Dr. Gail O. Mellow Named New President

Dr. Gail O. Mellow, president of Gloucester County College in Sewell, New Jersey, who for 20 years has been involved with two-year college education, has been appointed LaGuardia's third president. The action came on April 24 at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of The City University of New York. The appointment is effective August 1.

"I am delighted that Dr. Gail Mellow will be joining this great university," Chancellor Matthew Goldstein said at the trustees' meeting. "LaGuardia has an extraordinary history and an even more splendid future. "I could not think of anybody who can navigate its future better than Dr. Mellow."

No Stranger to LaGuardia

Her long association with two-year institutions runs the full spectrum—from student and faculty member to provost and president. "As a community college graduate, I know what it takes to work, go to college, take care of my daughter, and still graduate with honors," said President Designate Mellow, who received her associate's degree in liberal arts from Jamestown Community College in New York. "The doors of opportunity were opened to me through the community college."

The appointee is no stranger to LaGuardia. In 1996 she assumed the one-year post of senior administrator for curriculum and pedagogy before leaving to fill the presidential post at Gloucester.

"LaGuardia Community College is one of the brightest stars in the community college galaxy," said President Designate Mellow. "With the new chancellor at the helm and the outstanding quality of LaGuardia's faculty and staff, the college is poised to become the 21st century flagship community college. Through its cooperative education and non-credit and business development programs, LaGuardia is an integral part of the economic fabric of the Queens community."

President Designate Mellow added: "The diverse student population makes one realize that America goes to college at LaGuardia, with all the promise of her dreams and the struggle of her challenges. I am honored to join with LaGuardia's proud tradition of innovation, and to serve as a part of the great City University of New York."

Dr. Mellow takes over the position from Interim President Roberta S. Matthews, who has served in the post since September 1999, following the retirement of President Raymond C. Bowen.

"LaGuardia Community College is indeed fortunate to have as its new president a nationally recognized leader with a long commitment to the multiple missions of the community college," said Interim President Matthews. "President Designate Mellow will find a college community eager to work with her to meet the challenges ahead."

A Community College Graduate

Dr. Mellow’s affiliation with community colleges began as a student at Jamestown Community College where she received an associate’s degree in liberal arts. She went on to receive her bachelor’s degree from The State University of New York at Albany, and her master’s degree and doctorate from George Washington University.

A Professional and Public Leader

Her career in community college education began in 1976 when she became an assistant professor at Essex Community College in Maryland. She left in 1984 to serve as the assistant director at the University of Connecticut's Women's Center. Two years later she became the center's director. In 1989 President Designate Mellow moved on to Quinebaug Valley Community College in Connecticut, where she secured the post of academic dean. During her five years there she also served as its acting president. In 1994 she went to Rockland Community College where she served as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs until she left to fill the LaGuardia position.

Dr. Mellow has played an active role in workforce development, serving in multiple capacities in Connecticut and New Jersey to support economic development initiatives. She currently holds leadership positions with the American Association for Higher Education and the American Council on Education.

She is active in community and charitable organizations in New Jersey. Dr. Mellow has an extensive record of scholarly publications, with an emphasis on equity and community college education.
President Matthews Clarifies Strategic

With all the splash of a well-planned advertising campaign, Interim President Roberta S. Matthews gave an official update of the college’s strategic planning campaign.

Aided by a slide show and informational brochures that were handed out to the 200 faculty and staff members who attended the spring instructional staff meeting, President Matthews presented a clear, detailed report of the college’s bold plan to create and implement a strategic plan and combine it with an outcomes assessment process.

“The strategic plan will enable LaGuardia to anticipate its most important challenges over the next five years and will specify a systematic approach to address those challenges, consistent with the college’s mission,” said President Matthews. “The outcomes assessment plan will permit the college to evaluate whether it is achieving its programmatic and institutional goals.”

Giving impetus to the campaign is the college’s impending Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools’ self-study and evaluation. The accreditation agency now requires that all colleges have an outcomes assessment plan in place and demonstrate that the plan is being implemented.

“Nothing stops the Middle States calendar,” said President Matthews. “We have engaged, we are dancing, and we will go to the end of the set.”

The appointment of a new president, she assured, will also not stop the process.

The dance with Middle States began in November when Cliff Clarke, associate dean of Institutional Planning, and Professor Lenore Beaky, chairperson of the Middle States self-study, attended an institute for colleges doing their self studies and preparing for the Middle States visit. Subsequently, three committees were established—the Core Group, Steering Committee, and Working Groups. The Core Group is responsible for setting the agenda and supervising the work of the Steering Committee, which is made up of the heads of each of the 17 Working Groups. The Working Groups comprise the foot soldiers who do the actual work.

“Middle States will want to see that we are fulfilling our obligations to our students and meeting our goals as an educational institution,” said President Matthews. “They will want to see that we have established planning and outcomes assessment systems to help shape our future and to know whether we are succeeding in our goals.”

In addition to helping the college evaluate student learning and adjust what it does to make sure that superior learning is occurring, the president cited another reason for getting a plan in place. “There is a pressing need for us to define who we are, what we do and how we should be evaluated. If we do not do it, others will.”

Aware that the college has made two prior attempts at getting a strategic plan off the ground, President Matthews asked the Office of Communications to develop a full-fledged advertising campaign that would stress the

(Continued on next page)

Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce Unveils New Headquarters at the College

Members of the Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce and LaGuardia Community College gathered around Queens Borough President Claire Shulman as she cut the ceremonial ribbon to officially unveil the chamber’s new offices at the college.

“This space will allow us to develop and promote programs that will help us to better serve the communities’ businesses and residents,” said Luke Adams, executive director of the chamber, at the March 27th event.

This is the first official home of the nonprofit organization, which for the past 52 years has played an integral role in the commercial and residential vitality of Sunnyside, Long Island City, and Woodside. The

donated space, located in the main building, permits the chamber to conduct business in a three-office suite.

After Borough President Shulman cut the ribbon, Mr. Adams praised her for her long-standing support of the chamber. To show the chamber’s appreciation, Buster Sabba, the chamber president, presented her with an original watercolor by Simon Dorakian, a local artist.

LaGuardia then took the opportunity to recognize the borough president who has been one of the college’s strongest advocates. “We want to thank you for being our friend for so many years,” said Roberta S. Matthews, the interim president, “and for continuing to be our friend.”

President Matthews then presented the borough president with a framed collage of photographs that shows her at a number of college events that span over 20 years. “It is a walk down memory lane,” said the president as Ms. Shulman looked over the images.

During the ceremony, Mr. Adams also thanked the college for “generously donating the space.”

At the ceremony, Interim President Roberta S. Matthews presents a collage to Queensboro President Claire Shulman.

With the chamber and college now under the same roof, Mr. Adams said that the two will be engaging in a variety of joint ventures. Through one initiative, which is already in place with the college’s cooperative education program, Mr. Adams has hired two college interns to assist him in the management of the office and the creation of the chamber’s new website.

“The college has always supported the chamber’s efforts,” said President Matthews, “and we look forward to expanding the relationship and to developing projects that will benefit the chamber as well as the college and its students.”
Planning with a Bold Plan and Creative Campaign

(Continued from previous page)

importance of the project. A ten-page, full-color brochure entitled “Excellence by Design: The Strategic Planning Process Explained” was produced, which gives a simple but complete explanation of the strategic planning process, including an outcomes assessment component, and the relationship of both initiatives to the Middle States self-study. The brochure was highlighted in large posters that featured such great Americans as George Washington, Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Sojourner Truth, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Neil Armstrong. The posters’ tagline read: “A great venture needs a clear plan.” In the days before the March 22 meeting, the posters were located throughout the college, announcing the plan. Supplementing the brochure and posters was a little dictionary-type publication called “Cliff Notes” that defines the common terminology used in strategic planning and outcomes assessment. Both publications were composed by an all-college Coordinating Committee convened by President Matthews to coordinate the planning, assessment, and self-study processes, and to facilitate communication and understanding about the three initiatives among the college community.

To get to where the college is now, Dean Clarke has been leading the charge. Since spring, 1999 he has been working with scores of people in academic departments and divisions, guiding them through the process of defining their missions and developing their individual goals and strategies, all of which must reflect and inform the mission and goals of the college.

As it embarks on the two-year process of self study, the president said the college has in place a newly approved mission statement, which indicates the primary emphases of the college in simple, concise, and straightforward language. “It provides the basis for the college’s strategic planning process,” said President Matthews.

The Excellence by Design brochure lists the college’s planning initiative’s seven strategic directions:

- teaching and learning excellence;
- management excellence;
- financial strength;
- enrollment management;
- workforce, economic and community development; and
- diversity and pluralism.

The college will focus on them for the next five years. The president explained that within the framework of the strategic directions, a strategic plan, as well as a plan for assessing institutional outcomes, have been created. She went on to say that a document stating the college’s goals in each of the seven areas, along with a list of general strategies that will be implemented throughout the college to achieve each one, has been circulated.

“This is an all-college document that will then go to departments, programs, and areas within division for development of their action plans that will support college-wide priorities,” said President Matthews.

In discussing how the college will assess its effectiveness, President Matthews said core indicators endorsed by the American Association of Community Colleges will be adopted. They will measure student progress, workforce development, general education, transfer preparation, developmental skills, and outreach.

The college, she said, has also identified seven core competencies expected to be developed in all students, which represent aspects of student learning that will be evaluated in the outcomes assessment process. Three core competencies have received final approval for development by the academic division, while the other four are expected to be reviewed and approved in the coming semesters.

Time-tables for the incorporation of core competencies throughout the curriculum are part of the college’s outcomes assessment plan, and have been included in the Middle States self-study design.

President Matthews pointed out that another aspect of student learning that will be evaluated as part of outcomes assessment is learning in major and other programs. She noted that the development of learning goals stated as student competencies is expected to begin in all programs immediately.

“Outcome assessment strategy is an opportunity: it’s all about students learning,” said the president. “Outcomes assessment asks a simple question: ‘How do we know that our students are learning what we think they are learning and that, as a result of that learning, they can do what we assume they can do?’

The answer, the president noted, does not lie exclusively in the academic areas, but in an all-campus experience that includes any structured learning experience.

During this entire self-study process, President Matthews stressed that the entire college population will be involved.

“Ultimately, vice presidents will be accountable for movement towards accomplishment of goals in their areas and the Cabinet will play a role in facilitating the strategic plan and priority setting and achieving process,” she said. “But you as individuals need to participate, and if the process in your division is not inclusive, work to make it one. Ideally, as the institution moves towards a shared sense of goals and outcomes and everyone embraces those values and the strategies that will accomplish them, everything that happens at the college will contribute toward the achievement of shared goals.”
LaGuardia Holds Birthday Bash for Former Mayor Abraham Beame

Over 130 admiring guests, including former Mayor David Dinkins, Borough Presidents Claire Shulman of Queens and Howard Golden of Brooklyn, Speaker of the New York City Council Peter Vallone, and City University Chancellor Matthew Goldstein came out to celebrate the 94th birthday of former Mayor Abraham Beame.

They all came to honor, celebrate, and pay tribute to a man who enjoyed a long and distinguished career in public service.

Mayor Beame joined the city government in 1946 when Mayor William O'Dwyer appointed him assistant budget director. He went on to serve as budget director, and comptroller for two terms under Mayors Robert F. Wagner and John V. Lindsay, before being elected in 1973 as the city's 104th mayor.

At the party, an exhibit on the mayor allowed guests to read about the only immigrant mayor who rose from the impoverished neighborhood of New York's Lower East Side to the highest office in city government. Others poured over a showcase that displayed wonderful pieces of memorabilia that the mayor donated to the archives. At one point, the mayor was enthusiastically telling a group of guests the story behind the oversized boxing glove that was personally signed and presented to him in 1976 by Mohammad Ali. He playfully put up his fists in a boxer's stance and showed how he duked it out with the world champ.

During the tribute, Speaker Vallone recalled a courageous leader who did not surrender to the financial woes that hit the city. "Through the most difficult period that I have ever seen, he stood up and fought back. He was the one who laid the foundation for our city."

As he looked out at the man whom he referred to as his 'mentor,' Speaker Vallone added: "I hope as history is being written it recognizes that no one has ever served our city better, more faithfully, more dedicated, than Mayor Beame."

In his remarks, Chancellor Matthew Goldstein of the City University of New York, pointed to two events the mayor launched that contributed to the city's turn around: the Democratic National Convention and the Bicentennial Celebration.

"Abe changed the conversation about New York," said Chancellor Goldstein, "by steering us through the troubled times of the 1970s, bringing the 1976 Democratic National Convention, and the nation's Bicentennial Celebration home to the intellectual and cultural heart of the nation—right here in New York."

"Through those two events, Abe Beame turned the city around in terms of the way it was perceived," said Dr. Richard K. Lieberman, the director of the archives, which organized the party. "A mayor cannot control the stock market, but what a mayor can do—what Fiorello H. LaGuardia did during the Depression and what Abe Beame did in the 70s—is change the way people perceive New York."

In looking back at his mayoralty, Mayor Beame also described those two events as the highlights. "My proudest year as mayor was 1976. First, because I was able to get the Democratic National Convention to come to New York for the first time in 50 years. Second, it was the year of the Bicentennial."

The college and the mayor established a relationship in the mid-1990s when he donated his personal papers, photographs, and artifacts from the 1880s through the 1990s. There is also an oral history collection made up of more than 30 associates and contemporaries of the mayor.

"We are very happy that the mayor has agreed to share his legacy by depositing his papers here," said Borough President Shulman. "Leaving the papers here means that the city's future leaders can learn from the experiences of Mayor Beame."
LaGuardia Teams Up with Business To Support High-Tech Entrepreneurs and College Programming Efforts

To arm fledgling high technology companies with the business strategies needed to succeed in today's highly competitive economy, LaGuardia and members of Long Island City's industry-support business and financial communities held a conference that explored e-commerce and other strategic growth issues of the digital economy.

LaGuardia, Citibank, The Chase Manhattan Bank, and Con Edison Communications put together a comprehensive program where over 170 new digital economy entrepreneurs, established companies with plans to venture onto the Internet, and college staff heard from experts in the fields of human resources, marketing, real estate, and finance/venture capital.

"The conference," said Interim President Roberta S. Matthews to the attendees who gathered at the Con Edison Learning Center in Long Island City, "is an exciting venue for established and early-stage technology entrepreneurs to meet with acknowledged industry experts to gain valuable insights into access to capital and strategies for growth."

Sharing their expertise were Pete Wills, president and chief operating officer of PSINet, Inc., who was the keynote speaker, and representatives from Viant, Inc., VastVideo.com, NYC Investment Fund, Citibank, and Chase. PSINet has announced plans to open a 400,000-square-foot facility in Long Island City for 450 employees.

The participants also learned how Long Island City, which was recently designated as a Technology District by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, could provide them with a full range of valuable site-related resources.

"Long Island City is a logical site for a high-tech district," said Gayle Baron, executive director of the Long Island City Business Development Corporation, who pointed out its close proximity to Manhattan, its abundant and affordable space, and its easy access to all modes of public transportation.

"The mayor's action cements New York City's grip on the new media industry."

For businesses opting to settle in the area, Ms. Baron added that the area's education and business organizations would serve as prominent support networks for their operations.

David Brause, vice president of Brause Realty, spoke of the company's ambitious plans to renovate the 400,000-square-foot Bridge Plaza Tech Center for high tech industry. With plans to have its plug'n'go building (wired for Internet and e-commerce applications) ready for occupancy by next September, Mr. Brause assured the guests that "Long Island City is an excellent place to do business."

President Matthews told the audience that the college has been a leader in the economic development of Western Queens and is an "educational and training resource for business."

One way LaGuardia can immediately help growing businesses, she said, was through the cooperative education program, which can provide them with skilled student interns. "Our nationally acclaimed cooperative education internship program," President Matthews said, "ensures that our course and training content is relevant and current. Our faculty and staff are in continuous contact with the corporate community to review course content, and form advisory committees to keep current with the rapidly changing pace of technology."

She also pointed to the LaGuardia Urban Center for Economic Development, which designs custom training in quality management, computing, and telecommunications.

With a strong focus on reaching out to this new industry, Jack Rainey, the college's director of Business Partnerships, said that the college is in the process of collecting work force and economic data on the new economy firms in Queens.

"The college," he said, "will use this data, along with the data collected from conference attendees, to support curricula development efforts, advance experiential learning opportunities, and to custom design entrepreneurial support programs to meet the needs of the digital economy."

One of the strategies for growth panelists was T. J. Walker, founder and president of NewsBoom.com, a multimedia news site launched this past May, who gave the entrepreneurs some firsthand advice.

On obtaining capital, "Put in your own (Continued on page 10)
Technology Enters the Classroom

The Division of Information Technology is involved in several projects that will bring media technology and distance learning to the classroom.

According to Ken McCollum, vice president of the division, the college has embarked on three major initiatives:

- the delivery of traditional forms of multimedia to the classroom through technology;
- the introduction of two-way interactive video conferencing; and
- the creation of on-line courses.

"The expansion of technology into the classroom," said Dr. McCollum, "will provide faculty with a powerful teaching tool that will enrich the students' learning experience."

Dr. McCollum said the CUNY Network Media Distribution System, which was connected to the college last year, is enabling the college to bring technology resources, such as slides, videotapes, laser disk, to seven designated classrooms: E-229, E-232, E-242, E-256, E-500, C-104, and C-217. When the work is completed this summer, he said, the classrooms, which will be equipped with one monitor and one mobile camera, will enable professors to engage their students in interactive video conferencing.

This technical innovation will also dramatically change the method by which professors get such instructional tools as slides, videos, and CD-ROMS to their classes. For example, a professor who wishes to present a slide show of impressionist paintings on a certain day will contact the head-end room, the repository that houses racks of multimedia. On the day of the request, the teacher will be able to direct his or her students to the video monitor located in the front of the room, turn on the machine, and with a remote in hand, control the images on the screen.

"This simplifies the process and makes the resources much more available," said Dr. McCollum, who noted that the media roll carts used to carry VCR or slide carousels from classroom to classroom will become a thing of the past.

The vice president explained that the multimedia distribution system also contains a video-conferencing system (located in room M-419), which enables two-way interactive video communication between multiple sites.

Since its installation, Robert Monegro, technical resource manager for distance learning, said the college has set up numerous two-way satellite conference events, the majority of which have been within CUNY.

He pointed out that the room has also been used for two-way interactive classroom instruction. One area that has taken advantage of the technology is the Program for Deaf Adults. Last February, Professor Sue Livingston conducted a two-way interactive seminar on the methodology of teaching deaf students and the importance of using American Sign Language with 18 graduate students from Lamar University in Texas.

The conference went extremely well," said Professor Livingston who is already planning to conduct a three-way conference this fall with Lamar, Kansas School for the Deaf, and the New Mexico School for the Deaf.

To further increase the college's two-way video-conferencing capacity, the division is in the process of wiring and equipping rooms E-242 and E-500. According to Mr. Monegro, the conference rooms will be "full-blown," two-way video-conferencing facilities with four monitors, two video cameras, a document camera, and an interactive whiteboard.

"The integration of the multimedia distribution system and video conferencing technology," said the vice president, "creates a unique, interactive, real-time instructional environment that is designed to serve the needs of students, faculty, and community members in the 21st century."

Dr. McCollum said that another site where technology and teaching will be integrated, is the college's new I-net distance learning classroom, which is presently under construction. He said the high-tech classroom, located on the fifth-floor of the E-building, will target high schools such as neighboring Aviation High School. Also, arrangements have been made with various government agencies, such as the Department of Transportation, which will use the facilities to connect with other transportation agencies.

The vice president noted that still another way that the college is exploiting technology to enhance learning, is through the offering of on-line courses.

"The college realizes that to remain competitive," said Dr. McCollum, "it has to provide its students with this educational option."

Interim President Roberta Matthews has established a committee headed by Dr. McCollum and Sulema Ebrahim, associate dean of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, to identify traditional courses to be offered on-line and how they should be presented.

For professors who are interested in developing their own on-line course, Mr. Monegro noted that the college has the software program Blackboard, which allows instructors to develop their own on-line course. Already, Professor Lorence Long of Human Services has developed a course that he is testing in his classroom.

According to Dr. McCollum, the college sees the offering of on-line courses as an ideal way to provide students with more scheduling options. "We are serving a large non-traditional student population that struggles with ways to schedule college classes around work and personal obligations," he said. "The introduction of structured on-line courses would help alleviate this problem."

"The traditional classroom is not going away," said Dr. McCollum, "but on-line courses are going to be viewed more and more as viable options."

Gates Foundation Donates Books to Library

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recently donated to the college library a set of books written by some of America's greatest writers.

The 41 volumes, which are from The Library of America series, include the works of such important American writers of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries as W.E.B. DuBois, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, Robert Frost, William Faulkner, and John Steinbeck.

LaGuardia was among 120 historically and predominately black colleges in the nation to be chosen as a recipient. The gift is intended to help address the precarious state of many black college libraries.

"The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is (Continued on back page)
Richard K. Lieberman Honored for Commitment to Public Service

Dr. Richard K. Lieberman, a professor and historian who has imparted his passion for history beyond the college campus to all New Yorkers, received the Sloan Public Service Award from the Fund for the City of New York for his extraordinary public service.

The professor of history and the director of the college's LaGuardia and Wagner Archives—a repository viewed as the country's leading urban archive and the only mayoral archives in the nation—was honored for doing his job "with ingenuity, energy and compassion."

In presenting the award, Dr. Mary McCormick, president of the Fund, noted the words of one of Dr. Lieberman's colleagues who said: "He is a person who upholds the highest scholarly standards and stands for the best in public education."

The award was presented to Dr. Lieberman and six other city employees at a formal ceremony on March 14. Each awardee received $7,500.

"For 27 years the Fund for the City of New York's Public Service Awards Program has been honoring outstanding civil servants whose work performance and commitment to the public transcend not merely the ordinary but the extraordinary," said Dr. McCormick. "In honoring these winners, we also acknowledge the contributions of the many thousands of dedicated public servants who, with integrity and devotion, perform the work that keeps this complex city running."

The Fund for the City of New York is a private operating foundation launched by the Ford Foundation in 1968 with the mandate to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers. The Fund achieves this mission by being responsive to the problems of New York City and to opportunities to improve the performance of its government and nonprofit agencies.

At a college reception held in his honor, Dr. Lieberman told a group of invited guests: "You cannot imagine how much fun and how easy it has been at LaGuardia. LaGuardia is, and remains, a petri dish for creativity."

Since joining the faculty in 1972, Dr. Lieberman has been inspired to present the history of New York City in creative ways. For example, as a way to show students that ordinary citizens play an integral role in the city's history, the students were sent into the community where they garnered

(Continued on page 10)

At a small college reception for Dr. Richard K. Lieberman, Professor Brian Gallagher gave the following speech:

"We are honoring Richard Lieberman today, it seems to me, precisely because he is not a man of his times, times in which it often appears, to quote Yeats' millenial phrasing, "The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of a passionate intensity." At a political moment when meanness and spite often rule the process, Richard stands out, unabashedly, as a generous soul. At a cultural moment when a fatuous Social Darwinism is again rearing its ugly head, Richard shines forth as a passionately democratic educator. At a social moment when greed—often greed writ large—serves as a credo, if not an ethic, for many, Richard remains stalwart as a self-sacrificing public servant.

I have known Richard Lieberman for a quarter-century and have, with the greatest pleasure, worked very closely with him for the last fifteen years. During that time he has directed, with superb grace and energy, the development of the archives into a major historical resource of this city (and, indeed, of this nation), always with the aim of sharing its resources with a wide variety of users, from classes of fourth-graders to eminent scholars, from undergraduates to documentary filmmakers. The archives is also a stimulating educational place, with dozens of projects created by a splendid staff under Richard's direction, projects which go a fair way towards insuring that the archives' users don't fall victim to Santayana's warning that "those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it." The archives is the pride of our institution.

Richard's book, Steinway and Sons, is an outstanding piece of historical scholarship, sublime in its analysis, graceful in its writing. Making use of extensive Steinway material in the archives, he has combined musical, performance, cultural, political and economic history to create a compelling Familien.geschichte (i.e., family history), as the German translation so aptly, if not so melodiously, reworks the book's title. Steinway and Sons is also, as only the best scholarship can be, an absorbing "read," thick with drama and peopled by Dickens-like characters.

(Continued on page 9)
A Repertory actor shows students how to find their “voice” during a two-day workshop at the college.

The nationally acclaimed classical theater company took scenes from several Shakespearean plays as well as the Greek tragedy “Medea” to show students just how accessible and contemporary these works really are. The plays also served as springboards for actively involving students in materials related to such fields as business, psychology, speech, and the social sciences.

“This was an exciting opportunity to expose as many students as possible to the classical theater,” said Interim President Roberta S. Matthews, who noted that over 400 college and high school students participated in the workshops. “And at the same time they saw first-hand how theater is relevant to all academic areas.”

For the 30-year-old Off-Broadway company, the two-day residency was part of its Theater in the Classroom program, an educational outreach project.

“Many of LaGuardia’s students do not have much interaction with classical theater,” said Elise Stone, an actress who participated in the workshops. “Through these workshops, we hope to demystify it and show the students that they can be active participants.”

In designing the four tailor-made workshops, the actors met with participating faculty members to learn about the students’ wants and needs. “The actors were very sensitive to the instructors’ wishes and put together very specific programs,” said the president.

In one workshop, the troupe performed monologues from various plays to show students how actors prepare their voices for the spoken word. The students then got their chance to “try on” voices while reading selections of familiar texts.

The whole of theater-making was explored in another workshop. Here actors used “Medea” to take the students through the collaborative process of developing a character in literature and bringing it to life on the stage.

“By using this play, we brought in all the people that it takes to make a play—actors, directors, producer—and demonstrated how they work collaboratively from its conception to the actual production,” said Ms Stone.

“This lesson is a cross-over application in any endeavors the students will pursue.”

In another workshop, by taking the students through rehearsals of two Shakespearean plays, the troupe explored the clues that a playwright gives actors and the way the physical staging of a play can reveal its action. As the novice actors went through the “first rehearsal” of several scenes, they learned how the director guides the actors to make choices in their body positions and physical relationships to reveal the values in the text.

“How to make literature come alive” was the topic of another workshop. Actors did this by taking materials that students were studying in class and conducting a reading where the characters find the “voice.”

The college collaboration is just one of many programs that helps the theatrical company solidify its reputation as a leader in educational outreach. Its Student Matinee Series, which is the oldest operating program of its kind in New York City, has introduced tens of thousands of students to classical theater. And the Cocteau Repertory’s Audience Diversity Development Outreach program provides discounted tickets and free transportation for clients of social service agencies and members of community centers from the five boroughs.

Jolie Garrett as Jason and Elise Stone as Medea brought Euripides’ classic play to life for a standing-room-only audience in the Mainstage Theatre.
LaGuardia Receives Grant to Offer Classes to Inmates

Answering the need to provide educational opportunities to inmates detained in New York City's correctional facilities, LaGuardia is offering a host of academic and vocational classes in ten jails.

Funded by a $2.6 million New York City Department of Corrections grant, the two-year program is built on the philosophy that by improving the basic educational skills of inmates recidivism will be reduced.

“LaGuardia has a strong record of success in helping inmates become productive members of society,” said Sam Farrell, program director of LaGuardia’s program. “Our program shows the adults in the right direction.”

The Department of Corrections strongly believes that it is important to offer programs that develop and improve the basic education skills needed by an ex-offender to successfully re-enter the community and the workplace,” said Farrell.

Studies support the link between correctional education and reduction of recidivism. A 1992 report from the New York Correctional Service, for example, stated that 24 colleges and universities throughout the state provided college programming for approximately 3,500 inmates in 66 correctional institutions. Of the inmates who earned a college degree while incarcerated, 26 percent were returned to prison, compared with the 45 percent who were returned from New York State’s general prison population.

Since the college's program began in November of 1998, adults in the participating facilities—six sites at Rikers Island and the borough detention houses in Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx, and Manhattan—have eagerly volunteered to enroll in one of the nine-hour courses that focus on basic education, high school equivalency preparation in English and Spanish, and college preparatory. Also offered are vocational training classes in custodial maintenance and computer office skills. Culinary arts and a journalism course are offered through the Osborne Association, a subcontractor with extensive experience in the jails.

“More than 50 percent of all inmates in New York City jails do not have a high school diploma or its equivalency and a significant proportion read English below the sixth grade level,” said Mr. Farrell. “This program offers them the opportunity to improve their reading, math, writing, and oral communication skills, and to prepare for the high school equivalency exam as well as to strengthen their readiness to obtain employment, and to obtain vocational skills.”

On any given day, more than 500 inmates at the ten centers gather their books and go to class where for three hours they are simply referred to as ‘students.’

“How we gauge the program’s success is by class attendance,” said Janet Cyril, the administrative director. “Virtually every classroom at every facility is full, and, in some instances, classes are over-flowing.”

The class most in demand is the GED prep class where Francisco Torres, the assistant director, said that of the results received so far, more than 160 students have passed the GED examination.

While the college is providing a valuable service to this community, Ms. Cyril said that it recognizes the limits in serving adults who can be in a class one day and scheduled for trial or reassigned to another facility the next.

“The majority of the inmates are detained at these facilities for only a short time while awaiting trial or bail,” said Ms. Cyril. “Because of rapid turnover, we see our program as helping to motivate people, engage them, and awaken their interests in continuing their education. Certainly, while there are some students who have been with us for a period of time and have made some concrete gains in skills, we also have students who have been there for a very short time but whose interest is rekindled in continuing their education through the class and contact with teachers.”

Mr. Farrell noted that one way the college attempts to provide guidance and direction to those who have been released is through CUNY Catch, a transitional service for inmates. Through this program, counselors are available to advise adults on educational and vocational opportunities, to provide personal and family counseling, and to offer employment and housing assistance.

“We see CUNY Catch as a bridge between jail and the community,” said M. Farrell who noted that Bronx Community College and Medgar Evers College also participate in the program, which is coordinated by LaGuardia’s John Chiarkas.

Last year the three colleges provided on-campus services to over 500 released adults. Among that population, 190 received their GED classes, 234 enrolled in degree programs, and 242 were placed in part- and full-time jobs.

“LaGuardia has embraced the mission of reaching out to serve populations often neglected by more traditional educational institutions,” said Ms. Cyril.
Division to Head $36 Million HRA Project

The New York City Human Resources Administration recently named the Division of Adult and Continuing Education as the lead agency to head a $36 million project that provides placement and training for public assistance recipients.

Through the three-year grant, the division will oversee a consortium comprising four other CUNY colleges—Hostos Community College, New York City Technical College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, and Bronx Community College. Each college will provide the necessary services on their campuses.

According to Claudia Baldo, acting director of the Adult and Career Counseling Center, the HRA program is essentially a direct job placement service. However, long- and short-term skills training will be provided in such areas as customer service, clerical skills, telecommunications cabling, and medical records.

Continuing Education Courses Go Online

The division just made it easier to take that continuing education course that you could not squeeze into your busy schedule.

Nine on-line, non-credit courses are being offered this semester by the division’s Career and Professional Programs, and Allen Cohen, the program director, said that as many as 30 may be offered this fall.

It’s easy and you can do it on your own pace,” said Mr. Cohen. “All you need is Internet access, an e-mail address, and a Web browser.”

The courses are being offered through Education to Go, an educational company that supplies non-credit courses through local colleges and universities. For this semester, the program offerings focus on the computer and the Internet: introduction to PC troubleshooting, Windows file and disk management, introduction to the Internet, creating Web Pages, advanced Web pages, creating Web graphics with Paint Pro, Photoshop basics, Java programming for the Web, and how to start your own home-based business.

Dr. Lieberman Honored

(Continued from page 7) Oral histories from the city’s elders.

Other student populations also have been the recipients of his innovation. For public school teachers on year-long study leaves, Dr. Lieberman developed a one-of-a-kind academic and enrichment sabbatical program. And for the past 11 years, he has put together New York City history curriculums, using documents and photographs from the archives, for fourth graders.

To share local history with the general population, Dr. Lieberman packages history in such forms as local history calendars, pictorial exhibitions, and a seven-part radio show about the life and times of Mayor LaGuardia.

The archives, which Dr. Lieberman founded in 1983, serves as another means by which he offers the city’s history to its residents. Each year, an estimated 5,000 students, historians, and researchers peruse the mayoral and personal papers of four city mayors—LaGuardia, Wagner, Beame, and Koch—the Steinways, and the New York City Housing Authority collections. Also housed in the repository are over 41,000 books, photographs, films, artifacts, videos, and audio tapes.

In summing up Dr. Lieberman’s accomplishments, Dr. McCormick borrowed a quote from a national leader in social history programs: “As a historian he has led the way in showing a community its history. He has done it better than anyone.”

LaGuardia, Business Team to Support Tech Entrepreneurs and Programming

During the process of getting start-up capital, Mr. Walker admitted that he faced multiple rejections. “I took the rejections to heart, but I responded by further developing my business plan,” he said. “And when the venture capital firms finally hit, it became a feeding frenzy.”

His last words of advice: “Be aggressive and be persistent.”

To learn more about the conference and related efforts, call ext. 5411 or e-mail: jrainey@lavec.cuny.edu
LUCED Program Helps Small Businesses

To help small businesses better satisfy their customers, LUCED's Industrial Management Resource Program (IMRP) recently conducted a management forum, that showed them how easy and inexpensive it is to conduct a satisfaction survey.

"In the buyer's market today, understanding and satisfying your customer is the only way to stay ahead of the competition, but few actually do," said Will Saunders, director of LUCED. "Most often, they fall victim to two fundamental misconceptions—assuming that they already know what is in the minds of their customers, and that surveying them is a complex and costly process."

Vic Fuhrman, vice president of Operations of AWISCO NY, a distributor of welding equipment and supplies in Maspeth, shared his company's experiences with more than 30 small business owners.

According to Mr. Fuhrman, the survey revealed some surprises—things they thought they knew but did not, and, at the same time, it validated some of the things they did know.

"As a result of the survey's findings," said Mr. Fuhrman, "the company's management has made some very successful and profitable changes."

IMRP, which co-sponsored with the Long Island Business Development Corporation, assists businesses in implementing customer surveys as well as providing other valuable services under a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.
International High Displays Scale-Model Bridges Designed by Students

A n exhibit of model bridges conceived and built by students from International High School was recently on display at the college.

The 12 scale-model bridges, all creative and unique in conception and execution, were the tangible products of a 10-week comprehensive course on the art and science of bridge building.

The course, developed by the Salvadori Center, an educational agency on the campus of City College, is designed to teach math, science, and the humanities while developing a student’s appreciation for the aesthetics, history, structure, and functioning of the built environment. For the center, which historically teams up with middle schools, this was the first collaboration with a high school.

During the event, the 30 student architects conducted interactive activities and demonstrations that explained the most important science and engineering concepts involved in the construction of arch, suspension, stayed cable, and cantilever bridges.

The 10-week interdisciplinary course integrated the teaching of math, science, architecture, engineering, and the humanities. Students then applied the course work to the hands-on team project of conceiving and building a bridge. The four-feet-by-eight-inch bridges were made from a variety of materials such as aluminum, wood, and plastic.

Some thirty students from the Robert F. Wagner Institute for Arts and Technology crocheted over 30 blankets for AIDS babies that they donated to a health agency. The students, members of the Young AIDS activists, presented the blankets to the Visiting Nurse Services of New York, which will distribute the gifts. In the photograph, Dwight Slatten Jr. (left) and Francisco Vera work on their blankets.
Arts & Technology Puts on a Performance with the Help of the Internet

The students at Robert F. Wagner, Jr. Institute for the Arts and Technology were in the process of creating a major theatrical production. But there was one little problem: their fellow collaborators—160 high school performers, dancers, musicians, and technicians—were scattered across the country.

So how did the students from 20 Middle Colleges jointly write the songs and dialogue, create the dance numbers, and produce the final script so that they could prepare for two days of rehearsals before the curtain went up on May 7th?

The answer: the Internet.

Arts and Technology, the host of the three-day Middle College Consortium conference, looked to the wonders of cyberspace to get this ambitious project off the ground. Through the creation of a student-designed web site, all the students were able to actively participate in the collaborative effort.

"Each year the conference's host decides upon a special project that will involve teachers and students," said Terry Born, co-director of the high school. "Because we are a school of arts and technology, we absolutely wanted to do a play, but we wanted it to be a collaborative work, not 20 separate pieces. The only way that we could possibly overcome the obstacles of time (only two days for rehearsing) and distance was to link the students through the Internet."

Each of the participating middle colleges selected eight students to participate in this annual conference that brings together all the alternative high schools that are modeled after the successful Middle College High School.

To give the students a base from which to work, Ms. Born said that her students developed the play's plot, which centers around 160 young people who mysteriously find themselves on a deserted island. There they are greeted by an Oracle who shows them a vision of conflicts throughout history.

"Within this framework, the students were encouraged to write poems, lyrics, and create dance numbers around specifically defined conflicts from the past and present," she said.

The message of collaboration and full participation was clearly stated on the web page:

Which position will YOU be taking? What character will YOU portray? How will your step lead the way? Will you witness life as it is changing Or be the 1 who does the rearranging?

It's your decision. I urge your participation in a conference of Free Xpression.

On the web, a free back-and-forth exchange took place. For example, dancers posted videos of original choreographed pieces, while writers read over poems and dialogues written by students. Everyone was given a chance to e-mail their suggestions.

In the music department, the 16-piece percussion ensemble from Flint, Michigan, composed a composition that was used. The band, which has an international reputation, also performed at Lincoln Center over the conference weekend.

During the revision process, a team of Arts and Technology students and teacher reviewed all the responses and made the final decisions. By April 15, the play was completed and each student received his or her part.

Although students communicated via chat groups and e-mail, they met face-to-face for the first time on May 5, the start of the conference, and the beginning of the intensive three-day rehearsal schedule.

"Our intent was to develop a truly student-centered project," said Ms. Born, "where students can come away knowing that they contributed to the creation of the production and used their talents."
Honor Student Receives State and National Scholastic Awards

For Miriam Fujita it was a small recruitment advertisement about LaGuardia that convinced her to leave her secure but dead-end office job in a Japanese publishing company in Tokyo, come to the United States and enroll in the college.

That was in 1997. Today Ms. Fujita is a 24-year-old liberal arts major who will be graduating with honors in June and entering Mt. Holyoke in the fall with the help of a two-year full scholarship.

And to sweeten the pot, she was recently recognized by two prestigious scholastic competitions. The Phi Theta Kappa honors student was selected to the 2000 All-New York Academic First Team and to the All-USA Academic Third Team for Community and Junior Colleges by the All-USA Academic Team program, which annually recognizes 60 outstanding students from more than 1,400 student applicants from across the nation.

"The competition was the strongest in the ten-year history of the program making the selection of team members incredibly challenging," said Rod A. Risley, executive director of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, which sponsors the competition along with USAToday and The American Association of Community Colleges. The All New York competition is sponsored by New York Community College Trustees of SUNY, Association of Presidents of Public Community Colleges, Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and Phi Theta Kappa.

"We are so proud that one of our Phi Theta Kappa leaders has been given due recognition," said Interim President Roberta S. Matthews. "It is an honor for LaGuardia that Miriam was among the students selected."

Vice President of Academic Affairs George Sussman added: "Miriam has been a model student in combining a high level of scholarship with a strong sense of responsibility toward the community. LaGuardia is very proud of her achievement."

Describing how her life made a dramatic turn-around in three short years, Ms. Fujita credits the college for helping her plot her future. "LaGuardia is very special because it helps students prepare for the next stage," she said. "Whether it is a job or a four-year college."

For Ms. Fujita, the college gave her the opportunity to test both paths before she made the decision to pursue a four-year degree.

Upon enrolling at LaGuardia, she explained that her goal was to work toward an associate's degree in business administration and then find a job in New York. And she diligently stayed on that course until she took a class in philosophy.

When she describes her experience in this course, there is pure excitement in her voice. "Although I loved business, I found philosophy and other liberal arts courses to be so intense, challenging, and totally new," said Ms. Fujita. "And the professors gave me the courage and confidence to pursue what I wanted."

That became a liberal arts concentration. And throughout her three years at the college she stood out as an outstanding student.

"Miriam represents the best of LaGuardia Community College," said Professor Will Koolsbergen, one of her professors who taught the liberal arts cluster, "Freedom and Communication."

"She is one of the most intelligent, diligent, and inquisitive students I have ever had the pleasure to know."

The scholar also became a shining light in the college community. She joined Phi Theta Kappa and quickly became an active member serving as secretary, vice president, and president.

"When I joined Phi Theta Kappa, I met students who coordinated events and publicized information on scholarships, and I decided to get involved," said Ms. Fujita. "I found that I liked volunteering and helping other people."

College government was another area where her voice was heard. As a foreign affairs representative for Student Government, Ms. Fujita was the advocate for foreign students. She was also a student member of the College Senate.

Activism also came in the form of tutoring and mentoring College Discovery students.

With Mt. Holyoke as her next stage, Ms. Fujita plans to major in economics and minor in international relations.

And what will she do upon receiving her bachelor's degree? "I want to be a professor at a community college and teach economics," said Ms. Fujita.
Plan to Expand Health Care Services for Students Gets Nod

To address the student population's desire for increased free on-campus health care, the division of Student Affairs recently received approval from the college and the City University to expand its primary care services.

When the newly renovated health center begins operation in the fall, the college will offer to all full-time students a comprehensive health care program that covers a full range of medical, dental, counseling, referral, and immunization services.

"Many of our students do not have health insurance and look to the college for free health and wellness services," said Ruth Lugo, vice president of the division. "To better satisfy the needs of our students, the college decided it was necessary to expand the existing services."

With the nod from CUNY and the college, Vincent Banrey, the associate director of the Student Services Cluster, noted that the division will now proceed to obtain quotes from a variety of health care agencies that will supply the required services. The proposal outlines the hiring of a physician who will be on campus four days a week, as well as a social worker and a counselor. Also, the center will hire a health professional who will oversee the training program for peer advisors.

At present, the college's health center provides a limited range of free medical services to full-time students. Last year, approximately 10,000 students visited the center to get everything from a band-aid to counseling on immunization to a HIV test.

A physician provides professional medical attention by conducting medical exams on campus one day a week. Through a long-term collaboration with North Shore University Hospital, a counselor on campus two days each week conducts HIV testing and counseling and refers students for follow-up treatment at affiliated hospitals in Queens. Services also include an emergency response system.

"These arrangements do not sufficiently satisfy the health needs of our students," said Senior Administrator Renee Butler, who noted that the doctor sees only 15 students a day. "If we could add four days of service, it would go a long way in meeting students' health needs."

Along with the additional days, Ms. Butler said the division would like to see the physician's basic medical services expanded to include physical exams, gynecological care, pregnancy testing, preventive hepatitis B immunization, and tuberculosis screening.

The plan also calls for the placement of an on-campus counselor who will be available to discuss health and safety issues. Students will be able to get advisement on such matters as sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol and drug addiction, sexual violence and assault, as well as nutrition, stress management, and contraception.

Another professional who will be added to the roster will be an on-campus social worker who will educate students on available services.

"Because we have a large population of immigrants and women," said Ms. Butler, "we feel it important to expose them to services that are available."

Still another service will be free dental care. Mr. Banrey noted that the division is negotiating with the New York City Department of Health to have a dentist placed on campus.

To adequately provide these services, plans to renovate the existing 1,500 square-foot facility are underway. The center, which now contains one treatment room and one infirmary, will be reconfigured to accommodate the expanded services. Created from the treatment center will be two more rooms, one of which will be used as a dental clinic. Also enlarged will be the recovery room, which when completed, will have more bedrest space.

The division's proposal grew out of the findings of a 1997 New Students survey that contained a question on health care coverage. Of the 1,100 freshmen who responded, 41 percent stated that they did not have any insurance.

Recognizing the need, Mr. Banrey said the division approached Student Government with a recommendation to increase student activities fee by $10 as a way to help fund the project.

"With $100,000 each year from student fees, plus tax levy dollars from Student Affairs," said Mr. Banrey, "we will be able to provide a base of funding to provide these needed services."

The governing board approved the plan, and this year's budget is supporting the renovations.

Interim President Roberta S. Matthews applauded the division's efforts at the March instructional staff meeting. "This proposal is a perfect example of the importance of learning student needs," said President Matthews, "and responding to them."

Retirements

Ron Boerke, events coordinator, will be leaving the college after seven years to take a position with the Central Park Conservancy. Ron will head sports and recreation programming.

Nina Penino, associate registrar, will be leaving the college in mid-June after over 20 years of service. Not knowing what she will do with all her free time, her fellow workers have offered a suggestion: work part-time in the office.

Births

Nila Sen of the President's Office, and her husband, Supratim, on April 8, 2000 of their son Nishant.
Gates’ Gift

(Continued from page 6) committed to improving people’s lives through access to knowledge and learning,” said Bill Gates, Sr., co-chair of the foundation. “This gift is a step in honoring that commitment by ensuring that historically black colleges and universities have the resources to purchase significant works of American literature.”

“The college deeply appreciates the foundation’s generous gift that enriches our library collection and brings the classics to our students,” said Interim President Roberta S. Matthews.

The gift was made in honor of William H. Gray III, president of the United Negro College Fund, America’s oldest and most successful black higher education assistance organization.

“The generous gift from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation reinforces the value of the contribution of African-Americans in literature along with works from the likes of Henry James and others as a resource for these students,” said Mr. Gray. “This contribution exemplifies the commitment of the foundation to the enrichment of educational opportunities for young men and women across our nation.”

“Sets of The Library of American should be in every university and college library in the United States, if not the world,” said Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the W.E.B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University.

The Library of America is a non-profit publisher and cultural institution created to preserve the nation’s literary heritage by publishing authoritative editions of America’s best and most significant works. For over a decade, it has organized grant and educational programs designed to further an appreciation of America’s best writing by providing sets of its volumes to schools, public libraries, and other institutions.

For the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation, this project is one of many that display its strong commitment to improving the lives of people throughout the world through the development of education and health-related programs. One such educational project—the Gates Millennium Scholars Program—commits $50 million a year for scholarships to outstanding minority students. The program will continue to award scholarships for the next 20 years.

In the area of health, the foundation’s Children’s Vaccine Program has allocated $100 million to speed the delivery of life-saving vaccines to children in developing countries. And through its Maternal Mortality Reduction Program, $50 million has been set aside to prevent pregnancy-related deaths of women in developing countries.

Library Services Have Been Increased

The college’s library has announced an increase in service hours on Fridays and Saturdays.

According to Ngozi P. Aghim, professor and chief librarian, under the new schedule, the library is open on Fridays from 9 am to 8:45 pm and on Saturdays from 9 am to 4:45 pm. The new service hours became effective May 1.

In a memo to the student body, Professor Aghim encouraged students to take full advantage of the extended hours. “Many of you, over the years, have requested this service, and we are now especially delighted to offer it to you,” she said.