

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

SCHOLARS

HONORS
PROGRAM





**NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
of The City University of New York**

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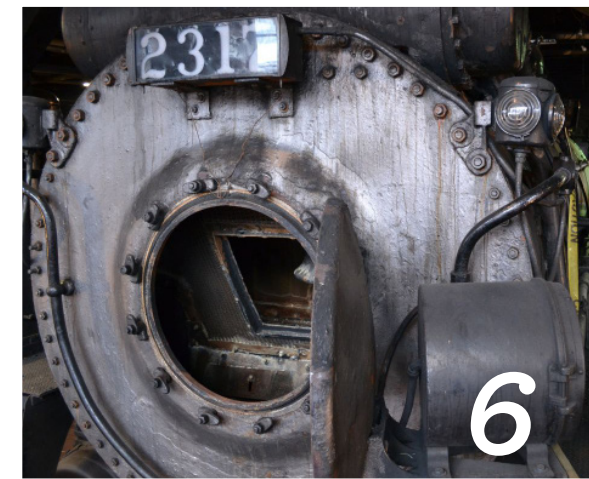
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LEARNING TO RE-LEARN MY DREAM TO BE A NURSE

Most people have a dream. Some just dream and wait until it comes true; others make it come alive step by step by working hard on it. I belong to those “others.” There are a lot of aims on the way to my dreams. Once I begin dreaming of something, I start planning my route to reach this dream, knowing that you cannot gain anything without putting something into it.

When I was younger and transferred from my junior high school to a new one, I barely passed a placement test there, despite the fact that I was an “A” student in the previous school. It affected me deeply, and I decided to strive for success. I worked very hard together with my teacher, who supported me and helped me in meeting the standards of my new school. I started to learn from the very beginning, having extra tasks and studying through the night and weekends. The biggest challenge for me was learning a foreign language, but I was lucky to have a great teacher who inspired me. As a result, by the end of the semester, I was the best student in the class. This situation taught me a valuable lesson: nothing can be achieved without an effort. In other words, if you want to eat the fruit, you must climb the tree. I realized this concept back in my childhood and, since that time, I have followed it everywhere. Thus, whatever I want to reach in my life, I will work on it, thoroughly planning each step.

Obtaining a degree in Nursing is just the closest goal on the way to my dream. I want to be more than merely an ordinary employee; instead, I want to be someone who will make a substantial contribution to the field of Nursing. Since it is impossible to get everything at once, my route to this aim goes *per aspera ad astra*, or “through hardships to the stars.” After I graduate from the program, my goal is to work at a hospital where I will develop as a specialist, improving my skills and professionalism. At the same time I have long-term study goals, which include getting a Master’s degree while working as a nurse. Afterward, I will share my experiences through lecturing students and other nurses who have just started working. It is unfair to keep inside all the abundant knowledge and skills which I am going to have by that time. We are given this knowledge to make changes in our lives for the better, and we should help others be able to make those changes as well.

ALYONA PAVLOVA



Obstacles are the Pedestals of Tomorrow

WALTER RADA

The obstacles of childhood lead to the birth of personality. Through hardships, one can find weaknesses and restrict the control it has over one’s body. Theodore Roosevelt overcame his weaknesses and grew into the great leader we know today because he overcame adversity. However, without the principles and support from his family, he would not have been able to take his first steps. Born in 1858, Theodore, “Teddie,” was cursed with asthma and that disease would follow him for his entire life. After numerous attacks and unsuccessful treatments, his father told him that he needed to overcome his problem because no one else could. This task weighed heavily on Theodore, but with the pedestal that his father had created, he would do anything not to fail.

Theodore Roosevelt Senior was a man to be respected. Though he never failed to display his wealth, his heart always outshone it. Every party he held was used to market an organization or program that needed financial support. Perhaps

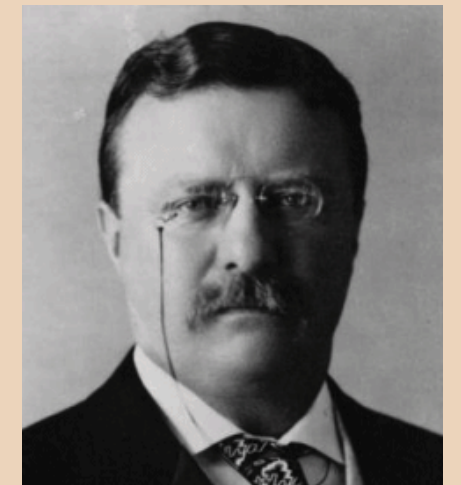
the most famous story about his support was about a party he held to fund a hospital for children who had spinal diseases. Roosevelt Senior led his guest to the dining room to reveal numerous children, all suffering from spinal diseases. The fact that

However, without the principles and support from his family, he would not have been able to take his first steps.

he helped those children by simply displaying their misfortune showed the height of Theodore Senior’s accomplishments and reputation, and one can see that Theodore Jr. had big shoes to fill. One could also say he spent the entire life trying to live up to all the good his father had accomplished. For instance, one example was the fact that he helped create the Allotment System we still have today, which supports the families of American soldiers by sending them money from the soldier’s payment.

The following is just a small amount of information discussed in the

Theodore Roosevelt birthplace on March 22. Though spring break had just begun, this did not mean that education was over. City Tech Honor Students went to this great landmark in order to walk through the home of a U.S. president. The stories of Theodore and his family were told in the very rooms where they occurred, creating a sense of atmosphere and intrigue. Theodore Roosevelt set standards for leadership, and his ideas are still around today. An opportunity to learn about one of the greatest men in history should not be missed.



Photos from The National Park Service



CREATING A LEGACY

NSCS Leadership Summit 2013

The excitement was palpable as members of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS) gathered in the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Houston, Texas, for the annual Leadership Summit. Officers, members, and alumni from all over the United States joined together for an unforgettable experience as they prepared to launch their legacy. From June 21-23, members were treated to three days of enriching workshops, training and guest speakers that mixed equal parts enthusiasm with the professionalism expected of NSCS members.

Starting on Friday, officers of various chapters were offered different workshop training sessions in order to get their chapter back on track and make it better: from aiming for a higher STAR status and promoting NSCS to new members to networking with other campuses and learning how to better delegate chapter workloads. After everyone was registered and situated in their rooms, the NSCS national staff greeted members with a bang: music and dancing and a huge level of enthusiasm. Then students were introduced to the first keynote speaker, Jeremy Johnson, a technology entrepreneur and co-founder of the online company 2tor. After the keynote speech and a breakdown of Saturday's schedule, members were dismissed and allowed to spend the night however they pleased; most students paired up with newly made friends and went out to explore the nightlife of Texas, too excited to turn in.

Saturday morning started off with a cheerful welcome from the staff and

some morning dance competition to wake the students up before the multitude of workshops. These workshops varied from more officer training—offered again just in case you couldn't attend the day before—to personal development workshops that encouraged students to pursue their passions and their dreams and to discover what their legacy would be. Afterwards, professional development workshops promoted ideas about studying abroad as well as preparing to take the GRE. Workshops paused for lunch, where, once students finished eating, they had a chance to complete mock interviews. After lunch, students were treated to another guest speaker: Michael Dorsey, a former contestant on the reality series *The Biggest Loser* and founder of the One-Click Movement. Listening to such an inspirational story of overcoming life's hardships and the dedication to never quit pursuing your goals no matter how dire the obstacles were, students were motivated into finding that "one-click": the moment in which they finally accomplished what they set out to do. Enthusiastic students attended more workshops followed by another keynote speaker, Daniel Hernandez, the former intern to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords who is credited for taking action and saving her life after a gunman shot her and 18 others on January 8, 2011.

Once the workshops were completed, students were given a break to prepare for the excitement of the Honors Gala Awards Ceremony. Members dressed their best for the dinner honoring all of the chapters for their hard work over the year. Chapter officers were presented with trophies for how well they did. Our very own chapter was able to come home with a silver trophy depicting our work. The dinner was

TAMRAH CUNNINGHAM

formal and the crowd abuzz when the information for the next leadership summit was announced to be held next summer in Orlando, Florida. Again, once dismissed, students were free to roam Houston or prepare themselves for their departure the next day, unless they had signed up for Scholars Day of Service.

In the morning, Scholars Day of Service was a workshop provided by Red Cross volunteers who taught students the basics of CPR, including a chance to practice with dummies, and explanations and instructional videos on what to do in case someone is choking or experiencing a heart attack. With that, the summit ended with students going home to share what they learned to benefit their chapter and to maintain new friendships created along with the fond memories that are sure to be cherished for years to come.



STEP ONE TO A GREAT RESUME

Internship!

Supported by the National Science Foundation
Opportunities for Enhancing Diversity in the Geosciences Grant #1108281

WALTER RADA

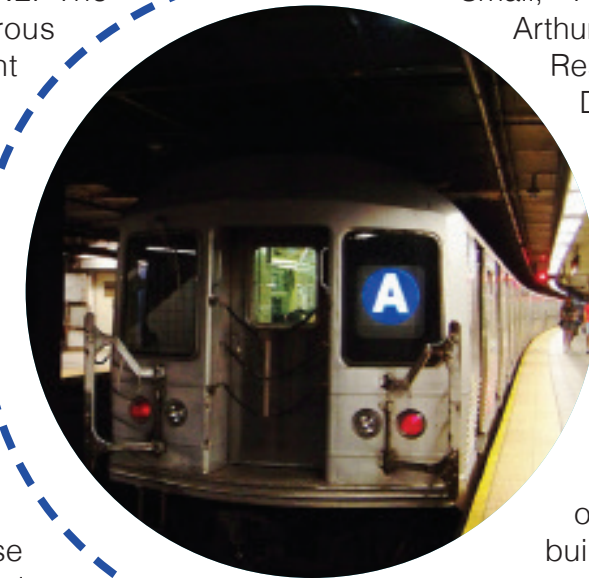
This past July, students had the opportunity to intern at a joint program hosted by the Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) and the NYPD. The paid internship program, Subway to Surface Air Flow Exchange (S-SAFE), was a collaborative effort between 18 different colleges, universities, and agencies, including City Tech. The program is supervised by Professors Reginald A. Blake, Janet Liou-Mark and Ms. Laura Yuen-Lau, and coordinated by Mr. Noel Blackburn of BNL. The project attracted numerous students from different schools and gave them the opportunity to work on a city-wide dispersion experiment.

The goal of the project was to replicate the act of a deadly chemical being released in New York City. A nonlethal, traceable gas was released in subway stations throughout NYC to map how quickly the gas would disperse throughout the city on a normal day. Program interns placed air samplers at various locations throughout the NYC subway system and monitored the samplers in case of malfunction, theft, or any other events that could jeopardize the monitoring. Sampler deployment days occurred three randomly chosen times during the three-week internship. During the rest of the internship, the students worked on another project on increasing geoscience awareness.

Students created a four-page brochure, poster, and a PowerPoint presentation on a selected topic in the geosciences. Students were separated in 21 groups to work on the two projects and were supervised by professors, including Dr. Blake.

The internship closing ceremony highlighted the students' printed brochures and posters. City Tech President Russell Hotzler, BNL Directorate Reinhold Mann, CUNY Vice Chancellor Gillian Small, NYPD Counter Terrorism Lt. Arthur Mogill, and the Environmental Research and Technology Division Head of BNL Paul Kalb attended the ceremony. During the ceremony, participating students reflected on how much they enjoyed and appreciated the internship experience. One student stated that this was the first real experience he could add to his resume. For him and others, this program offered the first real step towards building an attractive resume.

This program required students to work alongside professionals and gain transferable skills. Furthermore, some students expressed interest in working with BNL next summer. This internship program provided an exciting, interesting, and educational opportunity with the BNL and the NYPD that will open many doors for students seeking to build their resume with real-life experiences.





THE PEOPLE THAT BUILT OUR TOWN

HONORS SCHOLARS PROGRAM TOURS HISTORIC SCRANTON

Near the end of the Spring 2013 semester, the Honors Scholars Program visited Scranton, Pennsylvania to learn about the history of the people that built this historic town.

Our first stop in Pennsylvania was the Anthracite Heritage Museum, located on Bald Mountain Road. This museum

highlights the history of this area, focusing on the people that worked in the anthracite mining and textiles industries. Many immigrants were brought to Pennsylvania to work as coal miners during the late 1800s and early 1900s. The unsafe work environment of these European immigrants and the injustices they

faced made an impression on us all.

The museum also highlights the sexism that females dealt with during that era. Females lacked job opportunities, and when they did find a job, they were frequently exposed to unsafe work environments, similar to their husbands,

brothers or sons working the coal mines. Some women found jobs in silk factories. While viewing a replica of a silk factory, we learned that women who worked in the silk factory had to be careful to not catch their hair or clothing in the silk machine.

After learning about the difficult and unsafe working

conditions in the coal mines, we were able to see those conditions first hand in the Lackawanna Coal Mine. This mine is located right below the Anthracite Heritage Museum. We were transported several feet underground via trolley and by foot. As we traveled into the mine, we learned the labor involved in mining during that time in history. The mine goes as far as 528 feet underground; however, groundwater allowed us to travel only 243 feet down. At the end of the tour, each Scholar was awarded the Lackawanna Coal Company

Miners Certificate. We all emerged from the mine with a deep appreciation for the miners that labored under such difficult conditions.

We then traveled to Steamtown, a historic site. Steamtown is the only place in the National Park System that highlights the story of steam rail-roading and the people who made it possible. This site includes a 90-foot long turntable, 1902/1937 roundhouse, and a locomotive repair shop. We learned about the extensive repair process of steam

trains and history of all the specialty engineers that were involved during the railroad boom. This tour reminded us of how much personal history lies behind the transportation options that we take for granted today.

Our tour concluded with a self-guided tour of the Technology Museum. At this museum, we saw replicas of steam train workers and passengers, and pictures of Steamtown in the 19th century. Our tours of the Anthracite Heritage

Museum, Steamtown, and the Technology Museum left a distinct impression on us all: the sacrifices, innovations, and tenacity of real people who had hopes and dreams and lives and loved ones made this area what it is today, and we should never forget that fact.

The Honors Scholars Program wishes to thank our wonderful tour guides Mr. Tortella, Mr. Jim (Anthracite Heritage Museum), and Mr. Kan Ganz (Steamtown).

FELICIA FRANCIS



NEW YORK'S OWN TREASURE ISLAND



When my cousin first told me about Governors Island, she described how amazing it was and told me that I needed to go with her when she returns. Admittedly, the name alone didn't sound appealing: it doesn't have any flair. I thought it was just another island used by the state for government purposes. But I decided to give the island a try when the Honors Scholars Program announced a trip there. Surely, there must be something more to the place if Honors students were going and if my cousin insisted I go with her on her return.

The only means of getting to the Island is by a five-minute boat ride: there are free (and I repeat: FREE) boat rides to Governors Island during weekends: it's also the only time that the Island is opened for visitors and locals alike. At first, I thought that the boarding area would be the modern-looking Staten Island Ferry; instead, it turns out that the boats that ferry people to and from Governors Island were stationed at the Battery Maritime Building. Compared to the Staten Island Ferry port, it looks so antique and there seems to be no evidence that the city or state plans on remodeling anytime soon. And I guess it's a good thing: little did I know it was meant to serve as a hint to Governors Island's overall feel and atmosphere.

The boat itself was fairly large: accommodating at least 100 people, it was also designed to accommodate bicyclists and strollers. Upon arrival, I was expecting buildings constructed for city officials' use. Instead, the first thing that greeted us was an upward walk to a huge grassy hill. Signs directing visitors to various events taking place on the Island lined the hill's stone wall borders. Speaking of visitors, there were hundreds of people who boarded the boat as well – initially, I thought that Governors Island was obscure. When I found out how long I had to wait just to

get off the boat with the other Honors Students, I realized that there were plenty of locals and tourists who knew about the Island.

The path from the Island's docking port to the grassy hill is T-shaped: taking the road to the left will bring visitors to the Island's kiddie park and one of the entrances to the Island's two forts, Fort Jay and Castle Williams, and the Bike Rental Shop, which rents out bikes on an hourly basis on Fridays and Saturdays. They offered the standard two-wheel bike for single riders and the quadcycle for larger groups. And no, you did not just read a misprint: there is such a thing as a quadcycle. In simple terms, it is a cycle with four wheels and takes two adults and two toddler passengers (for the smaller version) and four large people or six skinny people (for the larger version) to pedal. Both quadcycles only use one steering wheel despite the fact that there are two. Don't say I didn't warn you, though: just because you have four people pedaling, it doesn't necessarily mean that the ride will be smoother with four pairs of legs working. I think I mentioned hills before in this article. Hope you have good legs.

The Honors group was split into two: one group went around half of the

park (only half of the entire island is open for visitors) on quadcycles while the other half went to Castle Williams, where a tour of the fort is given every 30 minutes. I opted to go on the bike ride as I wanted to explore the island and take some rare snapshots of the Manhattan Skyline. If the best vantage point for anyone to take pictures of Manhattan's buildings existed, it is Governors Island. Completely free from cable lines from bridges and the rumbling of subways, no other place can offer you a majestic and up-close view of the horizon. But that wasn't the only thing that the Island had to offer.

The first stop that we made on the quadcycle was an uphill climb towards Fort Jay. By the time we reached the top, I felt the disadvantage of being a short person on a cycle with three taller people. Mercifully, that was the largest uphill climb we had to do and staying on the paved road eventually led us to one of the entrances to Fort Jay. One of two forts built on the island to keep New York's harbors safe during the Revolutionary War, no British ship could make it past the fort without sustaining critical damage. It retained its traditional design from the colonial era: star-shaped with each point strategically jutting out to parts of the Island. Fort Jay was slightly damaged during Sandy's

visit: a statue resting atop the arch that leads to the fort suffered some missing parts. A guide during a later tour was kind enough to show before and after pictures of the statue.

Circling around on the island with my three fellow quadcyclists, I noticed something peculiar: there were lawn chairs everywhere! Their red color only made them more distinct compared to the old buildings and the classic feel of the Island. Lawn chairs are one of the universal icons of relaxation; to see them planted all over the grassy parts of the island was pretty much a giant invitation for anyone to just kick back and relax – a far cry from the hustle and bustle projected by Manhattan across the river. There were also red wire benches in the park, but they don't have the appeal and lull that only lawn chairs can convey.

A majority of the buildings on the island consisted of rustic houses that hardly resembled a military base: they looked so inviting and permanent that it's easy to forget the fact that they housed soldiers and, occasionally, family members. The lawn chairs added a touch of homeliness to them rather than coming off as Spartan quarters.

Adding to the relaxing mood that the Island provided was the friendliness of the people who were there. Everyone we passed greeted us with a sincere "hello," something I've come never to expect from the city that greets its visitors while secretly plotting how to sell them the most expensive wares.

Returning to our starting point, we found a picnic being set up by our

professors. At that point, I forgot any notion that I was on a school trip and likened it more to a family outing. The Honors Students were very friendly and just as curious as I was about the Island: despite the fact that I've just met all of them, it was as if we've known each other for some time.

After a few quick bites, I was off on a half-hour tour of Castle Williams. Despite its name, it is actually a fort shaped like a round cheese with a wedge sliced off. The fort was designed and built by Colonel Jonathan Williams, chief engineer and first Superintendent of West Point, who went on to design Williamsburg. Castle Williams was a strategic structure during its time: its circular shape allowed soldiers to fire at invading ships while minimizing damage from returned fire. Afterward, it was briefly used as a prison for captured Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. The only remnants of the fort's use as a prison are the bars that remain steadfast beyond their years of service, as well as the solitary confinement block where there is no source of light inside the cells. I went inside one to see and feel what it was like: pitch black and cold.

The tour ended on the roof of the fort where another spectacular view could be seen: not just the Manhattan Skyline but also nearby Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. Selfies with Manhattan were easy, and you won't have to worry about someone walking in front of you and your camera.

Some of the students explored the island on their own and, despite the fact that only half of the Island was

open, it never felt like it was crowded. I was expecting a sea of people, yet I never saw one. The boat continuously ferries passengers between Manhattan and Governors Island every thirty minutes, and, since it was the last open weekend, I figured the whole place would be packed. But I'm not complaining: I was able to enjoy the island without the suffocating feeling that comes with crowds.

Lastly, I did mention a few times that the Island had a rustic charm to it. Despite being surrounded by modern buildings and ports, the Island's preserved colonial style allows for a sense of peace without making one feel like home is a road trip away. Fort Jay's barracks have porches with tempting white rocking chairs. I sat on one and I had no intention of getting up: I just wanted to slowly rock back and forth while watching people pass through the courtyard in front of me.

Governors Island is not the kind of place to visit once and forget. Let it welcome you with open arms for a temporary reprieve from the busy New York lifestyle. Allow yourself to experience history in a way that takes only 5 minutes to commute. Better yet, see how far you and your friends can navigate the quadcycle in a test of strength or endurance. But if the Island's hypnotizing relaxed atmosphere proves to be too much, the chaotic scene of Manhattan is only a boat ride away. As they say: only in New York.

Liza Luboa

The Citadel of Hope Library Project

Known as the Warm Heart of Africa, the Malawians are certainly courteous and generous despite their economic conditions. Most often I would be greeted by a swarm of bright smiling children with filthy tattered clothing, shoeless, and a big swelling belly of malnourishment. The adults would bring out their best woodstools and invite me to sit with them around an open fire as they cook their only meal for the day. How I love the translated conversations, the energy of the children, and their passion for learning...

Malawi, a landlocked country about the size of Pennsylvania located in southeast Africa, is the fifth poorest country in the world. The north-south regions are flanked with highlands and mountain ranges, and Lake Malawi occupies most of the eastern border. There are still poverty-stricken areas with no electricity or running water. Women walk as long as six miles to draw clean water.

Why the need for a library?

With a population of approximately 15 million, 46 percent of the people are under the age of 15. The primary education in Malawi is eight years (Standards 1-8), but it is very common for students over the age of 13 to repeat many of the primary grades. Although the reported literacy rate is 74.8 percent, the primary school completion rates stand at just 35 percent. Findings from the Population Council's "Plotting a Safe, Healthy, and Productive Path to Adulthood" study showed that, of the 57 primary schools studied, all were uniformly understaffed, overcrowded, and lacked the most fundamental resources including curriculum materials, textbooks, and basic teaching materials. Moreover, increasing student enrollment rates have resulted in a student-teacher ratio as large as 100:1. Dropout rates and repetition rates are especially high for Standards 4 and above.

With this present trajectory, the future of the Malawian education

system looks grim. Chronic shortages of curricular resources and well-trained educators will exponentially impede the nation's need to educate its children. According to the World Bank's "The Education System in Malawi" (2010), 4.8 million children will need a primary school education by 2018.

To assist in this predicament, a 20-foot container was shipped to Malawi in June 2013, containing approximately 7,000 books, teaching materials, bookshelves, school supplies, tables, chairs, and clothing. Partnerships with the local chiefs, headmasters, and pastors were formed to set up satellite libraries in seven areas with the central library site located at Gospelink Agricultural Center where approximately 30 orphans reside. Four of the seven sites will be in primary schools serving approximately 500 to 1,200 students at each location. At present, the library structures for each site are in the process of building or renovating. It is projected that the satellite libraries will be in full operation in Spring 2014.



A special appreciation to the administration, faculty, and staff at New York City College of Technology for the generous donations. Thank you to Dr. Henry Africk, Dr. Reginald A. Blake, Dr. Gwen Cohen-Brown, Prof. Peter Deraney, Dr. Stephen James, Dr. Tony Nicolas, Mr. Jeff Novak, Dr. Peter Spellane, Dr. Selwyn A. Williams, Ms. Adele Yeung, and Ms. Laurie Caban for coordinating the efforts to collect textbooks, teaching materials, and school supplies. A warm thank you to the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs for

supporting this project especially to Dr. Mari Watanabe-Rose who organized the book collection. To the Physics Department at Brooklyn College, thank you for your donations and to Dr. Ming-Kung Liou for overseeing this work. To the National Society of Collegiate Scholars at City Tech, the Honors

Scholars, and the Black Male Initiative students under the direction of Dr. Reneta D. Lansiquot, Ms. Laura Yuen-Lau, and Dr. Reginald A. Blake, thank you for your enthusiasm, passion, and support for this project.



Internships

The Wealth of Possibilities

Walter Rada

Every day, opportunities pass people by like strangers in a subway. Most people are oblivious to the opportunities that are available to them. Along with other professors, Dr. Viviana Vladutescu is seeking to increase efforts to help students forge their futures by making them aware of numerous internships provided by prestigious organizations. The Fifth Annual Internship and Fellowship Seminar was held on Halloween and, despite its lack of spooky fun, it still attracted a significant amount of students. In addition to regular speakers, the event also drew students who discussed their internship experiences.

After the introductions, the event covered the CUNY Service Corps' first successful year with both footage of their opening event and a student speaker, So Lan Liang, demonstrating the growing interest of student participation in the New York community. An unscheduled student speaker for STEM followed, discussing

the fellowships and graduate programs offered by the STEM fields, which would be beneficial to veteran students. The next speaker was Jean-Phillipe Regis who discussed the Naval Research Enterprise Internship Program (NREIP), which allows students to work for the Department of Navy Laboratories and

experience hands-on work at scientific and engineering facilities for ten weeks over the summer. This prestigious internship has less than a thirty percent acceptance rate with well over a thousand students already on next year's list.

The next two speakers discussed the Jewish Foundation for Education of Women (JFEW) Scholars Program which provides hospital field work for students in the areas of nursing, dentistry, and radiology. The second speaker was a student who described how her internship boosted her confidence and professionalism. Next, Dr. Reginald A. Blake highlighted research opportunities provided by the National Science Foundation (NSF), choosing to speak on the resources companies invest in internships. Two students followed him, reiterating that, while the NSF provides travel and hotel expenses, these should not be

taken lightly and require a great deal of hard work in return. The students also emphasized the importance of not restricting themselves to their field of study. One student, participating in NASA's One Stop Shopping Initiative (OSSI), was accepted due to the variety of experiences he had in previous internships and, now, while he does plan on heading into one field, he can branch out now without worry due to his varied experiences.

This seminar provided insight not only into various opportunities, but also into student opinions and experiences. More than anything, this seminar eased the stress in finding internships. All it takes to find the perfect internship is the kind of guidance offered by the Service Corps; afterwards, as one student said, "it's a snowball effect," and students can be on their way to make something more of themselves with surprisingly little effort.

Prepping for Your Future

Standardized exams such as the SAT, ACT, and the GRE are common sources of unease and anxiety in students. These tests are the common talk of teachers, parents, and students when students move on to the next level of education. These exams have had classes, books, videos and entire websites dedicated to them. Parents have to deal with the \$200 books or \$500 classes simply to have their child prepared for just one exam. Students have it worse. There are multiple reports of students having panic attacks and even taking “study drugs” in order to receive high enough grades so they won’t be a source of disappointment to their parents. For all the trouble these tests have caused, they are still seen as educational standards for most institutions of higher education in the United States. Readers who have made it through the SAT or the ACT, but wish to go to graduate school, had better be ready because the GRE is the next of these titans.

For those who don’t know, the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is used for graduate school admission. This exam has recently lost its mandatory status, although this doesn’t mean it has lost its stature. Most schools still use this exam as a standard for acceptable students, and, even if they don’t, they find other means to decide

whether an individual is ready to enter into a masters or doctoral program. The GRE preparation course held by Professor A. E. Dreyfuss throughout the 2013 spring semester helps one train for the Graduate Record Exam and gives useful tips for studies in general. The course was held one day a week for ten weeks.

One week included a résumé preparation course in addition to the regular weekly course. The classes consisted of students completing questions used in previous GRE exams, and, after they provided their answers, they were given tips on how to arrive at the correct answer.

The GRE Verbal Reasoning section focused on word structures to predict sentence terminology. This class started with simple fill-in-the-blank problems, but the essays were unlike regular class essays. The Analytical Writing consisted of choosing a side of an argument or providing arguments to both support and refute a claim. The focus that tied these two types of essays was the use of personal experience as a basis for one’s claim. This is a simpler method of writing claims on an argument more so than “use examples from your readings.” The most interesting method I learned was the analysis of the given statement/paragraph to separate opinions from fact. In my usual readings, I refer to facts as quotes or statistics, but this course taught me to look deeper into the presentation of the text. For example, paragraphs provided to the test taker may state data to support an argument, but this does not mean that there are no data that contradict the argument. When reading the essay article, one must understand that the given statement is purposely one sided and that data are purposely omitted. The reader can look at points that are ignored and use them to counter an argument. If the article focuses on a study done twenty years ago, then a counter argument can easily be ground in the fact that the article’s age makes it a less relevant source.

The GRE Quantitative Reasoning section exhibited combinations of methods used in previous math courses to solve eccentric word problems. This course caught me off guard as I had to use much simpler methods in math, of which I had lost familiarity, and without the direct indication that I was to use them. This section relied more on the recognition of concepts rather than on memorized formulas. For example, the test taker must remember that a triangle is not a right triangle when the box on the corner of a triangle is missing, no matter how perfect it looks. The lack of details such as this can be easily missed.

In the second-to-last class, students were presented with GRE questions and timed according to the actual exam time. In the last class, the answers were provided and the essays were read out loud in a peer-review format with constructive criticism given by all participants. The course eases the tension of the GRE by providing students with practice questions and thoughtful feedback on answers. The only cost to this course is time, and it is certainly well worth it. This shed light on the expectations of graduate schools and what the GRE will actually test: one’s adaptability.

WALTER RADA



City Tech’s OpenLab, our open source digital platform for students, faculty, and staff, is looking for enthusiastic bloggers to join our Student Community Team in Fall 2013.

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WALLETS AND WISDOM

Becoming Financially Savvy



City Tech's own Professor O'Halloran of the Hospitality Management Department hosted a "Money Matters and You" workshop to give students tips on how to start building and maintaining an economic foundation for the future. The session ran just over two hours and gave much detail on matters of spending, investing, saving, renting, mortgages, stocks, and property. The experience was a live forum: students were encouraged to ask questions and were given meaningful answers by their peers as often as by Professor O'Halloran, who provided ample reading material for workshop attendants to part with, both on financial matters and on general self-improvement. Overall, though, conversations focused on the use and management of credit. O'Halloran opened the dialogue with the question: "How many of you have credit cards?" and, to his surprise, almost everyone in the room raised a hand.

O'Halloran started to impart his thoughts on credit and his personal experiences with bank loans. He was emphatic on two opinions in particular: everyone in the room should have established or should be establishing some form of credit, and they should give strong consideration to joining a credit union. Very few workshop attendants were already credit union members, and many admitted to not knowing anything about them. So O'Halloran first explained the way credit cards work through banks and the progression of revolving debt.

The main issue with bank credit is that debt is being compounded by month on top of interest and fees, while customers are baited with fractionally minimum monthly payments that will

never satisfy their balances. The low payment plans provide people with false confidence in their abilities to finance their purchases and encourage them to open more credit accounts. The trend carries and customers stretch themselves thin while banks constantly increase interest rates. If this practice seems predatory, it is. What people tend to forget about banks is that, before anything else, a bank is a business and, as such, is primarily concerned with profit. The main source of profit for a credit-issuing bank is interest, so, in an effort to increase interest rates, they offer low monthly payments in hopes that customers will skate by paying the minimums. It works and it will continue to work until people start choosing to pay fast dollars instead of slow compounding nickels.

Luckily, banks are not the only option for someone interested in building credit. Since 1935, credit unions have grown as an alternative to traditional banks. Today, the United States is home to nearly 10,000 credit unions with combined assets of over \$800 billion. The main difference between a credit union and a bank is that credit unions are nonprofit, meaning the stockholders who resource the loans are not looking for returns on their investments. In layman's terms, this means low interest rates on loans, higher interest rates on savings, and no fees provided union members pay their monthly balances on time. Furthermore, every person with an account at a credit union is a member and thus a partial owner of his or her union. As such, members get to vote on who should serve on the union's Board of Directors. This includes securing more financial services like surcharge-free ATMs and offices for the branch.

Above all, what tends to draw in more and more union members each year is their consistently excellent customer service ratings and their open door policies for the family and friends of existing members. As with any financial institution, however, there are some caveats to consider. New credit union members are assessed for eligibility based on where they work and live, even sometimes their religion. For one who isn't a family or friend of an existing credit union member, it might be difficult to find

a preferred union to join that's welcoming. It's also rare that credit unions have central offices for their members and most have very few if any ATMs, though they are growing in both areas. Also, there is a small percentage (below 3%) of credit unions that remain uninsured, meaning members are not secure in their deposits. This requires that new members do a bit more research before signing up to ensure they don't fall into the minority. Finally, the modern amenities you get with banks like smart phone apps are still largely non-existent with credit unions: their focus is on pooling resources for the betterment of the community and such frills are costly; typically, they aren't a huge concern for board directors.

Professor O'Halloran dismissed us with a few lines from a favorite book *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. As the title suggests, it's a go-to guide on building interpersonal skills, focusing on listening, appreciating, leading, and being soft spoken. Not surprisingly, the sentiments in the book seem to echo the amiable approaches credit unions take with their members. Where credit is concerned, whether one decides that he or she is better fit for a credit union or a bank is totally subjective, but O'Halloran made clear to his audience that good credit is an asset that we should all be investing in now.

What people tend to forget about banks is that, before anything else, a bank is a business and, as such, is primarily concerned with profit.

Khoreece H. Mendoza

HONORS SCHOLARS


FALL 2013

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
12 12:45 - 2:00PM Honors Scholars Program Orientation Atrium Amphitheater	5 5:00 - 9:00PM Brooklyn Museum	8 9:30 - 12:00PM Federal Hall National Memorial	4 3:00 - 5:00PM Research Mixer Namm 119
26 1 - 2PM & 4 - 5PM Writing Abstracts for Research Projects Namm 119	8 11:45 - 1:45PM Cultivating Fine Dining Etiquette Second Floor Namm	14 1 - 2PM & 4 - 5PM Designing a Research Poster Presentation Namm 119	4 11:00 - 4:00PM Honors Scholars Poster Presentation Atrium Ground & First Floor
28 10:00AM - 2:00PM Governor's Island	10 Contract for Honors in a Regular Course due	19 2:00 - 3:00PM Research Poster Design Workshop G604	5 10:00 - 3:00PM Awards Ceremony at 12:30 PM Namm 119
	17 1 - 2PM & 4 - 5PM Advancing Library Research Techniques Atrium 540	21 12:30 - 2:00PM Fifth Internship and Fellowship Seminar Atrium Amphitheater	19 12:30 - 4:00PM End of the Year Celebration Namm 119
	25 9:30 - 12:00PM NBC Studio		
	31 12:30 - 2:00PM Fifth Internship and Fellowship Seminar Atrium Amphitheater		

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

SPRING 2014

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
2 - 4 Washington, DC	6 12:45 - 2:00PM Honors Scholars Program Orientation Atrium Amphitheater	6 Contract for Honors in a Regular Course due	4 9:30 - 12 PM African Burial Ground	7 3:00 - 5:00 PM Research Mixer Namm 119
23 9:00AM - 12:00PM Steinway Piano	27 1 - 2PM & 4 - 5PM Writing Abstracts for Research Projects Namm 119	7 9:30 - 12:00PM American Natural History Museum	10 1-2PM & 4-5PM Designing Research Poster Presentation Namm 119	7 11:00AM - 4:00PM Honors Scholars Poster Presentation Atrium Ground & First Floor
		11 11:45 - 1:45PM Cultivating Fine Dining Etiquette Second Floor Namm	29 4:00 - 5:30 PM Research Poster Design Workshop G604	8 10:00AM - 3:00PM Honors Scholars Poster Presentation Awards Ceremony at 12:30PM Atrium Amphitheater
		13 1 - 2PM & 4 - 5PM Advanced Library Research Techniques Atrium 540		27 9:30 - 1:00PM Central Park
		27 1-2PM & 4 - 5PM Developing and Delivering Effective Research Presentations Namm 119		29 12:30 - 4:00PM Honors Scholars & BMI Graduation Ceremony Atrium Amphitheater



WHAT IS THE OPENLAB?

The **OpenLab** is our open digital platform for learning and collaborating, created by City Tech students, faculty, and staff. Anyone at City Tech can join the OpenLab. The **OpenLab** allows its members to share their work with one another and with the world beyond City Tech. Over 8000 people are already using the OpenLab for their courses, projects, clubs, and portfolios. The **OpenLab** is a key part of the U.S. Department of Education Title V grant-funded project, "A Living Laboratory: Revitalizing General Education for a 21st-Century College of Technology."

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Learn new skills for working with the OpenLab.

Wednesday, December 11, 2013 | 2:00pm-3:00pm | Rm G604

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Interested in working with the OpenLab? Every semester we look for enthusiastic bloggers to join our Student Community Team.

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Help us make the OpenLab better!
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