

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

# Empire State College

ALUMNI AND STUDENT NEWS

VOLUME 34 • NUMBER 2 • SPRING 2009

## **Green Matters**

**Cleansing Global Waters**

**Marine Conservation in Alaska**

**Energy in the Sunshine State**

***Learners First Campaign Highlights***

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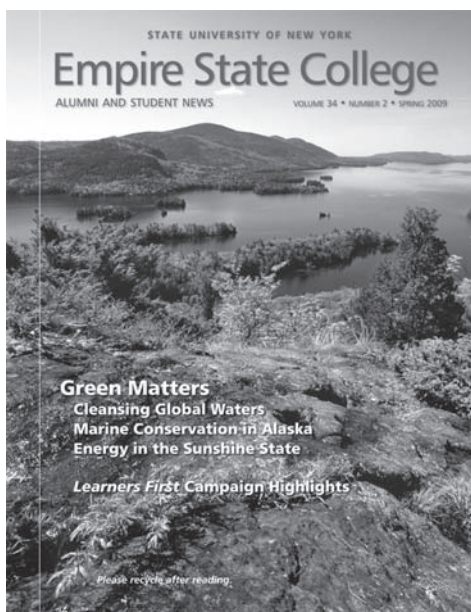
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### On the cover

The cover photograph was taken by noted Adirondack photographer Carl Heilman of Brant Lake, N.Y. His work has been published in numerous national and regional publications including such books as "Adirondacks: Views of an American Wilderness" (1999), "Wild New York" (2005), "The Adirondacks" and "Our New York" (2006), and "Backroads of New York" (2007).

His most recent multi-image production, the digital panoramic presentation "The Wild Adirondacks," is shown daily at the Wild Center natural history museum in Tupper Lake, N.Y. Heilman's program on Adirondack Waterways can be viewed at the Adirondack Park Visitors Interpretative Centers.

More information on the photographer and his work can be found at [www.carlheilman.com](http://www.carlheilman.com).

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William Ehmann

# Where Ernie Meets Gaylord

by William Ehmann, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean, Center for Distance Learning

In April 1970, Wisconsin Sen. Gaylord Nelson got the world to celebrate the first Earth Day, just six months before Ernie Boyer asked his assistant vice chancellor for policy and planning (Jim Hall) to outline a tutor/mentor model for a new SUNY college.

Gaylord's team asked grade school students around the country to write an essay on "Pollution – It's Effect on My Community." I wrote mine about endangered wildlife and the DDT/bald eagle situation: "If all wildlife dies off, we will too." It got a grade (without a narrative) of B. Thirty-four years later, as a Ph.D. ecologist, I was honored to help host a gathering of wilderness advocates at the National Press Club, and got to meet Gaylord himself.

Today, as an associate dean at Empire State College, I see the contemporary spirits of Gaylord and Ernie intertwined and driving the work of our college Environmental Impact Committee (EIC), chaired by Mentor Chris Rounds and featured in this issue of Empire State College Alumni and Student News. Our new president, Alan Davis, has started EIC discussion around the question: "If Empire State College had, as part of its identity, the moniker of a "green college," what would that mean to us and what would it look like?" We can use this opportunity to reflect and move forward.

What can be gleaned from this coevolved history? Perhaps akin to Empire State College's founding, the environmental movement started as counter-culture, impulsive, and open to all. Passionate environmentalists were often cast as either uncredentialed crazies or credentialed, anti-capitalist doom-sayers. Thus, only a few extremely well-credentialed and well-spoken scientists were broadly accepted by the public to speak to new, scary, and often largely unknown environmental concerns. These included Jacques Cousteau, Jane Goodall and Carl Sagan.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, college environmental programs fell into two camps: environmental science or engineering majors (wall-to-wall science with earmarks of credibility from requirements in organic chemistry, physics and calculus) that assured "you'll get a job," or environmental studies majors or minors that drew a workforce stigma of "jack of all trades, master of none." Around New York, some of these "studies" students from SUNY schools banded together to form intentional communities and land trusts, beginning to live, as we now say, more sustainably.

By the 1990s, led by women's studies programs, colleges began to see value in the "interdisciplinarity" that Empire State College mentors and students had used for decades. The global scale of environmental issues was made more apparent by our engagement through the World Wide Web. Instead of strict environmental science programs, hybrid programs in science and policy, science and sociology (conservation biology), and policy and engineering (restoration ecology) began to crop up. In parallel, environmental studies programs started adding more science (e.g., earth system science, ecology) and technology (e.g., geographic information systems) to translate passion into persuasion.

Today, environmental curricula are defined not by one way of knowing, or even the combination of two, but increasingly by a full integration of the liberal arts as the humanities are considered. The example that brought this home for me was Hurricane Katrina. What was originally cast as a technical problem, keeping the water out, was dramatically shown to actually be an economic issue, a governance issue, a communication issue, and an ethics and justice issue.

The best time to have planted a tree, or have pursued a college education, is many years ago. The second best time, for both, is now. I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of Empire State College Alumni and Student News and seeing how the people of this college are working to define problems correctly and share their new wisdom. Everywhere and online ... where Ernie meets Gaylord. ○

# A Clear Initiative

**Rick Renjilian '03, '05**

COO, The Water Initiative

by Liz W. Armtun



**W**ith nearly 20 percent of the world's population compromised by unsafe water, and some 5,000 children dying everyday from associated waterborne diseases, clean water is today's largest health concern – and tomorrow's largest opportunity. At the forefront of this opportunity is Rick Renjilian, chief operating officer of The Water Initiative (TWI), a business that creates point-of-use solutions to satisfy the world's insatiable thirst for safe drinking water through empowered local partnerships. With a team of leading global business executives and renowned scientists, The Water Initiative develops and globally deploys platform point-of-use (POU) water systems adapted to fit local conditions.

"We are passionate about our mission and also excited about launching a successful business," says Renjilian. "Ben Franklin said to do well by doing good. The Water Initiative gives me the opportunity to help people through the creation of a sustainable and profitable business model. People who have never had safe water before will be able to get it everyday for less money than what they currently pay."

He gets to the essential core of TWI's business model, which is a *for-profit* system. He believes that incentivised participants at all levels ensure the best outcome. "It is not so much an environmental movement as much as it is social capitalism with triple net gains – returns to investors, the environment and to society. We engineer water systems that use low energy, conserve water, provide safe water, create local entrepreneurs and return profits to our investors."

It's been an interesting journey from Renjilian's beginnings in Albany, N.Y. to the remote, third-world locations where TWI installs its systems. Renjilian hadn't finished college when he began his working career at Pall Corporation in Cortland, N.Y., one of the largest filtration companies in the world, creating filters for aerospace, pharmaceutical, life sciences and industrial processes. He was integrally involved with the launch of their blood transfusion filter, which made the process much safer.

This high-growth company pulled Renjilian in, and he ended up moving from Cortland to Glen Cove, Long Island to company headquarters. In his 12 years there, the company grew from \$80 million in sales to \$1.2 billion, and he rose to the position of vice president of operations. Now

married with a family, he decided to jump to a smaller, more entrepreneurial company. In 1995, he moved to Gurnee, Ill. to work for FilterTek, a filtration manufacturing company which makes filters for the automotive industry, health care and other industrial processes, including the Brita water filter for Clorox Corp. As VP of operations, he oversaw manufacturing worldwide, taking him to the far corners of the globe.


"There I was, running this worldwide corporation but I hadn't gotten my college degree," he says. "My son was starting to look at colleges, and I felt I couldn't set a very good example for him!" That's when he heard about the Center for Distance Learning, and immediately applied to Empire State College. "I was assigned Ian Jacobs as my advisor, great guy! He looked at my work experience, and got me almost the maximum credits for life experience." In a few short years, Renjilian had both his bachelor's and master's degrees. "I was 45 when I graduated – my son was really proud!"

FilterTek was sold in 2007, the year Renjilian turned 50. With a yearning to create his own legacy, he created a company called Water Health International, a water purification company in India. There he met Kevin McGovern, an entrepreneur who was the founder of Sobe and also interested in third-world point-of-use water purification.

Together they formed The Water Initiative, focusing on developing countries where water-borne diseases are rampant. The project has attracted big names from the worlds of science and entertainment, including Quincy Jones, humanitarian and Grammy award-winning composer, who is on the board.

As chief operating officer of this entrepreneurial start-up, Renjilian says, "If we can solve these problems in the hardest places in the world first, we then have a product that has unlimited potential everywhere."

To date, The Water Initiative's projects are producing both clean water and profits. In a world with a burgeoning population, and limited supply of potable water – approximately 0.007 percent of the planet's water supply – this is clearly a working model, and a great hope for the future. President John F. Kennedy said this about clean water, "Anyone who can solve the problems of water will be worthy of two Nobel prizes – one for peace and one for science." Renjilian is on the short list. ○



Fran Martino in her element.

# Water Woman

Fran Martino '07

by Kathryn Gallien

**"Hudson River Almanac," January 13**

**"My little red kayak shared the river with only one other vessel, the Veronica Evelyn, being gently coaxed north by the tug Cheyenne. I looped the Hudson-Athens lighthouse, then the island where a white-tailed deer bounded the short distance from the west side of the island to the east. About 150 Canadian geese greeted my return to the east side of the island with loud honks. ... I watched the sun set with two immature bald eagles perched on the island; maybe they were eyeing the one lone merganser riding the incoming tide." – Fran Martino, Middle Ground Flats, Hudson, Hudson River Mile 118**

Her entries into the "Hudson River Almanac" reveal much about environmental educator and self-anointed "River Haggie" Fran Martino: knowledge of flora and fauna, connection to the Hudson River, a flair for writing, her let's-go attitude.

"I'm on the river as often as I can be," says Martino. "I always have my boat on top of my car, so that on a moment's notice I can just plunk her in the water."

Aside from a few years she refers to as her "other life" – when she worked for an oil company and then in telecommunications – Martino has been outdoor-oriented. "I grew up in a family that did a lot of hunting, fishing,

mushroom hunting, picking flowers, getting fresh catnip – just always outside." From their Albany home, her playground was Washington Park; the family's playgrounds ranged through Green and Columbia counties.

She now lives in Claverack and enjoys hunting and fishing with her brother. Martino hunts only deer, believing it helps control overpopulation, and since she no longer eats meat, she gives any she obtains to Hunters for the Hungry.

One marvels that she finds time to hunt and fish. Balancing her many jobs takes "some precision," she says, adding quickly that a lot of what she does for work involves hiking and kayaking: "I'm fortunate to do what I like."

Her full-time position is environmental educator with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, serving at Taconic State Park and Copake Falls and leading activities throughout the region. She also serves as the Kinderhook watershed coordinator for the Hudson Basin River Watch and the Catskill watershed coordinator through Cornell Cooperative Extension. In addition, says Martino, "I have my little business, River Haggie Outdoors."

River Haggie? The name, referencing sea hags and river rats, "came up more as a joke," she chuckles. "But since I'm a female and getting older it just seemed to fit me." She takes groups of children into field and stream to explore turtles and frogs, track animals, tap maple sugar trees, identify bird calls, listen for owls and coyotes, and through it all begin to grasp the beauty of nature and the values of environmental conservation.

Much of her work grew directly out of her Empire State College capstone study on organizing and educating Hudson River stakeholders about watershed protection.

Martino came to the college's Northeast Center after having made the leap from corporate America to the National Park Service. "I was never able to put together a college degree," she recalls, but as the years went by and she gained lots of field experience, she realized that "if I was going to teach anyone, I needed to learn it better myself."

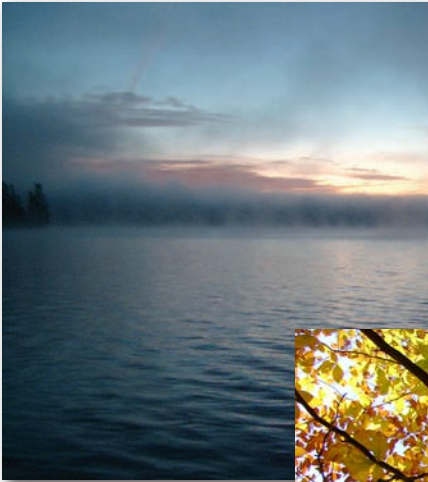
*(continued on page 14)*



# *Applying Gray Matter to Green Matters*

## Empire State College's **Adirondack Residency**

by Kirk Starczewski



Photographs provided  
by residency participants.



**I**n 1996, a group of Empire State College faculty gathered at SUNY Cortland's Camp Huntington – the first Adirondack Great Camp ever built – on the remote shore of Raquette Lake in the heart of the Adirondacks. This group, headed by faculty Chris Evans, Dora Ingolfsdottir and Wayne Ouderkirk, came together to think through how they might work together to create an environmental educational experience for Empire State College students. Thus was born the college's Environmental Studies Residency that has taken place at Camp Huntington every October since.

“We had reserved the location, so were ‘sort of forced’ to develop a residency or lose the reservation date,” said Ouderkirk. “We were worried at first if enough students would come. We only had 17 students register initially, but two to three weeks before, there was a surge to 25 students. Now, it usually hosts 30-40 students.”

Ouderkirk explained that none of this could have happened without the great collaboration between SUNY Cortland and the college. “We have a wonderful relationship with them and we can't say enough about the cooperation they have shown in working with us,” he said. “They are very accommodating.”

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## Anatomy of an Environmental Residency

Each year the faculty decides on the residency's theme. On a Tuesday in October, students and faculty meet at a dock just beyond the tiny town of Raquette Lake, N.Y., where they are ferried across the lake on pontoon boats. Once at the camp, there are introductions and a short orientation to the camp, followed by a plenary session on the year's theme.

After that, it's on to study groups. Typically eight courses are offered and each student chooses one. Then, everyone gathers for a social hour and dinner. Each meal begins with a short, contemplative reading by one of the participants. The first night ends with Adirondack storyteller and singer Bill Smith. He's performed at every residency since the beginning.

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*You really have to want to leave your life behind for a little while and make the journey to learn.*

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Many get up early the next morning for a meditative walk as the woods fill with light. Some are drawn to the dock to watch the lake turn from indigo to silver to rose as the sun rises over the mountains. Fortified with some steaming coffee, it's a time for reflection or quiet conversation.

After breakfast there is an environmental science lecture, followed by another study group session and then an ecology walk that teaches about the local flora and fauna. Lunch is followed by an official tour of the camp, covering the architectural and historical development of the camp, and the exploits of the colorful people who have lived there. When on the tour, students can well imagine Mrs. Durant spending the early summer on the houseboat to avoid the blackflies, or the wealthy friends of the Durants arriving by steamboat in all their finery to see this wonder of the woods.

After some free time, a social hour and dinner, there is a guest speaker – typically an expert on the theme topic. Afterwards, there is lively conversation and thoughtful exchanges as people continue to get to know one another, and students and faculty who have become regulars regale the “newbies” with tales from residencies past.

By Thursday morning, everybody knows now that Camp Huntington is a special place – a brief retreat from the world where computers hum, phones ring and everything seems to be going 100 miles an hour. One more study group session and one final plenary session bring the residency to a close.

“After lunch, we climb aboard the pontoon boat to be ferried back to our regular lives,” said Elaine Handley, who joined the coordinating committee of the residency in 2000. “We are not quite the same people we were just two days before. Maybe

inside ourselves we are a bit wilder, and a tad more pensive as we think about how much there is to lose if we humans don't take our stewardship of the earth more seriously. And it's hoped we feel a little renewed, having had the chance to live a little more deliberately for a few days, as part of nature, not removed from it.”

## Meet a Residency Student

Ouderkirk commented that today's residency students are more environmentally literate and sophisticated. “They have a deeper commitment to doing their part in nature,” he said. “Earlier, they came and took the residency because they were curious. Now more of them do so because it's something they believe in.”

According to Ouderkirk, the majority of the students are not seeking degrees in environmental fields, but are very active with an ecological/environmental issue in their own communities. One thing that added to the popularity of the residency was the decision to make all courses offered meet SUNY general education requirements. This was in direct response to a survey of attendees, who commented that their elective choices were limited because of the general education requirements. “The residency offers a variety of courses that look at the environment and environmental issues through the lenses of different disciplines,” said Handley. “We do survey the students and try to respond. This year, we added art as an offering with a course in digital photography.”

“One of the things that's important about the residency, is its location in the heart of the Adirondacks,” said Handley. “Not only is it a drive to get there, but you then take a boat to get to the camp on its own island. You really have to want to leave your life behind for a little while and make the journey to learn. It's developing a specific mindset to do this.”

Handley is continually amazed at how the group gels so quickly, given that the students come from such disparate backgrounds and are spread out across the state. “That's one reason a number of them come back is the gelling,” she said. “It's also the way we live when we're at the residency. It's not about the creature comforts you find at a hotel. We eat family

*(continued on page 7)*

### Did you know?

**Did you know** that alumni who attended the Adirondack Residency have formed an interest group in the alumni online community? If you attended the residency and want to connect with other former students, please go to

[www.esc.edu/AlumniCommunity](http://www.esc.edu/AlumniCommunity)



Dorothy Childers feeling the environmental pulse of Alaska's ecosystem.

# A Planetary View from Alaska

Dorothy Childers '79

by Tom Dimopoulos

She was a young dancer living in working in New York City when a series of events led her to change her career path and resulted in a leap across the country. "It didn't seem like a huge leap," says Dorothy Childers, who studied at Empire State College while she was working with modern dance groups in Manhattan. She graduated from the Hudson Valley Center in 1979. She says the curriculum offered her the opportunity to continue her studies while maintaining her work.

"I was getting to an age where I had to decide what I was going to do and I felt that I wasn't good enough to have (dance) be my calling," Childers says. "I also had a tremendous interest in the environmental movement. To me, being an artist and caring about the planet weren't separate," she says from her office in Anchorage, Alaska, where she has lived for the past 19 years.

It was the time of the nuclear incident on Three Mile Island. The Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union and the sinking of the Greenpeace ship, the *Rainbow Warrior*, soon followed.

After working her way to Washington, D.C. where Childers found herself on Capitol Hill involved in issues related to the state of Alaska, she decided to make the cross-country leap to learn more about the state.

Today, Childers advocates for marine and coastal conservation as program director of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council (AMCC).

"We're a community-based, nonprofit organization for people who live on coastal Alaska who rely on healthy ecosystems and resources from the ocean," Childers says.

The group focuses on the conservation of fisheries and the protection of habitat in the face of 21st century challenges that includes access to fishing resources and climate change.

In 2007, Childers received a prestigious three-year Pew Fellowship award in marine conservation for her project on Climate Change in the Bering Sea. "Alaska is warming at a fast rate and our marine wildlife habitat is changing. Local people all along the Bering Sea are witnessing this change. It has huge repercussions for the ecosystem," she says.



Childers' Pew Fellowship project focuses on treating both the symptoms and the cause of climate change in the Bering Sea and aims to create national opportunities for Alaska native leaders, field scientists and fishermen to share their perspective on global warming.

"There are so many communities where their way of life is tightly linked to those natural resources," she says, citing a population who rely on game and fish to put food on the table.

"They don't just go to the grocery store, because there is no grocery store." Complicating matters is the growing trend of consolidating fishing licenses, resulting in fewer fishermen attaining those licenses that threatens to break the generational chain of fishing families.

Childers likens the increasing industrialization to the agricultural business where farms that have been passed through generations of families are being gobbled up by large agricultural corporations.

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***"Everybody is talking about climate change. The reason is because it's a planetary crisis. It's important for every single person, no matter where they live, to be informed about causes and effects and the opportunities that we all have ..."***

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"We're trying to extend the family farm," she says. "We're defending the opportunity for local people to have that access."

Her work advocates for solutions that involve everything from educating local communities to lobbying policy makers.

"Everybody is talking about climate change. The reason is because it's a planetary crisis. It's important for every single person, no matter where they live, to be informed about causes and effects and the opportunities that we all have – from the smallest town to the largest city – to be part of the solution," she says.

Childers cites the changing chemistry of the ocean as another major concern, because of its threat to marine life.

"If there's anything good about ocean acidification and climate change, it is that it has the potential to mobilize society like nothing ever has. The solution of those things is a solution to many other problems and the benefit of those solutions will be many-fold," she says.

Despite the crisis, Childers is hopeful that the leaders of the incoming government will usher in a new wave of "green" technology.

"Rescuing the economy. Rescuing the planet. You do these things with the same solution," Childers says. "And that would be a turning point in our history." ○

## Adirondack Residency

*(continued from page 5)*

style, everyone – including presidents and provosts – take a turn at KP duty, and everyone lives in dorm settings, on bunk beds."

A number of students have attended at least four residencies, as undergraduate and graduate students. Drew Monthie was one who went through the residency as an undergrad, a M.A.L.S. student and now serves as a faculty member. His final project as a grad student was to team-teach a course with Nikki Shrimpton on Iroquois ethnobotany.

In addition to the original coordinators, a core of faculty have been involved, including Chris Rounds (Binghamton), Nikki Shrimpton (Central New York Center), Duncan RyanMann (FORUM East) and retired members Deborah Kleese, Lloyd Lill, Cathy Copely-Woods and Sally Daly.

### The Future

Early on, a huge theme was seen in the students' comments – make it longer.

"We were very surprised, since it takes place during the week, and we're talking about working adults with commitments here," said Ouderkirk. "We run Tuesday to Thursday, and a Monday pre-residency was added, which usually attracts 10 - 20 people. We still get asked to go the whole week."

One constant is that themes are developed and courses created to meet students' needs or emerging issues or concerns. Plans for any expansion in the future are limited by the available facilities at Camp Huntington. It can only accommodate so many people.

But the sustained success of the Adirondack residency has spurred discussion of developing other residency models that build off this one. "Not many students attend from the greater New York City area," said Ouderkirk. "But interest has been expressed in developing an urban residency that addresses the specific environmental issues and special topics for urban dwellers. We could possibly offer it in the spring to complement the Adirondack residency in the fall."

Reflecting on the success of the past 12 years, Ouderkirk sums it all up by saying, "It's a program that offers our students a range of values and a good solid course of study. It is an opportunity to get away from it all, to focus and reflect. It's a chance to interact with others who are different."

For Handley, it's that "We become a true community of learners for a brief time, sharing discourse, all in a national landmark. What could be better than that?" ○



Sketch of Margie Campaigne at a Sierra meeting

## Green Makeover: Home Edition

Energy Star  
Margie Campaigne '99

by Kathryn Gallien

Call it the *good* green-house effect: These days more and more homeowners are trying to soften their environmental footprints by buying energy-saving appliances and lightbulbs, recycling newspapers and plastic bottles, installing low-flow toilets and showers, and renovating with minimally processed and even salvaged materials.

But the concept is nothing new to Margie Campaigne '99, who has been promoting home energy conservation for more than 30 years.

"I began Project HOUSE (Household Opportunity to Upgrade and Save the Environment) in the '70s as a way for people to determine how much energy and resources their household used," says Campaigne. Back then, she compiled usage charts and tips for reducing energy consumption in a printed document that she copied and distributed by hand.

"I still have a few of those original documents," she recalls now. And when she joined the Global Warming/Energy Committee of the Rochester chapter of the Sierra Club in early 2007, she realized it was time to dig one out and "make it 21st-century friendly." Her web site [www.project-house.us](http://www.project-house.us) was born, and she had it up and running, appropriately, by Earth Day 2007.

At the same time, Campaigne took her own Project HOUSE advice to heart with an environmentally friendly, 21st century makeover of her Rochester home. She replaced her 1950s-era gas furnace with a new high efficiency model; upgraded her refrigerator, washer and windows to Energy Star products; insulated with thermally efficient non-toxic foam; and improved



heating and cooling with ventilated panels in the roof. Her contractor helped her secure a \$6,000 Energy Star grant, and she got a low-interest loan through the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

There was some out-of-pocket cost too, but as Campaigne points out, “the savings for this household go indefinitely into the future.” And they are already impressive: after one year, she had cut her electricity use by 44 percent and gas by 25 percent.

While she is committed to cutting her home’s energy use, Campaigne shows no signs of reducing her personal energy level, which keeps her perpetually on the go. “Energy? I guess at 62 I’m doing pretty well in that regard,” she admits. In addition to authoring and maintaining the Project HOUSE Web site and volunteering in environmental advocacy groups, she works full time as a bookkeeper and part time as a counselor for adults with attention deficit disorder.

Her Empire State College degree in counseling psychology has almost as long a history as Project HOUSE. She first enrolled at the Genesee Valley Regional Center as a single, working mother with nearly three years of credits from the University of Pittsburgh. “I heard about Empire State College, and not having to attend classes but work on your own time, so I enrolled to try to finish up that missing year.” But it was too hard balancing everything, and she dropped out. She tried again in 1988, but again ran out of steam. Finally, secure in the bookkeeping job she still holds, she re-enrolled in 1996, “determined that I just had to finish this time, because I was so close, and wanted to work in my chosen field of psychology.”

With her home’s eco-makeover reaping rewards and her Web site getting plenty of hits, Campaigne finds her commitment

to the environment is growing, and she is optimistic about it rising on the national agenda too.

“Being green is touted by products and magazines and TV programs all around us,” she notes. “Al Gore’s documentary was the biggest push so far, and I think President Obama will have a good green agenda.”

Campaigne’s own green agenda may well get even bigger. She is looking to make a career change and work as an environmental educator. That transition may take some time, but as her college experience clearly demonstrates, she has the tenacity to achieve her goals – that, and plenty of energy. ○

## Three simple ways to reduce your carbon footprint

### Use compact fluorescent lighting

Compact fluorescent lightbulbs use about 70 percent less electricity, last about 10 times as long as incandescent bulbs, and now come in not only the curlicue style, but also round globes, incandescent-shaped, three-way, dimmable and outdoor-suitable. Note that they should not be put into the trash; they can be recycled at the end of their life through Home Depot or a hazardous waste collection site.

### Turn down the heat

Even a degree or two makes a difference. Setting the temperature up to 65 - 68 degrees when home, and 55 - 58 degrees when away or overnight, saves a lot. Buying a programmable thermostat makes it painless, as you can have the house warmed automatically by the time you get out of bed or get home from work.

### Eat lower on the food chain

It requires 16 pounds of grain to produce one pound of red meat. Add in thousands of gallons of water per animal, transportation costs, etc., and you see the difference you can make replacing one meat-based meal with one plant-based (vegetarian) per week – perhaps spaghetti with no meatballs, eggplant parmesan, or meatless chili.

Find more ideas at: [www.project-house.us](http://www.project-house.us).

# Recycling Electronics Could Create “Green Collar” Jobs

by Marie Morrison '06



Kimie Romeo '08

Kimie Romeo '08 is an Empire State College graduate who grabbed the environmental ball and ran with it. With a goal in sight and brimming with ideas, she went from student to activist, on the way becoming the first Monroe County environmental educator.

The college's Genesee Valley Center helped structure her interests and, in addition, allowed her to put to use her combined studies in environmental science and public administration.

"I had a sort of a blended program and was able to take some of the things that I was really passionate about on the environmental science side and learn how to fold them into my job at the county and get other people interested in those same things."

Her job at the Monroe County Department of Environmental Services resulted from her volunteer efforts in the community, where she had spoken at numerous local meetings and even went to municipal officials to get backing for a stormwater management program that she hoped to see implemented.

The director of the department had observed her in action, he said. "I think we need somebody like you to really tell the community what we're doing and who we are and how they can be part of it all. I want to create a job at the county level." So, Romeo went to work, this time with a salary.

"We have a mandated curbside recycling program here in Monroe County, but there was very little public education about it. I started doing a lot of public speaking and I opened the county-owned facilities and gave tours for students, for community groups, for scout groups. I even designed a scout patch and made this an achievable recognition in cooperation with the regional Boy and Girl Scout councils."

Romeo also worked closely with the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester, developing a recycling program one Passover season and working with the federation to put recycling bins in all the temples and synagogues so that people could take some positive action, however modest, to protect the environment through recycling.

Eventually, however, after a new election and some budget cuts, Romeo's job had become less of a priority for local government. But, by then, she had become interested in a new company that had sprung up in Brockport, called Sunnking.

Started by an ardent environmentalist named Duane Beckett, Sunnking, now with a staff of more than 50, has contracts with the government and major companies in the Northeast to recycle end-of-life electronics, including televisions sets and monitors in a sound environmental manner. Romeo stated, "That's what we do with anything electronic – anything that plugs into the wall can be dismantled, broken down and put back into a commodity."

She became the company's environmental coordinator. In addition to her continuing educational efforts through the company, she also was tapped to pursue new environmental challenges.

"We're working now with some amazing things," she said. "We're working with Mayor Bloomberg's office, and with the Pollution Prevention Institute at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) through funding from a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation grant to support pollution prevention initiatives. We're looking at recycling carpet; we're looking to comb plastic to turn it back into diesel; we're working with some proprietary technology that would allow us to completely deconstruct a TV or CRT monitor, protecting the environment from the heavy metals in these materials. Really exciting new initiatives that also would help bolster the economy because it would keep production here of many items. It would create green manufacturing here in upstate New York. Ultimately, it could create what I like to call "green collar" jobs.

"I'm actually writing a grant right now," she went on, "and working with Empire State Development to acquire the new technology that will help us completely dismantle TVs. We're going to be facing a big challenge nationally because we're going to be moving from analog to digital in our TV programming and although the converter boxes are out, I think we're going to see a lot of TVs by the wayside. And we don't want these durable goods in our landfill; there's a lot of mercury and cadmium and other things in a TV that we really don't want but perhaps could be recycled. There's some technology right now that would let us take this tsunami of TVs and recycle them right here in upstate New York." It's great job, she added, "and a great time to be alive and be involved in so many awesome things."

And it's a great time to have someone like Kimie Romeo running down the field with that environmental ball. ○

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# Alison's Art

by Marie Morrison '06

For Alison Gilbert '92, the environment isn't a new issue – she's been practicing it and promoting it in one form or another since her college days, when she had food allergies but also a sweet tooth and created a healthy no-sugar, no-fat, no-wheat, no-dairy muffin that she went on to market successfully.

Instinctively, she also knew mainstream medicine wasn't right for her and became interested in holistic medicine as an alternative. Because she wasn't trained in the subject, she became instead a representative for holistic practitioners and appeared on radio and television and published a monthly newspaper. Her healing projects now include representing and promoting holistic health care practitioners and advocating for holistic medicine to become part of the medical mainstream.

Her desire to eat healthier food led to teaching health food cooking, both privately and to the public and lecturing on nutrition in continuing education classes and health food stores. Recently, she began to re-evaluate her cooking to take into account the changing nutritional needs of older people and to that end has put together a new food synergy program that incorporates some older food traditions of an earlier day with a new way.

Her food rules are as environmentally sensitive as her furniture redecorating concepts: eat local, organic, seasonal foods as much as possible; eat in moderation; limit refined foods, avoid artificial sweeteners, and the ever useful adage – eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince; and dine like a pauper. Her Food Heirloom Project also can be found on her Web site.

But she has a particular love for a project that began in her basement when she rummaged for furniture for the house that had been in her family for some time, wanting to salvage what was reusable and advance her environmental goals. Lacking more professional tools, she started to paint and spruce up some old pieces with ordinary house paint and brushes and sponges. New furniture, she insists, has no soul and doesn't inspire her. So successful was her effort that friends and neighbors asked her to redo pieces for them, too, and before she knew it she was a professional decorative painter and began her own business, which has now blossomed into several enterprises.

One of her earliest efforts resulted from paintings done by both her grandmothers. In the process of gathering up furniture, she also obtained some wooden frames and painted them. Some had interesting pictures in them and she combined them with her grandmothers' pictures and they became "Little Bytes of Art." In miniature form they're available now as pins, pendants, magnets and note cards. Her grandmothers would undoubtedly be pleased at her adaptive, and environmentally practical reuse of their creations.



Alison Gilbert recycles with imagination and artistry.

Out of these multiple efforts came the idea for a business called Alison's Art [www.alisonsart.com](http://www.alisonsart.com), which combines business marketing systems she developed and a spin-off she calls her Heirloom Project. Drawing on her interests and talents in business, food, healing and art, she calls it Alison's Heirloom Projects, which, she says, "bring something of greater value to the present, and for the future, that was meaningful in the past." The idea was inspired by the renewed interest among the environmentally conscious in heirloom tomatoes, from which she borrowed the name.

Her specialization in custom decorative painting on clients' furniture uses a technique called the five-step decorative painting system, that utilizes non-toxic materials, house paint and low-tech tools. Some details on the process are on her Web site and in a manual she has written on her techniques, called "The Recycled with Love Manual." She has appeared on the Lifetime "Our Home Show," and also has been featured in *Distinction* and *House* magazines as well as *Newsday* and the *Herald* newspapers.

Gilbert became interested in Empire State College in the early '90s, when she needed additional credits to complete her degree, after studying design, architecture, and both graphics and the fine arts.

"I was able to spend my entire year and a half at the Long Island campus doing independent studies first in nutrition and addiction studies, then in holistic medicine as an alternative healing system to mainstream medicine. From these studies, I actually started a business representing holistic practitioners, educating the public, and advocating for holism itself."

She feels recycling alone isn't enough: we must not only reduce the waste stream but recycle with love and turn things into art. It would seem that Gilbert's whole life has been a recycling of love, and art has been its beneficiary. ○



# Helping Haiti While So Far from Home

by Tom Dimopoulos

Carline Seide-Murphy '95, left her family and her native homeland as a 19-year-old when she migrated from Haiti to America in 1979.

"That's typical for most immigrants. Whoever can leave home does so and goes to work. I spent 24 years without my mother before I was able to help her come here," she says.

Even though Seide-Murphy physically left her homeland, she never left its people behind.

Five years ago, mother and daughter were reunited. It was around the same time Seide-Murphy helped found the Haitian Community Development Project (HCDP).

"It is a community organization. It's not political or religious and we try to address the needs of the Haitian community, not only here but also in Haiti. We need to make that connection because when we help a Haitian here, we help Haitians at home," says Seide-Murphy, who graduated from our Center for Distance Learning.

She explains that members of her community in Columbia County are more apt to put themselves at personal financial risk to try and help poor family members with limited resources back home in their native land.

Working with the HCDP, she coordinated a project that proposed

the installation of a neighborhood-scale incinerator for domestic wastes to address the waste issue and its impact on public health in Haiti.

In 2007, she was awarded the prestigious international Energy Globe Award for her work.

"It's an honorary award to address the issue of waste because a lot of children were getting sick," she says.

In Haiti, the mounting garbage was blocking waste pipes and open sewage was flooding into the streets. Children were at risk of disease as they strode through the open sewage and polluted water while walking from their homes to school. Additionally, garbage was being dumped into the sea that resulted in marine life disappearing, while agriculture was being affected by the infected water.

"I addressed an environmental problem. The waste problem has become a big issue in Haiti over the years," says Seide-Murphy of her proposal for a waste management program.

She also has encouraged the start of a recycling program at the small school where her sister is a teacher to tackle the problem of what to do with things like styrofoam and plastic.

"Separate the glass, the plastic, the paper and the food. Whatever does

not fit into these categories can be incinerated and I proposed to start that at the school level," she says.

An academic career put her on a path of realization that she acknowledges many in her native homeland have not had the privilege of experiencing.

"Growing up, higher education was just for the few. I found my studies at Empire State College were illuminating. It really gave me a bigger view of the world," she says of her studies, which she was able to complete while raising her family at home.

"I found that distance learning was very convenient and affordable at the time. I had children at home and it made attending college with adult responsibilities very convenient," she says.

After she received the Energy Globe Award, an overseas company contacted the HCDP and offered their involvement to help bring a small incinerator to Haiti to address the waste issue and its impact on the environment in the country.

Seide-Murphy is currently raising money to bring the project from proposal to reality and change the direction of the Haitian culture.

"We can start with this generation," she says. ○



Carline Seide-Murphy's award-winning environmental efforts are helping Haiti deal with waste management and health concern.

Celebrating the Completion of

# *Learners First*

The Campaign for Empire State College

2003 - 2008



# Highlights from *Learners First*

## *Dear Friends,*

Although our graduates live all across New York, the nation and, indeed, the world, most of you will recall that Empire State College's Coordinating Center is in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., a city fabled for its thoroughbred racing.



Alan R. Davis

In August 2008, I was handed the reins of this college, which was already at a gallop. Empire State College came out of the gate in 1971 as a leader in adult learning, and 38 years later, there is every indication that it remains in front, forging flexible, relevant, personalized education. Many are along for the ride. Among them are the visionary donors who have contributed \$9 million in private philanthropy in the past five years to support our stability and our growth. I am gratified by the generosity of their bounty, and humbled by the leadership of my predecessors, Presidents James W. Hall and Joseph B. Moore, who guided us to the point where we are today.

The hallmark of this college is opportunity, enabling more people to learn more. We are proud that we have had a role in enhancing the lives of nearly 57,000 graduates, encouraging them to pursue the ideas, ideals, experiences and skills that fuel their personal, professional and community achievements.

With their gifts, our donors make it possible for us to welcome and serve a diverse student body and to ensure that the college can respond to their expectations and aspirations with the finest faculty, facilities, equipment and academic programs.

Honoring you, our donors, is a great privilege. We appreciate that you recognize the value of Empire State College, and that you enhance the experience of current and coming waves of students with your passion and support.

As I pass the mid-point in my first year as president, it is my pleasure to thank you for your commitment to Empire State College, and to ask for your continued support of our mission and the learners who enrich our world. Truly, you are in our winners' circle.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. R. Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alan R. Davis, Ph.D.  
President, Empire State College





“It is faculty mentors who enhance student learning, and change for good the lives of thousands of adult learners and their families.”

– Dr. Susan H. Turben '72, '05

## Support for Faculty

### The Turben Professorship in Mentoring

The relationship between the adult learner and the faculty mentor is a fundamental part of the student experience at Empire State College.

Whether online or in-person, this relationship grounds students in basics while encouraging them to attain higher academic goals. The vitality of the student-mentor process is fueled by the motivation of our learners and the dedication of our knowledgeable faculty.

Dr. Susan H. Turben '72, '05 was the second graduate of Empire State College and now is an internationally recognized expert on families and child development. She has made it possible for the college to establish its first-ever

endowed chair, named in her honor. The purpose of the Turben Professorship in Mentoring is to promote excellence among new and experienced faculty who exhibit great promise and academic best practice.

Her extraordinary \$1 million gift, made with her husband, Jack, is evidence of the couple's confidence in Empire State College faculty, and their understanding of the important benefits derived by students when faculty members are encouraged to grow and excel.

Dr. Turben, who is the president of Turben Developmental Services Foundation in Beachwood, Ohio, looks back on the time she spent earning her degree as a time of engagement.

"Empire State College makes it possible for adults around the globe to earn a college degree via the World Wide Web. It is faculty mentors who enhance student learning, and change for good the lives of thousands of adult learners and their families," she said. "Our investment in the Empire State College faculty is an investment in educational opportunity."

## A Flexible Nursing Program

### The T. Urling and Mabel B. Walker '79 Endowed Scholarship in Nursing

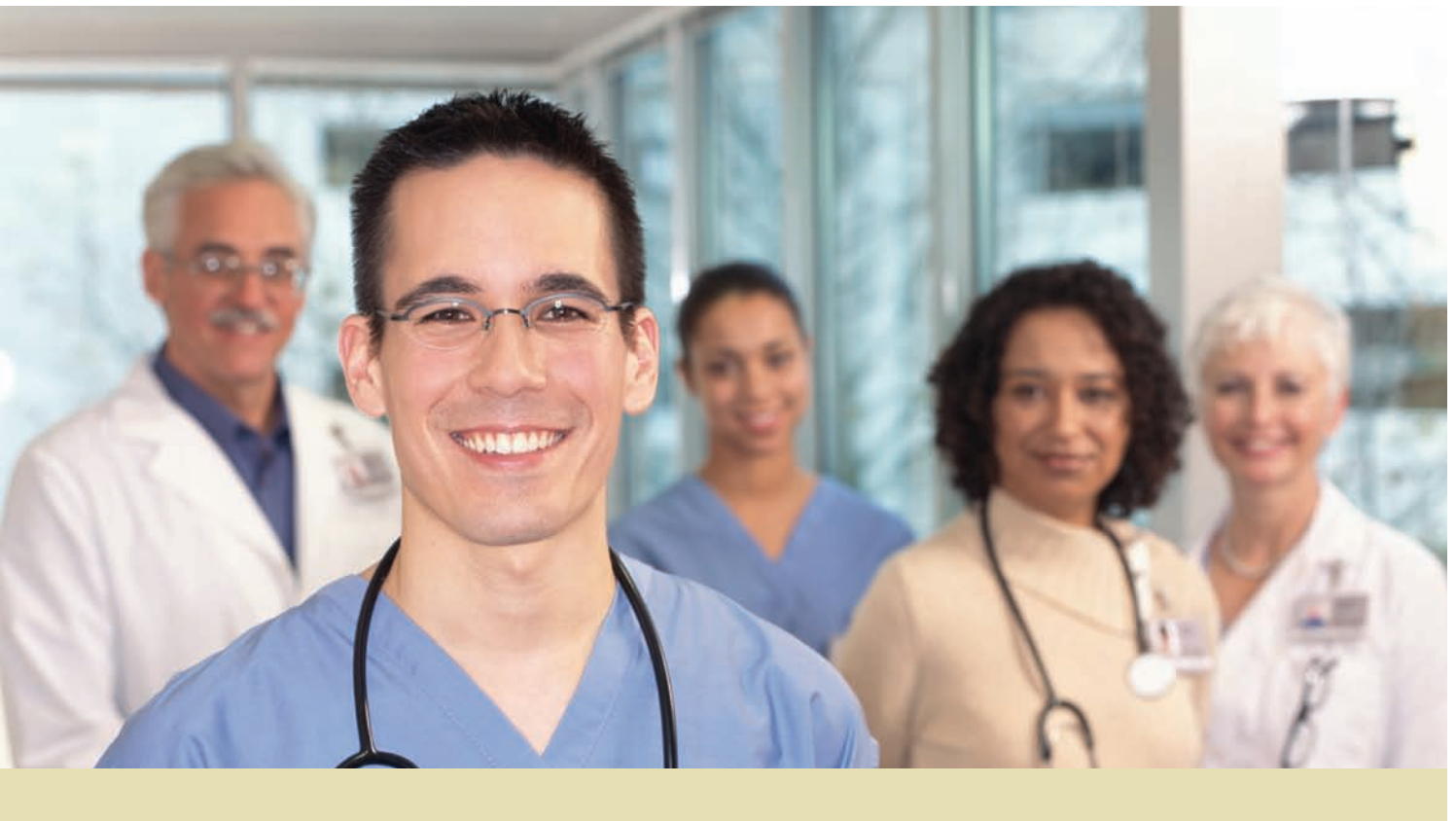
The shortage of nurses at all levels of the profession is growing in the United States. Human resource specialists project 17,000 nursing positions will be unfilled by 2010 and 44,000 by 2020.

Empire State College's response has been to develop an online Bachelor of Science in Nursing program specifically designed to move registered nurses to the next educational level in their field and enable the college's adult learner to meet their own career goals while making a significant contribution to the medical community and the nation at large.

"Our nursing program is designed to sharpen your critical-thinking skills, stimulate scientific inquiry and develop evidence-based practices keeping in mind the true art of nursing, which is caring."

– Rosann Carpenter Ed.D. RN,  
Director of Nursing  
Associate Dean





The college's new RN to B.S. in Nursing program is supported in part by the T. Urling and Mabel B. Walker '79 Endowed Scholarship in Nursing for a student enrolled at the college's Watertown Unit or who lives in the North Country of the state of New York. Mr. Walker is a member of the college's Foundation Board. Mrs. Walker is a nurse who learned her profession and earned a diploma in nursing from a hospital in Pennsylvania. Later, she continued her education at Empire State College, graduating with a bachelor's degree in human services in 1979.

The couple's motivation for their generosity was straightforward.

"We need more nurses," said Mabel Walker. "Particularly, I'd like to see nurses from the North Country, who choose to stay in the North Country, where the shortage is serious."

Mrs. Walker applauded the college's approach to learning and the possibilities this opens for adults to study from home, which she recognizes as economically and logistically efficient. She expressed support for the value of a nursing education.

"You can always get a job as a nurse," she said. "It's a career you can be involved in for your whole life."

The director of the college's nursing program, Rosann J. Carpenter, Ed.D., RN, led a team in designing the groundbreaking, web-based curriculum.

"Our nursing program is designed to sharpen your critical-thinking skills, stimulate scientific inquiry and develop evidence-based practices keeping in mind the true art of nursing, which is caring," Carpenter said.

## Support for Academic Scholarship

### The Keep-Mills Symposium on Ways of Knowing

Inquiry is the centerpiece of education.

The Empire State College Keep-Mills Symposium and Residency ensures that the process of inquiry is encouraged and enriched during a student's work with the college.

Funded with a gift in honor of his parents from alumnus Stephen Keep Mills '89, an independent filmmaker, the symposium annually presents a provocative and timely topic for discussion both online and at a residency. The 2009 multidimensional,



multimedia seminar is titled “Contested Knowledge: Religious Ways of Knowing.” It will examine the fate of religious knowledge in the United States, particularly in terms of its influence on personal thought and political leadership.

Mr. Mills’ vision to cultivate fertile intellectual ground already has stimulated excitement among both student and faculty participants.

Paul Rezac of Buffalo, N.Y., called his experience in last year’s conversations about creativity “transformational.” His questions about the nature of creativity and its role in family, society and life

**Mr. Mills’ vision to cultivate fertile intellectual ground already has stimulated excitement among both student and faculty participants.**

yielded a singular discovery for Mr. Rezac: “None of us had the answers.”

Mr. Mills recognizes that the route to meaning is paved with “inspiration,” and he is gratified that he may have provided a catalyst for some people to be guided into surprise as well as action.





## Scholarships for Deserving Students

### The Robert and Carol Johnson Endowed Scholarship

Bob Johnson '96 already was president of his own company when he decided to enroll at Empire State College.

“I wanted my grandchildren to know I was a college graduate, and to encourage other youngsters to finish their schooling,” he said.

It took him two years to complete the requirements for a business degree he'd begun long before in a traditional setting, and he worked full time while he attended the Genesee Valley Center.

Mr. Johnson spent 23 years in the automobile business in the Rochester area and during that time mentored many youngsters who attended college and about whom he said he is “very proud.” In 2004, he and his wife, Carol, decided to launch a scholarship to further support the education of minority students who might otherwise not be able to earn a degree.

“We started the scholarship small, but raised its value every year,” he said, speaking from his retirement home in Sarasota, Fla. “Last year, when my wife died, in her honor, I increased the scholarship to \$100,000 for minority students in the Genesee Valley area, to thank the people in that community, and to thank Empire State College for supporting my success.” He gives back in other ways as well, generously donating his time and talent as a member of the college's Foundation Board.

### Stewart's Shops – Empire State College Scholarship

The motto of Stewart's Shops, 300 convenience shops in upstate New York and Vermont, is: “Closer to you.” It is something the company proves every day through its generosity to the communities where its stores are located. Scholarship support for students in those communities is just one way Stewart's nurtures its neighbors.

**The support from Stewart's, along with matching funds from the Empire State College Foundation, provides scholarships to 28 students a year.**

The company has teamed up with Empire State College to create a program that doubles the resources available to adults who attend the college. The Empire State College Foundation will match the Stewart's pledge, making it possible to provide scholarships to 28 students a year. The scholarships are awarded on the basis of need and academic promise, and are available to community college students who choose to complete their undergraduate degrees at Empire State College.

Provost Joyce Elliott applauded the Saratoga Springs-based company's vision.



**“Education can be life changing in the best sense ... a scholarship for an adult impacts both the student and the whole family.”** – Susan Dake

“The partnership underscores the key role of community colleges in higher education, stimulates the economy and enhances the well-being of families and communities while it helps individuals complete their bachelor’s degrees,” she said.

This is the fourth year that Stewart’s Shops has awarded the Empire State College scholarships to residents of the northeast, central and Hudson Valley regions of New York.

“Education can be life changing in the best sense,” said Susan Dake, president of Stewart’s Foundation. “A scholarship for an adult impacts both the student and the whole family. Stewart’s Shops is proud to be of assistance.”

### **Nicholas Pekearo Endowed Scholarship**

By the time Empire State College creative writing student Nicholas Pekearo was 28 years old, he was well on his way to success. One of his novels, “The Wolfman,” had been accepted for publication by Tor Books, an imprint of Macmillan. But Mr. Pekearo never saw his book on a shelf because he was fatally shot while working as an auxiliary police officer in Greenwich Village.

New York Police Department Commissioner Ray Kelly called the young officer “valiant.” And more than one person has referred to him as a hero. Mr. Pekearo was felled as he and another officer pursued a man who had killed a restaurant worker.

Ironically, he was especially drawn to write about heroes who, like Superman, are a hybrid of super-power and vulnerability. As an officer on the street he was able to make contributions to the security of his community; in his personal life, Mr. Pekearo spent his time reading and writing. He was strong and he was sensitive; he was a man of action and he was a man of words.

“Nick said from the time he was a little boy that he wanted to be a writer,” says his mother, Iola Latman. “He was a talented, funny, ambitious young man and Empire State College was definitely the right environment for him. He loved going to classes and his goal was to finish his degree and teach writing.”

Through the generosity of Nick’s mother, his brother, Chris Latman, and dozens of other donors, Empire State College has created the Nicholas Pekearo Endowed Scholarship. This fund will honor Nick’s memory by providing scholarship support to students from the New York City-area who are studying creative writing.

View our donors report online at  
[www.esc.edu/Donor-Report](http://www.esc.edu/Donor-Report)

## Teaching Math and Science to Adults

### The Charitable Leadership Foundation

Funding ideas that fundamentally change lives: that's the mission of The Charitable Leadership Foundation.

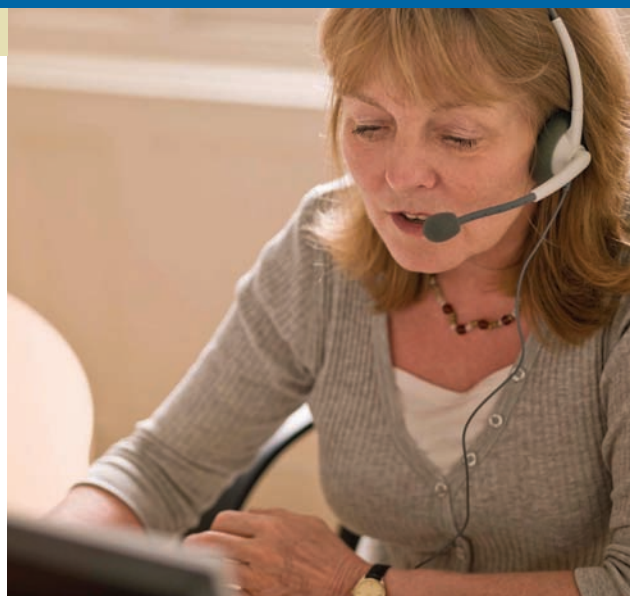
A philanthropic organization headquartered in Clifton Park, N.Y., the foundation supports programs with the power to have a positive influence on all people, especially individuals and families with low incomes.

Developing math skills and a better understanding of the practical applications of science among adults is a goal shared by The Charitable Leadership Foundation and Empire State College.

As a means to achieving that goal, the foundation underwrote an initiative undertaken by the college to develop and implement an online math and science curriculum that is accessible and convenient for adults, and meets the State University's general education requirements.

"The vision dovetails with the commitment of the college's faculty and deans to introduce vital how-tos to adults, whose lives can be enhanced by their use," said Meg Benke, dean of the Center for Distance Learning. "Because they are interactive, these classes engage students who might not have been open to learning math or science in a traditional setting."

Key to the successful acceptance and use of these courses is their relevance. Topics are probed that demand and deserve attention in daily life, but can



**"Because they are interactive, these classes engage students who might not have been open to learning math or science in a traditional setting."**

**– Meg Benke, dean**

present roadblocks for people without fundamental knowledge. One course developed that had particular relevance during the recent presidential election season was "Voter Math." It educated students headed to the polls about who holds power in an election and how candidates decide what positions to take. Another course is titled "Energy: The Issues and the Science" and guides participants through such topics as the global impact of consuming fossil fuels, how the environment is affected and what new technologies can be developed to achieve a sustainable planet.



## Annual Fund

Annual fund gifts of all sizes – made consistently by our alumni, faculty, staff and friends – provide money to live by. These dollars provide scholarships and no-interest loans for students and allow us to respond to trends in education and technology to meet the changing needs of our communities. Every gift counts at Empire State College.

### Dianne Cappiello '01

Dianne Cappiello credits Empire State College with changing the direction of her life. That is why she continues to make annual giving to the college a priority.

**“I think of others who have put their dreams on hold ... I know that Empire State College can remove roadblocks and change lives. That is why I give, so others can get an education and achieve their dreams.”**  
– Dianne Cappiello

“I started taking classes at Empire State College in 1987,” said Ms. Cappiello, now a doctoral candidate in history at Cornell University. “But I put my education on hold when I got married and started a career. I could only take one course at a time and the prospect of completing my degree seemed remote. So, I stopped.”

While working as a medical secretary, Ms. Cappiello realized that her career options were limited. She decided to finish what she had started. She completed her bachelor’s degree in human resources management at Empire State College’s Binghamton Unit.

Through her coursework, along with encouragement from her faculty mentor, she ultimately accomplished much more.

“I discovered that I could succeed as an adult student,” Ms. Cappiello said. “I figured, ‘Why stop here?’ I went on to get a master’s degree and began teaching history. Then, I entered the doctoral program at Cornell.”

Ms. Cappiello believes her experience is common.

### Gerald Gentner '74

Gerald Gentner said his degree from Empire State College paved the path to a successful career in management consulting. Mr. Gentner was teaching race relations for the United States Coast Guard on Governors Island in the 1970s when he decided that a bachelor’s degree would enhance his work.

“I found out that Empire State College offered evening classes in downtown Manhattan and that they could provide a faculty mentor to work with me one-to-one,” Mr. Gentner said. “This was a whole new way of getting an education and it opened doors for me.”

More than 30 years later, the Teaneck, N.J., resident gives regularly to the college’s Annual Fund so today’s students can enjoy the same benefits and opportunities.



# Spotlight on Students

We strive to ensure that limited resources do not prevent our students from pursuing their goals. Gifts to the college allow us to support students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to learn. Your investments help make dreams come true.

## Jonathan Kistler, student

Of the nearly two million farms operating in the U.S., most are small and family-owned. That has not prevented technology from changing the nature of the business.

Productivity is being enhanced and the marketplace expanded as processes are made more efficient and standards for products are raised. That’s why Jonathan Kistler, 23, decided to pursue a bachelor’s degree in business. His goal was to get the family farm certified as biodynamic.

The scholarship award he received from the T. Urling and Mabel B. Walker Scholarship is enabling Mr. Kistler to “finish up, graduate and have a good experience.”

“Both the scholarship and Empire State College’s online courses allowed me to further my education,” said Mr.

Kistler. “On the farm, my days start early and end late, so I have to complete my studies in between.”

Mr. Kistler expects his business degree will give him the financial skills to expand milk processing operations and grow the farm’s profits. “I am grateful for the help I received for books and courses, and I know it will make a positive difference in how things turn out for my family.”

## Aili MacDonald, student

Aili MacDonald, a senior completing her bachelor’s degree in psychology, also benefited from donor support. A professor noted the quality of Ms. MacDonald’s coursework and “secretly” submitted her name to receive a Phyllis E. Dake Foundation Scholarship. The award not only helped Ms. MacDonald finance her education, but it affirmed her decision to accelerate her program by studying full time.

“One of the things I really appreciated about the scholarship was the validation it gave me as a student who was balancing a heavy workload, including working part time, and still keeping my grades up,” Ms. MacDonald said.

“I value the fact that I could design my degree to fit my career goals and that donors to the college helped make my education affordable,” she said.

# Campaign Highlights

- Raised in excess of \$73 million during the campaign
- Over \$9 million was committed by alumni, employees, friends, foundations and corporations
- Increased the endowment by 55 percent to \$13,174,563 as of June 30, 2008
- Secured two gifts in excess of \$1 million, a first in the college’s history
- Created 22 new endowed funds for scholarships
- Invested in infrastructure across the state including the planned construction of our first two permanent centers in Rochester and on Long Island
- 10,074 alumni made at least one gift to the campaign
- Enhanced alumni outreach and engagement, including the launch of our award-winning alumni online community and Web site
- \$2,589,357 committed to the Annual Fund
- Launched Master of Arts in Teaching program for career changing adults, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program for RNs and an extensive suite of online classes in math and science
- 35 alumni and friends joined the Boyer Society by remembering the college in their estate plans

Campaign Goals and Results				
	Private Philanthropy	Federal Funding	State Support	Totals
<b>Goal</b>	\$9,000,000	\$6,000,000	\$36,500,000	\$51,500,000
<b>Commitments Received</b>	\$9,161,258	\$3,158,323	\$60,910,000	\$73,229,581
<b>Percent Completed</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>167%</b>	<b>142%</b>

# Leading the Way

*Learners First* The Campaign for Empire State College was a resounding success. Campaigns, however, are not all about money. *Learners First* would not have been successful without the care and diligence of the volunteers listed here.

## Campaign Co-chairs

Susan Turben '72, '05    Richard Liebich  
Lewis Golub

## Annual Fund Chairs

James Karcher '79    Melba Tolliver '98  
John J. Corrou '94

## Empire State College Foundation Board of Directors 2008 - 2009

Morton Bahr '83, '95  
Evelyn Buchanan '99  
Phillip B. Catchings  
John J. Corrou '94  
Dr. Alan R. Davis  
Andi Emerson '01, '05  
Jerel T. Golub  
Robert Johnson '96  
James G. Karcher '79

James R. Keane  
James W. Lytle  
James R. Malanson  
Stephen K. Mills '89  
William H. Parker Jr. '86  
Vincent A. Roberti  
Brigadier General  
F. David Sheppard  
Robert J. Thrasher

Melba Tolliver '98  
Monte I. Trammer  
Ann S. Turner '86  
Susan H. Turben '72, '05  
T. Urling Walker  
Evelyn H. Wells  
Stephen P. Wink '83  
Paul Tucci

## College Council Members 2008 - 2009

Richard Liebich  
Michael Dennis  
Roselie Donadio

Anthony Esposito  
Elizabeth Collins Kaming  
Lynne L. Lenhardt  
Patricia E. Salkin

Lewis P. Trippett  
Daniel Wall  
Linda Weiss

*Watch a video-taped message from  
President Alan Davis at [www.esc.edu/Alumni](http://www.esc.edu/Alumni)*

# The Jolly Green Garbage Man

John Benvengo '89

Turning Waste into Energy and Water

by Liz W. Armtun

"It's a big joke in my family – about how garbage has been good to me," laughs John Benvengo, the freshly-minted president and chief operating officer of International Power Group, a waste-to-energy recycling business in Celebration, Fla. You might say it's been very good to him.

Benvengo reflects on the winding path that brought him from his Brooklyn childhood to the sunny skies of Florida, and the sunnier prospects for the recycling business.

"When I graduated from high school at 17, I didn't know what I wanted to do, whether to go to college or trade school," muses Benvengo. "Out of patriotism, I joined the Navy." This was at the beginning of the Vietnam war, and he served aboard the U.S.S. Providence, CLG-6, a Cleveland-class cruiser stationed in Japan to provide support for ground troops in the conflict. "My military experience is what made me who I am today: aggressive, dedicated and self-motivated. It all comes from the discipline you get in the military," he says.

After the service, he went to Nassau Community College on the GI Bill, but didn't finish his associate degree. "I was married with my first son, and I had other responsibilities." Responsibilities that kept him in a career with the New York City Sanitation Department ... for 20 years.

"For me with a family, a mortgage, taxes – all of it, I couldn't finish college, he says, "But I wanted to prepare myself for a second career. When I found out that at Empire State College, I could use my life experiences for credits toward a bachelor's degree, it was perfect. It gave me the luxury of flexibility to go to classes, meet with a mentor, and get the degree."

He graduated in 1989 with a bachelor's in business, at age 43 from the Long Island Center. For him, it was a personal milestone, "I told my kids – I don't care what you do in life, because you can always fall back on your education."

Retiring from the New York City Sanitation Department as a supervisor in 1990, he was ready to move on ... as a manager in the waste industry. In 2002, Benvengo moved to Florida as general manager of BFI Allied Waste, where he oversaw the movement of 3,000 tons of municipal solid waste (MSW)

dumped daily and transported to out-of-town landfills. He also was responsible for the hauling divisions at BFI/Allied Waste. From there, it was on to RSF Recycling overseeing the Florida operations, including new accounts and trucking operations.

At this point, he was ready to move even higher up the management ladder, to run an entire company. He says "I love authority, I like to be up front, making decisions. I like success. I wanted the opportunity to do my own thing."

International Power Group is giving him that opportunity. As president of this recycling powerhouse, he is poised to compete globally in the fast-changing waste management market. As a leader in the development and the implementation of new cutting-edge technologies that maximize recycling values while providing environmentally safe disposal of solid wastes and hazardous materials, this is a company to watch. With its proven clean technologies, solid wastes and hazardous materials can be minimized while producing significant secondary benefits such as clean energy and clean water.

The unique feature of the power group's waste-to-energy (WTE) technology and equipment is the compact, modular design and its ability to materially reduce airborne pollutants. What's more, their gasification process can produce significant amounts of electricity, and purified water. Each module is capable of combusting a minimum of 180 tons of solid and hazardous wastes per day, reducing the aggregate waste to less than 10 percent of its original volume, and 20 percent of its weight. A typical WTE module can generate six continuous megawatts of electricity per hour as a by-product of the waste reduction process. In addition, up to a quarter of a million gallons of distilled water can be produced per day.

Currently, Benvengo has projects in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Mexico, and has just signed the company's first joint venture in the U.S. to build a waste energy plant in Indiana. He says with pride, "We're doing our part to save the environment."

While you could say that garbage has been very good to Benvengo, he's now returning the favor to the environment. ○

## Water Woman

(continued from page 3)

She did a 10-month tour of duty with Student Conservation Association AmeriCorps, which led both to greater involvement in the Hudson River Estuary Program and to college. “You’re given an educational award at the end of your assignment,” Martino explains. She looked around for the right college and settled on Empire State College, where she could incorporate her considerable life experience into her degree.

Martino complemented her assessed credits with courses in chemistry and statistics and writing; studied microeconomics and environmental policy at the Adirondack Residency; and in about two years completed her B.S. in environmental stewardship.

A devoted steward of the Hudson River, she takes great satisfaction in raising awareness about water quality issues, bringing diverse stakeholders together, and especially teaching the next group of stakeholders. “I sincerely believe that when you teach the children, they go home and teach their parents,” says Martino.

There is much teaching and much work to be done on her beloved Hudson, but Martino is encouraged by what has been

accomplished during her lifetime. She recalls when she was growing up in Albany how “you couldn’t walk past the river without holding your nose; and there was no such thing as bald eagles living around this area. I’m seeing a lot of forward motion – areas that are swimmable, some fish that are safe to eat, better access points.”

And the eagles are back, their presence lovingly observed and recorded by the River Haggie in the red kayak. ○

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**June 10:** “There’s something magical about 6:00 in the evening on the river. It’s when a snake skims across the water with only its head peeking out; when a beaver crashes down the side of its lodge eager to begin the night shift; when a muskrat hurries to swim out of the way; when creatures go ‘splash, kerplunk and swish’ as an eagle sits on its perch watching the sun take its rest.”

– Fran Martino, Stockport Creek, Hudson River Mile 121.5

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PHOTO BY BILL DEMMA

Fran Martino '07, works with a group interested in stream ecology to conduct a stream study of the Roeliff Jansen Kill at the Roeliff Jansen Park in Hillsdale, in New York's eastern Columbia County. Previous stream studies of the creek have revealed a broad biodiversity that indicates it is healthy enough to support fragile organisms extremely sensitive to pollution.

## Autism and the Environment: Can a Mother's Cause Have an Effect?

by Barbara Fischkin, student, Center for Graduate Programs

It's been years since I felt as if I had any control over my own time. In my dreams, I like to blame it on the frenetic schedule of a hockey mom. It's true that I was one – and still am to some extent, since our younger son Jack plays on a college team in Maine. The rest of the story, though, is grimmer. Jack's older brother Dan – who, as the child of itinerant foreign correspondents, spoke English as well as words and phrases in Spanish, Cantonese and Tagalog – regressed suddenly into non-verbal autism at the age of three and a half. He never recovered. When this first happened back in 1991, my husband and I suspected environmental toxicity and we still do.

Back then we also felt very alone. Few people knew what autism was in the early '90s. Although Bruno Bettelheim's theory blaming "refrigerator mothers," for autism had been long debunked, there were many who still believed it was true. I had to explain, in so many words, that autism was a neuro-biologically based disorder affecting communication and social skills and often sensory tolerance and movement. I used to think that what happened would be much easier to accept, if only I didn't have to relive it with each new acquaintance. Going to the playground meant much more than watching to make sure my son didn't run away, eat leaves or walk in front of swings. It meant explaining autism and the regression that is so commonly associated with it and then suffering the ensuing amazed stares.

These days, though, being out with my 21-year-old son, as my husband and I often are, is even scarier. But on a global level rather than a personal one. Everywhere we go people now understand what autism means because they have in some way experienced it. Often they tell me about a young relative who has been recently

diagnosed. And time and again, usually when Dan is in the midst of dealing with a challenging behavior, someone with their own child with autism comes forward to help.

Anecdotally it's hard to deny that there is an autism epidemic afoot and according to federal health officials, the statistics concur. Officially, at least one in 150 children is now diagnosed with autism, including many whose cases are as severe as our son's. This makes autism more prevalent than pediatric cancer, diabetes and AIDS combined.



Barbara Fischkin and son Dan

In some states, including New York and New Jersey, the rate is said to be even higher. Officially the cause is still unknown. But many parents – along with more physicians and scientists than one might suspect from reading and listening to the mainstream media – believe that vaccines could be the cause. In the years after Dan regressed there was a considerable increase in the number of vaccines children received. That, coupled with a toxic Mercury preservative – one that has since been removed from many but not all vaccines – could very well, in my opinion as well, account for much of the epidemic. Interestingly, Somali immigrants in Minnesota, whose children were first vaccinated when they came to the United States, are

seeing many cases of autism, although it was rare in their homeland.

In Dan's case we are not sure whether his autism was caused by a vaccine or not. But based on the sudden and severe onset of his illness at what was developmentally-speaking an advanced age, we are sure that there was an external factor, if not several. When it happened, we were living in Hong Kong and one day the playground of our luxury apartment complex overlooking the South China Sea was covered with white powder, presumably from a nearby construction site. Not long after that Dan, in an incident that may or may not have been connected, was hospitalized with a fever of 106 and the resulting dehydration. Recently, we have been seeing a state-of-the-art autism physician who, as the result of genetic investigation in tandem with intensive blood and urine screening, has described Dan's body as a "garbage truck that isn't dumping." In short, he can't get rid of toxins. What if, as a little boy, he was hit with a large load of them?

Lately though, with my sons growing up – and with publishing and teaching becoming more competitive – it occurred to me that graduate studies might be the very fuel I need. My goal was to find a graduate program that would inspire me as I explore adult autism in regard to many issues, including environmental cause.

Empire State College Professor Elana Michelson gave me the term I needed to use to bring the disparate elements of my book into cohesion: interdisciplinary. And so, I applied to the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program and began in September 2008. I have found that even in the required courses there is room to start exploring my specific area. I know how to write about autism as a mother. The next step is to write about it as a scholar. ○

# Empire State College Going Green

by Rick Iuli, mentor, Master of Arts in Teaching Program



Rick Iuli

What began on April 22, 1970 as a modest grassroots “teach-in” to bring into the political arena discussion of and solutions to our nation’s environmental health problems, quickly mushroomed into the defining moment of the environmental movement – Earth Day. Although he had initiated earlier attempts, such as then-President Kennedy’s five-day, 11-state conservation tour, to force the environmental issue onto the political agenda, it was not until the fall of 1969 that Sen. Gaylord Nelson began to witness the ripening fruits of his labor. In September 1969, Sen. Nelson put forth his call for a nationwide “teach-in” on behalf of the environment. In the six months that followed Sen. Nelson’s modest announcement, this teach-in grew to become a self-sustaining movement carried on by 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools and communities across the nation that early spring day. That same year, President Richard Nixon authorized the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and congress amended the Clean Air Act to include standards for air quality and auto emissions. In 1968, a future U.S. senator, vice president and presidential candidate sat in a Harvard University classroom intrigued by the early research findings of his professor, geochemist Roger Revelle. Thirty-nine years later, that young student, Al Gore, shared the Nobel Peace Prize with the United Nation’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

In fall of 2006, I was selected to become a member of The Climate Project, Nobel laureate Al Gore’s grassroots initiative to educate the nation and the world about the growing problem and urgency of global climate change. In January of 2007, I participated in a three-day workshop led by Mr. Gore in Nashville, Tenn. at which

200 of my fellow Climate Project recruits met with Mr. Gore, his staff and leading climate change scientists to review and discuss the growing body of scientific evidence pointing to rising global temperatures, its root causes in human burning of fossil fuels, its short- and long-term impacts on the environment, and current and future solutions to reversing the troubling trend. At the time, educating the general population as to the reality of rising greenhouse gases and their direct correlation to increasing global temperatures, along with environmental impacts, was our primary charge. Upon returning to Rochester, N.Y., I began giving live presentations of “An Inconvenient Truth” across Central and Western New York and the Empire State College community. At about the same time, plans were underway for the fall 2007 Adirondack residency, the theme of which was to be global climate change. Members of the college community interested in this issue included Wayne Ouder Kirk, Chris Rounds, William Ehmann and Elaine Handley. Chris Rounds also had spearheaded an effort to establish a collegewide Environmental Impact Committee, authorized by the College Faculty Senate.

The collegewide discussions that have taken place over the past two years have led Empire State College to take stock of what we are already doing to live a more sustainable institutional life, but also to spur new initiatives and make more formal commitments to becoming a green institution. Some of the initiatives I would like to bring to your attention are:

- The college becoming a member institution of the American Association for Sustainability in Higher Education;
- SUNY’s adoption of an Energy Conservation and Sustainability Implementation Plan;
- The efforts of the college’s Environmental Impact Committee
- Presentations and discussions on the global climate crisis, sustainability and greening of the college curriculum at the All Areas of Study, All College

Conference, Student All College Conference and College Professionals Conference;

- The creation of center environmental impact teams to look at ways each center and unit can meet the growing demands for meeting sustainability standards, such as those put forth by SUNY and AASHE;
- The design and construction of new buildings that meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification standards; and
- An inventory of current and proposed studies that are green.

My hope for the future emanates from President Barack Obama’s inauguration speech in which he said, “ ... We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories ... we will work tirelessly to lessen the nuclear threat, and roll back the specter of a warming planet ... To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to suffering outside our borders; nor can we consume the world’s resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.”

Members of the Empire State College community are leading the way in the green movement which is, indeed, alive and well as we approach the 40th anniversary, in 2010, of Earth Day and the 50th anniversary, in 2012, of Rachel Carlson’s Silent Spring. I invite you to join the likes of Dorothy Childers, Alaskan conservationist who was awarded the 2007 Pew Fellow in Marine Conservation for Climate Change Strategies, or Carline Seide-Murphy’s, Haitian Community Development Project. I hope you will find this issue of Empire State College Alumni and Student News illuminating, interesting and spurs you to action, regardless of the scale at which you contribute. Every effort makes a difference. ○

# College News

## A. Tomasz Grunfeld Receives Fulbright Award



A. Tomasz Grunfeld

A. Tomasz Grunfeld, a mentor at the Metropolitan Center and a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to spend the spring 2009

semester teaching at the Universitatea de Vest din Timisoara (University of the West in Timisoara) in Transylvania, Romania. Grunfeld teaches foreign relations of the United States and critical media studies. He has lived and traveled widely in Asia, and written a number of books, including "The Making of Modern Tibet," as well as articles, reviews and scholarly presentations. He is the recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation, and has been a consultant to BBC TV. He is widely sought as a speaker and commentator on the issues concerning the relationship between China, Tibet and the U.S. as well as U.S. policy regarding the movement for Tibet's independence.

The Fulbright Program has allowed 108,160 Americans to study, teach and conduct research abroad and 178,340 students, scholars and teachers from other countries to engage in similar activities in the United States.

## College Kudos

**Rosann Carpenter**, associate dean and director of the nursing program, submitted a proposal for three years and \$650,271 for Advancing Nurses, Improving Care: Expanding a Statewide RN-Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in New York. The proposal was submitted to the Nurse Education, Practice and Retention program of the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

**Nataly Tcherepashenets**, a mentor at the Center for Distance Learning, submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities for the development of an online course, On Mercy and Justice: From Antiquity to Present. The proposal, submitted to the NEH Enduring Questions program, is for 18 months and \$25,000.

**Michael Andolina**, a mentor in the Johnstown Unit, presented a paper at the Eighth Global Conference on Business and Economics in Florence, Italy. The paper, How We Learn Ethics: A Qualitative Research Project, was based on surveys of his students. He also served as a panelist for the conference session on "Ethics and Integrity In the Workforce," and as a moderator for a session on "Marketing to the Third World: The Working Poor."

**Bernard Flynn**, a mentor at the Metropolitan Center, delivered a paper at an international conference in Lisbon, Portugal, celebrating the centennial of the birth of Merleau-Ponty and Livy-Strauss. His paper, Merleau-Ponty and Livy-Strauss as Critics of the Philosophy of John Paul Sartre, will be published in a forthcoming special issue of the Journal of the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research devoted to the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty.

**Susan Tower Hollis**, a mentor at the Genesee Valley Center, had the second edition of her book "The Ancient Egyptian 'Tale of Two Brothers: A Mythological, Religious, Literary and Historico-Political Study," published as the first volume under David Brown Book Company new series Bannerstone Press. She also presented a paper at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Boston on Nov. 24 as part of a panel discussing the expected Dec. 2008 volume, "From an Antique Land: An Introduction to the Literature of the Ancient Near East."

**Eric L. Ball**, mentor/coordinator of language and cultural studies in the Center for Distance Learning, published the article, "The Place Within: Scott Russell Sanders on Literature and Art of Place" in ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment, Vol. 15(2): 137 - 155.

**Lynae Sakshaug**, an associate professor in mathematics education in the M.A.T. program at the Genesee Valley Center, who presented a paper, Learning and Engaging in Doing Mathematics in an On-line Environment at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Regional Conference and Exposition in Reno, Nev. in November.

**Nadine Fernandez**, a Central New York Center mentor and CDL area coordinator of gender and family studies, co-organized an invited session for the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco, Calif. in Nov. As part of the panel, Engagement, Authenticity and Tourism: Gender, Sexuality, Ethnicity/Race and Space in the Americas, she presented a paper, Tourism, Race and the Construction of Authenticity in Havana.

## Empire State College Named a Top Military Friendly School

Empire State College has been named as one of the top military friendly colleges and universities by Military Advanced Education, a publication aimed at service men and women who want to take advantage of the military education benefit.

"We are particularly pleased because we were considered alongside of bigger schools with large military education programs, or schools for whom this is all they do. This a particularly noteworthy honor," said Linda Frank '98, '00, director of corporate and military programs for the college.

# Alumni News

## Center for Distance Learning

**Sarah Smorol '06** is a Ph.D. candidate and graduate assistant in American Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). She addresses issues of marginalization of raced and gendered bodies in literature, cinema and visual arts. In spring 2009, she will be a graduate assistant for the course Screening Asians, dealing with representation of Asian Americans in U.S. cinema. Smorol is co-founder and director of the American Studies Graduate Student Association at UHM as well as being a member of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association.

**Brooklynn Welden '06** is working toward her doctorate in conflict analysis and resolution at NOVA Southeastern University's Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences and interning at St. Stephens Community House. She also has a consulting business, Sintashta Dispute Resolution.

## Center for Graduate Programs

United States Navy Captain **Robert Gould '90** retired following 27 years of reserve and active duty and now is an aviation safety instructor with Global Jet Services. He had been an eight-year member of the board of directors of the Professional Aviation Maintenance Association and volunteers for many FAA pilot/technician safety seminars.

**Jean Hale '92 '98** is director of alumni relations and development with the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. She writes that her "education and credentials from Empire State College have served me well and I have never regretted the time spent to earn my B.S. and M.A."

The New Hampshire Business Education Association has named **Dorothy Morin '92, '96**, who teaches business management and marketing at Nashua High School North, New Hampshire Business Educator of the Year.

**Juan Vazquez '07** has been named director of marketing and public affairs with the World Trade Center Buffalo Niagara, an international business development organization committed to helping companies trade by providing consulting services, education and training and recognized as a Center of Excellence by the World Trade Centers Association.

## Central New York Center

**Tom Adessa '92** is the author of "Butternuts," the first in a series of children's books he has authored which tell the tale of a red squirrel who lives in the Adirondacks. He hopes to teach children how to deal with fears, the power of friendships, acceptance and how to develop self-esteem.

**Ken Champ '00** has been named director of information technology with Fust Charles Chambers LLP.

**Astrid Ewing '82** is the author of "The Little Girl Can Cook," a cookbook/story drawn from her global travels and fascination with people, places and cuisines from throughout the world. To view a book sample, visit: [www.winpresshosting.com/The\\_Little\\_Girl\\_Can\\_Cook.html](http://www.winpresshosting.com/The_Little_Girl_Can_Cook.html).

**Ann Rushlo '07** brings more than 28 years of corporate experience to her role as director of Leadership Mohawk Valley (LMV), a leadership development program she herself graduated from in 2002. In addition, she has been appointed continuing professional education program coordinator at SUNYIT. Her many accolades include being the 2008 recipient of the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce Chairman's Award for Exceptional Leadership and Dedicated Service as well as the 2006 recipient of the Mohawk Valley Women in Business award. She is chairman-elect of the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce and serves on the Rome Hospital Rehab Unit Community Advisory Board.

**Dorothy Stacy '93** has written her second juvenile historical fiction novel, "Three Weeks in Utica," a continuation of a story begun in her first book, "Erie Canal Cousins." She plans to write a series of four to five books about a young girl traveling

down the Erie Canal from Albany to Utica with a boatload of cousins she has never met.

**Denise Young '99** is director of the Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization which is addressing, among other issues, the growing number of cases of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

## Genesee Valley Center

**Linda Holbrook '94** is the author of "You Wanna Go to Willard?," the story of a young girl learning how to grow up, find happiness and along the way success in her life.

**Myra Kovary '76** is a professional freelance orchestral harpist who teaches the instrument privately and also plays weddings, receptions, etc. She has released the CD "In Pursuit of Happiness: Five Centuries of Favorites for Solo Harp" which follows "Morning Light," a CD she released with flutist Laura Campbell. Kovary earned a master's in landscape architecture from Cornell University and her thesis work was included in "Interaction by Design: Bringing People and Plants Together for Health and Well-being." She also serves as a United Nations representative from MindFreedom International to the U.N. Ad Hoc Committee on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**John Larish '80** is the author of "Silver to Silicon," "The Seat Next to Me" and "Only the Faces Are Different." All are available at Amazon.com.

**Terri Mertz '01**, who holds a graduate degree from Rochester Institute of Technology, has joined the staff of The Rochester School for the Deaf where she is the Outreach Center's coordinator of Signs for All, the school's American Sign Language instruction program.

**Patricia Wild '80** was awarded an honorary degree in community service from Cape Cod Community College for founding the Computers for Seniors program and also for her leadership on the Barnstable County Health and Human Service Advisory Committee and her ongoing commitment to find solutions for unmet educational needs across Cape Cod.



## The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies

**Denis Hughes '99**, president of the 2.5 million member New York State AFL-CIO, is one of 11 appointments made by Gov. Paterson to the New York State Commission on State Asset Maximization. According to Gov. Paterson, "Now, more than ever, we must bring together both public and private stakeholders to identify ways to maximize our economic potential and identify sources of efficiency and innovation." Hughes also serves as deputy chair of the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York as well as chair of the management and budget committee and member of the audit committee. In 2008, he was appointed to the three-year term as a commissioner of the New York State Insurance Fund.

## Hudson Valley Center

**Sy Cook '80**, who first attended college in 1941, is a retired electrical engineer with plans to attend graduate school. He has written a number of published technical articles and is the author of "The Child and the Serpent" and co-author of "The Sharing."



Sy Cook '80

Retired police detective **Mark Gado '99**, who holds an M.S. from Iona College, is a contributor to "Famous American Crimes and Trials" and author of "Death Row Women" and "Killer Priest." He also writes for Tru TV. Gado is a member of the International Association of Crime Writers and Patriot Guard.

**Angie Mills '05** graduated from Pace University with an M.S.T. with dual certification in childhood and students with disabilities.

A Certified Research Administrator, **Marie Smith '96** is grant administrator and compliance officer with the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies. She serves on the board of the Research Administrators Certification Council and is co-author of a paper which was published in the fall 2008 issue of The Journal of Research Administration.

Following a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis, **Charles Sourby '91** has become a strong advocate for assistive technology. His efforts have included a presentation to the New York State Parks and Recreation Society.

**Linda Tuttle '95**, who received an M.A. in religious studies from St. Joseph's Seminary, is a case manager with Dutchess County DSS-Adult Protective Services as well as a part-time campus minister with the University Apostolate of the Archdiocese of New York and advisor to the Catholic students at Vassar College.

## Long Island Center

"Armor of God," a religious mystery and sequel to "The Masada Scroll," is the most recent book co-authored by **Paul Block '73**, published by Macmillan. They are but two of the many books to Block's credit including "Beneath the Sky" and "San Francisco: The Deceit."

**Rosaria Broesler '03** is a work experience teacher/coordinator with Eastern Suffolk B.O.C.E.S. and member of the Work Experience Coordinators Association. In 2007, she was named Outstanding Educator for Long Island by the Greater New York Automobile Dealers Association.

**Dominic Cardinale '95**, who has a professional engineering license in fire protection, is a partner and vice president of the consulting firm Rodkin Cardinale. The firm, which has over 20 engineers and designers in its Manhattan-based office, specializes in mid and high-rise hotels and apartment buildings, nursing homes, and state and private schools.

**Barry Fine '86** is a member of the Suffolk County Bar Association and partner with Fine, Fine and Associates. He also is a volunteer mediator with the United States District Court, Eastern District of New York. He is listed in "Who's Who in American Law."

**Joan Hertz '79**, a psychoanalyst, also is the author of The Psychoanalysis of the Adoptee, an article published in the spring 2008 edition of The New York State Society for Clinical Social Work newsletter. She conducted a workshop by the same name in November 2008.

## Metropolitan Center

**Marion Belcher '01** earned an M.A. in language and literacy from City College of New York and credits her experience at Empire State College with helping her maintain a 4.0 G.P.A. Currently, she teaches English as a second language.

The Indianapolis Museum of Art hosted "Class Pictures: Photography" by **Dawoud Bey '90**, a graduate who holds a Master in Fine Arts degree from the Yale University School of Art. He has taught photography at Columbia College, Chicago and assisted in art instruction at various colleges including Rutgers University. Bey has exhibited extensively including at the National Portrait Gallery, London; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City; the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; and the Art Institute of Chicago.



Dawoud Bey '90

**George Bosolet '03**, a veteran himself having joined the United States Marine Corps in 1969 and serving on active duty until his retirement in 1991, is a New York state veterans' counselor at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Brooklyn. While in the military he garnered numerous awards including the Marine Corps Good Conduct Award, Navy Achievement Medal, U.S. Army Parachutist Wings, Marine Unit Citation Award and 1989 Fourth Marine Division Staff Non-commissioned Officer of the Year. Since he has been out of the service, he has earned a Certificate in Healthcare Management from New York University as well as a Graduate Certificate in Human Resource Management and Master of Business Administration from Capella University.

Following graduation, **David Boyd '08** made the decision to continue his studies and is working toward an M.F.A. in creative writing at The City College of New York. He is the author of two books; one of which, "Falling Down," he is developing into an independent film.

**Patricia Cadreau '00**, an administrative assistant and part-time teacher, has returned from a Goodwill trip to Haiti and plans to go on another in 2009.

**Liza Cowan '93**, who also earned an M.A. in anthropology at The Graduate Faculty at The New School, found that being an artist was her true calling. For the past three years she has been owner of Pine Street Art Works, a gallery in Burlington, Vermont, where she exhibits her photographs and paintings.

**Marilyn de Leo '94** has been appointed director of development with the Children's Burn Foundation, California, which provides state-of-the-art reconstructive treatment,



Marilyn de Leo '94

psychological and social services as well as camp experiences to help young burn survivors heal. De Leo has to her credit more than 25 years of experience, including, most recently, working with Mount Sinai Medical Center and prior to that, City of Hope and the United Way of New York.

**Robbin Farrell '96** earned a Master of Education from Lesley University and is certified in the Bikram, Kripalu and Prana forms of yoga as well as Kripalu Danskinetics. She is a teacher at Majuro Cooperative School, located in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Ferrell's past volunteer experiences include the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps and the Pace University's Center for Urban Education.

**Renee-Noelle Felice '79** has been chosen by the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation to portray the 19th century abolitionist, activist and author. She writes that, "Empire State College allowed me to have a double major: education and drama. Living history is the perfect blend of those two disciplines."

Attorney **Peter Gleason '93** is a former fire fighter, police officer and first responder on 9/11. He, along with a member of the Manhattan South Task Force of the N.Y.P.D., created a political board game called Ground Zero, a satire which calls attention to the slow progress of rebuilding Ground Zero.

Artist **Rosalyn Jacobs '84** has exhibited her paintings and drawings in galleries and museums in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Russia, Israel and Japan beginning in 1987. The Memory Project is a nonprofit organization co-founded by Jacobs, the child of Holocaust survivors. Her paintings are a prominent part of the Memory Project

exhibit which is on display through April 2009 at the Holocaust Resource Center in Manhasset, New York, and in fall 2010 will be hosted by the Holocaust Museum Houston, Texas.

**Ronald Knoth '08** has launched the Web site, The Bespoken: For Gentlemen, The Thinking Man's Guide to Fashion, Life and Everything Else. It can be found at [www.thebespokenfor.net](http://www.thebespokenfor.net).



**Lee Marvin '06** has released "Flowers to Strangers," a CD featuring his singing, bass playing and songwriting talent. Marvin honed his musical skills in New York City, playing at venues ranging from subway platforms to Madison Square Garden.



Lee Marvin '06

**Gerald Sherman '75** is a partner in Sherman and Perlman, a firm specializing in PR and marketing. He is the co-author of "Womanpower in Textile and Apparel Sales," "The Real World Guide to Fashion Selling and Management" and is currently writing "The Real World of Fashion Public Relations."



Gerald Sherman '75

appeared in almost 30 television episodics and sitcoms; has been a principle in numerous national commercials and has done regional theater throughout the U.S., including a one-woman show, "Lily."

**Tammy Wnuk '04** was instrumental in establishing Central Referral Service/2-1-1 WNY and serves as operations administrator. She also volunteers with the Greater Buffalo Counseling Center.

## Northeast Center

**Michelle Buffardi '06** is online editor at Martha Stewart Living, Omnimedia, having previously served as editorial assistant and then assistant to the editor-in-chief.

**John Femia '99** is a columnist for Advance for Imaging and Radiation Therapy Professionals and has nearly 70 published works to his credit.

**Brian Haak '94** is associate counsel to the Majority Conference and Home Rule Counsel in the New York State Assembly.

**James Hamilton '03**, who earned a Master of Science degree from Buffalo State College, has been promoted to associate professor with Hudson Valley Community College.

**Al Lawrence '76**, a mentor with the college's Center for Distance Learning, presented a paper, "From Cooper to Parents: School Desegregation and Re-segregation," at the 40th annual meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association.

**Jeanette Massaro '00** is early childhood education director for the Carver Early Childhood Education Center.

**Kent Stanton '94**, an instructional technologist with the college's Center for Learning and Technology, co-authored the paper "Employing GIS for Creating Interactive Data Sharing and Visual Pedagogy" that was included in the 2008 proceedings for the World Conference on E-learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare and Higher Education.

## Niagara Frontier Center

**The Rev. Raphael Kevin Barberg '06** is working toward a Master in Divinity at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

**Rocco Di Pietro '86**, a composer in residence with the Stanford Initiative for the Creative Arts, is working on a new orchestra piece, "Finale." He composes for the lap top orchestra of the Center for Computing and Music Research and Acoustics as well as working with and directing the Wired Sound Class on Inet2.

**Bryna Weiss '83** has been a supporting or lead actress in over a dozen films; has

### FACTOID

Did you know you can get career advice and search job postings in our alumni online community? Go to [www.esc.edu/AlumniCommunity](http://www.esc.edu/AlumniCommunity).



# BACK TO YOU

Alumni and Student Events  
Around the College

Have you recently published an article, paper or book?  
We would love to hear about it for our next issue.  
Please contact [Maureen.Winney@esc.edu](mailto:Maureen.Winney@esc.edu).

The college held its first-ever event in Ann Arbor, Mich. graciously hosted by Kate Pepin '94. Standing from left to right, Kate Pepin, Shana Greenstein '00. Seated are Mrs. and Mr. Ronald Martin '77.



Faculty, staff and students gathered in the courtyard of our Athens, Greece location after their Center for International Programs student orientation.



President Davis and Dean Deborah Amory welcomed alumni and students to the Central New York Center open house at the new location in East Syracuse. From left to right are President Davis, Rita Howard, Timothy Jennings-Bey, Kimberle Guy, Dr. Anibal Torres and his wife, Isabelle Wilczewski.



## BACK TO YOU

Alumni and Student Events  
Around the College

The Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors elected officers at their fall board meeting. From left to right are John Corrou '94, vice president; Judy Parkhurst '98, secretary; Peter Maloney '03, '06, treasurer; Marian Conway '01, '04, president.



Dr. Robert Trullinger, dean of the Hudson Valley Center, hosted more than 100 alumni, students, faculty and staff on October 2, 2008, at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park.

# Making a Will

Begin today.  
Protect your family  
and your assets.



## Be secure in knowing ...

My will reflects my wishes and my values. I have decided to leave my estate to those I care most about instead of letting the state disburse my property.

My will lets me leave money to my children and also to my grandchildren, when I think they will be prepared for the responsibility.

My will identifies several charities to receive special bequests: our local hospital, an animal shelter, and Empire State College.

My will can be amended at any time if my family's financial circumstances change.

My will is safely stored. I have a copy at home and the original is filed in my attorney's office.

My will is legally valid. I benefited from the expert advice of an attorney who specializes in estate planning.

My will is my best plan for my beneficiaries and me. For years I lived with a nagging apprehension about what might happen if I died without a will. Now, I have control over the future of my estate.

*The Empire State College Foundation, Inc. would be honored to be included in your estate plans. Please contact Alta Schallehn at [Alta.Schallehn@esc.edu](mailto:Alta.Schallehn@esc.edu) or call 518 587-2100 ext. 2413 or [www.esc.edu/PlanGift](http://www.esc.edu/PlanGift) for information about wills and charitable bequests.*



EMPIRE STATE  
COLLEGE

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



# Come join us for our annual *Empire State College* **Day at the Races**

Saratoga Springs • **Friday, August 7, 2009**

## **Empire State College Track Pack for \$35 includes:**

- Grandstand admission
- Grandstand seat
- Program
- Box lunch
- Coffee and pastries
- Handicapping seminar by faculty member **Andrew DiNitto** and **William Ferrero**, Office of Administration

Registration begins at 10:30 a.m., at which time you will pick up your pass, program and lunch. We will be serving coffee and pastries during that time. The handicapping seminar will begin at 11 a.m. and will be held at the Canfield Casino in Congress Park. Post time for the first race is 1 p.m. Seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. We will reserve your seat when we receive your check made out to **Empire State College Foundation**. Simply use the order form below. You may make a copy of the order form for your guest/s. Once you are registered, we will send you directions, parking and other information.

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### **Please complete and return to:**

Maureen Winney  
Empire State College  
Alumni House  
28 Union Avenue

Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-4390

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation year \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to: **Empire State College Foundation.**

The box lunch will include a sandwich, condiments, side salad, dessert, fruit and chips. Drinks are on your own.

Please circle your sandwich choice

1. Turkey
2. Roast beef
3. Chicken salad
4. Baked ham
5. Vegetarian

**New this year** – The college has reserved a block of rooms at the Saratoga Springs Marriott Courtyard for August 6 and 7. Please call them directly at 866 210-9325 and ask for Empire State College Day at the Races rate.

We have reserved a number of parking spots across from the main track entrance where you can park after you leave the handicapping seminar.

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ spot/s at \$10 each. Add this amount to your ticket cost.



### **Stay Tuned**

Empire State College is looking at ways to connect students and alumni with citizen science activities that can be done even in their own backyards. We are currently working on a grant for a collaborative project with several other institutions. The YardMap Network will recruit citizen science (birding) participants and gardeners into an ecological, social learning network that spans the continent asking them to map their habitat management activities and sustainable practices in their own backyards and parks. If you, or members of your family, like birds, check out possibilities at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)

# YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO US!

*Send news of your accomplishments and activities so that we can feature them in future issues of Empire State College Alumni and Student News. If possible include a recent photograph (with your name on the back). Please spell out all organization abbreviations.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Job title \_\_\_\_\_

Business name/address \_\_\_\_\_

Center/unit attended \_\_\_\_\_

Year graduated/degrees \_\_\_\_\_

Current student? \_\_\_\_\_ Area of study \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: Work \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Honors and other accomplishments \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer/professional organizations \_\_\_\_\_

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Send to: Empire State College, Alumni House, 28 Union Avenue, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-4390, or visit our web site at [www.esc.edu/Alumni](http://www.esc.edu/Alumni) and add your news online.