ACCESSION #98-005
THE PAPERS OF BELLE ZELLER

Dates
Inclusive dates: 1917-1998
Bulk dates: 1927-1985

Extent
16 boxes / 13 cubic feet

Creator
Belle Zeller (1903-1998)

Access/Use
This collection is open for research. Materials can be accessed at the Brooklyn College Archives & Special Collections 2900 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, New York, 11210

Languages
English

Finding Aid
Guide is available in-house.

Acquisition/Appraisal
This collection was donated by the Zeller family in 1998.

Description Control
Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: Content Standard. Processed by Erin Allsop, April 2013.

Preferred Citation
Item, folder title, box number, The Papers of Belle Zeller, Brooklyn College Library Archives & Special Collections, Brooklyn College Library.

Subject Heading
Lobbying – (New York State).
Lobbying – United States.
Zeller, Belle.
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Belle Zeller was born in Manhattan, New York on April 8, 1903 and was one of nine children of Davis and Celia Zeller; a couple who emigrated from Eastern Europe in the late-nineteenth century. On a daily basis, Belle and her family would discuss politics and developed a fond interest in this subject as a result. She attended Hunter College High School for girls and eventually Hunter College, where she graduated cum laude with a B.A. in history and social sciences in 1924. It was also during this year that she obtained her New York State teaching certification, which qualified her to teach history for grades one through seven. She continued to excel her education further by enrolling in the Master’s program at Columbia University and graduated with a degree in sociology in 1926. With a Bachelor’s degree, a Master’s degree, and a teaching certification under her belt, she began teaching sociology at Hunter College’s Brooklyn campus in 1927 and was one of the system’s few female professors at the time.

In 1930, the Brooklyn campus of Hunter College had evolved into Brooklyn College, where Belle Zeller became one of the institutions founding instructors. She was an educator at Brooklyn College for over 50 years and is responsible for the creation of the Political Science department in 1938. As a teenager during World War I, Belle Zeller understood the place of politics and propaganda within a war. As a professor at Brooklyn College during World War II, she taught her students about war time politics through the use of primary source documents such as propaganda advertisements. While teaching at Brooklyn College, she received her Ph. D in philosophy from Columbia University in 1937. It was during her time as a doctoral student that Belle Zeller developed an interest in the study of legislative lobbying. Her dissertation, “Pressure Politics in New York,” is the first complete study on state-level lobbying and as a result, made her the foremost authority on legislative lobbying during the twentieth century. During her spare time when she was not teaching, Dr. Zeller served as an advisor to members of the New York State Legislature, the Senate and the House of Representatives; most notably, Senator John F. Kennedy requested assistance from Belle Zeller to provide as much background material as possible on the Regulation of Lobbying Act (1955).

It was through her influence in government and her knowledge on lobbying that Dr. Zeller became the chairwoman of the Legislative Conference of the City Colleges. This conference is known today as the Professional Staff Congress, the first union to represent faculty members of the City University system. She was an educator as well as a labor advocate who lobbied for legislation to establish tenure and pensions and because of her efforts these standards are considered basic rights for public college educators in New York State today. Dr. Zeller has received numerous awards for her political and educational achievements during her time at Brooklyn College. In March of 1979, the CUNY Professional Staff Congress (PSC) created the Belle Zeller Scholarship Trust Fund as a way to commemorate her achievements as an educator. This scholarship trust fund is a private non-profit organization which offers merit-based scholarships to undergraduate students within the CUNY system. The first applications were accepted in January of 1980; this program continues to help students achieve their educational goals today.

Dr. Belle Zeller, an emeritus professor of political science at Brooklyn College and tenacious leader of the Professional Congress, passed at the age of 95 at her home on the Upper West Side in May of 1998. Through her efforts as a professor, a political advisor, and a union leader, the legacy of Dr. Zeller continues to encourage people to never give up on their dreams.
The *Papers of Belle Zeller* collection contains rare materials from her personal life, as well as her professional life which was richly involved in education, politics and philanthropy. Within this collection, researchers will find a plethora of items including over 150 photographs; awards; hand-written and typed correspondence between colleagues and administrators of Brooklyn College, the New York State Legislature, the Senate and the House of Representatives; numerous publications and scholarly papers; a unique hand-made scrapbook detailing the events of World War I; as well as her personal classroom materials such as her grade books and propaganda advertisements created during World War II. There are two oversize boxes in this collection which include the World War I scrapbook and newspaper clippings, an honorary degree from CUNY (1985), and some propaganda classroom materials. The inclusive dates of this collection range from 1917-1998, and the bulk dates range from 1927-1985.

This collection is arranged into five series which are: *Personal Material, Academics, Belle Zeller Scholarship, Government, and Oversize*. Please refer to the container list for further information.
**SERIES STATEMENT**

**SERIES I. PERSONAL MATERIAL**

**Dates**  
Inclusive Dates: 1917-1994  
Bulk Dates: 1923-1986

**Extent**  
Four Boxes / 2.5 cubic feet

The *Personal Material* series contains items such as Belle Zeller’s personal correspondence and handwritten notes; her yearbook from Hunter College (1923); her Master’s Thesis (Columbia University, 1926) and her New York State Teaching Certifications; numerous awards from Hunter College, Brooklyn College and CUNY; her original scrapbook which documented various events throughout The Great War (1919); as well as over 25 envelopes containing rare black and white/color photographs documenting her travels throughout the Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Asia as a political attaché in 1967. There are four boxes within this series; three standard-size boxes and one tray (*please note that the tray is located in the oversize series as well*). All materials are organized based on subject matter and have been housed in the proper archival boxes and sleeves necessary to maintain long-term preservation. The scrapbook, however, is in very poor condition and must not be handled. In order to view this scrapbook, researchers may use the disc that is included within this series to view digital images of the entire scrapbook.

**SERIES II. ACADEMICS**

**Dates**  
Inclusive Dates: 1926-1980  
Bulk Dates: 1930-1960

**Extent**  
Five Boxes / 2.5 cubic feet

The *Academics* series contains materials relative to Belle Zeller’s teaching career at both Hunter and Brooklyn College from the late 1920s to the early 1980s. Such materials include her correspondence and notes between administrators and colleagues regarding the creation of the Department of Political Science (Brooklyn College) as well as the Congressional Staff Congress (CUNY); her “grade books” for each of her classes dated from 1927 to 1968; along with rare World War II propaganda material which was used in her classes perhaps to discuss the effects of propaganda in the study of Political Science. There are five standard-size boxes within this series and all materials have been organized by subject matter and are housed in the proper archival
boxes and sleeves necessary to maintain long-term preservation. Please take into consideration the use of gloves for handling materials when necessary.

**SERIES III. BELLE ZELLER SCHOLARSHIP**

**Dates**


Bulk Dates: 1983-1989

**Extent**

9 Folders (half of one standard-size box) / .25 cubic feet

Created by the CUNY Professional Staff Congress (PSC) in March of 1979, the Belle Zeller Scholarship Trust Fund was a private non-profit organization which offered merit-based scholarships to undergraduate students within the CUNY system. The first applications were accepted in January of 1980; this program continues to help students achieve their educational goals today. Within the Belle Zeller Scholarship series, researchers will find copies of the application, fact sheets, and information on criteria and eligibility; along with photographs and documents of recipients from 1980-1997. This small series is contained within half of one standard-size box, 9 folders in total. All items are in relatively good condition, have been organized by subject matter and have been placed in proper folders to ensure lasting preservation. Please consider the use of gloves when handling the photographs.

**SERIES IV. GOVERNMENT**

**Dates**

Inclusive Dates: 1938-1988

Bulk Dates: 1940-1960

**Extent**

5.5 Boxes / 2.25 cubic feet

Belle Zeller’s doctoral dissertation entitled “Pressure Politics in New York” (Columbia University, 1937) is widely recognized as the first complete study on state-level lobbying and had established her as the foremost authority on the subject of Legislative Lobbying during the late-twentieth century. Within the Government series, researchers will find hand-written and typed notes, correspondence, memos, and publications that give credence to her authoritative place within the world of American politics. Senators and Congressman alike, including John F. Kennedy, wrote to her for informative advice on the place of legislative lobbying within politics;
final reports and publications from the Senate and House of Representatives are included within this series as well. Most of the items are in good condition; however, some require care and the use of gloves when being handled. These items are arranged chronologically and by subject matter and are contained within 5.5 boxes.

SERIES V. OVERSIZE

**Dates**  
1919; 1940s; 1985

**Extent**  
2 Boxes / 5.5 cubic feet

The *Oversize* series contains items in this collection that are unable to fit on standard-size shelving from the *Personal Material* and *Academics* series’. From the *Personal Material* series, oversize newspaper clippings from the World War I scrapbook and an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws given to Dr. Zeller in June of 1985. From the *Academics* series, you will find oversize propaganda advertisements she used classroom instruction materials. Please note that Box 3: World War I Scrapbook, from the *Personal Material* series, is included in the oversize series and room as well.
CONTAINER LIST

SERIES I. PERSONAL MATERIAL

Box 1. Photographs
1967
Envelope 1. Belgium – July 29 & 30
Envelope 2. Iran (Conference) – August
Envelope 3. Iran – August
Envelope 4. Afghanistan – August
Envelope 5. Jerusalem – August
Envelope 6. Bulgaria – August
Envelope 7. Pakistan & India – September
Envelope 8. India (B&W Photos) – October
Envelope 9. India (Color Photos) – October
Envelope 10. India, Nepal, & Bangkok – October
Envelope 11. Siam – October
Envelope 12. Cambodia – October
Envelope 13. Philippine Islands – November
Envelope 14. Macau – November
Envelope 15. Hong Kong – November
Envelope 16. Singapore – November
Envelope 17. Indonesia – November
Envelope 18. Indonesia – November
Envelope 19. Japan – December
Envelope 20. Japan – December
Envelope 21. Japan – December
Envelope 22. Hawai’i – December
Envelope 23. Hawai’i – December
Envelope 24. Los Angeles – December
Envelope 27. Headshots (8.5 x 11, various dates)

Box 2.
Envelope 1. Peer-Autograph Book (1917)
Envelope 2. Map of Asia (1960s)
Folder 3. Hunter College Yearbook (1923)
Folder 4. Nu Chapter – Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Newsletter (1940)
Folder 5. Hand-written notes
Folder 6. “Haiti & the United States” paper by Belle Zeller (1925)
Folder 7. Columbia University Master’s Degree (1926) & Ph. D (1937) Certificates
Folder 8. Master’s Thesis (Columbia University, 1926)
Folder 9. NY State Board of Ed. Teaching License & Certificates (1924-1928)
Folder 10. Personal Correspondence
Folder 11. Correspondence from Sylvester Simon (9/28/18)
Folder 12. Correspondence with Ercan Ünalan (from Turkey, 1956)
Folder 13. Brooklyn College 55th Commencement Booklet (June 10, 1980)
Folder 14. Hunter College 168th Commencement (Jan. 27, 1994)
Folder 15. Brooklyn College Radio and Television Programs (1969)
Folder 16. Requests
Folder 17. Articles on Belle Zeller
Folder 18. Biography

Box 3. Scrapbook (file box, located in oversize room)
Folder 1. Scrapbook of WWI newspaper clippings (1919)
   Note: This scrapbook is in fragile condition, a disc containing digital images of this scrapbook is included in this box for viewing/research purposes.

Box 4. Awards
Envelope 1. Hunter College Hall of Fame Marble Stone (4/29/72)
Envelope 2. Hunter College Hall of Fame Award (4/29/72)
Envelope 3. Certificate of Recognition: 35 years at Brooklyn College (5/18/65)
Envelope 5. Medal: Brooklyn College (undated)
Folder 6. Certificate Awards and Correspondence (1965-1986)

Series II. Academics

Box 5.
Hunter College
Folder 1. Correspondence (1926-1929)
Brooklyn College
Envelope 2. Photographs (1938 & 1953)
Folder 3. Letters of Recommendation (various years)
Folder 5. Harvey Kirlan (1946-1947)
Folder 6. Committees
Folder 7. Department of Political Science
Folder 8. Staff Personnel Records (1938-1953)
Folder 9. Salary / Promotion to Associate Professor (1930-1942)
Folder 10. Congressional Staff Congress (CUNY)
Folder 11. Brooklyn College 50th Anniversary
Folder 12. Traveling / Leave of Absence
Folder 13. Propaganda Classroom Materials – A
Folder 14. Propaganda Classroom Materials – B
Folder 15. Miscellaneous

Box 6. Grade Books
Hunter College
Envelopes:

1. Feb. to June (1928) / Sept. to Feb. (1928-1929)
2. Feb. to June (1920)
3. Feb. to June (1929)

**Brooklyn College**

6. Feb. to June (1931) / Feb. to June (1932)
7. Sept. to Feb. (1932-1933) / Feb. to June (1933)
8. Sept. to June (1933-1934) / Feb. to June (1934)
10. Fall (1935) / Spring (1936)

**Box 7. Grade Books**

**Brooklyn College**

1. Fall (1936) / Spring (1937)
2. Fall (1937) / Spring (1938)
3. Fall (1938) / Spring (1939)
4. Fall (1939) / Spring (1940)
5. Fall (1940) / Spring (1941)
6. Fall (1941) / Spring (1942)
7. Fall (1942) / Spring (1943) / Fall (1943) / Spring (1944)
8. Fall (1944) / Spring (1945) / Fall (1945) / Spring (1946)

**Box 8. Grade Books**

1. Spring (1948) / Fall (1948) / Spring (1949) / Fall (1949)
2. Spring (1950) / Fall (1950) / Spring (1951) / Fall (1951)
3. Spring (1952) / Fall (1952) / Spring (1953) / Fall (1953)

**Box 9. Grade Books**

1. Fall (1956) / Spring (1957) / Fall (1957) / Spring (1958)
2. Fall (1958) / Spring (1959) / Fall (1959) / Spring (1960)
4. 1960-1962
5. Miscellaneous notes and correspondence found with grade books. (Various dates)

**Series III. Belle Zeller Scholarship**

**Box 10.**

1. Photographs (various years)
2. 1980-1983
3. 1984-1986
Folder 4. 1987-1989
Folder 5. 1990-1991
Folder 6. 1994
Folder 7. 1995-1997
Folder 8. Informational Brochures (undated)
Folder 9. Application, Fact Sheets, Criteria & Eligibility information (various years)

**Series IV. Government**

Folder 10. Conferences (1945-1976)
Folder 11. Conference Programs and Educational Newsletters
Folder 12. Committees Correspondence (1942-1974)
Folder 14. Legislative Conference (1958)

**Box 11. Publications**

Envelope 5. “Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946”
Folder 7. “The Role of Department Chairmen in Collective Bargaining (CUNY)” (September 5, 1953)
Folder 10. “Final Report on the Governor’s Task Force on Higher Education” (December, 1975)

**Box 12. Publications and Correspondence**

Folder 1. “The State Lobby Laws” (1958)
Folder 2. “Regulation of Pressure of Groups and Lobbyists” (1958)
Folder 8. “Formulation of the Annual Legislative Program” (1948)
Folder 9. Legislative Memorandum Number One (1945, fragile)
Folder 10. American Political Science Association Meeting Minutes
Folder 11. Social Science Research Council (1945-1950)
Folder 12. Congressional Investigation Data (1940)
Folder 13. Correspondence
**Box 13. Notes**  
Folder 1. 76th and 77th Congress (1939-1943)  
Folder 2. 78th and 79th Congress (1944-1947)  
Folder 3. 79th Congress (various bills and notes)  
Folder 4. 80th and 81st Congress (1947-1951)  
Folder 5. S. 1205: Federal Road Act (1944)  
Folder 6. S. 1606: National Health Program (1944)  
Folder 7. S. 380: Full Employment Bill (1945)  
Folder 8. S. 575: FDR on McKellan Bill (1945)  
Folder 10. S. 250: Forest Service  
Folder 11. HR. 2051: War Mobilization & Reconversion Act (1944)  
Folder 12. H.R. 3691: Rivers and Harbors, H.R. 4485: Flood Control  
Folder 13. Bonneville Project (1945)  
Folder 14. Legislative Reorganization Act (1946)  
Folder 15. Presidential Vetoes A (1941-1945)  
Folder 16. Presidential Vetoes B (1941-1945)  
Folder 17. Atomic Energy  
Folder 18. Appropriations of Dept. of Agriculture Bills (1936-1945)  
Folder 19. Enrolled Bill Procedures (1946)  
Folder 20. Lobbying Act (1955)  
Folder 21. Letter draft regarding Legislative Program (President Truman to Mr. Smith)  
Folder 22. “Contact with Legislature”  
Folder 23. Private Legislation in 77th Congress  
Folder 24. “Check List for H.R. Bills #5-#2238”  
Folder 25. House and Senate Reports (notes for research)  
Folder 26. Miscellaneous

**Box 14. Budget Bureau**  
Folder 1. Early History  
Folder 2. “The Legislative Clearance Function” (1948)  
Folder 3. Legislative Clearance and Operations – Checklists and Guidelines  
Folder 4. Clearance Procedures of various departments (notes included)  
Folder 5. “Study of Legislative Clearance in Executive Departments”  
Folder 6. Legislative Clearance: Department of Agriculture  
Folder 7. “Non-Clearance” Bills and Annual Reports  
Folder 8. Executive Order No. 7298  
Folder 9. Budget Bureau and Congress  
Folder 10. Memos, Bulletins & Correspondence  
Folder 11. Legislative Statistics Relating to Congress  
Folder 14. Manuals  
Folder 15. Interviews for Annual Budget Proceedings

**Box 15. Reports**  
Folder 1. 78th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions
Folder 2. 79th Congress, 1st Session
Folder 3. 79th Congress, 2nd Session
Folder 4. 80th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions
Folder 5. 81st Congress, 1st Session
Folder 6. Preliminary Legislative Checklist for 81st Congress, 1st Session

**Series V. Oversize**
*(Located in Oversize Room)*

**Box 16.**

**From Series I. Personal Material**
Folder 1. Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (June 6, 1985)
Folder 2. Newspaper Clippings from Scrapbook (1919)
   *(Please use CD-ROM disc to review items in this scrapbook)*

**From Series II. Academics**
Folder 3. Propaganda Classroom Materials (1940s)