

THE COMMUNICATOR

February 8, 2010

Dedicated to Informative Excellence

Issue 4 Winter 2010

BCC Launches Fresh Initiatives to Serve Student Veterans

By Jessica Colter

In July 2008, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill was signed into law, providing a comprehensive series of education benefits—including tuition and fee coverage, a monthly housing stipend, a books and supplies allowance, and funds to cover the cost of relocation to acquire higher education—for military service members who have served on active duty for 90 or more days since September 10, 2001. As a result, Bronx Community College and other institutions of higher education across the country have seen a spike in military veteran student enrollment. CUNY has one of the largest veteran student populations in the U.S., with over 2,000 enrolled veterans.

In response, BCC has formed a Veterans Affairs Resource Center (VARC) to expand the school's capacity to provide support services to student veterans and service member dependents on campus. Clifford L. Marshall II—BCC's Assistant Registrar and Director of the Black Male Initiative—serves as Director of VARC and the Certifying Official responsible for helping to connect eligible students to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits. "We are excited about opening our first resource center," Mr. Marshall says. "This is just the first step to making BCC a military-friendly school for all our returning veterans."

VARC is open five days a week to provide one-on-one support to BCC's student veterans and service member dependents, connect them to the wide range of benefits and resources available to them through the VA, ensure they have a positive experience on campus, and foster a sense of community and mutual support among



From left to right: Christopher Vasas, BCC student veteran and Ellie Pappas, VARC intern at the 2009 BCC Club Fest. Photo: Massawa Lawson

student veterans. A dedicated Blackboard site, webpage, and electronic newsletter are in the works to provide students with virtual resources. A student veterans club is also in the process of being formed to further establish a sense of community and peer support among BCC's student veterans.

BCC has partnered with Project for Return and Opportunity in Veterans Education (P.R.O.V.E.) for the 2009-10 academic year to expand its services to student veterans. Founded in 2007, P.R.O.V.E. is a program operated out of the Hunter College School of Social Work to help veterans make a smooth and successful transition into the CUNY system; acknowledge and appreciate the skills veterans bring to CUNY; and increase the graduation rate among returning veterans. Two graduate students from the

Hunter College School of Social Work—Ellie Pappas and Jessica Colter—are serving as P.R.O.V.E. interns at VARC during the 2009-10 academic year. Christopher Vasas, a BCC Student Veteran and VA Work Study Student, works to help provide personalized peer-to-peer support to other student veterans.

Last November, VARC hosted its First Annual Veterans Day Luncheon in the Gould Memorial Library Rotunda to thank BCC's student veterans for their military service. Also, BCC student veterans showed their pride by marching alongside CUNY's float in Manhattan's annual Veterans Day Parade.

VARC has plans to do several event on campus including one in February for Black History Month titled *Bronze Warriors: The Struggle of WWII African American, Latino, and African Fighting Men Over Oppression Abroad and at Home* and one is planned for March during Women's history month highlighting the role that women have played in the U.S. military. An off campus event is planned by CUNY and P.R.O.V.E. during February to help kick off the spring semester.

To learn more about VARC or the services offered through PROVE, please visit Colston Hall, room 509, or call 718-289-5447. VARC is open Monday through Thursday, 9:00am-5:00pm and Friday 9am-12:30pm.

Jessica Colter is a graduate student at the Hunter College School of Social Work and is one of two P.R.O.V.E. interns working with the BCC Veterans Affairs Resource Center (VARC) to help service the needs of the college's student veterans.

MSA Holds Cultural Event

The Muslim Students Association (MSA) held an Islamic cultural event on Thursday, November 19th in Begrisch Hall from 12 to 2pm. There was a speech from Sheikh Abu Taubah, as well as a conversation/debate between the attendees and the sheikh (the scholar), with many questions answered, all supported by the food and beverages graciously provided by the MSA.

This was a popular, well attended rendezvous. As early as 11:45am the event began receiving the first attendees, arriving from all over the campus from different religious backgrounds and beliefs. Begrisch Hall was about to crack from overcrowding; everyone was curious to hear what the Islamic scholar had to say about Islam. In fact, Abu Taubah (formerly Marcus Robertson), the keynote speaker, was none other than a Native American from Brooklyn who has converted to Islam and who has been seeking Islamic knowledge ever since through his multiple travels to Japan, Senegal, Egypt, Sudan and many other countries. It was his eloquence of speech, as well as the easy agility of his tongue, that attracted and seduced his audience while allowing them to participate in his speech by questioning some of the points he illustrated.

Among the crowded audience important personalities from BCC student life were the honorable Many Lopez, assistant director of student life, Omar Murray vice-president of the Student Government Association (SGA) and Chairperson of the Inter-Organizational Council (IOC), Mohammed Jalloh, vice-chairperson of the BCC Senate, Komi Attitso, senator of the SGA, Raya Bayor, the holder of the keys to SGA's fortune (treasurer of the SGA), and many more who honored the event with their presence and helped it to be a success.

In their welcome message the president of the MSA, Nourou Alassani, and the MSA IOC representative, Issa Boubacar, thanked everybody for coming, while imploring the Grace and the Mercy of GOD, the Creator upon them. Then, they introduced the speaker, Sheik Abu Taubah, to the public and took their places among the audience, removing any difference between themselves and the other attendees in respect of one of the Islamic values (everybody being equal in front of God, without exception).

Abu Taubah, after performing his Zouhr Salaat (first afternoon's Salaat) with some people from the audience, greeted everyone, praised the creator and presented to the audience the topic of his speech, "What is Islam?" In fact, the audience was asked to participate in the discussions



Sheikh Abu Taubah

about education and knowledge and thereafter linked those concepts to the first point of his topic. He also mentioned the recognition by Islam of all the prophets of God; for instance, he talked about Jesus as a messenger of God, not as his son. After talking about the five main pillars of Islam – having faith in God by singling him out, performing the five daily salaats (prayers), paying Zakaat (taxes), fasting the whole month of Ramadan and, finally, performing the hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca) for those who have the means to do so, he opened the gateway to questions and answers when a sister's question attracted the audience's attention. In response to the sister's question about the place of a woman in Islam, Abu Taubah answered by comparing the woman to a rare ruby, a priceless pearl, a jewel or diamond, something so very precious that it's impossible to carry in a clear or transparent bag, revealing the contents, without attracting all types of people, wrongdoers included; that a woman is more precious and desirable than anything in the world and in Islamic culture has to be respected absolutely. For that reason she has to wear a veil in order to protect herself and her surroundings from any type of violence. According to Abu Taubah, a survey conducted in California stated that many criminal cases were about women in different ways.

The attention given this controversial subject matter caused everyone to become unaware that time that had passed and many people had to leave for their 2pm classes. As brief as the event was, it was a great success.

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Bronx Community College Media Technology students in Professor Jeffrey Wisotsky's CMT 12, Small Studio Color Television class joined Lonnie Juli, the lighting director for The CBS Evening News with Katie Couric for a tour of the CBS Television Broadcast Center. Juli taught a lighting workshop at BCC's Media Technology television studio last fall. While on the CBS tour, BCC students met Harry Smith, anchor of The Early Show. (See related story on page 15.)

The Communicator Editorial Policy and Disclaimer

The *Communicator* urges students to submit articles and editorials to the newspaper. We also encourage students to respond to the articles and editorials found in this newspaper.

The views expressed in by-lined articles and in published letters are solely those of the writer, and they do not necessarily represent the view of *The Communicator*.

We reserve the right to edit any article or letter submitted due to space considerations.

We reserve the right to refuse publication to any article or letter due to space considerations as well as those articles or letters deemed inappropriate because of profane language, non-verification problems, or slander.

No article or letter will be published unless the author submits his or her name, email address, and telephone number.

Please submit all articles and letters to the following email address:
rowanandrewdavid@aol.com.

Notes:

No Word submissions will be accepted that are saved in Word 2007. Please save and submit in an earlier version.

JPEGs must be submitted as email attachments and should not be embedded in the Word copy.

The Communicator

If you are interested in having an article, editorial, letter or announcement included in *The Communicator*, it must be received by the following dates:

Deadlines

March
Thursday, February 18, 2010

April
Monday, March 22, 2010

May
Thursday, April 22, 2010

Please note that *The Communicator* reserves the right to refuse publication of any submission due to space considerations or if the submission is deemed inappropriate because of profane language, verification problems, and/or slander.

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BCC Secondhand Smoke Program Fulfills Commitment to Smoking Community

From the Co-sponsors of the Program,

Department of Health, Physical Education, and Wellness
Office of Health Services
Professional Staff Congress— BCC Chapter
Student Government Association

Per the request of the College Smoking Community, two outdoor smoking areas with protective overhanging structures have been designated with appropriate signage as follows:

1. Upper south side plaza of Meister Hall with ashtray, tables, and benches.
2. West side of Meister Hall with ashtray, table, and benches.

Both areas are centrally located within the campus and provide adequate protection from the upcoming challenging winter months. The areas also provide an environment that can accommodate numerous smokers.

Please remember that the *Friendly Reminder Approach* is implemented for the purpose of creating a program of fairness for both the non-smoking and smoking community members of the college. The program is working because of the support of the BCC Administration and the compliance of the majority of the smoking community.

Once again, thank you for your continued help in making this program a success!



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Writers of the Month

The Ethics of Journalism

By John Ortiz

In this day and age, the ethics of journalism have come under constant scrutiny by the general public, due to the fact that a huge percentage of media outlets do not provide factual accuracy and social relevance when reporting a story. That is, the notion that many news correspondents often choose to report on stories with attention-grabbing headlines filled with shock value rather than reporting on more critical issues to the public at large. I firmly believe that watching the news does not guarantee that we will get the entire story because of sensationalism, propaganda and tabloid journalism.

The first reason is sensationalism because the media has been notorious at times for reporting news if it makes a good story, regardless if the story has been derived from a rumor or an actual occurrence. Furthermore, such stories like many presidential elections are usually interpreted (rightfully or mistakenly) due to the sensational nature in which they are reported. For instance, the Fox 5 news station has presented several stories on President Barack Obama in a biased manner or has primarily shown one side of an issue while distorting another, indirectly. In addition, there have been a multitude of reports like the Clinton sex scandal where emotional and exciting aspects of a story have been over-amplified, important information required for the viewer to form an honest opinion on the subject.

The second reason is propaganda through movies because they are powerful, visually perceptive tools that have become some of the most important transmitters of propaganda imagery, tools that can certainly leave a lasting indelible imprint on the mind in order to create a provocative and dramatic effect. One example from history of a leader who used propaganda was Adolf Hitler, who created a government that disseminated propaganda

through movies, art, the radio, newspapers, speeches, schools, youth programs, and other cultural and political outlets. The ability to perplex audiences probably first became apparent because of one of the most well-known mistakes in broadcast history. It occurred on October 30, 1938, when a considerable number of Americans tuned into a well-liked radio station that premiered some stories that were written and directed by Orson Welles.

Furthermore, the performance on that particular night was a modified version of the science fiction novel, *The War of The Worlds*, about a Martian invasion on earth. In addition, Welles had chosen to make a slight adjustment; under his instruction, the play was written and performed so it would come across like news broadcast about an actual attack from Mars, a method that, in all likelihood, was intended to increase the theatrical effect. The broadcast also contained a number of explanations that it was all a radio play, but if members of the audience missed a brief explanation at the beginning, the next one didn't arrive until forty minutes into the program. As a result, many Americans went into a state of pandemonium because of how convincing his story had sounded over the airwaves. This is a clear example of how many people are quick to jump to conclusions when it comes to believing a story rather than finding out all of the facts first.

The third reason why media networks have such an entrancing effect on the world is tabloid journalism. Throughout time, there have been a countless number of events that have shocked the world. For instance: the O.J. Simpson trial, the Clinton sex scandal and the death of Princess Diana. The paparazzi's reckless behavior was even linked to the cause of Princess Diana's death. The word "tabloid," in one sense, is used to identify a special

type of newspaper, one that has been truncated, usually half the size of a normal newspaper. The majority of these publications are infamous for their mastery in celebrity-based journalism. Some papers like, *The National Inquirer*, *Star*, and *Weekly World News*, have all been held liable for reporting inaccurate stories filled with fictional and misleading content. It is evident that the tabloids will do anything to captivate or persuade the masses with their colorful headlines about amazing and even shocking stories. What is not clear is the reason why we as a nation chose to tolerate such unethical practices.

In conclusion, sensationalism, propaganda and tabloid journalism have all had a tremendous emotional impact on many Americans through the practice of media manipulation. In my opinion, I don't think that every detail of a story should be disclosed immediately or even at all, because of the potential detriment it can have on our children. Tougher guidelines and regulations should be stipulated regarding how far the media can go when looking to report a "so-called" good story. More importantly, a good story is one of good moral judgment and respect for all human privacy. The ethics of journalism will continue to be encroached upon if we as a country continue to allow the media to misrepresent the events that realistically take place in our society. Perhaps, an even more monumental complexity is how some of our very own lawmakers turn a blind eye to these media networks that report these dehumanizing stories. In the end, it is quite clear that what we see is not always necessarily what we'll get and that seeing is believing, but only when we chose to believe what we see.

The Perception of Immigrants in the United States

By John Ortiz

The perception of immigrants in the United States has been remarkably consistent over the last 150 years. It has always been steeped in controversy, conflict and vitriol. The level of vitriol can be directly connected to the health of national economy or lack thereof. In my estimation there are several major factors to be considered: racial stereotypes, bias and prejudice, immigration laws and policy, economic instability and insecurity.

Racial stereotyping, bias and prejudice have been a factor in almost every facet of American life. I view the first two as kindling wood. If this is true and I hypothesize that it is, then economic instability is surely the fuel that feeds the flames of vitriol and animosity towards immigrants. There are other contributors, but they are secondary in nature and only play a supporting role. The United States, attitudes toward immigration, can be described as enigmatic, schizophrenic and oxymoronic. It is in fact a nation of immigrants (African Americans) being the exception, that views immigration in a negative context. Racial stereotyping, bias and prejudice are at the forefront of this phenomenon. Generally speaking, people are always more comfortable with their own ethnic make-up. Every ethnic and racial group on this planet can be found in the United States, no other country can claim this distinction. Yet, it can also be said that we are the most polarized country in the world. We live in a highly competitive environment! Americans compete for everything – jobs, schools, housing, politics etc., when the economy is robust peoples prejudices tend to subside, become latent if the economy takes a downward turn, then ugliness can be seen in all its glory. An example of this can be found in the following. "Many investigators have noted that the opposition to immigration rises during recessionary periods. This raises the question of whether public attitudes favoring immigration restriction are volatile because they are rooted in shifting economic circumstances" (Gimpel and Edwards 202). A public opinion survey conducted in 1995 also confirmed "50 percent of American respondents

believed immigrants did take jobs from people born in the U.S." (Simon and Sikich 958).

More than a hundred and fifty years later, there is evidence that Mexicans are now facing the brunt of anti-immigration sentiments. Earlier ethnic groups that were singled-out at some point in American history were: Irish, African, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Native Americans, to a lesser degree, the Italians, Polish, and Hispanics. When the economy is struggling and jobs are scarce, people tend to lean heavily toward self-preservation, when that happens differences in ethnic groups manifest themselves in a bigoted, biased, prejudicial manner.

Immigration laws and policies over the last 150 years can be seen as further evidence of negative perceptions. When the economy is stagnant, laws are very often harsh and heavy handed against immigration. The Chinese exclusion act is a perfect example of what can happen when one group is seen as a threat to job seeking Americans. "In 1882 congress suspended the immigration of Chinese laborer's for twenty years, but President Chester A. Arthur vetoed the bill while indicating that he would accept a shorter experiment" (Daniels). This act was a direct result of the anti-Chinese movement in California.

One of the most egregious acts in American history, although not directly related to immigration, was the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II. Japanese Americans were rounded up and put in detention camps because of an over reaction by the United States government and the mass hysteria of the American public. The rationale for this atrocity was the fear that some Japanese Americans were collaborating with Japan against the United States. This travesty is the by-product of paranoid, racist attitudes against an ethnic group that had successfully assimilated into American society. The same type of attitude that is prevalent when assessing the perception of immigrants when there is a downward turn in the economy. Supreme Court justice Frank Murphy, in a dissenting opinion, believed that the internment order

against Americans of Japanese ancestry fell into "The ugly abyss of racism" (Sundquist 531). These cases came before the court in 1943 and 1944.

In conclusion, it can be said that there is an overwhelming volume of data that suggests that the perception of immigrants and immigration is a negative that worsens when the economy stagnates and jobs become scarce. When the economy slows down, our laws and policies become strident and sometimes unbearable i.e. Chinese exclusion act, Japanese interment camps, World War II. Furthermore, racial stereotyping, bias, and prejudice are also at the forefront of anti-immigration attitudes. Economic instability breeds' insecurity, that insecurity tends to heighten the differences between ethnic groups, when that happens people will usually tend to go straight into survival mode.

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Writers of the Month

Ethnicity vs. Race

By A. De Los Santos

During my recent job search I did something that was very liberating. When I came across the equal opportunity section on my application, I reached a compromise. In the ethnicity box I checked Hispanic and in the race box I checked Black. I finally knew I had an identity, I am a Black Hispanic.

Growing up, I have always been a Hispanic. Born to both Dominican parents in Spanish Harlem there were nothing but Dominicans and other Hispanic cultures, which influenced my everyday life. From the music I listened to, the food we ate; Sunday mass. Everything was influenced by Spanish culture. Our own little world. I was never made to question who I am even if my skin is brown until I moved down South where I was placed in a world that is Black or White. There I was, a black person. The town where I lived in was very formal and conservative. It was a confederate town in which old southern traditions are still valued. Yet there were a lot of biracial kids coming up. Many times, I would approach other Hispanics who needed help with translation and they would be surprised I spoke Spanish. They would ask questions like, where did you learn it? You can speak so well, who taught you?

I would feel a rejection from my own people because I am brown.

You would think I felt an embrace from my black people but to some blacks down south I was too fair skinned. Now, when I finally felt comfortable with my African roots and referred to myself as dark you would

hear a simultaneous teeth sucking sound that made me even more confused. My friends that were really southern would refer to me as house slave, high yellow with red undertone, deep cinnamon with orange, anything but Black. Born to a yellow Creole father with curly hair and green eyes (French ancestry) and mother with deep brown skin, coarse hair (West Indian ancestry), I am right in the middle. My hair is curly but a little coarse, my skin is darker than my dad's but lighter than my mom's. Soft facial features and big lips. To my black amigas I have good hair; to my Hispanic homegirls I need a relaxer. So the day that I checked the box for ethnicity-Hispanic and race-Black I knew I was in my own category. I represent a people who have been taught how to choose a side. A side that rejects our inner core which is African.

Ethnicity is a very complex subject. There are different views on how ethnicity relates to race. Some may say it is the same thing, but my opinion is that ethnicity is more related to cultures, traditions and moral laws that a group of people share. That is why there is such a Black Spanish mixture in Latin America. Our founding fathers who were Spaniards left traces of their traditions, music, religious beliefs in the core of our foundation. Not realizing they were creating a people who were a blend of all the strife, love and war between Spaniards and the Africans. Mulattos, our only distinction to other Blacks is our culture. Same culture which in subtle ways teaches us how to embrace our Spanish side more. The truth is, I do

relax my hair and rather not go out in the sun to much but those are just my personal habits. Or is it a mentality that rejects Afrocentricism?

My country of origin the Dominican Republic is composed by 80% blacks. That is more than half the population, yet in my country there is a lot of racism. Our traditions and cultures are very Spanish. We speak the language but in the music you can hear the rhythms of African drums. So why the rejection of ourselves? That is why when I saw Sammy Sosa, I saw a victim of years being harassed. Probably called Mono, Prieto Feo and all these sayings that teach us how to reject ourselves as black people. It must have been very hard for Sammy Sosa to grow up that color and be happy with himself where we are from. He relaxed his hair, bleached his skin and wore contacts which is what some women do on a daily basis. Giving up on the battle that we must fight everyday not to conform to a society that wants to slowly DEBLACKIFY us through advertisement, products and music. Thus we adapt to an ethnic group that tells us we can join them but only through assimilation.

I am glad that I was taken out of my comfort zone and questioned who I am. So I can be sure of what I stand for and where I am going. If my foundation is solid my house will dwindle and fall. I identify myself with my Spanish culture as part of me but I am glad that I now accept I am black as well.

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Poetry Corner

On November 13, 2009, BCC hosted a poetry contest, *The Poet's Lounge*. The Bronx Community College community would like to congratulate the finalists of the contest by featuring them in the launch issue of "The Poetry Corner," a section that will feature poetry from students, faculty and staff.

I Write For By Ibrahim Siddiq*

I write for all the street scholars who never needed school because they're self educated

Gotta Heal the pain so they self medicate it

Never seeing 40 acres so we make self reparations

It aint stealing because they owe... and we're here to collect that debt

We need to come together but the plan to unite we neglect instead

I write for those complaining about a 9 to 5

When you have single mothers like mine raising 3 kids between ages 9 and 5 and still worked a 9 to 5

Some working two jobs, working 12 to 8 in the morning

Making sure their kids got something to eat in the morning

This is for the next Malcolm X or Dr. Martin Luther King

Sitting in class somewhere or upstate in the Bing

I know you're sitting in the dark stuck behind those bars

But please let these words shine through like the stars

This is for those working on the story of their life but haven't yet wrote the preamble

I write so you can use my life as an example

So many have the truth on pause and are scared to play it

It's at the tip of their tongue yet are scared to say it

So for them I'll narrate it

Cops shooting us dead like it's something legal

I call them terminex how they're exterminating our people

50 shots should ring a bell

I write for Sean, the Jena 6

I write for Amadu Diallo

I write for all the natural born leaders who have yet to find their way

So for now it's me you can follow

I write for the ignorant,

For those too close minded to understand what I spit I still speak for the hell of it

And to those who are enlightened, it's for you especially I'm writing

I write for the deaf, if you can't hear you can still read what I wrote

I paint pictures so if you're blind you can still see what I spoke

I write to give hope!

Hope to those who may be struggling from day to day

But most of all I write for those who may feel this way

And just can't come up with the words to say

Winner of The Poet's Lounge

Strong Black Woman with Children to Feed By William Murray

(I wrote this poem 3.23.08. I dedicate it to the novel "Push" by Sapphire and women of color everywhere)

I am a strong black woman with children to feed
Aboard a slave ship at stormy sea
Off the western coast of Africa
John Newton sang for me

I am a strong black woman with children to feed
My family from Sierra Leone
My descendants embarked the Amistad
The white man stole us from our home

I am a strong black woman with children to feed
Like Harriet Beecher Stowe
Lodged in Uncle Tom's Cabin
Flanked by Simon Legree and old Jim Crow

I am a strong black woman with children to feed
I was a ward of the state
Affirmative action didn't give me work
Welfare didn't fill my plate

I am a strong black woman with children to feed
Call me Elaine Brown
I know even Black Panthers
Let patriarchy keep them down

I'm a strong black woman with children to feed
They say I must have Indian in my blood;
I just use hair care by Madame Walker
They say I've got Maya Angelou on my tongue
Because I'm such a sweet talker...

I am a strong black woman with children to feed
I'm Harriett Tubman, I'm Maria Stewart
I am Rosa Parks, I'm Oprah Winfrey
I am a strong black woman with children to feed
And I'm making my own black history

Domestic Violence By Monique Lewis

Domestic violence
As you repeatedly hit me over n over again
I wonder what I did to deserve this
I mean I did not but love you hug and even gave you a kiss.
But as soon as I did
D*mn...
Here comes the smack
I shoulda known it was too good to be tru
I shoulda known it was a trap
Why do you fight me all the time
I love u I say
But you just roll ya eyes ,shake ya head ,and look the other way
I'm tired of explaining the bruises, the bags under my eyes
I wish over you I didn't have to cry the tears that I cried
But I did
Breathe damnit I said
But you was tired and my lil man left me anyway
See you been fighting all your life and you tired of all the pain
The poking, the prodding, the doctors asking the same redundant questions over and again
You never meant to hurt me
you mad that I can see
Our last outside date was at the Halloween party at BCC
And our last kiss was when I tried to breathe life back into you
How I wish for that smack
that bruise on my arm
How I wish I could hold you in my arms!

I freaking loved you you was my whole damn world
Now there's a big hole in my heart and life is going around in a swirl
It's funny you wont believe my abuser to be
Ya'll gotta understand it's ironic to me
I cant believe to this day
I was being so called abused but loved by my son
Rip RAY-RAY

*This poem is dedicated to my son Raymond Charles-Lamont Elliott, Jr.
Aka
Domestic Violence

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Poetry Corner

My World at War

By Anthony Madrid



Rain POURING, soldiers at WAR AND,
 Economy CRASHING, families CLASHING,
 Days getting SHORTER, days getting COLDER, the
 hates getting OLDER,
 No CHOICE if you have no VOICE, it becomes to
 LATE,
 Regret is the WORST, hate turns into a BURST; my
 expression is a THIRST,
 To be HEARD WORD BY WORD, the evil all deserve
 to BURN,
 Not looking for UNDERSTANDING, I am
 DEMANDING for better, or I'll be the only one
 STANDING,
 Whatever HAPPEN to those days that passed AND we
 were always LAUGHIN,
 A problem was never CASH AND,
 My love for you was a PASSION, nothing could OUT
 LAST IT,
 Now I'm the BASTARD, a disturbed part of your world,
 hard to swallow the TRUTH,
 My looks ain't no longer CUTE, my heart stands in a
 point of ABUSE,
 We live to gain so why do we LOSE, I'm CONFUSED,
 My fairy tale I've lost SIGHT OF, my days are always
 night,
 Who cut the LIGHTS OFF, I'm mighty STRONG, cant
 you see the mighty ARM,
 Karma is ALIVE, and I've seen her RISE to the
 OCASSION,
 At it full time no one being SAVED AND, my wrongs
 are a CRAVING,
 Thru my mind WAVIN, yeah it's AMAZING; I was
 raised to be IMPATIENT,
 The truth is hard to start FACING, love is far but I'm still
 RACIN,
 Its dusting any chance of a CLOSE CHASE AND, why
 am I losing my PLACE WHEN,
 All I'm looking for is a FRIEND

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 LOCATED IN FRONT OF MEISTER HALL**



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
 THE OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE
 AT 718-289-5194 OR VISIT US IN MEISTER 202.

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Haiti Counseling Support at BCC In Place Since Monday, January 25th

Bronx Community College is offering support and counseling to Haitian students who may have relatives and friends who have been affected by the Haitian earthquakes. Haitian students should call Psychiatric Social Worker Donna Paroff-Sherman at (718) 289-5873 to schedule an appointment. She will be happy to meet one on one or in small group sessions with students.

Counseling sessions began on Monday, January 25th and will continue through the rest of the semester, as needed.

For BCC employees and family who have particular needs, you may seek help from the CUNY Work/Life Program, a voluntary, free and confidential benefit for CUNY employees and their families administered by Corporate Counseling Associates, Inc. (CCA). To reach them, visit their website: www.cuny.edu/worklife.

You may also call their 24-hour Helpline at 1-800-833-8707.

Campus News

Lady Broncos Volleyball Team Won CUNY Championships: For The Second Year in a Row

By Beatriz Ramirez

Bronx Community College Broncos, the defending Women's Volleyball champions, prevailed over the Borough of Manhattan Community College Panthers, 3 – 0, winning the CUNY Athletics Conference Community College Women's Volleyball Championships for the second consecutive year.

On the night of October 26th in the BMCC gymnasium, it was a volleyball face-off of four boroughs and only one champion. Did that night answer the age-old question of which borough has the better team? Pretty much!!! Borough of Manhattan CC and Kingsborough CC were still in the thicket of playing a decided game, while the BCC Lady Broncos sat back and watched after their first game. BCC defeated Queensborough Community College in a short set game of 3-0 (25-9, 25-11, 25-12) to advance to the championships. BMCC fought hard to stay in the competition by narrowly beating Kingsborough Community College by scores of (25-15), (21-25), (25-22), (17-25), (15-11).

Though worn thin, the BMCC Panthers kept their adrenaline running into the following game against the Broncos. In beginning of the first set the Panthers started out strong, driving seven unforced errors from the broncos to post a 15-9 lead. Momentum was on the Panther's side, but it would only go so far. The Broncos fought back and recovered, closing the set 25-19 and preventing a 0-1 hole.

With a set behind them and the championship looking that much closer, the Broncos key players came up to the net when it counted. Alexandra Mejia (#12) landed two straight aces giving the broncos a 10-7 lead in the second set. BMCC kept it close though and came within 4 of the second set, but, ultimately, the Lady Broncos trampled through and took it 25-21. With two sets ahead of BMCC, the Lady Broncos were completely relaxed and playing precise volleyball. After the second set Lady Broncos took off, controlling the rest of the game confidently and swiftly, winning the third set 25-9. It was apparent there was no dark horse coming to play volleyball that night.

Sandra Izaguirre was also named Most Valuable Player for the second time with 20 kills and 12 service aces that evening. In this last year of her attending BCC, she led the ladies to a seventh place, finishing among 17 colleges in the regional women's team competition with a 12-6 overall record. BCC was the only CUNY community college to make it to the regional playoffs held at Suffolk Community College. Unfortunately, with



14 Vanessa Brown, 4 Rosalie Cabrera, 3 Argelis Capellan, 15 Fatima Genao, 7 Sandra Izaguirre, 12 Alexandra Mejia, 5 Johanky Reyes, 6 Rosly Rodriguez, 8 Mandolin Rufino, Head Coach - Divina Arroyo, Asst. Coach - Teddy Gaspard Athletic Director - Eric Mercado

injuries and missing players, the ladies did not perform as the strong, cohesive group of raging broncos that night of the CUNYAC championship. The girls embraced the challenges the regional teams provided, and they were confident that any other night, they could have defeated Suffolk CC.

Watching the Lady Broncos play was such a delight. This group of young student athletes are an example of outstanding students in Bronx Community College. They not only take on their duties as full-time students, they also have spent most of their evenings practicing. They practiced hard throughout the season, and it is no wonder why the girls deserved to win this season.

BCC looks forward to another season next year with the return of head coach Divina Arroyo and assistant coach Teddy Gaspard, in which, without them, all of this could not be possible. Certainly new members have very big shoes to fill, but it is possible. Many of the members throughout the last two seasons had never played on a volleyball team prior to BCC.

The BCC community is grateful and proud of all the ladies for their hard work and dedication this season. We wish them the best in their future on and off the court.

Health and Safety on Campus and the Hall of Shame

The Professional Staff Congress, the union of faculty and staff at Bronx Community College and CUNY as a whole, are increasingly concerned with conditions on campus that affect the health and safety of all members of the campus community. One of the PSC sponsored events that proved a great success was the birthday party for the sinkhole in front of Havemeyer Hall that blocked traffic and posed a considerable hazard to the community. Thankfully, that problem was soon fixed. However, many problems remain, including a similar sinkhole on the BCC track.

In an effort to make these problems clear to the campus community and beyond, an event named the Hall of Shame took place on November 24th in the lobby of Meister Hall. Faculty, staff, and students submitted descriptive stories and digital photos that were printed and displayed. A tremendous range of problems was represented, everything from rodent/insect infestation to holes in the walls, from leaking ceilings to drinking water. Mounted on easels, the stories and photos attracted many people, regardless of their position on campus, and a slide show augmented the still pictures.

Plans are in the works to take this exhibit to other buildings in spring semester for those who weren't able to attend, and to post stories and photos on the Internet. Health and safety are vital issues on our campus. We all need to be aware of what needs to be addressed and we need to work together to make our community a healthier and safer place.

JOIN A CLUB

BCC Raises Awareness of Dating Violence, Helps Environment with Verizon Wireless UHopeLine Program Company Donates \$1,000 to Student Programs Combating Violence



Dr. Carolyn G. Williams, Bronx Community College (BCC) president, David Samberg of Verizon Wireless and Ruth Villalonga of the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, teamed up recently to launch UHopeLine, an extension of the company's exclusive HopeLine® wireless phone recycling program which places permanent collection points on college campuses. UHopeLine is designed to increase awareness of dating violence and encourage college students to help the environment by recycling no-longer-used wireless devices.

In recognition of BCC's participation, Verizon Wireless made a \$1,000 donation to student programs aimed at combating relationship abuse. Championed by the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, the City University of New York is the first university in New York State to host UHopeLine. The BCC collection point is one of eight UHopeLine bins placed at key locations on CUNY campuses throughout the City. For more information about HopeLine visit www.verizonwireless.com/hopeline

Campus News

The Spirit of Fall 2009 Inter-Organizational Council

The Fall 2009 Inter-Organizational Council (IOC) charter process was completed on October 27, 2009 with twenty-eight clubs, including three honor societies and five new clubs. The goal of the IOC has always been to embrace campus involvement by encouraging the formation of new clubs and to provide freshman and continuing students with a sense of belonging while fostering their academic endeavors. Many of the new club members are new freshmen students. New clubs include the BCC Organization for Leadership in Disability (BOLD), the Book Club, the Future Teachers Club, the Libra Women's Club, and the Urban Unity Club.

The second meeting of the IOC concentrated on two major elections within student leadership. IOC executive roles were filled with Julissa Lora of the Answer Club elected Vice-Chair, Light Amedzekor of the newly formed Urban Unity Club elected Treasurer, and Alexander Santiago of the Secular Humanist Club elected Secretary. The elections also focused on finding suitable candidates to replace Student Government Association (SGA) senators who have resigned due to relocation or academic factors.

The most notable of the SGA by-elections was the election of Charles Harding to the Office of the SGA Legal Legislature/Legal Advisor. Harding has served respectively as the IOC representative for the Media Technology and Film Society, followed by the 2008-2009 IOC Secretary. The spirit of the IOC can be seen in the eyes of the clubs, honor societies and college-wide organization members who just want the best for our college by relating to the everyday lives and issues affecting students. The ideas and experiences these students bring to the IOC table is derived from their various cultural and ethnical backgrounds which makes IOC bolder and stronger.

Our college is divided into three dimensions, students, faculty and administrators; therefore, alliances play an important role in how we function as an entity. We all have a goal and that is to serve and protect the common interests of the student population. The Faculty Council has embarked on numerous initiatives, such as the creation of the Faculty-for-Students Scholarship which is dedicated to helping students who do not qualify for financial aid. The college administration with the leadership of our president, Dr. Carolyn Williams, and the Senior Vice-President of Finance and Administration, Ms. Mary Coleman, has set forth a plan to create a new Student Center slated for completion between 2011-2012. It will be a tremendous benefit to the student population and for this we are proud. In October of this year I was elected co-chair of the Senate Governance and Elections Committee alongside distinguished History Professor Simon Davis.

The main function of the Committee is to ensure that the by-laws are followed and ensure that all elections within our campus are judged based on democratic ideals. One of our main goals is to establish an online campus wide electronic system (E-Vote) which will save time and resources – not to mention getting more bills passed. Students and faculty would be required to go online and cast ballots; thus, eliminating the use of paper ballots.

The semester for me was very heavy, balancing classes, committee hearings and attending events. At the end of the day sometimes I would go home and wonder will we win or lose in the battles we fight in life. Then, again, no one ever said the road would be easy. We just have to remember that we are all here for a common good – not for me or you but for all.

Omar Murray
Vice-President,
Student Government Association
Chairperson, Inter-Organizational Council
Bronx Community College
Meister Hall, Room 212
Bronx, New York 10453

Students Can Be Green and Save Green at the Same Time

By Carlos Roldan

Expenses for college students can be a lot to handle. Whether you're an independent student, living on your own, or at home with your parents, daily expenses can add up and quickly. As a current student at Bronx Community College, I know how things like how to pay for lunch to paying for transportation can put a big hole in your pockets. As students, we are constantly looking for ways to save ourselves cash, no matter how little the amount. Understandably, most students, and people in general, like to get the most bang out of their buck. However, there is another important factor to consider when making any purchase besides the price; how will it affect the environment.

Saving money and being environmentally aware are two topics people do not normally think of together. However, there are a number of ways that "going green" can help you save some green. You may be wondering, "What exactly is going green?" According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "going green" is described as adapting your lifestyle so as to do less damage to the environment. Most students probably say to themselves, "I can't think about the environment right now... I'm too busy". However, there are many levels of involvement that even the busiest of students can participate in.

Some examples more highlighted for busy students on how to "be green" can be more subtle. For instance, Bronx Community College has a fairly new partnership with Royal Recycling Solutions Inc., in which they have placed bins all over campus in order to encourage everyone to recycle paper and plastic products. These partnerships are important in particular for schools that sell vending machine goods, which many do, including ours. You could become more actively involved and get some cash back by taking those bottles to recycling centers yourself. Most supermarkets have bottle return programs that you can easily utilize.

Another great way to save money and be environmentally friendly is by using your local public transportation system instead of driving to school or work every day. According to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, the average cost of gas today in New York State is about \$2.73 a gallon. The cost of a single ride on the bus or subway is \$2.25 per ride, not mentioning the discounts you get for purchasing a weekly or monthly pass. The incentives for taking public transportation aren't only for you but for the environment as well.

Taking public transport lessens your carbon footprint; "the amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) that are emitted into the atmosphere each year by an entity such as a person, household, building, organization, or company. It is usually measured in units of carbon dioxide equivalents" (EPA). These harmful gas emissions negatively affect the ozone layer and play a key role in global warming. Another anomaly negatively effecting the environment is the improper disposal of electronics.

According to a 2003 report by Environmental Media Services, there are many health problems related to the toxins in electronic waste. These products often have harmful chemicals, including lead, mercury, arsenic, and cadmium. The report also states that when these products are thrown away with everyday household garbage, they create an environmental threat by going into the air through incinerator ash or to our water sources from the landfills.

Most electronic manufacturers have become aware of this issue and have started up incentive programs to get consumers to reuse and recycle electronic goods. This is where the savings comes in. For example, Apple Inc. has an incentive program where if you bring in your broken or unwanted product you receive ten percent off towards your next purchase. There are many companies with similar programs, including AT&T, Best Buy, Dell, eBay, Hewlett Packard, Intel, LG electronics, Motorola, Nokia, Samsung, Sony Ericsson, Sprint, Staples, T-Mobile, and Verizon. In some cases, the recycling of these unwanted electronics (in particular cell phones) cannot only save you money and help the environment but can also save lives.

According to Melissa Kirk, the director of Student Life at Bronx Community College, Verizon has created a partnership with CUNY for recycling cell phones. This program is highlighted to help victims of domestic abuse. These unwanted cell phones will be programmed to only dial out to 911 in case of an emergency. They will be distributed to the victims who do not have cell phones and would have trouble contacting the proper authorities if they find themselves in a dangerous situation. So you potentially could be saving someone life by properly disposing your cell phone. This program should be launching by the end of 2009.

Aside from saving money there are other student related incentives to "Going Green." BCC also hosts a number of "Go Green" events that students can receive OCD credits for attending. Also, most senior colleges prefer for their students to be active in the day to day happenings of campus life. Co-curricular activities are an important and highly respected aspect of your academic resume.

Overall, student voice as a large impact on campus and can even positively affect the local neighborhood. We, as individuals, are easily discouraged by the size of the problems we face. College students already have a lot on their plate and it's understandable to be intimidated by such controversial issues. But if we think about it long and hard, the realization of our responsibilities as the future leaders of the world kicks in quickly. If we can make a difference on this campus, we can make a difference anywhere. Every change has been started with a single voice and has the potential to be revolutionary. So start a club, recycle your bottles, properly dispose of your electronics, and use public transportation; the environment is counting on it..

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Campus News

Arms and the Man

By Katherine Campbell

When George Bernard Shaw's witty comedy *Arms and the Man* debuted on December 3rd at BCC, it became a hit. Shaw described it as "one joke after another ... a firecracker." That's pretty much what I witnessed on stage at the Student Life Playhouse. *Arms and the Man* offers verbal precision and wit in the production directed by John Socas of the Communication Arts and Sciences department.

The play follows Bluntschli played by Ibrahim Siddiq, a Swiss mercenary soldier who escapes from a battle by breaking into the bedroom of Raina, a young Bulgarian woman, played beautifully by Christina Suarez. Raina Petkoff is a romantic girl who has an overly idealistic view of war. Her fiancé Sergius is played by Langston Belton as a dashing cavalry officer, and she's captivated by his reckless heroism. But Bluntschli's simplicity wins her affections, after many complications involving uppity servants and Raina's doltish, bourgeois parents.

In the first act, an escaping enemy soldier, Bluntschli, breaks into Raina's bedroom. He is a practical sort and tries to convince her of the realities of war. Siddiq offers a controlled portrait of the "chocolate crème soldier." Bluntschli carries chocolates rather than bullets in his cartridge case. "It makes more sense to carry chocolates than ammunition," he tells her. He ignores all the fripperies swirling around him and adopts a perspective that makes Raina's "incredibly romantic disposition" seem all the more ludicrous in her grand declarations and physical posing. Siddiq's verbal skills, his expressive face, and his sense of timing are exactly the qualities needed to make Bluntschli the perfect foil to the overdone characters around him. Clearly, Raina has become attracted to him because she hides him in her closet while the Russian officer, played by the funny and frantic Gabriel Jackson, searches the room and orders the firing in the streets to cease while the very realistic sound effects of gunshots and rioting go off in the background. Meanwhile, all the time the missing pistol is on the bed. Also, we see Raina has feelings for Bluntschli because she helps him to escape. In the end, Bluntschli's simplicity and candor win her affections.

The pragmatic view is also represented by two servants: the feisty Louka (Idalia Castillo) and the obsequious Nicola (Johnathan Aviles) who define the spectrum of attitudes for living in the modern world. Louka takes a no-nonsense, right-between-the-eyes position on romance and servitude, while Nicola flies under the radar to maintain his equilibrium.

Shaw's comedy is driven by the intersection of Raina's giddy notions, her arrogant fiancé's blustering

and posing, and the down-to-earth Bluntschli's ability to see through all the tomfoolery.

Castillo plays the antagonistic Louka, and Belton makes Sergius all at once laughable, lovable and a little bit frightening. My favorite part of the play was indeed Louka and Sergius' love affair. Louka is the one that seemed to add fire to the flame when she fed Sergius with stories she has heard while she was eavesdropping in front of Raina's door. While Raina's and Sergius' relationship became hilarious as the giggling, gushing lovers were full of rhapsodic pronouncements and outlandishly demonstrative gestures. At one moment, bidding Sergius farewell, Raina mimes grasping her heart and blowing it in his direction, which he in turn captures and places in his own chest. I thought this really got the point across that Raina was head over heels for him. Their every move and action was intentionally overdone, frequently reinforced by Catherine Petkoff, Raina's mother, played by the assertive and aggressive Andisha Steele and Major Paul Petkoff played by the hilarious Ivan Rodriguez, as Raina's pretentious, status-conscious parents who yearn to add a heroic son-in-law to their social aspirations, which are premised on trivial items like an electric bell to summon servants.

The costumes gave emphasis to the characters: Raina was decked out in ruffles and flourishes, while Sergius and Raina's father wore bright white uniforms with sashes. Bluntschli was in a brighter red uniform looking like Britain's red coats during the American Revolution. The scenic design credited to the stage crew Sharif Ali and Nahim Adeyi was simple but effective, with each of the three acts offering rooms outfitted with pleasant Victorian furnishings. The setting was beautiful: an unusually pleasant home space, the actual parlor of a turn-of-the-century mansion with lovely, believable scenery of a bedroom, garden and library.

I was stunned by how good the production was and how true it stayed to the original play. It was well acted: everything was harmonious. The notes struck a tone with perfect shifts from one to another. The actors delivered their lines seriously, comically, realistically, formally so that their actions and gestures contributed to the plays' meaning. Belton and Siddiq as actors excelled in physical comedy. There was hardly a moment that wasn't setting up or recovering from a laugh when either of them was present on stage. Given when it was written, the play's modernity is amazing. This BCC performance was a near-perfect production. The show ended with the exclamation, "What a man!" and I say, "What a performance!"

Peace and Social Justice Club

*Hello Fellow Students of
Bronx Community College:*

Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Gabrielle Garcia the President of the Peace and Social Justice Club. I am a Human Services Major, and a mother of two wonderful children. I would like to personally welcome all of you back to the Spring 2010 Semester. I wish you all a happy, successful, and a stress free semester.

Our Club goal is to introduce nonviolence to our community and promote nonviolence in our everyday lives. We are also sponsoring a Level one Nonviolence Training during spring break if you are interested in this event please feel free to e-mail me at gabrielle.garcia@stu.bcc.cuny.edu for all the details of this upcoming event.

I am writing to inform you that our club is looking for dedicated members to join our club. If you are interested in attending one of our club meetings you may do so. We will meet once a week, every Thursday, in Colston Hall, room 614, from 12:15 until 1:30pm.

We hope to see you! Thank you for your time and consideration.

**JOIN
A
CLUB**

The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) Announces REFUNDS

Students on this campus voted to support a NYPIRG chapter.

Like other clubs and organizations on campus, NYPIRG is funded through the mandatory student activity fee. Unlike any other club, NYPIRG offers a refund of the portion earmarked for NYPIRG (\$3 per student per semester) if a student does not wish to contribute.

NYPIRG is the state's largest student-directed non-partisan advocacy organization. NYPIRG students learn community organizing, event planning, debate skills, research, and writing by organizing and engaging in meaningful issue based campaigns.

To request a refund or for further information please contact:
Leticia Negron, Project Coordinator for the BCC NYPIRG Chapter, at
lnegron@nypirg.org, or stop by the NYPIRG office at Meister 214.

Campus News

Students Take Part in Nonviolence Training

By Gabrielle Garcia

I wanted to share my experience with all of the Bronx Community College students about my participation in the Nonviolence Training that took place during the winter break from January 21-23.

There were various certified facilitators there to make sure that the training went as smoothly as possible. All the facilitators were friendly, clear in their directions and patient with the students attending the training. The learning environment is relaxing, educational, and soothing. It is a positive learning experience that will benefit you in your educational career, in your personal life, and in your social development. A bonus is that upon completion you will receive a certificate. In addition, after the completion of the second part of the Nonviolent Training you have the opportunity to become a facilitator and make money.

I learned various nonviolent techniques, such as, the hassle line. The hassle line is used to show the active members what they might expect while they are protesting and most importantly how to react nonviolently towards

the violence that will be inflicted upon them. Most importantly, I learned some of the history of nonviolence, and I saw the full potential of the power of nonviolence via movies. The power of nonviolence is so effective as opposed to violence. At the training you will see that there is actually a third way of solving conflicts between people that you tend to have relationships with. I really recommend this training to all of the students attending the college.

If you are interested in this Nonviolent Training, luckily, the Peace and Social Justice Club will sponsor this event one more time during the spring break, on April 1-3 from 9am-6pm. To find out the location you can e-mail me at GABRIELLE.GARCIA@STU.BCC.CUNY.EDU. We are also looking for interested members to join our club. We meet every Thursday at Colston Hall, room 614, during club hours from 12:15-1:30.

(See Peace and Social Justice Club meeting notice on page 10.)

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Recurring Features



Health and Fitness with Dr. Wayne Top 10 Reasons to Try Yoga

Originating in India thousands of years ago, yoga has become an increasingly popular form of exercise and stress reduction. The word yoga means to yoke or unite, which refers to the practice of using the mind and body together to achieve balance, flexibility and strength. There are different types of yoga to suit every need, from vigorous to relaxing and everything in between. Here are 10 reasons to give yoga a try.

1. Increased flexibility and reduced risk of injury. Each yoga pose targets specific muscles while also keeping them warm and limber, thereby increasing flexibility and reducing the risk of injury.
2. Focused breathing and concentration. A primary component of yoga is the rhythmic breathing. Taking full, complete breaths makes it easier to relax and center the mind, and is believed to have other therapeutic effects.
3. The mind-body connection. Rather than mindlessly going through the motions, yoga requires you to focus all of your energies on performing each movement precisely. This benefits both the mind and body.
4. Greater strength and stamina. More vigorous forms of yoga, such as vinyasa and ashtanga, promote strength and stamina as well as flexibility and relaxation.
5. Fewer muscle imbalances. Those who are new to yoga may notice muscle and flexibility imbalances throughout the body. Yoga poses are designed to help correct these imbalances over time.
6. Better balance and stability. Balancing poses require you to engage the core stabilizer muscles, which can help improve overall stability.
7. Improved posture. Yoga poses strengthens and opens tight areas such as the shoulders and muscles of the upper back, which is necessary for good posture.
8. Greater body awareness. Yoga requires you to contract and/or relax specific muscles as you stretch into each pose, thereby increasing awareness of the body's strengths and weaknesses.
9. Stress reduction. Yoga helps soothe the mind and lower stress levels by focusing the mind on the moment and the movements rather than on external distractions.
10. Cross-training benefits. Yoga combines flexibility, strength training and balance to create a mind-body activity that is a perfect addition to any fitness regimen.

If you have any questions or comments, please email me at: Wellness4all@yahoo.com

**Be well.
Dr. Wayne
Health, Physical Education and Wellness**



What is WAC and Who are Writing Fellows Anyway?

By Ragnhild Utheim

Writing Across the Curriculum, or WAC, is a CUNY wide pedagogical program that seeks to enhance teaching and learning by developing the language, literacy, and critical thinking of students, and actively engaging them in mastering course content. The notion of 'writing to learn' is a basic tenet of WAC philosophy and advances writing as a dynamic learning tool that helps students focus on a subject matter and organize their ideas in relation to it. The underlying assumption is that writing is closely linked with critical thinking and that creating an environment where students regularly engage in writing activities will promote their overall cognitive and intellectual growth. In other words, writing not only serves to enhance students' writing proficiency, but also helps students master the subject content and analytical goals of a course. For this reason, the WAC program aims to integrate writing processes that encourage critical thinking throughout courses and across the disciplines. Six writing fellows are assigned to Bronx Community College in order to implement the objectives of the WAC program. These writing fellows are advanced CUNY doctoral students who are assigned as consultants to different academic departments on campus and who actively partake in carrying out the program's various component parts:

Faculty Professional Development. Professional development seminars are offered each semester during when faculty are paired with a writing fellow and trained in WAC philosophy, pedagogy, and practices. The faculty seminar convenes once monthly to discuss issues in teaching and learning, and to share WAC designed assignments that faculty have piloted in their classrooms. Faculty and writing fellows meet weekly to prepare and review seminar materials and discuss WAC practices in conjunction with the training seminar.

Assisting Faculty. Writing fellows assist faculty (particularly those who teach writing intensive, or WI, courses) in enhancing their teaching strategies and incorporating writing assignments into their course content in a variety of ways: Structuring course syllabus

to effectively meet writing intensive criteria; designing critical thinking and problem-solving tasks that engage the course content; devising low-stakes and high-stakes (formal) writing assignments; creating questions to focus student reading of course textbook; designing or refining group work assignments; creating rubrics for assignment requirements and grading assessment; and more.

Assisting Students. Writing fellows work directly with students either one-on-one or in the classroom setting. They are available (at the professor's request) to hold workshops on a range of topics throughout the semester, and can meet privately with students during office hours (or by appointment) to assist them with their writing assignments. Sample topics that these workshops and one-on-one conferences focus on include, but are not limited to: how to conduct research; how to take notes, summarize and paraphrase; how to structure and organize your paper; how to draft, revise and proof-read your paper; how to approach essay writing or develop a thesis-driven paper; and how to avoid plagiarism.

WAC Professional Development. Once monthly, participants from across CUNY's WAC program gather to exchange information and new developments in WAC pedagogy and practices, and to participate in training workshops. Here writing fellows are able to learn more about WAC programs at other CUNY campuses and how the mission and goals of the program are being implemented throughout the CUNY system.

Collaborate with the CPE Testing Office, Writing Center and CTE. The CUNY Proficiency Exam (CPE) is a qualifying requirement for the Associates' degree (and in advancing to four-year colleges) that measures important academic literacy skills. The WAC program and its writing fellows collaborate with both BCC's CPE testing office and the Writing Center in assisting students meet these literacy requirements. Writing fellows also support the work of the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) by participating in the an-

nual CTE day showcasing tools for teaching and learning excellence.

The short of it is that a wide range of assessments and student performance indicators have established the need to enhance the opportunities for students to strengthen their writing skills. Such opportunities are especially important for those whose native language is not English and whose writing skills require further development. In the fall of 2004 Bronx Community College instituted the new Writing Intensive (WI) Course Graduation Requirement: all freshman and transfer students who entered Bronx Community College beginning with the fall 2004 semester are required to take two WI courses in order to graduate. This requirement is a step toward encouraging students to use writing more generally throughout their courses, and will help students polish their writing in preparation for the CPE, advanced CUNY courses and the job market.

Writing fellows are a valuable resource for both faculty and students in meeting the literacy goals placed on BBC students, but also significantly attempt to nurture a broader appreciation of the important role that writing plays in learning. This involves raising awareness about the program, its activities, and the WI graduation requirements in articles like this. In order to create more campus-wide discussion of WAC theory and techniques, the WAC program at BCC publishes monthly articles in *The Communicator*, where you can find short cover stories on WAC activities and topics related to writing-to-learn processes. Be sure to check out our column!

Ragnhild Utheim is one of BCC's six Writing Fellows. To learn more about WAC and how Writing Fellows can assist students and faculty, especially in Writing Intensive courses, visit us online at: www.bcc.cuny.edu/WAC/.

Recurring Features

Welcome Back From NYPIRG at Bronx Community College



Hello and welcome back! For those of you who are unfamiliar, I am the NYPIRG Project Coordinator and we are the New York Public Interest Research Group. NYPIRG is New York State's largest student-directed consumer, environmental and government reform organization. We are a nonpartisan, not-for-profit group established to effect policy reforms while training students and other New Yorkers to be activists.

NYPIRG has been here at BCC for nearly ten years working with students on several of our campaigns which include: hunger & homeless outreach, consumer rights, higher education, voter registration, environmental protection, and our straphangers mass transit campaign. Just last semester your fellow students were instrumental in surveying the cleanliness of the trains, fighting for legislation to combat climate change, collecting clothing and food for the hungry and homeless, and much more. NYPIRG students were even featured on *News 12 The Bronx* protesting cuts to higher education!

This semester, BCC students are getting involved in fighting for access to affordable higher education, protecting free and half-priced student MetroCards, and volunteering to serve the hungry and homeless. Come to our Student Action Meeting on Thursday, February 25th in Loew Hall, Room 321, from 1-2pm.

NYPIRG always welcomes new members to our chapter here at BCC and is also accepting interns for the Spring 2010 semester. For more information stop by the NYPIRG office located in Meister Hall, Room 214, or e-mail me at lnegron@nypirg.org. I look forward to working with you all!

Leticia Negron
NYPIRG-Project Coordinator
lnegron@nypirg.org
Meister Hall, Room 214

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IN THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE
COLSTON HALL, ROOM 513
FROM
JANUARY 28, 2010 THRU MARCH 15, 2010**

The Outside View

Gallina de Ciudad: Part 1 By Massawa Lawson



Making the decision to get a chicken was easy. Choosing which breed was much harder. It started with a Google search in the fall and ended Saturday evening, January 30th with an excited call from the 149th Street Post Office. My chickens had arrived. “In general carriage the Spanish are graceful and stylish. The rich glossy black plumage, the large red comb, and the long pendulous white face and ear lobes present a striking and different appearance” is the description of the White Faced Spanish breed from mcmurrayhatchery.com and just one of over a hundred varieties of breeds that range from miniature to giant, white to rainbow and everything in between.

I have always been fascinated with birds as the evolutionary link to the dinosaurs and I was thrilled to find out chicken ownership was legal in New York City. The earliest known bird is the Archaeopteryx (ar-kee-OP-ter-ix) which lived 150 million years ago during the Jurassic Period. It shared the Earth with dinosaurs and flying reptiles known as pterosaurs. This crow-sized creature was one of the first birds on Earth. On You Tube I found some interesting videos documenting the Red Jungle Fowl the progenitor of our domesticated chicken. At the Bronx Zoo I watched the jungle fowls acutely, imagining what it would be like to care for and raise such an exotic and wild creature. After an extensive dip in the ocean of info online I puffed out my chest and announced to myself “I’m going to raise chickens.” and never looked back.

Since taking ownership I haven’t gotten much sleep. There are so many things that can go wrong I am inexperienced which adds to my feeling of impending doom. I wake in the morning and rush to see if they are ok, if they survived another night of my novice care. I am fearful of some disease spreading from my upstairs neighbor’s wild parrots to my innocent newborns. My first tragedy was beyond my control. Apparently some chicks just won’t make it. One of my Mottled Houdans, which arrived with a bent toe and difficulty walking, is still hanging in there, the little pipsqueak still limping around, dodging the now larger chicks and holding her own at the feed tray. On day three a perfectly healthy Buff Laced Polish chick, all creamy yellow with a powder puff afro, suddenly slipped into a coma that she never woke up from followed by another yellow chick whose breed I was never able to determine with certainty. The other two dozen are healthy in appearance with feathers growing brilliantly on their wings at one week old.

I will keep worrying over their well being til they get feathered enough to range the yard and live outside in the converted shed. Then they will be with nature again foraging in the wilds of my Bronx backyard which will be their home. Pecking and scratching in the grass and soil much like the Fowl I observed at the Zoo and the Archaeopteryx did so many years ago. My reward for vigilant parenting will be the most delicious natural white, brown, and even blue-green eggs and a sense of humanity and unity with the planet earth I call home.

Join A Club

Inspired by the Bronx VA Medical Center By Ricardo M. Caceres Jr.



Currently, HSC 12 taught by Professor Monte Grey has been heading up a collection project in collaboration with Mr. Michael Williams of the VA Hospital. When Mr. Williams came into my class back in September, he spoke to the class about some of the unmet needs that the VA was trying to deal with, which include transportation for his dialysis patients and other necessities. After extensive discussions with the class Mr. Williams with Professor Grey acting as our liaison, came up with the decision to help. Mr. Williams is trying to provide more support for the VA patients since those same patients gave so much to this country.

Right now, we are in the midst of a collection drive for gifts to the veterans. The class expanded the collection sites for small personal items to the library, the Writing Center, the Human Service department, Perkins Tutoring Center and other drop points throughout the campus. Since the patients of the VA have given so much of themselves to this country, we felt that collecting items such as lotions, playing cards, combs, razors, and even metro-cards would be the least that we could do to show a small token of our appreciation. On November 23rd the representatives from the Bronx VA Medical Center were on campus to receive the donations.

In order to see for myself I visited the James J. Peters Veterans Affairs Medical Center, which is located on 130 West Kingsbridge Road in the Bronx. The person I interviewed is Mr. Michael Williams, MSW LCSW, who is currently a Nephrology Social Worker, Minority Veterans Program Coordinator, and the Visual Impairment Service Team Coordinator for the VA hospital. For your information this agency’s main field of practice is Clinical Social Work, although the hospital is a host setting for the social workers at the hospital who deliver the medical treatment of United States veterans. Given

that the Veterans Hospital is a federal organization, it is a non-profit public agency whose services are exclusive for veterans.

The James J. Peters VA Medical Center is a tertiary care facility classified as a Clinical Referral Level 1 Facility. It’s a teaching hospital, providing a full range of patient care services, with state-of-the-art technology as well as education and research. Comprehensive health care is provided through primary care, tertiary care, and long-term care in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care. The James J. Peters VA Medical Center has 311 authorized hospital beds and 120 nursing home beds and operates several regional referral points including spinal cord injury and medical/surgical subspecialties. Additionally, it serves as home to the Network 3 Telephone Triage service. This system, staffed by Registered Nurses and available 24-hours a day, provides telephone helpline service for veteran patients of 36 VA medical centers; this is the only VA telephone care program that is nationally accredited.

The major unmet need that the Bronx VA Medical Center experiences is the lack of funding because they are unable to provide their dialysis patients with transportation to and from the center. Since these patients cannot hold steady jobs due to their dialysis treatments, the little money they do have goes towards transportation to and from the center and it adds up especially since they must have their treatments done anywhere from 2 to 4 times a week. One of the services that are provided by the hospital itself is the Access-A-Ride but that does not meet the needs of all the dialysis patients as they are not eligible for this service. Michael Williams has taken it upon himself to provide “black-car” services for his clients so they don’t have to spend what little money they do have.

Overall, I believe that the VA works to advance social justice because of the help and services they provide to their clients and patients. They provide the medical help that United States veterans are seeking for and are in dire need of. Clients come in to receive treatment and when they leave, they are able to live much more fruitful and satisfying lives. One recommendation I have to better the agency is to hire many more professional staff members, and push to receive free transportation for all patients of the VA hospital.

My interviewee, Michael Williams, received his A.S.S. from Bronx Community College, and then moved on to obtain his BSW and MSW from Lehman College. Mr. Williams entered into the field of social work because he began an internship working at the Bronx VA hospital and in doing so, was very intrigued with this field of study. He is also very passionate about helping those who seek out help for themselves since he firmly believes that those who are genuinely interested in advancing must always take the initiative.

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The Outside View

CBS's Early Show Gives Students the Cold Shoulder



Good day, BCC.

My name is Margie Y. Rodriguez, your Student Government Association President at Bronx Community College. I, along with a few other BCC students, were invited and asked to come represent our school on the *CBS Early Show* on Friday, November 13th.

We arrived and stood outside patiently in front of the CBS building from 6:45 a.m. until about 8 a.m. and, although it was cold, and windy, our hopes of getting some camera time to proudly represent BCC kept our adrenaline rushing and us hanging on. At about 7:50 a.m., the show's staff directed us to the barricades where again we stood cold and shivering but patiently waiting. Unfortunately, a CBS staff member gave us the cold shoulder and decided to focus on other groups of students around instead of us. One gentleman, Harry Smith [the show's anchor], looked our way, rolled his eyes, and shook his head with discontent. Fortunately, a lady, Maggie Rodriguez, was pleasant to all the students. She smiled and waved and looked at our direction as we shook our pom-poms and cheered for our college.

Keep in mind that we were invited, and yet we were treated as if we were pests. No one but Maggie treated us in a respectful manner; instead, we stood oblivious in the cold. One of the staff that stood by the lights sympathized with us and tried getting the camera guy to circle around our way even for just a second – but he too was ignored. Another guy who appeared to be the director walked our way and as we said, "Can we get just five seconds of TV time? Will we be seen? It's cold out here." His answer was both surprising as well as hurtful. "Well, you can leave if you want!" is what he said and kept on walking.

Why would CBS treat us like this? We are proud Bronx Community College students who felt as if we were invited for all the wrong reasons. Were we invited for their own publicity reasons? Why were we not given a chance to represent our college in any way possible? I am truly disappointed in CBS for the lack of respect they gave to BCC.

Greetings, all!

I am writing you this letter this morning because I have never experienced such a lack of respect for ones time and commitment as I have this morning. Throughout the last month, we at Bronx Community College have been promoting our appearance on the *CBS Early Show*. We went out of our way at times so that we could to ensure a high turn-out and represent the school in a big positive way. We were very happy and appreciative to the *CBS Early Show* for inviting our school to their show.

We arrived early as we were asked to do some students even coming directly from work and have little to no sleep. We all huddled together embracing the cold weather proudly displaying our school spirit for the world to see or so we thought. As the show was setting up, we were instructed to line the barricades to the left side of the cameras. This is where we were then ignored and basically forgotten for the next two hours. Nevertheless, we continued to conduct ourselves with dignity due to the fact that we were not only representing our friends and families but most importantly our school which we all love. We never let the weather or our poor treatment dampen our want or desire to represent our school.

As time moved on, it became very apparent that not was our presence not wanted but also not needed at the *CBS Early Show*. Soon, the once great enthusiasm and pride and respect for what we came to represent, gave way to a feeling of great disrespect and outrage for the way we were being pushed aside and disregarded by the early show. When we inquired why we were being treated this way we were to by the Assistant Director, I assume, in charge of the shoot, he responded with this response "You can leave if you want!"

We felt that this was the last slap in the face to a cold and disappointing morning and at this point all hopes and dreams of representing our school on national television were rapidly fading away as the minutes left for the show began to count down to a close. We made one last desperate plea for just 5 to 10 seconds of air time to represent our school. At almost exactly 8:45 or 8:50, we were finally rewarded for all of our time and commitment and dedication to our school. With the 5 to 10 seconds of national exposure for our school, we screamed and cheered and clapped for all we were worth. Afterward, we were left with such a negative feeling about what had taken place that we graciously declined their studio tour and returned back to our respective homes.

We, the students at Bronx Community College, take pride and respect for where we come from and when we are asked to represent our school, we consider that request an honor. We came to the *CBS Early Show* as invited guests hoping to display that pride and respect to the world and hopefully encourage others to come and join our college. When we left the *CBS Early Show*, we left feeling somewhat disappointed and worthless. When you invite someone to your home, you are expected to be a gracious host and leave them wanting to come back. The *CBS Early Show* failed to do both ... we neither felt appreciated or welcome and, as a result, would never want to return again.

Charles M. Harding
SGA Legal Legislator 2009-2010

The Early Show Experience Monique Lewis

I am writing because I have never experienced such a lack of respect towards myself and my respective college as I and my colleagues have this morning. The students and faculty of Bronx Community College have been promoting our appearance on the *CBS Early Show*. We went out of our way at times so that we could to ensure a high turn-out and represent the school in a big positive way. We were very happy and appreciative to the *Early Show* for inviting our school to their show. Our students were very excited at the prospect and we even had our Bronx Community College cheerleaders in attendance ready to promote BCC but CUNY too.

As I dragged myself out of bed from sleeping only three hours (I work three-to-four nights a week until about 3-to-4 am) I donned my BCC gear and set off in a cab with our SGA president, Margaret Rodriguez, to represent our illustrious college. Sleepy or not, we were going to be there to represent the school that had given us a new pathway in our lives!

We arrived and were greeted by Ms. Carol White [BCC's Special Assistant to the President for Public Affairs] braving the cold along with some of our other students some who were even coming directly from work and have little to no sleep – like myself and Ms. Rodriguez. We all huddled together embracing the cold weather and proudly displayed our school spirit for the world to see or so we thought. We had students from the Urban Unity club, LIBRA: BCC WOMEN OF POWER club, the Media Tech club, and even the cheerleaders showed up! BCC was definitely in the house!

As the show was setting up, we were instructed to line the barricades to the left side of the cameras. We never let the freezing cold or our poor treatment put a damper on our yearning to represent our school. The minutes began to tick by, and, slowly but surely, it seemed to us that our presence was not needed at the *Early Show*. The cameras panned on all the other schools but ours and when the hosts – Harry Smith and Maggie Rodriguez – came out, it seemed as if we were blatantly ignored! Not one time did the camera pan over to us!

When we inquired why we were being treated this way, we were told by a gentleman that worked on the set with this response "Well, you can leave if you want!" I was disgusted at that point! Not only was I working on limited sleep but my asthma was starting to flare up but I stayed. I felt that as a representative of BCC and CUNY that it was my duty to stay there! At that moment I looked up at the clock and to my dismay, there were only 5 to 10 minutes left of the show. At that point, I called a cab to take me back to BCC. As soon as I hung up, the announcement was made that they were going to pan the camera across all the colleges in attendance. As I watched my fellow classmates and faculty members yell and cheer as the camera showed them for 2.5 seconds, I felt a wave of disappointment at CBS and their treatment of us.

Most of BCC respectfully declined the tour that was offered to us. Personally, I had had enough of CBS to last me a lifetime!

Going Global



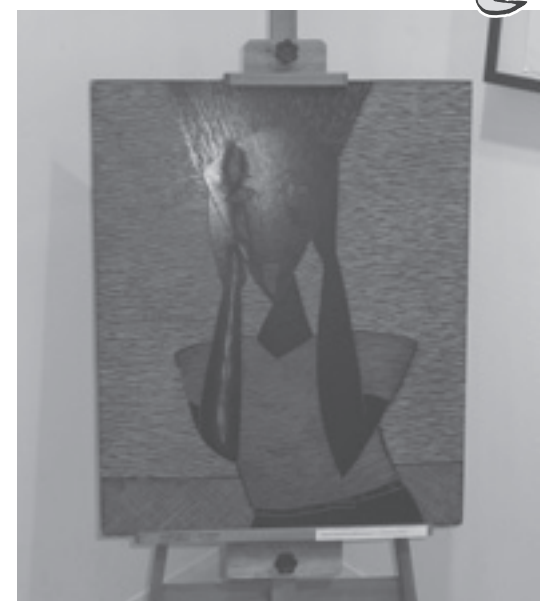
South African Artist Exhibits Unique Prints at BCC

Scenes from the Opening Reception for Ezequiel Mabote's *Ubuhle Be Africa (The Beauty of Africa)*

Thursday, February 11, 2010
The Hall of Fame Gallery, Bliss Hall

"Africa's rich cultural heritage is diverse and timeless and is distinguished by the vibrant colors that reflect the warmth of the sun and the continent's close ties to nature. UBULHE BE AFRICA incorporates an intense palette drawn from the joys of my people's everyday life. My work expresses the simple, but infectious beauty that shines through despite the conflicts, poverty and disease that we still continue to face. It is my responsibility as an African artist to share this beauty with the world and create a new vision that no longer depicts Africa as the Dark Continent, but as a beacon for a better world."

-- Ezequiel Mabote

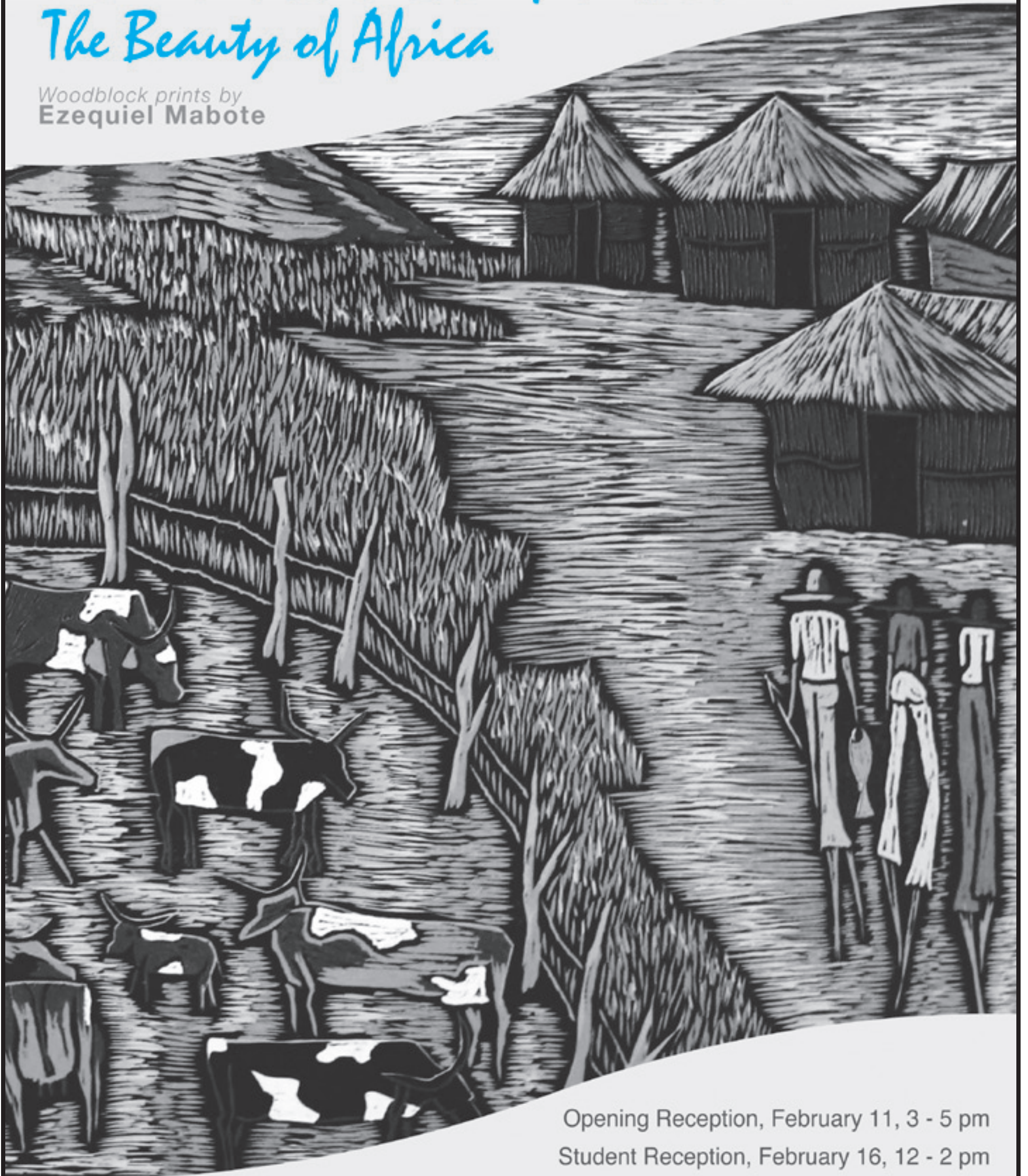


The Hall of Fame Gallery at Bronx Community College
presents

UBUHLI BE AFRICA

The Beauty of Africa

Woodblock prints by
Ezequiel Mabote



Opening Reception, February 11, 3 - 5 pm

Student Reception, February 16, 12 - 2 pm

February 8-18, open weekdays, 10-2pm

Design by Gerson Lopez

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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This show was made possible by The Office of the President, The Office of Academic Affairs, The National Center for Educational Alliances, and The Global Initiative Steering Committee, and supported in part by public funds from The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, BCC Inc., and The Art & Music Department of Bronx Community College.