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HUNTER

magazine

■ Alumni Issue



BUT FOR HUNTER...
How a Great Public
College Transforms Lives

Page 8

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Left to right top row:
Carol Crossdale, Matteo Callegari, Stephon Odom, Mateo Guerrero; Middle row:
Aluem Tark, Christopher Lai, Alteronce Gumby, Kelle Jacob; Bottom row: **Lisa Iatckova, Bayron Quillay, Naomi Sampson, Edward Friedman.**

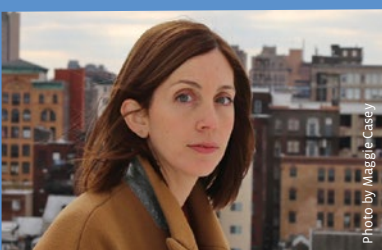
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NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I've known for many years what a remarkable place Hunter College is. My mother, after all, was a member of the class of '43 in social work. But nothing could have prepared me for the joy of being president and being blown away day after day by story after inspirational story of a student, faculty or staff member, or alum who is changing the world for the better. Since my arrival this past August, that is exactly what has happened, and evidence of it can be found on every page of this issue of *Hunter Magazine*.

From Alpern Scholar Juniper Sokolov striving for equal justice for the incarcerated and gender-divergent individuals, to chemistry Professor Brian Zeglis trailblazing new paths to cancer treatment, to former men's and women's track coach Vincent Chiappetta whose alums from 45 years ago still gather to celebrate his transformative effect on them, to alums across generations who, but for Hunter, say they would not have developed the tools they have used to forge careers of public purpose, to nonagenarians Sonia Sanchez '55 and Helene Goldfarb '51, who continue to share their prodigious gifts in cultivating new generations, there is a through-line of determination to bridge the divides of our fractured world.

I think that part of the delight we derive from the incredible stories of incredible members of the Hunter family past and present is that they brought the excellence of their diverse lived experiences, from neighborhoods all across New York City and beyond, representing the wealth of cultural capital and the bonus of the multiple faiths, languages, national origins, ethnicities, and histories of roads traveled to come to Hunter.

Maybe that is what makes the Hunter family so richly stimulating and inspiring. We are extraordinarily diverse in our backgrounds, but share in common respect for where we have come from and energy to push on to make the world even more welcoming for all, together.

Hunter was designed to catalyze changemakers, to remind the world about the many forms that brilliance takes, even as the common element is the shared belief that the care of the future is ours.

Cordially,
Nancy Cantor
President and Professor of Psychology

Alumni

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD PRESENTED TO **HELENE GOLDFARB** AT BIRTHDAY BASH



Helene Goldfarb, left, at her Sept. 17 birthday celebration with Judith Zabar '54.

Hunter College alum **Helene Goldfarb '51** has devoted her long life to Hunter's motto of caring for the future — as a philanthropist, teacher, theater and television producer, publisher, and social-justice champion.

So it was fitting that the college bestowed its Lifetime Achievement Award on her as she celebrated her 95th birthday at a joyous party at Hunter's East Terrace on September 17.

"Helene has always known how precious educational opportunity is, how precious life itself is, how none of us gets anywhere in life all by ourselves, how vitally important it is that we stick together in our democratic society, and how the arts can catalyze that by helping us see the world through the eyes of others and empathize with each other," Hunter President **Nancy Cantor** said in presenting the award, "Isn't that essentially the magic of Hunter? It's an amazing engine of opportunity where

people from any and every background can — and do — come, generation after generation, to discover the world and discover themselves."

Goldfarb influenced many young lives as a longtime science and biology teacher and guidance counselor at Hunter College High School and other public schools. A television and theatre producer earlier in her career, she learned her love of theatre at Hunter as part of the cast and production of *Sing!*, an annual song-and-dance competition.

She also became a champion of social justice at Hunter, serving as president of Alpha Omega Pi, which was then the only interracial sorority on campus, and served as student government president her senior year. Later, she was a president of the Feminist Press, an imprint founded in 1970 to "lift up insurgent and marginalized voices," according to its website.

State Sen. **Liz Krueger**, Assembly

Member **Rebecca Seawright**, and an aide to Governor **Kathy Hochul** presented proclamations honoring Goldfarb.

A trustee of the Hunter College Foundation since 2009, Goldfarb has been active in the Hunter Alumni Association since her graduation, helping alumni connect with the college and each other for more than 70 years. She is the only two-time president of the association.

Goldfarb also has contributed to Hunter's Scholarship & Welfare Fund for many years, helping to raise funds for scholarships, emergency funds, and grants to recent Hunter grads to



Goldfarb, right, with then-Hunter President Donna E. Shalala in the 1980s.

pursue their studies, serving early on as president.

Her service and philanthropy have supported tens of thousands of Hunter students who have gone on to become the teachers, nurses, scientists, social workers, and elected officials who lead New York City. She was inducted into Hunter's Hall of Fame in May 1978, received the Hall of Fame Distinguished Service Award in May 1984, and she received the President's Medal at the June 1999 Commencement.



ALUM BRINGS CLASS TO BILL SIGNING WITH GOVERNOR

It was experiential learning at its finest! Hunter alumnus, 40-Under-40 honoree, and adjunct professor New York State Senator **Andrew Gounardes '06** brought students from his Law of Democracy class to a bill signing at Governor **Kathy Hochul**'s Manhattan office on October 23.

FIRST HUNTER GRADUATE IS CHOSEN FOR U.S. DIGITAL CORPS



Sachin Panayil

A recent Hunter graduate was selected for a competitive program launched in 2021 by the White House to bring civic-minded early-career technologists to serve in the federal government.

Sachin Panayil '23 was the first Hunter alum tapped to join the U.S. Digital Corps, where he will spend the next two years working at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as a software engineer. Panayil was one of 70 fellows chosen from more than 2,000 applicants nationwide. Panayil credits the good guidance he

got at Hunter for preparing him for the fellowship.

"The career services at Hunter provided me with great tools to find courses as well as connections with real-world opportunities in tech," he said.

He also gave a shoutout to his Hunter classmates: "I also wouldn't be where I am without my Computer Science buddies from Hunter. We would pull all-nighters and cram for exams together all the time. The collaboration gave me the extra boost that I needed to succeed."

The two-year, paid USDC fellowship offers five tracks: cybersecurity, data science and analytics, design, product management, and software engineering. Fellows support projects at 19 federal agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Internal Revenue Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

CALLING ALL ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS!

Are you passionate about making a difference in students' lives?

Do you have job or internship opportunities?

Join us in mentoring students, networking with fellow alumni, and participating on event committees.

Discover the career initiative *HunterWorks!* and explore volunteer opportunities. Sign up to become an alumni volunteer today and be a part of something meaningful!



bit.ly/hunteralumvolunteer

Alumni

PLAYWRITING GRADS NAMED DRAMATIST GUILD FELLOWS

Hunter MFA playwriting grads **Phillip Christian Smith '23** and **Jennifer Diamond '24** were named 2024–25 Dramatist Guild Foundation Fellows — a highly competitive program that selects only five playwrights each year.

“It’s an enormous honor that two out of the five fellows this year are our graduates,” said Rita and Burton Goldberg MFA Playwriting Director **Christine Scarfuto**. “We justifiably can say that Hunter is one of the top programs in the country, where our faculty’s outstanding teaching is bolstered by our ties to the industry and our location in the heart of the theatre world.”

Smith is an adjunct lecturer at Hunter, where he has taught playwriting and acting. Diamond is part of the indie-comedy duo OLGA, which performs stand up and sketches and writes for television and film.



Playwriting MFAs Jennifer Diamond and Phillip Christian Smith.

Recent Hunter playwriting grads have won a panoply of top awards this year. For example, **Lauren Holmes '23** won the Princess Grace Playwriting Fellowship; **Minna Lee '24** the Dramatist Guild’s prestigious Lanford Wilson Award; and **Jesse Jae Hoon '23** the Terrence McNally Award from the Rattlestick Theater.

The Dramatist Guild Foundation



Fellows is a year-long intensive program for New York City-based emerging dramatists in which they develop existing plays. Fellows receive a \$5,000 stipend, career resources, an industry mentor, and the opportunity to partner with arts organizations. At the conclusion of the program, each fellow presents their work to industry professionals.



Hawk Track & Field veterans with Coach Vincent Chiappetta at upper right.

HAWKS WHO RUN TOGETHER, STICK TOGETHER!

Veterans of Hunter College’s late-1970s indoor-outdoor and cross-country track teams — including a former Olympian and their coach — met for a reunion in October at Van Cortlandt Park in The Bronx.

The group of 11 men and one woman, organized by a team captain, **Victor Lopez '75**, came from as far away as Texas, Ohio, Florida, and North Carolina. They reminisced about their long-ago exercises — many meets were at VCP — and presented mementos to each other and the man of honor, “D’Coach,” former

Hunter Men’s and Women’s Head Track Coach **Vincent Chiappetta**.

Chiappetta, 91, is a legend in New York running. Besides his eight years coaching at Hunter, he taught science at Yeshiva University for decades. He is a co-founder and former president of New York Road Runners and a founder of the first New York City Marathon in 1970. He started running in 1948 at James Monroe High School and has run 114 marathons and more than 100,000 miles since.

“D’Coach spoke lovingly (yes, that is the correct word

to use here) as he reminisced of days (actually, years) gone past and how he watched us develop our skills,” wrote **Jack La Torre '77**.

Teammates honor a coach.

The group presented Chiappetta with a framed sheet with the team’s signatures, which “showed him we not only respected him but love him as we certainly love each other,” in La Torre’s words.

Other attendees were **Eugene Atwood '78**, **Jorge Buxton '77**, **Ernie Eans '78**,

Tim Hanks '79, **Karen McKeon '79**, **Vincent O’Sullivan '79**, **Peter Paris '78**, and **Bob Siegel '77**.

O’Sullivan, who in 1982 was inducted into the Hawks Hall of Fame for Track & Field, competed beyond Hunter. He placed fifth in racewalking at the 1979 Pan American Games in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and competed on Team USA at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

“My spirits were lifted by spending time with all of you,” Buxton wrote. “I think that our group got a great deal out of our Hunter experience because we found each other.”

LIZ MOORE MFA '07 TURNS HER NOVEL INTO A TV SHOW

Celebrated novelist and Hunter MFA alum **Liz Moore** is on fire: Her suspense novel *The God of the Woods* was named *People Magazine* Best Book of the Year and made 10 other best-book lists. She also is turning another book, *Long Bright River*, into a series debuting on Peacock in 2025.

River, set in the opioid-wracked Philadelphia neighborhood of Kensington, depicts the lives of sisters Kacey, a homeless addict, and Mickey, a police officer who patrols the streets where Kacey lives.

Kacey disappears and...

The series is a first-time venture for Moore, 41, a **Roger and Susan '65** Hertog Fellow at Hunter and the director of MFA creative writing at Temple University. Her three novels were *New York Times* bestsellers, but Moore was a novice at show-running.

“I feel like I’ve gotten a college degree in television production,” she told the *Kensington Voice*.

Moore will speak at Hunter’s Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute on April 8.

HUNTER WRESTLING ALUMNI REUNITE

There were plenty of bear hugs — but no throwdowns! About 30 alumni of the Hunter College men’s wrestling team met for a reunion happy hour this fall at the Upper East bar The Milton, re-engaging with old classmates and hearing updates on their beloved Hawks.



Sergio Nicolosi (second from left), Hooman (Mo) Tavakolian, Bob Gaudenzi, Andrew Azzarello, and other alumni at a wrestling alumni reunion on September 20.

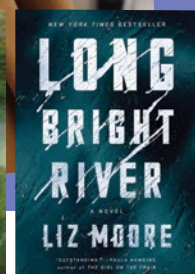
Intercollegiate Athletics Director **Terry Wansart MSE '85** gave a report on Hunter’s general success in the CUNY Athletic League and beyond while Head Wrestling Coach **Peter Jacobson** previewed the season for the sport. They thanked the alumni for their

support and asked them to keep it going.

It was the first wrestling-alumni gathering since the 2022 fundraiser that enabled Jacobson to come onboard as full-time coach. The alumni were excited to hear about the team’s progress and how

Jacobson intends to improve the student-athlete experience with the continued support and engagement of these proud alumni Hawks.

The event was one of several planned by the Hunter College Alumni Association to gather groups around shared affinities.





From left, Bayron Quillay, Stephon Odom, Aluem Tark, Christopher Lai, Naiomi Sampson, Lisa Iatckova, Matteo Callegari, Edward Friedman, and Mateo Guerrero.

How a Great Public Higher Education Has Transformed Generations of Lives

Hunter College is more than simply a college: It is a pillar of a great city, an engine of social mobility, and the institution at which many find their life's calling.

But for Hunter — founded in 1870 and long since New York City's largest public college — the city might not have developed as broad a middle class. But for Hunter things might have turned out differently — and worse — for many generations of New



Matteo Callegari works at a school in Santa Maria de Ojeal, Peru.

Yorkers from immigrant families.

But, thanks to Hunter's affordable, world-class education, generations of students have become teachers, social workers, nurses, lawyers, doctors, entrepreneurs, artists, actors, and authors.

At Hunter, scores of alumni have learned the value of a liberal public education. Here at Hunter, they made the connections that propelled their careers.

A number of graduates shared their stories with us — and we hope many of you will follow them. Their life journeys are fascinating, heartening, and remind us of the power of public higher education — even as public education for students of all ages is under attack.

Here are their stories:

Hunter was instrumental in my art career and nonprofit work.

Italian-born **Matteo Callegari MFA '12** was finishing the paintings

for his thesis exhibition when he was offered his first solo exhibition in a New York gallery, Ramiken.

"I still remember inviting the gallerists to see the paintings in my studio in the Hunter MFA building," Callegari said. "You are lucky if someone offers you that after your thesis exhibition."

Hunter's rigor pushed Callegari to develop his work conceptually, and soon he was doing exhibitions in Milan, London, Zurich, Dallas, and Los Angeles.

Passionate about ecology and spirituality, Callegari started a nonprofit, Light for the Amazon. The project, focused on ecology and the knowledge of medicinal plants, helps preserve the rainforest by working with the local school in the village of Santa Maria de Ojeal in Peru.

"Hunter was instrumental in my art career and my nonprofit work," Callegari said. "It taught me how to pursue my passions, and how to be prepared, knowledgeable, and hardworking. It taught me how to be part of a community, and how to

work together with people. But for Hunter College I would not have the courage and resilience to pursue this amazing journey as an artist and an activist."

Hunter let me attend college full-time while still having the flexibility to navigate my life and familial and financial responsibilities.

Carol Crossdale '91, the founder and CEO of the eponymous executive-search and compliance firm Crossdale Search, graduated Hunter with a degree in human communication. It took her far.

Crossdale, an immigrant from Jamaica who moved to New York to attend college, later earned a JD at Harvard Law School. She worked as a corporate associate at top firm Davis Polk & Wardwell and at PepsiCo supporting businesses in Latin America and the Caribbean.

"My studies and the knowledge I gained have set me up for a career in the legal world, and my current career in executive search, because I'm interacting with people all the time and understanding how they make decisions, which is critical for success in my career."

Crossdale said she experienced tre-



Carol Crossdale

mendous growth at Hunter, even with heavy outside responsibilities. Having lost her mother at 16, she helped support her family and care for her sick father, all while paying her own way through school.

"Hunter allowed me to attend college full-time while still having the flexibility to navigate my life and familial and financial responsibilities," she said.

Crossdale wants others to enjoy the Hunter experience; she became a Hunter College Foundation trustee and formerly chaired its Pre-Law Advisory Board.

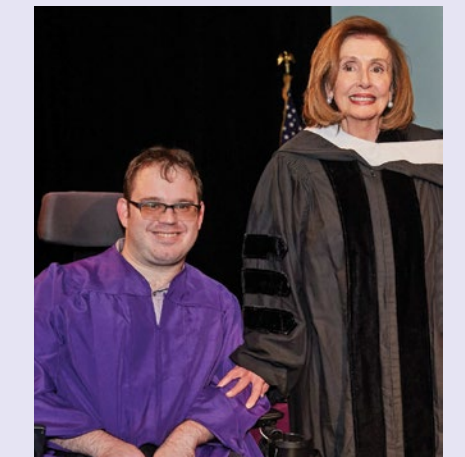
"My Hunter degree set me up for admission to Harvard Law School, which then made it possible for me to work at Davis Polk," Crossdale said. "But for Hunter College, I would not have been able to afford an undergraduate degree and go to law school. Hunter College made that possible, and I'm grateful!"

Edward Friedman Hunter-Macaulay Honors College '18 always knew he wanted to be an attorney. Born with cerebral palsy and now a power wheelchair user, he began advocating for disability justice as a youngster.

At Hunter, where Friedman graduated as a valedictorian, a team of advisers helped him gain admission to Yale Law School — ranked No. 1 in the nation — and win a coveted 2022 Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans.

Now, having graduated YLS in May and passed the New York bar exam, Friedman is a law clerk and set to become an associate at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, one of America's top law firms.

A native New Yorker and the eldest child of Soviet Jewish immigrants, Friedman was a political-science major with legal-studies and international-relations minors. He also earned certificates in public policy and human rights from Hunter's Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute — a rare feat that required



Edward Friedman with Eleanor Roosevelt Leadership Awardee Nancy Pelosi.

two capstone papers and presentations.

"My time at Macaulay at Hunter further galvanized my passion for law and justice," Friedman said. He thanked "a large support system" for guidance.

"But for Hunter College," he said, "I would not have met so many wonderful people who I now am privileged to call my mentors and friends!"

Mateo Guerrero '17 didn't think he could attend college because he was an undocumented immigrant from Colombia supported by a single mother.



Mateo Guerrero with the late trans leader Cecilia Gentili.

“Hunter College enabled me to go to school,” he said.

At Hunter, where he earned a degree in political science, he was selected for a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, which paid for his schooling and helped him take advantage of research opportunities. One such opportunity allowed him to travel to South Africa — after adjusting his immigration status — to study the country’s social movements.

At Hunter he also found friends and a supportive community that helped him come out as a transgender man.

Thanks to Hunter College’s central location and its flexibility for commuter students, he began working at the non-profit immigrants’ rights organization Make the Road New York, where he still writes and advocates on policy issues.

“But for Hunter, I wouldn’t have gained the skills to work at Make the Road,” he said. “But for Hunter, I wouldn’t have been able to graduate and to celebrate my trans identity in an educational environment. But for Hunter, I wouldn’t have been able to live up to my dreams.”



Alteronce Gumby

Alteronce Gumby BFA ’14, a Hunter 40-Under-40 honoree, is an award-winning artist who displays his work at top galleries. The Bronx-based artist often counsels Hunter art students on career success.

But for the experiential learning Gumby received at Hunter — part of our mission as the “public school for the arts” — he might not have become the successful artist he is today. With Hunter’s location not far from Museum

Mile, professors took their students to view Monets, Picassos, and Matisses, giving lessons directly in front of the works. It was literally eye-opening.

“Going to a museum is so much better than seeing art in a slide show,” said Gumby. “Having the Guggenheim, the Met, and the Frick in walking distance of the college was really enlightening.”

A member of Hunter’s **Evelyn Kranes Kossak (’42)** Painting Fellowship, which gives students a \$1,000 grant for supplies and provides them with group critiques from visiting artists, Gumby thanks the program for introducing him to the importance of art-world feedback. Hunter’s location was ideal for that, too.

“Once you’re out in the real world, you need relationships with curators and gallery owners to be successful,” he said. “I don’t think artists should just sit in their studio praying to the painting gods that somebody is going to walk in and hand them a solo show,” he said. “There are relationships that must be built. The only way to do that is to get out and promote your art as much as you can.”

But for Hunter, **Lisa Iatckova ’19** might never have become a neuroscientist.

Iatckova emigrated from Russia at age 20 knowing little English and with little idea of what she could study in America.

“In Russia, people are limited to what they can study to assure their financial stability,” Iatckova said. “I studied economics and construction, which would give me a solid job.”

At Hunter, Iatckova rekindled her love of science, settling on a biology major with a concentration in behavioral neuroscience.

“I remember being endlessly fascinated that the movement of a few kinds of ions across membranes created this profound experience of being a human, and I wanted to know more,” she said.

Hunter gave her the opportunity. Funding from Hunter’s Mother’s Day Campaign enabled Iatckova to volunteer at a research lab instead of having to work to support herself.

Now Iatckova is a PhD candidate at Weill-Cornell Medicine, deciphering the



Lisa Iatckova with her Mother’s Day benefactors Robert and Nellie Gipson ’83.

activity of the resting brain. A mother herself, she became a Mother’s Day Campaign donor in 2022.

“But for Hunter, I wouldn’t be where I am today, personally or professionally,” Iatckova said. “Through the liberal arts core, I acquired an understanding of society in America, which I didn’t know being an immigrant, and through the science curricula, I achieved a deep understanding of the world that I now share with my husband and daughter.”



Kelle Jacob

At Hunter, I understood that you could do so much more as a part of something bigger than yourself.

But for Hunter, **Kelle Jacob ’08**, another 40-Under-40 honoree, might never have gone to college.

A model, entrepreneur, and speaker by the time she was 18, Jacob felt no economic need for more education. But after she was invited to speak on her

career at Hunter, she decided to enroll.

“No one at any of the schools I had visited asked me about my own college career, but at Hunter, they did,” she said. “I was going there to inspire the students — and I wound up being inspired.”

The former contestant on *America’s Next Top Model* became a media-studies major and English minor. Through Hunter’s connection to the late Evelyn Lauder HCHS ’54 HC ’58, Jacob landed an Estée Lauder internship.

“It changed my life forever,” said Jacob, a Brooklyn native. “I thought they wanted me to work at a counter,” she said. “Instead, I was involved in strategy and product development.”

Her insights led the company to hire her full-time after graduation and send her all over the world.

“I found myself in Hunter, my voice, and I understood that you could do so much more as a part of something bigger than yourself,” Jacob said. “My degree in media studies and English minor were crucial to my success. It’s not just what happens in the classroom, but the Hunter community also supports one’s personal growth.”

Jacob has founded her own company, ASRI Wellness. She joined the Hunter College Foundation Board and founded Hunter’s Young Alumni Network. “Even now, as an entrepreneur, I want to give that back,” she said. “I want every student to have that Hunter experience.”

By day, **Christopher Lai ’17**, a vice president at JP Morgan Chase’s Consumer & Community Banking division, navigates the world of finance. At night, the father of two transforms New York City spaces into vibrant artistic hubs. His confidence today differs from his early Hunter days, when a diffident Lai felt unsure of his path.

“I would come to class and leave the minute it was over,” he said.

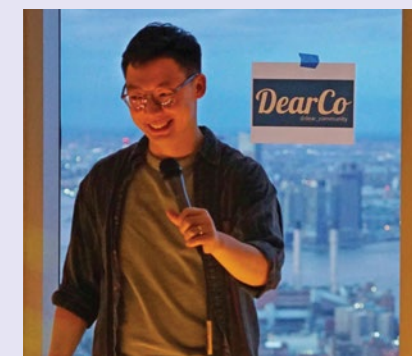
Raised in Flushing by parents from Hong Kong and Taiwan, Lai dabbled in film studies and even explored French, then gravitated toward pre-med as a stable career. But Hunter’s diverse environment exposed him to new possibilities.

He founded Hunter’s Kappa Sigma fraternity, then held several leadership

roles in Undergraduate Student Government. Connections with business majors ignited an interest in finance. He even revived Hunter’s defunct Accounting Society and helped bring Big Four accounting recruiters to Hunter.

Lai sought mentors, such as **Keith Okrosy** of Hunter’s Career Services, and helped establish the college’s first finance club. Post-graduation, a series of internships culminated in a successful finance career.

But his Hunter experiences instilled a desire to give back. During the pandemic, he joined forces with **Ray Gejon ’15** to create



Chris Lai speaks at a gathering of his nonprofit, Dear Community.

the indie meetup group Dear Community.

Backyard performances during lockdown blossomed into a platform for emerging artists, poets, comedians, and musicians. Now Lai is a budding impresario.

“But for Hunter, I might still be that super introvert,” he said. “Instead, I discovered myself through to the power of education, opportunities, and community.”

Stephon Odom ’18 entered college with a practical goal: to avoid student debt. Hunter College provided him with the opportunity. First drawn to nursing, Odom took an unexpected turn when he discovered a passion for economics.

“It felt like something clicked,” he recalled. “It opened my mind to a whole new world.”

After a detour to Lehman College, Odom returned to Hunter and embraced its resources. The **Leon Cooperman (’64)** Fellowship and the Black Male Initiative provided crucial support and mentorship. Working closely with Pre-Business Advisers **Naomi Press** and **Peggy Segal**,



Stephon Odom

he refined his resume and mastered networking.

“I was hungry to learn and grow,” Odom said.

His drive led him to an internship at Deloitte, where he gained experience in strategy consulting. Impressing his supervisors, Odom secured a full-time offer before even graduating.

Odom exemplifies the power of curiosity and perseverance. His advice to students? “Don’t be afraid to explore different paths and find work that truly inspires you.”

Today, he is an experience designer at the country’s largest multinational bank, JP Morgan Chase, where he ensures digital projects are user-centered.

“But for Hunter, I would not have had taken this winding road into experience design.”



Bayron Quillay as a wrestler.

Bayron Quillay ’22 arrived at Hunter College as a first-generation college student, the first in his family even to graduate from high school.

A child of Ecuadorian immigrants, Quillay had little idea of how to navigate college and pursue a career. But, as a championship wrestler, he knew how

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AROUND CAMPUS



From left, Asst. Dean for Student Life Miesha Smith, Latysha McKenzie, and USG President Ariadna Pavlidis-Sanchez at Welcome Week Sept. 5.



MSNBC host Rachel Maddow and producer Steve Benen speak about what's next for America after the election and Benen's book *Ministry of Truth* at the Stepanski Family Lecture at Roosevelt House on Dec. 17.



Author Sandra Cisneros and co-host of NBC's *Today with Hoda & Jenna*, Jenna Bush Hager, at American Voices: The Sandra Cisneros Symposium on October 1.



Artist Kate Sherman shows off her work during the MFA program's Open Art Studios event at 205 Hudson on October 19.



From left, student Aisha Yildirim, President Cantor, student Sumaiya Ahmed, and Eboo Patel at Roosevelt House on November 18.



Former U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney and director Donna Zaccaro discuss her film *Geraldine Ferraro: Paving the Way* at Roosevelt House on October 21.



Christine Lee '19, center, spoke about her experience as a growth consultant at Amazon at an alumni networking event on September 26.



Elizabeth Strout signs copies of her book *Tell Me Everything* at Roosevelt House on October 17.



Macaulay Honors College Director Lev Sviridov, Adrienne Nemchik '24, and Swara Patel '24 at the Giving Tuesday Reception on December 3.



Author Jonathan Alter speaks about his new book, *American Reckoning: Inside Trump's Trial — And My Own*, during a talk at Roosevelt House on October 29.



Students and alumni showed up in force to cheer on the Hawks for Homecoming games on December 6 — including wrestling, fencing, swimming, and basketball.

to work hard and stand his ground.

Thankfully, he found Hunter's Cooperman Business Center, which helped him gain the skills, leadership opportunities, and internships to wrestle with college and the business world.

An economics major, Quillay earned a certificate in business studies and was named a Leon Cooperman Fellow. On top of that, he was a member of the NCAA Division 3 Wrestling Team and the VP of the Investment Club.

Now Quillay is a financial analyst at Kenvue (formerly the consumer health-care division of Johnson & Johnson).

"But for Hunter, I would have never been in the position that I am today," he said. "I obtained the skills I needed to be successful."



Laura Quiros

Laura Quiros MSW '00 PhD '09 worked right out of college at a residential-treatment center for youth with mental health challenges. Frustrated by the number of kids who kept returning to the center, she sought a master's degree at Hunter's Silberman School of Social Work. She found much more than an advanced degree.

Raised by a Latino father and a Jewish mother in Westchester, Quiros sometimes felt unsure as a child of where she belonged. She dreamed of wanting to help children, to "fix" them.

Her first day at Silberman, Professor **Michael Fabricant**, who later became her mentor, challenged her to think about the social barriers holding people back.

"It was a shift for me," Quiros said. "I'm working to help people move through obstacles."

Quiros, who described herself as the kind of child who never raised her hand in

class, said her exposure to scholarship on biracial identities and meeting others who wanted to help fix injustice helped her emerge as a true scholar.

She earned a PhD at CUNY's Graduate Center. Now she's an associate professor at Montclair State University in New Jersey and lectures on diversity, inclusion, and joy. She spoke at Hunter in December on community healing.

"But for Hunter, I would have gone my whole life not feeling like I was smart," said Quiros. "It was almost like a dream come true."

But for Hunter, I wouldn't be on a path achieving change in the world.

For **Naiomi Sampson '24**, a valedictorian and Commencement speaker, Hunter opened a whole new world.

"The thing about the Hunter curriculum I really appreciate is that it makes a student go and look at fields that they didn't think that they were interested in," Sampson said. "The college understands that being well-versed in different cultures and peoples helps someone in the way that they perceive the world."

An undocumented immigrant from Guyana, Sampson came to America at age 15 with her sister and mother, who worked for \$5 an hour to support them.

An economics major, Sampson plans to attend law school in 2025. Hunter's diverse student body gave Sampson a passion for justice and immigrants' rights. She interned for State Supreme Court Judge and Hunter alum **Ruth Pickholz '71**, which enabled her to understand how lawyers interact in court and the role of judges.

"It made me realize that the courts in the United States are very important when it comes to affecting change," Sampson



Naiomi Sampson at Commencement.

said, "and that if I wanted to affect change, it would have to be through the law."

For Sampson, the experience was nothing short of life-altering.

"But for Hunter, I wouldn't be the person I am today on a path achieving change in the world."



Aluem Tark and her mentor, former Hunter Acting Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel.

When **Aluem Tark BSN '09**, a Korean immigrant, entered Hunter College, she struggled to recognize her own strength. She took pre-nursing classes and gained admission to the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, meeting dean **Joyce Griffin-Sobel MSN '81**, who saw her potential and became her mentor.

For Christmas, Griffin-Sobel sent Tark a card saying that one day she would be a wonderful nurse.

"That really changed my entire career path and made me who I am today," said Tark, who still has the card. "If she believed in me, I could do anything."

Now, having earned a PhD, Tark directs a family nurse practitioner program at Columbia University School of Nursing. She was named Educator of the Year by the National League of Nursing and a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine. Her research interests include end-of-life care and caring for individuals with advanced or life-threatening illnesses.

"It was my education for Hunter that helped my understanding of what it takes to be a healthcare provider and an educator who has compassion and critical skills," Tark said. "But for Hunter, I would have never formed the connection that profoundly changed my life. I wouldn't be the nurse scientist, the nurse educator who strives to do the best every day to shape the next generation of healthcare providers."

Students

DOUBLE LEGACY JUNIOR SHOWS IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY WITH STAND-OUT PRESENTATION IN ITALY

She's a science superstar — and a double Hunter legacy. In September, **Emilia Pelegano-Titmuss** — the daughter of **Janine Pelegano MA '19** and **Matthew Titmuss DPT '09** — achieved something highly unusual for an undergraduate: The Hunter-Macaulay junior presented her research on electrolytes for lithium-ion batteries at an international conference at the University of Palermo, Italy.

The physics and mathematics double major and John P. McNulty Scholar spoke for 15 minutes at the 13th Conference on Fast Field Cycling Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Relaxometry about her work on environmentally friendly electrolytes for batteries. She was the only undergraduate who spoke at the conference.

Emilia's parents exemplify

how Hunter's graduate programs can propel the careers of New York City professionals. Her father, who received his doctorate in physical therapy from Hunter and The CUNY Graduate Center, is now the Chief Operating Officer at NYC Health + Hospitals | Harlem.

"The faculty of the Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy all had exceptional and varied experience and had developed a strong didactic program," Titmuss said. "The program provided significant individualized attention and support one would expect in a much smaller college."

Her mother earned an MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. She now teaches at the United Nations International School.

"Of all the educational experiences I have had, my time



Emilia Pelegano-Titmuss, center, flanked by her parents.

at Hunter was certainly one of the best," Pelegano said. "I felt truly connected to New York and the people that lived there, and that I was a part of a community that was working to make a positive impact on the lives of New Yorkers."

They also show how Hunter creates lasting connections. Emilia spent her early childhood at Hunter's preschool, the Children's Learning Center, as did her two sisters. She still sees some of her old teachers from back in the day. She credits Hunter with giving her the running start she needed to become a scientist.

"Hunter is not a huge school where everyone wants to be a researcher," she said. "It provided me with the opportunity

to pursue my dream career off the bat, as a freshman."

Pelegano-Titmuss's work, a collaboration with The University of Tennessee, is supervised by CUNY Distinguished Professor of Physics **Steve Greenbaum**, and Postdoctoral Research Associate **Giselle de Araujo Lima e Souza**, mainstays of Hunter's Department of Physics and Astronomy.

Greenbaum said that Pelegano-Titmuss had taken full advantage of the sciences at Hunter and will have co-authored three or four peer-reviewed journal articles by the time she graduates.

"Emilia is one of the best students I have had in 40 years at Hunter," Greenbaum said. "She will have her pick of top PhD programs."



JUNIPER SOKOLOV IS HUNTER'S FIRST OBAMA-CHESKY SCHOLAR

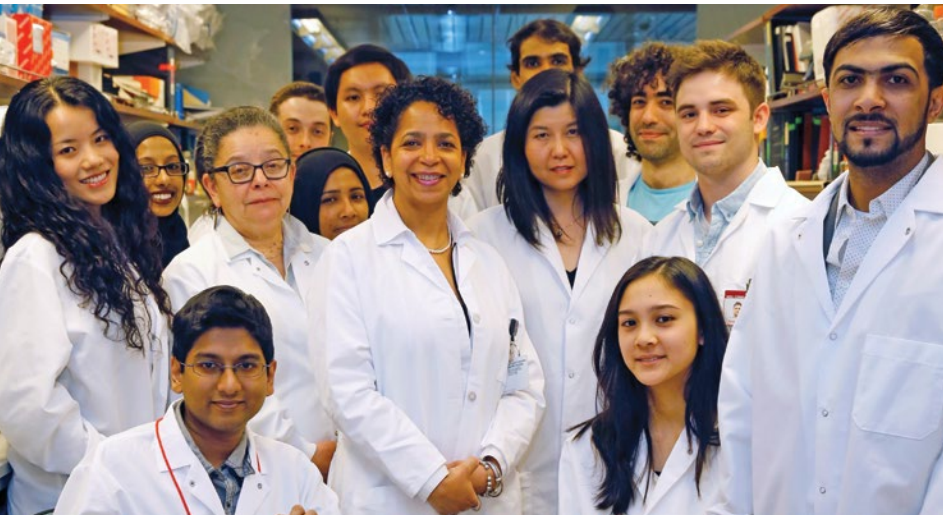
Juniper Sokolov '26, a Mildred Alpern Education Scholar, has won a Voyager Scholarship, the Obama-Chesky Scholarship for Public Service.

Sokolov is the first Hunter College and only the second City University of New York student to receive the honor from the Barack Obama Foundation, which awards about 10 Voyager Scholarships each year.

Sokolov is majoring in psychology, philosophy, and political science and focuses on the legal treatment of incarcerated and gender-divergent individuals.

The Voyager Scholarship is a two-year leadership-development program for equipping next-generation leaders with the tools to launch public-service careers. It was established by the Obamas and **Brian Chesky**, co-founder and CEO of Airbnb.

Research at Hunter



Jill Bargonetti, center, surrounded by students in her lab in an undated photo.

HOW HUNTER COLLEGE GAVE JILL BARGONETTI HER START

Dr. **Jill Bargonetti** **HCES '74**, a renowned breast-cancer researcher, and the Marie Hesselbach ('36) Professor of Biological Sciences at Hunter College, is another “But for Hunter” story. Her association with Hunter profoundly influenced not just her career, but her life path.



Bargonetti and her mother, Adah Askew.

Bargonetti's mother, **Adah Askew '71, MA '74**, earned her undergraduate degree at Hunter when Jill was 9. Askew later got a master's in counseling and student development as she worked for Hunter's SEEK Program. So young Jill spent a good amount of time at the college, where Adah took dance classes

with another Hunter alum, the legendary Pearl Primus '40 (a biology and pre-med major at Hunter, as it happens).

Primus (1919–1994), who also earned a doctorate in anthropology from New York University, was the dancer and choreographer who, more than any other, introduced African dance to American audiences. Bargonetti imbibed Primus's African movement at dance classes, rehearsals, and performances — so much so that Bargonetti studied dance as well as biology as an undergraduate and still uses dance as a technique to teach the latter.

In fact, Bargonetti has created an innovative curriculum using dance to teach students how cells and molecules bond and interact — which she demonstrates at Hunter's Black Box Theatre, where she remembers seeing Primus's classes. Students learn about molecular bonds and cellular changes by mimicking the movements to the sound of science narration and staccato Bebop trumpet.

Primus, no doubt, would approve. “I got to know Pearl and she became my ‘godmother,’” said Bargonetti, who credits Primus with pushing her toward Hunter College Elementary School. “It

was because of her that they had me tested for Hunter Elementary. Pearl Primus saw something in me and promise for my future because I questioned everything as a young child.”

Bargonetti later attended Hunter College High School after graduating from HCES but transferred to The Bronx High School of Science. She earned her BA in biology at SUNY-Purchase and her PhD at New York University, all the while performing dance.

At times, she was “embarrassed to be a scientist. I didn't let people know I was studying science while I was a dancer and then also going to graduate school for my PhD,” she told *CUNY Research in Focus*.

Bargonetti, whose research probes the biology of cancer mutations, began teaching at Hunter in 1994 and became



Pearl Primus leaps in a performance.

a full professor in 2007. She focuses on one of the deadliest breast cancers, triple negative, and an associated protein, mutant p53.

When she became a faculty member at Hunter, Bargonetti formed a friendship with another Hunter alum: Evelyn H. Lauder HCHS '54, HC '58, DHC '04, who died of cancer in 2011 at age 75. Lauder founded the Breast Cancer Research Foundation in 1993.

A champion of Hunter who fervently wanted it to be part of a cure, Lauder once visited Bargonetti at the lab after

she was funded by BRCF. BRCF generously funded supported an invited Bargonetti proposal in 2005 — making Hunter the only public college without a hospital attached to it to receive such funding.

In the 20 years since, BCRF has given the Bargonetti lab a total of \$1.5 million in grants, with \$225,000 this year.

Bargonetti's lab has attracted more

than \$15 million in grants to Hunter, including recent awards of \$3 million from the National Science Foundation Research for Mentoring Post baccalaureates in Biological Sciences.

The lab is part of a collaborative pilot project to address systemic barriers to including African-American women in breast cancer research as part of

the National Cancer Institutes-funded Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equity Program.

Whether exploring targeted therapies for triple-negative breast cancer patients or preparing the next generation of researchers who will fight the deadly disease, Bargonetti can thank a long association with Hunter College.

HUNTER RESEARCH TEAM PROPELS ADVANCES IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE FOR BREAST CANCER

A Hunter College research team is advancing a diagnostic tool that heralds new treatments for metastatic breast cancer.

Professor **Brian Zeglis** of the Department of Chemistry and his collaborators at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center recently completed a clinical trial of a radioactive drug called 89Zr-pertuzumab that allows physicians to determine if a breast-cancer patient is positive for human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2). Visualizing HER2-positive lesions can help guide biopsy and treatment of patients with diffuse tumors.

Zeglis, who is an assistant attending radiochemist at MSKCC, with full research privileges, exemplifies how Hunter College acts as an anchor institution in New York City, collaborating with nearby hospitals and research institutes to advance public health and achieve scientific breakthroughs. Zeglis, who earned a BA from Yale University and a PhD from the California Institute of Technology, did his postdoctoral work at MSKCC. He publishes frequently, with important recent papers in *Lancet Oncology*, the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the *Journal of Nuclear Medicine*, and the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

The radioactive drug the Zeglis Laboratory is testing represents a step forward



Professor Brian Zeglis, right, and Shane McGlone discuss their project.

from earlier diagnostic methods in terms of both efficacy and safety. The pilot study involves six patients and is the first time the substance has been tried in humans. Larger trials are planned soon.

“Too many patients miss out on effective treatments because it is so hard to tell who is a good candidate for certain drugs,” Zeglis said. “Our hope is that this imaging tool will help physicians identify the patients most likely to respond to HER2-targeted drugs, and, so far, things are looking good.”

Zeglis is also a beacon of research for Hunter students. A Hunter–Macaulay Honors College junior, **Shane McGlone**, originated and is the lead researcher on a project with the Zeglis Lab to create radiolabeled imaging agents and thera-

peutics for atypical teratoid rhabdoid tumors, a rare and deadly brain cancer mostly affecting children under age 3.

Zeglis's chemistry alumni have gone on to plum graduate and medical schools, including **James Brennan '20** (University of Delaware), **Sam George '20** (Albert Einstein College of Medicine), **Cindy Rodriguez '19** (postdoctoral fellow, MSKCC), **Benjamin Sanits '18** (SUNY Downstate Medical School), and **John Variano '18** (Rutgers Medical School).

“One of the most wonderful things about working at Hunter is that it allows me to do cutting-edge, translational research with students who may normally not have access to these scientific fields and communities,” Zeglis said. “Frankly, it makes the science even more rewarding.”

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS



Famed director Trevor Nunn, seated center, inspired Hunter students, faculty, and staff with a week-long series of talks.

Inside Hunter College's Amazing Week With British Theatre Impresario **Sir Trevor Nunn**

Hunter College hosted **Trevor Nunn** — former Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre, and the Tony- and Olivier-winning director of *Cats* and *Les Misérables*, as well as every single play of William Shakespeare —



The late Floria Lasky

for a week-long residency in October. His stay as a Floria Lasky ('42) Visiting Artist was funded by a grant from the Frederick Loewe

Foundation named for the late Lasky, a famed entertainment lawyer.

Nunn delivered five lectures open to the entire Hunter community and worked directly with students in an open rehearsal for the Hunter Theatre Department's production of the Shakespeare comedy *Twelfth Night*. He also led a master class on directing new plays with writers in the Rita ('46) and Burton Goldberg MFA Playwriting program.

"Trevor doesn't often make college stops when he's in New York, let alone a week's residence," said **Gregory Mosher**, the **Patty ('82) and Jay Baker** Professor of Theatre and Executive Director of the

Office of the Arts, which hosted Nunn's visit. "His generosity and wisdom made for an exhilarating experience for our Hunter students and faculty."

Nunn was born into a working-class family in Ipswich, England, in 1940, and was knighted for his contributions to the arts in 2002.

In his lectures, Nunn emphasized Shakespeare's role as an actor and suggested he might have been the first director in the English theatre, and the forefather of modern musical theatre, noting his plays' regular use of songs.

He also recited several Shakespearean speeches from memory and shared stories about the many theatrical

personalities he has known during his six-decade career. Nunn also looked into the future of Shakespeare productions and the theatre in general — and prophesied more musicals.

In his conversation with Hunter actors, he stressed the importance of making Shakespeare's verse feel like thoughts happening in real time. "It's not something that you're reciting, it's not something that you learned off a page, it's something that's happening," Nunn said. "You are thinking it, you are creating it."

Hunter students, faculty, staff, and alumni wrote Nunn dozens of thank-you notes.

"It's a rare thing he has done: to affirm the centrality of Shakespeare's writing and intention while honoring theatre's role as an agent of essential social change to move our world forward," wrote alum **Tracie Morris MFA '01**.

Student **Zoe Mintz**, who played Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, wrote that she was in awe of Nunn's career.

"But I really want to say how much I admired your treatment of each-and-every student and person you interacted with," she added. "Your unconditional respect, patience, and empathy was quite moving. You're a class act, Sir Trevor Nunn, and it was an honor to have you visit us."



Sir Trevor Nunn recites a speech from one of Shakespeare's plays.

Hunter Honors Poet **Sonia Sanchez '55**

Legendary poet, professor, and activist **Sonia Sanchez '55** celebrated her 90th birthday with an unforgettable bash at Hunter College on December 9. The evening drew a standing-room-only crowd to Hunter's Roosevelt House, where admirers of the pioneering Black Arts Movement figure gathered to honor her.

Poets in all stages of their careers feted Sanchez: **Rachel Eliza Griffiths**, winner of the 2021 Hurston-Wright Legacy Award in Poetry; **Quincy Troupe**, poet and biographer of jazz musician Miles Davis; and **Ama Birch**, author of several collections and a professor at Hunter.

Birch's father, artist **Willie Birch**, and Sanchez visited classes at Hunter earlier that day. Willie Birch also attended the festivities for Sanchez.

"When I think of a *bad-d-d* poet, I think of Sonia Sanchez," Birch declared.



From left, Nancy Cantor, Ama Birch, Sonia Sanchez, Rachel Eliza Griffiths, and Paul Alexander at Sanchez's 90th birthday celebration at Roosevelt House on December 9.

"She guides people out of the middle passage of the past and into the diaspora of the future, a journey that exposes inequality. She's impressive because she's human, but she's also a revolutionary producing abstract and avant-garde lyrical poetry that speaks truth to power, whether on the page or the stage."

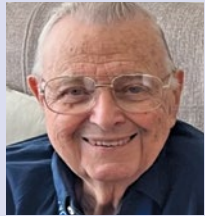
"An Evening with Sonia Sanchez" was part of the American Voices symposium series, directed by Hunter English

Professor **Paul Alexander**. Alexander shared video clips of interviews with Sanchez discussing her life and work.

Sanchez read from her own works, including two haikus. She emphasized that she never took her duty as a teacher for granted.

"I never went in unprepared," she said. "It was an honor to teach your children and your grandchildren. It was something I did not take lightly."

In Memoriam



Morton Z. Hoffman '55 — a renowned chemist, beloved professor, and 2006 Hunter Hall of Fame inductee — died on

September 24, 2024. He was 89.

Hoffman, a member of Hunter's first co-ed class, taught chemistry at Boston University for 44 years, raising generations of scientists and amassing awards. He earned a bachelors in chemistry from Hunter and an MS and PhD in chemistry from the University of Michigan.

A fellow of the American Chemical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, Hoffman published more than 200 journal articles and many book chapters on solar-energy conversion and ionizing radiation. Hunter's Alumni Association gave him its Outstanding Professional Achievement Award in 2000.



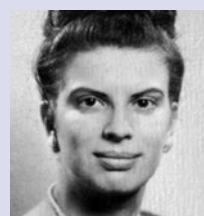
Dorothy Kryger '45 — a longtime teacher and philanthropist who established a center at Hunter's library — died on

May 12, 2024. She was 98.

The Dorothy Kryger Macaulay Honors Center in the Leon and Toby Cooperman Library houses a study and advising center for Hunter's Macaulay students.

A native of The Bronx, Kryger graduated high school at 15 and received her BA at 18, earning a master's in teaching at Columbia University. She taught in The Bronx and later at Cardozo High School in Queens. At Cardozo, she became a college adviser and later rose to head college advising at the New York City Board of Education.

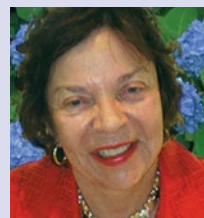
She was a supporter of Hillcrest Jewish Center and co-founder with her husband of the Kryger Oncology Fund at Beth Israel Hospital in Manhattan.



Gloria Petitto '65, MS '69 — a long-lasting Hunter College supporter and educator, died on April 13, 2024. She was 80.

Petitto was a major supporter of the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College and the Hunter College Foundation's Annual Fund and General Scholarship Fund. Known as a caring teacher and great friend, she took great pride in the students who benefited from her philanthropy.

"She exemplified the motto of Hunter College, *mihi cura futuri*, 'the care of the future is mine,' through her generosity of heart and spirit," said VP for Institutional Advancement **Alexis L. Eggleton**. Petitto graduated with a BA in chemistry and an MS in education from Hunter in 1969. She spent many years working in city public schools, rising to the rank of principal at PS 108 in Queens.



Reba Williams MA '89 — a financier, journalist, novelist, and renowned collector of American fine-art prints — died on October

14, 2024, in Greenwich, Conn. She was 88.

A native of Gulfport, Miss., Williams earned an MBA from Harvard and worked on Wall Street and for *Institutional Investor* magazine.

She and her husband, David, built a private collection of art by early 20th century artists, which has been exhibited worldwide and resides at the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the British Museum.

Williams earned a master's from Hunter and a PhD from the CUNY Graduate Center in art history. An author of mysteries and children's books, she established The Willie Morris Award for Southern Literature, an annual contest.



E. Mildred Speiser HCHS '49, HC '53, MA '55 — a longtime educator and Hunter Hall of Famer who founded the Hunter College High School Alumni Association — died on July 26, 2024, in New York City. She was 93.

A native of Manhattan's Upper West Side, the polymathic Speiser plunged into activism upon arriving at HCHS, founding the History Club and leading student government and many organizations.

At Hunter College, her involvement with extracurriculars and student government deepened. She later donated the records of her activities, including correspondence, class materials, minutes, etc., to the Leon and Toby Cooperman Library.

Speiser taught math and art to younger students and business and education at colleges, including Hunter. She also worked in sales, as a camp counselor, a travel consultant, a wedding planner, a cast teacher, an editor, and a writer. An entrepreneur, she founded Arthur Farms Inc., manufacturing gourmet pickles. She was also the public-relations consultant and a board member of the Shadow Box Theatre.

Speiser's volunteerism for Hunter never ended; she held a variety of posts until late in life, including as a distinguished adviser for students in the Hunter College Public Service Scholars Program. She served as the president of the HCHS Alumni from 1973 to 1983 and was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1983.

Class Notes

1950s

Connie DeNave '55

Wrote a memoir, *The Image Maker: Shattering Rock and Roll's Glass Ceiling*, in which she shares her experiences as one of the music world's first female publicists.

Sally-Jane Heit '54

The *Sing!* leader of her class had a successful career as an actor and published a memoir, *Not Yet!*, which has chapters about Hunter in the early '50s.

1960s

Ruth Bernstein '67

Is a great-grandmother of three (with three more arriving in '25) whose life since graduating from Hunter has been "filled with achievements and cherished family moments."



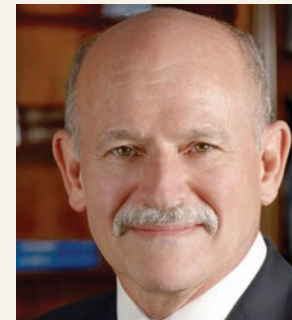
Hilda Densky '63

This November exhibited the 36 oil paintings of her Gratitude Project in Rye, N.Y., each inspired by a poem by a U.S. Poet Laureate.

Rosemarie D'Alessandro '61

Produced a documentary, *A Daughter of Mine*, which recounts the murder of her daughter Joan and the 30-year battle to keep

the killer in prison. The film was featured at the Teaneck Film Festival.



Steven Heymsfield '66

The doctor and obesity researcher was featured in a Louisiana health publication for his work developing technology to track muscle mass. He was most recently the executive director of Pennington Biomedical Research Center, where he is now a professor.

1970s

Frank Cambella '77

Works part-time as a tutor with the Huntington Learning Center.

Mariana Duarte Fodor '72

Recently widowed after 49 years, was honored with the 2022 Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award.

Francis Holt '79

The retired RN writes novels about the lives of first responders from his experiences as an FDNY dispatcher, including *The Guardians of Brooklyn* series.

Marilyn Aguirre-Molina '72

With her husband, Carlos Molina, has endowed a scholarship in Health Equity & Social Justice at

the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health.

1980s

Jeffrey Biggers '87

Has teamed up with filmmaker **Andrew Davis** for a thriller, *Disturbing the Bones*.

Gennaro Bonfiglio '80

Retired after a 41-year career in the FDNY and teaches at Empire State University, where he is helping to write an online program in emergency management. The grand father of five plays drums in a Black Sabbath tribute band.

Haydee Britton '83

Teaches English to adult learners at Santa Fe College in Florida. Britton founded a nonprofit organization, Les Petits Okapis-Okapis International, to support disadvantaged children in Kinshasa, Congo.

Jeanine "Hopper" Kopfmüller '89, '90

Is the owner of Liquid Sound Lounge in New York City, which broadcasts every Saturday from 7 to 10 pm on WBAI 99.5 FM.

Charyl Poindexter-Curry '81

The retired educator enjoys volunteering at a nursing home, where she teaches fiber arts.

Jacqueline Glaves Samuels '80

Is a family nurse practitioner and got married in 2020.

1990s

Colin Channer '92

Was named the poet laureate of Rhode Island in 2024.

Tashi Chodon '99

Has published articles in peer-reviewed journals highlighting the importance of social determinants of healthcare.

Daniel Goodwin '91, '92

Co-authored a book with **Edward Schwarzschild** published this year by MIT Press. He was the artist who produced work for an exhibition at University at Albany-SUNY, where he serves as Art and Art History Department chair.

Paul Pfeiffer '94

Recounted his art career in a conversation with Asia Society Museum Director **Yasufumi Nakamori**. A mid-career survey exhibition opened at the Guggenheim Bilbao on Nov. 30.

Sonita Singwi '97

The artist was recently interviewed by the *Provincetown Independent* during a gallery talk that centered around the question "How do we see things and engage with the world around us?"

2000s

Dan Berger '04

His new book, *The Quest: The Definitive Guide to Belonging*, delves into the human need for belonging with a step-by-step approach to connecting.

Class Notes continued

Marianela Collardo '00
Is executive officer of Tobias Financial Advisors and a Certified Financial Planner and Personal Financial Specialist.

Hansel Cordeiro '04
Was appointed as the director of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's new Office of Professional Conduct.

Lesley Enston '07
The Brooklyn-based author shared her culinary secrets with the *Hanover Post*, including calabaza pancakes and spicy pepper shrimp.



Manuel Esteban Sr. '01
A father of seven, Esteban was the first Hispanic elected to District 16 of the Suffolk County Legislature.



Jasmine Gripper '05
Serves as the co-director of the New York Working Families Party and was

ranked No. 33 on *City and State NY's 2024 Power of Diversity: Women 100* list.

Amy Herman '00 received an honorary degree from Lafayette College and address at the commencement ceremony in May.

Jen Pawol '05
Made history as the third woman to umpire a Major League Baseball spring-training game. She is setting her sights on becoming the first woman to umpire a regular-season MLB game.

Donovan Ramon '09
Authored a book, *Striking Features: Psychoanalysis and Racial Passing Narratives*.



Zoe Ryan '05
Was appointed the director of the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles.

Leah Umansky '06
Published a book of poems, *OF TYRANT*, and was featured on PBS.

2010s

Bianca Almedina '18
The senior VP of nonprofits at **Kasirer** was named to *City and State NY's*

2024 NYC 40-Under-40 *Rising Stars in Politics & Government*.



Firelei Baez '11
Has an art show at Hauser & Wirth in Los Angeles and a comprehensive survey at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Patrick Bringley '14
Bringley is bringing his memoir *All the Beauty in the World* to the stage as a one-man play. The play premiered at the Charleston Literary Festival.

Tomás Clasen '13
The real-estate attorney at **Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren s.c.** was featured as one of Wisconsin's most influential Latino leaders by *Madison365*.

Lindsey Ferrentino MFA '13
Had her plays produced at The National Theatre and The Donmar in London and Roundabout Theater Company and Playwrights Horizons in New York. She co-wrote the book for the Broadway-bound musical *The Queen of Versailles* and has five projects for Netflix.

Mohammed Saleheen '16
Saleheen, of Building Trades Employers' Associa-

tion, was named to *City and State NY's 2024 NYC 40-Under-40 Rising Stars of Politics & Government*.

2020s



Rebecca Bukofzer-Tavarez '22
Has been promoted to deputy inspector at the NYPD.

Kevin Condardo '24
Joined The Second City as managing director.

Vanessa Fuentes '23
Started a non-profit, Transcending Leadership Center, where she is the CEO.

Daniel Iskhakov '23
Has been accepted at the Weil Legal Innovators Program, which enables incoming law students to explore public-interest opportunities.

Karisma Jay '21
A **Jody Arnhold MFA** scholar-choreographer, taught the student troupe for Ballet Tech's 30th Anniversary *Kids Dance* at the Joyce Theater.

Jaydra Johnson '22
Has written a book, *Low: Notes on Art & Trash*, shedding light on the things that people and society choose to throw away.

Save
the
Date!

Alumni Weekend 2025

March 27-30

HUNTER
The City University of New York

Join us for a weekend of celebration, connection, and unforgettable memories at Hunter College's Alumni Weekend 2025!

Thursday, March 27

6 pm

Young Alumni Social

Friday, March 28

6 pm

2025 Hall of Fame Celebration

Saturday, March 29

Starting at 10 am

Reconnect with classmates, campus tours, esteemed faculty and alumni talks, milestone celebrations, and a toast to Hunter's 155th Anniversary

Sunday, March 30

11 am

Alumni Association of Hunter College Birthday Brunch

Visit hunter.cuny.edu/alumni for Alumni Weekend information.

We can't wait to see you there!



For more class notes or to submit your own, visit hunter.cuny.edu/alumni

bit.ly/hunteralumniweekend



MEET KRISTIN MATTHEWS

Kristin Matthews, Hunter's new executive director of alumni relations, wants to strengthen the connections of alumni with each other and the college by creating meaningful volunteer opportunities, events, and communications.

"Alumni relations are all about building bridges, fostering relationships, and connecting graduates with their alma mater," Matthews said. "Connecting alumni with students also helps both groups. I find it incredibly rewarding."

Matthews is especially excited about organizing Hunter's Alumni Weekend this coming March, the first in five years because of the pandemic.

"We are crafting an unforgettable program," she said, with a cocktail reception, a Hall of Fame celebration, and many social sessions. "Don't miss it!"

A SUNY alum, Matthews has spent most of her career in event planning and alumni relations. She felt attracted to Hunter because of its diverse community and strong academic reputation.

"The college's commitment to excellence and its history of fostering intellectual growth and social responsibility resonated with me deeply," she said. "The chance to engage with a passionate and accomplished alumni network was incredibly appealing. Every alum I meet has an extraordinary story to share, whether about a memorable class, a significant event, or a professor who guided them along their journey. The heart, passion, and drive of Hunter students and alumni are truly unparalleled!"

Matthews said that the welcome message she sent to alumni announcing her engagement at Hunter drew an outpouring of warm wishes and Hawk pride, inspiring confidence in her success.

"I want to be a valuable resource for our alumni, someone they can reach out to at any time to meet them where they are," she said. "Just drop a line!"

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