

# AlumNotes

HUNTER COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNAE/I ASSOCIATION, INC. WINTER 2012 • VOLUME 38, NUMBER 2

TEL 212.772.4079

FAX 212.772.4074

EMAIL [hchsalums@yahoo.com](mailto:hchsalums@yahoo.com)

WEBSITE [www.hchsaa.org](http://www.hchsaa.org)

## Alums Return to Inform and Inspire

Last year, in our Spring 2011 issue, we published an article highlighting some of the ways that alumnae/i give back by volunteering their time and talents to the Hunter community. So far, 2011-2012 has been a tremendous year for alum involvement.

In just a few short months, three brand new programs – **TEDxHunterCCS**, the **Life After Hunter** series, and **Career Day** – have brought fifteen alumnae/i back to HCHS as guest speakers.

While several well-established programs have afforded Hunter students face-to-face interaction with alumnae/i over the years, these occasions have tended to focus on a specific topic or area of study. Eyewitness to History, for example, is a powerful day in which alumnae whose families survived the Holocaust share their stories with current students. Many other alumnae/i return to HCHS as formal guest lecturers or informal mentors in the humanities, sciences, and the arts. In each instance, students benefit from the experience of their predecessors, who, in the sense that they are also Hunterites, are also their peers.

However, this year's new events were different, in that each one deliberately sought to bring together speakers from widely disparate disciplines, with Hunter, and what Hunter means – the enhancement and expansion of minds, with an eye towards the future – being the only common denominator.

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Reunion 2012 Schedule

See Page 3

## Mrs. & Mr. Sarah Maria Jones



Judy CHIN Wong '88 and Tai Wong '88 with their children, Katharine, Alexandra, Caroline and Luke.

Every year around this time, thoughts turn to romance. On Valentine's Day, spouses and sweethearts, crushes and better halves, are plied with flowers, candy, cards, fancy dinners, and other tokens of appreciation for what the Ancient Greeks called *eros*.

With February underway as this issue of *AlumNotes* came together, we wondered: Just how often has Cupid's arrow united two Hunterites under the banner of love? This, of course, would be impossible to know fully. Neither the High School nor the Alumnae/i Association maintains such a record of romances. Thank heavens for that, by the way.

But keeping tabs on those alumni who have actually married one another is an entirely different matter. For starters, there are records – wedding announcements in *The New York Times* and gifts made jointly to the Alumnae/i Association, just to name some of

the more conspicuous examples. Moreover, since boys weren't admitted to HCHS until 1974, any discussion of wedded alumna/alumnus couples has to start with the classes from the 1980s. Of course, we can reasonably assume that in Hunter's long history as an all-girls institution, there were occasions when two alumnae fell in love and maintained a romantic relationship over many years. (If you are part of such a couple, please let us know!) Also, given that several states including New York now permit same-sex marriage, we anticipate learning about more married alumna/alumna and alumnus/alumnus couples going forward. For now, we know of at least twenty marriages between Hunterites. Here are some of their stories.

We didn't have to look too far to find this first couple. **Judy CHIN Wong '88** and **Tai Wong '88** have been involved with the Alumnae/i Association for over a decade. Both

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ALUMNOTES

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Hunter College East Room 1314E  
695 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10065  
hchsalumns@yahoo.com

Founded in 1973

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Letter From the President

Dear Fellow Hunter Alumnae/i,

“Mihi cura futuri” / “The care of the future is mine.” Many of you will recognize this phrase as Hunter’s motto. It is a fitting credo for our school, which prepares exceptional future scientists, journalists, physicians, businesspeople, teachers, government officials, artists, and attorneys (and others) for college, careers, and a lifetime of learning. “Mihi cura futuri” also is an apt summary of the Alumnae/i Association’s mission statement. By supporting Hunter in many different ways, the Alumnae/i Association provides for Hunter’s present and future, while maintaining and developing relationships among Hunter graduates.

One of my principal responsibilities as your Alumnae/i Association President is to discuss with you ways in which alumnae/i can support Hunter and its current and future students. We must never lose sight of the need to provide financial support to Hunter. Without our dona-tions, Hunter would not have a renovated library, up-to-date computer labs, the new science research program, the academic support program for seventh and eighth grade students, or many other curricular and extracurricular programs funded by alumnae/i. But there are many other ways we can contribute to Hunter and the Hunter community. In the coming months, I will highlight some of these ways to give back to Hunter in my President’s letters and other communications to the alumnae/i community. By doing so, I hope to inspire you to join in and help our school.

Let me begin with one easy (and free) way we can help. Hunter is a small school and its impact on New York City and the world at large sometimes is underestimated. We can spread the word about Hunter by publicizing our own Hunter connections. My wife, Marci, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon at NYU, receives a mailing whenever a physician is appointed to the NYU faculty. One announcement Marci received was from dermatologist Dr. Susan Katz '68. Marci showed me the announcement and pointed out that Dr. Katz included her affiliation with Hunter in the second sentence, before any mention of her medical degree or residency training. When I asked Dr. Katz about this, she told me that she received the best education of her life at Hunter, and that Hunter shaped who she is today, more than four decades after her graduation. Dr. Katz said that she mentioned Hunter to provide publicity for the school, but that doing so has also benefitted her practice. Some patients cited her Hunter degree when they booked their appointments, and not all of them were fellow alumnae/i! I hope that you will join Dr. Katz and me and include your Hunter connection on your resume, LinkedIn pro-file, biographical sketch, or website. I also hope that you will join the Alumnae/i Association’s Facebook group (with close to 2,200 members) and LinkedIn network. Identifying yourself as a Hunter graduate is a zero-cost way to support our school and build our alumnae/i commu-nity.

Finally, I should note that this is the first Letter from the President written by a Hunter alumnus. After 38 years of inspired leadership of the Alumnae/i Association by Hunter alum-nae, I am honored to serve as its first male President. This change is a reflection of the evolu-tion of our school and the diversity of its students. As I begin my term as President, I am grate-ful for the guidance and inspiration provided by my predecessors, especially Joan Rosenthal '72 and Purvi Sevak '91, with whom I served on the Alumnae/i Association Board of Directors. Hunter students may not look the same as they did 20, 40, or 80 years ago, but they share the attributes that unite all Hunter alumnae/i across the generations: intelligence, a love of learn-ing, and a commitment to make a difference in their communities.

I look forward to meeting many of you at Alumnae/i Association events and working with you to help our remarkable alma mater.

Jason P. Criss '92  
HCHSAA President 2011-12

Milestone Class Gifts

Alumnae/i from the class years end-ing in 2 or 7 are encouraged to make a special tax-deductible donation toward their Milestone Class Gift to the HCHS. Please ask your Milestone Class Coordinator if there is a sug-gested amount and whether the class wishes to earmark the gift.

Save The Date – Reunion 2012

Join us on Sunday, June 3 for HCHS Reunion 2012. The Alumnae/i Association has a great day planned, beginning at 9:30 am with a continental breakfast and individual milestone class gatherings, followed by the General Assembly and buffet luncheon. The day will close with the Alumnae/i Association’s Annual Meeting at 2:00 pm in the auditorium, with dues-paid members eligible to vote on the slate of new officers.

2012 is a Milestone Reunion for all class years ending in 7 or 2, but it is an especially big year for the classes of '87 and '62, who will be celebrating their 25th and 50th reunions, respectively. Of course, all alumnae/i, regardless of class year, are encouraged to attend. Use the form on page 19 of this newsletter to pre-register for Reunion, or do it online at HCHSAA.org.

As always, we have a number of other fun activities planned for the weekend.

2012 Reunion Weekend Schedule

Advance Registration is recommended for all events. Please go to the Events Page on our website and click on Reunion 2012 to pre-register.

THURSDAY, MAY 31

HCHSAA 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR CELEBRATION KICK-OFF

Join us for a special celebratory cocktail reception honoring the Hunter College High School Alumnaeli Association’s founders and past presidents.

Location: Hunter College Faculty Dining Room, 68th St & Lexington Ave  
Time: 6:30-9:00 PM  
Admission: \$40 per person Dues-Paid Members and their guests  
\$50 per person Non-Members and their guests

FRIDAY, JUNE 1

ANNUAL YOUNG ALUMS PARTY

Join the Young Alums group for their annual bash. For more information visit HCHSAA.org or the Alumnae/i Association’s Facebook page at Facebook.com/ Groups/OfficialHCHSAA. Questions may be directed to Derek Kan '02 via email at Derek.H.Kan@gmail.com.

Location: Manchester Pub, 920 2nd Ave (between 48th St & 49th St)  
Time: 6:00 PM  
Admission: Free (cash bar)

OPEN HOUSE

Stop in for a glass of wine and meet fellow Hunterites from the 1950s to 1970s.

Location: Hunter College High School Library, 71 East 94th St  
Time: 6:00-8:00 PM  
Admission: Free

SATURDAY, JUNE 2

FIFTH ANNUAL JOE KUBAT FAMILY SOFTBALL GAME & PICNIC

Pack up your picnic basket, softball equipment and the kids and spend a great afternoon in Central Park with fellow alums from the '80s, '90s, and '00s. For more information contact Matt Blumenfeld '83 at Matthew@FinancialDevelopmentAgency.com.

Location: Central Park Softball Fields, enter at West 81st St or East 79th St  
Time: Warm-ups start at Noon. Game begins at 1:00 PM.  
Admission: Free

TOUR OF CENTRAL PARK’S CONSERVATORY GARDEN

This new event is a special opportunity to explore our alma mater’s backyard while walking with friends. Hunter staff member Franz Helmke (a horticul-turist and expert on the City’s parks) will lead the tour of Central Park’s only formal garden, best known for its fountains and sculptures. The tour will be suitable to all “walking” levels.

Location: Meet at Vanderbilt Gate, 105th St & Fifth Ave  
Time: 2:00-3:00 PM  
Admission: Free (space is limited, pre-register online)

SUNDAY, JUNE 3

HCHS GENERAL REUNION 2012

Location: Hunter College High School, 71 East 94th St  
Time: 9:00 AM-3:00 PM  
Admission: \$20 for Dues-Paid Members  
\$20 for Classes of '62 and earlier and Classes of '07 and later  
\$35 General Admission

CLASS COORDINATORS

The following alumnae/i are coordi-nating special reunion activities for their respective milestone classes. If you have not yet heard from your class coordinator, please contact him or her at the email address listed below. If no coordinator is listed for your class and you are interested in volunteering for this role, contact Elyse Reissman at ereissman@hchsaa.org.

1957 Arlene Issacs abimi@msn.com  
1962 Susan L. Schulman susan@schulmanpublicity.com  
1972 Robin KAPLAN Messer messer.robin@gmail.com  
1977 Claudia Krefetz clkrefetz@yahoo.com  
Becky MARKLIN Fine bewampa@yahoo.com  
1982 Karen Gelernt kgelernt@yahoo.com  
1987 Check the class’s Facebook page:  
Hunter College High School, Class of 1987  
1992 Jason P. Criss jcriss@aya.yale.edu

1992 Kim Maxfield Pillemer maxfield100@yahoo.com  
Jason Samuels jsolid@gmail.com  
1997 Adam E. Cohen cohen@chemistry.harvard.edu  
Agnes Inki Park agnes.park@gmail.com  
Jeremiah Lane jeremiah.lane@kkr.com  
Elizabeth Bernstein redxdress@ftml.net  
Jonathan Criss jonathan.criss@gmail.com  
2002 Derek Kan derek.h.kan@gmail.com  
Elizabeth Tharakan elizabeth.tharakan@gmail.com



ALUM EVENTS



Jean Kwok '86 with copies of Girl In Translation.

Autumn Reception

Fifty alums and their guests braved the rain on October 19, in order to enjoy an engaging evening with author **Jean Kwok '86** at the HCHSAA's Annual Autumn Reception.

From six to six-thirty, attendees mingled casually in the main area of the HCHS Library, enjoying an array of beverages, sandwiches and hors d'oeuvres, before taking their seats in the adjacent Leona Chanin Reading Room\*, where HCHSAA President Jason Criss '92 welcomed the group. The school's principal, Dr. Tony Fisher, then briefly addressed the alums, and board member Dan Berenbaum '87 introduced Jean, a friend from his Hunter days.

For the next 45 minutes, alums listened attentively as Jean described the genesis of *Girl In Translation*, her tremendously successful first novel, which was published in 2010. In addition to being a *New York Times* bestseller, the book has already been published in 16 countries and 14 languages. As Jean explained, *Girl In Translation* is a partially fictionalized account of her own experience as a young immigrant from Hong Kong who worked in a sweatshop before being accepted into an elite high school. Like Kimberly Chang, the main character in her book, Jean didn't speak a word of English when she arrived in the US, and found school very frightening and difficult. However, she was a quick learner and "good at school," and received constant encouragement from her family, as well as several compassionate teachers. Like Kim, Jean was soon leading a double life: star pupil by day, sweatshop worker by night. Jean accompanied her talk with a slide presentation that included photos from her childhood, which helped paint the picture of her family's early hardships in their adopted country.

A brief Q&A and book signing followed the talk. Every one of the dozens of copies of *Girl In Translation* available for sale at the event was sold. More about Jean, her work, and her story can be found at JeanKwok.com.

Special thanks to HCHS Librarian Eugene Lim and HCCS Schools Facilities Superintendent Franz Helmke. Both went out of their way to help make this event a success.

\*Named in honor of Leona FEIFER Chanin '34



Jean and her older brother Kwan, Brooklyn 1974.

MoMA Tour



Willem de Kooning. Pink Angels. c. 1945

The HCHSAA sponsored another successful cultural outing on November 30.

Nineteen of us, including alums and guests, met in the lobby of the Museum of Modern Art at 10:30 am, and then embarked on docent-led tour of the marvelous *de Kooning: A Retrospective* exhibit. The expansive exhibit (comprised of over 200 works) offered a one-of-a-kind opportunity to contemplate de Kooning's development over his epic seventy-year career. Our docent, William, was extremely knowledgeable, and happy to answer our group's many insightful questions. With all of the interesting discussion, the hour-long tour flew by, and many returned to the exhibit after our lunch at MoMA's Café 2. The Italian-inspired lunch of appetizers, salads and paninis was served at a long table that lent itself to enthusiastic conversation.

We were an energetic group of Alumnae/i Association members whose graduation years spanned the decades from the '50s all the way up through the '00s. Dr. Lisa BROTHERS Arbisser '70 and her family were visiting from Davenport, IA with their daughter Lily (who just so happened be a good friend of alumna Nora Gross '04 at Princeton). Current and former Board members in attendance included Susan MAJORS Battley '68, Marie DeRosa '78, Amy Farber '71, and myself. Alums were anxious to hear the latest news from HCHS and the Alumnae/i Association, and, of course, new relationships were established, too. Business cards and emails were exchanged as we discovered common interests and shared experiences. It was a wonderful day, all around.

—Marge LANDSBERG Goldsmith '61

Leah SALMANSOHN Dunaief '58

In 1976, Leah SALMANSOHN Dunaief '58 founded *The Village Times*, a weekly newspaper for the residents of the Three Villages, an area including the towns of Stony Brook, Setauket, and Old Field on the North Shore of Long Island. While the fledgling paper's potential circulation was limited by the community's small size, Leah, nevertheless, had her work cut out for her. Simultaneously performing the duties of editor, publisher, and CEO, she gradually built *The Village Times* into a relied-upon source of local news, as well as a successful business. And, in time, she expanded. Today, Leah is the owner and publisher of Times Beacon Record Newspapers, an award-winning community newspaper company serving multiple localities across the North Shore. The company's seven weekly newspapers are printed every Thursday, and have a combined readership of 150,000, along with their website, NorthShoreOfLongIsland.com. Leah also writes a regular column on the inside back cover of all of the papers. The following is her September 8 column.



ON OUR WAY BACK TO THE FUTURE

Last week, I took a step back in time. A friend from high school and her husband came for an overnight visit, and it was the first time that we had far-ranging and in-depth conversation in more than 50 years. I type that number in astonishment, but it is more than half a century since we graduated from high school.

So what did we talk about?

For starters, we caught each other up, in abbreviated fashion, on what had happened to us since 12th grade. That included where we went to college and why, where we met our husbands-to-be, where we lived after we married, what jobs we held, how many children we had and where they lived and worked, whether they married and if there were any grandchildren. In and around that exchange of information, of course, we told stories, because stories are the patchworks that hold the quilt together. As we talked and laughed, I remembered anew why I had liked this particular person in high school. She was lively, bright, open, kind, curious about life and always ready to laugh.

We had gone to an unusual school, Hunter College High School, which we entered in seventh grade, so we had spent six years in the same class of 172 girls, she remembered. That was in the days before the school went coed in 1974. She had commuted from the Fort Tryon Park section on the west side of Manhattan, I from only 14 blocks north

of our gothic building that was adjacent to Hunter College on the east side of midtown. Because admission was by testing, we shared our school years with students from all over the city, although I don't think there was any-one from Staten Island.

In between stories, we spontaneously burst into school songs. That included my friend's husband, who has helped her host reunions over the years and is wonderfully supportive of our school spirit that sometimes bubbles over. In fact, he seemed to enjoy it as much as we did and offered to burn a CD for me from their copy of "The Senior Sing," which they then sent the day after their return home.

We talked about teachers we had loved, teachers we had not loved —although there were few of those — and ditto for members of our class. We mourned the passing of the small number who have already died and commiserated on the void left by the loss of close friends. We brought up little hurts we still felt from cutting remarks made by classmates so long ago. I particularly recalled being admonished for wearing stripes with plaids. We marveled at some of the secrets we had guarded from each other through all those years that now roll so easily from our mouths. I never told a single classmate that my younger sister had Down syndrome, for example, although my friend thought she had shared with us how difficult her stepmother had been. Those secrets helped explain some of the behavior of

the students. I, for example, was reluctant to invite any of my classmates to my home.

We also talked about the present, touching on politics a little and finances. And we liked the idea of connecting in the future, especially since our pleasures coincide. They love to travel, enjoy the theater and the opera, like good food and good wine and see life as an ongoing adventure. There is a lot in there for us to share.

After they left, it took me a day before I truly returned to the present. They had taken me back to the late '50s, when there were no drugs to speak of, when it was safe to ride the subways and walk the streets on the way home from the theater, and when we lived in the protected worlds of our parents. As I recall, the biggest trouble we could get into in school was chewing gum.

We left home, went on to college and into the big world, saw the days of "Father Knows Best" and "Ozzie and Harriet" turn into "The Feminine Mystique," the civil rights strife, the assassinations of a president, a senator and civil rights leaders, the Vietnam War and the draft card burning, My Lai and the end of innocence.

We grew up, left behind our parents' expectations, became parents ourselves and finally understood them. It was a long journey to this point, and how nice it is to have a witness to those early steps.





Tai and Judy in 1992.

have served on the HCHSAA board (Tai currently serves). And, for several years, the couple co-wrote the “Alum Profile” feature for *AlumNotes*. Tai and Judy became friends in 1986 while running the HCHS Big Sibbs program together. “She was also the editor-in-chief of *The Observer*,” says Tai, “and I went to work for her - first as copy editor and editorial page editor, and eventually executive editor,” not so subtly suggesting an ulterior motive to his earliest journalistic pursuits. Through their junior and senior years, the two friends became increasingly close. “We used to speak on the phone for hours and even visited colleges together.” Luckily for their evolving relationship, they both ended up in Cambridge, with Tai at Harvard and Judy at MIT. Finally, in the summer of 1989, after they’d completed freshman year in college, Tai got up the nerve to ask Judy out on a real date. They have never been apart since. As Tai recalls, “I asked for her hand at a little bed and breakfast in Maine in 1994, and we were married in 1996.” Tai and Judy are clearly a duo that isn’t shy of commitment, as evidenced not only by their sixteen years of marriage and years of involvement with the HCHSAA, but by their busy careers and ever-growing family. Judy is Head of Global Research Recruiting at Gartner, an IT research and advisory company, and Tai is a Vice President of Metals Trading at the Bank of Montreal. “Today we have four great kids,” says Tai. “And,” he adds with a wink, “I still work for her.”

Like Tai and Judy, most of the couples that we’ve spoken to were friends, or at least friendly, while attending HCHS. One couple, **Joanna Spencer ’87** and **Dave MacAaron ’85**, maintained a long-distance friendship for many years before getting romantically involved. The two first met during Dave’s senior year, in the elective Shakespeare/Modern Drama class. But they didn’t really

become friends until Joanna started dating one of Dave’s bandmates in the student rock band known at various times as Granfalloon and Legion of Decency. After Dave graduated, he and Joanna kept in contact, even though they lived in different states. They bonded over the years as each pursued a career in the arts. Then, in 2004, the two met to celebrate their birthdays, which are only



Joanna Spencer ’87 and Dave MacAaron ’85

two days apart. As Joanna recalls, “Dave was telling me about his new puppy, a dachshund, and I said I wanted to meet her. At the time we were both single, and we started dating soon after that.” Dave and Joanna married and had a daughter in 2007. In addition to their daughter and their dachshund, the couple’s brood also includes two cats. And, their latest addition is Dave’s new freelance video production company, Franbro Productions.

Unlike Joanna and Dave, or Tai and Judy, we discovered that many alums lost touch with their future mate for years, if not decades, after graduation. In fact, a surprising number of married alumnae/i couples started out as “reunion romances.” For example, **Lori Hoepner ’90** and **Jeb Harben ’90** reconnected at their 10-year HCHS reunion. Although their social circles had overlapped



Stephen Murtaugh ’92 and Emily Hecker ’92 at HCHS in 1990.

in high school, the two never dated. But, when they met again in 2000, they hit it off immediately and started dating shortly thereafter. Lori and Jeb married in 2004 and now reside in Brooklyn with their two young sons. Likewise, **Justianna Birzin ’91** and **Michael Kubersky ’91** met at their 15th reunion in 2006. They married in 2011 and have a two-year-old daughter.

The School’s role as matchmaker is more evident in some cases than in others. HCHS literally put **Emily Hecker ’92** and **Stephen Murtaugh ’92** together in the seventh grade. As members of the particularly tight-knit Grade 7 - Group 7 traveling class, Stephen and Emily got to see each other quite bit as they walked together from class to class between periods. The “7-7” gang remained friendly throughout their high school years, and Stephen and Emily admit that at various times, they had secret crushes on one another - just never at the same time. The two lost touch after graduation, but in the end, it seems fate (or, perhaps, Hunter?) wanted them to be together. The two reconnected in 2002, at a barbecue held the day after their 10-year HCHS reunion. According to Emily, “We had instant chemistry. We started a conversation that lasted all night, and it’s still going.” At the time of the reunion, the two were living in different states - he in Chapel Hill, NC, and she in Cleveland, OH. However, they made an effort to visit one another as often as possible over the next year, until Emily relocated to Chapel Hill in 2003. In 2005, they married. “We are still living in Chapel Hill,” says Emily, “with our wonderful and amazing 2-year-old daughter, Amelia.” Emily is now a clinical research nurse at Duke University, working on clinical trials in tuberculosis, while Stephen manages a fine dining restaurant and plays guitar for Transportation, a rock band with a loyal regional following.

Of course, not every couple that came together years after graduation did so at a reunion. It was Facebook that enabled **Lin-Manuel Miranda ’98** to realize his secret high school crush on former classmate **Vanessa Nadal ’98**. Lin admits that while he admired Vanessa from afar at HCHS, he never pursued her. “She was gorgeous and I’m famously bad at talking to women I find attractive,” he told *The New York Times*. Not until 2005, when Lin was catching up with other Hunterites on Facebook, did he come across Vanessa’s profile and invite her to watch



Sam Schechner ’95 and Mara Hoberman ’97

him perform with his hip hop/comedy troupe Freestyle Love Supreme. Vanessa, who was then working in New Jersey as a scientist with Johnson & Johnson, showed up, and their relationship began to blossom. As reported in the Winter 2011 issue of *AlumNotes*, Vanessa and Lin married in September 2010. Vanessa graduated from Fordham Law School in 2010, and Lin needs no introduction.

In other cases, alumna and alumnus reconnected purely by chance. **Mara Hoberman ’97** and **Sam (MacIntosh-)Schechner ’95** knew each other at HCHS, but had limited contact through mutual friends and their involvement in *What’s What*. Sam was the paper’s editor-in-chief and Mara drew illustrations. As Mara was quoted in the couple’s *New York Times* wedding announcement, “I didn’t have a crush on him, but I can say that he was definitely on my radar.” After Sam graduated, the two had few occasions to see each other until 2006, when Sam noticed Mara standing at the Carroll Street subway stop in Brooklyn. As they caught up with each other during their brief ride together, they realized that they only lived four blocks apart. Although Sam and Mara each felt an instant connection, neither had any idea when they might see the other again. As it happened, they didn’t have to wait long. That evening, Mara attended an event at Central Park’s Tavern on the Green, celebrating opening night of the New York Film Festival. Soon after she arrived, she felt a tap on her shoulder. “I was floored by the serendipity of seeing her twice in the same day,” Sam told the *The Times*. Deciding to take the hint that fate seemed to be giving them, Mara and Sam started dating. The couple married in September 2011, and they will soon embark on another big change. Sam, a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, has received a transfer to the paper’s Paris bureau. Mara is a project manager and researcher for the *Catalogue Raisonné of the Drawings of Jasper Johns*, a publication being prepared under the auspices

of The Menil Collection, a Houston-based museum. Mara will continue to work on the catalogue project while in France, in addition to writing reviews for artforum.com and other publications.

Of all the alum couples we spoke to, our favorite story is that of **Mary (Tory) ROBBINS Kopke ’87** and **Peter Kopke ’87**, who actually *did* date at Hunter – in *seventh* grade, no less. “I was 11, so it’s not like it was truly intense,” says Tory, “but it was pretty intense for an 11-year-old.” It started with meeting up in the courtyard between classes, and playing arcade games at nearby Nino’s Pizza after school. But soon they were calling each other at home in the evenings. The crescendo of Tory and Peter’s adolescent romance came when they went on a movie date to see *Star Trek II*. However, Hunter provided the two with no classes in common, and their puppy love soon fizzled out. “We were absolutely not in touch later at Hunter,” recalls Tory, “I remember seeing him in the hallway by the lockers *once*, in 11th grade or so.” And that very minimal contact was all that they had for quite a while. It wasn’t for another 21 years, in 2008, that Peter and Tory reconnected. Thanks to a contact list put together the year prior for the Class of ’87’s 20th Reunion, Peter happened across Tory’s email address and wrote to her. At the time, Tory was finishing medical school at George Washington University, but would soon be moving back to New York for her residency at Mount Sinai Hospital. That summer, the two met for their second movie date, this time to see *Iron Man*, and things moved pretty fast after that. Tory and Peter were married in September of 2009, with seven other Hunterites in attendance at their wedding. This June, the couple will attend their 25th reunion together. It will be the first Hunter-related function that they



Peter Kopke ’87 and Tory ROBBINS Kopke ’87 married in 2009.

ever attend as an “official” couple. Or, at least, it will be the first since that day when they walked around the reservoir together during a Hunter Action Against Hunger fundraiser in 1982.

Whether because of a deliberate effort to maintain contact after high school, or completely by chance, it turns out that a lot of Hunterites are married to other Hunterites. We certainly learned of far more than we’d expected to find.

What makes it so common for these couples to come together? Is it that Hunterites just have some predilection for their HCHS peers? While we can only speculate, it may be that the unique formative experience that is HCHS can’t help but imbue certain elements of character that eventually seem to lend themselves to lasting interpersonal chemistry. Or something like that.

In addition to those couples that we spoke with, mentioned above, we learned of another twelve in the process of writing this article.

They are:

- Vicki Rosenzweig ’81 & Mark Rosenzweig ’84**
- Martha APPLEBAUM Cohen ’82 & Larry Cohen ’82**
- Gail Roboz ’86 & Dimitri Steinberg ’86**
- Patty CHANG Anker ’88 & Kent Anker ’87**
- Anna Suh ’89 & Ross Garon ’89**
- Erin Manning ’92 & Max Kellerman ’91**
- Betty Law ’92 & Matthew BARKER Law ’92**
- Rachel Dawson ’92 & Susan McDonough ’92**
- Rebecca Min ’93 & Sasha Blair-Goldensohn ’94**
- Amy ABBAZIA Rowland ’94 & Greg Rowland ’93**
- Kalila ROBINSON Hammonds ’96 & Loren Hammonds ’95**
- Irulan WILSON Budabin ’98 & Michael Budabin ’99**

And we’ve heard chatter about a number of other couples. As part of the HCHSAA’s ongoing effort to get a better sense of what our alums are up to, we invite any and all alumnae/i couples, whether married, partnered, or in a civil union, to get in touch and let us know. Email the HCHSAA office at info@hchsaa.org.

- By Benjamin Losi



## TEDx Hunter College Campus Schools

TEDxHunterCCS was a day of inspiring talks and performances by an eclectic ensemble of nineteen Hunter College High School and Elementary School alums, students, faculty and parents. Held on Saturday, September 24 in the Hunter College Campus Schools auditorium, over 350 members of the Hunter community attended the event, while many others viewed the day’s presentations via a live video webcast. TEDxHunterCCS was co-hosted by award-winning journalist and author **Jennifer 8. Lee ’94** and WNYC Radio Host **Brian Lehrer**, a proud HCHS parent. Of the day’s presenters, eight, or nearly half, were HCHS alumnae/i. Each speaker gave a talk as unique as his or her own experiences, with the guiding theme of the day being Hunter’s motto, *Mihi Cura Futuri*: The Care of the Future is Mine.

For example, **Dr. Judy Goldsmith ’78**, Professor of Computer Science at the University of Kentucky, spoke about the role of artificial intelligence in our future, while

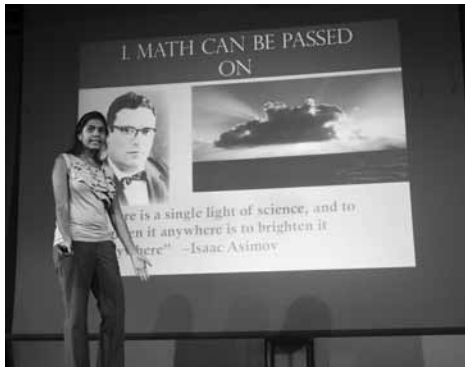


*HCHS English Department Chair Lois Refkin and student volunteers preparing for TEDxHunterCCS.*

urban planner and designer **Winston Dong ’82** gave a talk titled “Design Is Activism: Help Me Design the World We Want to Live In.” **Dana Kaplan ’97**, the Executive Director of the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana, a legal advocacy organization, spoke of the importance of reforming the criminal justice system. Other HCHS alumnae/i who pre-

sented at TEDxHunterCCS were **Monica Raymond ’65**, **Kyle Baker ’83**, **Christine Bader ’89**, and **Steve Evangelista ’94**.

**David Crenshaw ’81**, who has spent his entire adult life establishing community-based programs to benefit youth in Washington Heights and Harlem, gave one of the



*Meena Boppona ’12 presenting at TEDxHunterCCS.*

### What’s TED?

TEDx Hunter College Campus Schools was modeled after the popular TED conferences. Originally created in 1984 as a forum to focus on the converging fields of **T**echnology, **E**ntertainment, and **D**esign, the annual TED conferences have since evolved to bring together “the world’s most fascinating thinkers and doers,” from across all realms of academia, business, and the arts and sciences, for the common purpose of “ideas worth spreading.” TED speakers are given up to 18 minutes to present their most innovative ideas in the most engaging ways they can.

In 2006, TED made the complete catalog of its talks available for free video streaming at **TED.com**. Then in 2009, with many of its talks having become Internet sensations, TED launched TEDx, a program granting free licenses to communities, organizations and individuals, so that they might “stimulate dialogue through TED-like experiences at the local level.” Although TEDx events are independently organized and produced, each TEDx licensee must be approved by TED and adhere to a strict set of rules including format and duration. To date, thousands of TEDx events have been organized in hundreds of communities throughout the world.

The idea to organize a TEDx for the HCHS community first materialized in the summer of 2010. Ben Losi, who had recently been hired to write *AlumNotes*, suggested the idea of a TEDx exclusively of, by, and for Hunterites to Matt Blumenfeld ’83. Matt, whose former classmate Jane Wulf ’83 happened to work at TED, liked the idea and pitched it to the HCHSAA board. With the help HCHS parent Francesca Bacon, the idea was also presented to the leadership of the Campus Schools, and the PTAs of both HCHS and HCES. By early 2011, the organizations had come together to co-sponsor the event, and three volunteers were chosen to execute the effort. Jennifer 8. Lee ’94 secured the license for TEDxHunterCCS from TED, while Francesca and Alumnae/i Association board member Kelly Washburn ’83 took the roles of Co-Executive Producers. Over the next several months Kelly and Francesca recruited speakers and created the TEDxHunterCCS website. Kelly also promoted the event through various social media as Francesca organized event-day logistics. Numerous faculty, students and parents also volunteered to make the event a success, most notably English Department Chair Lois Refkin, Social Studies Chair Betty Kleinfeld, and HCHS senior Adam Brodheim ’12.



*The talk given by Dave Crenshaw ’81 has been selected as a TEDx Talks Editor’s Pick.*

day’s most memorable talks. Dave’s Camp Dreamers program provides children between the ages of six and eleven with camp-like activities in the morning before the start of the school day and during recess. In addition to being trained in a range of sports, sometimes even visiting colleges. Dave teaches his Camp Dreamers “the only true championship is a scholarship.” During his TEDx talk, titled “Helping Girls Be Strong Through Sports,” Dave explained the urgency that drove his work, which he began while still a senior at HCHS. “My community was at war,” he said, explaining that providing children with the opportunity to experience a more hopeful reality than what they are accustomed to (as he had at Hunter) could help them rise above the crime and decay they were subjected to in their daily lives. “When we left the hood, and we went camping, we could find characters to help us build character, so our girls could be stronger. Then, they come back into the community and build things better, instead of just letting things fall apart.” TED recently emailed Dave to inform him that his talk had been selected as a TEDx Talks Editor’s Pick. “Amongst the thousands of strong TEDx Talks,” said the email, “yours stood out for



*TEDxHunterCCS co-host Brian Lehrer chats with co-producer Francesca Bacon.*

being a truly exceptional and inspiring idea worth spreading.”

Why not watch Dave’s talk for yourself?

The beauty of TED and TEDx Talks is that they are presented with the intention of being shared beyond the confines of the time and

place in which they are given. All of the talks

mentioned above, as well those given by students, parents, faculty and HCES alums can be viewed on YouTube via the website TedxHunterCCS.org.

It should also be noted that a TED talk given by **Kevin Slavin ’87** at an official “TEDGlobal” in July 2011 was screened during TEDxHunterCCS. Kevin’s talk, “How Algorithms Shape Our World,” has been viewed over a million times.

### Life After Hunter

The Hunter College High School PTA hosted a handful of alumnae/i guest speakers at two of its meetings in the fall. In these “Life After Hunter” presentations, alumnae/i addressed Hunter parents about what Hunter had meant to them. Clearly, most Hunter parents are aware of the quality of the education that their children receive at HCHS. However, “Life After Hunter” offered parents the opportunity to take the long view of the benefits of a HCHS education, and to hear firsthand accounts of how the school has evolved over time.

In addressing the PTA on the evening of October 26, neurologist **Dr. Betty Mintz ’71** and *Wall Street Journal* news editor **John J. Edwards III ’88** described some of the unexpected ways that Hunter paved the way towards the professions that they love.

As a student at HCHS, John Edwards was the co-editor in chief of *What’s What*. Now at the *Wall Street Journal*, he says, “I enjoy my job a lot, and Hunter gave me the space and tools to help me get there.” One Hunter experience in particular crystallized John’s commitment to journalism. At the time, the then-director of Hunter College Campus Schools proposed erecting a fence around the entire campus block (from 94th to 95th

and Park to Madison). When John realized that *What’s What*’s coverage of the outrage surrounding the proposal contributed to its defeat, he realized that the press can make a real difference in people’s lives. John also highlighted the value of the Inter-Collegiate Year, during which he held an internship at *Essence Magazine*, assisting the Poetry Editor. Even though he wasn’t an expert on poetry per se, the instruction he received at Hunter made it much easier to turn down a number of submissions off-hand. When John attended HCHS in the mid to late 80s, “Joyful Elite” was a popular way to describe Hunter students. Even though the word “elite” has since fallen out of favor, John feels that being elite is a great thing. “It’s something that should be celebrated and something to be joyful about.”

When Betty Mintz attended Hunter, it was still an all-girls school – something she said many of her classmates hated at the time. “We didn’t want to go to an all-girls college once we graduated. But now, I think a lot of us look back and feel differently.” Betty also addressed diversity, explaining that while the student body in her day was not tremendously diverse, it was certainly far more so than the schools that she and her fellow classmates would have attended had they remained in their neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens. “We used all of the opportunities that being in New York City afforded,” she said. “We got to see what was out there, what was really going on the world.” Betty recalled that success in the sciences was highly valued at Hunter when she was a student, as it still is today, identifying two teachers whose example inspired her. One was Marge Goldsmith ’61, who taught her AP Bio. The other was Francine Salzman, a chemistry teacher “who was only about 20 years old when she started teaching at Hunter. She was often mistaken for a student.” While Dr. Mintz went on to study at Harvard and Mount Sinai, she felt that neither of these schools measured up to Hunter, telling the PTA audience, “You are the luckiest parents in the world.”

The second installment of “Life After Hunter,” presented at the PTA’s November 30 meeting, featured not two but three Hunter alums. *New York Times* food writer **Julia Moskin ’85** told the PTA, “No one would have predicted that I would go on to study at Harvard and write for *The New York Times*.” She had little ambition to write in high school, and didn’t work on the newspa-



pers or magazines. Instead, she spent most of her time at Hunter working on theater productions, and, she added, “Since it was the 80s, I also spent a lot of time on my hair.” Nevertheless, Hunter prepared her well for her career. Working at the *Times* is a “Hunter-like experience,” said explained, “and not just because there are so many Hunter people working there. It’s Hunter-like because it is a true meritocracy.” It is worth noting that on the same day that Julia addressed the PTA, an article she’d written (about cookbooks by celebrity chefs) appeared on the front page of the *Times* food section.

The **Honorable Patricia Williams ’61**, Acting Justice, Supreme Court, Bronx County, spoke next, describing her particularly strong and enduring connection to Hunter. Patricia served as class president in her freshman, sophomore, and senior years, and her mother was the first black president of the PTA. Lauding Hunter as “something wonderful,” she explained that one of her classmates had called her the previous night and likened attending Hunter to having “died and gone to Heaven.” Justice Williams and many of her classmates remain close, even fifty years after graduation. She said that she and nearly 25 classmates still get together regularly. One of the most enduring lessons she learned at Hunter, said Justice Williams, was that “simple questions often had complex underpinnings.” And her teachers sent her the message that “it is okay to wonder.”

**Dr. Nicholas Skipitaris ’85**, a cardiologist and electrophysiology specialist at Mount Sinai Hospital, expressed a similar appreciation for Hunter’s unique atmosphere. “The coolest thing about Hunter,” he said, “was that it was a place where it was totally cool to be smart. Or put another way, it was a place where it was not uncool to be smart.” It was an environment where it was “cool and fun to learn.” While Dr. Skipitaris knew he wanted to be a physician by seventh grade, his education at Hunter was rich with music and language. He ended up being a religion major at Dartmouth before med school at Brown. His pre-med advisor initially told him that he should major in something more typical/traditional for a pre-med, but Hunter gave him the confidence to study religion while being pre-med. The lesson for Hunter students and parents is “do not be narrow in the pursuit of your goals.”

## Career Day

Alumnae/i also played a central role in HCHS’s first-ever Career Day held on January 18. Conceived by seniors **Grace Xu ’12** and **Iving Xu ’12**, the event offered students the rare opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of what it is like to work in a number of fields. Guidance Counselor Jenna McLaughlin, who worked with Grace and Iving to put the afternoon together, tells us that Career Day was quite successful. Students were excited to have access to the event’s 24 panelists, including alumnae/i and parents representing various professions across the humanities and sciences, as well as business and finance. Alumnae/i panelists were:



*Alumnae/i and parents field students’ questions at Career Day.*

**Hannah Lipman ’89**, Geriatrician, Cardiologist, and Associate Director of the Montefiore-Einstein Center for Bioethics; **Christine Bader ’89** Human Rights Advisor to Business for Social Responsibility and Nonresident Senior Fellow at The Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University; **Joshua Rosenbaum ’89**, Managing Director at UBS Investment Bank and co-author of *Investment Banking: Valuation, Leveraged Buyouts, and Mergers and Acquisitions*; **Jean Tom ’80**, Director at Bristol-Myers Squibb; **John Tomlinson ’83**, Senior Manager of Communications at Synergos; and **Claudia Strauss ’80**, an alumna and a Hunter parent who was just named the CEO of the Alliance Division of Grey New York.

Ms. McLaughlin tells us it was evident that the day was going to be a success once she saw how enthusiastic alumnae/i were about participating. “We hope to continue to hold an annual career day to keep the relationship between current and former Hunter students strong,” she says. “Thank you to everyone who participated, it was wonderful hearing from so many successful people!”

## Of course, we can’t forget...

Alumnae/i continue to volunteer their time and expertise to Hunter and its students on an individual basis, too, in both formal and informal settings.

**Dr. Laura Auricchio ’86** delivered the 20th annual **Helen E. Witmer Lecture** on December 6. Speaking on the topic “Lafayette: Hero and Villain,” Professor Auricchio examined the military and political career of the Marquis in America and France, explaining why he is lauded in the US as a revolutionary icon, while he is “recalled with a shrug” by his countrymen. Professor Auricchio described how, despite his minimal military experience before his journey to America, the young Marquis won over General Washington and the revolutionary leadership. But back in France, after 1789, Lafayette’s middle course placed him on the wrong side of both monarchists and the increasingly more radicalized revolutionary cause. The topics covered in Dr. Auricchio’s lecture are also explored in depth in her new book, tentatively entitled *The Marquis*, which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf. Each year, the Social Studies Department sponsors the Helen E. Witmer Lecture in memory of its former chairwoman, who served on Hunter College High School’s faculty from 1927 until 1966.

Also, writer and editor **Rose PLATT Fox ’96** has visited HCHS numerous times to mentor students involved with the high school’s sci-fi/fantasy magazine *Tapestry*. Rose was an editor for *Tapestry* while at Hunter, and is now a Sci-Fi/Fantasy and Horror reviews editor at *Publishers Weekly*. In addition to sharing tips on how to get into the writing and editing business, this year Rose arranged for fantasy writers Ellen Kushner, Delia Sherman, and Holly Black to speak with the students as well. Rose’s visits were met with great enthusiasm, and *Tapestry* is excited to bring her back this year. Rose has written about her visits to Hunter in her *Publishers Weekly* hosted blog *Genreville*.

Stay tuned for even more stories about alumnae/i who share their gifts and their experience with the rising generation.

## HUNTERITES IN THE NEWS

In September, UMass Amherst Libraries launched a new special collection of 8,000 volumes of children’s literature donated by **Dr. Masha KABAKOW Rudman ’49**, a professor emerita of UMass Amherst’s School of Education. The Masha Kabakow Rudman Issues in Children’s Literature Collection, housed in the W.E.B. Du Bois Library, is to be a permanent collection available to teachers, students, and researchers alike. When Dr. Rudman began teaching in the ’60s, she realized that while children were being encouraged to read for entertainment, or in order to write book reports, they were rarely encouraged to read critically – to read between the lines and see what was implied. As Masha told *The Springfield Republican* in a September 7 interview, “If you believe in critical thinking, there are many possible right answers.” So she began to hunt for children’s books that examined controversial societal issues and presented unconventional perspectives. By scouring libraries and establishing relationships with publishers, Masha gradually amassed thousands of works of children’s fiction and non-fiction that tackled issues like race, class, and sexuality, as well as related scholarly reference materials, including several of her own publications. As one of the first scholars to study literature from such an “issues perspective,” Dr. Rudman wrote numerous books and articles on the topic, including *Children’s Literature: An Issue Approach*, which is now in its fourth edition. Although she originally began archiving books simply to serve her own work, Masha postponed retirement for several years partly because she feared the fate of her collection. As she told *The Republican*, “I just wanted to keep it alive. I dreaded the idea of boxing the books up and sending them some place.” Fortunately, as Masha was retiring in 2009, a former director of UMass Amherst Libraries asked her if she might consider donating the collection. As a library representative told *The Republican*, the collection’s greatest value lies in the unique way it is catalogued, with the books being indexed according to the issues that they examine. A recent, well-known work in Dr. Rudman’s collection is J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series, which uses fantasy to tackle the issue of “class and ethnic differences.” Dr. Rudman received both her B.A. in English Literature and her M.S. degree in Elementary Education from Hunter College. She also served as a lecturer in education at Hunter College in 1964, before



*Masha KABAKOW Rudman ’49 with her collection of children’s literature.*

entering UMass Amherst’s School of Education, where she earned her Ed.D. in 1970. Over her 45-year career in academia, Masha received numerous awards and distinctions. In 1972, she became the first School of Education faculty member to be honored with the University of Massachusetts’ Distinguished Teaching Award. And in 1973, the Hunter College Alumni Association elected her to its Hall of Fame. At the unveiling ceremony of her book collection on September 17, Masha delivered a speech in which she credited HCHS for teaching her “how to test authority, seek out multiple perspectives, and question, question, question.”

*Crain’s New York Business* named two HCHS alumnae to its 2011 ranking of the 50 “Most Powerful Women in New York.” Appearing at #44, Hunter College President **Jennifer J. Raab ’73** is lauded by *Crain’s* for her response to the dramatic budget cuts facing the CUNY system. In addition to having “brought in additional revenue through research grants and other entrepreneurial strategies, such as property rentals and continuing education programs,” the article credits her for “boosted fundraising activity.” *Crain’s* also considers the college’s growth under Jennifer’s leadership, not just in terms of increased enrollment (specifically, by 5% in the past two years), but in regard to expanded academic opportunities, including the recent creation of the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute and the new CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College. Coming in at #25 in the ranking is **Edith Cooper ’79**, the Global Head of Human Capital Management at Goldman Sachs. Explaining that she “manages the people who make the \$46 billion investment banking and securities behemoth run,” *Crain’s* also emphasizes Edith’s rapid

rise to the top. Only two years after joining Goldman in 1996, she became a managing director. And by 2000, Edith was a partner. She is now one of the five-person group that grants such elite titles. In her current position at Goldman, which she has held since 2008, Edith “oversees all functions relating to recruiting, developing and retaining talent for the firm.” She is also one of only four women on Goldman’s 32-member management committee, and sits on the firm’s diversity committee.

Only a year into her tenure, **Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan ’77** is already receiving praise from pundits. In a July 28 essay for *The New Republic*, titled “This year’s biggest surprise at the Supreme Court: Elena Kagan’s prose,” legal analyst Jeffrey Rosen expressed keen admiration for the new justice’s skill as a writer, praising her “eloquent voice.” He said, “In her first year on the Court, she wrote three dissents, two of which combine Scalia’s gift for the sharp aphorism with John Roberts’s powers of analytical dissection. But she also has something more: an ability to puncture her colleagues’ bloodless abstractions and tendentious arguments, and to explain the constitutional stakes in plain language that all citizens can understand.” Elena filed her first Supreme Court opinion in the case of *Ransom v. FIA Card Services*, on January 11, 2011. In the 8–1 decision, she found that an individual declaring bankruptcy who owns his car outright may not deduct car-ownership expenses and thereby lower the amount he will repay creditors. Justice Kagan’s second term began in October.

**Mitch Cutler ’83** started working in comic book shops after school when he was fifteen. By the time he was nineteen, Mitch had purchased the recently opened St. Mark’s Comics and has been running the Lower East Side mainstay ever since. On November 15, *Wall Street Journal* columnist Ralph Gardner Jr. reflected on his own history with St. Mark’s Comics, a shop he frequented more than 25 years ago, and just recently rediscovered. “I started patronizing the place in the early ’80s when underground cartoonist R. Crumb was still churning out the occasional comic book. But Crumb eventually moved to France, his output waned, and with it St. Mark’s Comics’ offerings by the artist. Visits there eventually became like quests for the Holy Grail – a quixotic adventure – until my trips stopped completely. However, I happened to be in the neighborhood last week and



## HUNTERITES IN THE NEWS

decided to stop by, half expecting my beloved comics bookstore to have been replaced by a sushi restaurant or an Urban Outfitters. I was happy to see the place was still going strong.” According to Gardner, one reason for the store’s continued allure is that when you visit, you feel “special, different, part of something approaching a secret society...the average customer seems more unusual than most.” Even its hours of operation set it apart, operating until 11pm on most nights, and until 1am on weekends, “well after the typical New Yorker has called it a night.” To Mitch, however, his store’s success has less to do with atmosphere, and more to do with old-fashioned customer loyalty. As he says, “I have been blessed with customers who have been customers for 25 years.” Some of those customers now show up with their own comic-enamored kids. As Gardner recounts a conversation between Mitch, another customer, and himself – three middle-aged men moving seamlessly between discussion of esoteric comic book trivia and their adolescent daughters – he seems to make the case that at least part of what makes the store special is its natural ability to straddle the generational divide, with a nostalgic eye to the past, while nevertheless doing the bulk of its business in newly published comics. Or, it could just be that comics, in general, grounded in the mythic struggle of good versus evil, are timeless. Describing Mitch as “laconic” throughout most of their discussion, Gardner observed a telling moment; Mitch became animated when discussing a particular comic book from 1996, one that imagined a scenario 20 years into the future in which iconic superheroes like Wonder Woman and Superman “are pulled out of retirement to combat a younger generation of amoral super vigilantes.” Taking the comic book out of its protective sleeve, Mitch explained “It’s really about how heroes behave and what are your responsibilities if you have such powers.” As of this writing, Mitch’s daughter is preparing for the Hunter admission test on January 6.

In October, news website *Business Insider* posted their ranking of the “20 Best Public Schools in New York City.”\* On the list were three schools led by **Brett Peiser ’86**, Managing Director of Uncommon Schools New York City. Uncommon Schools, a non-profit charter management organization that Brett helped found in 2005, has since grown into a network of 28 schools in New York, New Jersey

and Massachusetts. The organization serves nearly 5,500 elementary, middle, and high school students, with more than half of those students attending one of the 14 schools started and managed by Brett, all of which are located in Brooklyn. In terms of performance, Uncommon Schools is living up to its name. To date, 100% of its high school graduates have gained acceptance to at least one four-year college. In addition to the three schools ranked in *Business Insider*’s top 20 – Ocean Hill Collegiate Charter School (#6), Excellence Girls Charter School (#17), and Leadership Preparatory Ocean Hill Charter School (#18) – Williamsburg Collegiate, Uncommon’s first middle school, has been the highest scoring school on the NYC Department of Education Progress Reports since the reports began being issued in 2006. Uncommon attributes its success to its commitment to cultivating “intellectual curiosity and grit” in its students, and constantly honing the skills of its teachers and staff. And it is a staff that will need to grow rapidly. Uncommon Schools New York City is currently gearing up for a massive expansion that will see its number of students swell to 8,000. Brett and his team plan to open seven more schools in Brooklyn over the next four years, in addition to growing some of their existing sites. Prior to his work with Uncommon, Brett founded one of Massachusetts’ highest performing public schools, Boston Collegiate Charter School, serving as its first principal and executive director from 1998 – 2005. He received his bachelor’s from Brown University and earned a master’s in Public Policy from Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. Brett began his career in education as a history teacher at Midwood High School in Brooklyn.

*\*Business Insider’s rankings were derived from the NYC Department of Education’s 2011 NYC School Survey, which aggregated feedback from over 960,000 parents, teachers, and students in grades 6 through 12. The DOE has performed the survey annually since 2007.*

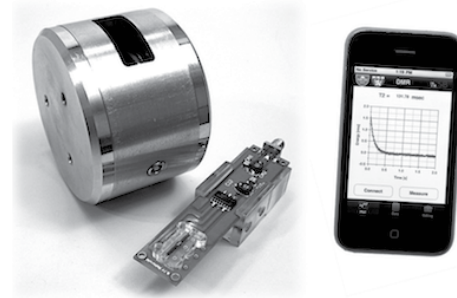
Last February, news organizations jumped on the story that an interdisciplinary team of clinician-scientists at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School had developed the world’s smallest and fastest cancer diagnostic system – a system so advanced, it comes with its own smartphone app. **Cesar Castro ’92**, M.D., a Harvard-trained oncologist who co-led the development of the new



*Cesar Castro ’92*

system, was interviewed by media outlets around the world after he and his colleagues reported their breakthrough in a study published in *Science Translational Medicine*. The study’s findings demonstrated that micro-NMR, or micro-nuclear magnetic resonance, can detect cancerous tumors procured through minimally invasive means – in about an hour – with accuracy superior to standard methods of diagnosis. In effect, micro-NMR is an evolved and miniaturized version of the familiar magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology employed by radiologists. Specifically, micro-NMR uses magnetic resonance and nanotechnology to directly sense, rather than visualize, cancer-associated protein markers in minute tissue specimens. As Cesar told *SmartPlanet*, “Our device has the potential for transforming cancer care through its ability to provide real time readouts.”

Under the existing paradigm, determining whether or not a suspicious growth is cancerous can involve multiple biopsies, as the information obtainable from a single tissue sample often does not produce a conclusive diagnosis. In short, as the need for more tests presents itself, so to does the need for more tissue. Such invasiveness is costly not only in terms of the physical and emotional pain inflicted upon the patient, but also in terms of time and resources. Once cut from the patient’s body, tissue is sent to a lab, where it can take three to seven days to analyze for specific cancer markers. By contrast, micro-NMR can be performed at a patient’s bedside, with a portable handheld device that displays its results via a smartphone application. That said, micro-NMR might portend



*Micro-NMR may soon revolutionize cancer detection.*

a sea change in cancer treatment for more reasons than just its incredible speed. It has demonstrated a remarkable 96 percent accuracy, according to the study’s findings, as compared with the 84 percent rate associated with conventional pathology. Of the 70 patients used in the seminal study, micro-NMR correctly identified 62 out of 64 cancer cases and all six non-cancerous cases. It also identified cancer in several other patients whose clinical pathology reports came up negative – those patients later developed cancers at the biopsy sites. However, as Cesar told *Bloomberg*, micro-NMR “is still experimental and must prove itself.” Indeed, larger validation studies are ongoing. Another improvement of micro-NMR over existing procedures is that because it requires so little tissue to obtain its readings, it can be used repeatedly on the same area. Therefore, as Cesar explained, “not only can it be used for diagnosis, but it will also allow us to see how the tumor is responding to therapy.” Since the initial study’s publication, the Harvard group has made further advances, extending micro-NMR’s detection capabilities to include cancer cells floating in the bloodstream. While all of the news surrounding micro-NMR is tremendously encouraging and exciting, the most revolutionary aspect of this new technology may be its price tag. Once in production, hardware costs are estimated at \$200, making this fast, accurate, and portable cancer detector a viable purchase for even the poorest and most remote communities.

**Greg Keller ’92** stars as Zack, the male lead in *Bellville*, a new play *The New York Times* calls “thrillingly good” and “quietly devastating.” Written by Amy Herzog, “one of brightest new talents in the theater,” *Belleville* is the tale of a young married couple whose relationship has begun to unravel, in spite of their genuine love and affection for one another, and despite the fact that they’ve recently embarked on a new life together in that most romantic of all cities, Paris. In a November 4 review, written

during *Belleville*’s three week premiere run at the Yale Repertory Theater, the *Times*’ Charles Isherwood extolled nearly every aspect of the play, from screenplay, to production, to cast: “Hints of unhappiness and disorder are slowly, almost stealthily revealed, until we come to see, with a clarity that is both heartbreaking and hair-raising, how both members of this seemingly contented couple are walking a tightrope over a chasm of despair. *Belleville* is both a perceptive drama depicting the sudden fraying of a young marriage and a nail-biting psychological thriller about how festering secrets and reservoirs of guilt can drive even stable people to the brink of violence...among the most suspenseful plays I’ve seen in years.” Isherwood describes Greg and his co-star, Maria Dizzia, as “fine actors” who portray their “rich and complex” characters “with insight and delicacy – Mr. Keller never loses his laid-back charm as Zack, even when we begin to see the irresponsibility beneath it.” He goes on to suggest that the pair’s on-stage chemistry may have benefitted from their recent experience playing opposite each other in *Cradle and All*, which premiered at the Manhattan Theatre Club in the spring. Greg is both an actor and a playwright. He holds an MFA in Acting from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, and was a Lila Acheson Wallace Playwriting Fellow at The Juilliard School, where he was a two-time Lecomte Du Nouy Prize winner. Greg is a member of LAByrinth Theater Company and Partial Comfort Productions. His numerous stage credits include originating the character of “Mike Clark” in Moisés Kaufman’s acclaimed *33 Variations*.

Broadway maestros **Bobby Lopez ’93** and **Lin-Manuel Miranda ’98** have rarely been out of the limelight in recent months. *The Book of Mormon*, the long-anticipated musical satire Bobby co-created with *South Park* creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone, became an instant smash when it premiered in March. A juggernaut at the Tonys in June, it won nine awards, including Best Musical, Best Book, and Best Original Score. When an original cast recording of *The Book of Mormon* was released in May 2011, it became the highest-charting Broadway cast album in over four decades, reaching #3 on the Billboard Charts. Interviews with Bobby appeared in print, radio, TV, and online throughout the year. In late October, *Playbill.com* reported that Bobby and his wife Kristen Anderson-Lopez were working on a new musical, a romantic comedy titled *Up*

*Here*. Lin Miranda was also a presence at the Tony Awards, albeit from behind-the-scenes. At the end of the night, host Neil Patrick Harris closed the show with a “rap-up” of the evening’s events. In other words, he recapped the night in a rap. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported, “Lin-Manuel Miranda and director Tommy Kail wrote the rap together in the basement of the Beacon Theater during the ceremony, and by 11 pm, Harris had a fully formed piece,” which Harris then performed. In the first week of 2012, *The New York Times* interviewed Lin in anticipation of his January 11 performance at Lincoln Center, saying “excerpts from ‘The Hamilton Mixtape,’ Mr. Miranda’s hip-hop song cycle based on the life of the country’s first Secretary of the Treasury, will open the latest edition of Lincoln Center’s annual American Songbook series.” Lin also appeared on the new show hosted by his old friend and former classmate Chris Hayes ’97, on January 8. Chris, an editor-at-large for *The Nation*, has been a fixture on cable news network MSNBC for several years: first as a frequent guest, and then as a regular guest host on programs such as *The Rachel Maddow Show*, *Countdown with Keith Olbermann*, and *The Last Word with Lawrence O’Donnell*. Chris’s own show, *Up w/ Chris Hayes*, debuted on MSNBC in September. It airs on Saturdays from 7-9 am ET and on Sundays from 8-10 am ET.

Three years on the job and **Jon Daniels ’95** is still the youngest General Manager in Major League Baseball. Yet, he’s already had more success than many of his veteran counterparts. His team, the Texas Rangers, captured the American League Championship in 2011 for the second year in a row. In 2010, the Rangers clinched the first ALCS win in their 50-year franchise history, defeating the Yankees. Although the Rangers lost the 2010 World Series to the San Francisco Giants, the team returned stronger than ever in 2011, setting several franchise records – including number of wins in a season and fan attendance for home games – as they made their way to another league championship in October. After defeating the Detroit Tigers in the ALCS, the Rangers went on to their second consecutive World Series appearance, losing to the St. Louis Cardinals in a nail-biting seven game series. Jon will be in New York this summer when the Ranger’s play the Yankees. He will join us as this year’s HCHSAA Gala Honoree the week of August 13.



# ALUM ANNOUNCEMENTS

In September, **Ilene “Gingy” EDELSTEIN Johnson Beckerman ’53** published her fifth book, *The Smartest Woman I Know*, a tribute to her Grandma Ettie, the insightful woman who raised her. From behind the counter of the stationary and magazine store she ran with her husband, Grandma Ettie dispensed advice to nannies and celebrities alike. And while she only possessed a third-grade education, her pithy insights into life and love were as clever as they were humorous; coming as they often did from conversations she had with God, out loud...in public. Nearly sixty when she began her writing career, Ilene’s first book, her memoir *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*, was a widely acclaimed bestseller that eventually inspired the award-winning Off-Broadway play of the same name by Nora and Delia Ephron, now in its third year. As *The New York Times* Book Review said when *Love, Loss, and What I Wore* was published in 1995, it “illuminates the experience of an entire generation of women.” Ilene’s own illustrations have accompanied the text of each of her books, all five of which have been published by Algonquin Books. Articles by Ilene have appeared in *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Ladies’ Home Journal*. She has judged for *People’s* “Best and Worst Dressed” issue, and has appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. More information about Ilene can be found on her website, [IleneBeckerman.com](http://IleneBeckerman.com).

**Nancy KIPNIS Miller ’57** recently published *What They Saved: Pieces of a Jewish Past*, a memoir describing her decade-long quest to reconstruct the history of her father’s family, a family she never knew. Sparked by the discovery of a small archive of mysterious objects found after her father’s death – including locks of hair, a postcard from Argentina, a cemetery receipt, and letters written in Yiddish – Nancy slowly assembles a genealogical tree, and pieces together a narrative that retraces her family’s emigration from Russia, at the turn of the last century, to Manhattan’s Lower East Side. A third-generation Jewish New Yorker searching for roots, Nancy soon finds herself asking unexpected questions about her own life. Ultimately, the odyssey intended to uncover the origins of her lost family becomes a nonfiction detective story and a memoir of renewal. More about Nancy’s journey, including photographs of her travels through Eastern Europe, can be found at

[WhatTheySaved.com](http://WhatTheySaved.com). A distinguished professor of English and comparative literature at the Graduate Center (CUNY), Nancy is also the author or editor of over a dozen books. Her last book was 2002’s *But Enough About Me: Why We Read Other People’s Lives*. She is currently writing a book about women’s friendships forged within second-wave feminism.

**Helen Epstein ’65** dove into the world of electronic publishing this fall. All of her work is now available on Kindle and Nook, including *Children of the Holocaust; Where She Came From: A Daughter’s Search for her Mother’s History; Meyer Schapiro: Portrait of an Art Historian*; and *Joe Papp: An American Life*. In addition to her work as a writer, Helen is the Editorial Director for Plunkett Lake Press, which specializes in the republication of out-of-print or largely unavailable books, including two works that Helen personally translated from the original Czech. *Under A Cruel Star* is Heda Kovaly’s award-winning memoir of a woman’s life in Stalinist Prague, and Vlasta Schoenova’s *Acting in Terezin* is an unusual account by a professional actress of making theater in a Nazi concentration camp. A list of current authors and titles can be seen at [PlunkettLakePress.com](http://PlunkettLakePress.com). Helen is currently writing a memoir about her experiences as a girl and young woman in 1960s New York City.

On September 19, *The New York Times* announced that Hard Case Crime, the publishing imprint founded by last year’s HCHSAA Spring Gala Honoree **Charles Ardai ’87**, would be releasing a recently rediscovered unpublished manuscript by James M. Cain. Cain, revered for his genre-defining hardboiled crime novels *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *Double Indemnity*, and *Mildred Pierce*, died in 1977. The forthcoming publication, *The Cocktail Waitress*, is described by the *Times* as the story of “a young widow whose husband has died under suspicious circumstances and who is left to rear their child. She takes a job in a cocktail lounge where she falls into a love triangle with a younger, handsome man and an older, wealthier suitor.” Almost a decade before he launched Hard Case Crime in 2004, Charles founded Internet service provider Juno. In addition to his “day job” as a managing director of the D. E. Shaw group, Charles is an award-winning novelist, an editor, and television producer.



The Ecstatic Music Festival, brain-child of composer and curator **Judd Greenstein ’97**, will be presented from February 4 until March 28 at the Kaufman Center’s Merkin Hall, on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. Billed as a series of collaborative concerts that “redefine music for the post-classical generation,” the festival, now in its second year, will present nearly 150 composers and performers over the course of 11 evenings.

Each night, the festival will pair composers and artists on stage who have little or no prior history of collaboration, resulting in a series of first-of-a-kind performances that will unfold live in front of audiences in one of New York’s great concert halls. Last year’s inaugural Ecstatic Music Festival was praised by NPR for showcasing “the most bracing combinations of adventurous, fulfilling music in recent memory.” This year’s opening night concert will feature Jherik Bischoff, the Wordless Music Orchestra, and multiple guests, including David Byrne.

Arguably one of the most influential figures in New York’s youthful, genre-defying “post-classical” music scene, Judd has spent the last five years passionately nurturing the innovation of his peers, in addition to making his own notable contributions as a composer. While “post-classical” music in itself is inherently difficult to classify, Judd and his cohort may best be described as classically trained, technically sophisticated instrumentalists, who not only cherish elements of broader contemporary culture, but who deliberately endeavor to incorporate sonic elements outside of the classical tradition into their compositions. Judd, for example, has a master’s degree from the Yale School of Music and has been a Fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center. But his first foray into composition was creating hip hop beats as a teenager, and he is currently completing his PhD dissertation on hip hop music at Princeton University. The result is a style of music that is as appropriate for, say, a downtown club or

a converted warehouse space, as it is for a concert hall. While Judd composes for a diverse array of performers, the primary vehicle for his compositions is NOW Ensemble, a group of young composers that crafts “chamber music for the 21st century.” Another of his ensembles, The Yehudim, debuted at last year’s Ecstatic Festival with a composition called “Sh’lomo,” a performance that *The New York Times* said “felt like an epiphany,” combining Judd’s “disparate musical inspirations with his abiding interest in Jewish history and literature to explosive effect.”

However, Judd’s most significant impact has been forged through his efforts as an entrepreneur. New Amsterdam Records, a Brooklyn-based record label that Judd co-founded in 2007, has released over thirty albums by two dozen artists, through a distribution arrangement with Naxos, one of the world’s largest distributors of classical music. The young label has garnered impressive acclaim. A number of its releases have received outstanding reviews, and, in each of the last two years, a New Amsterdam release has been nominated for a GRAMMY. Soon after New Amsterdam

Records’ founding, the range of services it offered began to grow. In short order, a not-for-profit artists’ service organization, New Amsterdam Presents, was established around the for-profit record label. Since its founding in 2008, New Amsterdam Presents has produced over 50 musical events around the world. The Ecstatic Music Festival, which New Amsterdam presents in association with the Kaufman Center, is its biggest and boldest production to date. More information can be found at [NewAmsterdamPresents.com](http://NewAmsterdamPresents.com).

## Angela Brown ’03



When **Angela Brown ’03** isn’t busy working towards her master’s at Bank Street College of Education, she is usually in the Hunter College Campus Schools Admissions office, where she has worked part time since 2009. In addition to processing the annual deluge of applications – roughly 2,700 were submitted to HCHS for the coming 2012 school year – she spends a lot of time responding to application-related questions. Many of those questions involve clarifying HCHS admissions procedures for parents more familiar with 9th-12th grade high schools. Curious parents are also often eager to understand what makes Hunter’s curriculum and atmosphere so special. As both an aspiring teacher and an alumna, Angela is particularly well suited to describe the Hunter experience as it compares to other schools.

Admittedly, working in an administrative capacity was never Angela’s plan. She wanted to work as a teacher while earning her master’s in Childhood & Bilingual Education. Unfortunately, New York City’s hiring freeze on new teachers in 2009 came right when she hoped to embark on her teaching career. Even so, Angela feels that working in Admissions has given her valuable insight into the inner workings of schools. “I plan to apply the skills and experience I’ve acquired, especially communicating with families, when I obtain a teaching position.” Moreover, her position has evolved in some exciting ways since she was hired.

Apart from helping the intensely busy admissions process run smoothly, Angela has been able to apply her training as an educator by guiding the HCHS students involved in The Lighthouse Project. Once a week, these Hunterites travel to PS/MS 161 in Harlem to meet fourth and fifth graders for one-on-one mentoring sessions. In addition to tutoring their charges in subjects like English and mathematics, the high schoolers serve as role models,

offering advice on organization and study skills, sharing anecdotes about life at Hunter, and demonstrating that it is possible to be cool as well as smart. In effect, Angela mentors the mentors: observing them as they work with the younger students, providing feedback, and advising them on best practices.

Angela has also assumed a key role in the school’s effort to foster greater diversity in the student population, an issue she is passionate about. She was a member of HOLA (Hunter Organization of Latin Americans) and the president of the African American Cultural Society when she attended HCHS. At Amherst, she received a dual bachelor’s in Black Studies and Spanish. Now, one of her duties for the Admissions office is contacting prospective volunteers for the nascent Alumni Ambassadors program, which is planning alumni visits to elementary schools and after school programs in underrepresented communities. In addition to describing their own Hunter experience, the Alumni Ambassadors will talk about the opportunities that a Hunter education made possible, and inform young people and their parents of the admissions process. Alumni may also volunteer alongside their younger counterparts, the Student Ambassadors, by helping them carry out an HCHS open house currently being planned for this spring. For more information about Alumni Ambassadors, email [HunterAlumniAmbassadors@gmail.com](mailto:HunterAlumniAmbassadors@gmail.com).

After more than two years in the Admissions Office, Angela will be departing soon. In February she will begin teaching preschool students at the Greenpoint YMCA. Director of Admissions **Kyla KUPFERSTEIN Torres ’92** says, “Angela has been a crucial member of our team. Her Hunter experience coupled with her dedication to being a force in young people’s lives has allowed us to serve families at a higher level. I’ll be happy as she moves on in the field, but certainly sad to lose her in the office.” As far as Angela is concerned, the feeling is mutual. “I’m glad to have worked with Kyla. Her experience in education and passion for working with youth has been instructive. She has taught me about the various roles that impact students’ lives.”



## IN MEMORIAM

**Bertha VAN ROOYEN Nonenbacher '31** died on October 20, 2011. In 1975, she retired from her twenty-year career as a first and second grade teacher in the New York City public school system. And, in 1983, Bertha relocated to Pittsburgh to be closer to her daughter. She made the most of her retirement years, and will be remembered fondly for the hands-on approach she took with her volunteer work for the Pittsburgh Opera Auxiliary and the 20th Century Club, a private woman's club. However, Bertha performed a very different sort of service in an earlier chapter of her life. Upon graduating from Hunter College in 1935, with a dual degree in geology and pedagogy, Bertha got a job as a cartographer with the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, mapping the combat zones of North Africa for the Allied Forces facing the German army during WWII. As Bertha's daughter, Joan, told the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, her mother "prided herself on her accuracy of mapping the combat zones, knowing that the targets she pinpointed were of help – especially to the fighter pilots who were attacking General Rommel's forces." Despite Bertha's important contributions to the agency, her boss repeatedly refused to promote her, making it plain that he would never allow a woman to be a supervisor. Frustrated, Bertha was able to secure a new job as a geological analyst with another, more obscure government agency. It was only after she took the position, and was assigned the task of analyzing soil samples in the search for sources of uranium in Chile, that Bertha learned she was working for the Manhattan Project. After the war, Bertha worked for Anaconda Copper Mining Company for several years, and in 1947, she married Joseph Nonenbacher. Opting to be a stay-at-home mom after the birth of her daughter, Bertha returned to the workforce as a teacher several years later when Joseph was diagnosed with cancer. He died in 1961.

The previous issue of *AlumNotes* carried an announcement about **Edith SCHICK Engel '34**, who, despite the fact that she never graduated from HCHS due to rheumatic fever, remembered Hunter so fondly that she wrote about it in her memoir, *Family Fortunes: The Wealth of Memories*, which she self-published in the spring of 2011. Edith died suddenly on November 8, 2011, in

Larchmont, NY, where she had lived since 1953. After graduating from Hunter College, Edith had a successful career in broadcasting, most notable for her role as an associate producer on the groundbreaking and long-running radio quiz show, *Information Please*. Later, she worked as a consultant and copywriter for PRO Hardware, a chain of hardware stores, and as an assistant to an estate attorney for the elderly. From 1976 until her passing, Edith was an activist for the affirmation of grandparents' rights. Testifying at three congressional hearings, Edith helped influence the New York State legislature's decision to permit grandparents to petition for visitation rights with their grandchildren. For twenty years, she led support groups for divided families at the Scarsdale Family Counseling Center. A courageous woman of great kindness and intellect, Edith will be remembered as someone who saw needs and addressed them, through action as well as words. She is survived by two daughters, Judy and Ginger; grandchildren, Stuart, Brooke, and Adam; and great-grandson, Gavin.



Retired HCHS English Department Chair **Miriam Burstein '41** died peacefully in hospice care on December 4, 2011, surrounded by family and friends. A beloved teacher to generations of Hunterites, Miriam's contribution to her alma mater can hardly be overstated. Hunter College High School was her life, and hundreds, if not thousands, of us were the beneficiaries of her dedication and intellect. In addition to the profound influence she had on countless students within the classroom, she also provided compassionate guidance in her role as senior class advisor, and was a mentor to many teachers. Only months after graduating from Barnard College in 1945, Miriam returned to Hunter as a substitute teacher. By the start of the following school year, she had received a master's in English from Columbia University, and was hired to teach full-time. Miriam eventually became Chair of the HCHS English

Department, a position she held until her retirement in 1981. Miriam was part of an extensive Hunter family legacy, and is survived by a number of alumni, including her sister, Deborah BURSTEIN Karp '39; as well as nephews Jonathan Burstein '84, Michael A. Burstein '87, and Joshua Burstein '89. She is also survived by her nephews David Burstein, Danny Burstein, David Karp, and Hillel Karp; her nieces Ilana Burstein Benson and Alissa Burstein-Bruhlim; numerous grand-nephews and grandnieces; and one great-grandnephew.

**Josephine BUTTI Cornacchio, Jan. '41** passed away on August 25, 2011. The daughter of Italian immigrants, Josephine graduated from HCHS at sixteen. Her father was a sculptor who worked on several prominent buildings, including the United States Supreme Court and the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City. After earning her bachelor's in statistics from Hunter College, she went to work for the Equitable Insurance Company. In 1947, she married her husband, Joseph, and two years later their first child was born. The family settled in Mamaroneck, NY, where she lived for the rest of her life. In 1956, Josephine became a public school teacher, taking night classes to earn a master's in education from Hunter College. She was eventually appointed Assistant Principal at PS 140 in the Bronx, a position she held until her retirement in 1988. Josephine always spoke of Hunter with much esteem, and there can be no doubt that her time there molded and shaped her life in many positive ways. In her later years, she remained very sharp and vibrant. Josephine was a lifelong fan of all New York sports teams, but the New York Yankees held a special place in her heart. She is survived by her two daughters, Frances and Phyllis, their husbands, and four grandchildren.

Author, poet, and activist **Rosario Morales, Jan. '48** died on March 23, 2011. Born to Puerto Rican immigrant parents, and raised in Harlem and the South Bronx, much of Rosario's writing explored and affirmed her ethnicity and working class identity, in addition to her feminism. One of her best-known poems, "I Am What I Am," appeared in the trailblazing 1981 anthology *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings By Radical Women of Color*, a collection of works on racism,

sexism, class and sexuality. In 1986, Rosario co-authored *Getting Home Alive* with her daughter, Aurora Levins Morales. The book, which is a poetry and prose exploration of mother and daughter's experiences as women of the Puerto Rican diaspora, is widely taught to this day, and has been excerpted in dozens of collections. In 1950, while attending Hunter College, Rosario married Richard Levins, a young scientist and political activist. As outspoken Communists, the couple was blacklisted during the McCarthy era and moved to Puerto Rico. Prevented from working, they purchased an abandoned coffee farm in the mountains and worked the land to survive. Dynamic farmers as well as organizers, they introduced new crops to the area, formed a farmers' cooperative, and were key members of the region's Communist party. Although they returned to New York for four years to study, they raised their three children in Puerto Rico, which remained their home until they moved to Chicago in 1967. Active in feminist, anti-war, and cancer activism, Rosario studied anthropology at the University of Chicago, where her master's thesis was a critique of the racism she found inherent in the work of Claude Levi-Strauss. After 1975 they made their home in Cambridge, MA. Rosario is survived by her husband and partner of 62 years, Dick; her daughter and co-author, Aurora; her sons Ricardo and Alejandro, five grandchildren and a host of friends and comrades.

**Blossom STEINBERG Kirschenbaum, PhD, Jan. '51** passed away on November 5, 2011 after a two-year battle with lymphoma. After graduating from Hunter College, she earned a master's and a PhD in English from Brown University, making Providence, RI, her home for most of the rest of her life. Nevertheless, Blossom always considered herself a New Yorker and a Hunter Girl. While raising three children in Providence, she served on the faculty of several universities, including MIT, RISD, Clark University, UMass, and Dartmouth. She also worked for many years as a research assistant at Brown University's Department of Comparative Literature, a topic of study she became interested in while living in Rome between 1969 and 1972. Italian Literature in particular interested her, and she published translations of Italian prose as well as poetry. Most

recently, she translated *AlphaBetaBestiario*, a collection of poems by Antonello Borra, which was released the day before she died. Dr. Kirschenbaum also wrote book reviews and scholarly articles, which appeared in a variety of publications.

Blossom was known for her dedicated service to an array of organizations, including Amnesty International, the Modern Language Association, and PEN International. Her keen intellect, exuberant spirit, love of language, and hatred of injustice left an impression on nearly everyone she met, and inspired others to reach for lofty goals. She is survived by three children and two grandchildren, as well as many friends who are spread across the globe. A celebration of her life is being planned for Spring 2012. Those who knew her are encouraged to send their recollections about her life to: rememberblossom@gmail.com.

**Evelyn HAUSNER Lauder '54** died on November 12, 2011, after an enormously successful life that was part fairy tale and part study in marketing brilliance. Named Hunter College High School's Distinguished Graduate for 2010, Evelyn was Senior Corporate Vice President of the Estée Lauder Companies and a member of the board of overseers at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Born into a family of Viennese entrepreneurs, in 1938, when Evelyn was only an infant, her parents managed to escape Nazi-occupied Austria with her. The family went first to Belgium, and then to England, where her mother was temporarily held in an internment camp. By 1940, the family settled in New York, where her parents eventually established a small chain of women's dress shops. As a freshman at Hunter College, Evelyn was set up on a blind date with Leonard Lauder, son of Estée Lauder, the founder and namesake of Estée Lauder Companies. The two married in 1959, and soon afterwards, Evelyn took a job at the family company. In time, Leonard and Evelyn became legendary among fellow Manhattan socialites for their lasting chemistry, both romantic and professional. One week after her death, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article profiling the couple entitled "Lessons Learned From an Epic Marriage." Although Evelyn "married in" to her first job at Estée Lauder, her drive and remarkable vision paid out in dividends for the company. In 1968,

as an Estée Lauder executive, she created Clinique, the now iconic line of cosmetics, and the first brand of women's beauty care to be developed and marketed as a product of dermatological science. In addition to developing the brand's name and its inaugural product line, as Clinique's training director, Evelyn was the first to wear the signature white lab coat worn now by Clinique salespeople at cosmetics counters around the world. She was also an early and effective champion of breast cancer awareness. In 1992, Evelyn and her friend Alexandra Penny, then the editor of the women's magazine *Self*, collaborated on the public awareness campaign that formally established the pink ribbon as the international symbol of breast cancer awareness. That same year, Evelyn personally raised much of the \$13.6 million used to create the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. And, in 1993, she established The Breast Cancer Research Foundation, a not-for-profit organization, which has raised \$350 million in support of breast cancer research since its inception. Evelyn is survived by her husband; her sons, William and Gary; and five grandchildren.

**Roberta (Bobbi) GROSSMAN Drosnin '65** died on June 10, 2011 after an eight-and-a-half-year battle with lymphoma. Throughout her recurring cycles of diagnosis, treatment, remission and recurrence, she remained a fighter, brave, optimistic and uncomplaining. Bobbi worked for Met Life for over forty years, retiring from her position as a senior vice-president only weeks before her passing. During the course of her long and successful career at Met Life, Bobbi managed to earn a JD from Fordham Law School and an LLM in tax law from NYU. A proud HCHS alum, Bobbi credited her academic and professional success to her Hunter education. She remained close to a number of her Hunter classmates throughout her life, especially Barbara Gary '65, with whom she shared a deep and abiding friendship. Bobbi is survived by her husband, Ira. She will be greatly missed.





The Alumnae/i Association has also been advised of the deaths of the following alums:

Rebecca LEVITAN Lister, Jan. ’28

Emily ROBICHAUX Love ’38

Ann L. JICHA Blackwell, PhD ’48

Jane HINES Reis ’53

Sarah (Sally) M. Lannen ’60

Abby Bess Russo ’60

Jean WILSON Realmuto ’70

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association, Inc. is:

To organize the alumnae and alumni of the School to further the School’s activities;

To provide financial support to the School in the form of endowment funds and other funding for the libraries, laboratories, theater, dance, music, art and academic programs, athletic and computer facilities, and other programs and facilities of the School;

To establish scholarships, fellowships and other student aid programs;

To serve as a resource for students of the School to enhance their education;

To sponsor educational, scientific, literary and cultural programs in cooperation with the School;

To serve as an advocate for our School within the larger community; and

To create and sustain a social and professional network for alumnae/i of the School to accomplish these goals.

## And The Rest Is History

The HCHS library recently came into possession of a *Harper’s Magazine* article published in 1878 titled “The Normal College of New York City,” about the institution that would ultimately evolve into both Hunter College and Hunter College High School.

As much a snapshot of the attitudes and ideals of its era as it is a “day-in-the-life” account of the school, the article is striking, not only for the obvious differences between then and now, but because certain philosophical underpinnings seem to have persisted at HCHS these last 134 years. Despite the effusive writing style of the time, and occasional lack of what a modern reader would call “political correctness,” the article is a fascinating look at the school, its students, and the curriculum in its earliest days.

Established in 1869 as a school to prepare young women to become teachers, from the outset, the Normal College was designed to be extraordinarily rigorous in the training of minds, while open to, if not celebratory of, intellectual freedom and individuality. The *Harper’s* piece

is suggestive of an institution not altogether unlike a convent, where an earnest and devoted sisterhood worshipped knowledge and understanding.

Some excerpts:

*“The first thing to excite our wonder and admiration was the number – there were 1542 pupils; the second thing was the earnestness of the discipline; and the third was the suggestiveness of so many girls at work in assembly, with their own education as the primary aim, and the education of countless thousands of others as the final aim, of their toil.”*

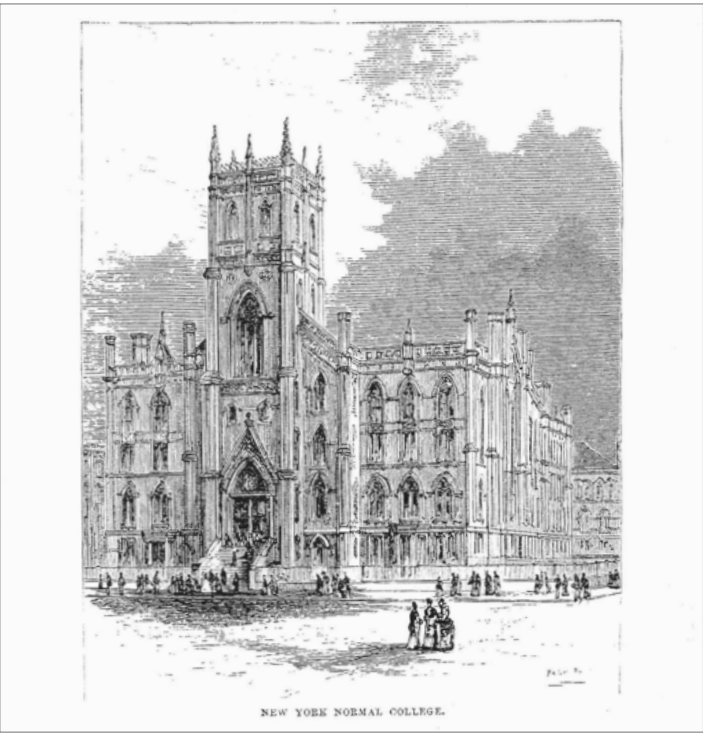
*“Girls all the way from fourteen to twenty years of age, from the farther edge of childhood to the farther limit of maidenhood; girls with every shade of complexion and degree of beauty; girls in such variety that it was amazing to contemplate the reduction of their individuality to the simple uniformity of their well-drilled movements.”*

*“The catholicity and toleration crystalized in the country’s Constitution prevail in the college: about two hundred of the students are Jewesses, and a black face, framed in curly African hair, may occasionally be seen.”*

*“The aim of the entire course through which the Normal students pass is not so much to burden the mind with facts as to develop intellectual power, cultivate judgment, and enable the graduates to take trained ability into the world with them. ‘Because teaching is intangible,’ says President Hunter ‘and can not be weighed like flour, nor measured like muslin; because it is spiritual in its nature, and deals with the human mind, the evil influence of a weak, foolish, or incompetent teacher is not felt until it is too late.’”*

The original copy of the article was a gift to Marge Goldsmith ’61 from Michael Cook, the Catering Director of Circa NY, a restaurant that has catered for HCHSAA events on past occasions. Mr. Cook is also an amateur historian specializing in New York City. Knowing Marge Goldsmith and her connection to Hunter, Mr. Cook purchased the article when he happened to come across it on eBay. The article is now in the HCHS Library’s archives.

Download a scanned PDF copy of the original Harper’s article from 1878 at [HCHSAA.org/node/2030](http://HCHSAA.org/node/2030)



## PAYMENT FORM

You can pay dues, register for reunion, make a donation, or purchase HCHSAA merchandise by credit card on our website at [www.hchsaa.org](http://www.hchsaa.org). To pay by check, complete the form below and mail this entire page with your check payable to HCHSAA in the enclosed envelope. Donors who make a contribution of \$100 or more a year (excluding Dues) will be recognized in the Annual Honor Roll of Giving published in *AlumNotes*. To submit news items for inclusion in AlumNotes or to make address corrections please email [info@hchsaa.org](mailto:info@hchsaa.org) or phone 212-772-4079.

**MEMBERSHIP DUES** (your dues expiration date is printed on the reverse page, above your name)

☐ BASIC .....\$35                      ☐ SENIOR/Fixed Income ..... \$20                      ☐ Class of 2011 .....Free  
☐ PREMIUM\* .....\$85                      ☐ JUNIOR (Classes of ’07-10)..... \$20

\*Includes a choice of one:    ☐ Adult T Shirt (S/M/L/XL/XXL)                      ☐ Reunion 2012 Admission  
☐ “Gifted Cook” Apron                      ☐ Tote Bag                      ☐ Coffee Mug  
☐ No Gift (contribution is 100% tax-deductible)

**Subtotal** ..... **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

### ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution towards the AA’s 2011-2012 Annual Fund: ☐ \$50   ☐ \$100   ☐ \$250   ☐ \$500   ☐ \$1,000   ☐ Other

**Subtotal** ..... **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**REUNION REGISTRATION** Sunday, June 3, 2012 at HCHS, starting at 10:30am

Classes of 1963-2006  
Dues-paid rate\*                      \$20 pp x \_\_\_\_\_ adult(s) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Non-dues-paid rate                      \$35 pp x \_\_\_\_\_ adult(s) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Classes of 1962 and earlier                      \$20 pp x \_\_\_\_\_ adult(s) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Classes of 2007 and later                      \$20 pp x \_\_\_\_\_ adult(s) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\*You may pay your dues now to receive this discount*

**Subtotal** ..... **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION KICK-OFF** Thursday, May 31, 2012 at 6:30-9:00pm

☐ \$40 Members and their Guests                      ☐ \$50 Non-Dues Paying Alums and their Guests

**Subtotal** ..... **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

### MILESTONE CLASS GIFT

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution to this year’s Class Gift: ☐ \$50   ☐ \$100   ☐ \$250   ☐ \$500   ☐ \$1,000   ☐ Other

**Subtotal** ..... **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**MERCHANDISE** (includes postage and handling)

SELECT ONE:   ☐ I would like to purchase the following items

| Quan. | Item                | Cost | Size (circle) |           |           |            |    | Subtotal |
|-------|---------------------|------|---------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----|----------|
|       | Adult T Shirt       | \$22 | Sm (34-36)    | M (38-40) | L (42-44) | XL (46-48) | 2X | \$       |
|       | Child’s T-Shirt     | \$16 | XS (2T-4T)    | M (10-12) |           |            |    | \$       |
|       | Coffee Mug          | \$12 | 2 for \$20    |           |           |            |    | \$       |
|       | “Gifted Cook” Apron | \$20 |               |           |           |            |    | \$       |
|       | Tote Bag            | \$20 |               |           |           |            |    | \$       |

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** ..... **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

ALUM/MEMBER NAME \_\_\_\_\_ GRAD YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name as it should appear in Honor Roll of Giving (if different)

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

|            |          |         |        |             |
|------------|----------|---------|--------|-------------|
| OFFICE USE | Received | Entered | Letter | Merch. Sent |
|------------|----------|---------|--------|-------------|



Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association, Inc.  
Hunter College East, Room 1314E  
695 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10065

[www.hchsaa.org](http://www.hchsaa.org)

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## Celebrating 40 Years of Support

In 1972, Hunter College High School alumnae saved the school from being closed forever. The following year, 250 Hunter graduates from as far back as 1911 came together for the Association's first reunion. The alumnae raised money for two graduation prizes for outstanding students and made a contribution to the school. The Alumnae/i Association has been supporting the school ever since.

On May 31, we will gather again to celebrate our founding as we kick off our 40th Anniversary Year. Please join us as we recall and recognize our founders and past presidents at this very special event.

For more on our history and to buy tickets to our 40th Anniversary Celebration please visit [HCHSAA.org](http://HCHSAA.org)