The Bridge
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"The Truth" by Keith Walker

Cristian Pena on
The Day of the Dead

Herman Badillo

National Council of La Raza

Politicized education is SCARY!
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This issue is dedicated to Mr James Marrero, former Features Editor, whom without, "The Bridge" could not have

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We are in the midst of a great social debate. On one side we have those who feel that higher education is a priviledge and should only be given to those who can abide by the highest standards. On the other side, there are those who contend that higher education in modern society is a right, and should be accessible to all.

This argument has come to a head at CUNY where the Open Admissions policy of the university has recently been abolished. Using a Guliani taskforce report as a blueprint, our new Chancellor, Matthew Goldstein and Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Herman Badillo, have set out to change the structure of CUNY forever. Are these men cutting to the heart of the problem or are they further ravaging a victim of the state for political ambition?

The Badillo-Goldstein Project
Mark Twain once wrote that there were three kinds of lies: "lies, damned lies, and statistics." He wrote this in response to the human tendency to use numbers as proof and justification for people's own beliefs, prejudices, perceptions and actions. We see the manifestation of this phenomenon in the recent and bitter fight over open admissions and remediation brought to a head by the release of the infamous Schmidt Report.

In May 1998, Mayor Rudolph Guliani assigned a 7-member taskforce to investigate and analyze CUNY. This was done partly in response to harsh criticism he was receiving for making unfounded negative statements about CUNY and CUNY students to the press. Also, by May 1998, members of the CUNY Board of Trustees had already voted to end remediation at the CUNY four-year colleges. They did this without any solid empirical basis at their momentous January 25th decision right here in the mainstage theater at F.H. LaGuardia. These trustees desperately needed evidence to support their case and push their new policies passed by a slight margin.

The Mayoral Taskforce was charged with a very specific mission: to examine and make recommendations regarding (1) the uses of city funding by CUNY, (2) the effects of open admissions and remedial education on CUNY, (3) the best means of arranging for third parties to provide remediation services to ensure that prospective CUNY students can perform college level work prior to their admission to CUNY, and (4) the implementation of other reform measures as may be appropriate. (Rand Preface). This taskforce was headed by Benno Schmidt Jr., former president of Yale and Chairman of the Edison Project, a for-profit enterprise that runs elementary and secondary schools and was comprised of several conservatives including present Board of Trustees Chairman Herman Badillo. It used city employees as staff and spent about $600,000 on consultants.

On June 7th, 1999 the mayoral taskforce released its report entitled "An Institution Adrift" also known as "The Schmidt Report." Immediately, the floodgates were opened for the waves of reactions from academics, politicians, reporters, and every other Tom, Dick, and Harry that had an opinion or other statement to make about CUNY. The Daily News headline blared "F for CUNY!" while 200,000 full time students and 150,000 continuing education students went about their business with their heads in shame.

The Schmidt Report in its entirety is a wealth of information available to anyone who is interested in reading all 10 of its parts spanning over 500 pages. It recounts the history of the City University of New York, open admissions, and thoroughly examines every facet of expenditures. The report made the following major observations:

- CUNY lacks strong central leadership.
- Widespread tenure and certificates of continued
employment restrict CUNY’s hiring practices and prevent it from effective management.

- CUNY lacks a central information gathering system that reports the success and progress of its students before and after graduation, transfers, and graduation rates.
- No clear policy on or coordination of transfer credit between colleges exist and the widespread proliferation of similar degree programs among the colleges should be consolidated.
- CUNY has high dropout and low graduation rates.
- CUNY has lost much of its full-time faculty and relies heavily upon adjuncts while CUNY administration has become bloated.
- Academic standards are loose and there are no definitive assessment tests to measure students.

One month later, The University Faculty Senate, a body of professors from all the CUNY colleges released their rebuttal to the report. Entitled “An Institution Affirmed” it rejected the “destructive ideas and overall rhetoric” while supporting a few of its “positive suggestions.” It is interesting that the Faculty Senate would act as though the Schmidt report were giving suggestions when Chairman Badillo has said publicly that he was planning on using the Schmidt report as “a blueprint for remaking the university.” Hello. Can we say reality?

In August, Friends of CUNY, an advocacy group led by Julius C.C. Edelstein issued a response to “The Schmidt Report” adding their voice to our academic Babylon. They pleaded with the State Board of Regents which exercises power over all decisions made on public education institutions in the state and

CUNY’s new Chancellor Goldstein not to institute the new remediation policy due to take effect in January 2000.

The Report
The report itself is a harsh wake up call to those in the CUNY system that would like to keep things at the status quo. Although the commission had several issues involving conflict of interest and the conclusions are rushed and obviously biased it is quite a comprehensive study.

Sally Renfro and Allison Armour-Garb, co-writers of the Schmidt Report, indicted the faculty and administration for fearing change and opposing the use
of standardized test scores in admission process. They concluded that, “While faculty and administrators have important roles to play, their track record suggest that they lack the expertise and independence to handle the technical side of assessment design.” They scorched the reliability and validity of WAT test especially, citing pathetic excuses given when minority groups fair badly on the test. Renfro and Armour-Garb wrote in the appendix entitled “Open Admissions and Remedial Education at the City University of New York” “We were told at Hostos that “Hispanics take longer to make their point but they get there eventually. (Translation: many students failed to write concisely.) At Queens, we were told that Asians are not taught to argue for a position, and that they do better if they are coached to write their WAT as though they are telling a story. (Translation: many students failed to write persuasively.) And at Medgar Evans, we were told that Caribbean students learned a British dialect. (Translation: many students lacked facility with standard written English.)” (Pgs. 95-97)

Were these excuses the faculty’s defense on the part of students? With friends like these, who needs enemies?

The report went on to say “High-level CUNY officials believe that faculty self-interest is an inertial force behind the university’s assessment policies.” (Pg. 105) Basically, professors who administer assessment at the different CUNY colleges get extra perks and power with the job; they oppose the changes proposed by the trustees because they would lose that influence at the campuses. In June 1997, the Faculty Union imposed a moratorium on the use of educational technology at CUNY. They justified it officially by saying that faculty are more concerned with intellectual property rights, workload, compensation and committees, but according to the report, interviewees said that they were really afraid of being replaced by computers. Hey, who isn’t?

The taskforce blasted CUNY for its lack of central leadership and information gathering. The CUNY Research Foundation came under attack when Brian P. Gill published comments made by many faculty that it provided incompetent service (Gill 22). Ironic, since the new Chancellor Matthew Goldstein (appointed after the report was released) was the president of the Research Foundation from 1982 - 1991, a large section of the years analyzed by the taskforce.

In fact, the complete report is filled with ironies and contradictions. The most glaring contradiction is the proposal to give remedial students vouchers for the “remedial provider of their choice” once the policy is in effect. The phrase “remedial provider of their choice” implies third party, for-profit companies like the kind Schmidt operates. Although it might be cost effective for CUNY to outsource its remediation course load, Miriam Cilo, another writer of the Schmidt Report, concludes that there is no hard evidence that third parties [for-profit] companies can successfully teach prospective CUNY students. (Cilo, 10)

Another Schmidt report writer, Arthur M. Hauptman, brings the fact that CUNY students dry-up their financial aid in remedial courses into clear and sparkling light. This by far, is the soundest and most reasonable argument to end remediation as we know it. Hauptman exposes the revenue incentive in some institutions and suggests that
CUNY not charge for remedial courses. "It will be difficult to place remediation at CUNY on a more solid footing. Institutional officials will continue to have the incentive as well as the mandate to admit underprepared students and charge them full tuition for courses that are clearly below college level by any reasonable standard." (Hauptman 11) He puts forth a proposal in which funding is directly related to the improvement of students. (Hurray! No more 096/099 teachers who couldn't care less about yo writ in & rithmatec)

Hauptman cites that CUNY spends more than the national average on remediation but fails to commend CUNY for providing remediation to 75% of its student body with only 8% of its budget.

Politics, Prejudice, Priorities, Power

Comparing CUNY to national averages is like measuring a basketball with a ruler. You could do it, but it would never provide you with the clearest and most definitive numbers. CUNY is a unique institution, with a unique student population, in unique circumstances, in a unique city, within a state with mediocre public education funding and the highest cost of living in the United States. Those who ask why CUNY students don't graduate in four years should also ask why you can't buy a slice for a dollar. Under all the politics, racism, self interest, turf wars, misinformation and nonsense, it all boils down to simple urban economics. And this brings us to the heart of the problem, actually almost the heart of every problem; MONEY!

City and state funding for CUNY has decreased drastically while tuition has risen and although TAP and PELL cover most of the expense they also have decreased over the last decade to cover only 90% of the cost. The state does not want to spend its funds on a system that only serves the needs of city residents, poor city residents at that. It does not want to give funds to the institution directly because the funds may not be directly used to help students. The city in turn does not want to raise its property taxes to pay for its own public schools. Raising property taxes could drive up real-estate values, rents, commerce and have an adverse effect on the city constituency that exerises its political power. A republican administration would rather spend money on services like police and sanitation anyway rather than schools which are run by unions and bureaucratic administrations, so, it in turn pays less and pushes the cost onto the students. From 1988 to 1997 state funding for CUNY declined by 39%, city funding declined 37% while tuition increased 93%. Well, of course you know the students can't pay for the tuition because they're you know, POOR. So, they have two choices; one is to borrow the money from the federal government or apply for student aid, TAP, New York State's Tuition Program.

This forces the state to pay for CUNY anyway. This situation does not make the Governor or the Mayor happy. They have to find another way to "streamline" the system and minimize cost without looking like they are bashing the poor too much. Enter the minority adherents of republican ideals like Herman Badillo and they have a Puerto Rican hero, (Clarence Thomas rřg a bell?) someone who can execute the plan and can't be accused of being a racist. Although recently, we aren't so sure. People like Badillo really believe that if you find a way to raise standards the schools will get better. In reality the schools will have to address a lot of issues and will need the right leadership and use of adequate funding for a long time before they
Celebrations for the Day of the Dead seem to be getting livelier each year—more like a holiday than a holy day. The concept and customs of this festival are featured each year in cultural centers, museums, and some colleges. What is the difference between Halloween and the Day of the Death? Halloween is based on a Medieval European concept of death, and is populated by demons, witches, and other images of terror, all of them negative. The Day of the Dead, in contrast, is distinctly different. It is a uniquely I ndio-Hispanic custom that demonstrates a strong sense of love and respect for one's ancestors: celebrates the continuity of life, family relationships, community solidarity; and even finds humor after death. The Spanish conquerors came from a continent that had been depopulated by plagues during the Middle Ages. They came for land, and to establish Christianity in the Americas. They brought with them a new concept of death: the concept of good and bad; the concept of a final judgment day; the concept of heaven, hell, and limbo; and the evangelizing process. During their confrontation with indigenous cultures, the Spanish sensed the power of the celebrations honoring the dead, which were at least 5,000 years old. The tolerance of the old religion of Catholic symbols, beliefs, and rituals combined with the belief systems of the conquered and converted people into a fusion called "folk Catholicism" or "concrete Catholicism."

In the pre-Hispanic cultures of Meso America, especially the Nahu civilization, death was seen as a dream. Only in dying did a human being truly awake. In pre-Hispanic times, it was believed that the dead made a long and perilous journey through nine underworlds before reaching the region of Mictlan, ruled over by Mictlantecuhltli, the god of the land of death, and Mictlancuah, the goddess of the land of death. The dead person's occupation in life and manner of death determined which afterworld would receive her or him. The passage through the realm of the nonliving lasted four years, taking the journeying soul across a series of deserts and dangerous mountains. It was impossible to pass over the great river at the end of the trek without the aid of a dog. This explains why remains of dogs or clay sculpture reliefs often were found at burial sites. In the ninth century, All Saint's Day, November 1st, when all saints of the Roman Catholic church are commemorated, became known in England as the feast of all the hallow days. October 31st, the day before, was known as All Halows E'en, an name later shortened to Halloween. Since the thirteenth century, the Catholic church's All Souls' Day, November 2nd, has been designated as a time to pray for the souls of departed baptized Christians believed to be in the purgatory.

In Mexico, beginning in mid-October, children and adults prepare to welcome the souls of the dead relatives, who return home at this time each year to make sure all is well and that they have not been forgotten. November 1st is set aside to honor the souls of the children. Hispanics make and eat pan de muerto, bread in the shape of bones and crosses. Children are delighted with gifts of whimsical toys and
candy skulls decorated with their names. The predominant colors for this holiday are black, white, pink, yellow, and gold. At the center of the Day of the Dead observance is an ofrenda (offering) or altar, constructed in the home and/or at the grave site or in business establishments. The ofrenda is an elaborate display of cempazuchitl (marigold), favorite foods and drinks of the dead, dried beans, pan de muerto, maracas, musical instruments, papel picado of skeletons (delicate tissue paper cut-out designs), candles that are left to burn continuously. We tell stories about death's laughter and jokes.

In the Labyrinth of Solitude, Octavio Paz describes our unique fascination with death:

"In a closed world where everything is death, only death, only death has value. But our affirmation is negative. Our popular images always poke fun at life, affirming the nothingness and insignificance of human existence, but all this boastful familiarity does not rid us of the question we all ask: What is death?...The Mexican jokes about death, caresses it, sleeps with it; it is one of his favorite toys and most steadfast toys. He looks at death face to face. With impatience, disdain or irony. The Mexican praises death, celebrates it, cultivates it, embraces it, but he never surrenders himself to it. Everything is remote and strange to him, and nothing more so than death. He does not surrender to it because surrender entails a sacrifice...Death neither gives nor receives; it consumes itself and is self-gratifying. Therefore, our relations with death are intimate, but empty of meaning and devoid of erotic emotion. Death in Mexico is sterile, not fecund like that of the Aztecs and the Christians."
moving open admissions from CUNY will disproportionately affect student of color is invalid. Presently the CUNY freshmen student population is 71% minority, and 62% female and 48% foreign born. Even if you lost the average 75% of freshmen who failed the freshmen skills assessment test, CUNY will never again be a W.A.S.P. institution. And those who fail can still en-

ter after they have completed their remedial education.

By the same token, those who say that they are keeping open admissions are lying. When Goldstein was asked how he was planning on upholding the open admissions policy once all the seats were filled in the community colleges with students in need of remedial work he said emphatically “We’ll find a way.” This doesn’t seem like a well thought-out response to the needs of students who want to pursue a degree after high school.

And where do we stand as students while our “elders” argue about what is the best course of action? We stand embarrassed when we go on job interviews, when we apply to pri-

vate schools, when we try to live our lives with the burden of re-
cieving an education at a politi-
cized institution; an institution not adrift but torn apart by years of wrongs, years of underfunding and years of mistakes made by those who are supposedly en-
trusted with the education of gen-
erations that will inherit the city. Will the Board of Trustees re-
member their basic kindergarten lessons, in which two wrongs don’t make a right, and ten wrongs still don’t make a right, or will they, too, have to go through ethical remediation? Will ca-
eree educators at CUNY finally admit that they too have made mistakes and are willing to recognize them and work to heal the system? Will the war between the administration and the faculty be placed behind closed doors instead of on the airwaves and in papers? The media advisors, spin-doctors and jour-

nalists will certainly not help the situation. Should we as stu-
dents elect leaders that will fight for our rights instead of just hav-
ing a title to put on their resumes? Should we take on the responsi-
bility ourselves and vote? I have heard Mayor Guliani compared to a dictator on several occasions, but it is an ironic fact that dicta-
tors are elected when a free soci-
ety becomes too lazy to vote. So, who do you have to blame?
The deterioration of Central Decisionmaking at CUNY

At most universities, while boards are ultimately responsible for major policies, the chancellor is expected to exercise leadership, implementing policy by pursuing a clearly defined university mission which is endorsed by the board. The relative responsibility for defining the university mission differs at different institutions; in recent years, trustees at many institutions, including CUNY, have taken a more active role in setting policy agendas. Regardless of whether the articulation of a university’s broad goals initiated by the chancellor or by the board, effective leadership of the institution requires agreement between the board and the chancellor about those goals.

Historically, the CUNY board largely followed the lead of its chancellor, Ann Reynolds. The chancellor was appointed chancellor by a board that was committed to the university’s tradition of open access, and that was willing to follow the lead in most matters. By the mid-1990s, however, a number of new board members were not content to be led by the chancellor, and wished to move the university toward a new emphasis on high academic standards. Not surprisingly, conflicts arose both in substantive policies and leadership style. The trust between the administration and the Board eroded as trustees began to perceive that they were being manipulated and denied access to information. Ultimately, the level of distrust grew so great that the board felt the need to gather information about university operations using non-administration sources.

The board’s frustration with the chancellor’s leadership was augmented by a growing sense that the administration was ineffective in executing board policy across the university. As the relationship between the board and chancellor evolved from one of cooperation to one of competition, the joint decisionmaking process was poisoned. The process reached its nadir in May of 1997, when the Board was surprised to discover that students were about to graduate from Hostos Community College without having passed the CUNY Writing Assessment Test (CWAT). The CWAT is given to all incoming students at CUNY to evaluate whether they need remedial education in writing. Some colleges, including Hostos, have established policies with board approval requiring passage of the CWAT before a student could advance into required English courses. Some members of the board apparently came to believe that they had a mandate to make passage of the CWAT a requirement for graduation. Unbeknownst to the trustees and the chancellor, in 1995-96 Hostos substituted other measures to permit students to move out of remedial courses and into the general curriculum. Five days before the commencement ceremony, the board announced that students at Hostos would not be permitted to graduate unless they passed the CWAT. Approximately 125 students did not graduate as a result. The incident suggested that the chancellor and board were poorly informed not only about practices at the colleges but also about their own policies.

In short, the deteriorating relationship between the board and chancellor reduced the effectiveness of both. The poor working relationship and growing disagreement about the University’s goals made Reynolds’ continued service as chancellor untenable; she left CUNY a few months after the Hostos debacle.

Continuing Dysfunctionality of Central Decisionmaking at CUNY

Despite the fact that nearly all of the top university officials of the Reynolds administration have departed, a healthy, working relationship between the board and administration has not been fully
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If you would like some easy to use documentation or have any questions or problems regarding your account you can contact our e-mail support line @ extension 6151 or stop by room e-228 where a technician will be available to assist you.

Department of Instructional Services - Information Technology Division
restored. The effectiveness and trustworthiness of the university administration remains in doubt by some members of the Board (personal interviews).

Frustrated by the perceived ineffectiveness or intransigence of university administrators (both during the Reynolds administration and since), trustees have tried to take on more of the responsibility of running the university. Even some members of the Board devote too much time to administrative details. For example:

- On more than one occasion, the board has argued over descriptions of individual courses, holding up the approval of programs and challenging faculty control over course content.

- Mundane matters such as personnel actions and contracts for computers and photocopying have consumed significant amounts of trustees’ time and energy; this is encouraged by a law requiring Board approval for all expenditures over $20,000 (N.Y. Educ. Law sec. 6218).

- In the pursuit of academic standards—an appropriate arena of board activity—board committees have mandated use of a particular set of standardized tests despite unresolved concerns about the validity of the tests. (In this instance, the board’s frustration may have resulted directly from a dispute about the tests among university administrators.)

It will be difficult for the board to get out of the business of administering the university until a permanent chancellor is appointed. The current chancellor and deputy chancellor have only interim status, the temporary nature of their tenure necessarily limits their ability to lead. Unfortunately, however, CUNY is finding few qualified candidates in its chancellor search. One potential candidate who declined to be considered for the position has suggested that this difficulty is due in part to the aggressiveness of the Board’s efforts to administer the University. CUNY’s leadership is caught in a vicious cycle: the trustees began intervening because they lost confidence in the chancellor, but their intervention has made it harder to recruit a qualified chancellor.

The shortage of qualified candidates for the position of chancellor may also be partly attributable to the perception that elected officials have excessive influence in university decisionmaking. As noted above, several members of the Board of Trustees work for the City of New York. Some observers believe that elected officials, especially the Mayor, have used their influence to undermine the traditional independence of the board. This perception was reinforced by the board’s decision, consistent with a proposal of the Mayor, to exclude students in need of remedial work from the senior colleges; all of the Mayor’s appointees supported the proposal.

Perhaps the largest obstacle to the hiring of a chancellor, and the most serious disability of the Board of Trustees, is the lack of consensus among the trustees about the fundamental mission and goals of the university. Most observers—including several members of the board itself—agree that the board is deeply divided. The clearest public indication of this division was the decision to remove remedial courses from the senior colleges, which passed the board with the bare minimum number of votes necessary for a policy change. Some observers perceive as many as four or five distinct factions on the board. The board has no forum that is specifically designed to promote consensus among its members and to permit them to frankly discuss ultimate ends.

In sum, CUNY’s leadership is not functioning properly. Many members of the board continue to lack confidence in the administration, and this lack of confidence encourages the board to undertake administrative tasks rather than focusing on broad policy issues. Administration, however, should properly be the task of the chancellor and other administrative officers hired by the board for that purpose; trustees are selected not for their expertise as administrators but to settle large issues of educational policy. In practice, while the board is heavily engaged in administration, it makes only limited and painful progress in matters of major policy because the members of that board lack consensus on the university’s fundamental goals.
From July 24th to July 28th 1999, thousands of beautiful Latin people congregated in Houston Texas for the 1999 Annual Conference of “La Raza”. Beautiful, not just Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez beautiful, but beautiful in their hearts and minds, cultures and personalities. These Latin people came from all over the United States representing every walk of life, socio-economic status and race, to discuss one subject: their community, “La Raza”.

The term “La Raza” has its origins in 20th century American Literature, and translates into English most closely as “the people” or “the race” and according to Mexican scholar Jose’ Vasconcelos it means “the Hispanic people of the New World.”

The National Council of “La Raza” (NCLR) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization established in 1968 to reduce poverty and discrimination and improve the life opportunities for Hispanic Americans. NCLR is also the largest constituency based national Hispanic organization, serving all Hispanic nationality groups in all regions of the country. They have gained major corporate funding and are highly influential in national politics and labor relations. NCLR president Raul Yzaguirre has led the organization for over 20 years and is among the best known and respected national leaders. He and his team, as well as the Hispanic community in general, has been able to accomplish allot in 20 years. The next twenty should be even more interesting.

This summer three students were chosen from “The Bridge” to attend the conference, report and return with information from this important event. Jose Arias, John Guerrero and myself were proud to represent F.H. Laguardia College and CUNY at the Conference.

The conference itself was an extravaganza of workshops, luncheons, speeches and various social events. Vice president Gore and presidential hopeful Senator John McCain addressed football stadium crowds in blacktie at the George Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston. The conference also featured a Latin Expo where NCLR corporate affiliates, sponsors and patrons gathered to show how they were helping the Latino community. Bank of America pledged 20 million dollars to a community development program.

No doubt that the community is being pimped as a market since Latinos will be the largest minority group and growing by the year 2010. I was disappointed at the fact that NCLR was accepting monies from companies like Phillip Morris and Shell Oil when these companies have such horrible histories with minority communities.

But there were other things happening besides corporate shmoosin’ there was a workshop on every ill facing the “La Raza”. Everything from AIDS to zero tolerance for profiling and police violence. The youth were at the forefront of many activities and we met students from all over the country that were leaders on their own campuses. In many ways the message was “One day you will inherit this, learn all you can.”

Photos by
Jose Arias
The NCLR funds research and publications for the Latino Community. This summer they released "The Mainstreaming of Hate".

The NCLR Conference received major media coverage nationally and throughout the Caribbean and Latin America.

For more info, write to National Council of LaRaza 1111 19th Street N.W. Suite 1000, Washington D.C. 20036 or visit their website at WWW.NCLR.ORG.
An interview with CUNY Board Chairman
By Steve Kleinberg

During his two year tenure, there has probably been no City university official who has been deemed more controversial than Herman Badillo. He has been an outspoken critic of what he would call a lack of "high standards" at CUNY. He is a primary architect of the university's remediation policy, that if implemented would phase-out remediation at CUNY's senior colleges—a policy that has not been supported by many.

However, it has occurred to us that many students may not know very much about Herman Badillo—his story; and why, for better or worse, he believes so strongly in the policies for which he advocates. The University Student Senate interviewed Badillo in mid-July.

-About Badillo-

An alumnus of the City College, Herman Badillo has been an important political player in New York City for almost 40 years. He's done just about everything there is to do in public life. For example, he has served as Bronx Borough President; a United States Representative; and as deputy mayor. He deservedly takes pride in the fact that he has been the first Puerto Rican to serve in just about every capacity to which he has been appointed or elected.

He has been a candidate for both citywide and statewide office. In 1973, he came very close to being elected mayor of New York City—forcing the eventual victor, Abe Beame, into a run-off election in the Democratic primary. Back then, Badillo was a leader in the "reform movement" of the Democratic Party (independent from Democratic ma-
allow for the implementation of CUNY policy that would phase-out policy when it named an acting-college president, Dr. Delores Fernandez, as the permanent president at the same school: Hostos Community College. Finally, the Trustees reportedly forced the resignation of Dr. Yolanda Moses from her position as the president of the City College. The Badillo era had begun.

-Badillo on Badillo-

"I think I represent more of the typical student profile of City College today than anybody else, even though I went to City College in 1947... My [parents] died when I was very young. My father died when I was a year old. My mother [died] when I was five. They both died of Tuberculosis. My [grandparents] died the same way. I never had a permanent person to care for me. I came [to New York] with an aunt [when I was twelve], and couldn't speak the language. I had no parents, no money, no mentor, and no language... I was working full-time from the time I was seven, [often] just to get food... I came here (to New York) and worked as an elevator boy; a pin boy at a bowling alley, a dish washer at restaurants...[and] as a short-order cook."

"I majored in economics...[and] graduated Magna Cum Laude... [which] meant I could go to work for any C.P.A. firm in the city... [Following my graduation from City College,] I went to work at a C.P.A. firm full-time, and went to Brooklyn Law School at night, where I graduated [at the top] of my class. I [practiced] tax law for several years—but when judges found out that I spoke Spanish they assigned me to work pro-bono (i.e. without pay) to represent Puerto Ricans who had been jailed [and had no knowledge of English]... [In] those days there was no legal aid... I tried [a number] of criminal cases for free; [but] I came to the conclusion that I couldn't solve the problems of the poor case by case, so I decided to go into politics."

"[Initially] I had a hard time [having] any one in the Democratic party accept me, because the last thing they wanted was a Puerto Rican who was articulate... and I was rejected by [a number] of [Democratic] clubs where I lived... [but] I finally found the one Puerto Rican district leader [in the city], Tony Mendez, and I joined his club."

"[in 1960], I [helped organize] the biggest increase in voter registration in East Harlem, a 48 percent increase... and I went to court and proved that the political system was deliberately discriminating against Blacks and Hispanics. It was the first case [of its kind in New York] that was ever won... I had been told that they were going to close a poll-

"In 1961], Mayor Robert Wagner had a fight with the [Democratic] organization. I supported Wagner, out of my clubhouse in East Harlem. After Wagner won, I was appointed [as a] first-deputy housing commissioner... [later I became a New York City commissioner], and the youngest [at age 32]."

"In 1965, I ran for president of the Bronx; and even though the [Latino] vote was only 10 percent at the time, I was elected. I became the first Hispanic president of a borough in the history of the City. As borough president, in connection with CUNY, I [helped] establish Hostos Community College as the first Bilingual college in New York State. Then I ran for mayor in 1969, and lost. But then I ran for Congress in 1970, and won... I served four terms [in] the House of Representatives...[and] was the author [and primary] sponsor of the BI-Lingual/BI-Cultural Education Act of 1974. I was also the sponsor of the Voting Rights Act of 1975, which enables the Hispanic Community to vote in Spanish..."

"I resigned from Congress in 1978 to become deputy mayor [under Mayor Koch]... [One of my accomplishments as deputy mayor was to persuade] Mayor Koch, after a long debate, to approve [start-up funding] for Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC)... that's how it came to be..."

continued on page 28
Dear fellow CUNY students: My name is Md. Mizanor R. Biswas, and I am the chair of the University Student Senate (USS). For those of you who are unfamiliar with USS, our organization is the official governance organization charged with representing the interests of nearly 200,000 CUNY students.

Through USS, students have representation at all standing committees of the CUNY Board of Trustees—the university's policy-making body; and a voice in all major university policy decisions, including the university’s budget. USS also advocates on behalf of student concerns before elected officials at the City, State and Federal levels.

**USS Structure**
The USS Board of Directors consists of representation from each of the divisional governments (i.e. day undergraduate; evening undergraduate; and graduate), where they exist, at our 19 member campuses. Delegates and alternates to the USS board are either elected directly by the student body during campus-wide elections; or are chosen from among the elected members of the respective student governments by that government.

The USS board elects its officers every October. There are nine members of the USS Steering Committee, including the chair of the organization. As the elected chair of USS, I also serve as the student representative to the CUNY Board of Trustees.

**Our Priorities**
USS has had a time-honored commitment to advocating for access and excellence at CUNY. We oppose all efforts to increase tuition (in fact, we have advocated for tuition reduction). We oppose all efforts to deny qualified students access to higher education based upon arbitrary admissions criteria or the ability to pay. We actively advocate for adequate state, city, and university support for essential services, such as campus child care; services for students with disabilities; and international student advisement.

**Funding**
All students at our 19-member campuses (with a few exceptions) pay 85 cents per semester to help support USS-sponsored activities. In addition to University-wide advocacy efforts on your behalf, USS provides financial support to: the CUNY Athletic Conference (CUNY AC); the CUNY citizenship project; and campus events. We also fully fund a university-wide scholarship program.

**Coalition building**
USS has a close working relationship with other student advocacy and service organizations, including: the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG); the Welfare Rights Initiative (WRI); Friends of CUNY, the CUNY Child Care Council; the CUNY Committee on Student Disability Issues.
We also work with our elected faculty counterparts at the University Faculty Senate (UFS); and the Professional Staff Congress (PSC).

However, I am most proud of our newest association, that with the New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, the umbrella group for organized labor in the City of New York. This relationship may reap benefits for our students for many years to come.

**Remediation Policy**
On January 25, 1999 the CUNY Board of Trustees voted (for a second time) to implement a policy that would phase out remediation at CUNY's senior colleges. I voted against the plan.

The issue of eliminating remediation from the senior colleges really hurts prospective college students, who, because of economic factors, have CUNY as their only viable higher education option. After all, the finest private colleges in the country offer some remediation (as long as you can afford their tuition). Why shouldn’t CUNY offer the same.
opportunities? Moreover, since SUNY currently has no similar remediation policy, there is a disparate effect (i.e. as far as access to the same level of public higher education) based largely upon the region within New York in which you reside. It's an admissions policy that smells of 'regional discrimination,' one rigid standard for public higher education in New York City, a more flexible standard everywhere else.

JSS has been, and will continue to be, supportive of a number of renowned civil rights organizations that have banded together to fight this grossly unfair policy through litigation.

If you have any questions about USS positions and/or activities, you can write to me at USS; 101 West 31st Street, Suite 900; New York, N.Y. 10001.

Congratulations to Mizanoor Biswas for his triumphant victory for the USS Chair. Biswas is an alumnus of F.H. LaGuardia and is now teaching on campus. He is also pursuing his doctorate at City College. Biswas has been a proven student leader, although USS has been an relatively inactive organization, he will continue to lobby for our rights and build political awareness among CUNY students. By uniting the delegates and other student leaders across CUNY, he plans to modify and restructure the staff at USS headquarters for a more proactive organization. Various so-called student leaders who were once supporters of Biswas and have benefited from him have come out of the closet and shown their true colors. (Mary Barrow, Becky Zaleski and Julian Rosado Jr. decided to support Calvin B. Alderman in a vicious battle for Student Leadership). They believe that Biswas has turned his back on the them but this is far from the truth. He is sick and tired of ineffectve student leaders who care more about how much money they could get from USS and irritated at full time employees at USS that have lost touch with today's CUNY students and spend their time kissing #a?!. To all those good for nothing "leaders": the time has come to pass the torch. Let the new leaders of the schools emerge!

GOOD LUCK, AND CONGRATULATIONS BISWAS!
- Jose Irizarry
Managing Editor
I was attending a University Student Senate conference, the time and place is not important, and a Trustee member told the students that:

"Ten years from now, CUNY students will be thanking me".

The room went into an uproar of sarcastic laughter, but he also stated:

"You put us here"

His statement left the room in silence. He implied that students do not vote. He also implied that our fate lies with high-level politicians who are unaware of the issues that the CUNY student body deals with.

Politicians are mutilating our CUNY system for their own purpose. The Board of Trustees consists of seventeen trustees: twelve appointed by the Governor and five appointed by the Mayor of New York City. Governor Pataki and Mayor Giuliani appointed their comrades to the Board of Trustees. This allowed them to influence the trustees on issues concerning CUNY one issue being remediation. This strategy transforms an educational institution into a political system.

The evolution of the remediation system will affect all CUNY students. This current issue, will affect incoming college students as well as the students whom are enrolled in English 099, Essential Reading 099, Math 096 and those who are still fighting that demon we call the WAT test. Another problem that is recently occurring is the increase of students per class and the shortage of professors within the City University of New York.

YOU DON'T MATTER
"13% PERCENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS VOTED IN THE LAST ELECTIONS"

The Political plan of Governor George E. Pataki was to propose an increase of $750-a-year for tuition, and cut grants for "public colleges" in 1998. Pataki’s proposal stated that the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) would deny grants to nearly 38,000 students. Fortunately, The New York State Legislature realized how biased Pataki’s proposal was to CUNY TAP students and refused to support it. Pataki supports the changes in remediation because the phasing out of the remediation program makes it easier to balance the state budget. Unfortunately, this will cut jobs for faculty and deter students who are in need of remediation. In addition, many of the students who are required to take remediation are qualified for TAP. Students who are in need of remediation will not be able to attend a four-year college and on that account, the Governor will again balance the state budget. Notice a pattern?

The politicians concentrate more on closing the gap within the city’s budget and not enough with the concerns of the citizens who elected them into office. Pataki intends to accomplish this objective: Balance the budget by phasing out the remediation programs.

Pataki’s hand-picked Trustees are carrying out their sponsor’s political plan. Many of the trustees will not and have not rebelled against Pataki’s and Giuliani’s ideas on CUNY because their jobs are at jeopardy. Facts display that many CUNY students come from poverty-stricken homes or are in need of student aid and Pataki’s plan hinders these poverty level students from an education.

The modifications that effect the students in CUNY are made by politicians and not by the students. The student voice is not being heard. The changes will effect all incoming CUNY students and those who have not yet passed their remedial classes.
by Keith Walker, Student Governor

Students in need of remediation will be given one semester to pass their remedial courses and those who don't meet these deadlines will consequently have to attend a community college and if community colleges become overwhelmed with students — drop out. To this problem Rudolph Giuliani says: "learn how to work."

The solution is to allow students to participate in the nominations for the Board of Trustees. Chairman of the Board of Trustees Herman Badillo was chosen to act out the plans in phasing out remediation by the year 2001 within CUNY. With more activity, we can prevent politicians from executing their political plans through avoiding hiring like-minded individuals who are going to kill off remediation.

"The Mayor and the Governor applied pressure on their appointees to approve this blueprint resolution: limiting remediation. In addition, the Mayors five appointees hold city jobs, at the pleasure of the Mayor, thus creating an obvious conflict of interest. " (Committee for Public Higher Education)

The only way we are going to stop these conflicts of interest and become more active within our own education system is to exercise our power as adults to vote. However, it seems everyone has an excuse not to vote!

I don't have the time!
My vote doesn't matter.
I don't even know who is running...

These are some of the disturbing answers I get from CUNY students when I ask if they are voting. Many students are unaware of the significance voting has and that might be one of the reasons why they don't vote. The only way to realize how significant voting is by doing it.

Here are some suggestions to start the habit of voting. Focus on the issues that effect you and try to understand what political parties a politician is affiliated with. The major issues candidates always discuss are Education, Taxes, Health Care, and Crime. Observing where they stand on these issues will aid in your decisions.

YOU DON'T MATTER? "13% PERCENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS VOTED IN THE LAST ELECTIONS."

We are the future for a productive New York society, yet currently we are being treated like tomorrow's trash. When we vote it demonstrates how active we are in government, plus it gets politicians to look our way, to acknowledge our contemporary problems within CUNY. If the 350,000 thousand students who are within the CUNY system voted then Governor Pataki would just have been Mr. Pataki.

Keith Walker
ast spring, Governor George E. Pataki received a less than glowing “mid-semester report card” from students and faculty at the City University of New York (CUNY) for his 1999/2000 Executive Budget for the university.

The list of grades included a “F” for his proposals to cut the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) by $116 million, and to implement a number of new regulations for the program that would make eligibility for full-TAP awards more difficult (e.g. increasing the minimum number of credits per semester by a TAP recipient from 12 credits to 15 credits—providing a new definition of “full-time” student that is inconsistent with all other State and Federal policies; a 25 percent withholding of your award until graduation, which is given only if you graduate “on-time”; and a reduction in the number of semesters you can be eligible for TAP while attending a community college (from six semesters to four semesters). The governor has also been notified that he has a number of “incomplete grades” (Inc) to resolve including: support for full-time faculty lines; CUNY child care; services for students with disabilities; building repair; educational technology; and library services. The governor’s budget failed to include any increases in funding for the University in these areas. Overall, the governor has recommended a budget for CUNY that was less than what the state appropriated last year.

The grades were posted by the University Student Senate (USS) — the official governance organization for CUNY’s nearly 200,000 students, and the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY (PSC) — the faculty union.

“Governor Pataki needs to know that his lack of support for public higher education is being closely monitored and will be aggressively publicized,” said Md. Mizanoor R. Biswas (City College), chair of USS. “This report card may only be the beginning.”

According to Dr. Irwin H. Polishook, president of the PSC, the mid-semester grades were more than fair, having allowed the governor plenty of room for improvement.

“We have urged the governor to work with the leadership of the state legislature and agree upon a budget that will improve standards at CUNY; by allocating adequate resources for CUNY to provide the highest quality higher education,” explained Polishook.

“Our goal is not to embarrass the governor, but rather to let him know that he still has time to improve his grades,” added Biswas. “It all depends on how he does on” the final — that is, the final negotiated State budget.

USS and the PSC have organized a postcard campaign using the report card theme. The effort is designed to compliment on-going letter writing and legislative visits. According to Polishook, “it’s critical that every member of the CUNY Community — whether faculty, instructional staff, academic support staff; or students — let their voices be heard individually in Albany. The postcard campaign will tell politicians that we won’t take it anymore! CUNY [must] receive fair treatment from the governor and the state legislature.”

State law mandates that a state budget be adopted by April 15; but as has been the case in previous years, this year’s budget agreement is very late. A major stumbling block has been the inability of the governor’s office, the State Assembly, and the State Senate to agree upon how much revenue is available to allocate. At the time of this newsletter’s publication (mid-July), there was still no budget agreement.

“The stalled budget negotiations should be treated as a window of opportunity for us to keep the pressure on,” said Timothy Jenkins (CSI), USS Vice Chair for Legislative Affairs. “Thanks to the support of our student governments, particularly our USS delegates and alternates; the PSC; and a number of campus-based organizations; thousands of postcards have been sent to Albany… and more are on the way.”
Last March, both the State Assembly and State Senate adopted their own respective budgets. However, in order for the state legislature to adopt the 1999/2000 state budget, both houses of the legislature must agree to the same allocations and language within their respective budget bills.

The respective budget bills adopted already by the State Assembly and the State Senate were more generous than Governor Pataki's Executive Budget. Both the Senate and the Assembly approved full restorations to TAP. However, the State Assembly included added support for a number of essential items, such as full-time faculty lines and CUNY child care.

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Brian McLaughlin, president of the New York City Central Labor Council (CLC), AFL-CIO, and CUNY University Student Senate Chair Md. Mizanoor Biswas have announced the formation of a historic partnership between organized labor and the needs than 200,000 students at the City University of New York (CUNY).

According to McLaughlin, the partnership for the 21st century will encourage CUNY students - many of them immigrants - to become involved in the labor movement and issues that effect working families. At the center of the partnership will be an ongoing dialogue about areas of concern to both groups and opportunities to share ideas and provide support. As part of the new relationship CUNY students will be given more opportunities to participate in union sponsored internship/externship programs in their field of interest. McLaughlin also said the alliance might lead to the establishment of union scholarships and an annual conference of CUNY students and legislators in Albany.

"Since many CUNY students are also working people, it is logical for the labor movement to reach out to them and work together to achieve our common goals," said McLaughlin. "This partnership will expose CUNY students to a wide range of opportunities and also further energize the organized labor movement in New York City."

McLaughlin said the partnership would explore tuition and its impact on working families, student financial aid programs, child care, and faculty. Student ratios and immigration issues. "We would also like to increase the number of labor studies programs throughout the CUNY system," said McLaughlin.

The partnership will work closely with Greg Mantsios of the Queens College Labor Studies Program, the Workers Education Center and the Cornell School of Labor and use the successful programs as models for the creation of others. "By educating young college students about the labor movement, we will insure that we will also be able to open doors for more student internships and job opportunities with organized labor."

Earlier this year the labor movement played an active role in supporting the efforts of CUNY students and faculty to preserve remedial education programs.

Biswa said, "the McLaughlin plan is visionary and historic. CUNY students working with organized labor will prove to be formidable coalition in our town. We're excited about this collaboration!"

The Central Labor Council is an umbrella organization of 1.5 million working people holding memberships in 450 local labor affiliates.
An interview with our new interim president, Roberta Matthews by Shawn Torr

I arrived late, in a panic, nervous.
Five minutes into the meeting I was already put at ease by a veteran English teacher who is now the acting president of our college.

You were at Marymount, what made you want to come back to LGCC?

I had spent over 29 yrs. At LGCC before I went to Marymount and so I knew the college in many ways. LGCC is my home. When I learned that Ray Bowen was leaving I decided to apply.

How did you feel when the Board of Trustees said “You got the job?”

I was delighted. I had also just arrived from China so I was a little jetlagged but anyway despite all that ... I was really delighted to be chosen and looking forward to the challenge. I think it’s a wonderful place.

LGCC is experiencing a growth period right now, the 7th floor of the C building is almost completed and we will have more classrooms on line. As our new president do you plan to continue that growth process?

Yes. I expect as interim president to hit the ground running and to move forward on many issues with as many suggestions from the faculty, staff, and students as possible.

Remediation: How are you as president going to deal with the new influx of students that will be forced to apply to LGCC once the remediation policy goes into effect in 2000?

My approach I not to act as an individual president but rather to try and play a role in the development of educational policies that make sense for the future of the university, and that means offering as many students as is feasible and reasonable an education in order to help them succeed as individuals.

Do you feel that maybe you have been put in a tough position by the policy?

Policies are broad and cover a lot of ground. When I worked at LGCC, developing programs, I used to say that sometimes when you level the playing field you can move some people under it. Probably, the time has come to take a better view and to really scrutinize who they’re talking about. Who the students are, what skills they bring to college and how we can help them. There is not one type of student. One thing I know about LGCC is that the student body is quite diverse and incredibly rich. We have to figure out a policy that addresses the needs and aspirations of these kinds of students.

Expansion & Funding: It seems that we have quite a few bills to pay now. I understand that one of the big reasons Matthew Goldstein was appointed Chancellor was his proven capabilities at fundraising during his time at Baruch College. Herman Badillo and the Board of Trustees are calling for presidents to take bigger responsibility marketing their institutions. Will you take an active role in searching for monies outside of our traditional sources?

I would say that one of the advantages of my having spent the past few years in a private institution was that I got a very different view of grantsmanship. I spent years at LGCC facilitating and writing grants and was involved in many grants over the years. They tended to be federal and state, which adds another dimension to my sense of fundraising which I feel will be very useful.

What other things did you learn at Marymount that you would like to apply to LGCC?

One of the advantages of a small institution is that things can happen more quickly because there is less bureaucracy. However, I believe that process is very important. At Marymount I worked with the faculty closely to apply some curricula and was very heavily involved in the programs there. We were able to really develop the internship program. So, I was able take small initiatives and make them larger. LGCC has already a number of large initiatives and a history of innovation that I can continue.

LGCC does have a history of innovation, for instance, it was one of the first CO-OP schools....

(Dr. Matthews brightens, she interrupts) Absolutely! I will plan to go around and shape these programs for the future.

Is there anything that you wouldn’t touch because you wouldn’t want to mess with perfection?

(Terry Cole, my faculty advisor, enters the room. Dr. Matthews was one of the people that helped hire
him. After greetings, Dr. Matthews turns smiling and says, “Shawn was just asking me if there was anything I wouldn’t change because why mess with perfection? Do you know anything that’s perfect, Terry?” “I don’t know anything here that’s perfect,” Terry responded.

Well, I am going to spend some time listening to people and familiarizing myself once again with the college before I make any great announcements as to what is perfect, near perfect, or not perfect.

We are looking forward to that. Tell us about your experiences here at LGCC?

My experiences go back to the seventies. They are generally in the English Department of which I was the first chair. Then I was Dean and served a variety of different roles including Associate Dean, then returned to the English Department where I got involved in the American Social History Project. In the project high school teachers and college faculty teams taught. This project branched out nationally. This really reflects on the college’s record. I’m proud of being one of the first professors to teach in that project.

Do you see immersion programs like the American History Project as a bridge to the future of education?

Yes, I think that education is the key. A large percentage of the teachers in the NYC public schools are CUNY graduates. If there are issues within the NYC public school system then there are issues in CUNY. The two are inextricably linked.

(Contemplatively) Someone once said that the only people to experience education as a continuum are the students and I believe this. I would say that one of the things I do well is see connections.

CO-OP is now going through drastic changes and there is a need for high school students to be prepared for college level work. CO-OP should exist in one form or another. Do you see a connection there?

If you are asking is there a need for CO-OP and the high schools to have a connection the answer is yes! But presently I am not sure if connections exist and what they are, if they do exist they should be strengthened.

However, I will say that in regard to CO-OP other colleges around the country are scrambling for a way to implement work and internship programs, LGCC has one and we should build upon the great tradition this school, look at what we have and look to grow and refine it in order to stay ahead of the curve.

One of the most impressive things about LGCC is that it has always been able to look at itself and change. Certainly there are areas that in order to stay relevant, the programs need to change and that is the kind of growth and change that is normal and beneficial to the college.

Are you excited about your new position?

I really am. What has driven me in administration all this time is a love for students and there are lots of other things (like food, rent, etc.) but that is definitely an inertial force.

Were there any bargains, deals, or instructions that the Trustees made before letting you lead us?

The only message I got was to be the very best president I could be.

Are there any last thoughts or words you would like to add before we end?

Just that I suspect there will be times when everyone does not stand in agreement over certain issues and that’s life, as long as we all have a commitment to the college and put the college in the forefront we will be fine.
WordCraft

Subterranean Train
Alphabetically numbered rumbling locomotive, mechanically chugging through boroughs... Thorough and intricate cross-stitched tunnels, weaving the fabric of our daily lives... Tribes of individuals transporting their bodies... Hobby? Never, more out of necessity... Intensely, metallic painted poles... Holes are held open by them... Ten, eleven, twelve... stops... We scurry through... Stressed and hurried to... Where to, without a clue? This is what the daily commute do... Silence between strangers, who only exchange looks... Books, newspapers and advertisements read, for internal thoughts are a much safer behavior... Our savior, is the occasional entertainment... Bent over life’s pleadings, a cup armed panhandler... Man dangler, for his manhood dangles from his body once proudly erected... Corrected hoping not to travel that path he selected Injected with fright from the thought... Tout, stiff and frozen Pre-chosen, could have been the vagabond’s fate... Your mental state is the continued observations of others Our brothers in transport A sport is made from the judgment of appearances... Prejudices and these prejudices influence our decisions of placement..... Intent on where we stand? Where we sit? Only if my judged perception fits... Am I the misfit? Or is it my riding neighbor? For I favor to place where I find comfort... Distort...ed, is it? Race or perception My deception continues in this daily ritual of sorts... My daily transport, on the subterranean train.

Victor Magnus Sanchez Valado

TO EACH THEIR OWN

Writing-
Placing my name everywhere on walls. On pyramids, on trains, on scriptures painting big pictures of my name, Hieroglyphics, etching of my story or just graffiti of my story Story of the youth; claim to fame for a lost generation, even though there is separation This is the quietest scream from this lost generation heard around the world with no sound just the story of words on walls, fantastic writings found in ancient temples, or just the words of today found in the deepest darkest tunnel, alleyway, and rooftop. Vandalism to the old and ignorant, while it’s the voice of expression for us An art form that some break on it, while others stare and remark on it. Something that has been heard worldwide yet is not recognized completely by the public eye. Still ridiculed and criticized, this way of expression strives and thrives, and no matter what will not die. An art form, an expression, a voice, a style, a disgrace, a problem, a stain, it remains - JUST WRITTEN MY NAME IN GRAFFITI ON THE WALL!
El cielo llora sobre la cuidad perdida,
faroles alumbran las tinieblas,
almas ajenas se apoderan de la soledad.
Vecindades dormitadas estan entre
suenos,
no escuchan ni el susurro
del viento lijero
que huye del ser amargo.
Las rosas se ahogan con la
tempestad del cielo,
cielo que ve todo,
cielo que sabe todo,
cielo sin ojos que puede ver,
cielo con semblante de tristeza.
Las estrellas no quieren
salir,
por miedo a perder su brillo,
la luna no quiere dejarse ver,
por miedo a verlo todo.
Susurros se oyen en las calles
y nadie las escucha.
Viento de olas frias,
donde es que huyes con tanta prisa?
Acaso huyes de algo
o acaso solo huyes por huir.
La media noche se acerca,
y canta el ruisenor,
ocche calida que enfria todo lo que se
acerca,
pobre ruisenor que nadie lo escucha,
que se congela cantando su
triste canto a la luna.
Sombras congeladas caminan
por las calles, se miran y se traspasan
miran sin mirar,
caminan para aplastar.
Que pudo pasar?
Si una vez tenias tu calido calor,
como una antorcha de las olimpiadas
que nunca se apaga
que te pudo pasar?
Pobre ruisenor que sigue
cantando,
y su canto se lo lleva el viento,
sin ser escuchado
en los suenos de nadie.

You are the One

Unimaginable how your eyes reflect the sun's light
and your smile the spring of my soul.
So thankful to find the one who carries
my happiness.

In a desert where my soul was chained
by loneliness you saved me.

Thanks for using your beauty as key
to free my mind.
By looking at you I discover that
beauty is not a mystery.

You introduce to my heart the light
that the sun cherishes with the river.

As your hair flows through my fingers;
my doubts disappear slowly.
God knows how long I wait
God knows how long I have been searching.

Thank you for helping me to cry for something
That makes me happy.

You bring new words to my life.
Love, Joy, Gracefulness
Don't confuse me any more because
their definitions are written on your lips.

Now I consider every second in my life
because the moving of my heart
reminds me how fortunate I am to
meet you.
Only the speed of my blood can express how much
I love You.
You are the one.

By Eddyson Jean-Baptiste

Sin título
Jacqueline Mercado
Where I’m From...

Where I’m from people respect the color of your skin
But they ignore your stomach pain

Where I’m from it’s hard to smile
Because hunger blocks the lake of happiness

Where I’m from being poor is not a shame because
being rich requires killing

Don’t talk about me if you don’t know where I’m from

I didn’t make myself who I am today
But where I’m from

Don’t step on my flag and expect me to smile
Because I don’t smile if my flag doesn’t wave.

Where I’m from people there are like Earthquakes.
We come when you least expect it.

Their energy comes from the Volcano,
because fire is their neighbor.

Make sure you stand back away from it.

Where I’m from we don’t put liberty on paper and sign it.
However it serves as a bridge to unite soul and mind.

Meditate on what you say about where I’m from
Because “anything that you don’t know is older than you.”

And you will see why I so proud of where I come from.

By Eddyson Jean-Baptiste
Race /Minority
Race, the human race,
Earthlings breathing
With all its facets
Diamond White
Carbon Black

Rich and squalid
Fine and rough
Hate with love
Unity beyond the stars
Feet deep in mud
Barely sensing our last stop
Never mind, never mind
The Dream will carry us on
As Shakespeare said...
“Dreams are the children of our idle minds”

If we leave the poem
We have nowhere to go
With our thoughts in silence
Our eyes fixed on the light and form
Chilled of being alone

In the Race,
Human Women Undefined
From the face to the brain
Not a single slot to trace
Other than a dying star

By Paulina Rieloff

THE SURVIVAL GAME

Inside the darkness of your mind,
grows the pain of insanity,
a very unsettling kind.
The word “freedom” has become only a fantasy.
Can you bring yourself to fame
And survive with the strongest?
You learn to play the game,
al your days now seem the longest.
You ponder on your future.
Is there any way out of this buried up hole?
The dark nights become your torture.
You feel your life draining from your soul.
You can only pray for your release
and dream through all your nights.
Can you bring yourself to peace
or stand up and fight?
Freedom can be so close,
but yet so far away.
Unlike most,
You live your life
day by day
moving toward the light.
You see things are not the same.
All you could is survive with all your might
and play the survival game.
By Jennifer Brady

WordCraft
ERA OTRO DÍA DE ESOS, EN EL CUAL PENSABA ACERCA DE LA VIDA.
UN DÍA MÁS EN EL CUAL AFORMA DECÍA DIOS ESTA GRAN OPORTUNIDAD DE VIVIR. LA VIDA ES ALGO MUY IMPORTANTE QUE DEBEMOS APROVECHAR PORQUE ES UNICA. DEREPENTE MIRE AL CIELÓ Y ME DI CUENTA DE QUE LA VIDA ES TAN LINDA, UNICA E IMPORTANTE, PERO LO QUE NO OLVIDE ES QUE HAY MUCHAS PRUEBAS QUE TENEMOS QUE SOBREPASAR. TODOS TENEMOS QUE PELEAR FUERTE Y SOBRESALIR EN GRANDE. TENEMOS QUE ENFRENTAR CONTROVERSIAS Y EXPERIENCIAS NEGATIVAS COMO POSITIVAS. HAY TANTAS COSAS QUE PUEDEN SUCEDER EN ESTA SOCIEDAD. QUE DE UN MOMENTO A OTRO ME PREGUNTE QUE FUERA DE ELLA SIN NOSOTROS LOS LATINOS.
LE PREGUNTE ALA LUNA, NO ME CONTESTO, LE PREGUNTE AL SOL Y EL NI ME MIRO. ME PREGUNTE A MI MISMO YYYYYYYY
SAQUE LA CONCLUSION DE QUE LA VIDA ES MUY BELLA
Y POR SUPUESTO QUE DI GRACIAS A DIOS.
DEREPENTE MIRE A MI LADO Y VI PASAR A UNA MUJER LATINA. ERA TAN HERMOSA Y BELLA QUE LOCO DE ME AMOR ME DEJO. YO ESTABA EN EL FRENETE DEL EDIFICIO ‘M’ DE LA GUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ME DIJE A MI MISMO QUE BONITA CREASIÓN, SONREI Y AVEMARIA ME DI LA BENDICION. EL LA SE DIO CUENTA Y SONRIO. ! QUE MOMENTO TAN EMOSIONANTE ! PERO CUANDO MIRE AL RELOJ ESTABA TARDE PARA IR A MI CLASE DE CONTABILIDAD Y DIJE..............?
NO OTRA VEZ TARDE!
-CAMILO GUOIO
Skater-Girl

Hips twitch as
Bubble gum pops
Out of parted smeared lipstick
Wanna see
A rail-slide, Ollie
Half-pipe, Skate-trick
You see its like
Urban muse generated ballet
Techno strobe lights stroke right
Through jungle nations drum bass, nights

Hips twitch
Wearing fatsuages
Camouflaging pain
Rough neck buzz cut
Pierced everything, but ear

"I like getting unaware of myself”
Because everything I see teaches me to change...

Buy that.

Glitter gltitez on sugar coated eyes
Because spontaneously everything I say is true
And spontaneously everything I see has truth.
She's sweet.
which makes her part of a breed that's few

Skate girl
Skate girl
Skate girl

Pretty city kitty, you're a cool cat
With your purr and purse
While I howl at the moon
ANGRy AT A WORLD
That seems like it's full of shit
You float through it

Mental survival skills or sedation through pills?
All of life is an act of Will
the hard part of the lesson is figuring out that
God’s name is Will.

- Shawn Torres
Badillo's Interview (continued)

-Why I Care About CUNY-

"I understand the problems of the present population because I was the first Puerto Rican at just about everything...I had been [among] the first in the new wave of migrants to come to CUNY...and that's the reason I am concerned. I understand the problems, because I went through them myself—having to work full-time, to go to school full-time, and be married and have other responsibilities...but I know that we can do it. I don't believe that we should lower standards, because if we do we are not going to be able to provide opportunities. The key is not to merely access, it's access with standards—so [that] we can achieve success."

"After having served eight years in Congress...I knew that [we] never going to get jobs for all out of the government. [We were] never going to get housing for all out of the government. [We were] never going to get health care for all out of the government. On the other hand, the one area where government has acknowledged [its] responsibility is education...and if we get [quality] education for our people, then they will be able to get their own jobs; their own housing; and provide for their own health care."

"The key to getting out of poverty is education...and that is why [during] the past eight years I have been focusing primarily on education."  

-Top Priorities as Chair-

"[My top priority is to] get a strong chancellor who will find out what is really going on in the University."  

"[CUNY must] separate remediation from college level work. The use of TAP (the Tuition Assistance program—New York State's basic financial aid grant for economically-needy students) for remedial work [forces] students to drop out because they don't have enough money to pay for regular [college] work (there's a limit on the number of semesters a student can be eligible from TAP. There are also no degree credits associated with remediation)."

"It's not the fault of the students that they are unprepared for college work because they don't have a real twelfth grade high school diploma. I want to go back to the high schools and develop a program that we call College Now [and test the students] at every single [New York City] high school...and help them earn a real high school diploma, so that they can graduate from [CUNY] more quickly and get a quality education."

"I [also] want to be sure we have an entrance test for remediation that measures a student's ability, and an exit test that determines that [the students have] completed remediation, because otherwise there will be no confidence from the business community or the general public that [our] students have in fact received a meaningful college diploma."

"I want to get remediation settled before a student gets matriculated. I don't think it makes sense to take remedial courses to get you ready for college, and take [college-level] courses for which you're not ready, concurrently. Therefore, the first thing to do is help the student get remediation out of the way. At the senior colleges, you can take intensive summer classes. [This summer] we're going to have 20,000 students at these sessions so that they can be matriculated...We propose that these programs should be free to students..."

-Dont Judge Me, Join Me-

"I need the support of the student body and faculty if we're going to improve [our University]. These people who say they don't believe what I say should look at what I did at Hostos Community College. Two years ago, I was accused of having a secret plan to destroy Hostos. But what has happened since then is that we've brought in [Dr.] Delores Fernandez, who is a truly accomplished Bi-lingual educator, recognized nationwide. She's now the permanent president at Hostos. College morale has improved, and the faculty and students believe that it is much better than before. So if you want to judge what I plan to do in the future, look at what I have done in the past."
A Message to Herman Badillo: Step Down From the Chair

On September 22, 1999 Herman Badillo made a speech at the Education Innovation Luncheon. In his controversial speech Herman Badillo said the following:

“They’re pure Indians, Incas and Mayas, who are about, you know, 5 feet tall, with straight hair. And when they speak about ‘La Raza’ they’re not talking about the Spanish language, they’re talking about the original Indian language. And therefore it’s a far more complicated problem than the problem that we’re used to dealing with but nobody seems to want to face up to it.

“I’m well aware of it. We need to have a sense of urgency about his continuing problem. In 15 or 20 years, as I told you just now, the fact is I don’t believe there’s a falling birth rate because one of the things that happens to people who come here, particularly those who come who are illegal aliens, who are undocumented people...is they get married and they have children right away.

“And I’ll tell you why. And maybe you wondered why Immigration doesn’t conduct a raid in the areas where it’s known there are many people without documents. The reason for that is Immigration can arrest the father or the mother, but they can’t arrest the kids because the kids are American citizens, and Immigration doesn’t have day-care centers...”

What the hell is this man’s problem? How in the world could our City University Chairman ever face his students again? His inflammatory comments about the educational ethic of Hispanic groups in America are disturbing, insensitive and deeply upsetting to the Hispanic community and City University students as well. We are fighting mad and will not sit for Badillo’s statements that paint an unfair picture of Hispanic immigrants as uneducated people.

With the infamous comment that “there has never been a tradition of education” in the culture of recent Hispanic immigrants, Mr. Badillo put his proverbial foot in his mouth. Badillo, a Puerto Rican immigrant himself, sounds like the politicians that protested Puerto Rican migration in the fifties. His rhetoric about standards and open admissions is reminiscent of standards and English test given to Puerto Ricans...so they couldn’t vote.

As a respected leader of the Hispanic community, our CUNY chairman should recognize firsthand, the frustration and stigma long felt by Mexicans, Dominicans and Central American immigrants who have struggled to obtain a college education in New York City. Instead, Badillo denounces these groups and in so doing, the students at CUNY. He has left other Latin leaders aghast and scrambling for some type of understanding. Roberto Ramirez, democratic assemblyman from the Bronx and chair of the Puerto Rican/Hispanic taskforce, just stood in front of news cameras and asked “what happened to the Herman Badillo we used to love and respect?” Well Mr. Ramirez power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Although he has since retracted his statement (pointing out that he only meant to illustrate that newer Hispanic groups need stronger educational services) he has already inflicted hurt upon the people who look to him for support. Too little, too late, Mr. Chairman.

If Herman Badillo so carelessly tosses insults about the intelligence of his own people, imagine what’s in store for CUNY students...a statement about the lack of ambition among us? A derogatory comment about the quality of education that we receive? People have the propensity to speak their truest thoughts. If in fact, Badillo’s comments were his true reflections, he is headed for trouble not only with the Hispanic community and CUNY, but others whom he has offended.

Now is the time for us to come together and fight against Mr. Badillo’s insensitive leadership. The students of CUNY want a leader who respects us without stereotyping or categorization. We deserve a leader who knows how to administer discretion and tactfulness. Hear this, Herman Badillo! We demand satisfaction! We refuse to sit idly by and allow you to demean the hardworking mothers, fathers, scholars and leaders who make up the City University of New York! This is a call for you to step aside and make room for a caring, qualified leader. You should be ashamed of yourself and ashamed of those around you who defend you. Uno no puede subir al cielo aguantando la mano de Diablo, despíértate. Step down, Mr. Badillo!

-Chanita Williams
Shawn Torres
On the eve of the new millennium, I am pleased and proud to report that the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management is well on target in meeting our mission to enhance student learning and development. This report: 1998/1999 Accomplishments and 1999/2000 Goals will show that our directors, faculty, and staff have been hard at work in developing and maintaining programs, services, and opportunities for our diverse student body.

Here are some of the highlights of the past academic year:

**Health Services Referendum:** In the spring Student Elections, our students voted to increase the Student Activities Fees by $5.00 per semester for expanded health services. This fee increase is expected to generate $116,000 for enhanced health services to our students free of charge. Thank you Renee Butler and Vincent Banrey of Student Services Cluster for developing a wonderful proposal, and to Irene Sosa and her staff in Student Life and Development and the Student Election Review Committee for coordinating a successful Student Elections event.

**A state-of-the-art multi-media audiovisual Career Transfer Center:** The new and improved Career and Transfer Center includes 22 computer stations, LCD projector and other high tech equipment to provide students with current career and college information, and the ability to apply to colleges on-line. My thanks go to Professor Michael Horwitz for bringing this need to my attention, and to Olga Vega and Judith Gazzola for successfully implementing this project.

**“The Bridge”: Resurrection of LaGuardia’s student newspaper:** Last year a group of students came up with an idea to resurrect “The Bridge.” Their enthusiasm and sense of commitment convinced us that their plan would be successful. Under the leadership of Editor-in-Chief, Shawn Torres, and the guidance of Professor Terry Cole, the spring and summer editions of the newspaper were published in magazine format. Hats off to the Bridge staff for renewing student interest in their college environment!

**National Hispanic Bilingual Engineering Program (NHBEP):** The college successfully established an articulation agreement with Turabo University in Puerto Rico in collaboration with the Mathematics Department. Six students participated in the National Hispanic Bilingual Engineering Summer Program at Turabo University and Polytechnic University in Puerto Rico. My thanks go to Olga Vega, Coordinator of the NHBEP at LaGuardia, Professor Emily Carasquillo, Dr. Jorge Perez, Professor Fabio Santos and Professor Dehly Porras for their teamwork and commitment.

We successfully established a Center for Leadership where our students can receive leadership and diversity training. Thank you Irene Sosa and Gregory Faulkner. Under the astute leadership of Brian Goldstein, Director of Fitness, Recreation and Aquatics Center, the Gym Pass revenue surpassed the budgeted goal by 52%. Professor Lyn Byk is working hard to expand the Internship Program of Personal Counseling to include doctoral-level students.

Furthermore, with the guidance and tenacity of Renee Butler and Judith Gazzola, our Divisional Assessment is on schedule. The Financial Aid Office and Student Services Cluster have completed their assessment reports. Academic Career Counseling, College Discovery, Personal Counseling, New Student Seminar and the Vice President’s Office are in the data collecting stage. Enrollment Management (Registrar and Admissions), Recreation, and Student Life & Development will begin their assessments Fall 1999. Keep up the momentum!

In closing, I want to thank each and every member of the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management for your teamwork and perseverance during the college’s conversion to SIMS. My kudos go to all the folks who worked during the fall 99 registration, especially to the Registrar’s Office staff who served our students under very difficult circumstances.

Ruth E. Lugo  
Vice President
A Message from Shamsul Haque, Student Body Prez 1999 – 2000

As we are approaching the 21st century, we do not only have to correct the millenium bug, but we also have to correct LaGuardia Community College, as well as, City University of New York. Our leader, Dr. Raymond C. Bowen, retired from LaGuardia Community College after serving as president for the past ten years. If CUNY trustees are kind, we will have a new permanent president within a year. We welcome Dr. Roberta Matthews back as the interim president. We have a new chair of CUNY’s Board of Trustees, Mr. Herman Badillo. Additionally, we have a new chancellor, Mr. Mathew Goldstein. Time will tell us if all these changes are good. We have some good news and bad news.

The bad news is that we, like the rest of the CUNY colleges, have received drastic budget cuts. This means, among other things, that services will be reduced in all areas. “Budget cuts” are not new words for LaGuardia’s administration. For the past several years New York City and State governments have been cutting large amounts of money, due to “raising standards” of CUNY. I get confused with the words “raising standards” when the Mayor and Governor speak about it. For example, if someone is told to construct a building, but is not given the proper tools or staff to do so, the construction will be either delayed or inadequate. Not providing enough funds for the successful operations of CUNY, and telling CUNY to raise standards is the same concept to me. If they really want to raise the standards of CUNY, they should provide more funds for less populated classrooms and hire more full time faculty. Cutting funds from colleges, will block any attempt for CUNY to raise standards. Budget cuts are the worst nightmare for administrators, faculty and students.

The good news is that although CUNY is under attack, LaGuardia Community College was praised for its performance according to the Benno C. Schmidt’s report. While City College lost 314 faculty members, LaGuardia hired an additional 56 new faculty. While LaGuardia’s leadership should be credited for this accomplishment, they should not forget that they have to strive for the best and keep working towards positive goals.

The bad news is that although we have approximately eleven thousand matriculated students, we still lack many services. Some of these are as follow: We do not have a student lounge area where students could come together and socialize. Night students have very limited services. Most departments do not have any evening hours. The Library Media Center still uses 386 and 486 mhz computers. Although many LaGuardia students need to take ESL courses, the ESL department is not taking an active role in helping these students. ESL students don’t have a place to go where they can receive proper tutoring. Our Computer Information Systems Department must hire more qualified faculty, otherwise a CIS degree will not have any value. Our foreign students and student activists have continually been neglected for years. They deserve some incentives for their hard work. Many students complain that our student activity fees are much too high. Are all of these issues happening because of budget cuts, or can some of these can be improved if the administration wants to do so? I will leave these questions for the administration, but our administration must realize that these issues are not new.

The good news is that Student Government is not alone anymore. Leaders and soldiers of LaGuardia have come together to fight for student rights. They have re-launched their tool, the school’s newspaper. The Bridge newspaper has come back to the campus as an atomic bomb, stronger than ever, and changed its name to the Bridge News magazine. The Student Government Association congratulates the hardworking Bridge staff for putting the last few issues together.
El Reto de CUNY: admision abierta, Altos Estandares por Herman Badillo

Por ser un alumno orgulloso de La Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York - clase del 51 de City College - siento estando de acuerdo desde hace mucho tiempo en que CUNY debe probar a los "newyorkinos" el mas amplio acceso educacion universitaria. Sin embargo, he argumentado por mucho tiempo acerca de la necesidad de altos estandares academicos para equilibrar ese acceso.

Como nuevo Presidente de la junta de Sindicos de la universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York, tengo el privilegio y la obligacion de asegurar que la universidad entre con mayor seguridad al proximo milenio como una instuccion en la cual la excelencia y las oportunidades son motivada y disponibles.

Los retos que nos esperan en nuestro afan por lograr estas metas son descritos detalladamente en el reporte publico por la comision de consejera del Alcalde compuesta por siete miembros, en la cual he tenido la oportunidad de servir bajo el liderazgo de Benno C. Schmidt Jr. Como el titulo del reporte - "Universidad de la Ciudad de Nueva York: Una Institucion Descarriladas" - indica, hay mucho trabajo duro y espero fructifero que hacer en lo adelante.

No importa quien hase la bola o quien se convierta en espectador, los problemas identificados recientemente por el grupo de investigacion deberan y seran enfrentados. Nuestra ciudad no puede simplemente permitir que los problemas academicos y la confusion organizacional que ha plagado el sistema universitario por mas de veinte años, continuen.

No es un secreto que el porcentaje de graduacion de CUNY es muy bajo y que el numero de estudiantes que entran a nuestros colegios sin estar preparados para lidiar con asuntos academicos es abrumadoramente alto o que demasiados graduados calificados de escuelas secundarias van a otras escuelas para conseguir una educacion universitaria.

Tambien es claro que esos problemas se pueden resolver y que los ciudadanos de la ciudad de N.Y. Quieren que se resuelvan. El 16 de junio, una encuesta del Instituto de Sondeos Quinnipiac encontro que por un margen entre 72% y 73% por ciento, los "newyorkinos" apoyan el que los requisitos de admision en las universidades de cuatro anos de CUNY sean elevados, y que casi el 70% de personas esta de acuerdo en la necesidad que hay de reparar las escuelas publicas y elevar los requisitos completamente.

Gracias al liderazgo del Governador George Pataki, el Alcalde Rudolph Giuliani y mis companeros sindicos, la renovacion en CUNY esta claramente en proseso de ejecucion. Esta renovacion creara una forma de admision unica que vale la pena por ella: el acceso a desafiantes expectativas. Los cambios positivos necesitados en proceso de ejecucion incluyen:

-Expandir a todas las escuelas secundarias de la ciudad de Nueva York el exitoso programa "Colegio Ahora", el con la mutua colaboracion del Consejo de Educacion Y CUNY, examina estudiantes y provee remedacion y acciones academicas antes de la graduacion. Las clases son ofrecidas por maestros de escuelas publicas quienes trabajan conjuntamente con profesores universitarios. Esto va a garantizar que los estudiantes sean preparados para lidiar con trabajos de universitario. El programa "Colegio Ahora" deberia ser expansado para permitir intervencion temprana y no solamente intervencion en los grados 9, 10 y 11.

-La fase inicial de la eliminacion de las clases remediales en los siete colegios de cuatro anos a comenzar en el ano 2004 como lo aprobo la Junta de Sindicos de CUNY en enero pasado. Para asistir a los estudiantes antes de que comiencen a nivel de colegio, CUNY. Esta planeando para el verano un programaexpandido de destrezas para estudiantes de pano ( se estima que 20,000 se inscribirian ); un ano completo obteniendo programas introducitorios remediados intensificando el uso de siete lugares para ofrecer clases introductorias de lenguaje, y nuevos programas de tutoreo y recursos expandidos de aprendizaje a distancia. Las clases remediales se ofrezcan tambien en los colegios comun.

-El continuo refuerzo de entrenamiento de maestros en las escuelas de educacion de CUNY. La ampliacion conocida predicciones de que podrian haber escasez de maestros certificados de escuelas publicas para el futuro inmejorables necesarios el que CUNY - la fuente de maestros mas grande del Consejo de Educacion - tome la delantera restaurando la vitalidad en los salones de clase de la ciudad.

-El continuo aumento de esfuerzos para explorar el potencial de la universidad por ser el recurso principal de negocios de la ciudad, trabajo, servicios humanos, tecnologia y sectores gubernamentales. Debemos demostrar que nuestra facultad academicos y expertos hacen de CUNY el mejor recurso economico e intelectual para resolver problemas que la ciudad de Nueva York enfrenta.

Por mas de 150 anos nuestra universidad a sido un gran hacedor de la historia de la ciudad, tan vital como nuestro sistema subterraneo de transporte, como nuestros rascacieles y como esa dama quien con su incansable glacon de amarse, el alma de nuestra ciudad.
The Challenge for CUNY: Wide Access, High Standards
By Herman Badillo

As a proud alumnus of the City University of New York-City College, Class of '51-I have long agreed that CUNY must provide New Yorkers with the widest possible access to higher education. But I have also long argued the need for rigorous academic standards to match that access.

As the new Chairman of the Board of Trustees, it is now my privilege and obligation to insure that the university moves securely into the next century as an institution in which excellence and opportunity are encouraged and available.

The challenges facing us as we pursue these goals are described in considerable depth in the report recently released by the seven-member Mayoral Advisory Task Force, on which I have the opportunity to serve under the chairmanship of Benno C. Schmidt Jr. As the report’s title-The City University of New York: An Institution Adrift”-indicates, hard, but I hope rewarding work lies ahead for all of us.

No matter who pitches in or who becomes a bystander, the problems recently identified by the task force are simply not to be let the academic drift and organizational confusion that has plagued the university for more than 20 years to continue.

It is no secret that CUNY’s graduation rates are too low, or that the number of students unprepared to do college-level work when they arrive at our colleges is shockingly high, or that too many highly qualified high school graduates look elsewhere for their college education.

But it is also clear that these conditions are soluble—citizens of New York City want them solved. A poll release by the Quinnipac Polling Institute on June 16 found that by a 72% to 23% margin, New Yorkers support the raising of admissions standards at CUNY’s senior colleges, and also that almost 70% agree with the need to repair public schools and raise standards across the board.

Thanks to the leadership of Governor George Pataki, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and my fellow trustees, renewal at CUNY is now clearly underway. This renewal will create the only kind of access worth fighting for: the access to challenging expectations. The positive changes needed or underway include:

- Expansion to all New York City high schools of the highly successful “College Now” Program, which, through CUNY/Board of Education collaboration, tests students and provides remediation and academic support prior to graduation. Classes are offered by high school teachers working closely with college faculty. This will insute that students are prepared for college-level work. “College Now” should also be expanded to allow earlier intervention, not only in the 9th but also the 10th and 11th grades.

- The phased-in elimination of remedial classes at the eleven senior colleges, beginning early in the year 2000, as approved by the CUNY Board this past January. In order to assist students before they begin college level work, CUNY is planning for an expanded pre-freshman year summer skills program (an estimated 20,000 students will be enrolled), year-round remedial immersion offerings, intensified use of seven language-immersion sites, new tutoring programs, and expanded distance learning resources. Remediation classes will also be available at the community colleges.

- Further strengthening of teacher training in CUNY’s schools of education. A widely predicted shortage of certified public school teachers in the near future makes it vital that CUNY - the single largest source of teachers to the Board of Education - take the lead in restoring vitality in the city’s classrooms.

- The marshalling of increased efforts to exploit the university’s potential for being a principal resource in the city’s business, labor, human services, technology, and government sectors. We must demonstrate how our faculty scholars and experts make CUNY a major economic engine and intellectual resource for solving the problems facing New York City.

For more than 150 years, our university has been a major maker of the city’s history-as vital as our subways, skyscrapers, and that welcoming lady with the tireless right arm who has greeted so many New Yorkers to America.

She greeted me as an 11-years-old orphan from Puerto Rico, and not many years later, they, City College opened its arms to me as well. Together, we can help CUNY continue to serve not only the countless immigrants who have traditionally depended upon it, but any and all who simply possess the desire to learn. If we do our job properly, City University graduates will have a large hand in writing the city’s history in the 21st century.

Herman Badillo was appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The City University of New York on June 1, 1999.
A. RESOLUTION OF REMEMBRANCE AND MOURNING - JOHN F. KENNEDY JR.:  

WHEREAS, John F. Kennedy Jr. was a dear and close supporter of The City University of New York, and  

WHEREAS, John F. Kennedy Jr. founded the Kennedy Fellows Program and Consortium for the Study of Disabilities at CUNY in 1989 as part of the Reaching Up Program, and  

WHEREAS, John F. Kennedy Jr. started the project to assist persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities, as well as the workers at the bottom of the economic ladder who provide them with direct care, and  

WHEREAS, Since then, ten thousand direct care workers have received educational opportunities at CUNY through this program, and  

WHEREAS, The Kennedy Fellows Program provides a $1,000 scholarship per year and career mentoring to direct care staff who are enrolled for at least six (6) degree credits at a CUNY or SUNY school, and  

WHEREAS, Nearly 400 Kennedy Fellows have been accepted into the program and one half have nearly graduated with baccalaureate or master’s degrees and received significant career promotions to positions as teachers, social workers, rehabilitation counselors, residence managers, recreation therapists and agency administrators; another quarter have completed credited certificates or associate’s degrees resulting in important career advances and most of the rest are making steady academic progress, and  

WHEREAS, Kennedy Fellows are already assuming leadership positions in a more diversified workforce, and  

WHEREAS, John F. Kennedy Jr. took a personal interest in the Kennedy Fellows, meeting with them several times a year to talk about issues of concern, which was a source of inspiration and pride for these workers and for all who worked in the program, and  

WHEREAS, John F. Kennedy Jr. treated each person with a transforming respect, kindness and generosity of spirit, and never sought recognition for his work, which will continue to benefit thousands more in the years to come; now therefore be it  

RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees of The City University of New York offer its deepest sympathy to the Kennedy and Bessette families for the tragic and untimely deaths of John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, and her sister Lauren Bessette as we mourn the loss of our loving friend and colleague.
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Welcome to another exciting issue of The Bridge, and a new semester in school. As motivated students, striving for that 4.0 average, we sometimes neglect a healthy balance in life. Regardless if you're an athlete, a typical "gym goer," or interested in fitness, all of us benefit from staying physically and mentally fit. A perfect balance leads to a "perfect self."

What do we picture when we think of the perfect body & mind?

Body training is an art. Art is not only created with paints and clay, but the body as well. In fact, the human body has inspired the magnificent statues of Greek gods having muscular, lean, and proportionate bodies.

We too, can be artists of our own bodies and achieve the ultimate. Our bodies can be molded and shaped, inspired by our thoughts and inner desires to estimate your potential for expansion. You must take a good look at your individual self. Take a good look, really focus on the inside. Go even deeper, find all the things you wish upon. These wishes are a wake up call to our bodies and minds meant to last a lifetime. Your minds are telling you to take care of it. This is a good opportunity to start today.

All of our goals are so different. Some may desire better school grades, to improve communication skills, maybe to become health conscious, maybe to overcome some personal struggle, or a drug/alcohol dependency. These are your goals and your ideas for you to discover the perfect self.

Meeting the challenge to master yourself will be one of the most difficult tasks you'll ever face. Proof of this enormous challenge is visible around you. Keep your eyes open, at the mall, in the hallways of school. You'll see just how difficult a challenge it is. However, when you begin to focus on those who accomplish, you will see what you too can accomplish. It doesn't require a 4.0 student or a super athletic person. It simply requires a wish or goal and some form of dedication from you. We are all, in essence potential champions.
I’m in my mid 20’s and perfectly healthy. How can someone like myself benefit from becoming health conscience?

To: Mid 20’s

This is a perfect age group to become aware and take part in a health conscious lifestyle. You are not only at your physical peak, you also have the potential to begin a process called “preventive maintenance.” This will prepare you for your later years.

I’m a student and I do not have the time to participate in the gym. What can I do?

To: Student

Let’s begin with proper nutritional. This doesn’t take any time, and you are already halfway there. At the gym, you can circuit train. This consists of doing 1 exercise per muscle and cardiovascular exercise. 3 days a week for an hour will be sufficient.

I go to the gym in a regular basis. When I work out I get a lower back pain. Should I stop working out?

To: Concerned Athlete

Have a personal trainer check out your form while you work out. You must have what’s called a neutral posture. This requires you to consume an outward curve in the lower back and a broad chest. Proper posture is important at all times, especially while exercising. You may want to do daily back stretches. If it still continues, see a specialist. Don’t give up.

For other questions and comments regarding health and fitness, I can be reached at “The Bridge” Rm. E324 or e-mailed at robert@josefs.org
Phi Theta Kappa says

LaGuardia Community College suffered a major loss this fall when much admired counselor Mr. Herminio Hernando left to assume a new position at York College/ CUNY in Jamaica, Queens. His absence will leave a void not only in the counseling department but also in the College’s Honor Society – Phi Theta Kappa. Herminio, as he loves to be called, has been involved in many aspects of the college not only as a counselor, but also as coordinator for the Career and Transfer Center, coordinator for the Internship Training Program and faculty advisor to Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. He has also served on several college committees including the Transfer Advisory Committee and Honors Study Program Committee.

In his more than seven years at the college, Herminio has touched the lives of many students, and has been a positive influence in their academic and career decisions. One of the many students counseled by Herminio is a Merrill Lynch Inc. Telecommunications Analyst and LaGuardia alumna, Teresa Figueroa. In her tribute, Ms. Figueroa comments, “When I first started at LaGuardia I was new to the country and did not speak much English. Moreover I was not fully comfortable with the culture, but Herminio had a way of putting me at ease whenever I came to him for help and that was a major difference in my education. I owe a lot to him because he was the person largely responsible for my success, first when I attained my A.S. Degree, second with my BS Degree, and finally with my job at Merrill Lynch.”

Through his commitment to helping students to be adequately prepared for transferring to senior colleges, Herminio was instrumental in reestablishing the now popular annual senior college transfer fair. The transfer fair gives students the opportunity to meet with transfer admissions representatives from senior colleges. The last fair held at LaGuardia on October 6, 1999 was a resounding success as students jammed in the college’s Atrium to get important transfer information from the more than 30 senior colleges represented. The staging of these transfer fairs are important to the students of LaGuardia. According to Herminio, “It is imperative that we give students the opportunity to meet with admissions personnel from the senior colleges. They can learn first hand what is required for transfer. It is also important to get students thinking about transfer early on in their education, ideally during their first semester at the college. The counseling department has been doing a great job in encouraging transfer, especially for incoming freshmen in the New Students Seminar.”

Herminio was also very instrumental in coordinating the reestablishment of the Internship Training Program, which is an internship field site for Human Services and Liberal Arts students.

Mr. Herminio Hernando proudly displays plaque presented to him by the Student Advisory Council at his farewell party.
goodbye to a great leader

As coordinator for the Career and Transfer Center, Herminio worked for many years to oversee the creation of the new One-stop Multimedia Career Computer Lab, consisting of state-of-the-art equipment that allows students to conduct intensive research on careers, as well as transfer and scholarship opportunities. The establishment of the lab is a major enhancement for the Career and Transfer Center. As Herminio points out, "I am excited about the potential of the lab. We have a state of the art facility which will allow students to do career, transfer, and scholarship research and will help the school prepare students to be active learners in all aspects of their education which is essential for the millennium. Moreover, the lab will be staffed by professionals who are knowledgeable about using technology to gather information about careers, transfer, and scholarships." The One-Stop Multimedia Lab puts the Career and Transfer Center at the forefront for career, transfer, and scholarship information at LaGuardia, and will play a vital role in fulfilling the primary mission of the college, which is to graduate and transfer an increasingly higher rate of well-prepared students.

Herminio’s outstanding and admirable contributions to the LaGuardia community have been acknowledged in many circles. Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Paul Arcaio, regards Herminio as an important asset. In his statement, Dr. Arcaio comments, "I know him quite well. Actually, I was on the search committee that hired him. I have worked with him on a number of committees. He was a very hard worker and knowledgeable. He could communicate with students very well. He was committed to helping students. He was a dedicated hard working person. I think we lost an important asset. I am quite sorry to see him go. I have only good things to say about him."

Joanna Sokolowska, advisor at the Career and Transfer Center, secured scholarships and grants to the NYU School of Education that covered almost all her tuition through Herminio’s challenge and support. Ms. Sokolowska points out, "Herminio has been my mentor, counselor, Phi Theta Kappa advisor and lately also a supervisor... Herminio helped me realize my potentials in the occupational sphere [and] opened my eyes to other transfer opportunities besides CUNY. Herminio has the rare ability to put students at ease. His accessibility and flexibility [enticed] many students to come back and follow up their counseling sessions with him. He has always been an exemplary counselor, advisor and co-worker, who was giving the highest quality services to anybody who turned to him for help or advice."

Miriam Fujita, Co-Vice President of Phi Theta Kappa, Student Senator and member of the Student Faculty Review Board, in her contribution to Herminio declares, "LaGuardia has lost an important asset and many students will miss him. He was a sincere and caring person and with his assistance we were nurtured to building strong leadership and communication skills, and also to establish strong fellowship among members of the Honor Society. It is no doubt that he was the best counselor at LaGuardia."

Herminio remains modest despite all his accomplishments and the deep admiration he has earned. To him, these are not just of his own doing, but are a result of a collective effort, as he acknowledges, "I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work in such a fine institution like LaGuardia. My supervisors have been very supportive in all of the projects that I have been involved in and have allowed me to do what I feel I do best, which is to work with students. I have also been fortunate to have worked with colleagues who are consummate professionals and do a superb job assisting students with their education."

We here at LaGuardia Community College remain grateful for his many contributions and will for a long time cherish his passion, dedication, and commitment to his work and to the students of our school. There is no doubt that Herminio will indeed be greatly missed.

As he embarks on a new journey, we wish him every success in all his endeavors.

Dexter H. Brown/Phi Theta Kappa Public Relations Officer/October
A little bit of Razz M’ Tazz

The Razz M’Tazz Mambo/Salsa Club, which is beginning its 3rd semester, is considered to be one of the best clubs that LaGuardia has to offer. For the past two semesters, it has been the largest and strongest club averaging 60 to 75 students on a consistent basis. Sisco Reyes, who is the President and instructor of the club, teaches students basic level and advanced beginner freestyle (shines) and partnering; basic concepts of clave theory; performing and the differences between performance, social dancing, and instructing. Styling for both men and women (men can be sexy too!) and the development of social and professional attitude within the dance culture are also taught. Cisco Reyes is a certified mambo/salsa dance instructor teaching all levels (1-6). He is also a team member of the well-known Razz M’Tazz Dance team which is a professional dance team that tours worldwide consistently and are contracted to perform for many famous and very well known Latino artists as well as being affiliated with RMM Records. Some stars include Ricky Martin, Tito Puente, Celia Cruz, Tito Nieves, Luis Damo, Dream,” and the new and upcoming dance movie (currently entitled) “The Dance Movie” (name soon to change). Cable and TV show appearances include Good Morning America, The Barbara Walters Show, Club View, Sesame Street, The Cuban Cooking Show, Fiesta Tropical, Caliente (includes radio 105.9, TV, and live performances for them), and channels 4, 7, 13, 21, 23, 41, 47, 53, Galavision and Lunavision. The Company has a long history of consistent performances dating back from the late 80’s until currently consisting from La Rueda/Casino (different levels) to Freestyle (shines), partnering and routines. Angel Rodriguez is the president and founder for the Razz M’Tazz Dance Company.
which is going on its 12th year, and is recognized as the number one mambo/salsa dance company in New York. RMT teaches palladium era mambo/salsa style which incorporates a combination of Jazz, Afro-Cuban rhythms and a little of Tango and Hustle. Angel is one of the original remaining members of the old legendary dance group named the “Latin Symbolics” from the 1970’s, who then broke off and formed one of the great teams of the past called “Fire and Ice.” He is known as “The Master of All Trades” being a former Hustle Champion, Cha-Cha, Plena/Bomba, Mambo/Salsa, bachata, merengue, cumbia, and one of the last and original remaining rare “Dojio” Masters (lifts, dips, and tricks).

Angel runs the company with the legendary salsa diva herself, “Addie Rodriguez” (her name speaks for itself). Cisco notes, “It is an honor and a privilege to be a part of the RMT dance team, an instructor, performer, and to just be affiliated with the company and its prestigious well-known reputation.” The Razz M’Tazz Mambo/Salsa Club is the brother to the actual company itself.

Cisco (Francisco Reyes) founded the Razz M’Tazz Mambo/Salsa club in September of 1998 to introduce the basics of Latin dance and its culture to those students of LaGuardia College who could not afford to pay for lessons and/or join the company itself. “Many people want to learn basic dancing skills but can’t afford it, so it pleases me to be the first to offer this experience and a gateway into the Razz M’Tazz company as well through this club,” says Cisco. “People get too caught up with technical propaganda that they forget the reason for joining the club which is to gain basic dance skills and most importantly to have fun. It’s all about having fun and a good time. Don’t get me wrong, there are formats, set systems, basic steps and skills you have to learn plus develop, but you can’t allow yourself to get lost in all that and let that be your priority because your main priority is to have fun.” The club itself has performed many shows here at LaGuardia, for example, the 2nd Annual Spanish Heritage Showcase, the 1st and 2nd Annual Talent night showcase, the Multi-cultural Show and several shows for Student Life and Development and the Center for Leadership as well as Student Government. “This term,” says Cisco, “I plan on having some students ready to perform for this year’s Annual Talent night showcase, so that they may also get a little bit of stage experience.” RMT’s office is located in room M118.

For those who want to have fun and learn basic and advanced beginner dancing skills, come join the Razz M’Tazz Mambo/Salsa club! Special thanks go to all club officers, the Martial Arts Club, Island Paradise Club, S.A.G.A, and most of all to all the students who have worked hard and were dedicated to the club and to learning.
A MESSAGE FROM STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

While some of you may have heard the words “Student Government”, I am sure that many of you have not. So the question arises—what is Student Government? What does student government mean to you? Here at LaGuardia, the Student Government Association is composed of 12 students who are elected during the preceding Spring Semester, and serve in office for one year. This year the members of your student government have dedicated themselves to serving the entire college community. We hope to provide a strong voice on behalf of those issues that are important to our fellow students.

Upon taking office this past July, my fellow members of student government and I have been working on a number of important projects. I am pleased to report that during the three months that we have been in office, we have been able to achieve some very important victories on your behalf.

As a result of many hours of intense research and the hard work of governors, we will shortly receive additional computers in the college’s media lab. We were also able to assist the Bridge Newspaper in finding new office space, which will enable them to continue to produce a high quality student newspaper. I also experienced great personal satisfaction in being able to recognize our 1999 graduation class with a special commemorative pin, which was presented to each member of the class. This was the first time that graduates received this type of recognition from student government.

This past August I was pleased to call together a meeting of our student leadership community to begin to collaboratively plan our programs for the year. We also hosted a farewell reception for Dr. Raymond Bowen, President of the college. In the near future we are planning to invite CUNY Trustee, Herman Badillo, and Chancellor Mathew Goldstein for a roundtable discussion here at LaGuardia. We will also be sponsoring a college-wide voter registration drive. Currently, only 13% of CUNY students vote. Unless we vote, we will continue to be faced with unfair attacks from politicians like Rudy Giuliani.

However, much work remains to be done. The creation of a student lounge is at the top of our agenda for the coming year. We must also press for the creation of additional scholarship opportunities for our students. Finally, we are working hard to obtain additional tutors for our students.

In conclusion, I want to ask for your help. Come to our weekly meetings, and let us know what you are thinking. Remember we are your fellow students, we are here because of you, and we are here to help.

- Shamsul Haque
This past April, the College held its 2nd annual Blood drive in conjunction with Long Island Blood Services. Student Life and Development made arrangements for the drive, which was led by members of Circle K and the college’s Center For Leadership. We had a much better turn out this year, as shown with an increase of 47 more pints this year than last. In fact, we did so well that we won an award for the third highest increase in pints of all colleges involved. Our total number of LaGuardia donors, including students and staff, was 89, meaning we more than doubled what we did last year! On September 1, 1999, I was among three students to receive complimentary tickets to the Alanis Morissette and Tori Amos concert at Jones Beach, where we attended a barbecue and awards ceremony before the show. This year, besides our annual drive in April we would like to have another drive between now and December. As a member of Student Government, I want to announce that the SGA will be sponsoring a blood drive in November, along with Circle K. I encourage everyone to participate. If you can’t donate you can still volunteer to help. One pint of blood can save up to 5 lives, and we are setting a goal this year to double last year’s total of 89. So please help us in our endeavors by donating blood. To find out how to help contact Student Government at (718) 482-5297 or stop by M-160.

Pictured above are from left to right: Jocelyn Iglesias - Student Government Treasurer, Andrew Calder - former President of Circle K, Mark Anderson and Nick Tsirkas of Long Island Blood Services, Anthony Pappas - Club & Ethnic Affairs.
The Bridge F.H. LaGuardia's Independent Student News Magazine invites you to join. Presently we are seeking a student to lead the magazine in the new millennium as Editor-in-Chief. There are other positions available, but without a leader, taking applications for those positions is useless. This individual must have passion, a willingness to learn, a focused mind, and a fondness of hardwork. This job does not pay but it does enrich. If chosen, you will be in charge of the school's only student publication. If you have what it takes, pick up an application in Room M117 or E 324 or see Prof. Terry Cole in the English Department.
I can remember a time when the streets of NYC were covered top to bottom with graffiti. The trains had beautiful artwork all over them. The same went for the train stations. Even in the streets I can remember seeing tons of beautiful pieces all over the place.

Along with this art went the tagging which was just as important to those involved. Tagging was a way of keeping your name out on the streets, just like a company advertises it’s name in order to uphold it’s reputation. But sometime during the 80’s I can remember noticing all the graffiti had begun to disappear. Starting with the transit system, the city began a huge buffing program and began to clean all trains and the stations. Eventually this spread to the streets and before you knew it the war on graffiti, although it hasn’t stopped, was decided. It felt as if the city won, and graffiti had lost.

This diminished the vibe significantly. You began to see less and less pieces. And more of “tags” because they were easier to put up then a “piece”.

So what happened to this controversial form of art? Has it died or is it that it has evolved from the street art to an art form that is beginning to gain acceptance and praise?

This form of art has had a love hate relationship with New York City. It has been aggravating and a problem to those that see it as vandalism. But to those who actually do it, or admire it, it has been a love and passion particularly the younger generation. This is an art form that was spawned from the inner city of NY. It started as a way for these kids to express themselves, and to get their own fame and recognition. Most writers when they begin, have no formal training or schooling. It is pure ambition, and vision of what to create. The only skills are trade secrets passed along or techniques made up and learned through experience.

Armed with these skills and an itch to create, these artists have made thousands of beautiful murals and pieces for everyone to see. While growing up in this city it is hard for anyone to get noticed and this is one way that fame is achieved. As the years have gone by and the war between writers and the “buff” (the city cleaning program) rages on, it seems as though the amount of graffiti has become much smaller because you don’t see it all over the place anymore. Most have stopped or just gave up on the art, while others stick to legal walls or their own personal mediums, such as black books, or canvas. I even began to think that this form of art was on its way to extinction because I didn’t see it, and the vibe wasn’t felt as much as it use to be.

Recently, I started to look around a little closer and take in to account all the things I’ve heard about what’s been going on in the graffiti scene. And I came up with a theory that it’s not so much that it is dying off, its just that the old way is giving way to a new a brighter day for the art form. I mean you have people that are making it their business now to paint murals for money, for stores, TV shows, movies, clothes, signs, album covers, and magazines.

Today you can actually be featured in certain art galleries on canvas. I thought this was amazing: it went from being an illegal form of expression and self-advertising to something that is appreciated, admired and even profitable.

Well, I guess that it’s true that this country is built on advertising, and graffiti is a form of self-advertising. I guess it does pay off to advertise, huh? The other day on some talk show I even saw three “taggers” who were showing what they can do and what they’re about, which is to spread this art around in a positive way. Examples like this are beginning to open people’s eyes to this beautiful art is helping them to understand it better.

This art has even gone international. It is quite active in other countries, which shows that something this wide spread and admired must have a bright future. Great artists were unappreciated in their own time, this is another form of art that I feel is just beginning to get it’s well deserved appreciation. It would be interesting to see how this art will flourish in 50 years. Imagine how people will look back on how the pioneers practiced this form of art. To all those who admire or practice this art, it’s up to us to take it there!
Aerosol Airofsoul Art:
by John Guerrero and Paul Ayestas

How long have you been writing?
Since ’90. About ten years you could say. I’ve been writing before that, yet being serious about piecing- I would say 1990.

How do you feel about the state of graffiti in NYC as compared to when you started?
Piecing has been coming more about than bombing (drawing large works in awkward places), however, more people are noticing the bombing aspect because writers are out with new styles. Letters are clearer and neater, like what ESPO is doing. People are becoming more aware of what writers are doing these days.

What was one of your most memorable experiences while writing?
Well, there was that one time when hitting the 3 yard for Video Graff. No one had been there in over ten years when we hit it, so I was shitting bricks. But once we were in there, we said fuck it - whether you get caught writing or not, you’re still getting arrested. It took two hours to cut through the fences but it was worth it.

What was the worst thing that has ever happened?
I got busted one time on a rooftop on the 7 line. We were videotaping with flashlights, so cops thought we were trying to rob the place. My friend jumped off from the third floor and started to run. We’re chased by fifteen cops with guns drawn. That’s one of the scariest experiences I’ve ever had. It’s an ill feeling when a cop points a gun at you while telling you to get on the ground - for writing graffiti.

Who inspired you to write?
Most of my inspiration came from SANE. He got me into bucket and house paint, and every little thing you could use with hardly any money. However, I look at other artists as well, not just graff artists. Salvador Dali is one example. In turn, I consider myself to be a surrealist graff artist. It’s crazy because I don’t think about the outcome. I just do it, so at the end I ask myself what have I done?

What drives you to create and to continue with this form of expression?
I love to just do. A lot of people don’t understand what I’m talking about, yet regardless of whatever it may be, I’ll just do it. My name is there and people will see it. Most of the time I paint without a sketch, which shouldn’t do, but everything is mostly free-hand. Every time I sketch something, I end up changing it so I just use it as an idea. It depends on how I feel at that moment.

Have you come to find anything positive through graffiti?
If I wasn’t a writer I would have been a criminal. I’d probably be in jail right now. Graff has taken me to a level in which all I want to do is paint. It’s come to the point where this is my life. If I don’t paint today, I’ll paint tomorrow. Regardless, I’m still painting. It keeps me out of trouble, even though it can get me into trouble. It’s ironic. In the end, it’s graffiti, it’s art.

Where do you see the future of graffiti going?
For one thing, rich kids are starting to write and at the same time, are putting
An Interview with Free 5

money into whatever they’re doing; attempting to publicize their name. I’ve seen people actually buy so much paint and do a mural just for themselves.

Back in the day that was unheard of. You steal your paint, you do your shit, and see what comes out. Now everything is getting hi-tech per say. The internet gets you a lot of fame, believe it or not. I just noticed today that I’m up a lot on the internet, yet I never sent out any pictures. I guess other people are sending in pics. I don’t even realize how popular I am. I was in St. Louis one time and these kids came up to me and were like “you’re FREE5!” I’m asking myself, how do you know my face? They wanted me to write on their shirts, skin, it didn’t matter, girls too! I was bugging out. One reason that happened is because of freights. Freight trains travel all throughout the country - Wisconsin, San Francisco, Chicago, and people actually see them.

Fame seems inadvertent. Well, I’m not one to try to stand out, but it happens.

In what direction do want to lead your art in the future?
I want to go mainstream, because everyone needs to make money. I do not want to work a 9-5 doing something I don’t like to do.

I’m trying to get my work in galleries and magazines, whatever will boost my name. I want to earn a living at what I like to do.

So you’re glad to see graffiti commercialize?
I’m really glad to see that graff has been growing. If it stays underground, how far could it go? In the future, graffiti is going to be revered as another movement in art which had it’s period like surrealism or dadaism. Take a look at the gallery scene - PINK, CRASH, LEE, as well as other artists are getting paid for their work on canvas. So why can’t I? Yes, I’m glad it’s going mainstream.

Would you say it’s the fame or the expression in itself that drives you?
I would say both because fame is like coffee; it’s the caffeine that motivates me. Whatever happens, fame or not, as long as I do what I want and get a flick, I’m all right.

Do you have anything to say to those who put down graffiti, stating that it’s vandalism and not art?
Fuck them. I don’t write for anyone else but myself. If you don’t like it just turn your head or change the channel. There’s always going to be someone that puts down graff and that’s because someone wrote on their garage, hallway, or some bullshit like that. Well, that’s life.

For more flicks of Free 5’s work check out our Arts section on pgs. 54-55.
Trend Watch -Fall/Holiday 1999
by Michele Miranda Sison

With the end of the millennium fast approaching, there is a myriad of different styles and looks for everyone to choose from. Menswear and womenswear designers are veering in many different directions these season... This is just a sampling of some “key” trends for Fall-Holiday 1999...

Womenswear is pushed towards its limits these season as designer’s are focusing on individuality. For designers like Armani and Ferré, Luxury, in terms of fabrics like cashmere, leather, camelhair etc. is a major factor to their more traditional yet sophisticated lines. Whereas gray and brown were the “it” non-colors” of seasons past, “Black is Back” is a common re-occurring motif in every collection these Fall Holiday season; but the reemergence of strong color in every shade of green, blue, red and yellow was also prevalent in many lines such as Ralph Lauren and Gucci. Romantic Bohemian looks compliment these new interesting color but also incorporate extremely feminine styling and exotic global details. Embellishment and shine, through the use of beading, glitter, and sequins as well as through fabrications such as iridescent fabrics and holographic fabrics are also key this season from many designers such as Gucci and Dooce & Gabbana; designers such as Donna Karan and Jil Sander take a more futuristic stance in their collections using architecturally shaped silhouettes with high-tech, but luxurious fabrications.

This season marks a rebirth in men’s fashion. Luxury, “Black is back”, and futuristic motifs also work into menswear collections this season. Designers like Paul Smith on the other hand take Swinging Saville Row influences this season with updating sharply tailored suits with unconventional twists (i.e. flashes of color and unconventional tailoring details). Apocalyptic themes fused with futuristic elements through the use of high tech fabrics and closures (i.e. Velcro) are reminiscent of “Mad Max”; this look is about oversized separates, mixing textures, extreme layering, motorcycle and streetwear styling. No matter what fashion path you choose, the bottom line is you make the rules.

Contrary to popular belief, the road to a career as a recording artist did not begin with “Touch Me, Tease Me”, the hit single from the Nutty Professor soundtrack. The vocalist we know today went a long way from singing for family and friends in his parents’ living room at the age of five. As the only son in what he describes as a strict household, Case found prized refuge in singing. It was a talent that created a lifelong bond between him and his father, who also worked for a short time toward a professional singing career. By the time Case reached his teens, his quest to become a singer had far surpassed his mother’s demands that he follow the rules of her house.

Case left home at the age of 17. He began a two-year struggle of life on the lonely streets of New York City, sleeping and eating wherever and whenever he could. He sometimes ate at a friend’s house, only if they had enough food left over for him. “I always wanted to be famous, not necessarily by making a record but by football, baseball or basketball. As I got older, I wanted to sing. I wanted to sing so bad that I was willing to leave everything behind so I could sing. My parents are as stubborn as I am. So I left and had to spend one of the coldest winters in New York City practically living in the streets, often no more than four or five blocks from my parents’ house”, says Case.

At 19 years old, Case returned home, secured a job with the New York City Housing Authority, and spent his nights in the recording studio making demos. He worked as a co-writer behind the scenes and also as a background singer for songs with recording artist
Case’s sophomore album, “Personal Conversation” is a definite improvement from his first self entitled album two years ago. “This album also in lus.

It’s the vision of Case,” says Joseph (Jo-Jo) Brimm, who is the AR Director at Def Jam who worked closely with Case on the album. Case co-wrote all of the songs with several different writers to achieve a variety of sounds and musical textures. Case states, “Personal Conversation, is just that… it’s personal to me. There are no limits to this. I often describe myself as having an old soul because I still love the music of the Gap band, Marvin Gaye, and Stevie Wonder, the stuff they sang back in the day. We will still be listening to their music twenty, thirty years from now. That’s the kind of music I want to make.”

such as Usher, Christopher Williams and Al B Sure.

And now with the release of “Personal Conversation” Case the artist and Case the person have both matured and are ready to fully embrace his career and all the responsibilities that come with stardom. In a word, Case is extremely humble, “In the beginning, I can honestly say that I wasn’t prepared for the money, the perceived power and the other benefits which come along with success in this industry. It was all brand new for me,” Case explains. Since the release of my first album, I’ve had time to see what can happen, what needs to happen and the work that goes into preparing for a long term career. I also appreciate things more like spending time with my son, Little Case. I’ll always appreciate the love my listeners give to me because they’re the reason I’m able to keep doing what I love to do best… Sing.

Case’s sophmore album, “Personal Conversation” is a definite improvement from his first self entitled album two years ago. “This album is by far a better representation of Case, both as an artist and a person. “Personal Conversation” is an entire package of artistry: the look, the sound and the lyrical content. We didn’t work on this album with the idea of just releasing singles, rather we wanted to illustrate a story. It’s the story of a Young Black man in love, out of love, and...
Rocky Road

music column

Hola, my Brothers and Sisters !! Once again its time to review the events of the Last three months in the world of music and nightlife. I am sure all had some fun this summer hopping from club to club or just chilling at home with the Discman on high volume. The past three months have been filled with a lot of great events, like the Player’s Ball sponsored by Hot 97.1, and La Mega 97.9’s own Summer Jam Concert Series. New to my list of things to see is the South Street Seaport concert series. Of course nothing beats the nightlife here in the world’s capital. Where else can you go to one type of club one night and then go to another without leaving the borough you live in?

This past June 30th I attended a press and record pool private party at New York’s Club Monaco, located on west 44th Street in Manhattan, the event featured four of Latin music’s hottest and youngest acts like Aleeo, Mikey Perfecto, Roberto Avellante and Corrine, who with her sultry voice and sweet smile will warm your heart and capture your soul.

TiTo Nieves “El Paparratzi de la Salsa” new album was released early this summer entitled “Clase Aparte” and contains two very great songs “Mas” and also “Le gustan que lavean” His party was held in may at Victors’s Café (great food and excellent environment).

Summer Jam Concert Series was brought to us by La Mega 97.9 and, believe or not, the NYPD were held all over the city, for example in Hyland Park in Brooklyn and Flushing Meadow Corona Park in Queens. Featured artist like the Hermanos Rosario, DLG, Elvis Crespo, San Cocho, and Fulanito, performed.

As I sit here in my studio just remembering the last summer of the century, stop and wonder how music will shape society in the next millennium. We only have to wait and see What the y2k has in store for us. Till next time see you on the dance floor !!!! CHECK OUT: WWW.LARITMO.COM and read Factoria de Sonido magazine.

Djrocky1@starmedia.com

Peace love n happiness
D.J. Rocky
Soon you'll be listening to WLGC, LaGuardia Community College Radio, the radio station that reaches out and touches you. I'm sure the common response to reading that statement is, "What radio station?" Surprisingly, there actually is a radio station here in LaGuardia. The reason you never heard it is because it's been off the air for a little more than two years now. The reason for this situation is unclear, some of the speculation is that there was a fire that damaged some equipment, or the radio station itself was moved and with the bureaucratic nature of a city colleges it seems to take forever and a day for anything to get done. But all the equipment has been fixed or replaced and the red tape circumvented and this semester WLGC will finally be on the air again. When, exactly, has not yet been determined yet but as the station declares, its slogan will be to "reach out and touch" in the very near future. WLGC only broadcasts within the college, so don't start scanning your radio dial looking for it. It will broadcast in general spaces such as cafeterias and lounges. The programming will consist of a combination of college news and all types of music. The music will try to reflect the diversity of our student body. It is completely run by LaGuardia students and faculty.

If you're interested in getting further involved or would like further information you can contact Allan Scribner in the Office of Student Life and Development.

Victor Magnus Sanchez
10/21/99

Readings for writers
by Chanita Williams

For the past 23 years, literature aficionados have gathered at Queens College to experience the Queens College Evening Readings Program, a program designed with the interests of readers and writers (professional and amateur) in mind. Directed by faculty member Joe Cuomo, the program originally began as small community of writers whom met periodically to discuss and share a common appreciation of literature. Since then, it has grown from a handful of supporters to a large group—sometimes exceeding over 250 participants—which meets to hear readings from group members, students, and novelists.

As an added treat to its members, the program also features readings from renowned authors. Past speakers include playwright Arthur Miller, Nobel Prize winner Shane Mastini and author Joyce Carol Oates. The abundance of literary talent and its artistic atmosphere make the Queens College Evening Readings program an excellent forum for the reader who wants to engage in conversation with his or her favorite writer.

Ushering in its prolific 24th season, the program will feature readings from Martin Luther King Jr. Award winner, Carol Phillips, essayist Peter Carey and author Norman Rush. Joe Cuomo invests countless hours and an immeasurable amount of effort to bring this outstanding program to the Queens community. It is open to students, readers, writers and anyone who wants to enjoy a good read. If you would like a schedule of upcoming events, please call (718) 997-4646 for more information.
Queens College
EVENING READINGS
1999-2000

A Roundtable on the Art of Writing

October 13

E. L. Doctorow • Arthur Miller • Joyce Carol Oates

Wednesday, October 13 — Admission $5

November 2

Jamaica Kincaid
November 2 — Admission $5

January 25

V. S. Naipaul
January 25 — Admission $5

February 28

Susan Sontag
February 28 — Admission $5

March 21

Phillip Lopate
March 21 — Admission $5

An exhibition of material from his novel, "The Realistic Path," will be installed in the Leslie-Lohman Museum.

A Roundtable on the Art of Writing

April 11

Peter Carey • Caryl Phillips • Norman Rush

April 11 — Admission $5

Tuesdays 7pm

Music Building

Concert Hall • Free with CUNY Student ID • (718) 997-4636

To order season tickets: (718) 793-8080
FREE 5

This very talented and unique artist has artwork that can be seen all over the city. His art work is unique in the sense that his pieces are so very different from each other. Each one is has a completely different flavor from the last. His use of colors, pictures within pictures, and touch of surrealism bring his paintings to life. Which makes it all the more worth it to go and check it out. So if you see one, stop for a minute and give it a look and you'll see why The Bridge gives him dap.

One of his latest works can be seen at 47th Avenue and 36TH Street in Queens.
Do I make you horny, CUNY?

Yeah, Baby!