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A newsletter for the Rutgers-Newark community and neighbors

COMMENCEMENTS



Photo: Shelley Kusnetz

Class of 2007: Missions Accomplished

(l-r) La Tanya Harry; Bahareh Hassanzadeh and her husband, Vahid Tohidi; and Daphne Davalie will join more than 2,000 Rutgers-Newark students in May as graduates of the Class of 2007.

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By Carla Capizzi

The names in a commencement program reveal who is graduating, but not how they got there. Some members of the Class of 2007 share insights into their journeys toward their academic degrees.



La Tanya Harry, School of Law-Newark, JD, and Master's in City and Regional Planning, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Newark, NJ

When La Tanya Harry was a child, she realized she had to leave her East Harlem neighborhood to find better stores and schools. When she asked her mom how to change this, Andrea Lindo explained that political leaders ran communities and were the ones who could change them.

Ever since then, La Tanya has wanted to be one of the people who changes things. That's what drove her to intern in New York Congressman Charles Rangel's office as an undergraduate, serve as Congressman Charles Schumer's housing policy advisor for two years, and what motivated her to simultaneously complete both a law degree and a master's in city and regional planning. During this four-year program, La Tanya also interned with the New Jersey Office of Legislative Services as an Eagleton Fellow and with the New York Bar Association Civil Rights Committee as a Thurgood Marshall Fellow. She helped inmates register to vote through the Rutgers
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IMPROVING THE WAY OUR COMMUNITIES WORK

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan

Marc Holzer, dean of the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA), has a prediction about the City of Newark. His prediction: that Newark will become a leader for government efficiency and perhaps even an agent for helping to reduce New Jersey's high property taxes.

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Photo: William Ramos

Newark City Hall will become the newest on-site location this summer for an Executive MPA program offered through the School of Public Affairs and Administration.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

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COMMENCEMENT 2007

By Alisa Alt

A dedicated headmaster and committed humanitarian will be the recipient of an honorary degree and serve as a commencement speaker during the 2007 commencement ceremonies on the Rutgers-Newark campus in May.



Father Edwin Leahy, headmaster of St. Benedict's Preparatory School, will be presented with an honorary degree at the Newark College of Arts and Sciences commencement ceremony on May 17.

For his work in revitalizing St. Benedict's Preparatory School and on behalf of the Newark community, **Father Edwin D. Leahy**, O.S.B., has been named the 2007 Rutgers-Newark Institute on Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience (IECME) Gustav Heningburg Civic Fellow. He will deliver the commencement address and receive an Honorary Doctor of Letters Degree at the Newark College of Arts and Sciences and University College-Newark commencement ceremony on May 17.

The IECME Heningburg Civic Fellows Program creates partnerships between Newark's established and rising leaders and distinguished scholars at Rutgers and beyond. It also seeks new ways to address civic challenges and opportunities that face the city, while expanding Rutgers' involvement in Newark's ongoing revitalization.

Leahy has served as headmaster of St. Benedict's for nearly 25 years. Among his many honors and awards, he has received the Newark Human Rights Commission's Brotherhood Award, the Scholarship Fund for Inner-City Children's Vitae Discimus Award and a Doctorate of Humane Letters from Seton Hall University.

The School of Criminal Justice will begin the first of six commencement ceremonies on the R-N campus. **Colonel Joseph R. Fuentes**, the 14th superintendent of the New Jersey State Police, will address the graduates on May 16. Fuentes enlisted in the State Police in January 1978 and has served the Division of State Police throughout the state. He has served as a supervisor with the FBI/New Jersey State Police Joint Terrorism Task Force, Narcotics Units and Street Gang Unit, and was assigned as chief of the

Intelligence Bureau, overseeing nine units within the Intelligence Section. He is a co-recipient of the New Jersey State Police Trooper of the Year award and was appointed general chair of the State and Provincial Division of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The College of Nursing will hold its commencement ceremony May 17 when graduates will hear from one of their own, **Professor Lucille Joel**. Since joining the college in 1979, Joel has held a number of leadership positions, including director of the Teaching Nursing Home program. She also has served as president of the American Nurses Association, advisor to the Joint Commission on the Accreditations of Healthcare Organizations, chairperson of the Federal Drug Administration's steering committee on nursing and medical devices, and director of the Federal Nurse Traineeship Program. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including an Honorary Recognition Award from the Society of Certified Clinical Specialists in Psychiatric Nursing and the New Jersey Governor's Nursing Merit Award for Education.

On the morning of May 18, Rutgers Business School (RBS) graduates will hear from Rutgers University alumnus **Nicholas J. Valeriani**, worldwide chairman of cardiovascular devices and diagnostics and a member of the executive committee at Johnson & Johnson. Valeriani began his career at Johnson & Johnson in 1978 in the engineering division of Ethicon, Inc. and advanced through various positions in engineering, operations, sales management and product management. He also chaired the Corporate Contributions Committee and was a member of the Management Compensation and Pension committees. Prior to his current position at Johnson & Johnson, Valeriani served as worldwide chairman of diagnostics.

Following the RBS commencement ceremony, **Paula Tallal**, Rutgers Board of Governors Professor of Neuroscience, will address Graduate School-Newark and School of Public Affairs and Administration graduates on the Norman Samuels Plaza. Co-director of the Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience at R-N, Tallal is a cognitive neuroscientist and a board-certified clinical psychologist. She also is co-founder of Scientific Learning Corporation and a world-renowned authority on language-learning disabilities. In addition to receiving the designation as Board of Governors Professor, the university's highest academic honor, Tallal is the recipient of the Rutgers

Commencement-At-A-Glance

Wednesday, May 16

10 a.m.

School of Criminal Justice, Golden Dome Athletic Center

Speaker: Colonel Joseph R. Fuentes, superintendent of the New Jersey State Police

Thursday, May 17

10 a.m.

College of Nursing, Golden Dome Athletic Center

Speaker: Professor Lucille Joel, College of Nursing

4 p.m.

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

Speaker and Honorary Degree Recipient: Father Edwin D. Leahy, headmaster, St. Benedict's Preparatory School, Newark

Friday, May 18

10 a.m.

Rutgers Business School, Norman Samuels Plaza

Speaker: Nicholas J. Valeriani, worldwide chairman, cardiovascular devices and diagnostics, Johnson & Johnson.

3 p.m.

Graduate School-Newark and School of Public Affairs & Administration, Norman Samuels Plaza

Speaker: Board of Governors Professor Paula Tallal, co-director, Rutgers Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience

Friday, May 25

10 a.m.

School of Law-Newark, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Speaker: The Honorable James R. Zazzali, chief justice, New Jersey Supreme Court

Board of Trustees' Award for Excellence in Research, the Thomas Alvin Edison Award from the Research Development Council of New Jersey, and was a *Discover* magazine finalist for the Science and Technology Discoverer of the Year Award.

The School of Law-Newark will conclude R-N's commencement ceremonies on May 25 with an address by **Chief Justice James R. Zazzali**, the seventh chief justice to lead the New Jersey Supreme Court. Among his many achievements, Zazzali has served as chief of the Appeals Division of the Office of the Essex County Prosecutor, as general counsel to the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority and as New Jersey attorney general. At the request of the United States State Department, he also has served on various delegations to United Nations conferences. In addition, he is a former associate editor of the *New Jersey Law Journal*, and a contributor to numerous publications.

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

Missions Accomplished... from page 1

Constitutional Litigation Clinic. Each of those projects provided "real hands-on experience" to advance her to her ultimate goal: to help citizens change their worlds for the better by arming them with the knowledge to effect those changes. "People need to realize that life is bigger than their community, and that the world outside impacts them," she explains.

Daphne Davalie, Newark College of Arts and Sciences, BA, journalism, Lithonia, GA



When Daphne Davalie left her native New Orleans, she initially studied drama in New York. When that didn't work out as hoped, she came to Rutgers to follow another dream: writing about fashion. She majored in journalism, and through internships spent semesters working on *TRACE*, a fashion magazine, and as a judge on a fashion reality show, "My Model Looks Better Than Your Model," on BET J, part of Black Entertainment Television.

Hurricane Katrina proved to be a long-distance ordeal for Daphne and a first-hand trauma for her family. As the flood waters rose, her family left their home in Orleans Parish and fled to Mississippi, but with

communications cut off, Daphne was unable to contact them for days. The Rutgers community gave her emotional support during her ordeal and also raised funds for her family.

Her family is now in Georgia and will probably never return to New Orleans. But Daphne's May graduation will unite them temporarily in New Jersey, and her parents are thrilled that Daphne already plans to go to graduate school with the ultimate goal of working as a fashion editor or editing a fashion magazine.



Bahareh Hassanzadeh, Graduate School-Newark, Ph.D., neuroscience



Vahid Tohidi, Graduate School-Newark, Ph.D., biological sciences, both from Newark, NJ

Love brought Bahareh Hassanzadeh and husband Vahid Tohidi together – love of science, that is. They met nine years ago as medical school interns in their native Iran. As they worked together, each was impressed by the other's love of science and research. They discovered that each had been passionate about science since

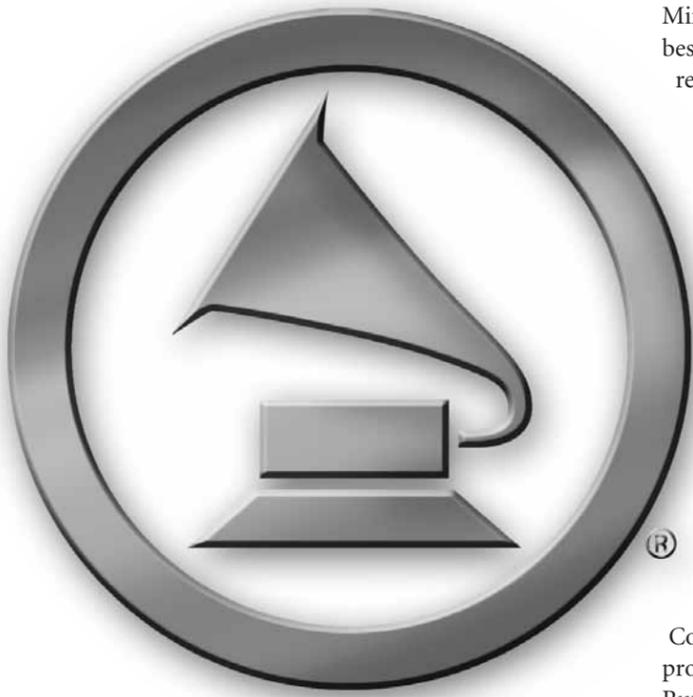
childhood, and as researchers working together to help patients who had neurodegenerative diseases or spinal injuries, they decided to devote their lives to research in this area. More personal interests were revealed over time, including exploring caves, mountain-climbing, and a sense of adventure: together they climbed the highest mountain in Iran.

Leaving behind extensive families and coming to a different culture was trying, both admit. During their years at Rutgers-Newark, however, they developed friendships and learned to bridge the cultural gaps—both now ski, and they explore the Garden State as they bicycle and enjoy the outdoors.

They say doing research at Rutgers-Newark provided them both with the opportunity for developing extra research abilities in neuroscience and prepared them for future challenges.

After graduating, they hope to work together at a research center. "We would be doing what we love, and helping people and society as well," notes Vahid. "Perhaps if we are lucky, we will succeed in a discovery," adds Bahareh.

On The Plaza



Rutgers-Newark and the Grammys

Rutgers-Newark had two winners among this year's Grammy award recipients.

Dan Morgenstern, long-time director of the Rutgers Institute of Jazz Studies, collected his seventh Grammy award, this one for Best Album Notes for Fats Waller's "If You Got to Ask, You Ain't Got It."

The Grammy, presented in February, was the latest in a series of honors bestowed upon Morgenstern in recognition of his lifetime of contributions to jazz. In January, Morgenstern stood alongside other jazz luminaries on a stage in New York – the only non-musician in the group – as he was named a Jazz Master by the National Endowment for the Arts, receiving the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy.

Also receiving a Grammy honor this year was Lyle Preslar, a third-year student at Rutgers School of Law-Newark and a former music industry executive. Preslar was one of five winners in the national Grammy Foundation Entertainment Law Initiative Writing Competition. Preslar's winning essay focused on the copyright infringement lawsuit filed by the Recording Industry Association of America against XM Satellite Radio.

Preslar launched a career in music at the age of 17 as a founder, guitarist and songwriter for the punk band,

Minor Threat. The group, recognized as one of the best punk bands, has sold more than one million records since its breakup in 1983. After receiving his undergraduate degree, Preslar worked as an artist manager, booking agent and paralegal. He then began a career as a music industry executive, working for Virgin Records, EMI, Elektra Records and Sire Records in marketing and label management.

Combating Political Corruption

When it comes to stopping political corruption, citizen groups and the governor hold the greatest sway, according to a recent survey of New Jersey residents.

Conducted as part of the Rutgers Ethics Initiative, a program of the Prudential Business Ethics Center at Rutgers Business School–Newark and New Brunswick (RBS), the survey found that state residents believe citizen groups hold the greatest potential for raising ethical standards. Twenty-six percent said they believe so, while 20 percent look to the governor, 17 percent to federal prosecutors, and 12 percent to the Legislature. Business leaders were at the bottom at 6 percent.

The Rutgers Ethics Initiative is a non-partisan project to encourage cooperation between business and government to promote ethics in New Jersey.

The survey also found that the public is evenly divided over whether a single state agency should enforce ethics rules for state and local officials and employees or if the current system of local governments policing their own elected officials and employees should be retained.

A summary of the survey results can be found on the RBS website at <http://business.rutgers.edu> (click on Faculty & Research," "Academic Centers," "Prudential Business Ethics").

Chorus to Honor Paul Robeson in Wales

In the 1950s, Paul Robeson, determined to honor his commitment, picked up the telephone and sang to the people of Wales. He was unable to travel after the United States confiscated his passport, but unwilling to disappoint those he admired.

An alumnus of Rutgers, Robeson, artist, singer, scholar, athlete and human rights advocate, possessed a deep passion for the miners in Wales. He made several visits to the Welsh mining areas in the 1930s. And when he was prevented from joining the Miners' Eisteddfod art festival in 1957, he spoke and sang over a carefully arranged transatlantic telephone line.

This May, the Rutgers University Chorus will honor Robeson's legacy during its tour abroad in Wales by singing spirituals recorded by Robeson. "For those in our audiences who may not be aware of Robeson's history, our programs also will include a narrative on Robeson and his connection with Rutgers and Wales," says John Floreen, conductor of the chorus. Included among the locations where the chorus will be performing during its May 18-27 tour is Llandudno where Robeson performed in 1930.

Since its founding at Rutgers-Newark in 1947, the chorus has made five previous international tours: Germany and the Czech Republic in 1997, Holland in 1999, France in 2001, England in 2003, and Scotland in 2005.

The Hidden Networks of Brain Function

While research into memory formation and learning generally has focused on pinpointing the major areas of the brain involved in each, Stephen Jose Hanson, professor of psychology, has taken a different approach. Taking into account that different areas of the brain seem to have multiple functions, Hanson is uncovering how specific regions work together to account for these phenomena.

Supporting his work in this area is the James S. McDonnell Foundation, which recently awarded a \$1.2 million grant to him and his collaborators at Carnegie Mellon University, the University of California at Los Angeles and Dartmouth.

"Whether we consider language processing, working memory or simple detection tasks, the cognitive and perceptual processes are likely to include regions of the brain that operate interactively," explains Hanson. "This leads to at least two ideas: one that specific, higher-order functions may require that different brain regions act together in a particular sequence, and that overlapping brain regions may be part of networks that serve several cognitive functions."

Such an understanding could help to provide insight into specific brain dysfunctions, such as those seen in autism, and, thereby, lead to new and better therapies, says Dr. Catherine Hanson, a research scientist in the Department of Psychology working at the Autism Center at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

A CENTURY OF REACHING HIGHER - www.newark.rutgers.edu/history

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

By Bill Glovin

Jerry Izenberg, NCAS '52, the renowned sports columnist for *The Star-Ledger*, recalls getting his first taste of journalism working for *The Observer*. As a student at Rutgers-Newark, he also joined Epsilon Lambda, the first interracial fraternity, and worked 40 hours a week at a nearby chemical plant. "All my classes were from 8 a.m. to noon, and I took two buses caught on South Street to get downtown," says Izenberg, who grew up in Newark.

One of Izenberg's classmates was Chuck Pezzano, NCAS '52, one of the great pro bowlers in history. And in Izenberg's senior year, the Newark campus came in third in the national fencing championships.

By the time Izenberg went to work for *The Star-Ledger* in his last year at R-N, he had met one of his favorite sports characters of all-time, Hank Bodner, the university's basketball and baseball coach. "He

was an enormous character and coach who may have invented the zone press," says Izenberg. "We had some very good teams and played basketball at the Newark Armory and baseball at Harvey Field in Kearny."

After college, the sports reporter served in the army during the Korean War and eventually came back to teach at R-N for two years. He has gone on to run his own annual charity college football game for Newark public school students and has become one of the few living sports writers to have covered every Super Bowl in the game's 40-year history. "The school was the lifeblood for a generation of kids like myself," says Izenberg. "I credit Rutgers–Newark for many of the good things that have happened in my life."

To learn more about Izenberg's career as a sports reporter, read *The Star-Ledger* series "Through My Eyes: Jerry Izenberg's 55 Years in Sports" at <http://www.nj.com/sports/ledger/izenberg/>.



Photo: Courtesy Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries

A PARTING GIFT: AN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL GEM

By Carla Capizzi

It's surprising to learn that Lynn Mullins didn't consciously choose to be a librarian; she is, after all, retiring June 30 as director of the John Cotton Dana Library. But as the Manhattan resident talks about her lifelong love of books and learning, and countless hours spent in the New York Public Library, you realize that her life's work evolved.

Mullins' decision to come to Rutgers 20 years ago from Marymount Manhattan College also was a natural move: Mullins was drawn to the urban campus and its diverse population, its interactions with Newark, and the chance to contribute to "a campus on the move." During her Rutgers career, she worked to "integrate the library and all of its services into the life of the campus." Mullins expanded the library's collections to support its academic and research missions, and developed both a permanent art collection and a gallery that presents rotating exhibitions. She oversaw construction of the Dana Room to host concerts and talks, and moved the Institute of Jazz Studies into facilities specially designed to protect the world's largest jazz archives. Mullins shepherded, with others, Dana's transition into digital information, balancing "creating the new, working with the traditional."



After 20 successful years of building the educational and cultural resources at the John Cotton Dana Library, Lynn Mullins will be retiring in June.

Her parting gift to R-N is a library that is a great learning resource, a cultural and art center, and a community hub.

For Mullins, life after R-N will include writing a book about her late friend, sculptor Stella Waitzkin. Mullins served as the personal archivist for Waitzkin; four of Waitzkin's works are in the Dana collection.

NATIONALLY RENOWNED JEFFERSONIAN SCHOLAR JOINS R-N

By Carla Capizzi

Few university history departments can boast of having not one but two distinguished experts on Thomas Jefferson on their faculties. But Rutgers-Newark can, now that Annette Gordon-Reed has joined Jan Ellen Lewis, acting dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science-Newark and renowned Jeffersonian scholar, in the department.

Gordon-Reed's interest in Jefferson relates to the central themes of her research and teaching: the history of race and slavery in America. "The issue of race has been at the heart of the American dilemma from the very beginning," Gordon-Reed notes. "How do you develop a multicultural society when you have the paradox of slavery and freedom existing together in the United States?" Her critically acclaimed first book, *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*, examines the relationship between Jefferson and Sally Hemings, an enslaved woman on his plantation.

Lewis is author of *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family Values in Jefferson's Virginia* and co-author of *Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture*. The two scholars noted that they are excited about the opportunities they will have for collaborating and enhancing Rutgers-Newark's reputation as a center for Jeffersonian scholarship.

Gordon-Reed earned her BA from Dartmouth in 1981 and her law degree from Harvard in 1984. She spent the early part of her career working in law, remains on the faculty at New York Law School, and frequently speaks on history and law-related topics. Her latest book, *The Hemings Family of Monticello: A Story of American Slavery*, is being published by W.W. Norton.

Improving Communities ... from page 1

An impressive prediction, certainly, but one based on several recent developments, including Newark's formation of an Office of Innovation and Performance Management. Also helping Newark to make that a reality is SPAA. This June, the school will begin offering an Executive MPA program for city employees and other public and nonprofit professionals at Newark City Hall. In addition, SPAA faculty and students are working with the Office of Innovation and Performance Management on implementing a performance measurement project for the city. The first part of that project will be to survey Newark residents.

"It's not just about gathering complaints," says Holzer. "Citizens can tell you what you are doing well and what needs improvement. Measuring where you are helps you to get where you want to be."

For example, if a survey finds that a city's building permit process is overly complicated and plagued by delays, it also uncovers a reason why its economic development may be off track. Information provided by such surveys can help pinpoint where changes need to be made, which can range from something as simple as

redesigning a form to realigning staff and financial resources.

Although still in the development stages, the Newark survey most likely will address the full range of city services, from garbage collection, to the issuance of building permits, to street and sidewalk repairs, to transportation, says Holzer.

Numerous communities around the country have gained impressive results from performance measurement, including New York City and Anchorage, Alaska, says Holzer. But there has yet to be a comprehensive effort undertaken in New Jersey. Newark will be the first. As it does so and identifies how it can improve its efficiency, the city not only can provide a model for other municipalities in the state, it also can position itself to offer its services to smaller surrounding communities. All of which could serve to make government in New Jersey more efficient and perhaps even help to lower property taxes, says Holzer.

"I think the heart of municipal innovation in New Jersey is going to be Newark," he adds. "It's wonderful to see this taking root in the state."

R-N RESEARCHER AWARDED \$1.5 MILLION FOR MOTOR PROTEIN STUDY

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan

HHeart disease, cancer and stroke are the three leading killers in the United States. At Rutgers-Newark, Charalampos "Babis" Kalodimos, assistant professor of chemistry, is focused on gaining a better understanding of the proteins involved in all three.

In recognition of his leading work in the area of motor proteins and heart disease and stroke, Kalodimos recently was awarded a \$1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). His proposal also received one of the highest rankings awarded by the NIH, according to Lynn Schneemeyer, vice provost for research at R-N.

The award will fund Kalodimos' research into the motor protein SecA, which is contained within bacteria that are inhaled or ingested into the human body. Once the bacteria enter the body, SecA then directs proteins to push outside the bacteria cells and enter human cells. It is the spread of those proteins that can lead to heart failure and stroke.

Kalodimos likes to compare SecA's function to the zip code system used by the United States Postal Service to direct mail. Like the scanner that reads zip codes, SecA is able to read the signals emitted by proteins, while also providing them with the energy to move into the human body.

Kalodimos explains that gaining a better understanding of how SecA functions could lead to the development of more effective drug therapies to lower the incidence of heart disease and stroke.

His other major research, also funded by the NIH, is focused on gaining a better understanding of proteins involved in many human cancers, including various carcinomas and sarcomas.



Charalampos "Babis" Kalodimos, assistant professor of chemistry, in his lab in the Life Sciences Center where he and his team are working on gaining a better understanding of the motor proteins involved in heart disease, cancer and stroke.

KEEP CONNECTED

Connections and *Connections: News Digest* are published by the Office of Communications. Your comments are welcome.

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