

# THE BRIDGE

STUDENT NEWSPAPER

SPRING 2004



From left to right, Student Governors Vhanessa Victoria and Khalid Boudhan, Assembly Members Catherine Nolan and Adriano Espaillat, President Mellow and Student Government member Gustavo Libreros. Espaillat and Nolan received certificates of Leadership from LaGuardia's Student Government Association.

## International Students: Education in Jeopardy

By Rebecca Ciceron

International students have been highly affected by the recent tuition increase. The increase, from \$130 to \$190 per individual credit, has made it hard for many international students to further their education.

"Without being advised six months ahead they sent me a bill three weeks before the winter session," said G. Jarrett, a concerned International student who expressed her disappointment towards the new regulations. According to Jarrett, International students "can't get on-campus employment because work-study has priority in the work field over anyone else. Where is all the money going if it can't help International students?"



International students praise the new Foreign Student advisor, Pressian Nicolov

E. Laurent, another concerned International student, knows that there is "nothing they [International Student Relations] can do about the tuition," but she would like them to "consider

## College Looks to VIP's for Cash Campaign

Assembly members Adriano Espaillat and Catherine Nolan, and state Senator Serphin R. Maltese, visited the LaGuardia campus as part of LaGuardia's campaign to raise funding.

According to a press release from the President's office, the purpose of their visits was to "press the College's case for increased capital funding from state and city government and witness first-hand the need to increase classroom space, office space, and study halls."

Assembly members Espaillat and Nolan toured the LaGuardia Campus on February 19, 2004. While in the C-building they visited a class in the Center for Immigrant Education

and Training (CIET).

The CIET program offers English classes and computer training to dislocated workers who lost their jobs because the companies they worked for moved overseas. These students are referred by the Department of Labor.

A long time supporter of LaGuardia, Nolan represents the 37th Assembly District in Queens County, which includes the neighborhoods of Sunnyside and Long Island City, among others.

During the visit, Espaillat, the first Dominican-American to be elected to a State House in the United States, introduced himself to the class and advised the students

see FUNDRAISING, page 4

see INTERNATIONAL, page 4

### Inside...

We shine the faculty "spotlight" on Dr. Carlos Hiraldo of the English Department ...page 5

A one-on-one with the publisher of NY's most popular spanish newspaper...page 6

The Word on Campus! What's on YOUR mind?...page 8

The English Language Center and what it's all about ...page 11

## Editorial

### Welcome to The "World's" Community College

F.H. LaGuardia Community College: "The World's Community College." Who came up with that slogan and what exactly does it mean? Was it created as a prescriptive statement of what LaGuardia hopes to become or was the slogan meant to describe the current state of LaGuardia's cultural atmosphere? And if so, is that necessarily a positive thing? No doubt there are many people from all parts of the world attending LaGuardia but the division between cultures on campus is so blatant that it reflects the ethnocentrism that still exists throughout the world

Although it may be considered instinctual for humans to "stick with their own kind," it is necessary - as well as inevitable - to interact with people of different races.

Granted there are many cultural clubs that are supposed to promote awareness and tolerance and

provide a sense of unity for its members. By the same token, those very same clubs exclude students who do not belong to that group. Although they may not exactly reject your membership, the fact that the club is from a specific part of the world makes you feel that if you are not from that country or region, you don't belong there.

Do we really need to promote diversity when we live in New York City, arguably the most racially and ethnically diverse city in the world? The city where everyone is from "somewhere else." Are we celebrating difference or are we just being politically correct? Are we welcoming the challenge of difference or are we really de-emphasizing it in order to avoid conflict?

What possible solutions do we have to offer? None because it is not our responsibility to change reality, we simply reflect it. But just maybe through reading this some of you will be inspired to create change on your own.

## Letters to the Editor

### Phi Theta Kappa Celebrates Founder's Day

Wisdom, aspiration and purity are the three words that define Phi Theta Kappa. 85 years ago, presidents of two-year colleges in Missouri sought to create an organization where students who showed promise in academic achievement could form a union. Over the years, Phi Theta Kappa has proven to be a success, providing services to the college and in the community that surrounds it.

Though it began as an organization found only in women's junior colleges, an amendment was written in 1924 so that all junior colleges in Missouri desiring a chapter could have one. Two years later, Phi Theta Kappa expanded out of Missouri and became a nationwide organization. On November 19, 1929, Phi Theta Kappa received recognition from the American Association of Junior Colleges. Phi Theta Kappa has set standards for excellence with chapters now in hundreds of two-year colleges around the world, the Alpha Theta Phi Chapter at LaGuardia Community College being one of them.

The Chapter here at the college celebrated Founder's Day by sending flowers to Dr. Gail O. Mellow, our college president, to thank her for her support. Our administration works hard to ensure the availability of resources that we can be provided with at the

college. Phi Theta Kappa is the most prestigious organization at the college offering scholarships that amount to over \$35,000,000. With the support of our college president, the Alpha Theta Phi Chapter has been able to ensure that this fine tradition continues.

Cindy Brown

### Help for International Students

Dear Editors

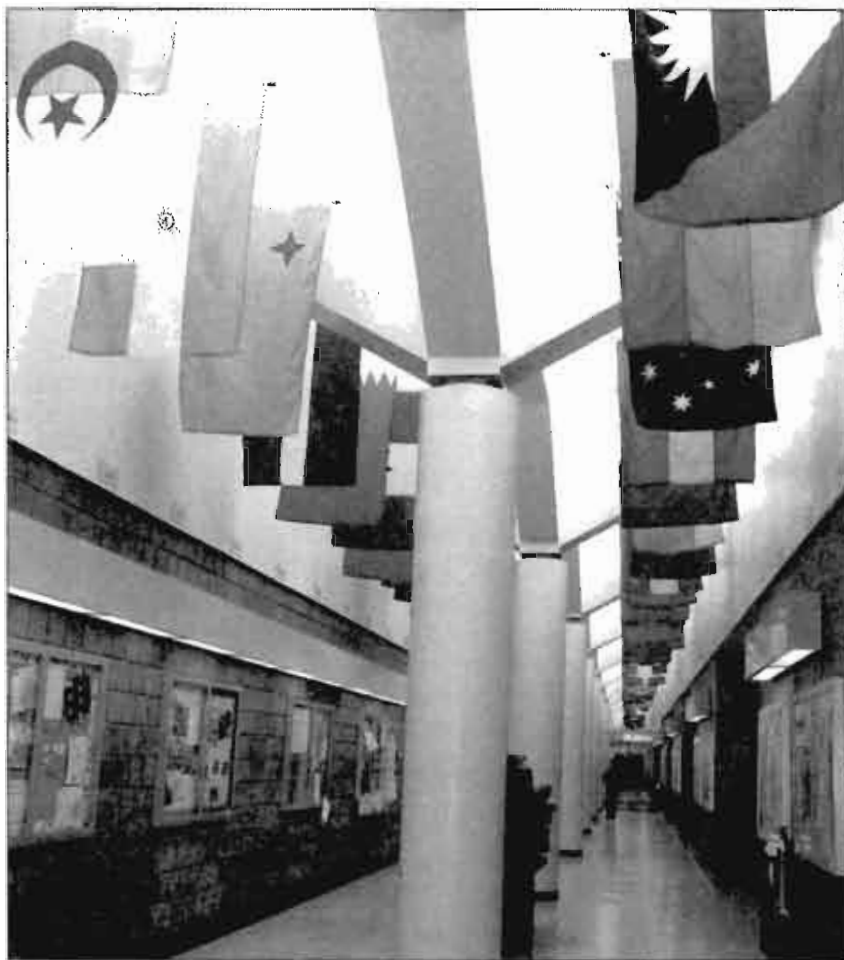
I'm an International student who is really concerned about the tuition increase. Most of us have been really affected by this increase and some of us even have to go back to our countries because we can't afford to pay for the tuition. We are paying a considerably high amount compared to what a resident student pays.

It seems illogical to me that we have to pay almost \$2,500 to do our full time internship. When have you heard that you have to pay to work? I wonder if there is anybody who can help us. Is there anybody out there who can do something for us International students?

We came here with our dreams in a bag, hoping to find what's known as "The American Dream," but unfortunately after September 11, we are paying for something that we didn't do.

Thanks for listening to my concern.

An International Student.



**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

### Where Do You Get Your Facts, in a Crackerjack Box?

By: George Chevalier

College students can be like lambs, cheerfully led to the slaughter intellectually, that is. They tend to presume that the person up in front of the class is learned and erudite, or, at least, that they have their facts right. I recently saw this in action, students willingly digesting the most preposterous assertions on the grounds that if he/she's a professor, it must be true.

Professors, fully aware of this, herd their sheep. One such professor is the only one in my life whose course I dropped within 20 minutes (I've been going to college now, off and on, for 34 years.) First, she announced she was "a political activist." Well and good, but not what my tax and tuition money is paying for. Then, she put a stack of adhesive-backed flyers on a table, advertising a political rally. Over the line, she's using her job as an officer of the state of New York to further her political agenda, during an instructional period. She then invited the students to help themselves to the flyers and post them, in other words recruiting for her political ends during class time.

The object of the rally? "U.S. out of Iraq, Palestine and Haiti," something I totally agree with, but there's a time and place for everything. Still, I sat there.

It became unbearable to me when she further announced she was "a radical." I realized then and there that the whole semester's teaching would be filtered through the inaccurate and long-ago discredited teachings of Karl Marx.

And still I sat there. Not long, though, for this particular specimen, a gray-haired woman that affected a little-girl voice, next came up with a truly staggering assertion: "Columbus killed 8-10 million Indians."

My first comment was that he must be very busy, then did some quick calculation. In lieu of a

census, there are no empirically-based figures, but the commonly-accepted figures don't add up to 8-10 million natives total, for North and South America.

And Columbus was on islands in the Caribbean, which still have no where near 8-10 million people on them. I dropped the course, and stopped off to see the department chairman in the process, asking him, in essence, "where do you find these people?"

Why do this? Why play the inflation of victims game? The higher the number you give, the more you feel you're in solidarity with the poor and oppressed peoples of the world, instead of being an upper-middle class college professor living in fear behind triple locks in an all-white neighborhood.

Slavery, everyone agrees, is evil and a crime against humanity. If, however, you exaggerate the numbers of African-Americans who were victims of this system, does that mean you have a special concern, or sensitivity?

One professor evidently thinks so. She said that as many as 100 million people were enslaved in this country. The 1860 census, taken at the point when the slave population was highest, recorded a slave population of just fewer than 4 million. Even if you multiply by seven generations, even if you allow for the horrific loss of human life on the slave ships, you still aren't a third of the way to a hundred million.

Of course, the students haven't a clue. Like lambs willingly going to slaughter, they copy down these "facts," totally unaware that the intellectual laziness and bias has cheated them out of what we're all here for: the truth.

*La Guardia student George Chevalier has studied at four other colleges. He has been a columnist, editorial and feature writer for such papers as The Poughkeepsie Journal, Kingston Freeman, Millbrook Round Table, Memphis Flyer and Key West Citizen.*

## The LaGuardia Logos

By Dr. J. Reitano, Social Science Department



Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College is proud to be named after that dynamic man who was Mayor of New York City from 1933 to 1945. His personal life and professional career reflected the spirit of openness and opportunity that has defined this city since its founding as a Dutch colony in 1625 and has enriched this college since its founding in 1970.

LaGuardia embodied diversity and humanitarianism. His mother was Jewish; his father was born Catholic, became agnostic and insisted on raising Fiorello as a Protestant. LaGuardia spoke five languages, worked with immigrants at Ellis Island and was a lawyer for labor unions. His commitment to public service was strong and, as U.S. Congressman for 16 years, LaGuardia proposed so many reform bills designed to improve the lives of ordinary people across the country that he became known as "Congressman at Large." Following in his footsteps, LaGuardia Community College has extensive community outreach programs.

LaGuardia had boundless energy and a big heart. Due to his efforts, the New York state Constitution includes a special provision to care for the needy. He helped people by building housing, health clinics, hospitals and parks. Particularly committed to education, Mayor LaGuardia not only increased the number of public schools and libraries but also improved access for physically challenged students. As an institution open to everyone holding a high school diploma or equivalency, LaGuardia Community College is dedicated to equal educational opportunity for all who want to learn.

The universalism of LaGuardia's life is symbolized by the college's new logo. The Big

Apple was the name given the city by jazz musicians during the Harlem Renaissance, a period of African American cultural flowering in the 1920s. The flags represent the many peoples who comprise what David Dinkins, the city's first African American mayor (1989-1993), called a "gorgeous mosaic." With students from over 140 countries and with a long tradition of innovation, LaGuardia Community College is a shining example of the Big Apple's diversity and creativity.

The college's original logo is based on Mayor LaGuardia's nickname, "the Little Flower," which is the translation of his Italian name, Fiorello. "The Little Flower" logo captures our educational philosophy. You, the student, are at the center of the flower and we hope you will bloom here by exposure to a variety of curricular "petals" that complement each other. Your skills and knowledge will grow through developmental education, liberal arts and science education, career education, cooperative education and continuing education. In addition, LaGuardia is the only college in the country which is so dedicated to its city that it asks all students to take one course in urban education.

The circular lines leading to the center of the flower represent the curricular paths you choose to define your college experience. It is significant that there is more than one path because people are multi-dimensional and education is multi-faceted. Learning can occur in the classroom, the workplace or the community. It can involve books, computers or the arts; lectures, group discussions or individual research; experiments, internships or travel. At LaGuardia Community College, the opportunities are limitless. Fiorello would have wanted it that way.

Breaking News...Breaking News...

# New Student Government President

Maya Sherpa, former Student Government's secretary, is the new President of LaGuardia's Student Government Association (SGA).

According to Sherpa, after the former president Mohamad Nur-e-Aziz, returned to his native country, Bangladesh, the vice-president at the time became the new President, and she moved up to vice-president.

"He [Nur-e-Aziz] left the country and he didn't mention to any of our members or our mentor... Khalid [Boudhan] had to move up into that position," says Sherpa.

According to Sherpa, Boudhan couldn't remain as president because he didn't meet certain requirements. "In order to be in Student Government, you have to take at least four classes, that would be twelve units, and since he's graduating he cannot take the classes."

Sherpa, as the new president, is looking forward to finishing the student government's plans for 2003-2004 school year, which include the multicultural event and the graduation cruise.

FUNDRAISING, from p. 1



LaGuardia graduate Kimberly McCaffrey (center) is presented with awards from Senator Maltese and President Gail O. Mellow.

to continue their studies and improve their communication skills. He urged them to participate in New York City life and to take advantage of the many things the city has to offer.

Student Governors Vhanessa Victoria and Khalid Boudhan presented the assembly members leadership certificates on behalf of LaGuardia's Student Government.

State Senator Maltese also toured the campus during the month of February. His stops included Middle College and International High Schools. Maltese presented an award to recent LaGuardia graduate Kimberly McCaffrey. The award ceremony, which took place in the Early Childhood Learning Center, highlighted McCaffrey's excellence as a student at LaGuardia. During the ceremony, members of Phi Theta Kappa were present.

INTERNATIONAL, from p. 1

making session II free." International students are forced to take at least one class during the second session of the Fall semester since they are only allowed to take off during Spring Session II. If they don't, they will automatically fall out of status. The consensus among International students is that they want someone to realize that paying \$190 per credit for all sessions is too much.

According to Laurent, International Student Relations, formerly the International Student Office, wants International students "to prove that someone can take care of you. We go to every department trying to see if we can get something. At least give us choices. Instead, they say there is no money," says Ms. Laurent. Sponsorship is mandatory for students who aspire to get their International student status. The sponsor must have at least \$20,000.00 in the bank and must prove that he or she is able to support the student.

LaGuardia now offers deferral for International Students, where they are given the option to pay their tuition monthly. However, Laurent adds, "deferral do not fix the problem." International Students are left with the option of having to pay for half of the tuition in one lump sum, and then the balance gradually.

Ms Laurent thanks Pressian Nicolov, the new advisor for International Student Relations. "Mr. Nicolov is trying hard to help us. At least he listens to our concerns," says Laurent.

Pressian Nicolov came to LaGuardia Community College from UCLA. Students can meet with Mr. Nicolov any time during office hours, which are Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am to 7:45 pm by appointment only. However, if he is unavailable he'll greet them, and refer them to someone who can help.

One of the purposes of International Student Relations is to make sure that international students are updated on new information so that they don't have problems with the office of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

In spite of the recent tuition increase, International Student Relations represents a shoulder these students can lean on and a place where they can "get the facts."

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**International Student Services is located in M-166.**

**Office Hours are:  
Monday & Tuesday  
9:00am to 5:00pm**

**Wednesday & Thursday  
9:00 am to 7:45pm\***

\*By appointment only.



## Faculty Spotlight

**Meet Dr. Carlos Hiraldo**

*Dr. Carlos Hiraldo is a graduate of SUNY at Stony Brook, from which he received a Ph.D. in English Literature. He recently published a book titled "Segregated Miscegenation: On the Treatment of Racial Hybridity in the North American and Latin American Literary Tradition," and has published many poems in different anthologies throughout his career. Dr. Hiraldo is a Professor in the English Department of LaGuardia Community College.*

***I understand you've been an advocate for the increase of classes that would better expose students to Hispanic writers. Tell me a little bit about that.***

Yes, I've been trying to advocate for more classes focusing on Latino literature, the literature of writers of Latin American ancestry living in the United States and writing in English. "Hispanic writers" is too broad of a term, because it includes authors who write in Spanish in Latin America. I think other departments and other professors may be better equipped to deal with that literature. I want to promote Latino literature, because I think this is an important area for both Latino and non-Latinos to study. According to demographic trends, Latinos are the fastest growing group in the United States. As the country becomes more diverse, all groups should learn as much as possible about each other. Both Latino and non-Latino students need to become aware that this growing minority group has a rich multiplicity of histories and cultures that go far beyond the simplistic stereotypes of Latinos portrayed by U.S. pop-culture.

Last academic year, I created ENG 248 Latino/Latina Writing of the United States in the hopes of attracting a diverse representation of LaGuardia students. I offered it in the Fall II 2004 semester as a team-taught course with my English department colleague, Dr. J. Elizabeth

Clark. Unfortunately, the course didn't run, because not enough students signed up for it. I find that disappointing, but I think it is also understandable. With money, work, family, and other kinds of outside considerations, many LaGuardia students feel the pressure to graduate or transfer as soon as possible. Right now, ENG 248 is an elective. Students want to take courses that will directly advance them in a major. That's why I'm trying to place Latino/Latina Writing of the United States into a degree option.

***Tell me about the book you recently published.***

The book was published by Routledge in February 2003. It's titled Segregated Miscegenation: On the Treatment of Racial Hybridity in the US and Latin American Literary Traditions. Now, there's a catchy title. If I ever publish another book, I need to think about marketing and give it a snappier title. It just doesn't make people run out to bookstores and go, Mmmmm, let me get some of that Segregated Miscegenation!

Anyway, I think the subject is interesting and important enough to invest as much time as I did on it. The book is a reworking of my dissertation. Focusing on race, it traces the general patterns of U.S. and Latin American literatures from the independence movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the end of the twentieth century. Basically, it asks the question, what constitutes a Black character in these literatures?

When defining "blackness" the United States and Latin America have traditionally maintained very different views of race. Historically, the U.S. has had the "one-drop" rule, asserting that if a person has any traceable African ancestry he or she is considered black, regardless of actual physical features. Latin America has had a much more fluid view of race, accepting "race mixing" and in some instances encouraging it.

Throughout Latin America, people tend to be classified by gradations in skin tones, not by some assertion of pseudo genetic ancestry or "blood." I wanted to explore how the literatures of these two regions contributed to the different racial views of their respective societies. So I looked at a range of authors from the U.S., like Mark Twain, William Faulkner, Nella Larsen and Toni Morrison. I read authors from Latin American countries with considerable African influence, such as Cuba's Cirilo Villaverde, Venezuela's Romulo Gallegos, and Brazil's Jorge Amado. I concluded by examining how Latino authors in the United States, such as Esmeralda Santiago and Junot Diaz, are influencing the way U.S. literature and by extension, I guess, U.S. society defines race, slowly moving it from its traditional rigidity.

***From where do you draw your inspiration when you write?***

Interesting question. I write poetry. So for my poems I draw inspiration from everything around me. My past, my present, the media, and general world history inspire my poetry. The question is interesting because I can also say that my dissertation was inspired from somewhere. We usually don't think of an academic work as being inspired in the same way we think of literature as being inspired. My academic interest in race comes from my childhood. I guess I was darker when I was a child or my features were more evidently African. I don't know. They probably still are, though I have been taken for belonging to just about every ethnicity in the world.

In any case, I vaguely remember being teased by aunts and uncles when I was a toddler about my thick lips, my broad nose, my nappy hair etc. Ironically, for my mother, who could pass for an olive-skin European, something uncommon for Dominican immigrants, I was the most beautiful thing in the world. It was all very

see HIRALDO, p. 6

# A New Age of Inspiration

By: Dayana Palacio



Rossana Rosado, *El Diario La Prensa* CEO and Publisher.

Inspiration. That's what Rossana Rosado, CEO and Publisher of *El Diario La Prensa*, the most popular Spanish newspaper in New York City, represents for young Latinas who aspire to pursue a career in the media field.

Starting out as a General Assignment Reporter at *El Diario*, Rosado managed to work her way up to the top and she is now in charge of what's known as the oldest Spanish-language newspaper in the country. "I always had a real affinity with *El Diario* because I was born and raised here in New York. *El Diario* was my community newspaper and I felt that as someone who was educated here I had something to give back," said Rosado.

She left *El Diario* to work on television, and after winning an Emmy award and succeeding in another media, she came back to become the editor in chief, replacing former editor, Manuel de Dios Unanue, who was assassinated in 1992. "I came back because I like journalism and I thought it would be interesting to try to fill his shoes; he had been my mentor," said Rosado.

She obtained the CEO and Publisher position after the former publisher became very ill and passed away. As she admits "everything happened rather quickly."

Being successful in a male-dominated field has not been easy, and Rosado has encountered obstacles along the way. "It is part of life in this country, to deal with the race and stereotypes, even in our own community, in terms of what the role of women is supposed to be. Sometimes you get an assignment based on the fact that you are a woman, or you are treated by sources in a certain way," Rosado says, "but you can't let that be the focus of your existence, otherwise you are going to be hiding all the time." However, she has never seen her gender as a disadvantage. "I have never felt that I was disadvantaged because I was a woman. I have recognized that for other people it became an obstacle. The fact that I'm a woman has been hard for people to deal with, but I chose not to make that my issue, my problem. There are so many levels of obstacles, the fact that I'm a Hispanic woman, the fact that I'm a Puerto Rican, and I could go around focusing on that,

but I choose not to because those are all things that I can't help," said Rosado.

Graduated from Pace University, from which she received a B.A in journalism, Rosado acknowledges the importance of writing for a Latino audience. "We know exactly who is our reader, where he or she comes from. We know what their experience is like; we are from that community"

Rosado admits that she writes with a different vision. "I think you approach stories differently. I know some people would think that's not the appropriate approach in journalism, but for us, and for me, in my opinion, you can't do journalism without passion and energy. And what better energy to fuel your passion than to really care for the people you are writing for, so that you write from a sense of wanting to inform, wanting to impress, wanting to empower."

Rosado recommends Latinas who are trying to make it in the field of communications to take the initiative in what seems to be a male-dominated field. "We need more women in this field, more women to be writers and columnists and we need more women to take on the role of telling our stories," Rosado added, "My advice to young Latinas is to embrace tradition, to save your own past. There's a new age for women in this country, there's a new age for Latinas."

HIRALDO, from p. 5

Piri Thomas. So I've always had this ambivalence about Latin America's view of race, its view of itself. On the one hand, Latin America has avoided the history of segregation and racial violence that scars the United States. On the other hand, there is a ridiculous strain of self-hatred in our make-up. Then again, we do have folks like my mother, who used to respond to people's assertion that she looked Spanish or Venezuelan instead of Dominican by making a face and claiming Haitian ancestry instead. Now, there was a contrarian, little dynamite stick. That's why I dedicated my book to her. Unfortunately, she passed away in the summer of 2002. She never saw the book come out. At least, she knew it was coming out.

*What's your experience been like as a young professor at an urban community college?*

My experience has been rewarding and challenging. I know many students when they first see me cannot believe that I will be the

professor of the class. Once I start teaching and they realize that I actually know something of what I'm talking about, they get comfortable. I know when they talk to me many students are surprised that I have a Ph.D. I like it when my youth, my ethnicity or any other factor serves in some measure to inspire a student.

However, there are times a student may be disappointed because he or she got a lower grade than he or she expected and that student then thinks that I should be more "understanding" because of my background or my age. I wish more students accepted their grades as the instructor's honest assessment of their skill-level at the time they are being graded. No prospective employer is going to ask a former student what grade he or she got in ENG 101. A potential employer will request that the student is able to write at the level expected from a college graduate. Students should see grades as indicators of what skills they need to improve and how much they need to improve them. I find that most students do approach their grades in this manner. I just wish even more did so.

*Tell me a little bit about your experience with the Black Literature Series Committee.*

My experience with the Black Literature Series Committee has been great. It's an absolute pleasure to work with my English department colleagues in the committee. Every year we put on a lot of important activities, such as the NCTE Black Caucus sponsored African-American Literature Read-In during Black History Month. Also, at least once a year, we try to invite a major African-American author and/or scholar.

The two years I was the chair of the committee we brought in Yusef Komunyakaa, Leonard Slade, Christopher Farley and Elizabeth Alexander. Though I'm no longer the chair, I'm still an active member of the committee. This past September my colleague, Victoria Brown, became the new chair. I think she has come in with some wonderful, fresh ideas for the committee, and I enjoy working with her.

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**CUNY Conference on Asian American / Asian Students: Aspects of Social Interaction**  
 Date: April 30, 2004 - 8AM to 2PM, Free  
 (Call For Papers - Deadline: April 1, 2004)

**CUNY Asian American Film / Media Festival**  
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 Prize Awards: \$200, \$150, and \$100

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<p><b>South Asian Conference</b></p> <p>Date: March 19, 2004              - 8:30AM to 4PM, Free</p> <p><b>@ Baruch College, CUNY</b></p>	<p><b>Friday Evening Lecture Series</b></p> <p>6PM to 8PM, Free</p> <p>2/27 - Yunah Hong              3/05 - Moustafa Bayoumi              3/12 - Jianguo Ji              3/26 - Jenny Liu</p>
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\*Seats at these events are limited. Early registration is advised.\*

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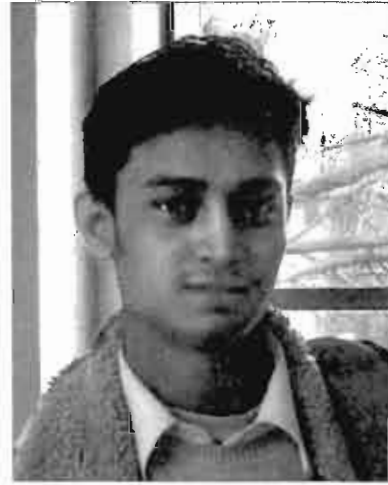
# The Word

*Have you noticed the plasma screens around the campus? Do you think they are effective or could the money to purchase them have been used for other necessities?*



“ The school should’ve probably invested [that money] in something else: programs in the school, departments like the music and the theater department... I still haven’t seen anything that catches my eye ”  
so far.

Jessica Wiscovitch



“ I think it is a good idea. [There are ] a lot of freshmen students here who don’t know about [the information displayed] and they ”  
have to ask people.

Hossain Shifeddin



“ It doesn’t make sense to have plasma screens here... Plasma screens are expensive ... They could’ve spent the money on maintaining the place, like the cafeteria area or other areas that need ”  
[improvements].

Ikenley Francis



# on Campus



“ I know plasma screens are really expensive... They could’ve spent [the money] on something that involves students and their relationships with the teachers.”

Jason Enrique

“ I think they are nice. Before they had them, I really didn’t get any information because we are always busy. I can see the screen and just check for information. I think that’s great.”

Soo Kim

“ You can’t help but notice them. They could’ve used [the money] for more important things, like hiring better help, instead of having these lazy bums, they get a TV for no reason.”

Jared Winston

“ They could’ve used the money to improve the video production equipment in the media labs. Most of the things I see on the plasma screens are useless to me.”

Zullay Pichardo

Entertainment

# Coming Soon on DVD and Video

**Start the "Revolutions" without me.**

By Michael Brody



*With Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving, Mary Alice, Tanveer Atwal, Monica Belluci, Ian Bliss. Directed by Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski. Running Time: 129 Minutes. (Rated R sci-fi violence and brief sexual content).*

The tagline for The Matrix Revolutions reminds us that "everything that has a beginning has an end." Now if only every end had a meaning, then the final chapter of the most elaborately philosophical science-fiction trilogy in cinematic history would have been a finale of some importance, rather than the junky sci-fi pop that it truly is. All I can appreciate is that the painful disappointment I felt after viewing The Matrix Reloaded at least prepared me for the tremendous letdown that these sequels have turned out to be.

Filmed simultaneously with Reloaded, Revolutions picks up almost exactly where the previous film left off, with the machine

army continuing to dig toward Zion, the last known human city. Neo (Keanu Reeves) is still in a coma that has left him in a purgatory between the Matrix and the real world, and Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne) and Trinity (Carrie-Anne Moss) are on a mission to free him by revisiting the cheerfully snooty Merovingian (who is now minus those creepy Albino twins). As the heroes try to reunite, the renegade program Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving) is slowly taking over the Matrix by turning every human inhabitant into an automaton copy of itself.

The Matrix Revolutions both fails and succeeds where the bloated Reloaded didn't. Many (including myself) complained that Reloaded was too heady, pretentious, and self-important for its own good; that a summer blockbuster of its magnitude should have been a thrilling adventure as well as an intelligent one, rather than an action movie terrified of being labeled an action movie. The Matrix Revolutions does not take on the dime-store philosophy lessons that Reloaded did and instead settles for being a

see MATRIX, p.15

**Bad Buzz**

By Michael Brody



*With Jessica Biel, Jonathan Tucker, Erica Leerhsen, Mike Vogel, Eric Balfour, Andrew Bryniarski, R. Lee Ermey, David Dorfman. Directed by Marcus Nispel. Running Time: 98 Minutes. (Rated R for extreme violence, gore, drug content, and vulgarities).*

The slick-as-oil remake of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre ignores the temptation to infuse this supposedly true story with MTV-friendly editing and vague pop culture references for the new millennium. It further chooses to set the update not in our too-cool-for-words twenty-first century, but in the sunny days of the early 1970's. But this bold and unexpected decision not to tamper with the original setting does little to save the new Massacre from being as rusty as a thirty year-old chain saw.

The film takes place in August 1973, as a group of care free youths is passing through the empty roads of central Texas to a Lynard Skynard concert in Dallas. They are sidetracked by a

mysterious young hitchhiker (Lauren German) wandering on the road. The girl, dirtied and quivering, lives long enough to reveal that the group of people she was with has been murdered. Any further information is left with her as she pulls out a revolver and ends her suffering. The travelers attempt to bring the suicide to the attention of the local police, and discover that finding the law is as difficult as understanding why the girl ended her life. Two of the youths (Jessica Biel, Eric Balfour) troop over to an isolated, gothic farmhouse nearby to phone for help, and realize they are in the wrong home at the wrong time, because it is inhabited by a "family" of deranged rednecks who take the term "dead meat" literally.

It is made clear early on that in no way will this remake foolishly attempt to one-up the groundbreaking original. The color-corrected and super-saturated new look is both an improvement technologically and a step down creatively from the harsh, gritty, documentary-style quality of Tobe Hooper's 1974

see CHAINSAW, p. 15

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## On Campus Services

**The English Language Center (TELC)**

By Anny Pichardo and Dayana Palacio



TELC students in classroom

The English Language Center (TELC), located in the C-building of La Guardia Community College has been the largest English as a second language (ESL) program since 1971, with close to 2,000 students enrolling each semester.

TELC is a non-credit ESL program established in the division of Adult and Continuing Education. The purpose of this program is primarily for scholastic instruction, where as the students enhance their English to prepare for college, and eventually pursue a degree.

"We sometimes look at ourselves as a stepping-off point for other programs," says Victoria Badalamenti, director of TELC.

The majority of the students who enroll in TELC are International Students who, by far, are the highest growing population in La Guardia.

A form called the I-20 is sent out to the student in their country. The student has to fill out the form and then send it to immigration specifically in their country, where they will be granted a visa. After the student receives their visa, they are allowed to come to the United States, and enroll in TELC to prepare for a college education.

One of the main programs TELC offers is stimulating ESL classes, which are intended to meet the individual needs of a diverse population.

The most well known curriculum of TELC is called The Day Intensive program, in which the students meet in the mornings and afternoons. Approximately 750 to 800 students enroll in The Day Intensive program, where they are required to take 18-20 hours a week of intensive English language instruction.

The second most popular curriculum is called The Evening Intensive program, where approximately 400 students meet 10 hours, four nights a week. TELC also provides an evening and Saturday non-intensive program for those of who work in the day time.

TELC offers a variety of unique features for the Intermediate Advanced Level ESL program. Dancing, public speaking, business electives are among the many exciting courses TELC offers in their ESL program.

Students are required to take courses in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, in which they enhance their English in order to pursue a college degree. "I'm about to graduate from LaGuardia and I will transfer to Hunter College," says Diana, a former student of TELC, "TELC has been the best investment I've ever made in my life."

Although the student's education in TELC is taken very serious, and that the students should keenly dedicate themselves into the language process, TELC still believes learning should be fun.

For the majority of TELC students it is their first time in the United States, and the office wants them to have an enjoyable experience. Students are encouraged to participate in their



TELC Director Victoria Badalamenti

special elective courses, watch movies in the language lab, and go on field trips. TELC believes that it will amplify their knowledge in many areas because they are having fun while learning.

One of the many benefits the students are given in the ESL program is that their courses are not just considered basic writing or reading classes, but "rather they will reflect on their college courses to be more content," said Badalamenti.

"When I came to this country, I wanted to learn English. I searched for places where I could learn English, but none would fulfill my desire to learn it," said Cesar Delgado, another former student of TELC, "Then I found TELC, and it helped me to write, read, communicate, and over all understand the English language".

After completing a certain level of ESL courses or until students feel prepared, they are required to take an exam called the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) before entering any college. If the student completes all the levels in the TELC program, then they do not have to take the TOEFL in order to be admitted to LaGuardia.

The TOEFL will detect whether the students are equipped to enroll at a college. Even though, most of the students usually do well in the TOEFL, some students scores might not fit up to the college's requirements, therefore, they are obligated to take the exam again.

see TELC, p. 13

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# BLACK EXPO '03



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A. Kareem Kano



*"The Black Expo shows unity within the Black community; how each member in the Black Student Union family can stick together to make something great."*

Visa Bellany





## ShoeMania!

By Tamika Hull



Everyone has a different obsession; for me it's shoes. If you know the saying "diamonds are a girl's best friend," my saying is "If diamonds are truly a girl's best friend, then shoes are a girl's first love." Since you live in New York City, there are thousands of shoes to choose from. It is truly very easy to locate that most famous designer who creates your dream shoe. However, try to remember that traveling great distances is part of the deal.



Some of the best shoe designers out there are Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo, Valentino, and Chanel.

Do remember that such famous names often come at a high price, which can range from \$300-\$1000 and up. Try not to forget that even though these shoes are deliciously gorgeous, we still have plenty of unknown stores that sell lovely shoes. Have you guessed the greatest part? They come in every color imaginable: baby blue, pink, black, green, just pick a color, any color. Some people go through life thinking they only need to own two pairs of shoes, but that's not necessarily true. For the fashion conscious, at least five pairs should do the trick, your closet should have casual, sporty, sexy, mainstream, and dressy.



Shoes are not just something you wear and tear on your feet, they are your friend, lover, confidant, and most of all your soul mate. If you can't depend on your boyfriend or girlfriend to bring you mocha latte when you most desperately need it, who can you count on to take you there? Your shoes, that's who you can always count on.



The shoes that you wear complete half of your appearance (along side the clothes you wear). Always give a good impression by keeping your shoes clean and well kept. Don't be afraid to go the professional route when it comes to cleaning or repairing your shoes. If you know you can't fix the problem of scuff marks don't try to fix it yourself, that only makes it worse. And always remember the most comfortable shoes are always the best looking shoes.

## The Passion: Repent!

By: Lesley Obando.

The Passion of the Christ takes an almost documentary approach to depict the last twelve hours of the life of Jesus Christ. The movie's script is virtually ripped from the New Testament, and put to screen as a reenactment of the biblical account, through which the gravity of the suffering that Jesus of Nazareth endured as he is captured.

As far as story telling is concerned it is helpful to have some sort of previous knowledge of the story of Jesus Christ before viewing "Passion" because no background information is given to enlighten the viewer of the sequence of events lead up to this tragedy. The influential characters' motives are not explained in great detail nor are the reasons behind the crucifixion; because it is assumed that viewers are familiar with the story.

The acting was exceptional with each actor portraying the emotions behind their words so avidly that viewers almost forget that the language the actors are speaking is Aramaic.

A great deal has been made over the amount of violence and gore that is shown in "Passion" and truth is, it is extremely violent, graphic and bloody, and that is kind of the point. The beating is so brutal that the viewer can feel every blow while slowly becoming numb to the pain and just wanting it to stop. But it keeps

coming without mercy. This might seem unnecessary but it is not. The point of watching "The Passion of the Christ" is to bear witness, therefore is not sugar coated or glossed over; if it were its meaning would be lost.

Whether viewers are believers of Jesus Christ or not, "Passion" can still have the power to affect them on a human level. Aside from the brutality that is shown it is emotionally draining to watch Mary, portrayed by Maia Morgenstern, watch her son, portrayed by Jim Caviezel, be tortured and not have the power to help or protect him.

However for those viewers who have grown up with the belief in Christ, this movie will undoubtedly affect them in a deeper way that goes beyond good storytelling, because they have the belief that all this suffering was endured for their salvation. It's almost as if Director Mel Gibson had the intention of making believers who watch the movie want to repent, which worked when you see that most viewers walk out of the theater in tears.

So if you have a weak stomach for watching gore, than maybe you should go watch "50 First Dates" But if you are a moviegoer, who enjoys the cinema experience with a side order of guilt, then "The Passion of the Christ" is the movie for you.

TELC, from p. 11

"We have a good reputation that a lot of our students, who leave [TELC], are very successful in the college", says Badalamenti.

Another great advantage that TELC has is the diversity of the program itself. Students can learn not only the English language, but other student's different cultures as well.

TELC is known to be a great program, where people can learn the English language, different cultures, and also fuel their aspiration to pursue a college degree.

"One hundred percent," says Delgado, when asked if TELC had some influence in his decision to pursue a college degree, "When I first learned [English], to speak it, write it, and understand it, it was then that I decided to pursue a degree at LaGuardia".





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MATRIX, from p. 10

somewhat involving blow-em-up yarn.

This makes *Revolutions* a venture noticeably less ambitious and creates an air of mediocrity that even the hits-with-a-thud *Reloaded* was able to avoid. The result is a film less respectable, but ultimately more entertaining. The climactic battle is worth noting, for all its sleek special-effects, but since when are impressive special effects really all that impressive these days?

The beginning and end of *The Matrix Revolutions* are tied together in the same classic fashion as in *The Empire Strikes Back* and this past summer's *X2: X-Men United*: characters are separated from each other early on and their short-term goal is to reunite in order to fight the greater evil. Spreading out the heroes over the landscape of the story adds an extra level of anticipation to the already tension-swelling actions. This is a style of structure that works wonderfully for this type of film, especially when the goal of the filmmakers is clearly to outdo the original entry in the series.

The problem is that the execution never has the same impact as the other films mentioned. The events being brought together are nowhere near as captivating and the gaps between seeing certain characters are often too far apart. In the opening few minutes, it is interesting to see where Neo is spiritually since we left him, but it becomes frustrating that he, Morpheus, and Trinity are not brought together as the film (and this saga) is brought to a close. In the final act of the film, there are portions that focus on new characters, and the heroes we have come to love are unfairly ignored.

Consider a scene that is meant to reduce us to shivers as a character named Zee (Nona Gaye), who was featured in one scene in *The Matrix Reloaded* and an unnamed character bond, moments before they are to enter the final battle against the machines. The scene means nothing in the grand scheme of things because we do not know these characters, and it is not enough to assume that we feel for them simply because of the war they are fighting.

These issues are minor quibbles when compared to the most fatal flaw to *The Matrix Revolutions*: it does not quite answer the questions hinted at in the original and finally asked in *Reloaded*; it thus fails to live up to the promise of two films. At one point, Neo asks the all-knowing Oracle (Mary Alice, replacing the late Gloria Foster) "Where is this going?" At the end of the film, I found myself asking "where did this go?"

As the sun set on the epic battle, the lack of emotion that I felt toward this franchise had hit me in a way I never thought possible. I was neither pleased that the trilogy could come full circle nor was I left in disgust that a groundbreaking classic could be reduced to such rubbish. *The Matrix Revolutions* is an inconclusive conclusion that made us feel as cold and emotionless as the machines themselves, as if they really had won.

Rating Guide

- ★ ★ ★ ★ Excellent
- ★ ★ ★ Good
- ★ ★ Fair
- ★ Poor

CHAINSAW, from p. 10

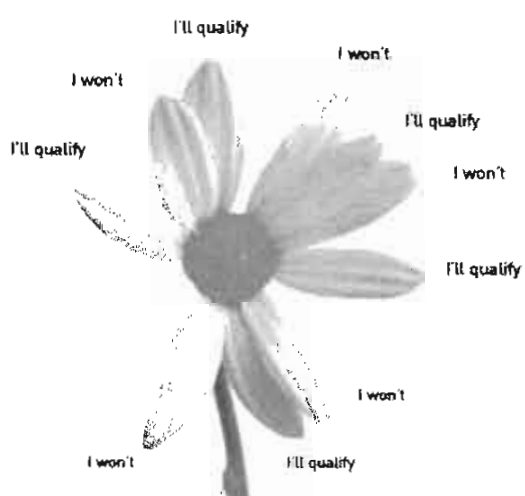
classic. In his *Massacre*, the heat brutally beat down on the viewer as many of the horrific events took place; all the while we were as physically discomforted as we were mortified. The look here is defined and cold; the idea to render each grisly murder as realistic as if it were being portrayed in any recent war film. This approach is fitting for today, and one has to appreciate first-time Director (and former music-video helmer) Marcus Nispel opting for a look less similar to its predecessor.

This cooler visual tone ultimately undoes much of the terror that could be had. Many of the scenes reek of producer Michael Bay (also a former music video director), whose distinct high-gloss style is somewhat of a nuisance. This causes *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* to resemble a high-priced music video or any interior action scene from Bay's own summer cheese doodle, *Bad Boys II*. If the massacre is immediately accepted by the viewer, then there is no tension, and no scares, either.

Yet in some instances, the scares pass with blood-stained colors. It is only occasional because the story of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is not meant to scare us in the same sense as *Halloween* or *Friday the 13th*. The star butcher here, named Thomas Hewitt (former body-builder Andrew Bryniarski), or "Leatherface" to genre junkies, is not a soulless demon in the flesh. He is a lumbering ogre, a creature that exists to survive. The terror that "Leatherface" should induce is not the shock that causes viewers to connect to the screen, foolishly warning the characters to turn around. He is a killer whose attraction (or lack thereof) is the shock of what he is. After all, that mask is not actually made of leather.

We are never given a chance to dwell on the sickness of *Leatherface* or any of the Hewitt clan. The reason for a film titled *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is to show us a subhuman, degrading side of the American landscape. Serving us yet another cold slasher yarn is nothing unsettling to our public, though it is tiresome.


The purpose of any remake is to improve upon, or at least equal, the quality and impact of the original. If the goal is the latter, then the remake should at least offer a fresh perspective on the original story. This new *Chainsaw Massacre* is faithful to its source material but exists for no reason. Watching it reminded me of the sensation I had after viewing the controversial *Psycho* remake: empty, confused, and cheated; with an unfulfilling sense of déjà vu. Perhaps the setting should have been made contemporary, and then *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* would have brought some fresh meat to the table.



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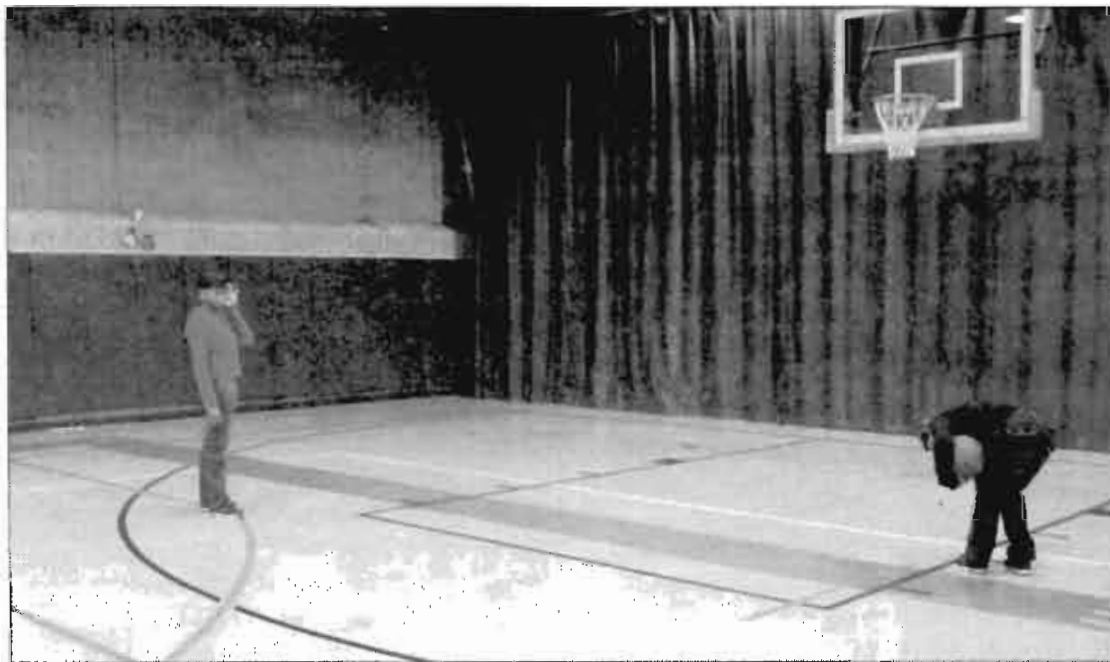
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## Sports

**Does LaGuardia Need Teams?**

By: Mickey Falcones



No sports teams in LaGuardia? Why not? I asked myself the same question. I always wondered why LaGuardia doesn't have a sports team that the students could call their own. Yeah, that's right, we don't have a team. There's no basketball team to watch, no soccer team to cheer for, no baseball team to root for, not even a golf team to ponder about. My main reason for wanting a sports team was because I wanted to join one.

I was so puzzled about this that I had to investigate it. I went to the ends of the world to pursue the urgent quest for the mysterious answer. I went through mountains, over vast oceans, crossed the deepest canyons, swam across the dingiest swamps; I even ran through mine fields. Eventually, I ended up at the door of Room MB31, the Recreation Department. I asked the question to Andrew Saluga, Associate Director of the Recreation Department. He says the question comes up every year, and it is brought up to him by the City University of New York (CUNY). CUNY wants LaGuardia to incorporate sports teams that represent LaGuardia.

They argued that teams would build up school pride within the college community. The teams would create revenue from game ticket sales and from college merchandise. In other words, the school would substantially benefit from acquiring sports teams.

Andrew Saluga makes his case towards the contrary. He states that LaGuardia Community College, as a whole, will benefit more by not

having any sports teams. He views the recreation, fitness, and aquatics portion of the school to be shared by every student in LaGuardia Community College for enjoyment. If a team were to be put in place, the facilities would be limited for the students to use. The teams need to practice in order for them to be competitive. Mr. Saluga asks, "How and when will the average athlete play?"

This very question will lead to a time issue with the average athlete who does not belong to the team. There are financial issues involved with the teams as well. In order to have a team, the school would have to hire a coach, his assistants, and purchase uniforms and equipment. Mr. Saluga explained, "A team is very expensive to run and it is a definite issue to consider, and that is why our main priority is to the students as a whole, for the many." Said Mr. Saluga who continued to explain that "the facilities should be shared by every student...It is why you pay student fees."

I finally got the answer to the pondering question. It was not the answer I was looking for. I was hoping to hear that a team for the school is coming soon but I guess it wasn't meant to be. Mr. Saluga does present a good argument as he, for a moment, convinced me, an average athlete, but did it convince the rest of the student body? I want to know. Call me at (718) 482-5189 to let me know your opinion or write to me at [TheBridge@lagcc.cuny.edu](mailto:TheBridge@lagcc.cuny.edu).

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