



# AlumNotes

Fall 2020

Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association, Inc. • Volume 47, Number 1



## MAKING AN IMPACT

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

If, as James Lane Allen is often quoted, crisis reveals character, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed much more. For many, it has upended the status quo and forced us to confront issues and attitudes that we have taken for granted, ignored, or have chosen to be indifferent about.

The pandemic revealed shortcomings in our supply chain, and our ability to respond to sudden changes in demand for critical items, such as PPE. It has placed a very bright light on our nation's public programs and social safety nets. Organizations and individuals have had to reconsider how we work, go to school, socialize, and play, as evidenced by surges in tele-everything, baking, biking, and board games.

For the Alumnae/i Association (AA), some changes have been positive. The cancelation of all in-person events has given rise to a number of virtual ones, and we've seen an increased level of engagement as a result. Alumnae/i have contributed generously to our Covid Emergency Fund (over \$70K), which allowed us to provide eBook licenses so that students could have concurrent access to required texts, visiting artists, and faculty wellness programs this past Spring, diversity committee internships to current students whose summer jobs were canceled, and resources that will be used to help create a safe and equitable learning environment during the Fall and Winter.

In late Spring, however, the nation's focus on racial justice and equity struck closer to our community. A group of Hunter students wrote a letter to the administration, rightly calling the lack of Black, Latinx, and low-income students within the school a crisis that demanded action. The Alumnae/i Association wrote in support of the students with about 1,100 alums signing the letter.

The Alumnae/i Association, as an organization independent from the High School and College, is in a unique position to help solve the diversity crisis at the High School. But this will require us to make a significant investment of time and money across multiple years. During a July meeting with the administration, I communicated that the AA was committed to making a significant, multi-year investment in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs at the school. I suggested that, for the HCHSAA to make such an investment, the administration should acknowledge the issue, bring in experts for a top-to-bottom review, and commit to concrete objectives and transparency of process.

At around the same time, the Diversity Committee of the AA (Chaired by **Judith Daniel '79**) established three subcommittees-- Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention-- to research various aspects of the issue and to develop recommendations. Numerous alums have participated on these subcommittees and on working groups with students, parents, and faculty. Each of the subcommittees has provided an update on their progress in this issue of *AlumNotes*.

Based on some preliminary analyses of data we received from the school, New York State, and the DOE, we believe that the exceedingly low Black and Latinx population at the high school today is a systemic issue and runs throughout the qualification and admissions process. While the population of Black and Latinx students was estimated to be almost 70% of all NYC public school sixth graders in 2019-2020, the Hunter population nowhere near reflects that diversity.

After filtering for eligibility requirements for the Hunter entrance exam (25% of the test-eligible student population is Black and Latinx), lower application rates (i.e., not all students who are eligible to take the entrance exam will apply; 20% of test takers are Black and Latinx), and finally, lower pass-through rates, the resultant incoming seventh grade class is less than 10% Black and Latinx. While there may be a wide range of views on the overall admissions process, the outcome is not acceptable. Please see page 5 for greater detail.

To help improve these outcomes, the AA is developing an ambitious program to provide enrichment, tutoring, and test preparation to high performing elementary school students from underrepresented groups starting as early as in the fourth grade. If the current admissions process is viewed as a series of funnels and filters, the program's objectives would be to increase the funnel of eligible, underrepresented students applying to Hunter, and improve their probability of success of passing through the admissions filters. This program would provide lasting benefits to these students even if they did not ultimately attend Hunter, and is consistent with our mission to recruit, develop, and advance the gifted students and alumnae/i of Hunter College High School. Please see our forthcoming February edition for more information on how you can be a part of this exciting fundraising initiative. But for the AA to make this level of investment, and for such a program to succeed, the objectives of the AA and administration (and other stakeholders) must be in alignment, which we have not yet attained. We are, however, encouraged that the administration is currently evaluating a proposal to have an expert in applications and admissions to specialized high schools consult with the high school. And we must also note that the most recent kindergarten class of the elementary school, which typically provides over 20% of the incoming 7th graders each year, is roughly one third Black and Latinx.

Racial and economic diversity in the boardroom, the locker room, and the situation room begins in the classroom. Hunter's mission statement includes the line "to serve as a model for combining excellence and equity." Hunter has reached a crisis point in this balance, and excellence without equity is not sustainable in the long term. We believe that our community has the character to confront this issue and take the necessary steps to achieve more equity in the classroom. Doing so is necessary for our continued excellence, and we are compelled to action by our motto, *Mihi Cura Futuri* (The care of the future is mine).

Raymond Tsao '84



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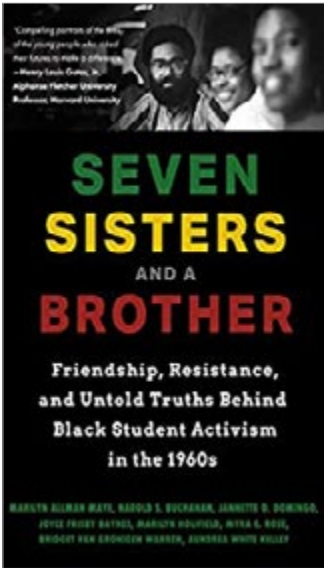


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## Dear Alumnae/i,

October has always been my favorite month. New York always seems to get down to business as the days become crisper and the leaves begin to change.

But this fall has brought change in ways we could not imagine when the AlumNotes was last going to print. The bravery and resilience of our City's medical professionals and essential workers across all vocations inspired us to stay home, to wear masks and to raise our voices in nightly appreciation and community at 7pm. And during this same time, the profound urgency of the Black Lives Matter movement raised voices in anguish and anger by calling out the names George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor to debride old wounds of injustice, racism and broken promises. These months have called us to tap into emotional reserves to help our families, friends and community in ways that have changed us and are still redefining us.

This issue is dedicated to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. You'll read

the legacies of our committed activist alumni in their dedication to nurturing inclusion and equity at Hunter College High School. You'll also be introduced to the history our students are making right now. In my time as Director, I have had the privilege of working with some of the young people — and alumni — featured here. I know you'll be inspired by their passion and dedication, as am I.

Nearly six months to the day when we shuttered HCCS in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have brought back limited in-person instruction at Hunter. It has been a challenge. We have needed to develop and implement strict health and safety protocols and to plan for the academic needs of both remote learning and in-person instruction. None of it would have been possible without the generous resources provided by Hunter College and CUNY: the technology loan programs for students without access to laptops or iPads, the rental of massive outdoor tents for classes, meetings, lunch and activity breaks in the fresh air, and the unparalleled opportunity

for the HS to use the Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work for our 9th and 10th grade students under the required social distancing parameters. The alumni association has, as always, been our partner by providing support to access digital texts, remote visiting artist programs, and internship opportunities for current students — a vital work experience that life in the pandemic had all but eliminated.

Just like every October, we're getting down to business. But this year, that work involves creating new ways to be a student or to "go" to school and how we interact as members of a community that meets more online than in the locker hallways or coffee shops. It also involves having tough conversations about our past, present and future. HCHS's motto, *The care of the future is mine*, guides us as we struggle with, and embrace change.

looking forward to the days when we can gather together again.

Lisa Siegmann  
Director, Campus Schools

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# NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL

## A VIRTUAL GRADUATION

The Class of 2020 passed a unique milestone as they graduated from HCHS. They were the first class to mark their commencement with a virtual graduation ceremony. Though this year's graduating seniors were preparing for the ceremony from their homes, many of the hallmarks of a Hunter graduation were still evident.

Lisa Siegmann, Director of Hunter College Campus Schools, gave the Welcome to the assembled class, and **Sophia Li '20** delivered the Salutation. Hunter College President **Jennifer Raab '73** addressed the Class of 2020, and Distinguished Graduate **Shola Lynch '87** was introduced by **Gabriel Franklin '20** and **Lia Franklin '20**. Lynch, whose college aspirations of competing in

the Olympics were cut short due to injury, changed her trajectory to pursue the craft of storytelling. After directing two award winning documentaries about Black women activists – Black Panther Angela Davis and Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, who ran for US president in 1972 – Lynch was appointed Curator of the Moving Image and Recorded Sound at the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. In speaking to the Class of 2020, she told them "Your choices and [their] consequences are yours... Make choices so that life doesn't happen to you, but you happen to life."

**Claire Shang '20** gave the Selected Reading and the class speech was

delivered by **Samuel Ahn '20**. Principal Dr. Tony Fisher led the class in turning their tassels. A post commencement celebration was held following the graduation ceremony, where the Class Gift was presented. This year's gift was donated to the Fund for Public Schools' NYC Schools COVID-19 Response Effort, a nonprofit organization that partners with the New York City Department of Education to support students, particularly those who may be economically disadvantaged. One of the highlights of the celebration was a prerecorded speech given by **Lin-Manuel Miranda '98**. HCHSAA Board President **Raymond Tsao '84** also spoke and welcomed the Class of 2020 into the alumnae/i community.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### THE TRANSIT STRIKE THAT AFFECTED THE CLASS OF 1966

Seeing the pictures of 13 members of my class, the Class of 1966, and their comments on the transit strike, brought back many old memories. I lived at 73rd and West End Avenue and walked across Central Park to get to Hunter during the strike. However, there were a lot of other strikes during Mayor Lindsay's tenure because he refused to work with the unions as Mayor Wagner had. I recall a really bad garbage strike that left mountains of trash on New York

City streets, as well as a milk strike! During the milk strike, there was no milk to be had in the supermarkets, but there were small containers of milk available at the Hunter College cafeteria, where we ate lunch. My younger brother could not grow without milk, so I bought a few extra containers at the cafeteria each day, put them in my locker, and carried them home on the bus so my brother could have milk to drink. I am sure that he does not remember this.

**Kathryn KANAREK James '66**

## Where Hunter Grads Are Going to College

|                                       |    |                                    |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|----|
| American University                   | 1  | New York University                | 15 |
| Arizona State University              | 1  | Northeastern University            | 9  |
| Barnard College                       | 2  | Northwestern University            | 1  |
| Boston College                        | 1  | University of Notre Dame           | 1  |
| Boston University                     | 3  | Oberlin College                    | 2  |
| Bowdoin College                       | 2  | University of Pennsylvania         | 6  |
| Brown University                      | 4  | University of Pittsburgh           | 1  |
| Bryn Mawr College                     | 1  | Pratt Institute                    | 1  |
| University of California, Berkeley    | 3  | Princeton University               | 2  |
| University of California, Davis       | 1  | Reed College                       | 1  |
| University of California, Los Angeles | 3  | Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute   | 1  |
| Carnegie Mellon University            | 4  | Rice University                    | 1  |
| University of Chicago                 | 7  | Ringling College of Art and Design | 1  |
| Columbia University                   | 5  | Rollins College                    | 1  |
| Columbia University Int'l Dual BA     | 1  | Rutgers University, New Brunswick  | 1  |
| Cornell University                    | 19 | University of San Francisco        | 1  |
| CUNY Baruch College                   | 1  | Sarah Lawrence College             | 1  |
| CUNY City College                     | 1  | Scripps College                    | 1  |
| Dartmouth College                     | 2  | Skidmore College                   | 1  |
| University of Delaware                | 1  | Smith College                      | 2  |
| Duke University                       | 3  | University of Southern California  | 1  |
| Emory University                      | 3  | Stanford University                | 2  |
| University of Florida                 | 1  | SUNY Binghamton University         | 4  |
| Fordham University                    | 2  | SUNY Stony Brook University        | 7  |
| Georgetown University                 | 3  | SUNY Purchase College              | 1  |
| Georgia Institute of Technology       | 3  | Swarthmore College                 | 4  |
| Hamilton College                      | 2  | University of Toronto              | 1  |
| Harvard College                       | 6  | Trinity College                    | 1  |
| Haverford College                     | 1  | Tufts University                   | 3  |
| Hobart William Smith Colleges         | 1  | Tulane University of Louisiana     | 2  |
| Johns Hopkins University              | 1  | Vanderbilt University              | 2  |
| Johnson & Wales University            | 1  | Vassar College                     | 2  |
| Macalester College                    | 1  | Wake Forest University             | 1  |
| Massachusetts Institute of Technology | 3  | Washington and Lee University      | 1  |
| University of Massachusetts, Amherst  | 1  | Washington University in St Louis  | 3  |
| McGill University                     | 3  | University of Washington, Seattle  | 1  |
| University of Michigan, Ann Arbor     | 2  | Wellesley College                  | 1  |
| Mount Holyoke College                 | 1  | Wesleyan University                | 7  |
| Muhlenberg College                    | 1  | Williams College                   | 3  |
| The New School                        | 1  | Yale University                    | 5  |

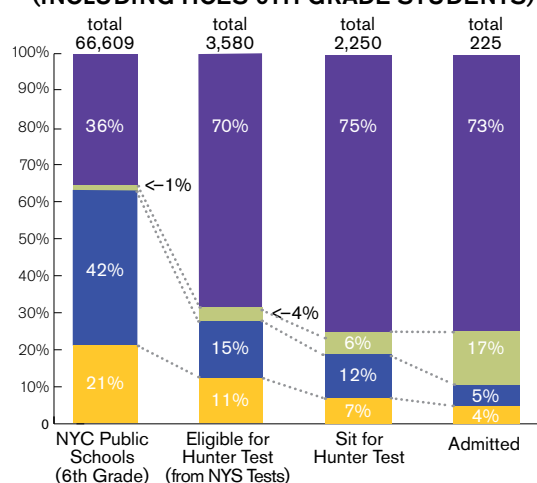
# DIVERSITY BY THE NUMBERS

## SUPPORTING DIVERSITY AT HUNTER

In June 2020 Hunter's current students issued a letter expressing their deep concerns about the lack of diversity at the high school and presented the administration with a list of demands. The PTA and the Alumnae/i Association each issued letters of support. Nearly 1,100 alums signed the HCHSAA letter.

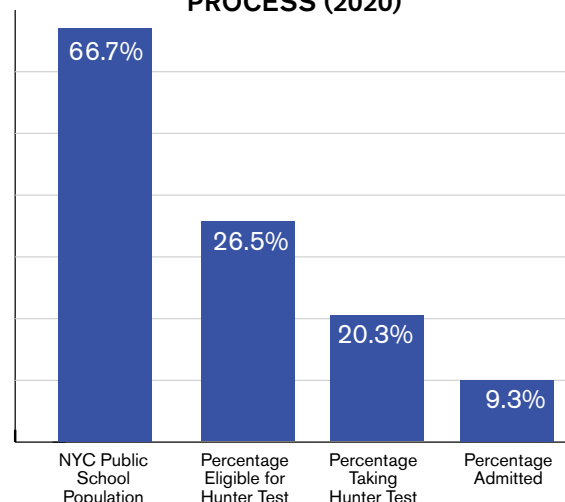
The HCHSAA has mobilized resources to work in conjunction with the PTA and with the current student body and administration to find solutions to this long-standing problem of declining diversity. A description of the work of the Diversity Committee's three subcommittees (Recruitment, Admission, and Retention) can be found on pages 24-26 of *AlumNotes*. There is also a Diversity resource page on our website that lists grants and initiatives supported by the HCHSAA, and where you can access the text of the letters sent in June by students, PTA, and HCHSAA. To read those letters, visit <https://www.hchsaa.org/diversity>

**HUNTER COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL 2020  
ADMISSIONS AT A GLANCE  
(INCLUDING HCES 6TH GRADE STUDENTS)**

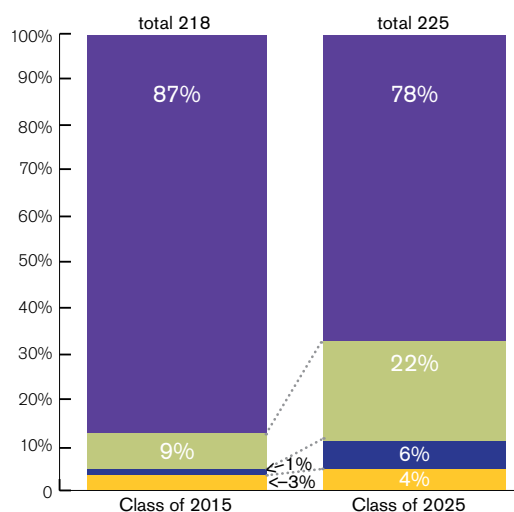


Source(s): NYC DOE, NYS BEDS data for HCCS, HCCS Data, HCHSAA analyses

**BLACK & LATINX STUDENT ATTRITION  
THROUGHOUT THE HUNTER ADMISSIONS  
PROCESS (2020)**

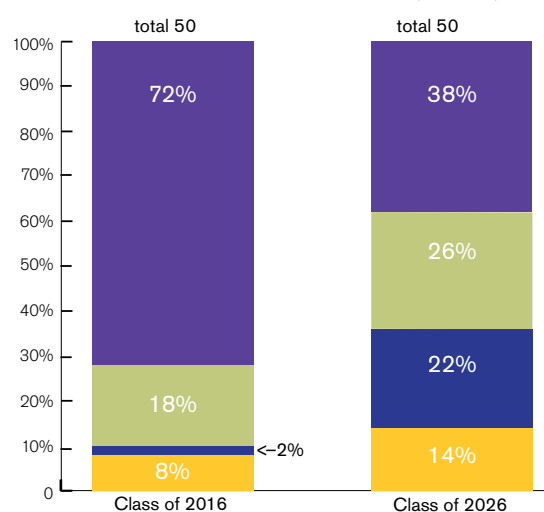


**ENROLLMENT BY CLASS (7TH GRADE)**



Source(s): NYS BEDS data for HCCS

**ENROLLMENT BY CLASS (HCES)**



Source(s): NYS BEDS data for HCCS

Black Latinx Multiracial All Others

# Gather. Reflect. Reminisce.

# HCHS Reunion 2021

## Saturday, June 5

## ON THE HORIZON: REUNION 2021!

Plans for Reunion 2021 are taking shape and we hope to welcome you to the high school on Saturday, June 5! We will be monitoring conditions in relation to the coronavirus and will determine whether our Reunion gathering will be held in person, or virtually. In either case, hundreds of alumnae/i will come together to reconnect and celebrate all things Hunter.

In case you haven't yet heard from your class coordinator, we invite you to reach out to learn about what events are being planned, and to offer your support and assistance if possible. Contact information for class coordinators is listed on the following page. If you don't see your year represented, then consider signing up as a coordinator!

Alumnae/i donors who make gifts totaling \$500 or more during their milestone year are recognized in the HCHSAA's Milestone Society, and we thank you for your generosity. All class gifts and contributions to the Annual Fund Campaign between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021 will be counted. To learn more about the Milestone Society, contact Eniko Horvath at [ehorvath@hchsaa.org](mailto:ehorvath@hchsaa.org) or speak with your class coordinator.



| This Year's<br>Class<br>Coordinators | NAME                     | EMAIL                        | PHONE        |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1956                                 | Joan HANSEN Grabe        | joangrabe@aol.com            | 203-259-4383 |
| 1956                                 | Sheila GREEN Goodman     | sheilamiami@mac.com          | 305-858-0155 |
| 1961                                 | Helene WILLIAMS Spierman | helenespierman@gmail.com     | 516-825-2939 |
| 1961                                 | Leonore Tiefer           | ltiefer@mindspring.com       | 646-279-2248 |
| 1971                                 | Sandi Charton            | chartonsm@gmail.com          | 781-789-5939 |
| 1971                                 | Beth Berenbaum           | bdberenbaum@gmail.com        | 917-209-3228 |
| 1971                                 | Alice Bruce              | alicebruce@comcast.net       | 617-388-0823 |
| 1971                                 | Tobe Becker              | Tobebecker@gmail.com         | 201-745-2921 |
| 1976                                 | Margo FRIEDMAN Kizel     | antacurso@gmail.com          | 917-921-9882 |
| 1981                                 | Mark E. Lang             | mlang341@gmail.com           |              |
| 1981                                 | Lauren BUXBAUM Kacir     | ellerbie63@aol.com           | 254-760-5883 |
| 1981                                 | Karen G. Schwartz        | kgs63@earthlink.net          | 917-742-4042 |
| 1986                                 | Robert Wu                | robert.t.wu@gmail.com        |              |
| 1991                                 | Kristina Boylan          | kristina.boylan@gmail.com    |              |
| 1996                                 | Elizabeth Hook           | betsyhook78@yahoo.com        |              |
| 2001                                 | Yuna Youn                | yuna.youn@gmail.com          |              |
| 2006                                 | Pete Martin              | petemartinny@gmail.com       |              |
| 2011                                 | Kevin Park               |                              | 917-719-2547 |
| 2016                                 | Jamie Shapiro            | Jamie.Sara.Shapiro@gmail.com | 917-923-3084 |

# ALUMNI NEWS

## LEARNING CHALLENGES FACED BY HOMELESS CHILDREN

Alumna **Samantha Shapiro '93** wrote an article examining the lives of young homeless students and their families as they navigate the New York City school system and the complex bureaucracy of the city's shelters. The piece, entitled "The Children in the Shadows: New York City's Homeless Students," appeared in *The New York Times Magazine* in September 2020.

To read her article, visit <https://nyti.ms/3nti71b>.

## A JOURNALIST'S CANCER DIAGNOSIS

Journalist and author **Helen Epstein '65** wrote a powerful account of her experience with endometrial cancer. Her diagnosis, which came during the COVID-19 pandemic in May 2020, was the result of an emergency medical visit after experiencing uterine bleeding. Epstein had cancelled her scheduled pelvic exam due to the lockdown orders in her home state of Massachusetts. She tells of her diagnosis, surgery, and recovery within the larger reality of coronavirus deaths and murders of African-Americans at the hands of the police. "Getting diagnosed with cancer was a shock," Epstein wrote, "but the twin pandemics (COVID and police violence) provided context. I found I had coping skills."

To read her article, visit <https://bit.ly/3jHokEs>.

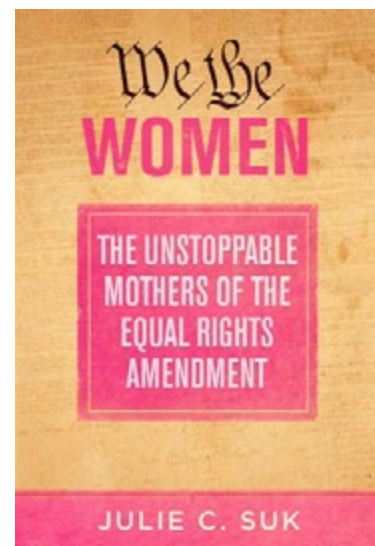
## WRITING OF WOMEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

2020 marks the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment, giving women the constitutional right to vote. However, the amendment did not guarantee their wider equal rights with men. Over the decades that followed, many women activists coalesced in order to create an Equal Rights Amendment.

In *We the Women: The Unstoppable Mothers of the Equal Rights Amendment* (Skyhorse 2020), **Julie Suk '93, Ph.D.** details the struggles of activists who fought for decades to gain full parity with American men. Working tirelessly to keep the issue at the forefront of society, women lobbied for its passing and it took nearly fifty years for Congress to adopt the amendment, which was enacted in 1972. It would take close to another fifty years to ratify it, with the final state, Virginia, approving it in January 2020.

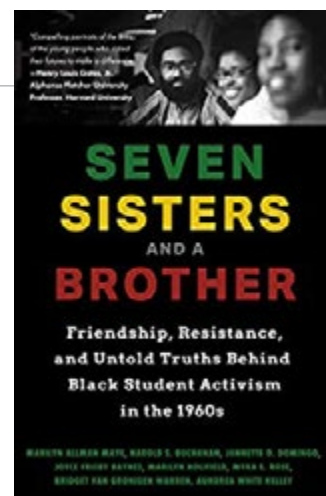
Suk chronicles the voices of the women lawmakers who created the Equal Rights Amendment, and the strong opposition they faced. Though progress has been made, she writes that gender equality has not provided true parity, particularly for working mothers and women of color. She also documents important movements like the Women's March and #MeToo to show how women are striving to collectively improve their lives.

Suk was interviewed by HCHS Social Studies faculty member **Irving Kagan '82** in September 2020. To see this interview, log onto the HCHSAA events site at <https://www.hchsaa.org/alumni2020>.



## ADVOCATING FOR AFRICAN- AMERICANS IN COLLEGE

Co-authored by **Jannette Domingo '66, Ph.D.**, *Seven Sisters and a Brother: Friendship, Resistance, and Untold Truths Behind Black Student Activism in the 1960s* (Books & Books Press 2019) presents the experience of students who engaged in an eight day sit-in to protest decreased enrollment of African Americans at Swarthmore College in 1969. The group, comprised of seven women and one man, advocated for the hiring of additional African American faculty and demanded a Black Studies curriculum. The book gives new perspective about the sit-in, as the media had cast the peaceful protest in a negative light; in fact, today's inclusive curriculum at the college is directly due to the activists' efforts. Autobiographical chapters round out the text.



## ALUMNA CREATES COVID-19 RELATED SURVEY

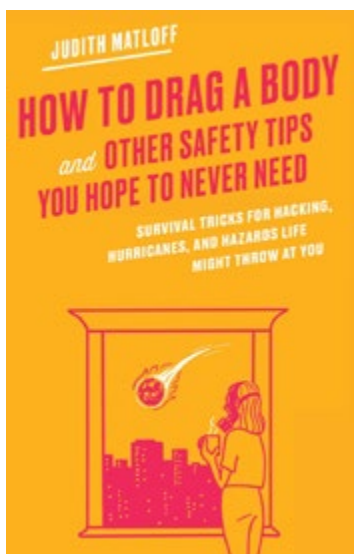
**Kathy Steinberg '00**, Vice President of Public Release Research at The Harris Poll, worked on a public opinion poll that was quoted in U.S. News & World Report. The poll, which was about the wearing of masks due to COVID-19, revealed that the majority of Americans recognized the importance of masks to protect the health of oneself and others. Perhaps surprisingly, there was significant minority of individuals who responded that they did not wear masks in public. The online survey was conducted by The Harris Poll between August 20 and 24, 2020 and was responded to by more than 2,000 adults aged 18 and over.

In a Facebook post, Steinberg credited David Hankin, who taught AP Statistics at HCHS, with inspiring her to pursue a career in research. To read the article, visit <https://bit.ly/2SFW6hl>.

## WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE NOT EXPECTING A PANDEMIC OR OTHER CRISIS

When she began writing her latest book two years ago, **Judith Matloff '75/76** ICY did not expect that we'd all be wearing masks and stockpiling toilet paper at the time of the book's release. Yet *How to Drag a Body and Other Safety Tips You Hope to Never Need: Survival Tricks for Hacking, Hurricanes, and Hazards Life Might Throw at You* (Harper Wave 2020) is meant for trying moments just like the one in which we now find ourselves. Matloff, a seasoned war correspondent, Columbia University professor, and safety consultant, draws on her teachings on war and other emergencies to guide us through all sorts of crises and to help us prepare for the worst. As *How to Drag a Body* makes clear, however, being prepared does not have to be a dark and depressing slog. Matloff dispenses useful advice with wry levity. The book is sprinkled with illustrations by *New Yorker* cartoonist Sharon Levy.

In a thoughtful and wide-ranging discussion in May 2020, **Sewell Chan '94**, the editorial page editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, interviewed Matloff about *How to Drag a Body* and the current crisis. **Ann Starer '75** organized the event. To watch this interview, log onto the HCHSAA events site at <https://www.hchsaa.org/alumni2020>.



## ALUMNA GIVES BACK TO STUDENTS IN NEED

**Anna Du '19** has been serving as a volunteer tutor with the nonprofit EduMate NYC. The organization was founded in response to the coronavirus pandemic by college students who are New York City public school alums and was launched once schools shut down in March 2020. Their mission is to provide free, virtual tutoring to New York City K-12 public school students, with an emphasis on supporting families facing disproportionate barriers to accessing education.

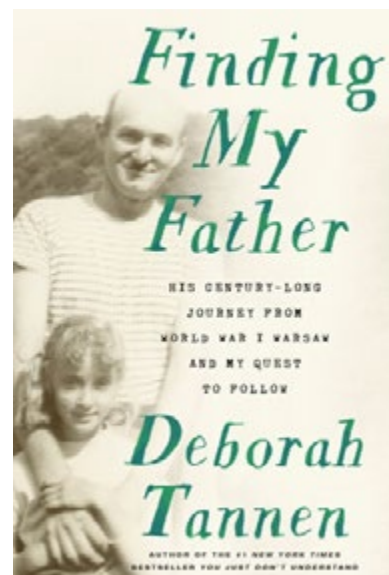
EduMate NYC intends to reach families that may be low income, homeless, undocumented, or whose children may have special needs. Tutoring is offered in all major school subjects, standardized test preparation, and guidance on the college application and essay writing process. Tutors complete on-boarding sessions with the organization in advance of working with students, and they are given online resources to ensure successful one-on-one interaction.

Enrichment events are being planned to enhance students' learning experience, and Du is helping with the coordination of the arts enrichment component. EduMate NYC is actively seeking tutors and invites professional educators to serve as speakers for their programs. For more information, visit [www.edumatenyc.org](http://www.edumatenyc.org)

## THE WORLD OF HER FATHER

**Deborah Tannen '62**, Ph.D., University Professor and Professor of Linguistics at Georgetown University and author of numerous books and articles about the ways in which the language of everyday conversation affects relationships, now turns to memoir. In *Finding my Father – His Century-Long Journey from World War I Warsaw and My Quest to Follow* (Ballantine Books 2020). Tannen traces her father's life, from his childhood in Poland, where he was born in 1908, to his adolescence and adulthood in the United States, where he arrived in 1920 and died in 2006. The memoir not only examines Eli Tannen's long life and the ways in which it reflects the near century that he lived, but it is also a daughter's attempt to understand her father more deeply and to find a more truthful story about her family.

**Sewell Chan '94**, the editorial page editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, interviewed Tannen in September 2020. More than 100 alumnae/i attended this virtual event, organized by **Ann Starer '75**. To watch the interview, log onto the HCHSAA events page at <https://www.hchsaa.org/alumni2020>.

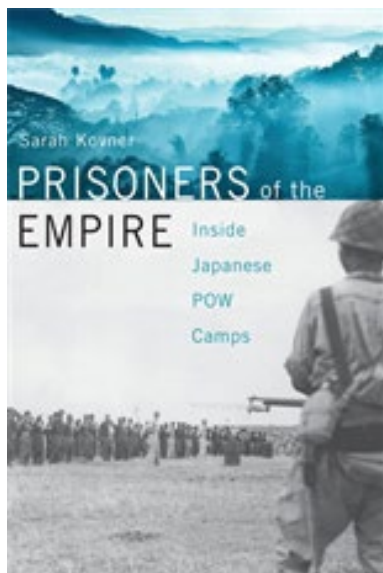


## A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON WORLD WAR II POW CAMPS

**Sarah Kovner '91, Ph.D.**, Senior Research Scholar in the Arnold A. Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University, recently published *Prisoners of the Empire: Inside Japanese POW Camps* (Harvard University Press 2020). Her book provides new perspective about World War II POW camps, countering the long-held belief that the Japanese Empire systematically mistreated Allied prisoners.

In the space of five months, from the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 until May 1942, the Japanese Empire took prisoner over 140,000 Allied servicemen and 130,000 civilians from twelve different countries. The Japanese quickly formed over seven hundred hastily made camps across China and Southeast Asia and, in the chaos that ensued, forty percent of American POWs perished. Kovner presents the first account of imprisonment in the Pacific theater and explains why so many suffered. Some of the worst treatment was the result of a lack of planning and poor training, rather than a specific policy of tormenting prisoners. Her book is an important document that contributes to ongoing debates over POW treatment through to today's conflicts.

Kovner was interviewed by **Jeannie SUK Gersen '91, D.Phil, J.D.**, Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, in October 2020. To see the interview, log onto the HCHSAA events page at <https://www.hchsaa.org/alumni2020>.



## HAMILTON AVAILABLE ON DISNEY PLUS

For those of you who long to see the production of *Hamilton* live on Broadway, it is now possible to see the original cast's performance on film through Disney Plus. *Hamilton* creator **Lin-Manuel Miranda '98** is among the stars of the film. Streaming began on July 3, 2020. To gain access, visit [www.disneyplus.com](http://www.disneyplus.com).

## LESSONS FOR COOKING IN LOCKDOWN

**Matt Garelick '99** has made the most of his time during the pandemic. Executive Chef at Manhattan's Park Hyatt New York Hotel, Garelick and his coworkers have been furloughed since March 2020. In his time away from the kitchen he created a video series entitled the *Super Chef Dad* Chronicles where he provides instruction on how to prepare dishes and desserts, accompanied by his daughter (and sous chef!) Zoe. He has kept the cooking fires burning since his interview in *AlumNotes*' food issue, *Glorious Food and Drink* (Spring 2017). To see his videos, visit <https://bit.ly/2FdZ1zL>.



To read his interview in the *AlumNotes* food issue, go to the HCHSAA website and login to the site. You will need to have an active membership profile to view the article. To set up a profile on our website, go to <https://www.hchsaa.org/login/logout>.

## A YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR CREATES SUCCESS

**Robert Berk '16**, author of *Why Wait?: How I Jump-Started My Entrepreneurial Journey Before Graduating Into a Covid-19 World – And How You Can, Too!* (Independently Published 2020), is on an accelerated path to success. As a student at Hamilton College, he accepted a position as executive assistant to *New York Times* Best Selling Author **Dave Kerpen '94**, founder of the social media marketing agency Likeable Media. In his years working with Kerpen, Berk was able to lay the foundation for his future journey as an entrepreneur.

While a sophomore at Hamilton, Berk launched his first venture, Solvit, a social media and digital branding agency that supports small business owners. Berk's next achievement came when he and Kerpen co-founded Apprentice, a platform that connects entrepreneurs looking for a driven Executive Assistant (future COO, do-it-all, and go-to person) and committed to professional growth to smart and motivated college students that are looking for real-world experience and mentorship. Now, as a 2020 college graduate who has launched two successful startups, Berk shares his story in this inspiring book. Fifty percent of the profits from *Why Wait* will be donated to Feeding America. Learn more at [RobBerk.Com](http://RobBerk.Com).

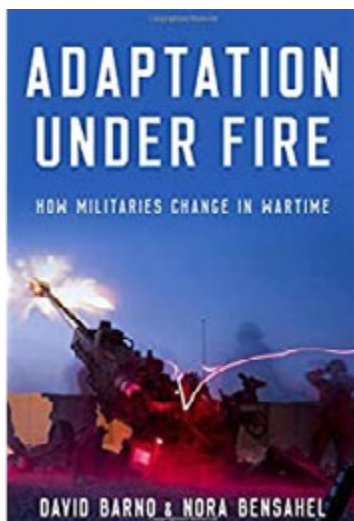




## ASSESSING MILITARY RESPONSIVENESS

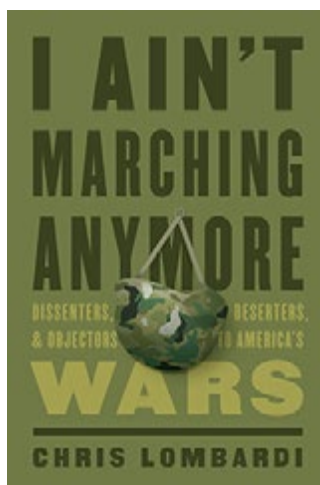
In a book assessing the long-range tactics of the U.S. military, **Nora Bensahel '89**, Visiting Professor of Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, casts a critical lens towards its future. In *Adaptation Under Fire: How Militaries Change During Wartime* (Oxford University Press 2020), she argues that the military continually needs to plan for future wars although there may not be a roadmap for determining precisely how those wars will unfold. In a quote from her book, Bensahel shares a statement from former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who said, "We have a perfect record in predicting the next war. We have never once gotten it right."

Co-author with David Barno, a retired Lieutenant General of the U.S. Army who led combined forces in Afghanistan, Bensahel posits that the military needs to rapidly adapt to shifting circumstances in order to claim victory. In their text, they provide historical background on conflicts, including the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In spite of unknown factors, the two explain that the military must identify leaders and procure weapons in order to continue their mission. They also provide recommendations on how to quickly respond to security challenges of the future.



## CAPTURING THE VOICES OF DISSENTERS

Tracing the history of the dedicated men and women in military service, journalist and author **Chris Lombardi '80** has presented an account of those in the armed forces who have exercised the power of dissent. In *I Ain't Marching Anymore: Dissenters, Deserters, and Objectors to America's Wars* (The New Press 2020), Lombardi examines the generations of soldiers who have protested against government actions and policies, going back centuries to before the U.S. Constitution had been signed. Soldier dissenters who stood against the nation's wars and violations in conduct spoke out and formed a foundation for change in U.S. politics. Lombardi follows the course of the nation's history through its long saga of war, from the Civil War to present day conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. She also profiles the activism of conscientious objectors including Howard Zinn, William Kunstler, and Chelsea Manning, giving voice to those who spoke out for peace.



## TEACHING TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Retired educator **Bernice WORMAN Hauser '49** wrote an article about introducing children in primary school to the practice of recycling. Published in the Winter/Spring 2020 issue of the *Teachers Clearinghouse for Science and Society Education Newsletter*, Hauser illustrated several ways in which the topic could be taught. Methods in which young children could learn about sustainability include class readings, usage of reused or new paper on which students' names are written, and hands on experimentation in paper making.

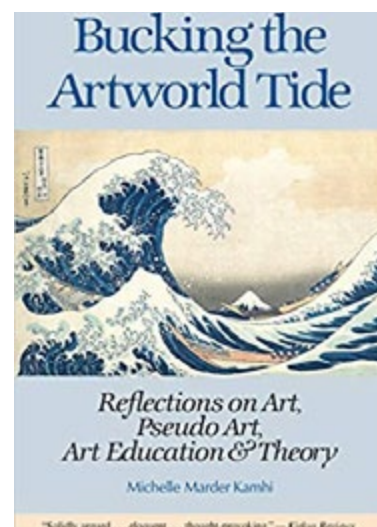
Hauser, who taught at the Horace Mann School in Riverdale, is a Primary Education Correspondent for the publication. To read her article, please request a copy of the newsletter from Editor-in-Chief John Roeder of The Calhoun School. He can be reached via email at JLRoeder@aol.com.

## SURVIVING COVID-19

**Jamie LEONG Ong '97** was interviewed by The Well for a discussion on career, family, and faith. In the podcast, Ong shared aspects of her work as an Environmental Protection Project Manager at the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, and how her work to restore natural landscapes in the city has been impeded by the coronavirus pandemic. She herself contracted the virus and spent three weeks isolating from her husband and her children; ultimately drawing strength from her family and her community. To listen to her inspiring story, visit <https://bit.ly/2SKrjiv>.

## A PERSPECTIVE ON THE ARTS

**Michelle MARDER Kamhi '54** embraces a perspective about art that runs contrary to the practice of many contemporary artists and the scholarly works of art historians. She posits that traditional, figurative art should be upheld for its aesthetic creation, and that many modern, abstract works are, as she terms it, "pseudo art." Kamhi has dedicated decades of research to this topic and has authored three books on the subject. Her latest, *Bucking the Artworld Tide: Reflections on Art, Pseudo Art, Art Education & Theory* (Pro Arte Books 2020) was recently published. Kirkus Reviews stated that her book is "solidly argued... thoughtfully presented... and strongly opinionated," and the Midwest Book Review noted that her writings "shake[s] the foundation of today's art establishment, challenging its basic tenets." Adherents to her theories can read more of her work on [www.aristos.org](http://www.aristos.org), an online publication devoted to the arts for which she is Co-Editor.





# MAKING AN BLACK & LATINX

Black and Latinx students have always been in the minority at Hunter. Alumnae who graduated from Hunter in the 1940s through the 1960s have recalled, on average, about ten Black women in their class and a similar amount of Hispanic students. The number of these BIPOC Hunterites, rather than increasing through the decades, has steadily dropped from its peak in the 1970s, bottoming out at an alarming rate. In 2020, the number of Black students at Hunter stands at just 2.4%, and Latinx students at 6.2%, while their enrollment in NYC's public elementary schools was approximately 25% Black and approximately 40% Latinx in the 2018-19 school year (Source: New York City Council).

Looking back on the methods of instruction and the fostering of a community at the high school, there have been visible changes over time. In the 1940s, the means of teaching and the cultivation of social gatherings at the high school were designed to make all pupils feel included, creating a singular student identity as Hunterites. Discussions about race and ethnicity, acknowledging the backgrounds of many of the immigrant students as well as students of color at the school, were rarely heard within the classroom. As time progressed, affinity groups were created by Black,



# IMPACT ALUMS

Latinx, and other student groups. Today, the African-American Cultural Society (AACS) and Hunter's Organization of Latin Americans (HOLA) each provide an important locus of social connection at the high school for many of Hunter's underrepresented students. Mosaic, the K-12 PTA-led organization, also supports the Hunter College Campus Schools community through developing diversity-related programs for high school and elementary school students.

When boys were granted admission to the high school, there were two Black students who were among that pioneering first class of boys that graduated in 1980. Their presence through their studies and extracurricular activities at Hunter helped pave the way for the many classes of boys to follow, continuing to this day.

In this issue, we draw upon interviews with Black and Latinx alums who have given back to Hunter and the community at large. Collectively, these alums have been making an impact later in their careers in diversifying admissions at HCHS, in the sciences, in business, and in politics. Read how their Hunter background has played a role in shaping their experiences.



## TRACING HISTORY

### Alumna Shares What Hunter Was Like in the 1930s and 40s

Nonagenarian, soon to be 97 years old, **Marie ROACH Pittman '41** began her Hunter studies in 1937. Her niece, **Pamela Roach '71** captured her aunt's journey from the high school into the world through conducting an interview in 2016. An inspiration to her niece, Roach wanted to attend Hunter and took the test. Together, the two generations of Hunterites have achieved much in their careers; Pamela Roach, a marketing professional and Chief Executive Officer of Breakthrough Marketing Technology, also served on the HCHSAA Board of Directors and is a former chair of the board's Diversity committee. From her interviews with her aunt, we learn a bit about life at Hunter in the 1930s and 40s.

As a child of immigrant parents from Barbados and Jamaica, West Indies, Pittman was born and raised in Brooklyn and attended public schools in the borough during the years of the Great Depression, in the days when African-Americans were known as Coloreds. At Hunter, she and her classmates were students while a building for Hunter College was being constructed on Park Avenue. During those years, instead of going to classes at Thomas Hunter Hall on 68th Street and Lexington Avenue, a satellite space was procured in an office building in Manhattan's Garment District. Schoolgirls took the elevators with office workers. Once the construction of Hunter College was completed, they were able to return to the 68th Street high school building.

Pittman remembers that there were a handful of Black students at the school, perhaps about five young women, and that there was one Asian student. Over the course of her four years at the high school, there were at most eight or nine Black girls. But, in looking back on those years she recalls the diversity of backgrounds of the population. "We had Jewish, Italian, Irish, Russian, Chinese, and Black students in all the classes. In some of my classes, I was the only one... but I think the teachers taught us in a way that made us feel that we were all the same and could achieve."

She took full advantage of what the high school had to offer, and participated in many extracurricular activities including athletics, chorus, and theatrical productions. She recalls that the Black students were fully integrated into the high school's population and felt that they could do anything. For instance, for one of the school plays, a Black student wanted to portray a character that had a European accent. The teacher in charge of the play said, "Oh, you can't have that part because you won't be able to do the accent." The student responded, "Why not? Of course, I can do that accent." Hunter gave its African-American students the confidence to speak up for what they wanted, and what they felt was important. At HCHS, Pittman organized a social organization of six Black students called the Toussaint Louverture Club, named for the general who led the Haitian Revolution.

Growing up in a close-knit family, Pittman's time outside of school was spent playing games with other children in her neighborhood, of German, Irish, and British backgrounds, in addition to other children from the Caribbean. In elementary school, she recalled that students were placed in classes according to their IQ, and she distinctly remembered the CRMD, (Class for the Retarded Mentally Developed). She found it unfair to label students in such a way and those memories would help lead to her eventual career choice as an educator. As a Hunter student, she noticed that she frequently had more homework than her friends who attended other high schools.

Her memories of the neighborhood included parades and other community gatherings. In summer, her parents took her and her four siblings on day trips, whether on a steamboat ride up the Hudson River or a day trip to Orient State Park on Long Island, and to local beaches.

She attended Hunter College during World War II. During those years, she also played night and softball games in the American Girls Semi-professional, fast pitch Softball League, which was founded while men were overseas in the armed forces. Ebbets Field was walking distance from her home and, while growing up, she and her siblings had often gone to see the Brooklyn Dodgers



play – being an ardent Dodger fan.

Pittman entered Hunter College with a major in pre-Social Work and then Physical Education. For graduate school, she attended the New York School of Social Work, initially founded as the New York School of Philanthropy, which eventually became a school within Columbia University. Upon earning her degree, she became a social worker, working with foster care and adoption cases. She would work in that profession for nearly ten years.

During that time, Pittman had a family and moved from Brooklyn to Queens. She felt that her workload put a strain on her as a new mother. She left the profession and took courses at Columbia University to become certified as a Physical Education teacher. She was certified to teach junior high and high school students Physical and Health education. In her health courses, teaching high school juniors and seniors, she found that many of her students could not read even on a second or third grade level. "It broke my heart," she said, "I felt I had been privileged to have such an education and here, these children, almost graduating from high school, and they can't read? I'm in the wrong place."

This led her to take on a new role in education: that of administrator. Pittman took courses at Columbia and Fordham Universities in supervision and administration, so that she could sit for the exams for Assistant Principal and Principal of Elementary Schools, reaching Pre-K through third grade children earlier and ensuring that they could read. "You don't push [a] child ahead who can't do the work. You find out why they cannot read and then meet their need – give them another chance."

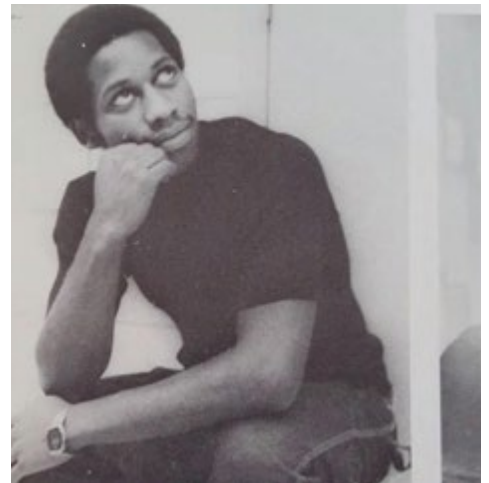
Pittman also worked as an early organizer and supervisor in the NYC Board of Education Auxiliary Educational Career Unit (AECU), a program that was formed in the 1970s to train community members to become certified teachers. Candidates for this program had not followed the traditional path to become an educator – some of the trainees did not have a high school diploma. Following a morning of hands-on experience teaching in the classroom under a master teacher, they took college courses at various city colleges. These "paraprofessionals" progressed towards earning their college degree to become certified teachers.

Roach informed her aunt about the low enrollment numbers of Black and Latinx students in today's HCHS community, which was about the same in 2016 as it was in 1940. Pittman was shocked and disappointed to learn of these numbers. She asked her aunt what advice she could give to those young minority students. "Don't play it cheap and don't play yourself cheap," Pittman counseled. "You're attending a school that has a lot to offer. Take everything it has to offer you to make you a better person – better able to help others, as it did me. I still volunteer. You never, never, ever give up!"





Craig Woods '80 and Vera Major



## YOUNG TRAILBLAZER - ATHLETE - BELOVED YOUTH PASTOR: HCHS Remembers Craig Woods '80

In 1952, a bright pre-teen named Ronald Brown graduated from Hunter College Elementary School. However, in the 1950s, as a male pupil, Brown was unable to attend Hunter College High School because the school would not admit male students, even those who attended Hunter College Elementary School. As an adult, Brown would later become the first African American U.S. Secretary of Commerce under the Clinton Administration. Even so, it would take more than two decades --- and a lawsuit --- before gifted male students were admitted to the high school.

In 1974, **Craig Woods '80** was one of the first eighteen male students to be admitted to Hunter College High School. A beloved and popular presence in the Hunter community, he would go on to dedicate his life to serving his Georgia community as a pastor. This past Spring, Craig passed away from complications due to COVID-19 on April 13, 2020. A light in life gone too soon, we share some of the memories of his life, his family, and his time at Hunter.

Craig started his Hunter journey at Hunter College Elementary School. Recommended to attend HCES by one of his preschool teachers, Craig later became one of the first Black male HCES graduates, along with his classmate, **Norman Carter '80**, to attend Hunter College High School. Craig grew up in Harlem. His mother worked in retail and his father served as a Commissioner in the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. Craig's father was actively involved in community affairs. In life, Craig spoke fondly of his father's influence in his life, as well as the lives of neighborhood youth. His father frequently urged him to take up sports, and would put a baseball, basketball or football in his hands to ensure that his energy and attention were channeled into positive activities. In his own words, at a community event for youth, Craig described his father as "a leader," "someone who looked out for them," and as "someone who was willing to give [young people] a

job when they needed one." Craig's father kept him continually engaged, and was someone who had a significant impact on the lives of youth.

Having solidified their friendship in elementary school, Norman Carter described Craig as "a unique individual in the way that he connected with others." Carter described the environment at Hunter as one where the faculty supported their studies as well as their extracurricular activities. The two friends and classmates formed bonds with Hunter's Black teachers, namely, Music teacher Campbell Austin, as well as Sandra Miley and Samuel Washington of the Physical Education department.

Within this environment, Craig was instrumental in the student effort to develop a sports program at Hunter, changing the dynamic of the school. Until the arrival of the male students, Hunter was recognized solely as a school for gifted youth, with extracurricular activities that included chess and science teams, but no sports. However, within five years of the male students' arrival, Craig helped launch a basketball team, and an athletics program was formally established. Described as "the best player on the basketball team," Craig helped to establish its viability and visibility. Significantly, Hunter was able to move beyond games with other specialized high schools (like Stuyvesant and Bronx High School of Science). As the team excelled, they were able to compete in major high school leagues throughout New York City, beginning in 1978, Craig's junior year.

Appropriately recognized as "Hunter royalty," as **Sheila Anderson '80** describes him, Craig opted to attend Hunter College, where he received an athletic scholarship. Majoring in Communications, it was at Hunter College that Craig met and later married his college sweetheart, Vera Jamison.

As partners in marriage and ministry, the couple would leave New York for Georgia, where he would begin his service as a preacher. In Atlanta, Craig and his wife Vera served as youth pastors who introduced young adults to peers of various cultures.

Craig later devoted himself to ministry on a larger scale, becoming the Pastor of The Love Walk Church in Powder Springs, Georgia. Together, he and his wife Vera dedicated their lives supporting individuals and families in need and providing resources for at-risk youth. They formed a foundation that supported women who had been victimized by domestic and intimate partner violence. Through the foundation, "care packages" of basic essentials were created for those who sought safe shelter at area hotels. They also launched Christmas toy drives for children, and clothing essentials for homeless men in shelters during the winter months.

Always the athlete at heart, Craig shared his love for basketball and other sports with children throughout the state of Georgia, acting as referee or coach. Before his untimely death, Craig spent the first few months of 2020 organizing a youth program affiliated with his church. "Sports 2020" was the manifestation of Craig's vision to invite well-known basketball players to speak with at-risk youth.

Craig was also a co-facilitator among area clergy "to combat any prejudice and racism in different congregations that we represent," as he described it to HCHS classmate **Gail Schechter '80**. As a Chicago-area community organizer and director of interfaith racial justice groups, Gail was immediately receptive and the two pledged to exchange ideas. "Craig's loss is immeasurable. Our biggest tribute to him would be to carry on his work," says Gail. She, along with Sheila Anderson and Norman Carter, are among a group of Hunter alumni planning a fund in Craig's name that will support individual Black and Brown students, student-led social justice groups, or related initiatives that will "keep Craig's vision of love and inclusion alive."

Craig is survived by his wife, three children, two grandchildren, two brothers, and two sisters. They, along with the Hunter community, mourn his loss.



Rebeca Arbona '83

## BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

### Entering Hunter as a Ten-Year-Old

**Rebeca Arbona '83** came to New York as a three-year-old. Born in Puerto Rico, she and her parents were U.S. citizens and decided to move the family to the mainland. After arriving in the city, she was raised in a bilingual household in the Bronx and on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Her mother was a social worker and her father, a journalist who worked for a Puerto Rican socialist newspaper, was also active with labor organizations. A few years after their arrival in New York, her parents divorced, and her father returned to Puerto Rico. Growing up, Arbona would spend one month out of every year with him on the island.

In middle school, Arbona's teachers recommended that she and several of her classmates take the Hunter test; her parents had never heard of Hunter and agreed once they were told of the opportunity their daughter was being given. With an August birthday and having skipped a year, she sat for the test at ten years old and would go on to graduate from Hunter at sixteen. Her recollections of the exam were that it was very difficult, and that one of the math questions involved solving a fraction over a fraction! She shared the experience of taking the test with her elementary school classmates and puzzled over the level of math that was included on the exam.

She and two other students from her school were granted admission to Hunter, with the condition that they take a month-long summer preparatory course. The students in the summer program were largely from minority communities. Arbona described the summer prep as coursework taught during the first month of classes at the school, rather than a formally organized program designed to introduce new concepts and methods of learning to support incoming students. Looking back on that time, she felt that providing training in study habits might have been

a more effective way to prepare seventh graders to join the Hunter community. "A true bridge program would have been great," she stated. "But it wasn't that. It was just the first month of curriculum."

The summer instructors told the students that the classes would be difficult and warned them about the amount of homework they would have. Arbona found math to be intimidating and the foreign language she selected, German, was also challenging to learn, as the English language instruction she had at her elementary school had not been that strong. However, once seventh grade began, she was already familiar with most of the material being taught and found the first month of classes to be repetitive. With four weeks of introductory instruction she still felt that she was "not necessarily better equipped," and was challenged by the work.

Socially, Arbona was not tightly connected to any one group, she had a number of different friends from diverse backgrounds, including White, Latinx, and Black students. She was aware, though, of a community of Black, Asian, and Latinx students that had come together around sports. As athletics was not among her interests and was not part of her extracurricular activities, she did not connect with them. She recalls that they seemed to be very supportive of each other.

In describing her time at the high school, Arbona felt that Hunter was an "idyllic" place with positive peer pressure that inspired academic excellence. At times, she shared, she did not always feel that she belonged; which was partly because she was Latina. Overall, though, she felt that Hunter "...was a life-changing blessing for me. It's absolutely an enormous part of who I am."

Arbona was a student during the time that the

New York magazine article, "The Joyful Elite," was published, which inspired a feeling of pride in her and many of her classmates. For college, Arbona decided to go to Yale University and majored in Linguistics. As graduation approached, many of her friends were going to law school, so Arbona considered that path as well. She got a job at a law firm and was considering taking the LSAT when a family friend suggested that she consider a job in marketing. She found that she enjoyed the work and saw that women were climbing the ladder, advancing in their careers. She attended New York University's Stern School of Business and got her MBA. Arbona has charted a course in marketing and branding that led to her forming her own company in 2016.

Though she moved out of New York nearly thirty years ago, she still keeps in touch with the Hunter community. Now living in Cincinnati, Ohio, she attended her 10th, 20th, 25th, and 30th reunions. Each week, she participates in a Zoom call with a few Hunter classmates that began in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

In today's competitive landscape involving intensive coaching for the Hunter test, Arbona feels that there is an ever-widening gap between children whose families can afford preparation versus those who can't. The inequities and inconsistencies in elementary school quality leading to the need for a bridge program before entering the school, she feels, are even more pronounced. As a strong believer in Affirmative Action, she feels that equity initiatives should be addressed to help minority students better prepare for the test.

Arbona acknowledges the difficulty of increasing the diversity at HCHS, "I don't envy them the task to try and straighten this out," she said.

## ACCULTURATION

### Alumna Blends in at Hunter and Turns Towards Politics

Growing up in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, **Melinda Lopez '90** was the first student from her elementary school to gain admission to Hunter. Her principal recommended she take the Hunter test, and her parents agreed. Lopez is the only child of parents from Puerto Rico who were both employed by MetLife Insurance. Her mother was an administrative assistant, and her father worked in moving for the organization.

Lopez recalls waiting in line outside the high school before taking the Hunter test. Being in Manhattan, looking at the other potential students around her, and seeing the school building for the first time, she felt overwhelmed and experienced a degree of culture shock. She did not prepare for the Hunter test beforehand and no other students from her elementary school took the test with her. Already, she had a sense that she did not belong.

Feeling as if she were an outsider was a sentiment that would follow Lopez throughout her years at Hunter. Once at the school, she made a number of close friends and decided that her approach to the social setting at Hunter would be "to survive and blend in." She did not feel a sense of community as there were very few Black and brown students in her class; she felt that the minority students all stood out as being different. Many of them looked different and some of them spoke differently from the high school's majority White population. She was also embarrassed to be the first student admitted to Hunter from her elementary school, another way in which she stood out. She felt that if she joined a club for Latinx students, she would be identified as different.

Consequently, many of Lopez's friends were White, and some of them were wealthy. It was also in the high school that she first realized that she spoke English with a strong Spanish accent, which she worked to eliminate. "I don't sound like any of these people," she remarked. Before attending Hunter, she was not cognizant of having an accent, because everyone around her spoke English in the same manner. Today, when encountering some Latinx people, she is sometimes identified as "sounding White."

Reflecting on her high school days and her decision to blend into the majority social groups at Hunter, Lopez felt that "It wasn't an easy choice, and it wasn't the right choice." If her sons had made that choice, she said, "it would make me really sad." Eventually, Lopez felt more comfortable at the school and, as evidence of the social acceptance she had gained, she was elected President of her senior class.

Lopez remembers that some of Hunter's minority faculty were very supportive of her, particularly her Spanish teachers, Jose Diaz and Maria



Jaxon Lopez Tavares (left), Melinda Lopez '90 (center), Joseph Lopez Tavares (right)

Nadel. She also felt a degree of affinity with some of the high school's Black teachers, including music teacher Campbell Austin and physical education teacher Samuel Washington. Lopez felt those teachers really cared for their students and looked out for them. She also credits math teacher Linda Aboody, who was White, for helping her realize that she could succeed at the subject with persistence. In spite of her successes, Lopez felt that she, and perhaps other Black and brown students at Hunter, suffered from imposter syndrome, where one experiences a sense of inadequacy in spite of personal, academic, or professional achievement.

For college, she applied early action to Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. She became familiar with the school through a White friend of hers who knew of students in attendance and spoke of the university's community and diversity. When she visited in tenth grade, she found the campus and the surrounding town to be to her liking. "It's like being on a farm," she thought, comparing Providence to Manhattan. Once she found out that she was accepted, a friend of hers remarked "You got in because you're Puerto Rican," which she still remembers as being very hurtful.

Lopez, who held aspirations of becoming a teacher from childhood, studied Psychology at Brown, with the understanding that it would help meet the needs of students. She embraced the university's environment, which gave her a much longed-for sense of belonging. She remained in Rhode Island after graduation and taught at public schools in urban districts throughout the state. As the years progressed, she turned towards consulting and training Rhode Island's teachers.

In time, she would also decide to run for political office, something that she had thought she would never do. She felt strongly that her voice and her ability to bring people together around a common goal would be beneficial for her town and for her state. Having gained first-hand experience that "there's so many things wrong with our educational

system," she ran on a platform of educational reform. "Rhode Island is a very small state," she said, "[and] we should be getting school right for kids and families." She ran for the position of State Representative, though she was defeated in the primary election held in September 2020.

Lopez felt the primary race was an uphill battle, as the district she lives in is 92% White. As a Puerto Rican woman, it was a challenge for her to bridge a cultural divide and prove to her district's constituents, who are largely Italian-American, that she could be a voice for them. The primary race was close, and she intends to run again when the seat is up for election in 2022. She is setting the foundation for her next run for office by keeping an active presence in the community; organizing food drives for local pantries and hosting fundraisers to donate much needed supplies to public schools. She is also Co-Director of the Rhode Island chapter of the Latina Leadership Institute, which encourages civic and community engagement.

Her work in coaching teachers has been affected by COVID-19, as consultants in Rhode Island are not allowed into school buildings. Therefore, a good portion of her educational work has gone virtual. She recently was hired by another Hunter alum, **Alexander Shub '90**, who founded the educational nonprofit School Empowerment Network (SEN).

The nonprofit, though based in New York, has contracts with school districts nationally. Lopez is a Program Director for the organization and has begun working on performing school quality reviews for public schools in Massachusetts, which is also done virtually.

Looking back on her time at Hunter, Lopez notes that the Class of 1990 has become very close over the last decade or so. Social media has facilitated connections between former classmates, and she feels that, collectively, they've become "very good humans" in spite of social struggles in high school, and now share personal and professional advice. When her youngest son was born with a serious heart defect, friends came to Boston when he was born and check in with her regularly.

Regarding diversity at the high school, Lopez feels that more outreach needs to be done at the elementary school level. She strongly believes that although no one from her school had ever gotten into Hunter before her isn't because nobody from her school could have gotten in; students and their families were not aware of the opportunity. Information should be accessible to all families, in multiple languages, in all different neighborhoods. "It shouldn't be left up to chance," she emphasized.

Lopez recently wrote a poem about her Hunter experience, reprinted below.

*I lost my accent.  
I had it - bold, thick, sassy and smart.  
When I arrived at my "special school" I heard it loud and clear  
and for the first time my 12-year-old self-realized she had an accent.  
My accent was now different, it was loud, it was getting attention and I wanted to hide.  
I couldn't.  
I was the only one from my elementary school to ever get into that "special school" and I had to  
succeed.  
I had to prove my 6th-grade teacher wrong.  
So,  
I lost my accent.  
And I learned to survive in a sea of difference.*

*You're Puerto Rican? From NYC? You don't have an accent. You sound white.  
You think you're better than us. You think you're white. Why did you have to go to that school?  
My 18-year-old self was neither white nor Puerto Rican. She was Ivy League and who did she think  
she was.  
And she learned to survive*

*My boys didn't learn Spanish.  
As a mom, thinking I'd protect them from my experience  
Thinking they wouldn't have to worry and struggle like I did  
They get asked: "you're Puerto Rican? you don't speak Spanish? You act white."*



## COMING FULL CIRCLE

### HCES Grad Returns to High School as Director of Admissions

Hunter has been a defining presence in the life of **Kyla KUPFERSTEIN Torres '92**. She and her younger brother, **David Kupferstein '95**, attended Hunter Elementary and completed their secondary school education at HCHS.

Her parents were immigrants; her mother came to the United States from Jamaica to join her parents and siblings. Torres' maternal grandparents had left their children in Jamaica and came to New York seeking work; her grandmother was a nanny to the grandchildren of the owners of the General Cocoa Company. Her grandfather was able to find a position there through his wife. Her father, the son of Holocaust survivors, arrived in New York at age eight. Born in what is now Uzbekistan and raised in the Bronx, he graduated from the Bronx High School of Science. Her parents met while in medical school in Europe and, upon finishing their studies, relocated to Manhattan's Upper East Side, where they raised their children.

As a first-generation New Yorker and a mixed-race Black child, Torres fit in with her classmates. In the 1980s, the elementary school was very diverse, with a sizeable population of Black, Asian, and Latinx pupils in addition to White students. In the vocabulary of Torres and her young classmates, advancing to the high school was "going upstairs," and it was expected that they would continue their studies at Hunter High. Taking the Hunter test was a requirement, though HCES students were granted admission irrespective of their scores. Hers was the first class who did not have to attend summer school if they did not perform well on the test.

In the high school, well familiar with the building and a good portion of its student body, Torres had friends of all races. Though AACS, the African American Cultural Society, had been formed, "It never occurred to me [in high school] to think of what it would be like to have a Black or Latino community around me," she stated.

She was conscious of the fact that there were only a small number of Black faculty in the high school, particularly because in the elementary school a large proportion of the teachers were Black. In the elementary school, Torres explained, "...you had some of the smartest kids in New York, and their teachers were Black." At HCHS, in addition to Campbelle Austin, who taught Music and led the much-loved Jazz Chorus, there were also Sandra Miley and Samuel Washington who taught Physical Education, Janice Warner who taught English, and Debra Martin in the Counseling department.

When senior year approached and it came time to prepare college applications, Torres began to explore her identity as a young Black woman who was both Jamaican and Jewish. "Diversity became very important to me in selecting a college," she remarked. She applied early decision to Vassar College in Poughkeepsie and was accepted. At Vassar, there was a good deal of flexibility in the choice of courses



Kyla KUPFERSTEIN Torres '92 and her son, Naftali

and she ultimately created her own major in American Culture, which combined two disciplines – English Literature and Sociology – and required the creation of a proposal. In that major, she focused intensively on the writings of James Baldwin. She had a Black male advisor for her studies who was a significant mentor for her. Through Vassar's exchange program, she was able to spend her junior year at Howard University, a leading Historically Black University in Washington, DC.

During her time at Howard, Torres was engaged in tutoring children from underprivileged neighborhoods. When she returned to Vassar, she became involved with the Black Student Leadership Network, a program that grew out of Marian Wright Edelman's Black Community Crusade for Children. She had also found her professional aspiration: to provide Black and brown children with access to top quality education. After graduation, she spent time some time back in Washington, DC working with other Vassar students in BSLN's Freedom Schools, modeled after the 1964 Freedom Summer Project Washington. She then returned to New York and worked with homeless youth. Soon thereafter she was hired by Oliver Scholars (then known as the Albert G. Oliver Program) as their Director of Admissions at age 24.

Torres thought she would attend law school, and even applied and was offered a scholarship at the University of Chicago Law School. But as the time to start her legal education came closer, she couldn't shake what her parents had taught her - education was of the utmost importance and through her community work she was ensuring that many more children would have access to a good education. She disappointed her family and turned down law school for a master's in Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has advocated for equal access to education for Black, brown, low income, and undocumented youth throughout her career.

She learned of a vacancy at Hunter for a Director of Admissions. Initially, she interviewed for the position with Kip Zegers, who said that

she “did not yet possess the gravitas” to be appointed to the position. About three years later, Randy Collins contacted her and asked if she was still interested in the role. She was extremely interested in the opportunity and was interviewed. A few weeks later, she was hired.

Torres worked as the Campus Schools' Director of Admissions from 2009-2015. She was given the task of increasing the percentage of Black and Latinx students at the high school and was personally and professionally aligned with that mission.

In her role as Director of Admissions, she developed new relationships, particularly with Head Start programs. With the team of testing psychologists who support the HCES admissions process, she instituted screening days where children selected by their Head Start teachers were tested on site. She worked with HCES parents of color to do intensive outreach to prospective families of color in the application process, trying to revive HCES' reputation as a school that could serve Black and brown children. She was successful in these efforts, and in her time as Director of Admissions representation of children of color rose.

While she was not as successful in her attempts to make an impact on student of color enrollment in the high school, she spearheaded Hunter's participation in the NAIS People of Color Conference and encouraged the administration to let students attend the concurrent Student Diversity Leadership Conference (supported by HCHSAA grants). She also organized alumnae/i Open Houses, where HCHS graduates would speak openly with prospective Black and Latinx parents about the opportunity to attend Hunter.

In 2015, Torres was moved to Hunter College and named Director of Partnership Programs in the Office of Admission. In that occupation, she was responsible for developing pipeline programs to increase the number of Black and Latinx students. During the two years she worked for the college, she was the coordinator of the new Mellon Arts Fellowship Program for

students of color. Torres found the diversity among the faculty and staff at CUNY to be refreshing; as a senior administrator, she served under and alongside a number of other administrators of color.

She left Hunter to relocate to the Bay Area in 2017. Now in California, she has transitioned to a new role as Managing Editor of *Stranger's Guide*, a quarterly publication that provides in depth exploration about places around the globe. Operating from Austin, Texas; Oakland, California; and New York, Torres and her colleagues had already been holding Zoom meetings before the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

Torres still provides college admission counseling to students and families on a consulting basis. She is also among the founders of Admissions Community Cultivating Equity and Peace Today (ACCEPT), a nonprofit organization that is engaged in equity work around college admissions.

Looking back on her time at Hunter as Director of Admissions, Torres has mixed emotions. While she was able to increase the number of incoming students to the elementary school, her efforts at the high school level were largely blocked. She strongly believes that HCHS' entrance criteria – meaning the emphasis on the Hunter exam itself – need to be revised, and that the administration was not positioned to take on that challenge. From her perspective, the administration was not open to revising its tools for admission and, consequently, she was not able to achieve the degree of success that she had hoped for. “I was representing an aspiration, as much as a school... [but] there wasn't the political will to do what needs to be done for kids of color,” she stated.

Furthermore, any efforts to increase diversity, she feels, must be grounded in racial equity and antiracism. Without working aggressively to focus on racial equity, she thinks that the work that needs to be done at the high school will not be accomplished. “You can't have euphemisms,” Torres said. “[The school must be] explicitly open about bringing in more Black and brown students.”

## Placing Big Bets

### Hunter Experience Allows Alumna to Dream Big

Alumna **Deanna Portero '08** came to Hunter from Fresh Meadows, Queens as the daughter of immigrants. Her father and his parents fled the Cuban Revolution and, after settling in New York, he was eventually employed in the field of advertising sales. Her mother emigrated from Jamaica after completing high school studies on the island and worked in community relations for a charter school. The two met at CUNY's Baruch College.

Portero distinctly remembers taking the Hunter test because she was excused from school for the day; she and her mother travelled from Queens to Manhattan. She had not prepared for the test beforehand, and her parents did not know that anyone did or could. She was immediately struck by the symbol for Pi, as she had not seen it before and assumed it was for math from high school, college, or even television. When she completed her essay, she was certain that she had performed well on that portion of the exam. Once the test concluded, she noticed that some of the children in the room knew one another; she was the only student from her school who sat for the exam. In her test results, she had just barely crossed the minimum score.

It was a letter from HCHS that led Portero to the high school. One of her elementary school teachers gave her information about Hunter that her parents could review. When she brought the letter home to her family, and they saw that the test required the payment of a fee, her mother thought it was a scam. Her mother agreed to let her daughter take the test on the condition that, if she passed the exam and was admitted to Hunter, she would absolutely have to attend.

When she entered Hunter in seventh grade, there were times when she felt out of place in the new environment. "For the first year or two," Portero relayed, "I felt like a foreign exchange student." She soon found community in the school's cultural clubs, the African American Cultural Society (AACS) and Hunter's Organization of Latin Americans (HOLA). She shared that their weekly lunches were a defining part of her experience at the high school. There was a familial relationship that was built between the students in those two groups, as they shared cultural references and ways of relating to one another.

In reflecting on her years at the school, she wondered how many Black students had come to HCHS through the Hunter test, outside of those who had entered as graduates of Hunter Elementary. She described the numbers of Black and Latinx students enrolled at Hunter in those days as being in "dramatically low territory." To learn that those numbers had dropped further in the years following her 2008 graduation came as a shock.

Portero immediately excelled academically, becoming class Co-President in her freshman, sophomore, and junior years. She also held executive leadership positions in AACS, HOLA, and the Fed Challenge clubs as a junior and senior. When her senior year approached, however, she felt that she was being held back from expressing her full potential. As a senior, she wanted to become Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Yearbook while retaining her position as class Co-President. The faculty would not let her have both roles, counselling her that she would be stretched too thin. While intending to be helpful, she now views the administration as having displayed a subtle form of bias; of having lower expectations for Black and Latinx students who may have been viewed as incapable of performing successfully in multiple leadership positions. Ultimately, she chose the position of Co-Editor-in-Chief of the yearbook, as she had become familiar with the duties of class president. Furthermore, the yearbook editor's position came with staff and an office!

As class Co-President, she got to know the entire class and, consequently, made friends with students of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Her Hunter experience instilled her with a strong degree of confidence and made her want to continue taking bold steps along her academic journey. While preparing for the SAT and college applications, Portero felt that she "wanted to keep placing big bets." She set her sights on attending, as she phrased it, "an Ivy League college in the mountains" and chose Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

While in college, Portero majored in Moral Psychology where she studied how to influence moral decision making, judgements, and actions. After graduation, she sought opportunities to apply those concepts in a practical sense. She relocated to Washington, DC and worked in fundraising for rare disease nonprofits. She also spent time volunteering to train Howard University students in digital and data organizing. Early in her career, she branched out from fundraising to managing project teams, including a team of software developers to create a product for patient organizations in order to run their own research studies. She feels that her years at Hunter gave her a significant head start in managing teams of exceptionally intelligent people. "Knowing how to manage the yearbook staff translated well to learning how to manage a team of software developers and learning how to manage researchers to design and launch a study, and learning how to negotiate the terms of a new public-private partnership," she said.

Through her time in developing software platforms, Portero formed strong relationships with her clients. One of them, the Fibrous Dysplasia Foundation, which advocates for individuals with



Deanna Portero '08

a rare bone disease, invited her to take on the role of Executive Director, a position that she was appointed to at 25 years of age. Through this work, which involved advocating for people with rare diseases, she was able to increase revenue over 100%, year over year, for the four years she led the organization. She also secured two major legislative wins, each with multimillion-dollar implications, and helped disburse over half a million dollars in research grants.

Today, she has transferred her skills to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where she coordinates gene therapy and genome editing initiatives. It is estimated that there are approximately 7,000 rare diseases that, individually, affect a very small amount of the population; each numbering less than 200,000. When viewed in aggregate, the number of Americans affected by rare diseases numbers about 25 million individuals. She remarked that it is particularly difficult to secure funding for drugs to treat rare diseases because the target community is so small; it's very difficult for corporations to recoup investments in research and development. Her work at NIH involves the development of drugs that can be more easily financed by the rare disease patient advocacy communities, without a profit motive. Like many, her work has been impacted by the coronavirus, which had forced most laboratories to operate at reduced capacities.

Regarding diversity at Hunter, Portero feels that there have been many well thought out proposals and that the alumnae/i community should focus their attention to how to increase institutional will to enact an appropriate number of those proposals. She also thinks that there is indeed an information gap about Hunter and how to get in; and that achieving a student body that truly embodies the most gifted students in New York City involves dropping allegiance to the high stakes standardized tests given in fifth grade. "Everyone knows that standardized tests do not exclusively screen for intelligence; they do not even reliably screen for intelligence," she stated.

# SOME NOTABLE NAMES AMONG BLACK AND LATINX ALUMNAE/I

We have compiled a partial list of distinguished Black and Latinx alums in Politics, the Arts, and Sciences. We apologize in advance for alums we may have missed.

## GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, AND LAW



**Ambassador Eunice Reddick '69**  
High School Distinguished Graduate 2019  
Diplomat (retired) stationed in Asia and Africa



**Edith Cooper '79**  
Former Executive Vice President and Global Head of Human Capital, Goldman Sachs President, Medley



**Jamal Greene '95**  
Constitutional law expert, Dwight Professor of Law at Columbia Law School  
Co-Chair, Facebook Oversight Board

## SCIENCE AND MEDICINE



**Marie Maynard Daly, Jan. '38, Ph.D.**  
Biochemist. First Black woman in the United States to earn a Ph.D. in Chemistry. Receiving her doctorate from Columbia University, Daly conducted research at the Rockefeller Institute of Medicine, Columbia University, and Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University.



**Corliss TAYLOR Henry, Jan. '43**  
First Black nurse on staff at Muhlenberg Hospital in Plainfield, New Jersey. Earned a master's degree in Education at New York University and became an instructor at Middlesex County College's nursing program in Edison, New Jersey. She later became an associate professor. Recipient of New Jersey's Legacy Award for her achievements.



**Mavis THOMPSON-Blaize '43, M.D.**  
Physician practicing medicine for over 50 years. Graduate of Howard University. First female president of the Black Caucus of Health Workers of the American Public Health Association. Member, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Recipient of Trailblazing Legacy Award from the Susan Smith McKinney Steward Medical Society.



## LITERATURE AND JOURNALISM



**Jane Tillman Irving '65**  
Journalist, first Black female reporter (retired) for WCBS Newsradio 880. President of the New York Press Club.



**Rowan Ricardo Phillips '92**  
Award-winning poet and sportswriter. Recipient of the 2013 Whiting Award and 2016's Anisfield-Wolf Book Award.



**Audre Lorde '51**  
Feminist author. Self-described as a "Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet." Recipient of the 1989 American Book Award and the 1992 and 1993 Lambda Literary Award for Lesbian Poetry.

## ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



**Ruby Wallace Dee '39**  
High School Distinguished Graduate 1992  
Award winning stage and screen actor and 2004 Kennedy Center Honoree. Starred in *A Raisin in the Sun* and Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*, among other films. First Black woman to play leading parts in the American Shakespeare Festival. Member, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



**Martina Arroyo '53**  
High School Distinguished Graduate 1968  
Operatic star and 2013 Kennedy Center Honoree. Performed at, among other venues, the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala in Milan, and the Paris Opera. Established the Martina Arroyo Foundation for young artists.



**Angela Bofill '72**  
Singer and songwriter of R&B and jazz classics. Compositions include the chart single "This Time I'll Be Sweeter" and "Holdin' Out for Love," which reached the R&B Top 40.



**Shola Lynch '87**  
High School Distinguished Graduate 2020  
Award-winning filmmaker. Curator of the Moving Image and Recorded Sound at the New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Director, Producer, and Writer of documentaries about Angela Davis and Shirley Chisholm. Recipient of The Peabody Award for Excellence in Electronic Media.



**Robert Lopez '93**  
High School Distinguished Graduate 2005  
Award-winning lyricist and composer for Broadway plays and Hollywood films including *Avenue Q* and *Frozen*. Double Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony (EGOT) winner. First male distinguished graduate.



**Loren Hammonds '95**  
Senior Programmer, Film & Immersive, Tribeca Enterprises. Curator and consultant for IFP and for numerous festivals including the Hamptons International Film Festival, GenArt Film Festival, and Bulgaria's SolIndependent Film Festival.



**Felipe Coronel '96**  
(performing as Immortal Technique)  
Hip Hop artist and activist. Albums include *Revolutionary Vol. 1* and *Revolutionary Vol. 2*, *The 3rd World*, *The Martyr*, and *The Middle Passage*.



**Lin-Manuel Miranda '98**  
High School Distinguished Graduate 2008  
Award-winning lyricist, composer, and actor. Creator and star of *In The Heights* and Broadway's *Hamilton*, which debuted at The Public Theater. Recipient of multiple Grammy and Tony Awards, the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and the 2015 MacArthur "Genius" Award.

# THE ALUMNAE/I ASSOCIATION

## Hopes for a New Chapter at Hunter: The HCHSAA Diversity Committee Takes Action

The Alumnae/i Association's Board of Directors has long been troubled about the lack of diversity at Hunter and has continuously offered its support in efforts to increase the number of Black, Latinx, and economically disadvantaged learners at the high school. We embrace the students' call for Hunter's student population to reflect the student body of New York City public schools. In the hopes of enacting change, the HCHSAA Board's Diversity Committee has launched a series of new initiatives that may yield positive results towards diversifying the makeup of the student body.

The HCHSAA Diversity Committee attended a series of meetings with key stakeholders within the HCHS community. In recent months, the Diversity committee met with representatives of the PTA and faculty, as well as current students who are actively working to implement change for future incoming classes. Working collectively with other groups, the Diversity Committee intends to support existing efforts and create new inroads that may advance the agenda of diversity at Hunter.

Plans laid out involved the formation of Diversity

subcommittees, identifying three key areas of focus: Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention. Each of the three subcommittees is led by an HCHS alumna and, over the course of the summer, student interns from minority communities participated in fact finding and research to support the work of each subcommittee.

The Diversity Subcommittees are led by the following alumnae:

**Recruitment Subcommittee Chair: Emma OWENS Kerins '84**

**Committee Participants: Norman Louie '84, Howard Shiau '84, Raymond Tsao '84, and HCHS faculty member Brian Park**

**Recruitment Student Interns: Charles E. '22, Jada M. '23, Mia M. '21, and Jamie (James) W '22.**

**Committee Participants: Dawn Cohen '81 (HCES '76), Susan Hammerman '79, Max Handelsman '88, Ann Starer '75, Kerry Toner '99**

**Admissions Subcommittee Chair: Sheila Anderson '80**

**Admissions Student Interns: Alexandra D. '22, Isabela F. '22, Chloe R. '21, and Katherine W. '22. Alexandra D. and Isabela F. interviewed an Educational Consultant in lieu of submitting a report.**

**Retention Subcommittee Chair: Vivian Altman '77**

**Committee participant: David Robison '83**

**Retention Student Interns: Naia C. '21, Ava J. '23, and Mia M. '21**

A statement and approach for each of the Diversity Subcommittees follows, and a report on the activities of the Admissions Subcommittee was written by Alexandra Doss and Isabela Fraguada. Resources related to diversity have also been posted on our website, and can be found at [www.hchsaa.org/diversity](http://www.hchsaa.org/diversity).

As one of the Board's Committees of the Corporation, participation in the Diversity committee is open to all members of the HCHS Alumnae/i Association. If you would like to learn more, and perhaps participate, email [info@hchsaa.org](mailto:info@hchsaa.org).

### RECRUITMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

The Recruitment Subcommittee's overall goal is to increase the percentage of eligible students from underrepresented groups at HCHS to take the Hunter exam in order to better reflect the diversity within New York City Public Schools. Some of the topics we have been working on this summer to reach these goals include:

- Obtaining data to determine who is sitting for the Hunter test and who is actually getting into the high school. Upon review of this data, we can work on solutions to increase the avenues to let all eligible underrepresented students know that they have qualified to take the Hunter test and encourage them to apply.
- Creating a more aggressive outreach program, such as having current students and alums visiting low-income/ Title 1 schools and emailing student families and letting them know about all that HCHS has to offer.
- Partnering with test prep companies to sponsor preparation for the Hunter test for some of these students.
- We also have some long-term goals to expand this program of ideas so that we can reach the community of underrepresented children at an earlier age, perhaps starting as early as the third grade.

The Recruitment Subcommittee is chaired by **Emma OWENS Kerins '84**. Alumnae/i who have worked with her to develop the subcommittee's approach include **Norman Louie '84, Howard Shiau '84, and Raymond Tsao '84**. The subcommittee's efforts were also strengthened by contributions from current HCHS science faculty member **Brian Park**, as well as interns **Charles E. '22, Jada M. '23, Mia M. '21, and Jamie (James) W '23**.

### RETENTION SUBCOMMITTEE

The Retention Subcommittee is working to improve Hunter's diversity for Black, Latinx, and lower-income students by creating a more welcoming and supportive climate from entrance through graduation. This includes the hiring and retention of faculty of color so that Black and Latinx students feel represented. The Retention Subcommittee is comprised of AA board member **Vivian Altman '77**, alum **David Robison '83**, and current HCHS student interns **Ava J. '23, Mia M. '21, and Naia C. '21**.

Our efforts are focused first on addressing why Black and Latinx students leave HCHS before graduation by compiling data on their reasons for leaving and where they matriculate afterwards. We may also gather information from Hunter Elementary students who chose not to continue on to the high school. Our interns are conducting interviews with as many former students and/or parents as possible. From the information we obtain we hope to better understand the issues that compelled students to leave, distill interview notes into major recurrent themes, and discuss programs to facilitate inclusion. We intend to engage alumnae/i for mentorship, educate faculty through antiracism and anti-bias education, and create spaces for students to be heard. Taking a cue from the HCHS' Project Diversity 2020 orientation, we hope to establish mandatory annual student workshops centering on anti-racism, allyship, and awareness.

We are identifying current members of the faculty/administration who are Black and Latinx as well as those that have left to examine why BIPOC faculty members leave. Recognizing that other groups are holistically reviewing the recruiting process, we are focused on providing support and mentorship to new, as well as existing, diverse faculty members. This includes implementing professional development for teachers/staff on race and racism in the classroom and highlighting the challenges of BIPOC students, including how implicit/unconscious biases can skew perceptions.

Other initiatives we are vetting include developing educational responses to instances of racism and hiring an additional guidance counselor or therapist of color who has specific training and expertise in working with BIPOC mental health & support.

From Vivian and David: As distressed as we are that Hunter is so much less diverse, we are incredibly inspired by the determination, eloquence, and passion of the students of all backgrounds that we've had the privilege to work with.



# HUNTER'S DIVERSITY CRISIS:

## An Interview with Dr. Darlene Dockery

By **Alexandra Doss '22 & Isabela Fraguada '22**

Introduction by **Sheila Anderson, '80**, Chair, HCHSAA  
Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Admissions

In July 2020, in direct response to the students' "Call for Diversity," an HCHSAA Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Admissions was formed. At its core, our subcommittee is driven by the conviction that Hunter will experience no meaningful change in diversity, equity and inclusion without a critical assessment and reformation of its admissions criteria.

This summer, I had the privilege of working with four (4) brilliant, engaging and remarkably "woke" Hunter students: Alexandra Doss, Isabela Fraguada, Chloe R. and Katherine W. In addition to weekly discussions regarding the current diversity crisis at Hunter, we explored the literature and opinions of specialized education experts who ardently support multi-criteria-based admissions reform. We also met virtually with Educational Consultant, Darlene W. Dockery, Ph.D. whose 340-page dissertation ("Addressing Underrepresentation in Gifted Education") has been downloaded over 1,000 times worldwide. Significantly, scholars have advised Dr. Dockery that her work has informed theirs, and she hopes to impact "countless" schools in the years to come. We hope that Hunter will be among them.

~ SA



It's abundantly clear that "Hunter" and "diversity" are about as compatible as oil and water. Though the latter repel each other naturally, Hunter and diversity can be brought together with the cooperation of those with the power to enact structural change. In a school that preaches excellence and equity, Hunter's student population of 2.4% Black, 6.2% Latinx, and 9% low-income learners can't be written off as merely an oversight. Although a team of students composed the "Student Call for Diversity" this past June, Hunter administrators have been unwilling to combat the inequities in the Hunter experience. There's a resistance to admissions reform despite ample research showing that high stakes, single day testing is ineffective in identifying gifted students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Admissions reform is an indispensable part of the diversity initiative, and many Hunterites are determined to support it and see it implemented.

This Summer we had virtual meetings with Darlene Dockery, Ph.D. to discuss her dissertation entitled "Addressing Underrepresentation in Gifted Education: A Historical Case Study of Policy and Practice in One School District." Dr. Dockery's expertise continues to be an invaluable resource in the fight for equity and inclusion.

Dr. Dockery shared a few of the experiences from her past that motivated her to advocate for gifted underprivileged children. Dr. Dockery grew up surrounded by lots of extended family members, and quickly recognized the developing intellect of one of her cousins.

Despite her cousin's unbounded potential, a



Alexandra Doss '22



Isabela Fraguada '22

family tragedy required the cousin to assume full responsibility for the care of her younger siblings. This tragedy stunted the cousin's academic growth, while one of the siblings won a scholarship to a boarding school and was given access to opportunities and resources that led her on a path to advanced schools and jobs.

This is not an isolated incident. As a child who went to school with poor children, Dr. Dockery saw the lack of support offered to students from troubled homes. Dr. Dockery grew up in a home where education was highly valued. Although her family was large and of humble means her parents' resourcefulness and encouragement led to 5 of their 6 children becoming college graduates. Dr. Dockery wanted to explore how youth like her were able to succeed, while others (like her cousin) could not find their way into the college pipeline.

Throughout the interview, Dr. Dockery spoke highly of an education model called "The Young Scholars Model" (YSM), created by the Fairfax County Public School System, in Northern Virginia, outside of Washington, DC. Dr. Carol Horn, a YSM administrator, "had the will" to support low income, high performing students, and create an educational program that would assess the true potential of students without relying solely on test scores. With the innumerable models, case studies, and statistics freely available to

educators, the real question here at Hunter is whether administrators are willing to implement change. Cultivating a student body that reflects the diversity of our school system is not an unrealistic goal. But our Hunter experience has, unfortunately, shown us that many of the stubborn naysayers seem to be the very same people who determine the future of Hunter's diversity.

Various methods of gifted identification are utilized in elite high schools across the country, yet their success has had no impact here at Hunter. Dr. Dockery emphasized the value of multiple criteria for gifted identification as opposed to a single entrance examination. She believes that reviewing student portfolios gives a far more extensive view of a student's academic prowess.

"Educational models" are so named for a reason. Initiating conversations about how multiple criteria evaluations can be integrated into Hunter's model is instrumental. The experts, data, and resources exist, and can no longer be ignored. Inaction is no longer an option, and we will actively promote "the will" we so desperately need.



## Board Member Spotlight

**Judith Daniel '79 Vice President and Chair of the Diversity Committee**

**AN: Why were you inspired to apply for HCHSAA Board membership?**

Attending my class reunions always remind me of how much HCHS influenced me in such positive and significant ways. My enjoyment of dance grew into a love of the practice through the many dance classes and opportunities for performance offered at Hunter. This love led me to pursue a master's in Dance Therapy. I found that Hunter's curriculum was so challenging, and the expectations for excellence so high, that it prepared me well for my pursuits in higher education.

I experienced much warmth while at Hunter and had memorable relationships with my teachers, the administration, and of course, my classmates. We were open and honest and had fun together. As students we competed for the grades but loved and admired our differences and what each one had to offer the collective despite race, ethnicity, or socio-economic background. Most of those who I call my besties now, I met at HCHS. It was not perfect, and perhaps not everyone attending during my time would say they had the same experiences. But when I get together with my Hunter friends, and when I meet my classmates at reunions, we share similar stories and feelings and still have a great time catching up and reminiscing.

When I first moved from Queens to Harlem, 15 years ago, I would often drive by the Hunter Campus Schools building on 94th street and wonder how I could give back to a school that gave me so much. Things going on in my life at the time kept me from pursuing this goal. Then I started to read articles about the crisis in diversity in the specialized high schools and wondered how this could be happening, remembering that my experiences had been so different. As I engaged in the preparations to celebrate my 40th high school reunion, I happened to see a call for board members. I jumped at the opportunity and applied. The time was right, and the time was now--- and the issue is diversity at Hunter.

**AN: What aspects of your career do you feel prepared you to sit on the HCHSAA Board?**

My career experiences may be atypical from most of the other board members I serve with. I do not have a corporate, finance, or legal background but decades of experience working in the

field of mental health-within social service, hospital, and educational settings. I began as a child therapist (0-5) and knew that to have a better understanding of children, I had to learn more about family dynamics and thus completed an advanced certificate in marriage and family counseling. After several years as a dance and family therapist in the foster care system, my desire grew to learn even more about the systems in society that impacted the families I served. I then decided to get another master's in public administration, focusing on Public Policy. I believe this progression in knowledge and experience in working with children and families and not-for-profit administration enables me to bring another perspective to addressing the issues that concern HCHS while sitting on the HCHSAA Board.

**AN: What aspects of your education at HCHS do you feel prepared you for Board membership?**

My education at Hunter was so much more than academics. Of course, I was greatly enriched by acting exercises in Communications & Theatre and by getting extra homework in French grammar because my French was not on par with my mother's French (it was her first language). But when I look through my yearbook and read what my classmates wrote about our high school years together, I see the invaluable relationships fostered over those six years. I remember the activities I took part in and the advice/support of teachers and guidance counselors. All aspects of my education at HCHS prepared me for Board membership. This was achieved through the time spent in a stimulating learning environment where I developed my strengths and learned how to confront and conquer my weaknesses to make my mark in the world. I look forward to making some positive and lasting contributions to the HCHSAA board.

**AN: What can you share with other HCHS alums to encourage them to apply for Board membership?**

I would tell fellow HCHS alums that if they ever felt that their high school education and experience led them to want to give back to the HCHS community, serving on the HCHSAA board is a great way to offer your time and talents. It provides the opportunity to learn more about the present-day happenings in the school and work together with alumni from a range of years as well as students, faculty, and administration to develop and execute solutions.

**AN: What do you feel is the most important contribution you've made?**

I have been on the board for just over a year and it has been a busy one for diversity initiatives. As soon as I came on, in the fall of 2019, I worked on the HCHS test-prep Bootcamp, facilitating the recruitment of alum educators so that the tutoring sessions for Black and Latinx invited test-takers could be expanded from a one-day session to three separate tutoring days. There were plans to expand the Bootcamp in 2020 even further, as well as continue with mentoring programs for the minority students of HCHS, but then COVID-19 hit and the school went to virtual learning.

The students' letter outlining the lack of diver-



sity in the high school and their call for action put into fast motion the AA Diversity Committee's restructuring of how it would be addressing those issues. I took on the responsibility of Chair of this committee from the start of my time on the board because this issue affected me deeply. But this is a collaborative effort, and there are many alumnae/i volunteers working diligently on specific aspects of this issue. I believe my most important contribution has yet to come.

**AN: What has been your greatest satisfaction serving on the board. What is the biggest challenge?**

To date, my greatest satisfaction serving on the board has been the opportunity to interact directly with the Hunter community in the fight for increased diversity at HCHS. This issue has many components and requires much analysis, energy, and time for it to be addressed and resolved. I am so happy to be a participant in this movement. I have enjoyed meeting and working alongside the students while serving on the board. From participating in student-organized protests to engaging in casual conversation about their extracurricular activities, I marvel at their energy and spirit.

In terms of challenges, in environments where there are so many points of view, I must remind myself to remain confident in my thoughts and convictions. There are many issues that the Alumnae/i Association is involved in, and we may not always have full agreement with all stakeholders. The challenge is to balance everyone's point of view with one's own and what may be necessary within the decision-making process.

**AN: Do you serve on the board of other schools or organizations?**

I live within a complex of four buildings, and for the past four years have been Building Captain of the building where I reside. I am also on the Board of a relatively new foundation established by a group of childhood friends who wanted to give back to the Harlem community where they grew up. In the past, I served as President of the New York Chapter of the American Dance Therapy Association for two non-consecutive terms.



**AN: Have you made any interesting connections being on the board?**

Being on the board has allowed me to get to know fellow Board members and other alums who I probably would never have even met had it not been for me serving. There is a wide range of graduating years among those I have met, and many of the high school experiences shared have been engrossing. I am looking forward to ongoing collaborations and developing friendships. I also have made many interesting connections with the faculty, staff, parents, and students of HCCS. Attending various cultural programs and meetings, both onsite and virtually, has been both entertaining and informative.

## A Recap of PREunion



Each milestone Reunion is a unique experience, where we see the alumnae/i community gather every five years as they journey through life. This year's Reunion, however, was truly memorable as it was the very first gathering that, due to the coronavirus pandemic, was held exclusively online.

This "PREunion" was held on Saturday, June 6 and served as a "placeholder" for an in-person Reunion (rescheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2021). Over 300 alums joined members of the HCHSAA Board of Directors from their homes to mark the passage of time. Streamed through Facebook Live, and featuring a live cast via Zoom, alumnae/i from many milestone classes had the opportunity to share what HCHS meant to them through video presentations.

One of the highlights of the event was having a virtual performance by the high school's Senior Strings ensemble, performing a movement of Vivaldi's Concerto for Strings in D Major, compiled by **Adam C. '21**. PREunion was followed by the Annual Business Meeting of Members, also streamed live on Facebook for the first time, where the President and Treasurer updated members on current Association priorities and finances, and members contributed their thoughts on future challenges and possible new directions.

Eniko Horvath, the HCHSAA's Events, Grants, and Development Manager, played a major role in organizing the PREunion, along with the Class Coordinators. In case you missed the event, PREunion proceedings are available for view on our YouTube channel. To view the video, visit <https://bit.ly/3nuxSFa>.

# The Zoom Where It Happened:

## The 466 Lexington Avenue Virtual Faculty/Student Reunion

Over 300 Hunterites from the classes of 1971 to 1982, students who attended the school when it was housed on the thirteenth and fourteenth floors of a Midtown office building, gathered via Zoom on Sunday, June 7, 2020 for the first ever 466 Lexington Avenue reunion. Many more, some from other Hunter classes, watched on Facebook Live. **Ann Starer '75** conceived of and organized the event.

The focus of the reunion was the 466 Lex. faculty, and they did not disappoint. Twenty-two faculty members from around the country attended the event, regaling students with stories about and perspectives on Hunter and the unconventional 466 Lex. experience. Former music teacher Campbell Austin kicked off the reunion, performing the alma mater from his farm in North Carolina. **Harriet WHITMAN Aufses, Jan. '44**, Tobie Brandriss, Dede Thomas Condon Levinson, Anne Eberlin Roush, Millie Rosenstock Fell, **Helen FINEGOLD Friedman '63**, Gerri Gelormini Gemmola, **Marge LANDSBERG Goldsmith '61**, Bob Goodman, Betty Braun Kleinfeld, Sheila Krilov, Rose Marie Laster, Deborah Levine, Allan McLeod, Susan Meeker, **Anna CACACE Morello, Jan. '53**, Stacey Nicholas, Maureen Kirby Sanders, Irv Steinfink, Janice Sinclair Hodges Warner, and Ingrid Wekerle also attended. **Adrienne ANDERSON Barnhart '53** and Sue Leung Eichler, who were unable to be there, sent messages to the 466 community.

After faculty members addressed the entire gathering, students were sent to smaller breakout sessions with classmates. Faculty members rotated in and out these "classrooms," where participants conversed and reconnected for hours.

You can watch the 466 Lex. reunion here: <https://bit.ly/2SKIKI7>. Starer also created the Hunter College High School at 466 Lex. Facebook group: <https://bit.ly/2GuWq0h>. The group is open to all members of the 466 Lex. community, including those who did not graduate from Hunter. Starer had originally planned an in-person reunion for June 5, 2020. Due to the pandemic, that reunion has been postponed.





## DECISION 2020 WRAP UP

Six distinguished alums assembled virtually on September 13th for Decision 2020, where the panelists briefed over 150 HCHS alums on the upcoming election. The event opened with a question posed by moderator **Aaron Retica '84**, Opinion Staff Editor at *The New York Times* to **Jamal Greene '95**, Dwight Professor of Law at Columbia Law School: "Are we in the middle of a constitutional

crisis?" The five person panel consisting of Greene, **Adam Berinsky '88**, Mitsui Professor of Political Science at MIT; **Nicholas Confessore '94**, political reporter

at *The New York Times*; **Christopher Hayes '97**, news anchor at MSNBC; and **Amy Davidson Sorkin '88**, staff writer at *The New Yorker*, examined several

DECISION 2020



topics including the importance of the electoral college, the accuracy of polling, the influence of campaign financing, and the unlikely possibility of rank choice

voting. The ideological nature of our two-party political system was commented upon and, with it, the notion that although there is a center left grouping that tempers the views of left-wing extremists, there presently is no center right.

Questions posed by alumnae/i and current Hunter students included what role the media plays in covering President Trump's comments and whether a third party would ever be viable. **Dorothy Steinbook Reik '60** kept the chat room active with a continued thread of comments.

## A NEW REGIONAL CHAPTER FOR THE HCHSAA

The HCHSAA is re-establishing a local chapter for alumnae/i in the Washington, DC/Maryland/Virginia region (DMV). **Sheila Anderson '80** (MD) and **Leslie Luxemburg '64** (DC) have been leading the efforts and, to date, have hosted three online "Happy Hours." As there are an estimated 500 Hunter alumnae/i in the region, the first Happy Hour, held on June 30, was designed to gauge the interest of area alums. Luxemburg and Anderson were delighted that a number of Hunterites participated and had the perfect opportunity to see each other and get reconnected.

Another "Happy Hour" took place on September 1, this time focusing on Election 2020 as many alums had expressed an interest in public service pursuits. DMVers **Ambassador Karen Kornbluh '80** and **Joshua Geltzer '01** joined as special guests and gave the group a preview of their October 8 discussion centering on security and the 2020 Election.

As co-facilitators, Anderson and Luxemburg have been assessing group interests through online surveys. Another virtual meeting was held on Tuesday October 20, and the focus of that meeting was centered on the current diversity crisis at Hunter.

We hope that alums in the DMV region will continue to attend, keep an open line of communication with us, and the enthusiasm for this venture going strong. Feel free to reach out to us in the interim with any questions, comments or suggestions! We can be reached at [events@hchsaa.org](mailto:events@hchsaa.org).





## Spring, Summer, and Fall 2020 Virtual Events

We have had a number of online events since the pandemic hit. A heartfelt thank goes to **Ann Starer '75** and the Program Committee for their tireless work in putting these events together.

On April 5, 2020 **Beth JACKENDOFF Harpaz '77** led a dedicated group for a sing-along to raise everyone's spirits. The sing along revisited a number of songs from the 70s as well as Sing to Our School. Our jam session was filled with memories and was launched via Zoom and simultaneously live streamed on Facebook.

On April 7, 2020 **Raymond Tsao '84** led an informative presentation with **Lawrence Chan '99** regarding the U.S. Government's \$2 trillion CARES Act in the wake of COVID-19, and how its Paycheck Protection Program could significantly benefit small business owners, nonprofit organizations, sole proprietors, and independent contractors.

On April 19, 2020 New York Times bestseller author, **Jean Kwok '86** was interviewed by Robin Kall Homonoff about her new book *Searching for Sylvie Lee* and about her experience at the Hunter College High School.

On April 28, 2020 **Pat GORDON Lamanna '65** gave us a concert of songs by, about, and for women—both her own pieces and some well-known songs.

On May 8, 2020 **Beth JACKENDOFF Harpaz '77** together with **Lee (Ilene BERGER) Morris '75** organized a Round Robin Sing-Along with

many “soloists” involved. Mr. Austin joined us as well and led us to sing *We Shall Overcome* in the end. A fun time was had by all.

On May 21, 2020, in another virtual event organized by **Ann Starer '75, Sewell Chan '94** interviewed **Judith Matloff '75/'76** about Matloff's latest book, the eerily prescient *How to Drag a Body and Other Safety Tips You Hope to Never Need: Survival Tricks for Hacking, Hurricanes, and Hazards Life Might Throw at You*. Who knew this book would come in so handy?

On May 28, 2020 **Hallie Cohen '65** gave us a fascinating presentation on her art, her inspiration, and her creative process.

On June 19, 2020 **Jennifer Freeman '72** was interviewed by **Ruth COBRINIK Williams '73**. Jennifer's decades-long advocacy for survivors of child sex abuse and her groundbreaking work pushing for the Child Victims Act in New York were discussed.

On July 8, 2020 **Judith Sachs '64** taught an introductory class on Breath and Stretching. It was an introduction to techniques based on traditional Chinese Qigong and Indian Pranayama methods.

On July 29, 2020 **Dr. Carole Brafman '57, M. D.** started an ongoing discussion series—Life in

the Time of Corona. We have met three times more, on August 25, 2020, on September 29, 2020, and on October 27, 2020.

On August 6, 2020 **Pat GORDON Lamanna '65** gave another concert, this time the theme was peace songs, and on this day of remembrance of the Hiroshima bombing, she also gave us a presentation of her tour of Hiroshima.

On September 9, 2020 **Chloe Bass '02** showed us her outdoors exhibition, *Wayfinding*, and she, and her interviewer, **Clarinda Mac Low '83**, talked about their Hunter experience and their other art projects—some of which they worked on together.

On September 17, 2020, Constitution Day, **Julie Suk '93, Ph.D.** was interviewed by **Irving Kagan '82** about her new book, *We the Women: The Unstoppable Mothers of the Equal Rights Amendment*, and about women and the process of constitutional change.

On September 23, 2020, **Sewell Chan '94** interviewed **Deborah Tannen '62** about her latest book, a memoir, *Finding my Father – His Century-Long Journey from World War I Warsaw and My Quest to Follow*. More than one hundred alumnae/i attended this virtual event, organized by **Ann Starer '75**.

On October 8, 2020 an insightful discussion was held about the 2020 Election & Security. Our panelists **Rachel Goldbrenner**

**'97, Joshua Geltzer '01**, and **Ambassador Karen Kornbluh '80** addressed topics including threats of political violence, cyberattacks, and disinformation spreading online. Our talk was zoom bombed, but resumed without incident.

On October 22, 2020 **Jeannie SUK Gersen '91, D.Phil, J.D.** interviewed **Sarah Kovner '91, Ph.D.** about Sarah's new book *Prisoners of the Empire*, which detailed conditions in Japanese POW camps during WWII.

If you missed these events, you can view recordings for most. Please find links at <https://www.hchsaa.org/alumni2020>

Other events planned for this Fall:

On November 12, 2020 **Maisy Card '00** will be in conversation with **Laurie Cedilnik '00** about Card's book, *These Ghosts Are Family*.

On December 17, 2020 **Mynette Louie '93** and **Casimir Nozkowski '94** will discuss their new movies, *I Carry You with Me* and *The Outside Story*.

For updates and more events, see <https://www.hchsaa.org/upcoming>

The community of Black and Latinx alums is on Facebook!  
Join The Official HCHS Black & Latinx Alumni Group at <https://bit.ly/2IraOHw>

# IN MEMORIAM



Betty BARTH Elman '29 and her son, Steve

**Betty BARTH Elman '29**, a longtime Riverdale resident and beloved mother, died peacefully at home on May 24, 2020 at 108 years old. She was born December 12, 1911 in Harlem, went to public school in the Bronx, and graduated from Hunter College during the Great Depression. Until her retirement, she was a public-school teacher in the Bronx. Having begun as a substitute, Elman became a master teacher, training other teachers, and finally served as an acting assistant principal. She was a role model and inspiration to many, and much loved because of her thoughtfulness and giving nature. She was a consummate cook and baker who loved sharing her creations with her rabbi, family, friends, neighbors, and the staff in her apartment building, often providing care packages of her baked goodies and home-cooked dishes. She had a reputation for preparing beautiful platters of food for her synagogue's *onegs*, and sisterhood and B'nai Brith events. Even in her later years, she provided comfort and joy to friends and family with her phone calls, positive outlook and sympathetic ear. She was an avid reader and bridge player, gladly teaching anyone who wanted to learn. Following her

husband's death almost 25 years ago, she lived independently in her own apartment until 103, and was able to remain there the last five-and-one-half years because of the loving care of her home attendant. Elman died peacefully in her own bedroom, as she had wished. She was predeceased by her husband, Hy, her only daughter, her five siblings, two nieces, one nephew, and many friends. She is survived by her two sons and her grandson. Donations in her memory may be made to any of the following: American Jewish World Service ([ajws.org](http://ajws.org)); Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society ([hias.org](http://hias.org)); MAZON, a Jewish Response to Hunger ([mazon.org](http://mazon.org)); or Congregation Shaarei Shalom, 5919 Riverdale Ave., Bronx, NY 10471.

**Shura (Sulamith) CAMENIR Saul '36, Ph.D.** passed away on March 29, 2019 at 98 years of age. She died of natural causes. Born Sulamith Camenir, she was a prodigy, attending Hunter College in the midst of the Great Depression. Saul was a progressive activist and a fierce defender of human rights. She and her husband, Dr. Sidney Saul, held respected positions in their fields of social work, as they pioneered

the concepts of mainstreaming the disabled, developed and expanded the field's understanding of the benefits of group work, and focused the attention of professionals on geriatrics. Together, they published numerous professional papers and presented at conferences in the U.S. and abroad.

Saul was a teacher at her core and her students at Hunter, Mercy, Sarah Lawrence and other colleges in the New York metropolitan area loved the infectious and instructive passion she brought to the classroom. In addition to her numerous professional publications, she was also an accomplished author of poetry, young adult, and children's books. She touched countless lives and will be greatly missed by everyone who loved her. She is survived by her three children, her loving son-and-daughters-in-law, her eight grandchildren, and her three great-grandchildren.

**Rhoda GITENSTEIN Sumberg, Jan. '37** passed away peacefully of natural causes at her home in Larchmont, NY on April 3, 2020 at the age of 100. She was born in New York City on July 1, 1919 to Israel and Rose Bralower Gitenstein. Her sister and her two brothers predeceased her. She was a proud graduate of Hunter College Class of 1941. She was founding member of the Larchmont Temple. Up until her 80th birthday she was a part-time Spanish, French and Latin teacher at the French School in Mamaroneck, New York and Rye Neck High School. After her husband Bernard David Sumberg died in 1992, she reinvented herself by learning bridge, making new friends, and staying involved with the Larchmont Temple. Her greatest joy was her family. She hosted the annual family gathering at her home even until 2019. She was the loving mother of three children and had seven grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. Donations in her memory may be made online to At Home on the Sound or by mail

to P.O. Box 523, Mamaroneck, New York 10543; Calvary Hospital Hospice, [Calvaryhospital.org](http://Calvaryhospital.org), or mailed to, 1740 Eastchester Rd., The Bronx, NY 10461; or Hunter College.

**Jane Faggen, Jan. '41**, Ph.D. of Princeton, New Jersey, died on April 19, 2020 at 95 years of age. She was born on May 5, 1924, in New York City. Faggen graduated from the University of Michigan in 1944 and earned an M.S. in Physics from Cornell University in 1947. At Michigan, she was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. She earned a doctorate in educational psychology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in 1972 and proceeded to work at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton until her retirement. Faggen was an active member of the Princeton Borough Historic Preservation Review Committee for many years. She was also a docent at the Princeton Art Museum, an expression of her deep love of the arts. She is survived by her three children, three granddaughters, and a great-granddaughter.



Elizabeth YURISIC Agresta, Jan. '42

**Elizabeth YURISIC Agresta, Jan. '42**, a resident of Norwalk CT, passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 11, 2020. She was 96 years old. She was the daughter of Marion (Cecco) and John Yurisc. Agresta was born and spent most of her childhood in New York City, living alone with her mother and

younger brother. She was always proud of her high school years and a mention of Hunter always brought a smile to her face. She remained a loyal supporter of the school, attending many reunions and staying friendly with classmates. On her own at 18 years of age, she set aside plans for college and went to work at the telephone company. About the same time, Agresta met her future husband, Michael, when they both lived in the East 90s. World War II broke out and he enlisted in the Marines. They married at a young age before Michael went overseas to fight in the Pacific and she welcomed him back after the war, along with their firstborn son, whom she had raised by herself for two years. She and Michael were married for over 50 years before he passed away in 1995.

Agresta retired from the Verizon business office at the age of 63 and enjoyed many years involvement with the Pioneers Club, a group of retired Verizon employees. She also volunteered for over 15 years with Meadowlands Hospital in Secaucus. She had many friends and she loved to travel, taking many cruises. Her favorite places to visit were Italy and Hawaii. In later years, her favorite form of travel was visiting her three sons and their growing families.

As she grew older, into her early nineties, she moved to the Atria assisted living residences in Stamford, Connecticut. It was there where she made many new friends and got to enjoy life in the surrounding community. She passed away while living in the Bridges by Epoch elder care facility in Norwalk, Connecticut.

Elizabeth is survived by her three sons, her nine grandchildren, and nineteen great grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hunter College High School, or to the charity of your choice.

**Corliss TAYLOR Henry, Jan. '43\*** passed away on April 14, 2020 in New Jersey due to complications



from the coronavirus. She was 95. She became, in 1957, the first Black nurse on staff at Muhlenberg Hospital in Plainfield, N.J., where her husband was the first Black person on the sales floor of any store downtown.

Henry was born in Manhattan on Sept. 10, 1924, to Kenneth and Ethel Taylor, who were immigrants from Jamaica.

Throughout the 1920s, the family shuttled between Jamaica and New York City, settling in Harlem in 1936 in an elegant house with wood paneling, fireplaces and a curved banister she was charged with polishing. But the house was soon lost to unpaid debts.

"She remembered standing with her mother and siblings on the sidewalk surrounded by their belongings, locked out of the house," her son said. They then moved to the Bronx. Henry worked briefly in a factory in the Bronx as a solderer. Later that year, she applied to a federal program at the Harlem Hospital School of Nursing for black nurses, who had few opportunities to study in the field.

Her first job was at Harlem Hospital and after marrying Preston Henry, she moved to Plainfield. When she was being considered for a job at Muhlenberg Hospital, the board of directors was required to hold a special meeting, said her son. "In the mid 50s there were very few things that women of color were allowed to do," he said. "The fact that she was able to become a

nurse, that was something to be proud of."

She earned a master's degree in education at New York University and remained at Muhlenberg until 1968, when she took a job as an instructor at Middlesex County College's nursing program in Edison, N.J., where she later became an associate professor and teacher's union representative. She retired in 1991.

Her husband died in 2012, and she is survived by her sons. A previous marriage, to Harold Wallace, in 1948 ended in divorce.

In 2018, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy presented her with a Legacy Award for her professional and lifetime achievements. "She encountered a lot of racism," Steve Henry said. "She didn't take it home with her. She left it at the door."

*\*Excerpted from The New York Times*

**Mavis THOMPSON-Blaize '43, M.D.\*** passed away in 2020. She practiced medicine for over 50 years, and her career can also be characterized as one that also included community service.

She was born in Newark, New Jersey, to Mavis and Nathaniel Thompson. Arthur, her older brother and best friend, was raised with her in the vibrant heartbeat of Harlem. When she turned 12, she started her association with Camp Minisink — one that would last her lifetime.

Thompson-Blaize graduated from

Hunter College and Howard University School of Medicine in Washington, DC in 1953. Returning to New York to complete her internship and residency in internal medicine at Kings County Hospital, it was also the time she met the love of her life, James Blaize. He was to teach her how to drive — "I had my marriage license before my driver's license," she said. After marrying in 1954, they would have five children. She started a private practice in internal medicine in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, in the renovated basement of the home James built. Her last 20 years of active practice was as a family physician with Health Insurance Plan, from which she retired in 1995.

While she was in active practice, she also worked on a part-time basis with the medical division of the city's education board. When she was able to retire from that position in 1985, she continued working as a per diem substitute physician until 2006.

She was medical director for the Neighborhood Health Center, the first female president of the Black Caucus of Health Workers of the American Public Health Association, member of the Bronx Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, and active in the National Medical Association and affiliates Manhattan Central Medical Society and the Susan Smith McKinney Steward Medical Society.

She was an active member and warden of St. George's Church,



founder and a former committee chair of the HIV/AIDS Awareness Committee at St. George's Church, and was on the advisory board of Episcopal Charities of the Diocese of New York. She was a senior advisory board member for Mentoring in Medicine, where she exuberantly mentored pre-health students.

In 1990, Thompson-Blaize was awarded the Bishop's Cross from the Diocese of Long Island. She earned the Trailblazing Legacy Award from the Susan Smith McKinney Steward Medical Society in 2014, the Balm in Gilead Diamond Leadership Award in 2017, and was celebrated by the Mentoring in Medicine family in June 2019.

With all she accomplished in her professional career, nothing came before her husband and their five children. She exposed her children to the arts, history, music, theatre, opera and literature and encouraged her children to pursue their dreams, "as long as you go to college." She also enjoyed traveling around the world — often with her children — "There is nothing more glorious than seeing the world through the eyes of your children," she stated.

Thompson-Blaize relocated to Riverdale 25 years ago: "When you get old, move near a child." She became a member of Christ Church Riverdale and served as a faithful and devoted member of this beloved community.

She was preceded in death by her husband, her eldest son, and one of her grandsons. She is survived by her four children and spouses, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. She leaves to mourn her beloved extended family, church family, medical colleagues, and a host of friends — all of whom feel privileged to have been a part of her extraordinary journey.

Contributions can be made to the Mavis S. Thompson Scholarship Fund at Howard University College of Medicine, to the attention of Charlene Blount, 520 W St., N.W., Room 511, Washington,

D.C., 20059. They also can be made to the music endowment of Christ Church Riverdale, 5040 Henry Hudson Parkway E., Bronx, N.Y., 10471, in memory of Mavis Thompson-Blaize, M.D.

*\*Excerpted from The Riverdale Press*

**Efrosene JOSEPHIDES Juffras '44**, passed away peacefully at age 93 on June 6, 2020 with Angelo, her husband of 68 years, by her side. Although Juffras lived in Pittsboro, North Carolina for the last five years of her life, her heart and home were in her birthplace of New York City. She graduated from Hunter College, where she earned a degree in mathematics and membership in the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. Juffras remained interested in mathematics and computer science throughout her life. She worked for IBM on the early computer language SOAP in the 1950s and later, after receiving a M.A. in computer science, she taught computer science at Passaic County Community College, Bergen Community College, and Felician University in New Jersey. She finished her career as a systems analyst for AT&T. In addition to Angelo, Juffras cherished her son and daughter, granddaughter, sister, and members of her extended family.

**Florence ROSENFELD Howe, Jan. '46\***, a key architect of the women's studies movement and a founder of the Feminist Press, a literary nonprofit dedicated to promoting social justice and amplifying overlooked voices, passed away on September 12, 2020 in Manhattan. She was 91 and had been in hospice care with Parkinson's disease. Howe also leaves a legacy of dedication to the Hunter community, serving on the HCHSAA's Board of Directors as Secretary from 2012-2018.

When Howe began teaching in colleges and universities in the 1950s, women's studies was not an established academic discipline.

In fact, it was rare to find a course catalog or syllabus that mentioned scholarship by women at all.

With the Feminist Press, founded in 1970, she sought to diversify the materials used in schools around the United States and beyond. She and her husband, Paul Lauter, were professors and knew firsthand that there was a gender gap in the books being taught.

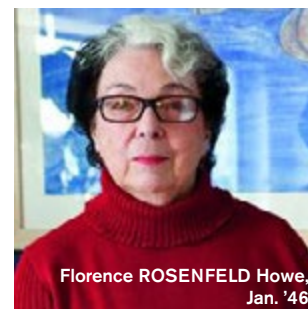
"I was teaching women's studies at Goucher College in Maryland at the time, and there weren't enough materials," she told *The New York Times* in 1972. "The publishers I spoke to all said, 'Wonderful idea, but there's no money in it.'" Lauter suggested that they publish the books themselves and came up with the name the Feminist Press. "It sounded magical," Howe said.

When Howe left Goucher for the State University of New York College at Old Westbury (now SUNY Old Westbury) in 1971, she brought the publishing house with her; the college, on Long Island, had agreed to house and support it.

More than a decade later, Joseph Duffey, a former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, wrote in *The New York Times Book Review* that the Feminist Press had "perhaps more than any other institution, helped to recover and make available a legacy of writing by and about women in American history and scholarship."

"I would say we started what has become an avalanche of the rediscovery of women writers," she told *The Baltimore Sun* in 1993. "We're not the only one who does this now." The article called her "the mother of women's studies."

Howe was born on March 17, 1929, in Brooklyn to Samuel and Frances Rosenfeld. During the Great Depression, her father abandoned his dream of opening a home-furnishings store and became a taxi driver to support the family. Her mother was a bookkeeper until Florence's birth and later worked for an aeronautics manufacturer. She hoped that her daughter would



become a teacher.

The family moved frequently in 1930s for financial reasons — to Hoboken, New Jersey, the Bronx and elsewhere in Brooklyn. Howe graduated from HCHS early and enrolled at Hunter College, "the place in which I learned to think," she wrote in a memoir, "A Life in Motion" (2011).

Her activist spirit was also ignited as a Hunter undergraduate. She formed an interracial and interfaith sorority with friends and was elected student body president. She studied English with the intention of teaching in the public school system but was encouraged by a professor and Hunter's president to pursue a master's degree, which she earned at Smith College. In 1951 she went on to study for a doctorate in English at the University of Wisconsin.

Within six years she married three times and took the surname of one of those husbands, Ed Howe. She married Paul Lauter in the 1960s; they divorced in 1987.

After three years of study at Wisconsin, Howe moved back to New York to teach at Hofstra College (now a university) and Queens College. She moved to Baltimore in 1957 and eventually joined the Goucher faculty.

Baltimore had by then become starkly divided along racial lines, with many white middle-class residents leaving for the suburbs. In 1963, she joined students in organizing a protest demonstration against a segregated movie theater near Morgan State College, a historically Black institution.

The next year she traveled to



Jackson, Mississippi, as a Freedom Summer volunteer to help register Black voters. She was given the task of opening a Freedom School for Black children in the basement of a church and ran it with a staff of six college students.

By 1969, she was frequently invited to speak on feminist subjects. In a talk titled "Should Women Read Fiction?" she criticized the fate that male authors often prescribed for female characters: marriage, death or some combination of the two.

In 1970, the same year the Feminist Press was founded, Howe was appointed chair of the Modern Language Association's Commission on the Status and Education of Women in the Profession, which sought to advance the study of scholarship by women and elevate female faculty members. In those conversations, whether she knew it or not, she was beginning to promote a growing discipline.

"A decade ago, it had no name," she wrote in *The Times* in 1976. "A few academics around the country labeled a segment of their freshman composition courses 'growing up female' or taught part of a sociology course on 'gender.'"

"But now," she continued, "in the wake of the women's rights movement, women's studies has taken its place in the curriculum and seems to be thriving."

Starting in the late 1970s, the Feminist Press began publishing its "Women's Lives/Women's Work" series, on the history of female labor. In 1982, the press released the "Everywoman's Guide to Colleges and Universities" in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The book provided statistics about rape reporting on campuses, information about childcare for student mothers and gender breakdowns of faculties.

In 1984, Indiana University Press published "Myths of Coeducation," a collection of essays by Howe on the rise of the women's studies movement. The next year, she

stopped teaching at Old Westbury to run the press full time out of the City University of New York. Though she continued to be designated a professor of English, she had stopped teaching regular courses. Howe received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Fulbright Program, many of which supported her efforts to broaden the Feminist Press' reach internationally. Beginning in the early 1990s the publishing house went on to release collections of women's writing from around the world, including "Women Writing in India," "Women Writing Africa" and "The Defiant Muse," a collection of global women writers.

"When you read the riches within these covers, you'll know that a Western male bias has left all of us culturally deprived," Gloria Steinem wrote in a blurb for the India collection.

The Feminist Press continues to publish out of CUNY, under the leadership of Jamia Wilson. In 2020 it is celebrating its 50th year.

*\*Reprinted from The New York Times*

**Veronica Patricia CAMBRIDGE Bergenn '48**, of Wilmington, Delaware, passed away peacefully on July 9, 2020. She was 89 years old. Born in Maspeth, Queens, the second of four children to Daniel, a Scottish immigrant, and Veronica (nee O'Donnell) Cambridge, she lived a life rooted in her Catholic faith. She attended P.S. 153 and later worked at Louis Sherry Ice Cream in Manhattan. She met her future husband, Walter Bergenn, while ice skating. Soon after, they married and began their family. In six years, they moved to Syracuse, New York. They built their dream home, became very active in Holy Family parish, and cultivated lifelong friendships. They later transferred to Clifton Heights and then Plymouth Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania, to

Barrington, Rhode Island, Stamford, Connecticut, and finally settled in Wilmington, Delaware. Bergenn remained close to her family in New York with weekly phone calls and frequent visits to see her parents, siblings and extended family.

She earned a B.A. in Criminal Justice with honors, then a Masters in Counseling from the University of Delaware. She encouraged scholarship, counseled the addicted, and took in and supported those who'd fallen on hard times. Bergenn recognized the good in every person, drawing it out with love.

Bergenn captivated others with her exceptional New York wit and self-deprecating sense of humor. An artist, she painted, sang, played piano, arranged flowers, and was a gifted seamstress. She would often spontaneously break into song, inspired by the moment. She was a wordsmith, writing poems, papers, and letters to far away family and friends; she inspired a love of the English language.

Her devoted husband, Walter, predeceased her in 2008. She is survived by her sister, her four children, nine grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Family requests that donations be

made in Bergenn's honor to the St. Vincent de Paul Society, SVDP - Wilmington Council P.O. Box 7266 Wilmington, DE 19803

**B. Charlotte WAREMBAT Schreiber, Jan. '49, Ph.D.**, 89, passed away peacefully on July 17, 2020 after a brief illness. She was a geologist, and an internationally recognized expert in sedimentology.

Schreiber was born in Brooklyn on June 27, 1931 to Herman and Eugenia Warembat, first generation immigrants from Poland. She completed her A.B. in Geology from Washington University in St. Louis in 1953, and later earned her M.S. in Sedimentology and Micropaleontology from Rutgers University in 1966. On completing her Ph.D. at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY, in 1974, she was awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) Post-Doctoral Fellowship, which she spent at Imperial College, London. She taught at Queens College and was a Senior Research Scientist at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia University. Study of the earth was her passion, and after her official retirement she held an adjunct professorship



B. Charlotte WAREMBAT Schreiber, Jan. '49, Ph.D

at Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, and from 2006 to present an affiliate professorship at the University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

An extraordinary scientist and educator, Schreiber's deep knowledge, intense curiosity, and keen intuition led her to creative insights and significant discoveries in her chosen specialty of sedimentology. A prolific researcher, she authored or co-authored over 100 peer-reviewed scientific papers, and was celebrated with the highest level of honors for her field, including the prestigious Sorby Medal, the highest award of the International Association of Sedimentologists.

As a mentor, collaborator and friend to scores of her students and colleagues, Schreiber combined determination, hard work, and raw talent, earning the deepest respect and admiration from her peers. At a time when the academic world could be deeply challenging to female scientists, Charlotte served tirelessly as a role model and inspiration to several generations of talented young women.

Endlessly fascinated by the natural world, Schreiber continued to make major contributions in her discipline well into her 80s, co-authoring papers, advising colleagues, mentoring students, delivering lectures, and travelling to remote geological sites -- especially to Sicily, where her pioneering work on evaporites is world-renowned.

She was a Friend in the Quaker community throughout her adult life, and a renowned cook, hosting legendary dinner parties for friends, family, colleagues, and generations of ravenous grad students. An insatiable reader and devoted pet owner, Schreiber's favorite form of relaxation was to curl up with a good book, and with one of her four-footed friends.

Preceded in death by her husband and scientific collaborator, Dr. Edward Schreiber, and her sister, she is survived by her two

daughters, nieces, nephews, as well as the many others she informally adopted into her world and family.

Family members request memorial donations be made to the Association for Women Geoscientists Foundation, c/o the AWG Foundation, 652 Glimmerglenn Road, Cooperstown, NY, 13326. Donations are also accepted online [www.awg.org](http://www.awg.org).

**Joan CORNERETTO Silverstein, Jan. '49** passed away on July 25, 2020 in New Rochelle, New York at 89 years of age.

Silverstein was raised in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn and moved to New Rochelle, New York upon her marriage to Albert Silverstein. Upon learning of her move from New York City to Westchester, friends remarked that Brooklyn lost a most valuable asset.

She dedicated her life to advocating for the town's libraries, schools, and communities with special needs. Her early efforts were as a volunteer with AT&T's Pioneers group, where she learned Braille transcription and was later certified by the Library of Congress. She joined the Westchester Braille Group, transcribed manuscripts for blind readers, and later became that organization's president and director. As her children began to arrive, Silverstein's attention turned to New Rochelle's schools and education. She served as treasurer and president at Trinity Cooperative Nursery School and became active in the PTA at Stephenson Elementary School. While president at Stephenson she was on the board of PTA Council serving as treasurer and later, as executive vice president. She was appointed to the Mayor's Screening Committee for the Board of Education and to the Master Plan Committee.

Silverstein was with the Thornton-Donovan School, a 105-year old school, for 41 years. She began as the school librarian and soon became interested in computers for student education. Under her

direction, T-D's computers multiplied like rabbits into a campus-wide, fully networked system. She would later receive the school's Community Service Award.

In 1977 Silverstein was appointed to the New Rochelle Public Library Board of Trustees. Her strong leadership skills were among the attributes leading to her election as a three-term president of the Board. Later, she was nominated to the board of trustees of the Westchester Library System and true to form, became its president. She lobbied for increased state and county funding for WLS while an active member of the committee working to automate the county-wide circulation system. Her work there is perhaps best summed up in the words of the former director of the Westchester Library System (later to be president of the American Library Association): "As a result of Silverstein's efforts, Westchester County's support of the Westchester Library System rose from \$40,000 in 1982 to its current level of \$940,000. [Her] indefatigable work and manifold contributions made this possible..." After her term as WLS board president, Silverstein organized and became founding president of the Advocates of the Westchester Library System, a citizen advocacy group formed in response to the erosion of state funding for public libraries. Her success here was widely acclaimed. In 2002 she received the National Library Week Recognition Award. She has also served on the New York State Association of Library Boards, editing their newsletter and leading workshops for trustees. For her tireless state-wide library advocacy, in 1991 she received the Velma K. Moore Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Expansion and Improvement of Library Services in New York State.

Along with everything else (how does it go? "If you have a job to be done, give it to a busy person.") Silverstein was recently First Vice

President of the New Rochelle League of Women Voters. In her spare moments, she made time to deliver for Meals-on-Wheels, where she has also served on the board. She was also calendar editor for the e-newsletter, New Rochelle City Soundings.

Silverstein is survived by her husband, their three children, and three grandsons.

**Adele KRONGELB Hast '49**, 88, passed away peacefully on May 18, 2020 at home, with her husband and two sons at her side. She was a research scholar, book editor, and historian.

Hast was born in Manhattan on December 6, 1931, and grew up in the Bronx, the third of five children of Louis and Kate Krongelb. She attended New York public schools, including Brooklyn College, where she met Malcolm Hast. They were married in their senior year of college. Her father Louis' native tongue was Yiddish and so she spoke it from her earliest years. At age 10, Hast began the formal study of Yiddish at the Workmen's Circle - arguably her first foray into serious academic pursuits.

From 1971-1975 she was a research associate for the *Atlas of Early American History* at the Newberry Library in Chicago. From 1976-1979 she was the associate director of the *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, also at the Newberry, an institution she loved dearly, her scholarly home. Hast



Adele KRONGELB Hast '49

earned a Ph.D. in Early American History from the University of Iowa in 1979. From 1981-1986 she was the Editor-in-Chief of the Marquis *Who's Who* books. Later, she was Survey Director at the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, followed by a stint as Executive Editor at St. James Press. From 1993-2001 she was Project Director and co-editor of *Women Building Chicago 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary*.

Throughout all of this, an abiding passion of hers was Jewish history and culture, and she played a prominent role in the work of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, including serving terms on its Board of Directors and as President. For many years, Adele conducted research into debts incurred by Americans to British merchants at the time of the Revolutionary War. In 1988, she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (UK). Even into her eighties, she travelled to the Newberry several times a week to continue her research. Adele is survived by Malcolm, her husband of 67 years; by her two sons, her sister, and three grandsons.

Hast developed a friendship with **Kayla SCHEER Cohen '54**, whose husband was also a historian working with the same historical period as Hast. Taking the subway in Chicago, Hast mentioned that she attended HCHS, to which Cohen's husband exclaimed "You've got to meet my wife!" Their friendship was cemented by their mutual ties to New York and to Hunter and lasted over 40 years.

**Janet KANTER Ryman '49** passed away on June 15, 2020. She was a committed and dedicated teacher in the New York City public school system. An avid swimmer and exercise enthusiast, Ryman was also an accomplished classical pianist. Blessed with a beautiful voice, she sang in several choirs. Married for 67 years, she raised two children and was very close to her four grandchildren.

**Harriet LEVIN Posner '50**, 85, died in Columbia, South Carolina on July 1, 2019. Born November 16, 1933 in New York City, to Clara and Ben Levin, she graduated from Brooklyn College with honors in 1954 and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, a membership she proudly kept all her life. Posner lived in Latham, New York and worked as a teacher in the North Colonie School District until retiring in 1989.

After retirement, Posner moved to Columbia, South Carolina to be near her daughter and son-in-law. She was a life-long member of Temple Beth El in Troy, New York and was active in the Tree of Life Congregation during her time in Columbia. Posner will be especially remembered for her love of family and friends, her students, the arts and her treatment of all people with dignity and respect. Survivors include her sister and brother-in-law, son and daughter-in-law, daughter and son-in-law, grandson, and two granddaughters. She was preceded in death by her husband, Elliott Posner. Memorial contributions are welcome at Tree of Life Congregation, 6719 North Trenholm Rd Columbia, SC 29206 or the Alzheimer's Association, SC Chapter, 140 Stoneridge Dr #210, Columbia, SC 29210.

**Marilyn KEILES Sipress '50** passed away on March 28, 2015 while she slept comfortably. In December of 2014, she was stricken with an aggressive form of brain cancer that took her from her loved ones.

Born on April 2, 1933, Sipress started her career teaching elementary school before making Great Neck North her home while teaching English as a Second Language. She treated her students as if they were her own children. Remarkably, she taught them how to speak English without having the ability herself to speak any other language.

Sipress graduated from the University of California at Berkeley

with a degree in Childhood Development and went on to get her Masters Degree in English. Her teaching was not confined to the school system. She was an exceptional bridge player. Her love of bridge and teaching brought her to another career: teaching bridge. An avid tennis player, Sipress enjoyed connecting racket to ball for most of her life until Multiple Sclerosis made it impossible for her to play any longer. She was a cultured woman who loved the fine arts and Broadway. Twice a month she could be seen scurrying around



Mary Hausler '52

Manhattan with her walker as she navigated the city streets heading toward her favorite restaurants prior to enjoying yet another fabulous Broadway or off-Broadway show. She also enjoyed her outings with her "Red Hatter Club" and playing Mahjong any chance she could get. Sipress is survived by her children, nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was predeceased by her parents, sister, and brother-in-law.

**Mary Hausler '52** died on April 11, 2020 in Gainesville, Florida at 86 years of age. She was born on November 29, 1933 in the Bronx. Her parents were Oscar Hausler and Justina Wellauer Hausler, who had migrated to the United States from Germany in the late 1920s.

Speaking little English, Hausler began her formal education at P.S. 53. She was a high achiever and graduated valedictorian of her class. She had the second highest grade

of all who took the Hunter test in the year that she was admitted. After receiving her bachelor's degree from Queens College in 1955, she began her teaching career in the newly established Syosset Central School District on Long Island. She earned her master's degree at Queens College and, after completing additional courses at St. John's and Fordham Universities, Hausler was certified to teach elementary grades K-8 and secondary school social studies as well as to serve as secondary school principal.

During her tenure in Syosset, she taught for several years and was appointed dean of students. Hausler became the assistant principal and then principal of H.B. Thompson Middle School. She retired from the Syosset schools in 1992 and worked as a supervisor of student teachers at Southampton College on Long Island for two semesters before moving to Connecticut.

In 1966, Hausler was granted a sabbatical to observe and report on the teaching of social studies in schools of Austria and Germany. Her knowledge of German was a prerequisite for this study. From January through August of 1966, she followed a prearranged schedule to visit German and Austrian schools. During school breaks she was able to travel to other countries with two Eurail passes, which allowed for visits to Spain, Portugal, France, Denmark, all the Scandinavian countries, and Italy. The former Czechoslovakia and Soviet Union were also on her itinerary.

Hausler was married to Syosset colleague Albert Traversa, a science teacher and department head, who retired in 1986. While still working, the couple traveled with a trailer throughout the United States. A favorite trip was trailering from New York to California and back during a summer vacation.

In their retirement years, they traveled to Europe, especially in Germany and Italy where they each



had relatives. They also enjoyed visits to China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, Australia and New Zealand. Their last trip together was a cruise from Rio de Janeiro to Buenos Aires.

They left Long Island in 1993, and moved to Southbury, Connecticut. In 2005, the retirees sought a permanent home in Florida. After spending fourteen years there, Albert died in 2019 at the age of 90. Hausler is survived by her sister, her nephew and his wife and their two children, her niece, and her two cousins in Germany. Her husband's son and daughter, and his sister and her husband also mourn her loss.

**Inge VOLLWEILER Gould '54** passed away peacefully on March



Inge VOLLWEILER Gould '54

13, 2020 at her home in Sarasota, Florida. She was 82 years old.

Gould was born on May 28, 1937, in Heidenheim, Germany, to Justin and Else Vollweiler. She immigrated to the U.S. at the age of two and was very close with her brother Jack, who predeceased her. She held Bachelors and Masters Degrees from Queens College.

In 1959, she married D. Robert Gould, a CPA. They lived in Queens until 1970, when they moved to Ossining, New York, with their young children. In retirement, they moved to Winchester, Massachusetts and later to Sarasota. Her husband passed away in 2015.

Gould began her career as a teacher in the New York City public school

system. She was so well regarded by her students that, over fifty years later, a number of them reached out to her with a collection of treasured remembrances and to hold a small reunion. After a decade as a full-time mom, she went back to work at Congregation Sons of Israel, Laurel Printing, and Malcolm Pirnie, Inc., an environmental engineering firm. Starting in administrative assistant positions, she eventually oversaw Laurel's computerization and became Malcolm Pirnie's first manager of training and development.

She was a talented and dedicated artist, working in numerous mediums, and was proud to have her favorite works grace the homes of family and friends. She and her husband loved travel and visited almost every part of the world. Gould was a pianist and singer and an avid theater and concertgoer. She read extensively, both fiction and nonfiction, and followed the news closely.

**Fay CHEW Matsuda '67\***, a first-generation Chinese-American who devoted her career as an amateur museum curator to preserving the heritage of overlooked generations of immigrants from China, died on July 24, 2020 at her home in Sound Beach, New York, on Long Island's

North Shore. She was 71.

The cause was endometrial cancer, her daughter said.

Matsuda was instrumental in transforming the New York Chinatown History Project, a grass roots campaign to save vanishing artifacts and record eyewitness reminiscences, into a permanent legacy of Chinese immigration.

By 1991, the History Project had morphed into the Museum of Chinese in America, or MoCA. She served as the executive director of MoCA on Manhattan's Lower East Side from 1997 to 2006.

She described the incubation of both the History Project and the museum as an urgent campaign to collect, restore and protect irreplaceable ephemera — including a unique cache of scripts and costumes from early 20th-century Cantonese operas, signage from old storefronts, photographs, diaries and newspaper clippings.

The museum's archives also include interviews with immigrants more concerned about striving for their children than about conserving their past.

Matsuda began her career as a social worker at Hamilton-Madison House, originally two separate nonprofit community organizations established in about 1900 on the Lower East Side to help acclimate

Jewish and Italian immigrants. It now serves primarily Asian and Latino constituents.

She left to join the Chinatown History Project, later worked at the Chinatown Health Clinic (now the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center), the Asian American Federation and the Brooklyn Children's Museum before running MoCA. She capped her career as the program director of the Hamilton-Madison City Hall Senior Center.

Children of foreign-born parents sometimes consider assimilation their priority, but by her account Matsuda was just as concerned that the history of Chinese immigration, reaching into the 19th century, could be forgotten.

She recognized, too, that though Metropolitan New York has the largest concentration of ethnic Chinese outside of Asia, there was no single museum there devoted to that immigrant experience, nor to the contributions Chinese immigrants had made to their adopted country. Such a museum, she believed, could also explore societal and cultural issues within the Chinese immigrant community, like the tensions between Chinese-born parents and their American children. All of which led her to the New York Chinatown History Project,



Fay CHEW Matsuda '67



which was started in 1980 by John Kuo Wei Tchen, a historian and the first American-born son of Chinese immigrants, and Charles Lai, a Chinatown resident who immigrated from Hong Kong with his parents and five siblings as a child in 1968.

Their fledgling effort evolved into what MoCA describes as “the first full-time, professionally-staffed museum dedicated to reclaiming, preserving, and interpreting the history and culture of Chinese and their descendants in the Western Hemisphere.”

Matsuda, as both a preservationist and a social worker, was “a big part of why Chinatown has so many agencies that serve seniors’ needs, and why generations of their otherwise neglected stories and belongings are remembered and kept safe for future generations,” Professor Tchen said. She was particularly proud of a 1991 exhibit called “What Did You Learn in School Today?: P.S. 23, 1893-1976.” The exhibit was inspired by a Depression-era class photograph taken at P.S. 23, a 19th-century school at 70 Mulberry Street that became the museum’s home for a period.

Matsuda said she had been especially gratified that the show drew visitors reflecting the school’s changing demography over the years — former students of Irish, Italian, Polish, Russian and Chinese heritage. “We realized the picture was a real magnet, and saw what the school meant to the community,” she said at the time.

The city-owned P.S. 23 building was converted into a Chinatown cultural hub in the mid-1970s, housing both MoCA’s exhibition space and its 85,000-item archive encompassing 160 years of Chinese American history.

In 2009, the museum moved to 215 Centre Street in Lower Manhattan, a space designed by the Chinese American architect Maya Lin, who is best known for her Vietnam War memorial in Washington DC. The archives remained at the former school.

In January 2020, a stubborn fire tore through the upper floors of 70 Mulberry Street. While many items from the archives were saved by museum workers, some were lost, and others required costly restoration.

Fay Lai Chew was born on April 11, 1949, in Manhattan to immigrants from Toisan, China, on China’s southern coast near Hong Kong, and grew up in the East Village. Her father, Chock Nom Chin, owned a hand-laundry north of the city in Ossining, N.Y., and several other small businesses. Her mother, Bick Koon Dong, was a garment worker on the Lower East Side. At one time Matsuda’s parents ran a restaurant.

She attended Barnard on a scholarship, receiving

her bachelor’s degree in 1971 in sociology. She received a master’s in social work from New York University.

Her husband, Karl Matsuda, retired in 2016 as a senior preparator (one who is responsible for installing and deinstalling exhibits) at the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan. In addition to her daughter, Matsuda is survived by her husband; her sisters, Vivian Eng, **May CHEW Ortiz ’68**, and **Rose Chew ’73**; and a grandson. Matsuda always insisted that a museum about the Chinese American experience had to depend, as she put it, on “the involvement of community members in the development, planning and implementation of museum programming.”

“It was about reclaiming our own history,” she said, “and telling the story we wanted to tell.”

*\*Reprinted from The New York Times*

**Rosanne Hazel Wyleczuk ’74**, of Saratoga, California, passed away peacefully on June 3, 2020. She was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts but spent most of her life through high school in Astoria, New York. While at Hunter, she met some of her great, lifelong friends.

From there she went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where she met her future husband, Rick Stern, during her first week of college. At MIT, Wyleczuk was able to follow one of her passions, acting in a number of plays. After getting her Bachelors and Masters degrees in Computer Science she decided she hated programming and went to Wharton to get her MBA. After Wharton she came to California to work for Hewlett Packard. She was there for over 25 years working in a number of different marketing positions. She made many friends because of how warm she could be, and her work impressed her colleagues. One of her most memorable times at HP was the 2 years she worked in Germany.

After Germany she and Rick got married and later had their two children. A number of years afterward her kidneys failed, and she went on dialysis, but she was still active and able to work for another 7 years.

Her nearly 20 years on dialysis hardly slowed her down. She was still able to travel and see both kids graduate college as well as take trips to Hawaii, Boston, and even London and Scotland. She loved the holidays, the arts, her Mahjong game, and her yearly block party where she kept court. But most of all, she loved people.

She leaves her husband, Rick, her children, her brother and his wife, her sister, her uncle and three nephews.

## WE HAVE ALSO BEEN NOTIFIED OF THE PASSING OF:

**Carmen Archibald ’51**,  
in 2016

**Jane Susskind-Narins ’52**,  
on 6/16/2020

**Toby BERNSTEIN Rubel ’43**,  
on 3/13/2020

**Jane MICHEL Alwais ’41**,  
on 4/10/2020

**Barbara BIGOLSKI Johnston ’55**,  
on 7/28/2019

**Jacqueline REYNAUD Page**,  
on 6/8/2020

The husband of Rosanne Wyleczuk has established a fund in her memory.

Please make any donations to:  
The Rosanne Wyleczuk  
Class of 1974 - Fund for the Arts

c/o HCHS Alumnae/i Association  
695 Park Avenue  
Hunter College East, Room 1313B  
New York, NY 10065-5024

Take pride in your alma mater and show your support of the school with a purchase of HCHS Alumnae/i Association items. Each item shows member and non-member pricing.

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**NOTEBOOK**

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**REUSABLE TOTE**

\$5/\$8



**CANVAS ZIP TOTE**

\$25 / \$30



**PURPLE LOGO T-SHIRT**

\$15/\$18



**BLACK LOGO T-SHIRT**

\$13/\$18



**PHONE WALLET**

\$6/\$8



**SWEATER BEAR**

\$15/\$20



Plastic



Metal

**WATER BOTTLE**

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## PAYMENT FORM

Use this form to make a donation or purchase merchandise. Checks should be payable to HCHSAA and mailed in the enclosed envelope. You may also pay by credit card at our website ([www.hchsaa.org](http://www.hchsaa.org))

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The HCHSAA Board of Directors has an exciting update about changes to membership, dues, and philanthropy at HCHSAA. Please stay tuned for more information soon!

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Gifts to the 2019-20 Annual Fund **support Hunter College High School's** academic and extracurricular enrichment programs. Gifts are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law, and, if this is your Milestone Reunion year, will be counted towards your class gift. Please check one:

| DONORS  | HONOR ROLL OF GIVING   | PURPLE SOCIETY  |
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