

ePortfolio Helps Students Showcase Skills to Prospective Employers

Imagine a virtual interview that allows students to showcase their work and present themselves to prospective employers anywhere in the world without leaving home. Well, that's the reality of ePortfolio, an innovative web-based program that is helping students at New York City College of Technology and LaGuardia Community College.

For example, Antonio Calixto, who recently earned his bachelor of technology degree in communication from City Tech, utilized ePortfolio to help land his current position as a graphics designer at the newspaper *Hoy*. Calixto, who arrived from Mexico 10 years ago at age 15, says proudly: "My website let me advertise myself: 'Here's talent, come and get it!'"

Calixto and others are benefiting from a five-year \$3.1 million U.S. Department of Education Title V collaborative grant to the two schools that aims to improve educational outcomes. The program is in its third year.

ePortfolio enables students to create online electronic portfolios in multimedia, state-of-the-art computer labs. Using photography, sound, movement, links, 3-D animation, multi-colored graphics and other technologies, they are able to design their own websites and create portfolios that include research papers, accounts of internship experiences and multimedia presentations.

"A student with an ePortfolio can, in a sense, interview virtually without leaving home," said City Tech program director



Antonio Calixto, who came from Mexico 10 years ago at age 15 and earned his bachelor's degree from City Tech in June, advertised himself with ePortfolio.

Karen Bonsignore. "With a click of the mouse an ePortfolio can be sent to potential employers anywhere in the world, who can see evidence of the student's creativity, work and academic success."

Dr. Bret Eynon is director of LaGuardia's Center for Teaching and Learning and also heads its ePortfolio program. "Approximately 1200 students were involved in the project last year," he said, "and we expect an additional 2000 during the current academic year." Seventy-five faculty participate in eProfile at LaGuardia.

According to Provost Joann La Perla of City Tech, the program has surpassed all expectations. "This fall, 400 more students will begin creating ePortfolios, bringing the total to 1,600, which is over 10 percent of our student body." In addition, 18 more faculty will join 40 colleagues who have

incorporated ePortfolios into their curricula.

The beauty of ePortfolio is that even students who haven't studied web design or have little or no computer training can create an effective electronic portfolio. Expert staff is available, either in person or via an e-mail help desk. In addition, there are self-guided tutorials, a template to take the guesswork out of website design, and technological tools including scanners, digital cameras, zip drives and CD burners.

According to Dr. Eynon, "ePortfolio allows students to prepare a self-selected multimedia presentation that reflects the full scope of their learning and development." The program places a premium on connecting academic achievement to creative expression as students showcase their accomplishments, he noted, ranging from text, such as research papers and essays, to projects that incorporate images, audio, and video.

City Tech student Javed K. Ellis, 21, who arrived from Trinidad & Tobago in 2000, says his website shows not only what he can create, but also how he has sharpened his skills.

"A design company executive saw my work online and contacted me to discuss what sounds like a very promising internship," he said.

Another user who showed the upward trajectory of her skills is Cheryl St. John-Broomes, who emigrated from Barbados in 1998 and this past June completed her bachelor of science degree in technology teacher education, with a 3.90 GPA. "My website showed samples of my work from

four semesters, so prospective employers could see how my later lesson plans were more professional and polished than when I began," she said. She shared her ePortfolio with potential employers during job interviews and landed a full-time teaching position with the New York City Department of Education.

Kurt McDonald, originally from Jamaica, is a senior majoring in architectural technology. "Since I am a night student, it's a great help that the lab is open on Saturdays, and that I can communicate with faculty 24/7 via e-mail," he said. "Having my own website, sponsored by my college, also says that my college is really behind me."

City Tech faculty cite many reasons for ePortfolio's success. "Creating an ePortfolio requires students to develop specific sets of skills related to critical thinking, writing and self-assessment," said Professor Aida Mysan, who has been incorporating ePortfolio technologies in her advertising design and graphic arts curriculum since Fall 2002.

Students also gain valuable skills in information technologies, Mysan added, which are transferable beyond their academic careers.

For Professor Tanya Mayulta of the Computer Information Systems Department, ePortfolio offers a personal dimension that "takes student presentations to an absolutely new level." Viewing and discussing portfolios that encompass her students' biographies, goals and dreams "is very moving and allows us to learn more about one another," she said.

Baruch Alumni Donate Millions to Their 'Downtown City'

Baruch College's new president, Kathleen Waldron, announced that six alumni—one of whom chose to remain anonymous—have contributed a total of \$53.5 million to the college.

Included in the total is one of the largest donations in history to a public college in New York State: \$25 million given by William and Anita Newman in support of Baruch's award-winning Vertical Campus facility, which will be renamed in their honor.

Newman, a 1947 graduate, has funded graduate and undergraduate programs at Baruch. He is the founder-chairman of New Plan Excel Realty Trust, one of the nation's largest real estate companies, which concentrates on shopping centers in a portfolio that comprises more than 400 properties. His wife attended Hunter College.

He noted that his immigrant parents and his late brother also attended the school, known familiarly at the time as Downtown City, "earning degrees and setting the stage for productive careers in business. I'm grateful for what this school, now Baruch, has given me, and I welcome the opportunity to do the same for a new generation of young people."

Another son of immigrants who has distinguished himself in the real estate field, Lawrence N. Field, made another of the major gifts to Baruch with his wife, Eris Field. The Fields donated \$10 million toward future renovation of Baruch's original academic building at 17 Lexington Ave. They are also giving \$2 million to fund the Larry and Eris Fields Family Chair of Entrepreneurship, expanding the scope of Baruch's Field Center in Entrepreneurship, which they endowed in 1999.

The founder and principal of NSB Associates, Field has more than three decades of experience in real estate development and investment in New York and Southern California. "For me, this opportunity to give back to Baruch College is both a privilege and an obligation," he said.

Lawrence and Carol Zicklin, who endowed the Zicklin School of Business in 1997 with an \$18 million gift, donated an additional \$2 million to fund Baruch's Robert Zicklin Center for Corporate Integrity. He graduated from Baruch in 1957, and was a managing principal and chairman of Neuberger Berman, an investment management firm.

Zicklin said the inspiration for his support was his cousin, Robert Zicklin, "a stickler for ethics and the law...For me he was the model of integrity."

Marvin Antonowski, a 1947 graduate whose long career in entertainment marketing involved him in such successful films as "Gandhi," "Tootsie," "Steel Magnolias," "Prince of Tides" and "The Big Chill," donated \$2.5 million to support the performing arts center in the Vertical Campus, which will be named the Martin Antonowski Performing Arts Complex.

"I'm delighted to lend my name to a first-rate arts center at a college that's home to the nation's largest business school," Antonowski said.

William F. Aldinger III, a 1969 Baruch graduate who is chairman and CEO of HSBC North America Holdings Inc., donated \$2 million to endow a chair in his name in banking and finance.

"My professional life has been profoundly impacted by the excellent education I received at Baruch," Aldinger said. "And I want to make sure the same holds

true for today's students."

Waldron said the final gift was \$10 million "from an alumnus who wishes to remain anonymous." She credited this "extraordinarily generous gift," and the amounts pledged by the other alumni, with helping to elevate Baruch's status and to enhance the outlook for the college's future graduates.

Noting Baruch's high standings in national college rankings by such magazines as *U.S. News and World Report* and *Money*, Waldron said that "the support of our alumni and donors is the driving force behind this explosion of excellence."



Alumni William Newman (left) and Larry Field (right) are here with a very happy Baruch President Kathleen Waldron. Both gave millions to their alma mater.

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