romaniuk, Government and Joseph King, Law and Criminal Justice, John Jay. He included a senior level seminar on Terrorism and two internships, one at the U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector and the other with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. Morgante plans to continue his education on the graduate level; he has already been accepted to the Master's program in Protection Management at John Jay College

Of CUNY BA, Morgante says "This Program is nothing less than phenomenal. I've been able to focus in on very unique coursework, and I've been able to progress with extreme efficiency. I couldn't have made a better decision with my education."

CLINT PORTER

ENERGY RESOURCE POLICY

B.S., JANUARY 2008

Clint Porter moved from Texas to New York to pursue a degree in photography at the School of Visual Arts. During that time, he stumbled across a book about the coming hydrogen economy that changed his life. "I wanted to build things and create, which is why I liked art and photography. But then I thought about hydrogen, biofuels, solar and wind, and figured that since people will always be using electricity, I'd always have a job." He found that no CUNY program offered such a course to a bachelor's degree. That led him to the CUNY Baccalaureate Program, which helped him pull together courses in physics, calculus, environmental policy and environmental chemistry from Baruch and City Colleges, under the direction of Prof. Sherrie Baver, Political Science, City College/The Graduate Center. At the CUNY Institute for Urban Systems, he conducted an energy audit on the federal Million Solar Roofs program. He added three independent study courses and two internships, including one at the

Solar Electric Power Association in Washington, D.C. and one with the Center for Sustainable Energy at Bronx Community College. Porter is the first CUNY undergraduate to earn a diploma in renewable energy. He now handles sales, government affairs and marketing for Kaco Solar Inc. USA, in San Francisco, part of an international company that manufactures photovoltaic inverters, which turn the direct current generated by solar cells into the alternating current needed for most power uses. "This was an awesome way to study—to have the freedom to educate yourself when a program is not in place to give you what you need," he said. "I have a plethora of experience because of the freedom provided to me by the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree."

DULCE WECHSLER

LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE

B.A., JANUARY 2008, SUMMA CUM LAUDE

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN

ROMANCE LANGUAGES

DEAN'S LIST

Dulce Wechsler was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela. Upon her high school graduation, her father refused to pay for college because she wanted to study journalism; he felt that was no career for a woman. Wechsler applied to an English program in Los Angeles (earning a full scholarship) with the idea of returning to Venezuela as an English teacher; then she would use the money she earned to pay for her own further education. But instead of returning to Venezuela, she relocated to Miami to work in the music industry promoting Latin American music which she did from 1997 on. (She received 15 credits from the CUNY BA Program for her work in Media Planning, Copywriting, Public Relations, Advertising and Marketing). She earned a few credits at Miami-Dade Community College and entered Hunter College in 2005.

Wechsler designed her concentration with Prof. Maria Hernandez-Ojeda, Romance Languages, Hunter College. Her specific study is of the Latin

American canon from pre-Columbian to Contemporary Literatures, within the themes of multicultural interaction such as Coloniality, Post-Coloniality and Border Thinking. This is an area she hopes to pursue in graduate school.

Wechsler received a highly competitive Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Institute of International Education. With this she studied in Argentina during the January 2007 winter break. Last year, she was awarded a Thomas W. Smith Academic Fellowship and was inducted into HAT (Hunter Achievement Team). This year she was elected president of the Spanish literary magazine and club, and won one of the CUNY President's awards for academic achievement in Romance languages.

In December 2007, Wechsler gave birth to her first child, a boy.

RODERIC WILLIAMS

ELECTRO-ACOUSTIC MUSIC COMPOSITION

B.S., SEPTEMBER 2007

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Roderic Williams grew up in Detroit in the 60's and 70's, a time he calls "glorious," when the city's remarkable music industry included the world-renowned Detroit Symphony Orchestra, a jazz scene to rival New York's and, of course, Motown. "Every Christmas," he writes, "there was a Motown Revue. For \$5 you could see Stevie Wonder, The Temptations, Smokey Robinson, The Supremes, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and the Miracles, all in one show." He got to "hang around these musicians, absorbing the music," and eventually he too became a musician, traveling the world and recording with famous artists. Along the way, he picked up a few credits here and there. In 2005, with credits from four different community colleges and two universities, Williams enrolled in Brooklyn College and the CUNY BA Program, knowing that what he really wanted was an academic degree that would allow him to become a music teacher—but also wanting to select his courses as he had before, a few here

and a few there. Although he had taken some music courses previously, he was largely a self-taught musician and composer. And so, under the guidance of faculty mentor, Music Professor Timothy Polashek of Lehman College, Williams took courses at Brooklyn and Lehman, creating a unique area in Electro-Acoustic Music Composition. Not surprisingly, he received 10 life experience credits from the CUNY BA Program for his prior work in jazz. Now he is looking forward to graduate school (he has been accepted to Brooklyn College's new MFA in Performance and Interactive Media Arts), saying "Education means something different to me now. When I think of education, I sometimes feel the need to use other terms, because education doesn't just mean schooling. I mean the transmission of wisdom, the transmission of deep thought, the transmission of the ability to analyze and construct – that is what I mean by education."

EASTER WOOD

AFRICAN DIASPORA IN THE AMERICAS

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

SALZBURG SEMINAR PARTICIPANT AND INTERN

THOMAS W. SMITH ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIP

HARRIET BROWS SCHOLARSHIP

CENTER FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE ESSAY

CONTEST WINNER, 1ST PLACE

BEACON SCHOLAR'S CONFERENCE, 1ST PLACE

WINNER (SOCIAL SCIENCES)

VALEDICTORIAN, BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DEAN'S LIST

Easter Wood says of her concentration, "The relatively unified bodies of African society were torn apart, beginning around the 1500s, and the individual cells of those bodies were driven into Diaspora throughout the Americas and the world. African peoples were enslaved, their cultures and histories largely stripped away, their families torn apart and the entire structure of their societies changed forever. Despite a release from physical bondage some 142 years ago, people of African descent remain in a marginalized and tumultuous state. Diseases, such as AIDS, proliferate in the continent of Africa and in Black communities in the United States, Brazil and other countries at

epidemic rates, and the worldwide Black population remains in last place both economically and educationally. Despite these difficulties and the atrocious way in which it came to be, the global African Diaspora is a beautiful thing, worthy of study in all of its glory and sorrow. The literature, art, philosophical worldviews, psychological and sociological structures and pedagogies that have sprung forth from the Diaspora are viable and may hold the key to easing some of the tribulations that continue to afflict African descended peoples and, in fact, the entire world."

Wood has had numerous opportunities to study the African Diaspora at CUNY and elsewhere, including study abroad courses in Ghana, Egypt, and in Salzburg, Austria where she participated in a special program that focuses on global citizenship (she was later invited back to the Salzburg Seminar to participate in their renowned intern program). Her course of study – with her mentor, Dr. Jo-Ann Hamilton, English/Black Studies, City College, with whom she is currently working on a major project in conjunction with the historic Apollo Theater – has included courses at City, Hunter and Baruch in Africana/Black Studies, History, Anthropology, Philosophy and English. She has also recently begun to study Portuguese; Brazil has one of the largest African descended populations in the world and she hopes to conduct research there while working on her Ph.D. Wood has also been deeply involved in campus life, first at Bronx Community College as President of the Speech Drama Debate Team and President and Editor-in-Chief of the campus newspaper, *The Communicator*, and later at City College, where she served as a Student Ombudsman, Vice President of a chapter of the national student organization Campus Progress (which she co-founded) and Managing Editor of the City College publication *The Paper*. She also continuously participates in relief efforts in New Orleans through the Gulf Coast Relief Society. Wood has served as a student member of the University Committee on the CUNY Baccalaureate Program, the Program's governing board, and of her experience in CUNY BA, and CUNY at large, she says: "The journey has been amazing and deeply

rewarding. The ability to plan and pave my own road to success has been invaluable and I consistently recommend CUNY and CUNY BA to young scholars who are thirsty for knowledge and eager to make their mark on the world."

LEI YU

RELIGION AND POLITICS

B.A. ANTICIPATED JUNE 2008

HARRIET BROWS SCHOLARSHIP

BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL

SCHOLARSHIP

WOMEN'S FORUM EDUCATIONAL AWARD

CHARLOTTE W. NEWCOMB SCHOLARSHIP

Lei Yu was born in a small village in China at the end of the Cultural Revolution. Limited by the economic, political, social and intellectual disruptions of the revolution, she left China for the U.S. in 1997, belatedly pursuing her intellectual interests (and recently receiving American citizenship). She had to learn English here and attributes her success to the many teachers and

support staff at Hunter who pushed her to excel. Lisa Tolhurst, Hunter College Lecturer in English, wrote that Yu is "one of the most outstanding students I have taught my fifteen-year teaching career at Hunter, NYU and the University of Melbourne, Australia."

Yu is particularly interested in religion, especially Eastern religions, a subject of course vigorously discouraged in her native communist China. Believing that "politics and spiritual searching are inextricably linked," she designed a concentration in "Religion and Politics" under the mentorship of Prof. Barbara Sproul, Religion, Hunter with courses from City, Hunter and Baruch Colleges.

Thanks to the Gilman International Scholarship, Yu studied at Humboldt University in Germany, desiring to absorb German history and culture as well as a study of some of the great philosophers, including Kant, Hegel and Heidegger. Yu's goal is to work for the Foreign Service or a human rights organization.

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