

THE BRIDGE

STUDENT NEWSPAPER

SUMMER 2004

\$12 for This? Well, Alright

By: Andrew McCormick



Since moving to Queens in 2002, the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) has found its new, temporary home to be largely well received by its patrons in terms of geographic convenience as well as content, say several employees who typically work at the main information desk. But the new, smaller location has not, they say, been without its share of gripes from patrons expecting "more art for their buck."

"It raises an interesting question," one part-time employee who frequently works at the main information desk said, "How much art is needed to justify the twelve dollar ticket price?"

Apparently, a small but consistent percentage of those who have patronized the museum's temporary home, containing one floor, a relatively small amount of art when compared to the museum's original Manhattan location, have complained of

See MOMA P.12

SGA AND CHAOS!

By: Anny Pichardo

It seems as though the cast of characters that make up the Student Government Association (SGA) has been constantly changing. Due to various conflicts with the organization, the most recent change was Vhanessa Victoria, who was removed from her position.

"The reason I was told that I was removed from [SGA] was because they were viewing the incompletes that I had in the prior semester as failures. Although I pointed out to them that in order to get an incomplete you have to [receive] a C grade or better in the course," said Vhanessa Victoria, who is also a college Senator at La Guardia Community College (LGCC).

On March 15, 2004, Victoria received a letter dated March 15 in her mailbox stating that as of that same day she was no longer a member of SGA.

"It's not only so much that they removed me from student government,

which they didn't really do. Giving someone a letter that says something doesn't mean the proper action has been taken," says Victoria.

The mentor of SGA, Louis Merchant, who has also been the adjudicator of the college for about fourteen years, sent a letter to Victoria stating that according to the City University of New York (CUNY) bylaws, students have to pass the course with a C or better, but Victoria believes that if she had a grade of C or better then it means she had passed her courses. She also claims that the SGA bylaws interfere with the CUNY bylaws because it states that a student has to complete their courses, but it doesn't specify a student has to complete their course.

According to Merchant, one of the policies that students have to abide by in order to be in SGA is to pass half of the courses they had registered for prior to the

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Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors,

The Bridge is a source of enlightenment, an outlet in which, students and faculty may voice their honest opinions. It also provides an uplifting and edifying view of our students and faculty who appear in the publication for the enrichment of the entire LaGuardia College community. I was amazed and quite disheartened by a recent feature article in the Spring 2004 issue, written by George Chevalier. I was extremely offended by this article since I am one of the students Mr. Chevalier describes as "haven't a clue" "lambs" wording he inaccurately chooses for his article "Where Do You Get Your Facts, in a Crackerjack Box?" The article left me wondering where exactly Mr. Chevalier got his facts. I also felt extremely betrayed by our student body publication for allowing such an erroneous verbal assault on the intelligence of fellow students and the blatant disrespect of faculty members.

The fact that Mr. Chevalier has some experience with journalism should indicate he knows gathering accurate facts is the primary function of responsible journalism. However, it is apparent that this is not the case. Please allow me the opportunity to state the facts.

Fact#1: Mr. Chevalier was not in the class (by the way it is an American History class) long enough to assess what anyone "willingly or not digested." Five of his fifteen minutes in the class, he spent expounding his educated version of Christopher Columbus as it related to native Indians with the professor. As evidenced in his article he was more affected by what his particular professor said, as well as her appearance. Obviously, the course and the instruction did not digest well with him so Mr. Chevalier exercised his right to drop the class. It is beyond me how Mr. Chevalier assumes anything about his fellow classmates since he was engrossed in what his own experiences in education of American History has yielded to him.

Fact#2: Christopher Columbus was a mass murder, kidnapper, had major obsessions with gold, and conquering new worlds for Spain. Until 1492 the native Indians both in America and the West Indies ruled their world successfully for some odd 3,000 years and perhaps longer than that. According to, historians and scientists, after Columbus' expeditions they encountered diseases they would have never encountered because those disease[s] such as small pox were not found in that region. Columbus' journal confirms his intentions were to subdue a docile people. The

native Indians became enslaved and faced a host of atrocities such as having their hands chopped off for inability to pay gold tributes, a law that Columbus himself imposed. As far as, the number of Indian who lost their lives let's remember entire tribes like the Taino for one were utterly destroyed.

Fact #3: As far as slavery is concerned, not "everyone" as Mr. Chevalier states in his article, considers slavery "evil and crime against humanity." Even in this day and age slavery continues to exist in various parts of the world legally and has been reported her in America although it is illegal. In regards, to the 1860 government Census of slaves here is Fact #4 – while the U.S. revealed the white population it did not count black people or Indians. The primary document reads, "...and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other persons" in Clause 3 and one must consider the entire document specifically states the conditions of black people free or enslaved in America. Black people were considered inferior, nameless and most certainly unworthy of any benefit that the government Census brought white people. This fact is evident in the Dred Scott case where Chief Justice Taney elaborated on the Court's firm belief as he interpreted the U.S. Constitution. We must also remember by 1860 both native Indian, free and enslaved black populations had been greatly decreased because they were being murdered in large numbers. In fact tens of millions of native Indians and tens of millions of black people were mutilated and murdered from the 16th century to 1860, Mr. Chevalier states it is "inflating the victims numbers" in order to achieve "solidarity with the oppressed and poor."

Again where did he get his facts? Perhaps he should have spent more time in college during his 34 years of on and off again stints, he would have benefited from a course instructing him on how to gather facts rather than making baseless assumptions on matters he has not bothered to fully research. One final fact, much of what Mr. Chevalier has written in his article is not simply a matter of opinion it is libelous. As a student with a native Indian and black descent I am seeking a public apology.

Jasmin Farnum

Editor's note: Mr. Chevalier's submission was an opinion piece, rather than feature article.

From SGA

Hi The Bridge,

Student Government Association and the college community believe that The Bridge is here to spread the word to college about what happen within the college and what college have done. Please correct me if I am wrong.

So, my point is that I have talked and requested several members of the Bridge to attend the May 5 event while politicians came in the campus. SGA didn't see any Bridge members which is very disappointing. I thought may be the bridge could join the event and write something about it. However, that didn't happen.

In any case, we are having another event, which I spoke to the member of the bridge already. It is called "International Day" May 19, 2004 at the Main stage theatre from 2-6 pm. Various LAGCC clubs will be performing. Free with CUNY ID. Please join us. Thank You.

Best,
Maya Sherpa
SGA President

Dear Ms. Sherpa,

We received your e-mails, and on behalf of The Bridge, we would like to address your concerns. One of the purposes that The Bridge serves is to spread the word about what happens within the college. In addition, we aim to provide a voice for the student body.

It is with those two goals in mind that The Bridge's Editorial Board exercises their right to decide what events and issues are covered and put to print.

The Bridge is always pleased to receive information and invitations to cover campus events. However, it is not always possible for The Bridges staff, which is made up of students with a vast amount of responsibilities and priorities, to volunteer their time to cover these events.

Thank you for expressing interest in The Bridge and informing us on the recent campus events. We would like to encourage you to submit a review of those events for publication in a future issue.

The Editorial Board

**GOT SOMETHING
TO SAY?
TELL US!**

THEBRIDGE@LAGCC.CUNY.EDU

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN LETTERS TO THE EDITORS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE BRIDGE STUDENT NEWSPAPER, ITS EDITORIAL STAFF OR LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

Opinion

Say a Prayer for Our Youth

By: Edward Cen

Given our unique and diversified culture, our future lies in the hands of socially inept miscreants. When comparing statistical standards, we rank below our international counterparts. I hold no judgments against those who decide to pursue their goals along other venues. However if we succumb to the apathy that runs rampant among us, I foresee a lackadaisical future that is yearning to be fulfilled.

Imagine if you will a nation occupied by hordes of aloof young minds, slaving away beneath the heels of mega-conglomerate corporations. Why aren't we compelled to further ourselves or strive to flourish? Are we so acclimated to our routines that we become desensitized drones? From my understanding, drones are capable of assimilating information; whereas the average youth is conditioned to absorb force-fed hogwash by various media. I for one will not advocate this, 'go with the flow' attitude.

As a part of the traditional educational experience, we hope to achieve more and express our self-interests. These fundamentals are lost between the levels of maturity and the hazily defined social constructs which co-exist with our age, creed, and race. To be fair, there are as many respectable scholarly intellectuals as there are insolent minds. It's inconceivable that a world power will succumb due to a

nation full of simpletons. After all, do we need so many blue-collar workers?

LaGuardia is renowned as the "world's community college" for its plethora of culture; this leads me to believe that we are shamefully misrepresenting our culture due to our youth. Typically, college students go on spring break to Cancun or Daytona Beach and partake in outlandish debaucheries. Is this the light we wish to depict ourselves in? If we analyze the situation, we fail to instill ourselves with proper morals and values. Instead, we quibble over our qualms and become self-indulgent. Obviously ignorance is bliss, since there are those who disregard what others may think. Then again, there are the countless others who carry themselves in a respectful manner.

This was not written to implicate others. This was purely based upon the cynicism of my own experiences. I have reached the conclusion that our path is determined by what we do, and our choices affect those around us indirectly. No one else can select our path; it is the small things that we do that shape our paths and define us. Shouldn't we be able to think for ourselves? At the very least, we should consider being open-minded. As this trend steadily develops, we are slowly sinking into the depths of a teenage wasteland.

Define "Hero"

By: Justin Berl

Was Pat Tillman a hero? Ever since his death on April 22, that is a question that has been asked a lot. In the society that we live in today, athletes are held on high pedestals whether they are accused of rape, murder or drug abuse. People still think that they are so much better than everyone else, all because they pull on a team jersey every day or just on Sunday afternoons. Sorry folks, but that does not make them a better person than anyone else, they should not be given any more respect than your everyday person. It took the death of Pat Tillman to show people that heroes are not always the most famous people that you see.

Tillman was the opposite of pretty much every athlete. He wasn't interested in the headlines, nor was he in TV commercials and he did not get the big endorsements that everyone else got. If he was around right now he more than likely would not like the plan the NFL has to dedicate the upcoming season to him, and he would not like the idea of his former team the Arizona Cardinals renaming the plaza around their new stadium in his honor. That kind of stuff was not what he cared most about. Tillman did not want to be seen as a hero. He turned down interviews, he stayed with the lower paying Cardinals out of loyalty, and he signed up for the war because, as Tillman said himself, "I really haven't done a damn thing in terms of laying my life on the line."

Tillman let his actions on and off the football field dictate the person he was. He walked away from over three million dollars as a member of the Cardinals to join his brother, who also gave up on a promising baseball career, to fight for their country, our country.

A student at the University of Massachusetts who submitted an editorial to the school paper "The Daily Collegian" blasted Tillman by saying that he was a glorified Rambo and that he got what was coming to him. Rene Gonzalez, the author wrote "Tillman, probably acting out of his nationalist-patriotic fantasies forged in years of exposure to Clint Eastwood and Rambo movies decided to insert himself into a conflict that he didn't need to insert himself into. It wasn't like he was defending the East coast from an invasion of a foreign power, THAT would have been heroic and laudable..." Mr. Gonzalez did have a point, Tillman didn't need to insert himself in the conflict, he WANTED to. Tillman had his reasons for wanting to join the Army. It was reported that the terrorist attacks on September 11 affected him deeply and led to his decision to enlist.

The sports world and the whole world in general needs more people like Pat Tillman. The type of person who will sacrifice the money and the fame that comes with celebrity, in order to fight for what they believe in.

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last semester. "There are some regulations; [a student] has to pass 50% of the classes that [he/she] registered for the semester before, so let's say if [the student] takes 12 credits in the Spring [then] in the Fall semester [the student] should have passed at least 6 of those credits," says Merchant.

According to the policies of SGA, which Merchant states are also dictated by CUNY, the officers have to have a minimum GPA of 2.5, and the governors have to have a minimum GPA of 2.0. According to Merchant, if a member of SGA were to fall under any of the stated guidelines then that member would be removed automatically because SGA has to verify that every semester to make sure the students are meeting the appropriate requirements.

Since SGA is the voice of the students when it comes to the administration, faculty, staff and the general college community, all the meetings of Student Government are open to all students. The week after March 15, Victoria attended the following meeting of SGA because she felt that although she was no longer a member, she is still a student at LGCC. Victoria claims that complaints began to arise at the meeting as some members of SGA felt that since she was no longer a member, she had no right to be there.

According to Victoria, a newly elected governor of SGA, Ebelechukwu "Chu" Okafor, felt that she was not comfortable discussing matters of Student Government in front of people who were not governors, and suggested that they should go into an executive meeting. SGA and Merchant agreed to the suggestion, and an executive meeting was called into order.

Victoria opposed the decision, stating, "since they receive tax-payer money, they can't go into executive session and not only that [the members of SGA] can't go into executive session because [they] don't like the person who's there, that is not a valid excuse."

After Victoria disagreed with the decision, they then proceeded to call security. Merchant claims that they had escorted her out of the room because he didn't want anyone acting like "a law enforcement officer," and as a professional he wouldn't have students arguing over who gets to stay in the meetings, and who gets to leave.

The matter then resulted in a security guard coming in to ask Victoria to leave upon the request that was made by the organization because Merchant believed there was a lot of tension starting to take place verbally. However, Victoria felt

strongly opposed to the decision the organization had made.

"They are there for the soul purpose of representing students and students are allowed to be there. The meetings are opened, and we have laws in this country, [thus] they should adhere to the rules of this country while they are here," says Victoria upon the matter.

Since the students pay for student activity fees, SGA meetings are open to the student body since Student Government operates on student's funds, so students as stock holders are expected to have access to what's going on, therefore making it public information. Though, according to Merchant, there are times when SGA needs to discuss matters that only pertain to the members of the organization. If there was an issue that needed to be discussed among the members, then a motion to go into an executive meeting would take place.

If a person were to disagree with the motion to go into an executive session, then a vote is taken to see if the organization agrees to go into an executive meeting or not. The majority of times, according to Merchant, the votes are usually unanimous, which means that those who are in the meeting; spectators, and guests would have to exit the room while the organization carries out the issues that need to be covered.

After the executive meeting is over, another motion takes place to confirm that the organization is going out of executive session. After doing so, the guests who were asked to leave are then asked to return to the room.

"Vhanessa was a member of student government for a substantial period of time, and she had participated in numerous meetings where the organization went into executive session, so it's a normal business procedure," comments Merchant.

As the adjudicator of the college, students must go before Merchant to discuss any allegations of disorderly conduct. Following the confrontation of the meeting, Victoria had to report to Merchant to settle down her disorderly conduct.

Victoria arrived at the meeting fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled time, which

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Faculty Spotlight

Meet Dr. Louis Lucca

By: Ginger Albertson



No matter how you look at it, Dr. Louis Lucca, or Louie as he likes to be called, is an interesting man. Whether it is his family history, his high school and college career, his diverse work history, or his teaching methods, his story is unusual.

Dr. Lucca's Byzantine Catholic grandparents, both maternal and paternal, came to America in the latter half of the 19th century. His mother's parents left Syria to escape persecution from the Ottoman Empire, and his father's parents left Corsica looking for the American Dream. Dr. Lucca's father and mother raised him in the same religion, which is similar to Greek Orthodox but practiced under the Pope. The unique Byzantium Catholic upbringing fostered a sense of individuality in Dr. Lucca as he studied at Roman Catholic institutions of learning from elementary school through university. The tenets his family followed were more relaxed than those of the Roman Catholic, lending to his own innate carefree attitude. He was raised in Brooklyn by a Syrian mother and Italian father (even though his father was Corsican, he considered himself Italian Corsican rather than French Corsican as the island changed hands many times), in an area with a rich Middle Eastern history.

Dr. Lucca's freshman year in high school ended with a horrible plane crash in the courtyard of the school, St. Augustine's. It was the worst plane crash ever in history up to that point, leaving a painful mark on his mind. His college years went much

better until the second semester of his senior year when his father passed away. The semester hadn't even started when he got the news. To top off the bad news, it happened during a cemetery workers' strike. Dr. Lucca still managed to find irony in the devastating event. "My father would do that. He would pick the most dramatic time to die...he chose a grave strike," said Dr. Lucca. That captures the type of man Dr. Lucca is: a man who can have an ironic sense of humor, even when things were rough.

After having to attend two funerals due to the workers' strike, he decided that it was time he left college and got a good paying job, so he headed to Wall Street. He stayed there promising himself that one day he would finish school, but it took him awhile to make the commitment. "The money became an attraction for me...You know how it is. They give you a carrot here and a carrot there and so then being a consumer you buy this...and then you realize that your life is passing you by," he said, smiling ruefully. After several half-hearted attempts to go to other universities to complete his degree, he went back to the first university he attended, Seton Hall University in New Jersey. Although he had been out of school for awhile and his particular major had been changed in the institution, the school had been kind enough to "grandfather" him in so that he only had to take a few extra courses to complete his bachelor's degree. It wasn't easy, though, and still took a couple of years

for him to get back into the swing of things. After completing his Bachelor's, he still did nothing with his education until "one day I had some sort of epiphany," and after going to work and looking at the company name etched in the window, he turned around and went home. That's when he decided to apply to graduate school. He applied and got accepted, just beating the application deadline for the fall term at NYU, and eventually he got his Masters in Education. He then applied for his first teaching position at BMCC, was hired, and then went to work on his Ph.D.

Toward the end of his time on Wall Street, a friend of his asked him to cover a couple of shifts at a radio station, which he did at night. Dr. Lucca had developed such a fan base during this time that, after his friend returned and took back his shift, the radio station asked him if he would do a show of his own for them, and that started his career in radio. This lasted for ten years, starting while he was on Wall Street and continuing through his remaining college years and into his teaching career. Eight of those years were devoted to his own show, a call in show "Standing Room Only", which had formats dealing with theatrical shows. One such original format "People On Broadway Who Can't Sing," caused a listener to crash his bike into a tree.

Considering that his career had been so diverse, it was interesting to find out that all three vocations overlapped, literally. His broadcast career happened at the same time

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LUCCA, from p.5

as his Wall Street and teaching careers; and while on Wall Street he did instructional programs at trade show presentations as well as tutoring people in French and Spanish. Teaching has been a theme throughout his life, something that he has always enjoyed.

As a student at the college, one cannot help noticing that Dr. Lucca has a unique, and very effective teaching style. He insists that this is due to a professor of his, Dr. Jean Maquilus, or Dr. "Mack" as she was known. She was an eclectic woman to say the least. "She would come to class in silver spandex...and she would put hand-drawn dart boards on the wall, and then she would put her lessons on the dart board, then she turned around...bend down and throw a dart through her legs up on to the wall and that was the lesson for the evening...she was very dynamic." After describing this, Dr. Lucca said that the most important thing she ever told him was, "If you're really good, your students will never leave you." He said that he has always found that statement to be true. He also said that she taught him a teaching technique called "inquiry based learning." This, he says, is a method wherein he sets the parameters and lets the student find their niche, taking their education into their own hands. He feels that he coaches rather than "teaches." Rather than taking the student by the hand with rote learning, he would rather that they take the initiative to go out on their own, and find out for themselves. Discovery has much more

impact on a student's education. He also tries to make the desk "invisible," by engaging his students in discussions to break down barriers.

Dr. Lucca is both excited and concerned about the future that his media students can look forward to. His excitement comes from the rapid changes in media that are happening today and the affect that it has been having on people. This is also the basis for his concern. "Everything is created for the camera, created for the sound bite, created for the clips...nobody listens to content anymore." He believes that we are too controlled by the media, by their creations, and that the consumer has developed into someone who can only grasp the sound bite and the clip because anything deeper, with more content would be too much to absorb. "So they are feeding them to us and we are willingly consuming them." As far as the idea that trends come in waves and that eventually consumers will demand more substance, he said he hoped so. Dr. Lucca also said that what he is trying to do in the classroom is to create critical observers, rather than people continually observing media with a blind eye and a deaf ear. "I say in the classroom to the students, and to our colleagues, that you've got to be aware of what's happening, you've got to pay attention, you've got to open up your eyes and your ears...If you don't, things are going to be taken away from you. Your freedoms, your liberty...are going to be taken away from you."

The Silence of the Limbo

By: Damien Rosenstock

Students and faculty at LaGuardia Community College (LGCC) came out and filled the little theatre to almost capacity to view a reading by author and distinguished Professor of English at Medger Evers College, Elizabeth Nunez of her book *Beyond The Limbo Silence*, on May 11th.

The event was organized by The Black Literature Series Committee and the Women's Studies Committee of the LGCC English Department to showcase the 2004 City University of New York's Common Reading Book award winner to students at LaGuardia, who have or currently are reading it now.

Beyond The Limbo Silence is a semi-autobiographical story of a Caribbean woman's struggle culturally and socially after immigrating to Wisconsin during the Civil Rights Era. Nunez herself is an immigrant from the Island of Trinidad, who came to Wisconsin to study at Marian College during the Civil Rights Era. She received her green card in 1968 right after the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. assassination.

"I finished my last exam, picked up my suitcase and never went back until after I finished my novel, when they invited me back to give me an award," said Nunez.

When the reading began, the almost 230 audience members pulled out her book and thumbed through *Beyond The Limbo Silence* as Nunez read. "I want to hear my voice because I write with my ear," said Nunez as she began the reading through her Trinidadian accent.

When Nunez finished reading she opened up the forum to the audience for questions where one student asked about her inspiration for the title. The title was inspired by her son, Tyler, at 11 years old saying he was going to grow an "Angela Davis" and for him to be inspired to go,

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Afghanistan Beyond Images

By: Sybille Ngo Nyeck, International Studies Student

There were no bombs. No holes. No ruins. Just Afghanistan, beautiful, just as in the old days, when Leeza Ahmady left the country. The images of Afghanistan shared with the students of LaGuardia Community College on April 1, 2004 at the little Theatre, made visible the beauty of a country that is still badly in need of being rediscovered.

Lilik Gondopriono, coordinator of the "Afghanistan & the Islamic World" workshop introduced Leeza Ahmady as an independent art curator, and administrator who is committed to educating the diverse communities of New York about the real cultures of Afghanistan and the Islamic world.

Leeza, her twin sister, and their mother left Afghanistan when she was 11 years old. Her family was lucky enough to find a way out of a country occupied by the Russians. After a short stay in Pakistan, she landed in the United States of America, where she is currently living and working. Leeza said her integration into the American Society was somehow easier due to the fact that she is an identical twin. She and her twin sister drew a lot of attention that prevented them from being isolated in school. Many people were eager to talk to them and learn more about the twins' life.

As an adult, Leeza has to struggle with identity issues. Because of her features, some people think she is from South America, or Europe or even, India. Her identity as an Afghan-American after 9/11 has become increasingly important to her, considering the way the mainstream media portray the Islamic world. It is therefore, out of that concern that, she dedicated herself to teaching about Afghanistan and making visible counter images that demonstrate the diversity and richness of that country.

Women

The images shown to the students were mostly speaking about women's lives in Islamic countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, and Morocco. Women sitting on the floor, sharing meals, baking breads and

babysitting. Some in veils, other in bathing suits. According to Leeza, the veil was not mandatory for women in Afghanistan since the early twenties. Her mother decided not to veil herself when she was a teenager, while many of her friends did. "Westerners have a tendency to refuse the reality that



most Moslem women actually choose to wear their veils. Like the use of hats for women in the western world, the veil encounters mixed reactions in the Islamic world," said Leeza Ahmady. Many Moslem women wear western clothes. Women in bikinis standing by women in veils proves that fashion and products never remain in one place. "American jeans are worn from Yemen to Turkey and which New Yorker has not tried a falafel. We can no longer claim that this belongs to the East and that belongs to the West" she noted.

Moslem women are hardworking, caring mothers and single women pursuing a dream. Beauty is essential to all Moslem people. The use of henna is widespread in the Islamic world where women (and men) celebrate their lives, their well-being and body by decorating it. A tradition that Leeza said later transferred to the Western world.

Women in the Moslem world are also talented artists. Lida Abdullah is among well-known Afghan women artists who

deconstruct the prejudices easily associated with the veil. In her performance, she is veiled and seductive; veiled and critical.

She is not only washing the hate words and the sad memories that occur on the global scale, she also incarnates hope by the letting go of anger as a way to reconstruct

the individual and the national self. Helping Afghan women to recover their dignity and cover their nudity is urgent. The sad story is that, each occupying force until this day comes with its corollary of sexual abuse and prostitution that impairs women's lives.

Men

Moslem and Afghan men are hard-working. They know how to help their communities. When Russia invaded Afghanistan, a friend of Leeza whom she identified as the "bald man" -- Yes, Arab and Afghan men can be bald and without a long beard--decided to help Afghan refugee families across the Pakistani border. The "bald friend" carried on his family tradition of designing and producing rugs to support his family and the children refugees. Afghanistan is famous for its rugs and mostly men, but also women, do the hard work of dying the materials. Moslem men are, therefore, creative. Some are businessmen and some are rock singers, like the famous Turkish pop star Tarkan. More interesting were men with Afro hairstyle.

Children

Photographs of courageous children smiling to the camera were really moving. Despite all the dangers, they find time to play and keep a smiling face. It's not a joke, they too have blue eyes...

see AFGHANISTAN, p. 14

The Word

If you could say one thing to the



"I'm against the war, but I'm for the soldiers. I feel they should have never been there in the first place, and they are dying unnecessarily."

Alec Whyte

"Fight for what you believe in, but yet still be compassionate. We feel for you."

Liat Vashdi-Bonnano



"I'd like them to come home safe, so they could see their families as soon as possible."

Hiroshi Kendo

"Keep trying, keep doing your thing. We're very proud of you and very appreciative for everything you are doing in your efforts to restore order."

Tamarrah Alves



on Campus

soldiers in Iraq, what would you say?



"I'm proud of what they are doing and I really give it to them for sticking with it for so long."

Cassie Worko

"I feel bad for you, I think you are fighting a pointless war."

Ryan Keogh



"Kick some butt while you are there, do what you need to do to get home safe and God bless."

Mike Skolimowski

"Keep safe, never give up and stay positive."

Jacqueline Escobar



Entertainment

Angry Vaginas take LaGuardia

By: Edward Cen

The word "vagina" is a unique word in the English language, and when it is heard we find ourselves either shocked or appalled by the word. Depending on the context it is used in, we allow ourselves to convey a negative connotation; we often find it taboo.

The Vagina Monologues originally began as interviews by Eve Ensler, and she was able to turn these interviews into short monologues enlightening the public by sharing the thoughts of women.

Colleges and universities all over began a revival of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* around February. As a part of the V-Day campaign, colleges hope to inform the public about violence against women and girls.

The V-Day campaign is recognized as a mission to fight against the abuse of women. The "V" in V-Day represents Victory, Valentine, and Vagina.

The latest performance, directed by Prof. Will Koolsbergen, was featured at LaGuardia Community College and promoted by the Student Center for Women

The actresses who participated felt that by being a part of the production, they contributed to the cause of educating the public and carrying out the mission of the V-Day campaign. "It is

enlightening to know, or to learn that these monologues are taken from actual women's lives; well, their experiences anyway. And some of these monologues were painful to read because the experiences were painful. And as a young woman, some of these really touched me," says Rhea Neblett, cast member.

The monologue entitled "My Angry Vagina", performed



by Giselle Blanco, expresses the difficulties of a woman confined to a male dominated society.

The monologue describes in detail the ideas and products concocted to undermine a woman's vagina. Blanco, states, "I think every man should see this show." She continues on to say, "Girls have come up to me after the show and said they wanted to bring every guy they know to see it."

In conjunction with the performances, the Women's Center formulated a week full events to celebrate womanhood. Prior to the performances, there

was a screening of *The Vagina Monologues* performed by Eve Ensler from her HBO special. Members of the Student Center for Women also made their own vagina self-portraits. Raquel Namuche, a representative for the Student Center for Women, elaborates, "When we were making them [vagina self-portraits] at the women's center some girls didn't know what

certain parts of the vagina were, so we were all helping each other out and teaching each other about our bodies. The vagina self-portraits are also a great visual reminder, that, 'Hey, vaginas exist and talking about them is OKAY.'"

The various events also included workshops entitled, "Sexual Assault: Basic

Facts, Myths, and Where to Get Help" facilitated by Prof. Cohen, and "Confronting Tensions: Straight Women, Lesbians and Transgender People Speak Out".

With the successful V-Week, expectations of the public grow. "We shouldn't be tolerant; instead we ought to be concerned," says Justin Berl, an audience member. Blanco, adds, "I think women are more comfortable talking about their vaginas... I know I am!"

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LaGuardia's Dark Room: The Photo Lab

By: Michael Skolimowski

To understand the Photography Department at Laguardia community College you first need to get to know its director a bit. It's only fitting that he had a great grandfather who was an avid photographer in the heart of frozen Russia. His grandfather also took pictures all over that icy tundra and loved doing it. No wonder Scott Sternbach has helped build an up to date and competitive Commercial Photography Program, right on "the doorstep of Manhattan" at LaGuardia Community College.

"Some people say we're the best two year photography program on the entire East coast, if not the whole U.S.," says Sternbach, "and we provide visual stimulation for the entire college through the hallway exhibitions."

Sternbach is not only the Director of Photography but also a full time teacher. His education comes from Ohio University, and from The New School, right in Manhattan.

He opened a photo studio in the city in 1979 and has done picture stories and editorials for world famous magazines such as *The New York Times Magazine* and *Swiss Jazz*, even *The Village Voice* features some of his work. Sternbach is no rookie. His 60+ album covers which he's photographed and designed pretty much remove him from that category.

Sternbach's one of those guys you want on your team. Easy to work with, focused and professional, and we got

him.

The photo lab is located in L119 and seems to be a place of fury. There's lights, darkrooms, jars of chemicals, computers, and tons of things the untrained eye can't identify. The place is like a maze of classrooms, labs, and storage closets. Sternbach seems to be flowing through this labyrinth like he's done it a million times.

The school doesn't give too much money to the department but Sternbach fights for every thing he can and actually just received some state of the art digital photography equipment and film scanners, which allows his students to get hands on training with cutting edge technology.

Even though the program at LaGuardia doesn't have such awesome equipment as some of the more expensive four year programs, Sternbach says it doesn't matter. "A lot of our students come from poor families and their hungry, hungry to achieve success and hungry to build a career in the industry." The students utilize what's there and make the most of their experience in the program.

At a recent college student photography exhibition called "SALON", which takes place at Parsons University, some of the best student photographers from the School of Visual Arts, The New School, Parsons, and Cooper Union College all displayed their best work. It was supposed to be an exhibition but according to Sternbach "it always seems to

become very competitive, and the students go around critiquing their work." LaGuardia was invited to bring their best work, to pull side by side with the "Big Boys."

Sternbach put it best, "not to pat our own backs but we kicked some major butt." Meaning that when LaGuardia student's work was put side by side with all the other school's work, "it was at least as good if not better than the ones coming out of the four years [Colleges]."

The Photography Department has four programs, all of which are targeted toward developing a career in the photography industry.

The first is the Commercial Photography Certificate program, which gives graduating students a certification in commercial photography and teaches you the basics of picture taking, lighting, and self advertising. It is direct and to the point. All hands on.

The other three are all two year Associate of Arts programs and are college certified. They are as follows: Commercial Photography, Digital Photography, And Fine Art Photography.

These three programs are laid out in a very similar fashion but vary in elective courses to help students hone their skills within their chosen major.

All students start out with beginning photo courses which introduce them to the basics such as film processing, printing, aesthetics (what to take pictures of), and critiques. All of these courses teach students the skills and information they need to get started in photography.

The Intermediate classes focus more on directing the students' career and skill paths. These courses include teachings on Photo Journalism, Fashion Photography, Portrait Studio, Architectural Photography, etc. These classes try to guide the student towards the field they're most talented in and happiest doing.

The Advanced courses seem to be the favorites, according to Sternbach. Students take intense courses in color, digital photography, studio lighting, and even a workshop to prepare them for the marketplace.

see PHOTO LAB, p.14

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MOMA, from p.1

paucity of their experience there.

"People come to the MOMA wanting a full, New York experience, they have high expectations and are often bitterly disappointed," said an employee.

"We get people coming up to us saying things like, 'This is an outrage!' or, 'This is a rip-off!'" said another employee preferring not to give her name. "A lot of people," she explained, "bring their kids here for the day and want to spend more than hour or an hour and a half here."

Expressing empathy for the peeved customers, a third employee recalled an experience a couple of years ago when he and his wife went to the Manhattan location and, after spending nearly twenty dollars each, realized that two of the floors were closed for renovation. "I was miffed," he said.

In spite of these fairly consistent complaints, though, the majority of museumgoers who've hopped the 7 train to 33rd street to check out the factory-turned-temporary museum seem satisfied, said the first employee. Having worked at the Manhattan location as well, he said that the museum's overall popularity has not been affected by the move across the river, as far as he could see.

"During the Picasso exhibit, there were lines all the way around the block, to the loading dock. Because of the fire code allowing a maximum of 800 people, there was a Fire Marshall present for enforcement. It was difficult finding some

way to regulate the flow of people."

Regular customers also contribute to the new location's success, say the info desk workers.

"There is a woman who brings her son here almost every Saturday, though we haven't seen her in a while. They always seem to have a good time."

The new location and relationship with nearby LaGuardia Community College has also been a positive experience for college students, the employees said.

"It seems that many students come here who wouldn't have if we were still in Manhattan, also, if we weren't free for them."

Professors at LaGuardia, they say, also seem pleased with MOMA's presence and relationship with the school.

"One LaGuardia professor was here just last weekend," an employee said, "and he was really excited about the new photography exhibit- he said he's been to it three times and he's going to take his class here."

As for the future of the small, temporary home, while the museum's official plans are still in the air, the talk around town is that somewhere down the road, the building will still house some exhibits, or be used for something to that end. As an employee said, "They spent at least 8 million dollars renovating this space. I don't think they would spend all that money just to use it for two years."

End of Summer Fun

By: Ginger Albertson

So you're sitting at home saying, "The summer is over and all I did was go to class?!" That would be depressing, but fortunately the summer is not over yet. There are plenty of things to do as the summer winds down. For instances, did you get a chance to go to P.S. 1's Summer Warm Up? Or have you checked out the OUTdoor Cinema, an international film festival at Socrates Sculpture Park? What about the gorgeous sands of Rockaway Beach? The beach is a lot nicer since the Surfrider and NY Cares, Inc. clean up in May and there is a rumor that on Saturdays people play samba and dance on the beach all day and night (it is an unofficial gathering evidently). Just imagine, a twenty-four hour beach-that gives you a lot of times to pick from. On rainy days, the American Museum of the Moving Image has more than a thousand artifacts from various film and television shows displayed in the museum's core exhibit, *Behind the Scenes*. Whether or not you are a film student, there are interesting exhibits of film relics both old and new available for viewing. And if you are just curious, you can also learn about the many processes that go into producing, marketing and exhibiting a film or television show. If that doesn't interest you, the museum also does classic film screenings during the day and in the evenings on Fridays.

I bet you are saying to yourself, "Yeah, but I'm not a millionaire. Who can afford to spend money when they are going to school?" Well, no one I know, but here's the surprise: the most expensive thing is the Warm Up party at P.S.1 at \$8 for admission; then there's the American Museum of the Moving Image at only \$7.50 for students and that includes the price of screenings, and on Fridays admission is free from 4 pm to 8 pm; the Socrates Sculpture Park film festival is very affordable, it's free. So you see, your summer isn't ruined. There is still time to have fun and it won't cost much to get out and enjoy something really fun. What are you waiting for?

For further information, visit: www.ps1.org; www.socratesculpturepark.org; www.ammi.org

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NUNEZ, from p.6

"beyond the limbo of silence".

Professor Nunez signed books and answered questions of the remaining audience members past the scheduled hour.

"I really appreciate the warm welcome and the enthusiasm from students seemed really interested and really engaged and they asked really in depth questions", said Nunez. "I really appreciated the silences and could see them thinking and reflecting and this is a reflection the way they were prepared by the faculty."

Nunez, who is also Co-founder of the National Black Writers Conference said it was "wonderful and every writers dream, though it took a long time to happen" when asked how she felt about CUNY recognizing *Beyond The Limbo Silence* as the Common Reading Book.

"I think it is a tremendous experience in making the connection in Caribbean and African American Culture considering this is a school that has a lot of people from the African Diaspora," said Professor Terry Cole, the LaGuardia English Department Co-director of composition and member of the Black Literature Series Committee.

Professor Nunez was born in Trinidad and immigrated to the United States to pursue her collegiate education. Of Afro-Caribbean and Portuguese descent, Nunez's father changed the name from the Portuguese Nunes to Nunez "because the Portuguese were considered to be poor shop-keepers and he wanted to be associated with the more wealthy Latinos," said Nunez.

"Because we've been doing this text in class the students became so involved; wondering whether it is autobiographical, it's like having the main character here," said Victoria Brown, chairperson of The Black Literature Series Committee and Lecturer of The LaGuardia English Dept.

Students agreed with Ms. Brown "It was pretty good actually, a sense of relief putting a voice to the words," said Ryan, a LaGuardia student.

"Hearing her voice made her words seem realistic," said Annie, a 21 year old, second year student.

Nunez has authored 5 novels and is currently authoring another book titled *Prospero's Daughter*, which is due out in 2005.

"We Brew Starbucks Coffee"

By: Damien Rosenstock



PHOTO COURTESY OF WWW.STARBUCKS.COM

"You're out of the Verona, It's the best one" Professor Mark Blackman of the Co-operative Education department informs cafeteria worker Wanda Mercado, as she pumps one of the 3 Starbucks coffee dispensers in the Poolside Cafe. "I'm a Huge Coffee drinker," says Blackman. "I don't like Starbucks, but it's nice to have a good cup of coffee without having to go across the street for that trash"

Starbucks is one of the many new features at the Poolside Cafe. Located by the Vandam entrance in the E-building across from the swimming pool, the Poolside Cafe is a spacious light gray with red trimming cafeteria with 14 tables, 4 vending machines. Pepsi has recently replaced Coca-Cola in the Poolside Cafe, but the ice cream and snack machines still remain. The decor is not 4 star and the large 50 something inch Toshiba projection television is not one of the flat panel plasma television recently purchased by LaGuardia Community College.

So what is the news at the Poolside cafe? The Poolside cafe is featuring a new menu. The new menu features Pancakes, Belgium Waffles, and French Toast with fruit and sweet topping such as chocolate chips, whipped cream and ice cream. If the pancakes and waffles are too sweet for your tooth, then you can order a 3 egg omelet with a choice of fillings. For lunch or snack the Poolside Cafe features foot long hot dogs with toppings. David's Cookies and ice cream (not from the vending machine) are new desserts being served.

But the Starbucks Coffee is the new feature that has bought all the buzz. The Poolside Cafe with the new Starbucks sign above the entrance is serving 3 different varieties of Starbucks Brand Coffee. The De-caffeinated Coffee, the Breakfast blend, and the very popular Verona are the 3 coffees available for \$1.50 for a small and \$1.75 for a large coffee. There are no Frappuccino or even Cappuccinos, no brownies or yuppies on their laptops like most Starbucks. But there are eight different flavors of Tazo Teas for .90¢ and a Tazo Iced Tea. You can accompany your Starbucks coffee with a Biscotti for an extra \$1.

Wanda Mercado, who has worked in the Poolside Cafe the last 3 years for Culinar has noticed an improvement in business, "The kids love the new menu whether it's the Belgium Waffles, the pancakes, or the ice cream," says Mercado.

Blackman who is a self confessed "huge coffee drinker" finds the new coffee at the Poolside Cafe to also be convenient "You get a lousy large coffee across the street for \$1 here you get a great large coffee for \$1.75" says Professor Blackman.

While the large sunny windows and projection television are still a great reason to sit in the Poolside Cafe during your break at LaGuardia, the new menu in the E-building's Poolside Cafe make this 172 person occupancy cafeteria more of an attraction to the student instead of going over the convenient store Thomson Avenue or the Vandam Diner.

Mercado cleans out the coffee maker and opens a fresh pack of coffee grind. "Ahh, I love that smell," says Mercado as she passes the package under Blackman's nose, "ahh" as Blackman whiffs in agreement.

AFGHANISTAN, from p.7

Social Life

Another was the beauty of the landscapes. Green valleys and mountain peaks covered with snow gave us a living picture of Afghanistan in opposition to the desolation and isolation often advertised in the mainstream media. Laguardia Students discovered yellow taxis, trucks and donkeys as means for travelling. The Islamic tradition in Afghanistan is valuable through its cultural heritage. The majestic central Mosque in Afghanistan, built during the Islamic renaissance, is surviving all the bombings and stands as a symbol of unity and faith of more than one billion people of Islamic world.

Education

Unlike the Mosques, school buildings didn't survive the bombings. Under the Russian rule, schools were bombed. The Taliban occupation only allowed few schools for girls. Even before 9/11 Leeza and friends were raising funds in the US to re-open schools in Afghanistan. In 2002, the School of Hope (www.sohope.org) officially opened its doors to girls and boys bringing hope through education.

Walking the walk

Leeza Ahmady not only talks the talk but also walks the walk. At the end of the workshop, she performed the Mohabatt-Dance for the Students.

Diversity is indeed to her, "the most powerful element a person, a community and a nation can have". Are we ready to embrace diversity?

SGA, from p.4

was at 3 PM. Accompanied by an independent professor to have as an eyewitness, she claims that after forty minutes of waiting, Merchant had disregarded the meeting by walking out.

Although Victoria claims that Merchant had been informed of her arrival, Merchant says that he had no knowledge of the reason for Victoria's and the professor's presence. According to Victoria, Merchant's receptionist gave him a signal with the intention to notify him that he had to leave for his next meeting.

"The reason why I walked out of the door is I had no knowledge Vhanessa and the professor were there to see me. It would have not only been rude, but it would have been unprofessional for me to walk past two individuals, a student, [who] I think is valuable, and a professor, [who] is a professional," says Merchant.

Despite the fact that there was no meeting set between Victoria and Merchant, Merchant claims that the vice-president met with Victoria to adjudicate the matters that had taken place.

As the adjudicator of the college, Merchant's job is to meet with students that have been charged with a disorderly conduct. If the issue turns unstable, then the student being charged with disorderly conduct is given what is called a summons. A summons application informs the student of the day in which they must meet with the adjudicator to settle the matter that had taken place.

If the student then denies the charges then they are taken through a process where the matter is reviewed somewhat objectively. In this case the student must report to a committee called The Student

Faculty Review Board that is like a jury, consisting of students and faculty. The Board listens to the same case as well as witnesses, and from there on they make a decision pertaining to the matter.

However, Merchant's job as the mentor of Student Government is mainly to guide the members in certain situations and/or matters. He mentions that he attempts to educate the members of SGA to negotiate, and mediate some of the skills that are used for adjudication.

"I also think it's a great conflict of interest to have Luis Merchant as the mentor if he's also the adjudicator, who's then suppose to solve problems for the organization who inherently always has problems", says Victoria.

Merchant states that being in Student Government helps him to balance out his position with being the adjudicator of the college. He feels you can acquire the skills of one to use it on the other. He reminds the members of SGA that their job is to reflect on the needs of the students.

"What I do is a lot of the skills that I use for the adjudication; I try to impart those skills on to student government members because they do like all human beings come into conflict with each other, and we try to figure out how can we resolve this", says Merchant.

Perhaps the quickest route to a resolution is to take Vhanessa Victoria's approach, "Whether or not we like each other as people, it doesn't matter we just have to go and do what's best for the students, and if we can all go out and have coffee afterwards, then that's nice, but if we can't, then you know what? It doesn't matter".

PHOTO LAB, from p.11

Community colleges tend to be under funded and overpopulated like ours, but sometimes good things can come out of that. Like Sternbach said, our students are "hungry" and they know what it means to have, and take advantage of, a good opportunity. The Photography Program here at LaGuardia seems to be just that, an

opportunity that can satisfy that hunger. The hunger to build a career doing something that you love and can be successful at.

Our Director of Photography and Communist ancestry put it best, "We just want the students who graduate from this program to follow their hearts and fulfill

their desires as photographers." Can't beat that.

Student World Assembly Chapter Established

by Karmen Varjabedian



LaGuardia Community College's International Program signed an agreement with Mr. Paul Reynault, president of the Reynault Foundation and the founder of the Student World Assembly (SWA), on April 26, 2004 to establish the first SWA Chapter on a community college campus in the world. As a non-governmental/non-profit body, the SWA "<http://www.StudentWorldAssembly.org>" attempts to allow the voices from even the most remote colleges on earth to be heard and encourages all students to begin to think of themselves as global citizens. SWA is a way to give voice to the voiceless; an opportunity for students around the world to experience democracy, campaigning and representation through the use of the Internet.

LaGuardia students began their participation by attending the SWA kick off campaign on March 26, 2004 at the UN Church Center. Nine LaGuardia students and alumni joined students from other colleges in this gathering on the East Coast to prepare for the first Student World

Assembly Convention to be held at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), in San Luis Obispo, in July 2004.

Mr. Paul Raynault, President of Raynault Foundation and founder of the SWA, envisions the SWA as a global community that represents the students' voice. The students' vote are not for the university or the country but for the ideas they support regardless of where they are from.

Mr. Raynault was very impressed by the LaGuardia

delegation and in follow up meetings asked LaGuardia students to take a leading role in the SWA. In return, Mr. Raynault agreed to provide five \$500 scholarships in Spring 2004 and five additional ones in Fall 2004 to LaGuardia students who actively undertake to establish a SWA Chapter on LaGuardia campus. Furthermore, Mr. Raynault agreed to pay for the expenses for five LaGuardia students who commit to prepare for the SWA July Convention in California. The two pressing global issues that the student delegates to the Convention will discuss are War and Global Environmental Sustainability.

LaGuardia students are excited about this opportunity afforded to them and have actively began to establish the SWA chapter at LaGuardia and to prepare for their participation to July convention. We are actively recruiting students for the SWA chapter and interested students should contact me through e-mail at kvarjabedian@hotmail.com or see Dean M. Reza Fakhari in M311.

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CUNY's Media Mecca

by Ryan Mundaca

The City University of New York, (CUNY) which is known to be made up of many renowned colleges, is planning to open up a new graduate school dedicated to journalism in the fall of 2005, in the Borough of Manhattan.

The decision to create a journalism graduate school was based on the desire to give CUNY students more options in terms of graduate studies, says CUNY Press Representative, Michael Arena.

Plans for the school include offering striving future journalists an intensive one-year training course in news writing, broadcasting, and magazine writing.

A rigorous three-week introductory writing and reporting 3 credit Boot Camp is in the works beginning August 2005, as well.

The new graduate school will also provide courses that mainly concentrate on urban journalism, which means they will primarily focus on news that occurs within New York City.

New York City's many media outlets will be used as an essential resource for the graduate school, which plans to recruit professional journalists to work as professors.

What will ultimately set this new CUNY graduate school of journalism apart from other graduate programs that are already offered by established private universities is the cost of tuition.

While private universities charge up to \$60,000 per academic year for such degree programs, the new school will charge up to \$6,000 per academic year.

Admission to the new CUNY graduate school of journalism will consist of passing a written exam that tests the prospective students composition and grammar skills.

CUNY administration is optimistic about the success of the new journalism graduate school. Arena, says, "what better place to open a [journalism] graduate school than in the capital of the world."



International Day

May 19, 2004

