



David Coates
President, NYSACAC
School Counselor,
Kenmore East High
School

Welcome from the President

College freshmen are finding their way in their new environments and high school seniors across New York State are dreaming about where they will be next year at this time. As one class enters college and another class prepares to apply, high school and college counselors are in learning mode as well, updating

themselves on what is new in the profession as well as on the wealth of campuses across our state and country. Yes, it must be fall as the college admission process kicks into high gear and NYSACAC is eager to help “Lead the Way” in assisting counselors, and through them, students and families prepare for the challenges that lie ahead.

Every year that I attend the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Conference in the fall, I realize the impact NYSACAC has on our profession both locally and nationally. Once again, NYSACAC was recognized nationally as Kristen Collins from Adelphi University has been selected to receive NACAC’s Rising Star Award. Additionally, over 400 professionals from across New York State will be traveling to Denver, eager to attend the numerous educational sessions available and take advantage of the limitless networking opportunities NACAC has to offer. If you have not had the opportunity to attend a national conference, I encourage you to consider attending NACAC’s first international conference taking place in Toronto.

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Did You Know?

*Submitted by Rob Piurowski,
NYSACAC VP of Communications*

JobTarget, located on the NYSACAC website, is a portal of up-to-date job postings in enrollment management within New York State. You can create a free “jobseeker” account to post resumes and set alerts for positions that may be of interest to you.

For employers looking to fill open positions, JobTarget provides an opportunity to post openings on their site for a nominal fee and provides several vanity options such as: online application submission and access to “jobseeker” resumes.

If you are interested in learning more about JobTarget, don’t hesitate to email vp.communications@nysacac.org or visit the NYSACAC website.

Upcoming Events:

October 3, 2012: E-board Meeting (At Denver NACAC)

October 4, 2012: General Membership Meeting (At Denver NACAC)

November 6, 2012: Election Day

December 6, 2012: E-board Meeting (Albany)

February 11, 2013: Legislative Advocacy Day in Albany

President’s Welcome, continued

We are looking for a strong representation from NYSACAC as our neighbors to the north host the national conference in late September 2013.

As we immerse ourselves in the new school year, I hope you will remember each of the valuable programs and activities NYSACAC has planned to help you grow as a professional. Just a couple of weeks ago, we held our first Student Leaders in Admissions Forum at LIU Post in Brookville, NY geared towards student ambassadors and their supervisors in admissions. The program received rave reviews, and we look forward to offering this forum every year.

On February 11, 2013 the Government Relations Committee will be hosting our Legislative Advocacy Day in Albany, NY. Please plan on joining us as we meet our legislators to lobby for programs that support higher education. In the spring, we will be offering six regional forums across the state to bring together high school and college counselors as we explore a topic of great relevance for all. This year’s forums will focus on college admissions for students with special needs. In addition, the Professional Development Committee is in the process of planning the first annual Empire State College Tour for counselors and CBO’s this spring. In early June, our thirty-fifth Annual Conference and the Coming Together Conference will be held at Canisius College in Buffalo, NY. We finish the year with the Camp College and Summer Institute programs that take place each summer.

Please visit our website at www.nysacac.org for more information on all these programs and everything else NYSACAC is doing for the 2012-13 school year. If you are interested in getting involved in NYSACAC, or want to help plan any of these events please contact us at nysacac@nysacac.org. I am honored to be leading a group of dedicated and talented professionals who serve on the executive board as president of NYSACAC, and I look forward to a great year ahead.

CBO SPOTLIGHT: Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program

The Children's Aid Society's Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program (CAS-Carrera) has greatly benefited from its partnership with NYSACAC, enhancing the program's ability to offer underserved students the single most effective poverty-fighting tool: a college degree.

Founded in 1984, CAS-Carrera is an evidence-based program proven to help young people develop the desire and tools to avoid parenthood and other risky behaviors during adolescence. A program of The Children's Aid Society in New York City, it uses a holistic, "above the waist" approach to ensure young people develop ambitious personal goals, improve their sexual literacy, and cultivate the desire for a productive future. The program is built on seven integrated, scientifically accurate, and age-appropriate components: daily education, weekly Job Club, weekly mental health (and social work services, as needed), weekly family life and sexuality education, multiple exposures to lifetime individual sports and self-expression, and access to comprehensive medical and dental services. Guided by a philosophy that sees youth as "at promise" not "at risk," CAS-Carrera begins working with boys and girls at age 10 or 11 and follows them through high school graduation and college admission.

Today, CAS-Carrera serves over 1,800 middle and high school students in four New York City public schools through its innovative in-school model, which integrates its core components within the school day schedule in traditional public schools and charter schools. These young people face a range of interconnected challenges including poverty, lack of parental engagement, and limited educational and school guidance support. In addition, low rates of adult educational attainment in their communities demonstrate a dearth of adult modeling; accordingly many young people perceive college to be out of reach.

In response, as soon as young people enroll in CAS-Carrera in fifth or sixth grade, they are immersed in a culture that has high expectations of high school completion and post-secondary education and they are provided the tools to prepare for college as they enter and progress through high school. CAS-Carrera College Coordinator Felipe Ayala, Jr. – a CAS-Carrera program alumnus himself – has oversight of all college readiness and prep services, collaborating closely with Education and Job Club component staff to deliver a multi-disciplinary approach. By senior year, our oldest participants sit for their SATs, fine-tune personal statements, narrow down college searches, secure application fee waivers for SUNY, CUNY and other schools, conduct follow-up campus visits and interviews, and submit college and financial aid applications.

Deconstruction of barriers to learning and academic success takes years; CAS-Carrera youth development professionals rely on the long-term dosage of the program model to gently, firmly and persistently move the dial in the right direction. In order to position young people for long-term success, the intervention with them must be daily, robust, and pursued in conjunction with each school's leaders. Thanks to CAS-Carrera's commitment to college completion and dedicated program partners such as NYASCAC, New York City students most in need of support are receiving the resources and services they need to enroll and stay in college through graduation, and helping them move from prospective tax burden to potential taxpayers.

Book Review : "Limbo: Blue-Collar Roots, White-Collar Dreams" by Alfred Lubrano

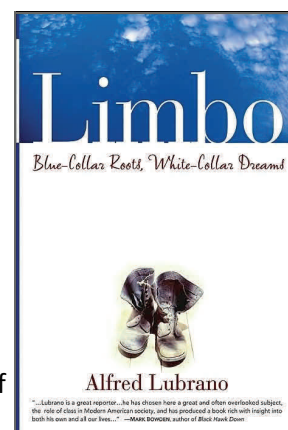
Submitted by Lisa Raney

Assistant Director of Admissions, Syracuse University

Co-Chair, NYSACAC Newsletter Committee

Anyone who works with first-generation college students (or if you were one yourself) should immediately read this book – get it for your Kindle, download it onto your phone, buy it at your local B&N if that's your thing, but do yourself a favor and read it now. Certainly, all of us who work in secondary and higher education believe firmly in the American Dream; the idea that through access to education and a commitment to hard work, each generation will achieve more, go farther, experience a greater level of prosperity and success than the generation that preceded them. This concept is still alive and well, but what we often don't hear about are the real challenges of adapting to an

(continued on next page)



(Book review, continued)

overwhelmingly middle-class college environment and eventually, the professional workplace.

Enter: “Limbo: Blue-Collar Roots, White Collar Dreams.” The author, Alfred Lubrano, is a former New York Times reporter and the son of a Brooklyn bricklayer. In his own narrative, he describes what it was like to be a student at Columbia University, where his father built buildings “he couldn’t go into once they were finished.” At once too-bookish for his old neighborhood and too rough around the edges to be successful in his college dating scene, Lubrano provides countless other scenarios to which those of us from working-class families can easily relate. He calls us “straddlers,” those with strong ties to family, tradition, and often, hard physical work, but who face a brave new world upon matriculating. “On Broadway, I felt stupid. Back in Brooklyn, I was a snob.” For straddlers, the challenge to reconcile this tension doesn’t end at graduation.

Lubrano shares not only his own experiences, but also those of nearly 100 individuals interviewed for this book. Their stories showed that families can be at once proud of their straddler’s achievements and resentful at feeling left behind; that cross-class dating and initial forays into after-hours mingling with co-workers can be unexpectedly strange experiences. Straddlers, Lubrano writes, are bilingual citizens – we speak both the language of the working class and that of the college-educated. Like interpreters and translators, our responsibility is to bridge the gap between two different cultures.

For those of us who work in higher or secondary education, that role becomes doubly important. First generation students may not fully understand the divide that can develop once they enter the ranks of college graduates, but they do know that they’re setting foot into what, for them and their families, is uncharted territory. And that’s why I love this book so much; not only because of the countless “it’s not just me who’s felt this way” moments, but because it’s such an important reminder for all of us “Straddlers” to be proud of your working-class roots; to let students know who you are and where you’ve come from. Maybe they haven’t exactly fit into their own neighborhoods and are hoping that college will really allow them to feel at home for the first time; maybe it will, but it might present a new set of challenges, too. They need to know that we’re here, and that we understand.

Summer Institute 2012 –Saratoga, NY: More than a conference

*Submitted by Carolynn Laurenza,
College Counselor at Uncommon Charter High School in
Brooklyn, NY*

In the rush of the beginning of the new school year, it is hard to believe that just a month ago I was in Saratoga at lovely Skidmore College for the NYSACAC Summer Institute with high school counselors and admissions officers from around the state. Even now, I am still feeling overwhelming gratitude for having been able to attend the Institute and for NYSACAC’s commitment to reaching out to those of us who work with students from underrepresented backgrounds.

As a high school college counselor, I naturally love opening my students’ eyes to college options. I work with the best students anyone could ask for. They inspire me every day, and they will be the first graduating class from our high school this year! New to New York, I desperately wanted to do right by my students in their college application process, and I knew I could not do it alone.

The NYSACAC Summer Institute gave me everything I hoped for in bringing together seasoned admissions professionals and college counselors, as well as new counselors from across the state. We experienced great sessions that will inform our work, on topics from ethics to athletics. John gave up his lunch to give us high school counselors feedback on our school profiles. Chris brought us to tears with his college access success stories from his days at Young Womens’ Leadership School. Heather’s financial aid session was the best I have seen. David and Will broke down letters of recommendation from both sides of the desk. Lisa gave us the nuts and bolts while keeping us laughing.

After those four intense days of learning in which every second was well-planned to be filled with networking, stimulating sessions, and of course fun, I returned to work with a to-do list pages long, of inspirational best practices, connections and practical strategies. I also came back to emails and texts from my new colleagues who I look forward to collaborating with throughout the next few months. (I am especially excited to see some of my new Institute friends at our school when they come to visit and meet with my students!)

Thanks in part to karaoke, we forged bonds that will take us through this year and beyond. I look forward to using the resources that Casey, John, Lisa, Will, Heather, Sonia and so many others were so willing to share, and to hitting the ground running for my students this admissions season.

Thanks to the generosity of Skidmore College, NYSACAC, and our amazing mentors on both sides of the desk who gave so willingly of their time, wisdom and resources, a new generation of New York College Admissions Counseling Professionals are ready to embark on the 2012-13 school year!

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Fall 2012 NACAC College Fairs

October 7:	Denver, CO
October 9:	New Orleans, LA
October 9 & 10:	Minneapolis, MN
October 10:	Baton Rouge, LA
October 13:	Jacksonville, FL
October 14:	Cincinnati, OH
October 14:	Phoenix, AZ
October 21:	St. Louis, MO
October 26 & 27:	Portland, OR
October 29 & 30:	Baltimore, MD
November 1:	Atlantic City, NJ
November 1:	Fort Lauderdale, FL
November 2:	Seattle, WA
November 4:	Philadelphia, PA
November 6:	Spokane, WA
November 7:	Washington, DC

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Matt Lamb, senior, Buffalo NY

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**Rising Star Award - Kristen Collins,
Director of Undergraduate Admissions,
Adelphi University**



Recipient of this year's Rising Star Award, Kristen Collins joined Adelphi University three years ago as an Assistant Director of Admissions. Eager to get involved, she began volunteering her time through regional associations and various events such as Camp College. Throughout each experience, Kristen expanded her network of mentors and friends, helping her to succeed in all areas of her career. In 2011, shortly after attending her first annual NYSACAC conference, Kristen landed the role as co-chair of NYSACAC's Professional Development Committee, where she began working alongside talented colleagues in uniting counseling and college professionals state and nationwide.

Today, Kristen serves as the Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Adelphi University and maintains her role as co-chair of NYSACAC's Professional Development Committee. In addition, she recently accepted the role as a college delegate, helping to represent the voices of her colleagues.

Kristen credits joining and remaining active in NYSACAC as one of the best decisions in both her personal and professional life. Having met such talented people through this organization, she recognizes the true value of mentors. She notes that many have become more than just mentors - they have become her friends. Kristen thanks the NYSACAC for the work the organization does in elevating our industry and relevant issues to the level of importance deserved, while emphasizing the relationships and friendships created along the way. Kristen states the NYSACAC, "is truly a wonderful, life-changing organization."

**Mark Your Calendars: the 35th Annual
NYSACAC Conference at Canisius College, June 5-7
Coming Together Conference, June 4-5**

*Submitted by Tim Lee, NYSACAC President-Elect and Chair of the
2013 Conference Steering Committee*

The 35th Annual NYSACAC Conference returns to the "City of Good Neighbors," Buffalo, NY, starting Wednesday, June 5 and concluding Friday, June 7 on the campus of Canisius College. The Coming Together Conference will start on Tuesday, June 4 and conclude in the early afternoon of Wednesday, June 5.

Canisius College and the Conference Steering Committee have been busy organizing and planning what will be an exciting conference. This year's theme encourages us to "Go Exploring: Mind, Body, and Spirit." We will continue to challenge the **Mind** by offering high quality and thought-provoking educational sessions, care for the **Body** by incorporating health and fitness into the conference, and encourage everyone to explore the **Spirit** of Buffalo and the western New York region.

Here are some anticipated highlights:

We will continue with the new conference layout that was unveiled at last year's conference - including an abbreviated opening session, where we announce our award winners and the keynote speaker will present during a separate session on Thursday morning.

* Last year's successful Counselors' College Fair on Thursday afternoon will return - in a shorter format.

* Offering a wide spectrum of educational sessions - including break out times for entry-level and middle management admissions staff members and attempting to offer CEUs for the secondary school/CBO population.

*The conference social on Wednesday will be held at the Buffalo Zoo, in what promises to be a unique experience, while Thursday evening will showcase the sounds and tastes of the Buffalo region in an on-campus carnival.

*Fundraisers include excursions throughout western New York's local tourist attractions, events that showcase Buffalo's rich architectural history, and the return of the 5k walk/run.

*A new and exciting format to Coming Together that promises to be a unique and groundbreaking experience.

I encourage you to visit the NYSACAC webpage (www.nysacac.org) and check out the 2013 conference link on the homepage for more information on the conference and surrounding area.

Storytelling and College Writing Readiness:

A Collaboration Between the College-Bound Initiative, the University of Rochester and Story To College

Submitted by: Carol Barash, Founder and CEO, Story to College, Joe Latimer, Assistant Dean for Enrollment Diversity and Outreach, University of Rochester, Patrick O'Neill, Senior Admissions Counselor, University of Rochester, and Jon Roure, Director, CollegeBound Initiative

One of the most difficult parts of the college application process for many students can be the personal essay. It can be even more difficult when students do not feel confident in choosing a topic or understand what the role of the essay is in the college application process. These challenges are compounded for first-generation college students and students from economically disadvantaged schools and communities (for a white paper about how Story To College addresses these inequities, please see <http://info.storytocollege.com/storytelling-college-readiness/>).

Through a unique partnership between Story To College, the CollegeBound Initiative (CBI), and the University of Rochester Admissions Office, a new program was developed and launched in summer 2012 to serve economically disadvantaged students in New York City in an effort to improve their writing and public speaking skills and confidence and better prepare them for the college application process and college-level writing.

From July 16 - 20, 2012, Story To College taught a course for 9th and 10th graders at the Jefferson Market Library in Manhattan. The course was based on Story To College's 15-hour essay development course and taught by Story To College instructors, Charles Inniss, MFA, Hyeree Grace Kim, EdM, and Evelyn Colon, MA. Preliminary data from a study by Yale University have shown that the Story To College curriculum improves students:

- * Writing capacity and fluency
- * Understanding of the college admissions process and the role of the college essays
- * Confidence in public speaking
- * The social-emotional attributes of college readiness and success

In addition to instructors from Story To College, Patrick O'Neill, an admissions counselor from the University of Rochester was also present to describe and demystify aspects of the college application process as well as answer the students' questions in detail. More than half of the students were from CBI schools (14 of the 31 CBI applicants were admitted and offered scholarships from Rochester to attend). Students worked in groups with peers and Story To College faculty each day to construct five different types of application essays--defining moments, influences, issues, community, and why I want to attend this college--based on stories from their own experience.

Before the class, only 11% of attendees said they understood the role of the essay in the application process. After the course, 88% did. Students reported that oral storytelling helped them to improve their writing in many ways. One student said that a highpoint of the course was "Telling stories in a way that captures the readers' interest and leaves them wanting more." Another student said, "I learned about effective magnets (story openers) and I understand how essays are supposed to encapsulate specific moments which relate to my potential place in a college environment." By the end of the program, each student had completed four to six different college essays, and each participant chose one essay to further refine into a final draft. The program experienced some obstacles, including a few absences (one student's apartment in the Bronx had caught fire during the night) and ensuring that all students completed homework on time. However, the outcomes were largely positive and they bode well for future collaborations.

CollegeBound Initiative (CBI), a program of the Young Women's Leadership Network, was extremely appreciative of the opportunity to participate in the College Application Essay Writing Course. Connecting students with the Story to College program is just one of the many ways the University of Rochester has taken a vested interest in the students they serve. Story To College staff was very committed to seeing their students succeed. The small learning environment really provided a safe space for students to express themselves through writing and public speaking. Often times, individuals do not take time to think about themselves and reflect on what is compelling, remarkable, and unique about them. Story To College provided that opportunity and ultimately helped to develop skills and confidence in each of its participants. CBI looks forward to building on this year's success by supporting more students through the Story To College and University of Rochester pipeline.

The University of Rochester's Admissions Office sees this program's success as a path to future collaboration with Story To College and increasing an already strong relationship with CBI. Ideas include staying in contact with, and planning a follow-up course for, the students who attended this summer's class, repeating this summer course next year with more students from as many different CBI schools as possible (and including a CBI alum), beginning recruitment of appropriate CBI students earlier for next summer's program, and, according to Jonathan Burdick, University of Rochester, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, "being present in NYC as a college admissions resource for students from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods and schools. For the University of Rochester this program is part of that broader mission."

Institute co-directors, mentors, and Curriculum Director Denny J. Nicholson, Dean of Admission at Le Moyne College, and On-Site Coordinator, Sarah Ireland, Associate Director of Admissions at Skidmore College, got the karaoke ball rolling with a rousing rendition of "We Are Family" and ended the night with, what else: "New York, New York."

The next morning, mentor groups presented their admissions choices for Webster University and then departed, but not before exchanging business cards and giving hugs to their new friends in the field. In that moment, it was clear that, once again, Summer Institute achieved its goal of learning, while building a network of support. It is why so many counselors count Summer Institute as the foundation of their professional life. It is why year, after year, high school principals and college directors of admissions continue to send their counselors to Saratoga--they know it's the *August Place To Be!*



Not registered to vote? There is still time. In New York, the deadline to register to vote is October 12, 2012.

To register, go here:

<https://registertovote.org/forms/register/registration/new-york.html>

OR

<http://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html>

Election Day is Tuesday, November 6!

What Makes America Great

Submitted by Brian Loew

Co-Chair, Government Relations Committee

I have to admit, I was caught in the hype of the HBO series "The Newsroom" earlier this summer. In the pilot episode, a student at a college panel asked the main character, "What makes America the greatest country in the world?" Whether or not you've seen the show, or whether or not you agree with the answer the main character gave, the question should get you to think: what does make America great? The answer, in my opinion, is this:

The other day, I was having a discussion with a friend about the presidential candidates, the policies they stand for and the platforms of the parties. I follow one party's principles, and he follows another, so it naturally became a very "spirited" conversation. When we finished, and ultimately agreed to disagree - that's when it hit me: What makes America great is that we're able to have these conversations. We're able to be active participants in the national discourse without fear of persecution or reprimand. You can decide whether or not you're satisfied with our leaders and have your hand in that process. You have a choice.

You have a choice of who leads our country and who leads our state. Not only do we have the presidential election approaching, we are also on the precipice of a huge swing in the state legislature. Altogether, 6,015 of the country's 7,383 state legislative seats will be up for re-election. That's a little more than 81% of our Congress, with 43 states up for changing hands. Here in New York, there are 213 state legislature races to be decided on November 6, 2012 - 63 in the Senate and all of the 150 Assembly seats up for election. At the Federal level, one third of the Senate seats will be up for election and, mirroring New York State, all House seats will be voted on. Whether or not programs that help us assist our students will continue to be funded will be decided in this election. Whether or not a school district's budget will be cut will be decided in this election. The ability of our students to seek institutions of higher learning will be decided in this election.

Choose people on policy and principle - they are, after all, the ones that we are giving the mandate to work for us because we are still a government of the people, by the people, for the people. Regardless of who is in the Executive chair come January 20, 2013, we need to have a Congress that will work with them for us. Select people who are going to collaborate, not instigate. The way the Founding Fathers designed our government was that the Congress would actually have more domestic power than the President. While we're living in the time of the greatest economic recession since the Great Depression, vote for a Congress that will move this country forward and will allow us to again become the America we continue to be proud to call home.

Vote because you care. Vote because you can. Vote because the majority of the students that we work to serve aren't old enough - vote for them. Vote because it's what makes America great.

More importantly than simply voting, it's crucial that you make an *educated vote*. Steer away from the political pandering - which happens from both major parties—one isn't any worse than the other. There are plenty of resources to find the answers to the big questions of our economic, social, foreign policy, domestic policy, and education policy concerns. We live in a country where you can have an open dialogue about the candidates. Talk to others who agree, and those who you disagree with. This is your chance to exercise your greatest liberty as an American - you choose who leads us and you choose the policies that govern us. Do not take this responsibility lightly.

What kind of Soup do our Counselor Souls need?

Submitted by Elisabeth Medina, Director of College Counseling— CollegeBound Initiative at Juan Morel Campos Secondary School, Brooklyn, NY

Just when you thought it was safe to get back in the ocean water, school is back in session. How did you spend your summer? Some of us worked, some of us vacationed or retreated to somewhere peaceful free from student ruckus. But I am sure that many of us took some time to reflect and regroup from our usual turbulent year in an effort to make the next year smoother, or so we'll try.

So how do counselors exhale? What outlets do we use that enable us to stay focused? How do we balance our professional, personal, counselor, caregiver, parent, and spousal roles?

As a wife, mother of a one and four year old and caregiver for my two elderly, ailing parents, I can tell you I have several outlets that help keep me grounded.

First and foremost, my **family keeps me balanced**. My two young boys do not have time for mommy to come home frazzled and on edge. Once I get home, I'm in mom zone: dinner, bath, milk, reading and bedtime. However, it's limited because I get home by 5:30pm (*on a good day*) to juggle household duties, all the while trying to get dinner on the table, my boys fed and in bed by 8pm.

But wait, is that my husband I hear at the door at 6:45pm? On time, great! Now I can get to the gym by 7pm and catch a *Spin* or a *Zumba* class! **Exercise is so essential**. But how often do we have the time or energy? Make time folks! If I don't jump into my workout gear and sneakers while I am in supermom mode at 5:30pm, chances are I'm not going to the gym. My process allows my kids to understand that mommy needs to exercise. While dad understands that it's his turn to bathe, read and put the boys to bed. Everyone acclimates. And after 8pm, we get to relax. It's a rhythm, a ritual. A necessity!

Thank goodness for friends and colleagues. Get away when you can. Call a friend and get some coffee, dinner or a glass of vino. Converse, breath and enjoy a nice meal. And please do not spend the entire time complaining about how you hate your boss! It is important to have **healthy, positive relationships** that help you escape the daily mayhem.

With that said, I believe my soul is completely ready to embrace 2012-2013! Find the soup that makes your soul content!

College Fair Committee Launches College Fair List *Submitted by NYSACAC College Fair Committee*

It's here... the first semi-annual NYSACAC College Fair Program Schedule! NYSACAC College Fair Committee launched the first college fair list comprised of dates, times, and contact information for many of the fall 2012 college fairs that will be held throughout New York State. The list is available for purchase at the bargain price of \$55.00.

A labor of love, this initiative was developed to support both college and high school members. We are knee deep in travel season for college counselors, and school counselor's schedules are more packed than ever before. This compilation of college fairs that will be held across the state can help advertise your college fair and streamline your travel schedule.

It is amazing to see the response we have received from across the state asking to be on the list. The College Fair Committee also fielded many requests for the directory from college representatives both in and out of state. Our hope is to make this list as comprehensive as possible, and we need your help to do so.

Don't worry if your high school missed the fall season. NYSACAC is currently accepting dates and times for spring college fairs. Simply email the College Fair Committee at: College.Fairs@nysacac.org. If you are interested in receiving the directory, please contact the NYSACAC Office at 845-389-1300.



Photo caption: Elisabeth Medina (article at left) finding time to relax with a few friends.

Back To School, Back To School

By Jessica Majestic, Assistant Director of Admission, Concordia College

Going back to school. What an intimidating and scary thought! Having graduated with my Bachelor's degree in 2005, I knew that I would eventually have to get a Master's degree to further my career opportunities, but I kept coming up with a reason to put it off. After deciding that I was finally ready to bite the bullet and enroll in school again (part-time, of course), I then had to determine what program to study and where to enroll.

I always thought that an online program would not be for me and that I would not receive the same type of education that I would in a classroom setting. However, given that this lovely world of college admissions requires us to be on the road in the fall and the spring, I decided that an online program was going to be the most convenient and easiest way for me to stay on-track with my classes. Now one-quarter of the way through the program, I think I made the right choice!

The biggest challenge that I encountered when beginning my online program was familiarizing myself with the day-to-day of the web portal. I gave myself a pat on the back every step of the way as I began to figure out where to post answers to DQs (discussion questions, for those not familiar with the technical online learning community lingo), how to submit papers, and how to simply send an email to my professors through the web portal itself. Writing with an academic mindset was also a challenge, and I had to get used to that mentality again. Apparently addressing an email as "Hey Professor!" as I would in an email to a prospective student is frowned upon in a classroom setting.

Once I became accustomed to the operating procedures, I realized that the world of online learning is much more interactive than I had envisioned. Although I do not have the opportunity to meet all of my professors or classmates in person, I think that I have gotten to know a handful of them on a more intimate level than I would have in a classroom setting because of the amount of emails that we send back and forth. Some of the discussion forums have people posting on them so frequently that the conversation feels as though we are sitting together in a classroom, having a conversation amongst ourselves. This was definitely not the type of interaction that I had originally envisioned!

Because I started the program in the spring, I have yet to experience a fall travel schedule combined with taking classes. I am sure that it will take some getting used to, but I am confident that it will be doable. Having a support system made up of classmates, co-workers, friends, and family to help me stay on track along the way will surely be helpful. All I need to "show up" for class is a computer and an Internet connection. As we all know from life on the road, Wi-Fi is readily available almost anywhere, especially at Panera locations across the country. The pumpkin spice lattes are just an added bonus.

Summer Institute: The August Place To Be

*Submitted by Casey J. Pedrick,
Director of College Counseling, Stuyvesant High School
and Publicity Director for Summer Institute*

On August 5, 2012, the campus of Skidmore College came alive as 91 new additions to our profession arrived for four days of learning and networking, part of the 26th annual Summer Institute. The new professionals were greeted by Summer Institute co-directors, Lisa Sohmer, Director of College Counseling at Garden School, and John Young, Director of Admissions at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. They were all given all they would need for the institute, including a USB containing all of the presentations they were about to learn from. This is a new gift at Summer Institute, one that was made possible by the generous sponsorship of the City University of New York.

At the opening session luncheon, Casey J. Pedrick, Director of College Counseling at Stuyvesant High School, shared how her experience as a 2008 Summer Institute attendee shaped her career as a college counselor. Following the luncheon, participants joined their mentor groups, the first of six meetings in which they review five mock applications to the fictional Webster University. As Sonia Szymanski, Director of College Counseling at CBI's East Side Community High School reflected, "Reviewing mock student profiles helped me gain insight on the way college admissions committees review student applications and it will certainly inform my work with my students".

The mentors this year were a great combination of high school counselors and college admissions counselors. They came from a variety of backgrounds, large and small institutions, and all had varied paths to this career. They include Karen Brown, Director of Admission at SUNY Oneonta, Will Cardamone, Director of College Counseling at Manlius Pebble High School, Tom DaRin, Vice President for Enrollment Management at Nazareth College, Chris Farmer, Associate Director of College Counseling at Horace Mann School, Rodney Morrison, Associate Chancellor for Enrollment Management at Rutgers, Ann Marie Moscovici, College Counselor at Canisius High School, Erica Padilla, Senior Associate Director of International Admissions at St. John's University, Jessica Sullivan, Associate Director of Admissions at St. Lawrence University, and David Weisbord, Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Columbia University.

Participant Ryan Mahanna, Assistant Dean of Admission at Hamilton College remarked, "The most amazing aspect about Summer Institute is how incredibly talented everyone involved is. Of course the mentors bring an overwhelming amount of experience and advice to the program, but what was really surprising is how much I learned from my peers despite our collective inexperience."

The first presentation laid a great groundwork for the profession as Katie Cooney Lesko, Associate Director of Admissions at Siena College, spoke on "Ethics and Why They Matter," specifically focusing on the Statement of Principles of Good Practice. Afterwards, a new tradition at Summer Institute continued for its third year: the viewing of "500 Words or Less," a wonderful documentary following the college application process of four high school seniors from across the nation. After a break, an old tradition commenced: dinner at Saratoga Casino and Raceway! Participants were able to dine while watching harness racing, a new experience for many of them. As always, one race was run in honor of Summer Institute, with participants and faculty having an opportunity to present the trophy to the lucky jockey in the winner's circle.

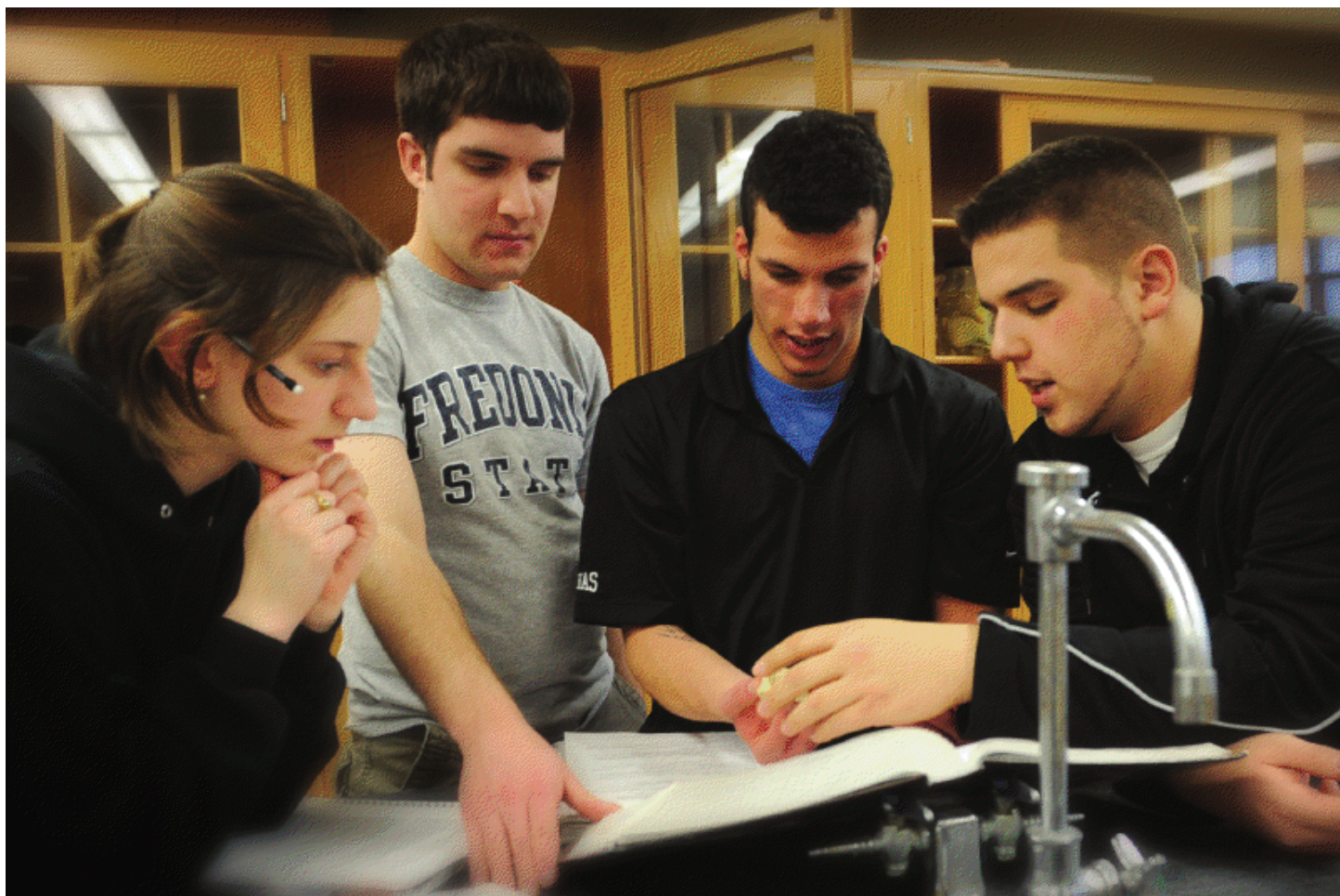
The following morning, the participants received a shot of espresso in the form of Ann Fleming Brown, Director of Admissions at Union College, who once again gave the benchmark of an effective presentation when she shared, "Effective Presentations," with an enraptured crowd. In the afternoon, John Young presented on "Athletics in College Recruitment." That evening, participants were able to explore gorgeous downtown Saratoga--the *August Place To Be in New York State*.

A favorite mainstay of Summer Institute is the "Optional Morning at the Track." Former Summer Institute co-director, Patty Peek, Director of Admissions at Fordham University, met with the early risers to illustrate the history of the track and to share stories about famous jockeys and horses who have graced this famed dirt track.

Later that day, Heather McDonnell, Director of Financial Aid at Sarah Lawrence College, presented for two hours on all things financial aid. One might find this dry material, but Heather makes it all easy to understand and participants left feeling less overwhelmed with what can be a daunting topic.

An afternoon filled with breakout sessions for both high school and college counselors followed. These sessions were led by Summer Institute's wonderful mentors, members of the planning team, as well as longtime friend of Summer Institute, Bill Short, Director of HEOP at St. Lawrence College. Afterwards, it was time for the not-to-be-missed BBQ and karaoke, which has been a staple of Summer Institute for years. For 91 professionals who arrived just a few days ago, not knowing anyone, this evening is always a great indicator of the success of the networking and bonding that occur in a short period of time. "I appreciated the time to socialize with my colleagues and really engage in meaningful dialogue around college admissions. I liked having the chance to talk about the type of students I work with, giving them a unique perspective on certain student challenges, while learning how I can help my students be competitive college applicants," said Sonia Szymanski.

(continued on page 9)



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14, January 15, and April 1. The newsletter is distributed electronically. Print copies are available upon request.

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Articles submitted for consideration for publication should be concise. Articles may be edited. Please include contact information of persons mentioned in articles, as well as the contact information of person(s) submitting articles. Email submissions to: newsletter@nysacac.org

NYSACAC

PO BOX 28

Red Hood, NY 12571

P: (845) 389-1300

F: (866) 370-1008

nysacac@nysacac.org

NYSACAC Office Hours

10 am—1 pm

Monday—Friday

