

# THE COMMUNICATOR

JUNE 3, 2016

The Student Newspaper of Bronx Community College Issue 1 – SPRING 2016

## Welcome to the 2016 Graduation Edition of The Communicator!

### ASAP in the Lives of a June Graduate

#### Acronyms Saved Me!

#### A Journey with BCC, ASAP & PTK

By Michael Jacobson

The day of my commencement is right around the corner. It is hard not to reflect back on my experiences, hurdles and achievements over the past two years here at Bronx Community College. BCC has been an eye-opening experience for me. As an adult student embarking on the goal of paving my way to success, I realized that without the amazing educational, financial, personal, mental, and organizational assistance provided by BCC, ASAP, and PTK I would have not made it to this point in my life.

Starting out as a 29-year-old freshman college student when I hadn't taken education seriously since the age of 9, in fourth grade, I did not expect much success. Frankly, no one in my life did. I had a proven track record of bad decisions and unreliability. Either way, I decided I wanted more from life, and realized that the most direct way to obtain a good job, the ability to support a family, and be proud to hold my head up high was by pursuing a higher education. I started off with two spring semester night courses here at the historic BBCC campus. To my surprise, I found that I was not only exceling with ease, but – more importantly – I was interested in what the professors had to say and craved more information, knowledge and understanding. During the following summer session, when I had enrolled in two more courses, I received a call. The voicemail stipulated that I was invited to apply to an accelerated study program due to my academic achievements and other met eligibility requirements from the prior semester. I was elated!

The opportunity is called Accelerated Study in Associate Programs, ASAP for those in the know. If it

was not for this program, I can't tell you what my life would look like today. They provided me with financial assistance concerning tuition, books, and transportation! ASAP's combination of merit and need based criteria for eligibility allowed me to attend college for free. That's not all. The fact that to stay in the program depended on maintaining a good GPA and structure based factors such as but not limited to bi-weekly advisor meetings, gave me no choice but to develop some sort of responsibility and time management skills. The ASAP advisor program is what I cherished above all else. The one-on-one interaction with Ms. Jessica Cabrera was pertinent to my success here at BCC. The relationship I was able to form with my advisor was just the safety net I need to push forward without fear. I really owe her everything. Ms. Cabrera and the ASAP program allowed me to take my education to a level I didn't know existed, the honor societies.

Due to the ASAP requirement to keep my grades up, I was offered a membership to the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, or PTK for short. I remember when I told my father about this honor for my academic achievements, it was the first time in decades he said he was proud of me, and really meant it. I will never forget that moment. Directly following that uplifting feeling, I went online and accepted my membership. Life has not been the same since. I immediately recognized the value and opportunity that PTK had to offer in my first member meeting, and thereafter ran for an officer position. I am convinced that PTK played an essential role in my application approval for a prestigious opportunity



offered by BCC, the Salzburg Seminar Global Citizenship Program. I participated in GCP 67, and it allowed me to find like-minded people with similar goals and morals and truly try together to make a difference. With the topics of the seminars and the discussions that followed combined with the experiences, I returned a much more aware, appreciative, and thoughtful member of society and officer for my honor society.

Much like at GCP I have met people in PTK and developed relationships with them to the point where they are considered family. PTK has enabled me to work on leadership skills and allowed me to develop myself into the kind of person I always dreamed of being. I owe a lot to PTK for introducing me to my new-found family within their Society. I plan on staying active with the BCC Lambda Nu chapter for quite some time after my graduation in June.

The bottom line for me is BCC provided me with ASAP which helped me to enter PTK and participate in GCP. All of these acronyms show a strong start in the pursuit of my MBA, but more so, they saved me, and I will be forever grateful. BCC and the programs of opportunity they offer their students, made me a better man.

### The Presidential Race Heats Up

Vermont Senator and Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders held a well-attended and enthusiastic rally at Bronx Community College's historic Gould Memorial Library on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 10 days ahead of his New York state primary battle with former senator and secretary of state Hillary Clinton. Cheering him on were BCC students, faculty, and staff, including BCC alum and former SGA member Julissa Lora.

*News 12 The Bronx* reported that Sanders talked

about immigration, foreign policy, and education issues. "He drew cheers from the crowd when he spoke about diversity." Amplifying his campaign theme – *A Future To Believe In* – Sanders was surrounded by celebrities such as Justin Bartha (*The Hangover*) and Susan Sarandon. "This is a revolution of hope," said Sarandon of Sanders' campaign.

After coming in second to Secretary Clinton in the New York primary, Senator Sanders has vowed to stay in the race until the convention.



## Outside the Quad

### The College's BCC Salzburg Fellows Gain Valuable Global Experience

Four Bronx Community College students were among 31 from CUNY (including those from Queensborough and Kingsborough community colleges) to attend the Salzburg Global Citizenship Alliances Global Citizenship Seminar in the sparkling city of Salzburg, hometown of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

From their arrival on Saturday, April 23rd to their departure during the early morning hours of Saturday, April 30th, Hakim Mitchell, Yubelka Nunez, Henry Siccardi, and Welbeck Sowah were immersed in a wide-range of global topics including lecture/discussions that included "Mapping Ethnocentrism," "We Build the City" "Brand YOU! The Fourth Industrial Revolution," The European Refugee Crisis: A Disaster for Global Policy," and "Mapping Globalization," among other challenging topics. Lectures were presented by a world-class faculty from the University of Salzburg, San José State University, the University of Oldenburg, and TU Dortmund University. On the last full



Students from Bronx, Kingsborough, and Queensborough community colleges, along with seminar faculty and CUNY advisors, outside the Schlosswirt au Anif, Salzburg, Austria, during a break in a lecture/discussion session, April 2016.

day of the seminar, the CUNY students presented their group projects that showcased their own week's work on

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Join The Communicator Staff

The Communicator is seeking interested and committed editorial staff members. We need news (campus events, including sports, club, and cultural events), editorial columnists, creative writers (poems, short stories, and memoirs), photographers, and proofreaders as well as an office manager (someone who is eligible for work study would be perfect). Senior colleges, as well as scholarship sources, love to see campus involvement such as working for the college newspaper on your applications.

Please contact Professor Andrew Rowan (we will get started in August as a team) if you are interested:  
andrew.rowan@bcc.cuny.edu.

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The staff of The Communicator would like to thank Senior Vice President Claudia Schrader and Ms. Yvonne Erazo, Office of Student Life, for their diligent assistance that has led to the publication of this special Graduation Edition of the newspaper.

SGA Letter to the Editor



BCC’s SGA Caucus with President Thomas Isekengebe and CUNY Chancellor James Milliken.

Dear Communicator Editor:

Being part of the student government for the past year has been an exciting learning experience. I had the opportunity to meet the politicians that represent our district; these representatives are an asset to our college and community. I learned that students have a very loud voice if they stand together for a cause. During the term of 2015-2016, student government alongside many student leaders throughout the five boroughs fought against Governor Cuomo’s proposed tuition hike, however students fought for tuition freeze and won against the proposal. When I transfer to a four-year institution this fall, I will be involved with my college’s SGA. I strongly believe that it is the best way to make great change.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Matos  
Student Government Vice President

SGA Sets Tone for 2016 by Giving Back

On January 15, 2016 the Student Government Association in conjunction with Student Life organized a day of service in which they made 225 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. The community service helped to feed plenty of folks in our community as Bronx Community College delivered the sandwiches to P.O.T.S. (Part Of The Solution). As leaders it is very important for us to assist our community and show unity. One day it could be you or your family who’s in need of help so the groundwork that you lay down today is the foundation of the future. I for one was happy for the experience because it feels good to give back to your community. It was a great testament of unity as many students participated in the event. What was extremely rewarding was to see staff and students interact in an informal and positive atmosphere. As we put together the sandwiches, we started sharing stories about our families, childhoods, journeys, and aspirations. Students benefitted from hearing Yvonne Erazo’s, Shermekia Pierce’s and SVP Claudia Schrader’s stories and understanding where their passion for student success came from. In the same manner, they learned more about the students and got hear how students were experiencing Bronx Community College. Mary Velez, who was fairly new to BCC, got to bond with her co-workers and the students she also serves at Student Life. Ironically enough this all took place on Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, a day that honors a leader who worked for a better world for today’s youth. The motivation and devotion exhibited this day was a credit to all those students who chose to make a difference as well as the administrators who joined us. A special thank you to SVP Schrader, Yvonne Erazo, Shermekia Pierce, and Mary Velez for all their help.



The SOMOS El Futuro Conference  
By Paloma Alonso

From March 18<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup>, I attended SOMOS El Futuro Conference in Albany, New York, with my fellow Student Government Association (SGA) members. I found it be to be invigorating, and it was the first time that I had ever been among a large of Latinos and felt that I belonged. SOMOS showed me that no matter how much or how little Spanish you spoke, how well or poorly you danced salsa or bachata, or if you were born here in the United States or Latin America, that we are all Latinos and that we must stand united. This was a message that truly hit home when I went to the panel discussion about Puerto Rico’s economic crisis. The panel discussion was moderated by Assemblyman Marcos Crespo and Senator Jose M. Serrano, and the panelists were Frederik L. Riefkohl Maldonado, CFO/EVP of CSA Group, Edwin Melendez, Professor of Urban Affairs and Planning and Director of

the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, the Honorable Jose M. Serrano, and the Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez. Before attending that panel, I was undereducated about the crisis in Puerto Rico. I knew the island was in default and that its people were suffering, but it wasn’t a topic that I particularly cared about because I’m not Puerto Rican nor do I have family living there. That view changed, however, as I learned the how dire the situation was and how many people in the U.S. government wanted to turn a blind eye to the problem. To hear that the United States, the country that was supposed to be looking out for Puerto Rico, the country that has enjoyed all the benefits of the relationship, played a huge part in damaging the economy angered me. It seems that colonialism would never end and that it benefits the U.S. government to keep Latinos divided.

Growing up all I’ve ever heard about Puerto Rico and its people was that they took advantage of the United States had to offer while everyone else had to work and struggle for their own. Any immigrant hearing this would demonize Puerto Rico and cause further divisions in the Latino community. Through the years, I learned that that wasn’t the whole story, but I never imagined that the abuse was so bad. Hearing politicians speak so passionately about standing united to help Puerto Rico was inspiring and compassionate. I appreciate the diversity of Latin America in a way that I’ve never done before. SOMOS taught me that together we have a powerful voice in the United States and in the government and that voice’s purpose is to uplift each other and secure a better world for the generations to come.



# Outside the Quad

## What is Nerd Nation?

By Michael Jacobson, President, Phi Theta Kappa, Lamda Nu Chapter

Many probably make the common mistake of picturing a convention filled with Boba Fetti and superheroes all gathering to share their love of fantasy and science fiction. A place where dreams become a reality. Nerd Nation is an annual convention for the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society’s advisors, officers, and members to converge for a weekend involving all things PTK. The convention is not only a networking extravaganza, but also an educational event to strengthen and fine tune the four ideological foundations in which The Society was founded upon. Scholarship, leadership, service and fellowship are the principles that every Phi Theta Kappa member is expected to embrace. PTK’s annual Nerd Nation is an experience where one can start to prepare and pick up the tools required to make their dreams into realities.

We drove down from BCC campus on Thursday night and arrived at 2am. I expected not to see a soul at that hour, but the grand lobby was flooded with PTK members from all around the globe! A mere six hours later I was able to check in with event staff and receive my identification badge and welcome materials. We were ready to make our presence known, or at least take full advantage of everything the convention had to offer.

Having a head count of six members/officers and one advisor representing Bronx Community College’s Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Lambda Nu, we made up a miniscule percentage of the attendees considering there were approximately 3,000 people in attendance. What we lacked in numbers we made up for in explosive spirit. It is my belief that our 7 person cheers rivaled that of the Texas chapters which were made up of hundreds of people. Regardless, the energy was spectacular! PTK sweats, shirts, and other gear commandeered the Gaylord Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland.

Our days were packed with lectures, forums, and a little down time here and there. The larger and more time consuming events of the day were called general sessions, in which all members of the convention attended. They revolved around amazing, knowledgeable, and prestigious guest speakers such as Lord John Eatwell (President of Queens’ College Cambridge), Katty Kay (lead anchor



for *BBC World News America*), and Dr. Lynn Tincher-Lander (President and CEO, Phi Theta Kappa). These lecture-based sessions were informative and engaging due to the current events brought up by the speakers. The take-away message from the speakers advocated aspects of scholarship and fellowship. The speakers urged the audience to be thorough and mindful in all our endeavors while also helping out not only one another, but all mankind. As previously mentioned, as a PTK member there are certain traits we all believe in and strive to obtain/strengthen. This convention posed multiple opportunities to develop those traits and definitely amplified the four PTK principles for me personally.

Smaller educational sessions were held throughout the day as well. The topics varied for each session and they were held simultaneously, so we had to formulate a plan for what session would be most beneficial for each Lambda Nu-bian to attend. There were a few leadership skill building sessions that I could have benefited from, but as President I had to take into account the work with PTK projects that lies ahead, as well as the future of this chapter. For the good of my officers and members, I decided to forego building my own skills, to attend sessions that focused on important details for how to complete the college project and honors in action project. That was a leadership and service milestone for me. It felt good to put aside my own wants and focus on the needs of

something much bigger than myself.

In between the aforementioned sessions, there was a market place for us to attend. This consisted of a much more interactive and personable setting. Phi Theta Kappa affiliate/sponsor companies such as Geico and the American Cancer Society (along with a slew of other companies) had booths set up with product giveaways and informational pamphlets. There were also four-year institution representatives stationed at tables with tons of information about their programs and admissions processes. Walking around that huge room really gave off a vibe that the world was at my fingertips. I found it motivating, inspiring, and flat out exciting!

If I had to make any complaints, I have only three. First, out of hundreds of members on campus at BCC, we only could afford to take seven people. If we had funding to bring 10-20 people we could make our chapter immensely more significant on campus. Secondly, the convention was great, the grounds were immaculate, but with that beauty comes a price. That is not the cliché either. That place was inexplicably expensive and paying out of pocket for meals was a burden on my bank account. Lastly, and possibly the most important issue I had with the weekend long event was that there was a serious lack of engaging networking. I would have loved for a general session to focus on attendees meeting other people from different chapters, states, and regions. It would have been helpful and exciting to participate in activities that promoted interaction between people who may not be so comfortable opening up to, for lack of a better term, strangers.

Complaints aside, I feel grateful, lucky, and honored to have been included in such an amazing event. Gathering this many like-minded young individuals with similar goals and aspirations had an indescribable inspirational impact (sorry for the alliteration) on me, and surely many others. Overall, it was an amazing experience where I felt a bond was built between our members in attendance. A bond of not only fellowship, scholarship, service, and leadership but a bond which gave us the foundations of comfort with one another to work as a unit more efficiently.

## The College’s BCC Salzburg Fellows Gain Valuable Global Experience

*Continued from Page 1*

creating action plans in the areas of media, NGO action, the arts, and STEM-related projects to address the growing global refugee crisis.

Through the years that BCC has sent students (and faculty for the summer session), attendees have attested to the transformative effect of going to Salzburg and the intellectual challenges that the seminar has presented. Henry Siccardi has noted, “The GCA in Salzburg was one of the most professionally, educationally, and socially enriching experiences I’ve been lucky enough to participate in. I left with more questions than answers in regards to our developing world and returned with the inspiration to find their answers.”

Of her experience at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Yubelka Nunez has stated, “To have stood in the gas chambers, to have walked through rooms where people’s dignity and humanity were brutally removed is beyond my ability to describe. When reading about the propaganda and misinformation published in the 30’s, I thought to myself how language changes over time, but the forces, the unfathomable cruelty, the processes of brainwashing, dividing, promoting hatred to obtain power – those concepts are present today. There is no difference between past, present, and future.

Of special note to all of the students was the informal nature of the session and the access that they had to faculty, their CUNY advisors, and to the GCA staff, including Dr. Jochen Fried, president and CEO of the Global Citizenship Alliance, Astrid Schroder, chief operating officer of the alliance, and David Goldman, the alliance’s director of program development.

Simply put, Hakim Mitchell has stated that the Salzburg experience is “unforgettable.”

*Editor’s Note: BCC will hold a Study- and Volunteer-Aboard Fair in September where information about Salzburg, the Michael Steuerman Legacy Fund Scholarship, and CUNY Study Abroad Programs will be available. Students will be notified by BCC Broadcast at the beginning of the fall 2016 semester of the date, time, and location.*



BCC student Yubelka Nunez (center) prepares to explore the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site, Tuesday, April 26, 2016.



# Outside the Quad

## The Essence of Kim Burrell: An Appreciation

By William Murray

*Her sound is like radiant light drawn around the heads of saints, fulsome and bright, demonstrating one-of-a-kind quality, distinctive yet intangible, as if produced celestially. Her voice glides with sonant cartwheels and somersaulting riffs. The elastic bands of her larynx that can strike tension or attune to dissolve like liquid in the top soil of her songs; she hits every right note in fell swoops, and swells of perfect tone and pitch. Her every passage is made on key. At her live show, you will not thirst spiritually as she establishes music’s architecture, right before your ears.*



Kim Burrell and Donnie McClurkin

Performing professionally since 1995, Kim Burrell served many years as assistant pastor at Jericho City Church of God in Christ. Given her history, it is only natural that sixteen years into her career, Burrell forged ahead to become Pastor of her own Love and Liberty Fellowship Church, celebrating her installment in February 2011. Recently, after commemorating four years as church leader, Pastor Kim Burrell relocated Love and Liberty Fellowship Church just eight miles northeast of its former home in Houston, Texas. Burrell’s inspirational testimony is ever increasing, and followers of her ministry may first know Burrell from her renowned music. In addition to holding pastoral office, Kim Burrell has recorded five albums over two decades that immortalize her virtuosity and prove her consummate musicianship. Each recording demonstrates a ministerial magic about her that produces profound love and admiration for the Holy Spirit, who she herself undoubtedly adores. She is currently working toward her sixth album *From A Different Place*, to be released this August on Shanachie Records, including several of her signature songs best-known for comprising set lists at concerts and congregations.

A number of the musical compositions on Burrell’s new album have, until now, been performed exclusively live, including the mainstay “Have Faith in Me.” This powerful track tells the listener that by restricting oneself, we too are restricting even God, and asks that we not place upper limits on life’s possibilities. Burrell sings, “You can have everything you want, everything you need, if you take the limits off of [God].” The song has encouraged Burrell’s fan base for many years by stressing the importance of having confidence in our abilities as well as the exceeding greatness of God’s power. In fact, it says that the best ability you can ever show is faith. Faith proves to God that you want to be built up; He works through the channels of our faith in Him.

“It Is Done” is a song about God drawing forth provision. Here, Burrell reminds us of the power prayer has for producing desired results. The song is a declaration of God giving us the authority of His word to speak to our stumbling blocks with conviction. No sooner said than done, if we believe it, we shall be unimpeded. Perhaps the most lyrically and sonically uplifting track, audiences will be

familiar with this tune and come away from it assured that devotion to God will move mountains and that their hearts’ desires are already praised and elevated into His presence.

“Go to God” has a global message because it was written in the wake of September 11th. It was inspired by the worldwide significance of the attacks on the United States as well as our country’s homegrown violence in current events. “Thank You Jesus” is about God’s tender mercies bearing fresh each day, echoing the lamentations of Jeremiah the prophet, Burrell sings “With each new day brand new mercies I see, that’s what He’s done for me.” This track is slated as the first single; Burrell described how it materialized, “Thank You Jesus” is a song that was written by collaborative effort between Robert Sput Searight out of Dallas, as well as Myron Butler. I added some new words and verses. Then, Asaph Ward (CEO of Miralex Records who produced Burrell’s 1998 album *Everlasting Life*) and I decided to come up with a different, funkier approach beat-wise.” Of her longstanding relationship with Ward, Burrell said, “My connection to Asaph Ward goes back to the early 90s. I recorded with him and his church choir, along with his mother. What keeps us together is our ability to expand beyond gospel... I trust his judgment and he has a good ear for where I like to go vocally.”

Kim Burrell is a Dove and Stellar Award winner (with several Grammy nods) and has become a household name, reaching the world over. Through her incorporation of music with classical jazz attributes into a repertoire of mostly gospel music, she has many regarding her as a contemporary Ella Fitzgerald. But, far excelling even her closest vocal contenders, Burrell has grown to master a unique dynamical form of melismatic singing without any formal training, even after battling double pneumonia for eight years as a child. Her widening audience will agree that that Burrell defies explanation. It takes tremendous skill to change the pitch multiple times in one single syllabized note as Burrell so recognizably does, going into expert detail every time she sings; gospel and secular artists alike have attested to her talent: Beyoncé said that all the “real” singers listen to her. Jill Scott said hers is the most exquisite voice

she’s ever heard, while Ginuwine said she is the definition of singing. Harry Connick Jr. hailed her as one of the greatest musical minds he’s ever been around. She is Chaka Khan’s biggest hero – admittedly – and everything Angie Stone wishes to be. Burrell believes that impassioning others is truly divine, “The idea that I’ve inspired anybody has to be a God connection [especially] to have not studied any music.” Even Whitney Houston said Kim Burrell’s voice is one of the greatest.

2010 was the year when Kim Burrell and Whitney Houston publicly encouraged each other in all places. In early January 2010, the *BET Honors* were held and Kim Burrell shocked honoree Whitney Houston with a tribute performance of “I Believe in You and Me,” from *The Preacher’s Wife* soundtrack. Later in May, Burrell joined Houston on stage in Munich, Germany, during the latter’s comeback tour. In December, Burrell and Houston sang “I Look to You” at the recording of *BET’s Celebration of Gospel* which aired in January 2011. Then in February of 2011 at Burrell’s opening ceremony of Love and Liberty Fellowship Church, Houston attended and spoke a blessing (the 122nd Psalm) over Burrell at the ceremony. It was merely a year after their friendship received great media attention that the legendary singer passed away. “I’m still missing Whitney,” Burrell says, “and I think of her every single day. We were very close. We were like sisters.”

Burrell travels year-round to sing and preach in many of the nation’s major cities and has led worship services in the reaches of Canada, Guadeloupe, Nigeria and beyond. Added to her many roles, she is charged with consultancy over participants of *BET’s Sunday Best*. She joined the cast in 2010 for Season 3, and the acclaimed singer returns as mentor to contestants for her sixth season in 2015 as part of *Sunday Best All Stars Edition*. In this capacity Burrell gives guidance to her mentees much like she does for her congregation at Love and Liberty Fellowship Church: “I cherish my role among Sunday Best because it gives me an opportunity to invest in people the values that others have invested in me by way of example and tutelage.”

Over the years she has seen a metamorphosis in gospel music and encourages emerging artists, “Just remain true to God. I think [gospel music] has changed tremendously, which I do hope and pray that it will do an about-face back to its original intent and that is to give glory to God.” Burrell will embark on 50+ city tour from September 30-December 6. She says the tour is partly about a resurgence of gospel music to its proper bounds. The Festival of Praise Tour 2015 is pioneered by Grammy/Stellar award-winners Bishop Donnie McClurkin and Fred Hammond who are re-launching the concert series after a successful run in 2014. All of the headliners want attendees to feel unified, and they are setting the example, as Burrell says, “All of us included will be each other’s background singers as well as just sharing the moments. I think it’s a resurging of gospel music back to its proper placement.”

why am I complaining

Created By Temi

Can't top that rite?

Nope but you just became my inspiration

This just shows that if I can do it, you can too.

Lesson learnt!

Bye Mike. I have to head to work. My name is Addison by the way

Bye Addison Nice meeting you.

THE NEXT DAY...

Hey mike, are you tired today?

Nope!

This comic strip was created at MakeBeliefsComix.com. Go there to make one yourself!



# Campus News

## DIGITAL VIEWS

International Cinematographers Guild, Local 600, IATSE

Masters Seminars Present

Director John Pirozzi

**Don't Think I've Forgotten: Cambodia's Lost Rock and Roll**  
**April 30, 2016**

(From left to right): Professor Jeffrey Wisotsky, Faculty Advisor, BCC Media and Digital Film Club members, Felix Taveras, Stephanie Zambrano, Ryan Toney, Kerron Henry, and John Pirozzi, director/cinematographer attend the screening and discussion of John's feature documentary film *Don't Think I've Forgotten: Cambodia's Lost Rock and Roll* at the Tribeca Film Center.



## New York Film and Television Student Alliance Meets with Key Industry Stakeholders

Professor Jeffrey Wisotsky, faculty advisor, BCC Media and Digital Film Club, poses with sixteen film and television students representing four different New York schools – Ithaca College, Fordham University, Hamilton College and Bronx Community College – came together April 21-April 23 for the second annual New York City meeting of the New York Film and Television Student Alliance (NYFTSA). Their schedule included tours of production facilities and meetings with leaders of the New York State film/television production and post-production communities.

NYFTSA aims to bring together students from colleges and universities all over New York State that offer production majors or minors in film or television production and post-production. Their mission is twofold: to nurture homegrown talent by encouraging and supporting students who want to pursue their future careers in New York State; and to help graduating students with contacts and access to industry professionals and organizations. The students planned the April trip to gather direct feedback and advice from key industry stakeholders.

The Governor's Office of Motion Picture & Television Development helped set the itinerary for the New York City trip, which began with a visit to advertising giant McCann Erickson for a roundtable discussion with union and guild leaders from several IATSE locals, SAG/AFTRA, the PGA East, DGA East, New York Women in Film and Television, and the New York Production Alliance. Over two days, the group visited the World Trade Center for meetings with film location liaisons for the Durst properties, toured the sets and soundstage complex at Steiner Studios in Brooklyn and attended events at the Tribeca Film Festival.

On April 23, the group convened at Fordham University's Bronx campus to discuss outreach to more campuses across the state, and to plan for their second statewide NYFTSA summit to be held in Ithaca this fall. The first officially chartered NYFTSA chapter was established at Ithaca College last year. The other schools on the New York City trip are in the process of forming local chapters, and students on at least four other New York State colleges and universities are in the early stages of organizing chapters.



## Aerobics: Decades of Dance - Aerobics Style - at BCC

By Dr. Joyce Bloom

Adjunct Professor, Department of Health, Physical Education and Wellness

Twenty five years ago the aerobic dance course at Bronx Community College began.

Aerobics is physical exercise ranging from low to high intensity requiring oxygen and generating energy. It takes place over extended, rather than short, periods of time and results in physical and mental health benefits.

Health benefits of consistent practice include strengthening the heart, circulatory and skeletal muscles, reducing resting heart rate and blood pressure and facilitating respiration and the transportation of oxygen around the body. Improved cognitive function and psychological well-being as well as reduction of stress are also associated with such exercise. The combination of exercise with the complete array of dance styles is creative and enjoyable.

Aerobics students reveal what aerobic dance means to them:

Barbara Perez says that aerobics is a form of exercise she likes to do to be energized. Norbely Cruseta notes that it is good to be able to increase her cardiac efficiency and to be healthy. Atilann Morillo posits that aerobic dance is a great complement to other physical activities that he does, such as lifting weights. Yerika Polanco feels that aerobic dance relaxes her, and allows her to add drama to her dancing as well as to lose weight. Tajram Permauloo notices that with aerobic dance he gets "a runners high." He uses science to aim for the proper intensity and to work hard enough to get that good feeling. Adderlyn Garcia states that he does aerobics because after the session he feels relieved of all the stress that has built up during the week and because it's fun.

Franchesca Castillo sums it up with her philosophy that aerobic dance is good for the body and soul!

Can you picture yourself in aerobic dance? Give it a try!





# Campus News

## C-BALL at BCC

By Gilda Cote

On April 2, 2016, the Community Board Athletic Leadership League (C-BALL) had their monthly basketball game at Bronx Community College’s Alumni Gym. While it started as a rainy day, the sun made way, and the children started pouring in. We took over the entire front side of the Alumni Gym building, and it was a packed, fun-filled day. We had three basketball games sessions held on the top floor: the Lady Broncos helped kids learn how to shoot a ball through the hoop in the morning. Then, there was a basketball game between the C-BALL female team and BCC’s Lady Broncos. The third was between C-BALL’s male team and male students from BCC.

The second floor was the educational hub where registration and membership services were provided. Breakfast and lunch was made available by Desi’s Soup Kitchen,, the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) offered CPR education, and our very own BCC Nursing Club evaluated the height, weight and blood pressure of all children and most grown-ups that entered along with nutritional counseling.

Students and members of the community came together for a simple cause: to give children a safe space for the day and to make them feel like they can be leaders through basketball. This service project allowed

BCC to provide a space for 85+ children and their accompanying adults for the day.

I want to give a warm thanks to Darnell Reed, the point person for C-BALL and Desi’s Soup Kitchen for bringing the idea to me, to Phi Theta Kappa and the Nursing Club for all the hard work that was put in and for volunteering in the game, to Sleep Johnson for creating such a wonderful program, to our Lady Broncos for participating in a friendly game, to our public safety officers and the maintenance and cleaning staff for being on the sidelines to help out whenever possible, and to all the people in the background that helped with getting the space together, including Professor Janet Heller and every one in the Department of Health, Physical Education , and Wellness as well as Senior Vice President Claudia Schrader, Director of



Student Life John Agnelli, and the staff from the Office of Student Life. I also want to thank Yvonne Erazo for staying by me through all the challenges that we faced trying to get the event together. At the end of the day it was a complete success, and the smiles on the children’s faces was all the reward needed.

## In Praise of the C-BALL League

By Darnell Reed

It’s tough to articulate words that can describe how I feel about the Community Board Athletic Leadership League (CBALL) event because there are no words to explain my thankful emotions.

I am very thankful for my advisor Yvonne Erazo and PTK for giving me a voice in society and the experience to commit actions to my thoughts. That is what gave me the strength to go out and make changes in the community, and also gave me the strength to propose my idea of the CBALL event to (BCC).

I would also like to thank the staff, faculty and security of BCC that aided in a successful day.

Our job with Desi Soup Kitchen Inc., is to feed those who are hungry and connect these people to social services that can help with their next meal. Our task with

CBALL, is to help children become productive members of society, to show them there is more to life besides the negative things they are accustomed to or hear about, and to build their character by preparing them for real world experiences, and propelling them forward. I was so excited to show the children Bronx Community College Campus, the place that helped me build my character which prepared me for the real world and propelled me forward in my academic career.

There is a saying about killing two birds with one stone. Well, on that day, we were able to kill multiple birds with one stone. The stone was the venue of Bronx Community College.

The overall theme to the combination of Desi Soup Kitchen and CBALL is to show the kids how

important education is to success, and that there are people out here willing to help. The Bronx is the poorest county in the State of New York. The only way we will be able to combat that problem is by educating the next generation.

We reiterated our theme of the importance of education throughout the day when children got to interact with the multiple professions that college can help them obtain. Overall, it was an educational experience for all. Filled with entertainment, smiles, laughter, and fun. For many of the children, this was their first time ever on a college campus and that they exposed to the idea of going to college. Hopefully, thanks to Bronx Community College, it will not be their last.

## The Benefits of Research to Bronx Community College Students

By Henry Siccardi (Future M.D.)

College students nationwide are encouraged to take advantage of the clubs and activities that exist on their college campuses. Students at Bronx Community College have access to many clubs, from science-based clubs like the Biology Club or American Chemical Society to the more artistic Spoken Word or Anime clubs. These clubs and the many other extracurricular activities on campus are meant to expand students’ educational experiences and to help them develop into scholars and contributing members of society. Students at BCC may not be aware that they have access to another form of extracurricular activity, one that many students at two-year colleges do not have: research. Higher level research provides great opportunities to students educationally, socially, and professionally while also bringing benefits to their home institution.

Research is a great way to help students grow into scholars, to be, as Ralph Waldo Emerson put it, “the delegated intellect...Man Thinking.” Research opportunities take students out of their comfort zone and with proper guidance helps them gain skills that set them apart from their peers. These skills include strategizing and planning skills, organizational skills, communication skills, and of course critical thinking skills, among others. Doing research work also helps students reinforce the material they learn in class by forcing them to take what they learn and apply it to real world situations. In doing so they answer the question every student has at least once in their lives, “why do I need to know this?” When the answer to that question becomes clear during research work the student’s interest and appreciation of that subject is bound to increase.

What’s more, research work allows students the opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship with the faculty member leading the work. BCC is home to many first-generation college students, including the author of this article, who lack guidance experienced family members

or a professional network to guide them through the education and career process. For many, such a mentorship may be the difference between surviving and striving in college. For some it may be the difference in keeping them in school at all. One student active in research on campus feels research gives her “the opportunity to have hands on” and that it makes her “eager and thirsty to learn more.” Yet for all students research has the potential to be the first major success of students’ academic careers. The early successes are the building blocks to greatness and it important students and faculty alike foster an environment where opportunities for success are plenty.

One example of student-driven research on campus is a project run by Dr. Vicki Flaris of the Chemistry Department. Her research team, which includes this author, is studying ways to develop plastic materials that kill bacteria. Their work is being done with the assistance of Professor Allan Gilman of the Biology Department. Students benefit greatly from working with subjects other than those within their majors as they gather a more well-rounded education. Dr. Flaris’ team, for example, has biology, chemistry, physics, and nuclear science majors among others. Though Dr. Flaris guides her team the work is conducted by BCC students and they are responsible for gathering, organizing, and interpreting their data. This teaches students the importance of working independently and how to old themselves, and each other, accountable. After all, there is a team dynamic at play where very intelligent people must learn to co-exist and collaborate with one another.

At times the work can be difficult or tedious, but it is always worthwhile. One member of the team, medical technology major Raquel Matos, feels “research has helped [her] focus on something greater than [herself] and has turned [her] weaknesses into strengths.” Other members of the team have received grants or scholarships for their work while some have been accepted to competitive

research programs, such as the CUNY Summer Undergraduate Research Program (CSURP). Some of these accomplishments have even led to collaborations with other labs, some as far away as Australia, Germany, and Greece. Part of the reason for this expansion has been that Dr. Flaris’ students are also expected to present their research. In fact, Dr. Flaris’ students have presented their data at fourteen conferences since 2012 ranging from New York City to Hawaii. At these conferences students not only have the opportunity to interact with students from other labs but also gain experience networking and begin developing a professional network.

So how does a student get involved in a research project? The answer is quite simple: do well in your classes, show a willingness to learn and, most of all, do not be afraid to ask! There are professors all over campus involved in exciting work, from Professors Robinson, Tian, and Maliti in the Biology Department to Professors Flaris, Socha, and Durante in Chemistry. Dr. Madeleine Bates and Dr. Kealey Dias of the Mathematics department are also heavily involved in research and helping students get access to funds for research. Non-STEM majors can certainly also get involved in research projects, as the social sciences such as psychology, sociology, and political science are fields with extensive research opportunities.

Speak to your professors, the chairs of the departments, and your fellow classmates to see who might be working on something of interest. Remember, if there is nothing going on that you find interesting it is also possible you will find a professor willing to start a new project built around your idea. BCC’s students are lucky to have so many people willing to support student-driven research, from individual professors all the way to the Office of the President. Now it is up to the student body to make sure the work continues at a high level. The boundaries are non-existent and the potential, limitless.



# Campus News

## Bronx Community College Marks Eleven-Year Milestone in Nanoscience, as Professor Vicki Flaris Wins Prestigious Educational & Mentoring Award

By Robert Josman

This year Bronx Community College marks an eleven-year milestone in having an active chapter of the Society of Plastics Engineers. During the years since its inception, the chapter has grown to now include Nanoscience, an emerging science which is expanding geometrically in educational, research and employment opportunities.

Professor Vicki Flaris of the Department of Chemistry & Chemical Technology has not only been the chapter's advisor since its inception, she has acted in a mentoring role to those students involved with the chapter. Because of her efforts, the college has class Chemistry 20 "Introduction to Nanoscience", which she created, and which is going to be held again this spring semester. Each year it has grown in numbers and last semester had twenty plus students registered.

Each year the Society of Plastics Engineers has an international professional conference which includes a series of exhibits, presentations and lectures in various fields. Members of the Bronx Community College chapter have attended this conference each year and presented research done at the college to an international audience. Last year four students attended with Dr. Flaris, in Orlando. This year's conference will be in late May, and be held in Indianapolis. With the college's expanded support we are able to send six students, Robert Josman, Henry Siccardi, Raul Rivas, Catherine Jerry, Islam Shalodi and Raquel Matos to attend with Professor Flaris.

This academic year has been especially gratifying. This was because the Society of Plastics Engineers gave Professor Flaris one of its highest honors, the President's award for "Excellence in Mentoring." I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this award as she routinely goes out of her way to help her students.

Each year Professor Flaris suggests a number of presentations we should all attend, and the Orlando conference was no different. Because the students had different majors, nuclear medicine and nursing for example, Professor Flaris recommended that we each pick out other lectures which interested us and/or were related to our majors. One of the lectures I chose to attend stood out. It was given by Michael A. Meador, who was one of the conference's plenary speakers. He is the Director of President Obama's National Nanotechnology Coordination Office. He gave a lecture entitled "The Role of Nanotechnology in Current and Future Space Missions." As a part of his lecture he talked about the more than \$ 20 billion which have already been invested in nanotechnology. This money has not only gone into research but also toward education.

Nanoscale materials and devices devolved through this funding are not only being used in space, they have real world applications. One of these is a possible replacement for copper wire to transmit electricity. This wire is in our homes, and devices we use every day, like our smart phones. One of the programs under his direction has allowed for the development of a carbon nanoscale wire that can conduct electricity and is as thin as thread. The great benefit of this nanoscale thread is that a spool of



Dr. Vicki Flaris and her research students at ANTEC 2015 (L to R), Robert Josman, Raul Rivas, Yanilly Heras, Dr. Vicki Flaris, Diana Kildoye, and Henry Siccardi.  
Photo: Robert Josman

it is one kilometer long, yet only weighs one gram.

This year two of the students, Robert Josman and Raul Rivas, each were awarded competitive CUNY Research Scholars Fellowships to do research with Dr. Flaris as a mentor. Both of the students have had their research accepted for presentation at this year's conference and will be making the presentations to this professional engineering society. They will be on "Antimicrobial Effects of Ion Charged Polymers" and "A Novel Measurement of Conductivity in Polypropylene Melt Mixed Composites," respectively.

Through some of Professor Flaris' contacts at the convention we have been invited to attend several student-centric events given by different companies. This will allow the students to get a better idea about what it would be like working in this industry when they graduate, along with the possibilities of internships and "co-op" work programs which the various companies offer.

As President of the College's chapter, Professor Flaris and I set a goal of increasing our visibility on campus. Not just within the science community, but with the college community as a whole. To that end we have had a series of guests on the college campus. The 2014-2015 Society of Plastics Engineers President, Vijay Boolani, was on campus talking about plastics and nanoscience with various groups and toured the college's laboratories. Mr. Thomas Hodson of Micron Technology also came to BCC to talk to the college community as a whole about Nanoscience, its possibilities and applications.

In April of this year we held "NanoDay," which is now in its fourth year at Bronx Community College. At these events prospective students for the college, members of the college community and guests from other institutions get to see a series of demonstrations about Nanoscience and the fact that the College offers a class, Chemistry 20, "Intro to Nanoscience". This is a good selling point for the school, as this is a new and emerging multi-discipline,

multi-billion dollar industry.

In conjunction with the College's Office of Student Life's celebration of Woman's History month, the students participated in a Women in STEM panel discussion. Two of our students were panelists, Catherine Jerry, Islam Shalodi, along with other students from the college. Robert Josman and Henry Siccardi moderated the panel's wide-ranging discussion with an audience from across the college community.

This year's group of six student researchers, half of whom are women, who are currently working on various research projects on campus, greatly reflects the diversity that makes up our college community. They include male and female Hispanics, an African American woman and an Arab-American woman.

Our students, Robert Josman, Henry Siccardi, Raul Rivas, and Raquel Matos all traveled to the American Chemical Society professional conference in March of this year to present portions of their research and extrapolated on how important it is for undergraduates to be able to partake in it as part of their academic evolution. As well as presenting at the Lehman College's Undergraduate Symposium and at the 2016 Middle Atlantic Regional Meeting of ACS in May and June respectively. Robert Josman and Raul Rivas will also be representing the college at John Jays CRSP Research Presentation and Final Symposium in July.

As President of the college's chapter, I have a strong work ethic and have a keen interest in giving back to the other students, mentoring them. A key part of this is leading by example: having stepped up for the other students who may not have the funds to register for conferences in advance and paid them out of my own pocket. This has been instilled in me by our mentor Dr. Flaris; she always pushes students to apply for scholarships, internships etc. In the spirit of giving back, this year I was proud to lead the largest group of students from any on-campus organization to participate in BCC's day of service to help a homeless food pantry in the college community. Our student's dedication to campus leadership showed, as they came up to campus even though it was over winter break.

In recognition of the totality of our efforts for the students of our chapter and the college as a whole the college, just last week, at an awards dinner, presented me with The Outstanding Club Officer award for this year, as President of the Society of Plastic Engineers and Nanoscience campus wide organization. The organization also won a separate award for its accomplishments with the students of our college community. As a campus leader one of my proudest achievement is when a student who may have been unsure at first goes from asking "how do you do that", to "how can I do that", and then finally to "I have done that."

Having reached our eleven-year milestone we will be able to expand and build on the strong foundation we have created while we look to the future not only of Nanoscience but also Bronx Community College and its students.



why am I complaining

Created By Temi

Can't top that rite?

Nope but you just became my inspiration

This just shows that if I can do it, you can too.

Lesson learnt!

Bye Mike. I have to head to work. My name is Addison by the way

Bye Addison Nice meeting you.

THE NEXT DAY...

Hey mike, are you tired today?

Nope!



**This semester, students in the honors section of English 12 studied issues related to globalization and sustainability.**  
**The following essays are responses to the challenge the cybernetics and sustainability expert Michael Ben-Eli posed in his article “Sustainability: The Five Core Principles – A New Framework.”**



**The Importance of Life’s Domain to the Issue of Sustainability**  
**By Baba Kane**

The word “sustainability” is an important concept that consists of preserving unlimited things like species that are crucial for our survival. According to Michael Ben-Eli, there are five domains to the issue of sustainability: material, economic, life, social and spiritual. The one I want to discuss is the domain of life. Since I was little, people used to say that the nature and environment are very important to us and without them, humans could not survive. Now, there are so many people around the world; humans have started to occupy and destroy the environment. The questions remain: “what is the importance of the nature” and “what can we do to preserve our environment?” In my opinion, we should focus on preserving nature by not killing endangered species, limit the destruction of the forest, and avoid throwing garbage in nature which can also lead to the destruction of natural habitat.

First off all, life is important for all of us. The way we people care about our life, we should also do the same thing to the environment. Nature plays an important role in our survival. Some people kill animals for fun. Last year, I read that a tourist who approximately \$50,000 to safari guards in Zimbabwe to kill a lion he named Cecil. If everyone was doing like him, there would be no lions in the world. We should protect these endangered species instead of killing and hunting them for fun. According to defenders of wildlife, there is an act called the Endangered Species Act that was passed by the President, Richard Nixon to protect plants, animals and ecosystems that may be extinct in the future. This is an example why the domain of life is important for the ecosystem and species.

Second of all, ecosystem can be defined as a natural



environment composed of water, air and support. Each government should impose laws to stop the destruction of the forest. As we know, there are so many people in the world and these same people started to occupy the animals’ habitats. People are destroying the forest in order to build their homes. People cut trees without knowing what will be the consequences. If we destroy the forest for our own interests, how will animals and plants survive? Without the forest, it is almost impossible for human to survive in those kind of environment. For example, in the desert, it’s almost rare to find any living species over there because it is difficult to survive there. In fact, reforestation is a very effective solution that must be implemented by

the authorities to obligate people to plant after cutting trees to help the conservation of the forests.

Third of all, garbage is a serious threat for our society. The amount of garbage can measure as a state. In fact, according to Samantha Jakuboski in her article “Garbage Dump in the Middle of the Pacific Ocean”, in 1997, Charles Moore discovered in the middle of the ocean, a garbage patch big as the state of Texas can fit into it twice, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Despite all those garbage trashes that has been placed almost everywhere in street corners, people are still lazy to find garbage trashes to throw their garbage. Lots of garbage can bring disease to the community. Throwing garbage anywhere has a negative impact to the environment. Most people are concerned about this disaster and tried to find solutions by informing others how garbage affects our society and also give some solutions of what we can do to take of it. I think it would be better if scientists could find some solutions how this garbage can be used for other needs. According to Antoine Lavoisier, a French nobleman, “rien ne se perd tout se transforme.” It means in English that nothing is lost, everything is transformed.

The domain of life regroups many things related to the nature and the environment like habitats, ecosystems, and animals. Most of them may be extinct in the future. People need these things to survive. To prevent this loss, we must take these problems seriously and find effective actions to resolve these catastrophes by stopping to kill endangered species, limit the destruction of the forest, avoiding to throw garbage in nature. I hope everyone should be informed about it and together we can make our environment a better place.

**Education is Important to Building a Sustainable Future**  
**By Malcolm Madison**

Most people in the world today have an immediate and intuitive sense of the urgent need to build a sustainable future. They may not be able to provide a precise definition of ‘sustainable development’ or ‘sustainability’ - but they clearly sense the danger and the need for informed action. They smell the problem in the air; they taste it in the water; they see it in more congested living spaces and blemished landscapes; they read about it in the newspapers and they hear about it on radio and television.

For thousands of years, human societies have proved that living sustainably as healthy and happy individuals, within caring and stable families and communities, and in harmony with the natural world is possible. The long-term sustainability of indigenous economic and cultural systems is the result of indigenous systems of education which established a human and natural ecology totally at one with each other.

Indigenous peoples respect and love the land as a mother, treating it as sacred, believing that people, plants, animals, water, the land and the sky are all part of the same on-going cycles of life. These beliefs and the knowledge that flows from them has been passed down through the generations through a wide range of cultural practices, including direct instruction, stories, dances, ceremonies and the art as well as networks of sacred places. All are part of indigenous approaches to education that link people to the land through culture, and through culture to the land.

Unfortunately, indigenous knowledge and wisdom have been undermined by the experience of colonization, industrialization, and globalization. By and large, indigenous priorities and systems of education have been supplanted by the somewhat narrow view that the environment and culture are valuable only in so far as they



are economically productive.

Certainly, knowledge about the earth, its plants and animals, and the functioning of ecosystems and the ways people use resources, is taught in schools and colleges in science, geography and social studies. Nature documentaries are among the more popular programs on television while visits to museums, science centers, environmental reserves and other sites of non-formal education are expanding. However, there is a widespread problem with the way that the environment and sustainable development are presented. Education, including formal education, public awareness and training should be recognized as a process by which human beings

and societies can reach their fullest potential. Education is critical for achieving environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behaviors consistent with sustainable development.

The challenge of sustainable development is a difficult and complex one, requiring new partnerships among governments, academic and scientific communities, teachers, non-governmental organizations, local communities and the media. All are essential to the birth of a culture of sustainability. Education for sustainability is of direct concern not only to ministries of health, environment, natural resources, planning, agriculture, commerce and others.

Education for sustainable development is an emerging, but dynamic concept that encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future. Basic education provides the foundation for all future education and is a contribution to sustainable development in its own right. There is a need to refocus many existing education policies, programs and practices so that they build the concepts, skills, motivation and commitment needed for sustainable development.

Education will shape the world of tomorrow, it is the most effective means that society possesses for confronting the challenges of the future. Progress increasingly depends upon educated minds. Educated minds and instincts are needed not only in laboratories and research institutes, but also in every walk of life. Education must be a vital part of all efforts to imagine and create new relations among people and to foster greater respect for the needs of the environment.



# The Global Lens



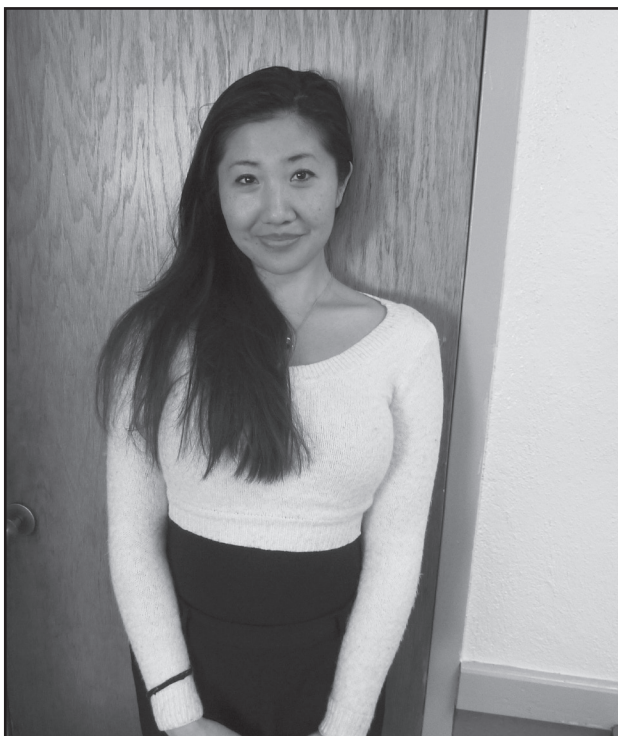
## The Path to Eden

By Mimi Majgaard

Sustainability can be defined in a variety of domains. At a superficial level, it can be described as a system in which the long-term goal of providing adequate usage of resources is regulated in a manner that does not exceed the regeneration of available natural resources. However, the interdependency between humans, non-human species and the ecological system has provided us with a profound sense of supreme awareness transcending beyond the limitations of common knowledge and physical human capacity. This unique concept further deepens our bond with nature by practicing compassion and appreciating true values in life, which ultimately contributes to our overall well-being.

Human interventions have hindered nature's capacity to regenerate itself at its natural rate and disrupted the cycle of life as a result. To live in an environment that can fulfil a sustainable ideology would involve reform in many arenas and force us to reevaluate our moral attitude towards our surroundings, our fellow beings and ourselves. We are all aware of the planetary emergency that has been urgently addressed in environmental summits for the past decade. However, the lasting impact of our carbon footprint is not the only disruptive pattern we have contributed to the unsustainable way of life. The current state of our environment reflects the scientific establishment of our past and the failure of foresight. In order to counteract the deterioration, we must change our vantage point in confronting the issues at hand and regard it not solely as a political or environmental issue, but a fundamental principle derived from human virtues.

One form of sustainable living involves the act of living within our means, which pertains to the overindulgence of modern living. It can be resolved by limiting the exploitation of agriculture and aquatic life, prevention of further deforestation and water pollution. This approach can gradually diminish the effect of overconsumption and overproduction and help mitigate the impact of environmental degradation. Additionally, it supports biodiversity and enables non-human lives to thrive in their natural habitats, which in turn will enrich the depth of our ecosystem and manifest to its full spectrum.



Our very existence is something quite unique and sacred; the same pertains to every living being on earth, it is in our best interest to honor all life forms and their life-supporting systems in order to maintain a healthy ecology.

Another form of sustainability applies to a less palpable domain, which involves our unique attachment to our spiritual existence. We have long thought of earth as a non-living entity that solely provides for us all our necessary demands. However, the recent discovery of environmental deterioration, species extinction and natural disaster has shed a different light on our traditional views on the function and nature of our planet. The compelling similarities between our natural environment and that of a living being resembles the very cycle of life, from the moment of birth to death, the evolution and intricacy of our ecology undergoes transformation similarly to that of our social system and human anatomy. Scientists have found significant evidence indicating a consciousness

of nature. Water, for instance, unique for its crystalline structure, has been reported to have memories of its own. Known to the world as the only environmental system that can exist in all three states, water carries with it all-encompassing rhythms of life and wisdom, traveling in great distances and gives birth to all living organisms along the way. The way we treat this vital natural resource as our private possession is self-entitling and undignified. Water pollution and scarcity is not only a threat to our environment but a global pandemic. Currently, 90% of Syria's water system does not cater to its population, and half of Haiti's population does not have access to drinking water. Natural resources are therefore not infinitely available and will eventually cease to support human life if we continue our relentless exploitation.

We humans pride ourselves in having values and intelligence superior to all other living beings. Yet, to possess such intelligence does not directly translate to corresponding progress in spiritual evolution; instead it proved to have adverse effects on the planetary equilibrium. In following this logic, we can deduce that intelligence without heart gives rise to arrogance, and science without humility can lead to destruction. Sustainability in a spiritual domain refers to the shift towards enlightenment within ourselves, which can only be felt and seen by our conscience. We have the responsibility and the moral courage to stand up against the most fatal misdeed – the absence of humanity.

Spiritual reform is conceptually complexed, yet it is inherently an intuitive trait in humans as we naturally tend to be compassionate and empathetic. Spirituality in this context is the feeling of oneness with the universe by regarding ourselves as part of a living entity and not a separation from nature itself. Only then will we begin to understand that our very existence and the conditions in which we live under reflects the way we interact with one another. The global consciousness towards a harmonious coexistence is an intuitive revelation of our inner ambition to honor the earth, as we embark tentatively on a journey with mindfulness and compassion, we will continue to live symbiotically with one another.

## Living without Labels

By Hakim Mitchell

Human beings are social animals, and without proper social interaction one will not develop into a well-adjusted human. In tribal days one of the most severe punishments a tribesman could receive was being shunned. This social isolation meant not only that they would have no one to interact with, but they had a greater chance of dying, due to now being alone and having to fend for themselves. This is why even to this day being shunned invokes strong emotions in humans, and many will fight vehemently to avoid it, even though today it does not mean certain death. According to Michael Ben-Eli's "the Five Core Principles" social interactions are part of the five sustainability principles. This means that in order to have a sustainable society it must adhere to certain rules. In almost all societies around the world there are entire groups of people who are shunned by mainstream society. It is instilled in these groups that they are inferior; this toxic environment not only destroys the psyche of the oppressed but damages the moral of a country as a whole. Any society with such an oppressive structure is not being sustainable but instead self-destructive.

Those who are oppressed by some societal structure are slaves to a set of arbitrary rules which may have been created hundreds of years ago by our ignorant ancestors. In certain situations, even though many of the archaic rules are not enforced they still stand firmly as pillars of the society. The racism or sexism experienced by those who live in the society may not be overt, but instead it is an underlying theme which may be hard to recognize unless you experience it. I have heard many white people in America state that racism in America doesn't exist anymore and that people of color need to just suck it up. I even sometimes catch myself thinking that feminists are complaining for no reason, but I stop and realize that I am doing the same thing that the white people are doing. I am dismissing the realities of other humans because I experience a different reality than they do. When people dismiss the claims of the "others", it only weakens the society because it deepens the rift between the people



instead of bringing them closer.

People enjoy labels because it makes them feel safe, it allows them to feel that they have a concrete understanding of our complex world. Instead of understanding each person you meet, it is much easier to state "they did this action because they belong to this group". Once we form a perception we then start to notice the evidence that confirms this perception almost everywhere, because we don't like to be wrong. This is called confirmation bias. What is happening is on a subconscious level, your brain filters out all instances of you being wrong and highlights the ones that prove you right. As a society we must strip ourselves of most labels and leave just one human. Entering an interaction with someone and seeing them is human is a freeing experience it allows you to see them for who they really are and

not what they are supposed to be. If as a society we can accomplish this, we will become a better, more sustainable society. People tend to look after their tribesman, and if we all consider each other just human we will start to make decisions which benefits everyone in society not just a select few.

On a larger scale when two societies have conflicting thought processes or are competing for resources war sometimes breaks out. War does almost nothing positive for humans as a species. It decimates populations, destroys infrastructure, and stagnates progress in general. You find that within a society a lot of prejudice people have very little interaction with people they are prejudice against. It is very easy for America to demonize a group of people if you don't interact with them often. For those who don't personally know any Muslims and the only time you hear about them is through suicide bombings in the media, it becomes easy to label the entire group as terrorists when that is simply not the case. Again, breaking free from the labels and realizing that it is not necessarily Muslims but instead a set of bad people who happen to be Muslim is very liberating. We can take a step back and examine ourselves and ask why they hold so much animosity towards us?

On a small scale and on a large scale, it is the labels associated with people that cause a strong rift between different humans. It is not only affect the people or nations that are being oppressed but everyone as a whole. Oppressing a group of people creates turmoil within a population something every successful society should try to avoid. When different countries are oppressed it can also cause turmoil in both nations and cause a rift which can last for many generations. This causes unnecessary wars and the spilling of blood of our tribesman on both sides. The world would operate more harmoniously if we were for each other instead of against each other; because we would now be pursuing the common good instead of the good for our own.



The Honor System: How Integrity and a Code Foster Sustainability

By Henry Siccardi

In outlining his five core principles for sustainability Michael Ben-Eli addresses the most often discussed concepts, most notably the material and economic domains. While his domains of life and society are also widely discussed within the sustainability narrative, his final domain, that of spirituality, is often lost. Interestingly enough it is within the domain of spirituality where ultimately, I believe, he posits his strongest point; the one I believe would transcend all other domains and ultimately drive us, not only towards a more sustainable world, but a better world all around. Ben-Eli’s call to “foster compassion and an inclusive, comprehensive perspective in the underlying intention, motivation and actual implementation of human endeavors” is a larger call for thinking and acting with honor and integrity. Doing so cannot guarantee better decisions, but it can ensure that decisions are made with purer intentions for the benefit of humanity as a whole.



a room, or to always finish their plate of food because waste is inherently dishonorable. The same is true of the honorable person who invests in a solar panel, not because he or she wants to save the environment, but because that person is acting with long-term frugality. Ben-Eli cites a “nurturing, self-restrained, inclusive approach” that “honors the larger system” as being one that will help achieve sustainability. Aren’t those qualities exemplified in every person who saves the environment just a little by eating vegetarian options/meals a few nights a week, even though they decided to do so to protect their own health? Likewise, isn’t purchasing a gas guzzling sports car and driving it aggressively in order to satisfy one’s own ego the very antithesis of such an approach? Note that one can be selfish and still act with honor, so there is no expectation of resisting human nature, only a call for honorable self-restraint.

When making decisions we know and understand it is impossible to see into the future and predict the consequences of every decision we make. Furthermore, we accept that neither the future nor the past are within our direct control and that they are, or were, the results of many moving parts coming together. As such, our responsibility to make decisions in the present day with good intentions becomes more pronounced. The challenge then faced is defining what qualifies as “good intentions.” Though that is a discussion more suitable for a philosophical dissertation, Ben-Eli begins to address this by calling for compassion, inclusiveness, and comprehensive

perspective. These three qualities are part of a larger notion, including other characteristics, called honor. The primary reason thinking and acting with honor is vital for sustainability is because honor holds individuals accountable for their role in a functioning society. Such a notion has been woven into the fabric of society from the Stoics and Christ to the Transcendentalist movement of the mid-1800s and beyond. Individuals acting with honor, no matter how big or small the act, will create a more sustainable world, often without knowing. Take, for example, the person with honor who teaches their children to never leave the lights on when exiting

Honor and integrity are more a way of life than characteristics we possess. As such they are all-encompassing, which allows for the positive development of every domain and facet of life. Moving forward each of us can make strides towards improving the world by improving the moral fortitude of our intentions and motivations. While we all have selfish desires and needs we must make decisions understanding that we can satiate them as long as we exercise some level of self-restraint. That self-restraint, in the long run, may provide us with more than we ever imagined today.



Exploring Issues of Social Justice and Equity in Chile

By William Murray



Two Mapuche pueblos preparing a meal in Temuco, Chile (with Bill in the foreground). Winner: CUNY Photo Challenge, February 2016.



My view of the Southern Andes Mountains from the Metropolitan Park of Santiago.

I enrolled for a 2016 winter intersession global justice course as part of Lehman College’s International Exchanges and Study Abroad program in Santiago, Chile, called “Human Rights and Transitional Justice.” During this once-in-a-lifetime educational opportunity our group met Mapuche inhabitants, visited memorial sites, and measured conditions that required outreach services in various under-resourced Chilean communities. Our lodging was initially at Providencia Bed & Breakfast but anthropological research took place outside the capital city. My time in Chile was largely unforgettable. My first day in the country I was able to view the Southern Andes Mountains from the Santiago Metropolitan Park at San Cristóbal Hill, and then I visited the Chilean National Zoo. The panorama of Santiago from Santa Lucía Hill rivaled my first subequatorial sunset and full moonrise by Río Mapocho. Juan Salvador Guzman Tapia, who prosecuted Augusto Pinochet, was our guide at Villa Grimaldi and lecturer during the first week where we studied at Bolivarian University. The mural paintings in La Victoria were fascinating, and I was humbled by the Mapuche pueblos, including the tribesman at Cerro Blanco who allowed the Chile Winter 2015 group to partake in our first Native American ceremony. Afterward in Temuco, we visited other communities who prepared meals for us by a milieu of Villarica volcano and

I got to play Palín and ride horseback in the countryside. We learned how much of the indigenous people in Chile share a cosmovisión or worldview that orients them toward ritualized use of ancestral land and how the Mapuche are committed to land recovery fundamentally aimed at restricting environmental abuse and achieving justice in relation to cultural use of traditional lands. One night while stargazing, I saw the Southern Cross and Galactic Center. I twice immersed myself in the country’s rivers and visited two out of three of Pablo Neruda’s homes: La Sebastiana (Casa De Pablo Neruda En Valparaiso) by the South Pacific Ocean and La Chascona. I already miss the scent of Bougainvillea and Hibiscus, the taste of carménère and the endless sight of mountains and peaks.

William Murray is an alumni correspondent to The Communicator. He is currently a student at Lehman College, and he was a member of BCC’s 2014 Salzburg student cohort. Currently, Bill works in our Office of Administration and Finance.

Photos: William Murray



# The Writer's Corner

## First, We Walk

By William Murrery

A tassel upon mortarboard is clearly worth the hassle  
We adjusted our sails, surely as our parents and other ministering spirits  
Ordained the winds

No, it is never too late to learn  
First we walk then we run  
And what we find out the hard way are our greatest lessons:  
You've got to take two steps forward for every backward one

Furthermore, we've done ourselves proud  
Directing our attention to a goal  
Not falling short, but becoming part of those for whom bells toll  
Through reverberant halls of knowledge, with realized potential

Part of those for whom others hold their heads up high – to our higher education  
At college graduation, when we the thinkers, have prepared the way  
For tomorrow outside the box, and with any luck, not wholly stranger to yesterday

## A Woman of Spice

By Yolanda Lasalle

Trigenita, morenita, color mocha señorita. Born in the lower East. Raised in Spanish Harlem. Puerto Rican descended.

A collage of the riches. Caribbean roots, grown in America. An American born citizen. Desensitize by our government. Accommodating to a way of life, a community, society A fear of god. Institutionalize... their soul purpose...the controlling of the human race. Threaten by marshal law, global warming & holy war.  
A dreamer, a daughter, a mother, a grandmother, a simple girl with a dream...A fighter, a realist, a rebel..An open mind, a humble soul, a righteous peer of the community.

Standing up for my rights. My right to speak. My right to live. My right to be inform. My right to express.

My right to be me

...A woman, a nurturer, a breeder, a guide, an influence. The strength behind that man... Oh yes I am....I am an important significant bloodline of race & gender... of what makes this world go round a part of the energy that feeds the universe part of the clutch that holds this humanity together

A Woman of Spice. A threat to the enemy who wants our demise & use religion to deplete the worth, the value of the female life...I'm... I'm a Woman of spice mix race blessed by rich DNA not afraid to fight for my right to be alive

## The Bronx Has a Graduating?

By Dariel Nunez

The moment is here Graduation time,  
What that means to us in the Bronx, waiting here patient,  
They say it's our moment nobody can replace it  
With a low rate graduation, this is what we say with?

Those were the days,  
Where we walked out the apartment to escape reality.  
To simply study or watch random things in the new library  
Although dark headaches is the pain that maintains

Thinking there will be better days  
Hope for the better ways  
Remember the days we remain confused in this page  
Our families' frown upon on us, put us down upon luck because is time for some bucks

What can we do? Survive cry, pay bills and pray while getting by  
The sunlight is raised we are not trapped in this Bronx cage  
Now we win to proceed, made it from the Bronx  
It's the grand celebration no more hunger pain to keep

Ask ourselves, are we going to be okay, while our loved ones cheers  
This moment is finally here? Wasn't really prepared? What will happen next?  
Think while we write the next chapter of life's path steps!

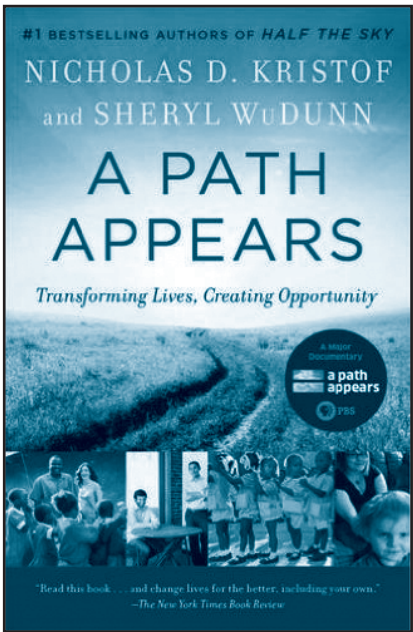
Join a Club or  
Organization  
in Fall 2016



# Summer Reading List

Don't let your skills get rusty over the summer.

Here are some suggestions of books that might capture your imagination.



**Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn (2015), *A Path Appears: Transforming Lives, Creating Opportunity***

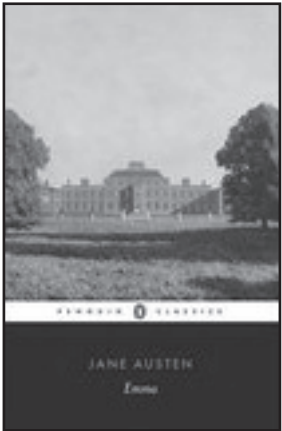
An essential, galvanizing narrative about making a difference here and abroad—a road map to becoming the most effective global citizens we can be. In their number one *New York Times* best seller *Half the Sky*, husband-and-wife team Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn brought to light struggles faced by women and girls around the globe, and showcased individuals and institutions working to address oppression and expand opportunity. *A Path Appears* is even more ambitious in scale: nothing less than a sweeping tapestry of people who are making the world a better place and a guide to the ways that we can do the same—whether with a donation of \$5 or \$5 million, with our time, by capitalizing on our skills as individuals, or by using the resources of our businesses.

**Hana al-Shaykh, *Women of Sand and Myrrh* (1989)**

These are four intertwined narratives from women in a wealthy Arab desert country. All of the women live in luxury and privilege but are denied the very basic freedom of self-expression. This novel has been described as “an eloquent and subtle plea for liberalization, as well as an evocative description of a society torn between tradition and the West.”

**Jane Austen, *Emma* (1815)**

*Emma*, arguably Jane Austen’s best and most representative novel, is often praised for its rich domestic realism. Like most of the author’s remarkable novels, it is also a novel of courtship and social manners. At its heart is Emma Woodhouse – “handsome, clever and rich” – who is also spoiled. She greatly overestimates her own matchmaking abilities, ignores, despite sound warnings, the dangers of meddling in other people’s lives, and misconstrues the meanings of others’ actions. Nonetheless, she eventually learns from her mistakes.



**Junot Diaz, *Drown* (1997)**

Diaz’ first collection of stories – 10 in all – offers vivid details of growing up first in the Dominican Republic and then in New Jersey. The stories are narrated by adolescent males who are outwardly cool but inwardly anguished as they attempt to recreate themselves in the midst of family problems and their own surging sexuality.

**Ha Jin, *Waiting* (1999)**

Lin Kong is a Chinese Army doctor trapped in an arranged marriage that embarrasses and repels him. (Shuyu, his wife, has country ways, a withered face, and most humiliating of all, bound feet.) Nevertheless, he’s content with his tidy military life, at least until he falls in love with Manna, a nurse at his hospital. Regulations forbid an army officer to divorce without his wife’s consent—until 18 years have passed, that is, after which he is free to marry again. So, year after year, Lin asks his wife for his freedom, and year after year he returns from the provincial courthouse: still married, still unable to seal his relationship with Manna. The final chapters are moving and deeply ironic when this forbidden love is finally consummated.

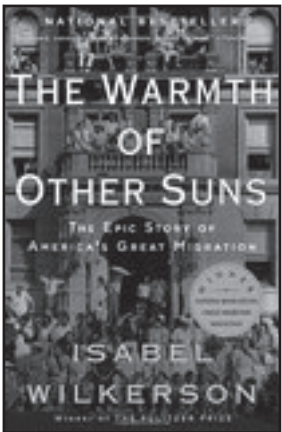


**Sembebe Ousmane, *God’s Bits of Wood* (1960)**

This story centers on a 1947-48 Dakar-Niger railroad strike. The plot revolves around the battle that ensues along racial lines and the long-lasting effects on all those involved once the strike ends. It highlights how the Senegalese and Malians responded to colonialism. Also exemplified is the oppression faced by women in the precolonial era who were deprived of their ability to speak on most matters.

**Philip Roth, *The Plot Against America* (2004)**

What if American hero Charles Lindbergh (widely thought to be a Nazi sympathizer) had defeated Franklin Roosevelt for the presidency in 1940? Roth imagines the aftermath. In reviewing this novel for *The New York Times*, Paul Berman states, “Philip Roth has written a terrific political novel, though in a style his readers might never have predicted — a fable of an alternative universe, in which America has gone fascist and ordinary life has been flattened under a steamroller of national politics and mass hatreds. Hitler’s allies rule the White House. Anti-Semitic mobs roam the streets. [...] The novel is sinister, vivid, dreamlike, preposterous and, at the same time, creepily plausible. Roth seems to be taunting, ‘You think swastikas are only for other countries?’ And you turn the pages, astonished and frightened.”



**Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of American Migration* (2010)**

Wilkerson is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who offers an extensively researched study of the great migration, the exodus of six million black Southerners out of the terror of Jim Crow to an “uncertain existence” in the North and Midwest. She incorporates sociological and historical studies into her beautifully wrought narratives of migrants who, while striving to build new lives, too often find that they have not left racism behind.