

COMMENCEMENTS



Photo: Shelley Kusnetz

Real-World Experiences, Community and Determination — The Class of 2006

Eva Dowdell, Kehinde Togun and Orlando Velez will soon join more than 2,000 Rutgers-Newark students as graduates of the Class of 2006.

A

By Carla Capizzi

A time to celebrate one's accomplishments, commencement each year is filled with special stories about the graduates marking their entrance into yet another stage in their lives. And while it is impossible to share all of them, here are a few of the noteworthy stories from the Class of 2006.

Orlando Velez — Gaining a "Real-World" Education

Like most college students, Orlando Velez will enter "the real world" when he graduates this May with a dual major in English and theater.

He'll be teaching in a Jersey City grammar school. Unlike most students, though, Velez has already had a unique real-world experience for which no college education could have prepared him: serving with the National Guard on the outskirts of Tikrit, Iraq.

Velez was deployed to Iraq for 11 months with Echo Company, the 50th Main Support Battalion of the 42nd Infantry, working in the Division Medical Supply Office that served about 95 American units in northern Iraq. His main duty was to "keep my buddies alive" by making sure urgently needed medical supplies, equipment and medicines got to the right places in a timely manner. Because Iraq is a war where there are "no traditional front lines," his job also was to stay alive, despite scattered gunfire, mortar and rocket attacks on the office, and

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RESPECTED NEW YORK TIMES COLUMNIST AND R-N'S OWN AMONG THIS YEAR'S COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS

By Carla Capizzi

A highly respected *New York Times* columnist and an equally highly regarded president of a neighboring Newark college will be the recipients of honorary degrees during the 2006 commencement ceremonies for more than 2,000 graduates on the Rutgers-Newark campus (See "Commencement-at-a-Glance" on page 2 for a complete schedule).

Journalist **Bob Herbert** and Essex County College (ECC) President **A. Zachary Yamba** will be honored May 18 during R-N's largest commencement ceremony for the Newark College of Arts and Sciences and University College-Newark. Herbert will receive an Honorary Doctor of Letters degree, while an honorary Doctors of Laws will be bestowed upon Yamba. Herbert will deliver the commencement address.

Both honorary degree recipients have ties to the City of Newark. Herbert began his journalism career as a

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COMING SOON —
A Century of Reaching Higher
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Commencement 2006

Respected New York Times... from page 1

reporter with *The Star-Ledger*, advancing to night city editor before moving on to the *Daily News* in New York and then into television reporting at both WCBS-TV and NBC's "Today Show" and its "NBC Nightly News." He joined *The New York Times* as an Op-Ed columnist in 1993. His awards include the Meyer Berger Award for coverage of New York City, and the American Society of Newspaper Editors award for distinguished newspaper writing.

Yamba has a special bond with the leadership of R-N, as well as the campus' home city. As president of ECC since 1980, he has worked closely with both the current provost, Steven J. Diner, and his predecessor, Provost Emeritus Norman Samuels, to revitalize Newark through the Council for Higher Education in Newark. Under his

Photo of A. Zachary Yamba by Arthur Paxton



Top, l-r: A. Zachary Yamba, Bob Herbert, Jay Albanese, Julia Plotnick. Bottom, l-r: Ronald Chen, Mark Holzer, Joseph McAlinden.

stewardship, ECC has experienced tremendous growth in programs and enrollment and an expansion of campus facilities, as he has established himself as an advocate for the power and promise of education.

The first ceremony for the Class of 2006 at R-N will take place May 17, when a history-making alumnus addresses the School of Criminal Justice (SCJ). **Jay Albanese** was the first Ph.D. recipient from the SCJ. Today, Albanese is chief of the International Center at the National Institute of Justice, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Justice. He also serves as executive director of the International Association for the Study of Organized Crime and is a past president of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

College of Nursing (CON) graduates will hear remarks from Rear Admiral **Julia Plotnick** (retired) the morning of May 18. Plotnick served in the U.S. Public Health Service from 1959 through 1996, where she held national posts as well as serving on international assignments to the World Health Organization. She was named assistant surgeon general and chief nurse officer in 1992. After retiring in 1996, she joined the CON faculty as a visiting professor. Her numerous honors include the Audrey Hepburn Humanitarian Award, the Surgeon General's Medal and the Distinguished Service Medal.

Rutgers Business School graduates will gather on the Norman Samuels Plaza the morning of May 19 to hear remarks by **Joseph McAlinden**, chief global strategist of Morgan Stanley Investment Management (MSIM). McAlinden, who has been with MSIM since 1995, is a member of MSIM's Management Committee and its Board of Directors, as well as chairman of the Asset Allocation Committee. Prior to that, he was president and CEO of Argus Research Corp., and had established and managed Dillon Read's research department.

That afternoon, the Graduate School's Class of 2006 will hear one of R-N's own, Professor **Marc Holzer**, deliver their commencement address. Holzer, chair of the Graduate Department of Public Administration, has earned international recognition for his efforts to improve government performance. The Rutgers Board of Governors recognized Holzer's contributions to public



sector productivity and public administration in February when it named him Rutgers Board of Governors Professor in Public Administration. (See article page 3.)

Another of R-N's own will address School of Law-Newark graduates on May 26. Former Associate Law Dean and Professor **Ronald Chen** – Rutgers Law-Newark Class of 1983 – was appointed New Jersey Public Advocate by Gov. Jon Corzine earlier this year. As a student at the School of Law, Chen was editor-in-chief of the *Rutgers Law Review* and the Saul Tischler Scholar. After graduation, he clerked for the Honorable Leonard I. Garth, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and was with the New York law firm of Cravath, Swaine & Moore. He joined the Rutgers faculty in 1987, and was named associate dean in 1995.

For more detailed information, visit www.newark.rutgers.edu/commencement.

Real World Experiences... from page 1

a suicide bomber who targeted – unsuccessfully – the convoy in which Velez was riding. He quickly learned that "you're at risk anywhere in Iraq."

After "seeing people die on both sides," Velez now asks himself a centuries-old question: "Does war ever really accomplish anything? Are there really winners or does everyone lose something?"

His war service has helped him to better understand his Vietnam veteran father, a former Marine, and forge the type of bond only combat veterans can share. Most importantly, Velez learned a lot about himself, especially that "I can meet almost any challenge and perform under adversity. It's an experience I will carry with me all my life."

Velez, who ultimately hopes to be a firefighter, says he has no regrets about his National Guard service. "I don't agree with the war, but I do support the troops there."

Kehinde Togun - Contributing to Community

To Kehinde Togun, community is more than a word in the dictionary; it's a way of life. It was Rutgers-Newark's sense of community that set this campus apart from the others he visited, says Togun. It is a sense of community that infuses his student life and personal activities, and that sense of community will ultimately send him back to Africa, where he hopes to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Togun, who will graduate with a joint degree in political science and economics, "walks the talk" when it comes to contributing his talents and time, dating back to his years at Newark's St. Benedict's Preparatory School. He has successfully juggled the demands of the Honors College's challenging curriculum and working on campus both as a teaching assistant and resident assistant in Woodward Hall. He also has given countless hours to organizations such as Beyond Campus, the Black Organization of Students, the Organization of African Students and

The Observer, in addition to assisting with educational awareness programs as a Student Health Advocate. Along the way, he's gained skills as a mentor, counselor, teacher and political activist.

"I've had great and varied experiences in this great R-N community, working with some remarkable people," he reflects.

Come fall, Togun will pursue a graduate degree in public policy with a health focus. Then, armed with his master's, the Nigerian native, who came to the U.S. at the age of 11, will go "anywhere in Africa where they need me." He hopes to eventually earn a doctorate and to work in Africa as a health professional, developing policies and procedures to deliver medical care, educational programs in HIV/AIDS prevention and related services for the people who most need them.

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COMMENCEMENT-AT-A-GLANCE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

10 a.m.

School of Criminal Justice,
Norman Samuels Plaza

Speaker: **Jay Albanese**, chief of the International Center at the National Institute of Justice

THURSDAY, MAY 18

10 a.m.

College of Nursing, Golden Dome
Athletic Center

Speaker: Rear Admiral **Julia Plotnick** (retired)

4 p.m.

College of Arts and Sciences and University
College, Norman Samuels Plaza

Speaker: **Bob Herbert**, columnist,
The New York Times

Honorary Degree Recipients: Bob Herbert
and A. Zachary Yamba, president, Essex
County College

FRIDAY, MAY 19

10 a.m.

Rutgers Business School,
Norman Samuels Plaza

Speaker: **Joseph J. McAlinden**, chief global
strategist, Morgan Stanley Investment
Management

3 p.m.

Graduate School-Newark,
Norman Samuels Plaza

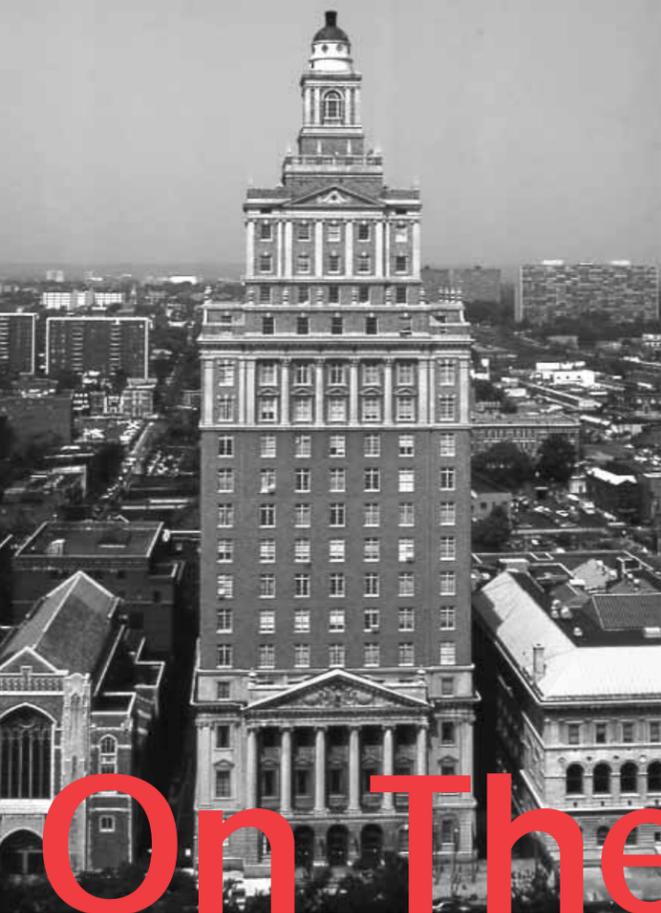
Speaker: **Marc Holzer**, Board of Governors
Professor and chair, Public Administration

FRIDAY, MAY 26

10 a.m.

New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark
School of Law-Newark

Speaker: **Ronald Chen**, New Jersey Public
Advocate



On The Plaza

The former home of Rutgers School of Law-Newark and School of Criminal Justice will now become a home for graduate students.

Graduate Students to Gain a New Home at R-N

Another transformation soon will be taking place at Rutgers-Newark as it takes an additional step toward creating an academic village in the heart of New Jersey's largest city. As the demand for graduate student housing has grown, the historic building the university owns at 15 Washington Street now will be converted into student apartments.

Built in 1929, the building was first home to the American Insurance Company and later the Rutgers School of Law-Newark and School of Criminal Justice until they moved to the Center for Law and Justice six years ago. A well-known architectural landmark, with its soaring Great Hall and marble throughout, the building gained national recognition when it was used for the 1998 film *Rounders*, starring Matt Damon.

As the campus's population has increased, so too has the demand for additional student housing. R-N now enrolls approximately 4,000 graduate students and over 6,000 undergraduate students. The location of 15 Washington Street makes it especially attractive for graduate student housing given its proximity to downtown, The Newark Museum, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Riverfront Stadium and train lines.

The project is an outgrowth of the university's master plan for the R-N campus, completed in 2003. That plan envisioned a dynamic, mixed-use academic village north of the central academic core and a significant increase in on-campus housing.

The university hopes to select an architectural firm and negotiate a contract by this summer, with work to begin soon after. Project completion is planned for the summer of 2008. The finished building, consisting of apartments with some as large as three bedrooms, will likely house 200 to 300 students.

Jazz Perspectives — First in its Field

Rutgers-Newark now has another first in the field of jazz studies with the launching of *Jazz Perspectives*, the first peer-reviewed journal of jazz.

Co-edited by Professor Lewis Porter and Assistant Professor John Howland of the Department of Visual and Performing Arts, *Jazz Perspectives* will report on original research and analysis, musical, historical, cultural and otherwise, in the field of jazz. The first issue is scheduled to be published this month.

The journal complements the *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* published under the auspices of the Institute of Jazz Studies. That R-N has undertaken this project is

particularly fitting, notes Porter, since the campus is home to the world's premier jazz archive, the Institute of Jazz Studies, and the first graduate-level jazz history degree, the M.A. in Jazz History and Research, which began in 1997.

While a growing number of commercial periodicals have been devoted to jazz, the academic jazz community has not had a collective international forum to promote cross-disciplinary scholarly dialogue. As a refereed academic journal with an international editorial board, *Jazz Perspectives* hopes to bridge the jazz-as-music and jazz-as-culture divide of contemporary jazz studies, and promote broader international perspectives on the jazz tradition and its legacy.

New Health Awareness Initiative at R-N

Rutgers-Newark Health Services and the Provost's Office made a bold move in the development of the first campus conference on Sexual Violence Prevention held in March. The conference marked the introduction of an educational and service initiative providing on-campus services and programming that clearly states that violence will not be tolerated and that everyone has the right to be protected.

With R-N crime statistics remaining below the national average, it would be easy to sweep past the topic. But with 5 percent of college students nationwide reporting a rape or attempted rape annually, R-N has brought the topic to the forefront in recognition that the student body is part of society as a whole. Lynne Logatto, associate director of R-N Health Services, described the conference as a vehicle to communicate on-campus resources that are available in the event of a sexual crime. "We want to help victims regain trust in themselves and the world and graduate strong, healthy and in control of their destinies," said Logatto.

A College of Nursing Time Capsule

The College of Nursing kicked off its 50th anniversary celebration on April 18 with a site dedication ceremony and the unveiling of a time capsule on the New Brunswick campus.

The time capsule, which will be opened in 50 years, will be placed in the new College of Nursing building between Paterson and Bayard streets near Robert Wood Johnson-University Hospital in New Brunswick.

Items placed in the time capsule include speeches from the site dedication ceremony, site dedication ceremony invitations, current nursing journals and pictures of the groundbreaking. Also included were essays from College of Nursing students about their vision of nursing 50 years in the future.

"The idea behind the time capsule is for our students and future students to come back 50 years later to see if their predictions came true," said College of Nursing Dean Felissa R. Lashley. "We thought it would be a great idea for our students to participate in our 50th anniversary celebration."

Marc Holzer Honored for His Research to Improve Government Services

An internationally recognized researcher in improving government services and enhancing citizen involvement, Marc Holzer, chair of the Graduate Department of Public Administration, now has a new honor to add to his list of accomplishments: Rutgers Board of Governors Professor of Public Administration.

The resolution naming Holzer a BOG professor noted that "internationally distinguished experts" recognize him "for his influential scholarship in public administration, for his development of the subfield of public productivity, and his influential contributions to performance measurement, public sector productivity and public service." It also cited "his many achievements," including his numerous scholarly publications, his editorship of major journals and book series, his leadership roles in the American Society of Public Administration and National Academy of Public Administration, along with his national and international awards and honors.

Holzer's primary research focuses on public sector productivity – a field he helped to establish. He also is the founder and director of the National Center for Public Productivity, and founder and editor-in-chief of *Public Performance and Management Review*, which provides practitioners and scholars with cutting-edge scholarship and research. In addition, he developed the E-Governance Institute to explore the impact of information technologies on public sector performance and how e-government can foster greater citizen involvement.

COMING SOON — A CENTURY OF REACHING HIGHER

All students, faculty, staff and alumni of Rutgers-Newark are invited to begin celebrating R-N's history, with the launch this year of a three-year commemoration of campus history, culminating in the 100th anniversary in 2008.

While 2006 marks the 60th anniversary of the merger of the University of Newark with Rutgers, the campus traces its initial roots to the New Jersey Law School, founded in 1908. That law school, along with Dana College, the Newark Institute of Arts & Sciences, the Seth Boyden School of Business and the Mercer Beasley School of Law, formed a series of alliances over the years, and a final merger in 1936 that resulted in the

establishment of the University of Newark. A decade later, the New Jersey State Legislature designated the University of Newark as the northern branch of Rutgers University.

The three-year celebration will touch on many facets of Rutgers-Newark's history – not just the institutions, but also the people who have left their mark, along with the buildings and stories of our home city of Newark. Get a head start now by visiting www.newark.rutgers.edu/history for facts, figures and some fun, old photos. Beginning this fall, *Connections* will start regular columns and features on "A Century of Reaching Higher" at R-N.



A campus shot from the 1950s

EARTH DAY – R-N'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan

Joe Pye, Lady Fern and Merry Bell may sound like names from a children's book, but actually are just a few of the many plants native to New Jersey. You don't have to go far either to find some of these treasures. As a result of Rutgers-Newark's second annual Earth Day celebration, a garden of native state plants now can be found right here on campus.

But it's not just a garden; it's a sustainable, perennial garden that requires little in the way of fertilizers and annual replacement. It is the campus' contribution both to the global environment and community around us, says Associate Professor Gabriela Kütting, who teaches global environmental politics and developed the idea for the garden.

"The whole idea of being environmentally friendly is to use local resources," she says. "We also saw this as a way to make the campus more interesting for the local community. If it prompts people to come here for a walk on a Sunday afternoon, wouldn't that be wonderful?"

Located on the campus plaza near Smith Hall, the garden was planted by students and other volunteers as part of the campus' Earth Day celebration. This year's celebration consisted of two events: the planting of the garden and assisting with the planting at the Greater Newark Conservancy, which also was the site of last



R-N volunteers dig into their task during Earth Day 2005

year's Earth Day celebration. Begun as a day of service, the Earth Day program provides the campus with an opportunity to show its appreciation for the city and global environment of which it is a part.

For a list of resources on what can be done year round to support green living, go to www.newark.rutgers.edu/earthday and click on the link "Resources for Green Living."

AN IMPRESSIVE INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

By Michael Sutton

You won't see any multicolored "Monopoly" money in this course. The eight elite MBA students at Rutgers Business School-Newark and New Brunswick (RBS) who take "Applied Portfolio Management" – a capstone MBA elective – deal in real greenbacks just like their Wall Street counterparts.

The students recommend investments in specific sectors, such as technology and health care, based on guidance from the instructors. The course was created by Professor Emeritus of Economics David Whitcomb. Whitcomb, who taught at Rutgers for 25 years, earmarked \$100,000 of the generous \$1 million gift he gave to Rutgers as seed money for the students' ventures into the world of high finance. He also funded the Whitcomb Center for Research in Financial Service at RBS and established a named professorship in finance.

"I really enjoy teaching the class because it's as close to reality on Wall Street as you can get," says instructor John Longo, chairman of the Investment Committee for The MDE Group, a registered investment advisor with \$1.4 billion under management. "It's run like a professional investor fund." He team-teaches the course with top-ranked mutual fund manager Basu Mullick of Neuberger & Berman.

Often, Longo notes, his students top their professional peers. The original \$100,000 has increased by 30 percent since it was established in 2000. "We probably rank among the top 10 percent of money managers," he observes. Each year, the student with the best stock report is awarded the \$2,000 Brick-Whitcomb Award.

"Many of these students have used their stock reports as interview openers to get jobs on Wall Street," Longo adds. "The reports allow them to say, 'Here's what I can do.'"



The Urban College Student Leadership Experience

By Nathan Fishman

Students in Rutgers-Newark Leadership Council (RU-NEW LEADS) have been encouraging hearts and challenging processes this semester as they learned to do last fall through their studies of Jim Kouzes' and Barry Posner's *The Leadership Challenge*. RU-NEW LEADS is a program that encourages and challenges students to develop their leadership skills and to apply those skills to service initiatives both on the R-N campus and within the greater Newark community.

RU-NEW LEADS consists of 21 student leaders. Their achievements include a motivational visit to Newark's

Central High School; a day of helping to build houses in Newark with Habitat For Humanity; an early morning shift at St. John's Soup Kitchen; and leadership training sessions for Newark's North Star Academy high school students, to name a few.

Last month, RU-NEW LEADS students also participated in a leadership exchange with 15 student leaders from Penn State University to discuss leadership challenges and to take part in the All Stars Project, which creates and provides educational and performing arts activities for minority youth. Next year, the R-N students plan to visit Penn State.

RU-NEW LEADS was founded by Darryl B. Holloman, associate dean and director of the Paul Robeson Campus Center, who explains that it is both a leadership development and research project. Holloman heads the research team that will be conducting surveys and focus groups to measure the students' success in achieving the learning objectives they have developed for themselves. In the fall, the team also hopes to survey other urban institutions such as Rutgers-Camden and Temple to compare leadership experiences.

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Eva Dowdell - Single-Minded Focus

"I've been stubborn my whole life; I had to be to get where I am," says Eva Dowdell, who will receive her J.D. degree this year. What she calls stubbornness, others would see as determination. Whatever you call it, it helped Dowdell get where she will be after graduation: the Manhattan District Attorney's office. It also has made her the first college graduate in a family where no one had completed high school.

Early on, it was obvious Dowdell would follow her own path in life. The Brooklyn native, who still calls the borough home, chose a Manhattan high school that was more diverse in its academic offerings, its student body and its faculty than her local school. She had to pay her own way to college, so she worked full time and went nights – taking seven years to earn her bachelor's degree. Her professional experiences spurred a new interest – public policy – and her determination resulted in her master's in public administration. Jobs followed with New York City, and with a consulting firm that worked with both the public and private sectors, neatly tying together her educational and work backgrounds.

When Dowdell set her mind on a law career, she researched several schools before choosing Rutgers; for her, the diversity of the student body and being a "small law school in a large university" were a perfect mix.

Her entry into law school was almost derailed by a serious car accident the spring before she started, but her trademark "stubbornness" saw her through. As a student, she was editor of the *Computer and Technology Law Journal*, won a partial scholarship, and her "note" – the major article written by each student on a law school journal – was published and is being cited in an upcoming textbook on criminal procedure.

Stubbornness or determination – by either name, it's worked for Dowdell.

KEEP CONNECTED

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