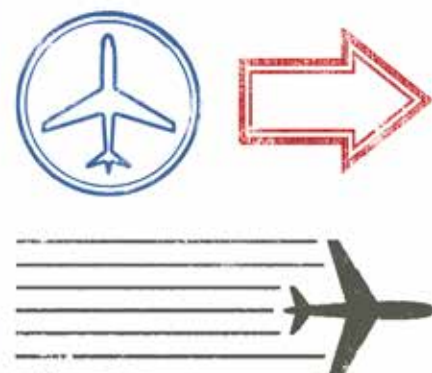
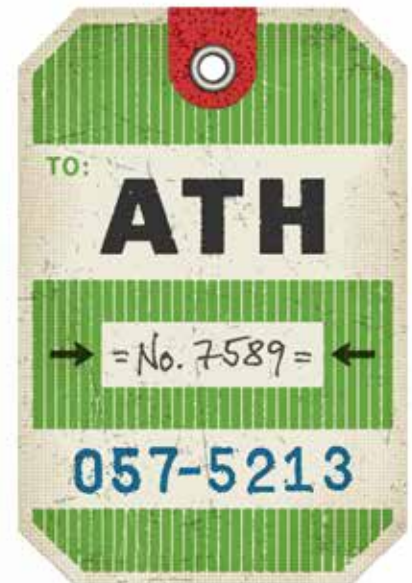
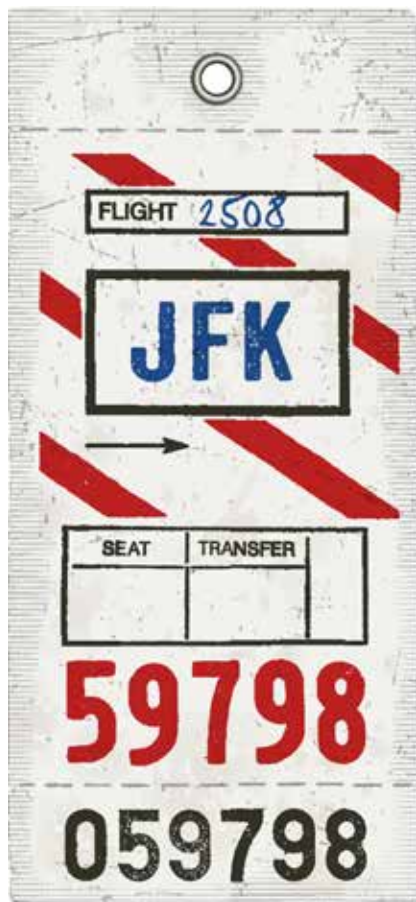




AlumNotes

Winter 2022

Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association, Inc. • Volume 48, Number 2





DEAR FELLOW HUNTERITES:

It is an honor to serve on the Alumnae/i Association board with an extraordinary group of alums volunteering their time and talents for our alma mater. In the months since the new Executive Committee and I took office, we have been hard at work, together with the other board members, familiarizing ourselves with all the day-to-day operations of the Association. During this process, we have had the incredible support and assistance of the previous Executive Committee, our wonderful staff, and several veteran directors, for which we are grateful.

With this process mostly behind us, we are now adjusting a few procedures and protocols and diving forward into action. In the last few weeks, I have had calls with Campus Schools Director Lisa Siegmann regarding grants for students, including to help establish programs we can fund to encourage matriculation from underserved communities, and to provide support to these students once they are at Hunter. I have also spoken to Jessica Knoble Gray of the Hunter College Foundation regarding our support for the school's pandemic preparedness initiatives. The Board is working to improve our communication with and outreach to the membership, mindful that different classes have distinct interests and needs. As the school reopened this fall, the HCHSAA held its first in-person event in over a year and a half. A group of theatre-loving alums attended a performance of *Morning Sun*, the latest work by acclaimed director **Lila Neugebauer '03**.

We are also looking to continue to improve the website. The new site is already a major improvement, and we are examining ways to continue to expand the services we provide, including more accessible information about the Association, making the directory more user-friendly, and creating more options to access Hunter updates and communications.

The Diversity Committee completed another summer with Hunter student interns and has been working on several projects. One of these projects involves providing mentors. Thank you to the many of you who responded to the survey on this topic. Additionally, the Retention Subcommittee issued a report with recommendations to help make Hunter more welcoming to diverse students once they enroll. The Board accepted this report, and we look forward to a discussion with the school to determine how best to implement them on an institutional level.

Our Annual Fund Campaign kicked off in December. Your generous gifts go to support projects that are identified as top priorities for the school, teachers, and administration after review by our Grants Committee. For information on the grants funded and how your gifts help support the school go to <https://hchsaa.org/grants-and-projects-funded/> or contact the office at giving@hchsaa.org.

Before you know it, it will be time for Reunion! Classes ending in a 2 or 7 have a milestone year in 2022. I remain hopeful we can be together this year and that I will see you there! More to come on Reunion in future communications.

Finally, I want to note the service to the Association of those directors who stepped down at the end of last year. Our gratitude to **Sheila Anderson '80**, **Christine Jung '01**, **Anna Kovner '92**, **Myrna Manners '74**, **Raymond Tsao '84**, and **Constance WILSON Williams '89** for their many contributions and commitment to Hunter. We hope that you've had a healthy start to the New Year!!

Vivian Altman '77

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Hunter College High School Alumni Association:

It is not astounding that, nearing age 93, I read every one of your "End Notes," found each recently deceased alumna's life worthy of a novel, and wished that I had known each and every one of them while I was at Hunter, 1943-Jan. 1946, or thereafter.

Like some of my generation of alumnae, I was a Holocaust survivor, having been born in Vienna on 28 December 1928, and having finally arrived in the U.S. on the San Miguel, a Portuguese cargo ship, on 28 May 1940, not speaking a word of English. **Kit Lan Tam '75/'76's** life echoes mine, and I too kept up my mother tongue, German, and my early childhood school-girl French and Italian, throughout my life, as she did in her studies of Chinese, her mother tongue. Like Kit Lan Tam, I also started at HCHS in tenth grade, and, by virtue of the Latin, German, French and Italian regents, graduated in Jan. 1946, as **Cynthia Ozick, Jan. '46** did. Of course, Cynthia's literary contributions are unique and unparalleled.

Like **Elaine JACKSON Stack '48**, I earned my law degrees later than most: But then, I did not start law school (Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law) until I was 73 years old, earning the JD in 2005, the LLM in 2006, and passing the bar in 2007. When I told Dean Rudenstine that I intended to become a litigator, he warned me that "Litigation is a field for young men."

"Great!" I said. "I like young men."

How I wish I had known Elaine during her distinguished law career on the East End. How much her advice would have helped me in my 15-year fight against corruption in the bold-faced Village of Southampton, and particularly, in my litigation, in EDNY and in 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, against former mayor Mark Epley, former trustee Paul Robinson, and former Village Attorney Elbert W. "Beau" Robinson, Jr.

What a bunch of exceptional women whose lives you told us briefly but eloquently in End Notes!

Yet, having been part of the HCHS Holocaust Memorial a few years ago, and having served on the Board of Trustees of the Alumnae/i Association also a few years ago, I did have a chance to meet several of the newest generation of young HCHS students, and boys and girls both, they were every bit as bright as I recall my generation of women to have been, and I have no doubt that the present crop of HCHS graduates will make immense contributions to our country and the world, with their idealism, unquenchable search for knowledge, respect for the past, and eternal hope for the future!

Thank you, HCHS! My lifetime debt to Hunter can never be repaid.

Affectionately,

Evelyn Konrad, Jan. '46

Stanford University, AB 1949

Stanford University, MA 1949





Regarding the article about the op-ed by **Anri Wheeler '99** ("A Commentary on Systemic Racism," *AlumNotes*, Summer 2021, page 10), where she says that "racism is in all of us."

She should speak for herself. I do not accept the characterization or the character assassination. Realizing that denial is absolute proof of racism, I nevertheless wish to go on record declaring that racism is not in me and she does not get to say that it is. Just repeating something over and over does not make it true, no matter how much you would like to believe that it does.

Yours truly,

Anita VALENTE Mule '55

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Dear Alumnae/i,

As the holiday season approaches, I am delighted to be writing this from your alma mater which is running at full capacity with a largely (and ever increasing!) vaccinated student body. All the beloved experiences of HCHS are returning –from full-sized classes meeting every day to extracurriculars like PSAL athletics, student theatre and musical productions, cultural club meetings and activities. How is this possible? With care—like the Hunter motto teaches us, The Care of the Future is Mine—we have reconstituted high school with great care to ensure that all that we love best can be done safely and carefully. Even the (hopefully) temporary adjustments like providing proof of vaccination to participate in some events or audiences, requiring weekly saliva testing and mask-wearing all contribute to the care of the future. While we do not know yet how this next generation of HCHSAA members will look back on their high school experiences during and after COVID, I do know they will remember the joy of being back together, with the teachers and each other and to the bright hope of the future. Your crucial support of the emergency COVID fund and your continued support of activities and programming opportunities at the HS are a vital part of the care of their future.

Thank you, for your care and continued connection to Hunter College High School. I wish you a happy and healthy new year!

Lisa Siegmman

Lisa Siegmman
Director, Campus Schools



SAYA (South Asian Youth Association) Diwali Celebration



HCHS First Robotics Team 3419 back at the Alliance Bernstein robotics lab... (with 10th grade Health class "robotic" babies) learning how to juggle work and parenting demands:



FIRST TIME IN HCHS HISTORY: PSAL City Champions GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER!



Hunter Theatre is Back!

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL

Hunter High School on Zoom: Reflections on Remote Learning

by Odelya Bergner-Phillips '24

While a definitive end to the pandemic remains elusive, Hunter College High School's over-a-year bout of remote learning has in fact come to an end, with the 2021-2022 school year beginning and continuing fully in-person. Back in the beloved Brick Prison, walking the windowless halls, and lounging in the courtyard while the warm weather lasts, Hunter students and teachers have returned, each changed by virtual learning. For many, an overwhelmingly salient element of their remote experiences was student isolation.

Sophomore **Miles H. '24** reflected on his journey learning remotely: "I think [remote learning] was a mostly negative experience. There were some positives — I got to do a lot more on my own time and figure out a little bit of a schedule that works for me. But I think in general, the isolation and lack of contact with our teachers was challenging."

Eighth grader **Calder W. '26** voiced similar sentiments about isolation, but as a seventh grader last year, he was new to the school.

"I was able to make some friends, but I wasn't able to solidify those relationships as much as I've been able to this year." Now attending in-person, he describes that he "[gets] lost so much this year, because I wasn't in the building at all."

Teachers observed the unusual social dynamics in their Zoom classrooms. Social studies teacher Ms. Eden Heller taught 9th and 10th graders remotely last year. Ninth grade is typically a formative year for Hunter students, as they no longer operate in travel classes and are thus exposed to a broader group of students. Ms. Heller recounted: "I definitely noticed that there would be people who didn't know the names of all their classmates or felt uncomfortable in the [Zoom] breakout rooms because they didn't know the other people," and added, "[Students were] not meeting each other as much, they [were] not talking to each other as much, they [were] not feeling as social and connected."

Science teacher **Ms. Caitlin Samuel '07** had a unique



perspective on the disappointment experienced by remote students due to her own years as a Hunter high schooler: "I really think that my teaching is very influenced by having gone to Hunter because I empathize very viscerally with Hunter students. I think that having that empathy helped me to connect to students even through this digital, weird setting, and to put myself in their place — 'what would I have needed in this time?'"

Both teachers noted that while the level of learning generally met expectations, the skills taught were different. For example, all ninth-grade biology students had open-note tests, prompting them to focus on note-taking and synthesizing information, rather than memorization.

Teaching remotely was challenging without the "classroom energy," according to Ms. Heller, who grappled with the increase in student distractions that came with learning at home. "It's hard, from a teacher's perspective, to see people not paying attention," she said.

Despite the limitations posed by remote learning, Ms. Samuel revealed that: "I kind of miss it. It was nice to have everybody on the same playing field for commute times and to get to see a window into everybody's really different lives."

Miles had an alternate perspective, one shared by many students: "I hope we don't have to do it again."

From Nonprofits to UN Conferences: Hunter Sophomore Ajani Stella's Fight Against Climate Change

By Rachel Pakan '23, News Editor at *What's What*

As the prognosis for our planet worsens in the midst of a climate crisis, Hunter sophomore **Ajani Stella '24** remains intent on increasing education, policy action and accessibility to raise climate awareness and forge a better future.

Ajani, who has been passionate about climate change since he was 10 years old, has embarked on a variety of endeavors to take an active role in the fight against climate change. In the past few years, he has started his own 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Kids Fight Climate Change, hosted two climate-related podcasts, co-founded the Youth Advisory Council at the Human Impacts Institute, and participated in a policymaking internship at Teachers College, Columbia University. Most recently, in early November 2021, he spent a week in Glasgow, Scotland at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 26, as an observing delegate.

Ajani attributes his interest in climate action to his fifth grade STEM teacher, Ms. Vicki Sando. He recalled how her lessons on the basics of climate change piqued his curiosity. Later, he explained, she suggested that he speak in her place at a campaign to divest the New York City Teacher Pension Fund from fossil fuel corporations.

Ajani reflected on his impact at the campaign: "I think that if there's one thing that they remember, it was the fifth-grader who could barely see over the table that spoke to them passionately about his experiences of climate change. I think that's one of the most powerful things about youth activism. It's that, even if we're small, we have a voice, and it's powerful. We can turn attention to the movement."

Since then, Ajani has not stopped fighting against climate change, and climate education is his top priority. One of the primary manifestations of his activism is Kids Fight Climate Change*, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that

Ajani founded. The organization's website, which Ajani described as an "educational portal," publishes a variety of climate-related news articles and resources. He stated that he aims to make information about climate change accessible to a diverse range of educational backgrounds—topics of articles can range from the basics of the greenhouse effect to the physics behind energy efficiency.

Ajani has also reached out to several schools across the country to develop initiatives that incorporate climate education into everyday subjects, since many schools perceive climate education as a disruption of preexisting curricula.

The lack of climate education opportunities stems far beyond the classroom. "The problem with finding [online] resources is [that] they don't exist," Ajani said. "Because of my interests, I pour through journal articles. I read hundred-page dissertations about climate change, but that's not what should happen."

Beyond education, Ajani's activism is largely guided by the belief that policy action is the key to halting the progression of climate change. He has participated in policy-related internships and recently spent a week in Glasgow at the UN Climate Change Conference, COP

26. Although officially designated as an observing delegate, Ajani participated in a variety of activities at the conference: he was one of the principal leaders of a Climate Crossroads exhibit, which shared the stories of 10 indigenous leaders from the Global South, and he also hosted a Facebook Live discussion about privilege and issues of access across the conference.

At the conference, Ajani also listened to a number of speakers that offered enlightening perspectives on the politics behind today's lack of climate action. He recounted: "I was listening to this scientist and economist talk about why they chose 2050 [as the year to reach a certain threshold of reduced emissions]. It's because it's out of the election cycle. You say 2050, and you can say, 'oh, that's so far in the future; that's the next guy's problem.' So you can just set that goal and dust your hands." Ajani asserted that 2030 is the goal that policies should be aiming for when it comes to reducing emissions, since stopping climate change is a gradual process that will not be immediately completed by enacting certain policies.

While he found a lot to gain from his experience at COP 26, Ajani was not hesitant to admit the shortcomings of the UN, citing that the organization does not provide a way to enforce international policies regarding climate action. However, he also asserted that there is value in the international cooperation that these conferences encourage, explaining that climate change cannot be solved by a single country.

Unlike the rhetoric of many politicians and corporations, Ajani's stance on climate activism puts less emphasis on individual actions. He referenced the "Keep America Beautiful" movement, which held intense anti-littering advertising campaigns throughout the 1960s and 1970s. "And guess who funded 'Keep America Beautiful?'" he said. "The plastic companies, the fossil fuel companies, because they figured out a way to subvert any policy attempts to regulate them and instead put the blame on individuals. And that's the most dangerous part of climate change that we need to remember. Corporations are causing this. Governments are causing this. It's not individuals that are at fault. So I don't think that individual actions are as nearly as important."

Though he does not believe that picking up litter will save the planet, Ajani encourages individuals to use their voices to influence legislators to pursue climate action and to boycott corporations that are major sources of carbon emissions. Most of all, he encourages people to bring climate action into their everyday lives. He stated, "You can be fighting climate change in your job even if you're not a Ph.D. scientist. You can be an elementary school teacher. You can be a librarian. You can be literally any job on the planet and be incorporating climate change into your work and helping your company, your family, and community become resilient and mitigate it."

*To learn more about Ajani Stella's nonprofit, visit <https://www.kidsfightclimatechange.org/>



Rachel Pakan '23



Ajani Stella '24

Back to the Studio: Studio 94's Post-Pandemic Return

BY ARIELA LOPEZ '23 AND EMMA SMITH '23

Navigating the pandemic has proved challenging for most of Hunter's clubs, but Studio 94, a music-based community service club, in particular, overcame hurdles to ensure they continue to fulfill their mission of engaging senior citizens through musical performance.

Founded in 2013, Studio 94 seeks to give back to their community by organizing musical performances for residents and members of nursing homes and senior centers. The club is "dedicated to making music, having a good time, and then bringing that music to others for them to enjoy," said junior **Jiayang J. '23**, one of Studio 94's co-presidents.

Historically, Studio 94 has appealed especially to singers and focused on rehearsing choral and cappella pieces. The club is a great opportunity for students who want to experience choral music, but don't have time in their schedule to join Hunter's chorus, explained music teacher Mr. Robert Randall, who has served as the club's faculty advisor since 2015.

More recently, Studio 94's membership has expanded to include students from all musical backgrounds, and its focus has likewise shifted to assembling sets featuring more instrumental music, and solo or small group performances.

When the pandemic hit, Studio 94 had to adapt. Because senior citizens -- Studio 94's target audience -- are some of the most vulnerable to COVID-19, in-person concerts were no longer an option.

In April 2021, the club held a virtual show with Concerts in Motion, a nonprofit dedicated to fostering connection and engagement amongst New York's most isolated members through musical performances.

Though logistically difficult, continuing to give performances became especially important during a pandemic, explained Studio 94

co-president, junior **Kamila K. '23**. "The pandemic was really isolating and scary, and I love that through music we are able to create some sense of community," she said.

While performing virtually was a big adjustment for many club members, Kamila has fond memories of interacting with the audience. "Last year there were 'regulars' that would come to several Concerts in Motion shows who were the sweetest people ever," she said. "They would ask us questions about our favorite musicians or how we chose our pieces, and our discussions grew out of that."

"Music is such a universal language, and it may be cliché, but it's so inspiring to see 10 or so people who live all across the city coming together for an hour to enjoy this event," added Jiayang.

Currently, most senior centers are still not allowing in-person programming due to safety concerns, forcing the club to continue their operations remotely. However, Jiayang described virtual performances as a "silver lining to the pandemic": virtual performances are more convenient for many audience members, and the club hopes to use them as a way to expand its audience beyond senior citizens to include Hunter students as well.

Currently, Studio 94 is occupied with recovering from a challenging year when it could not do any of its typical activities and attempting to make opportunities for Hunter musicians to perform amidst the ever-changing pandemic restrictions.

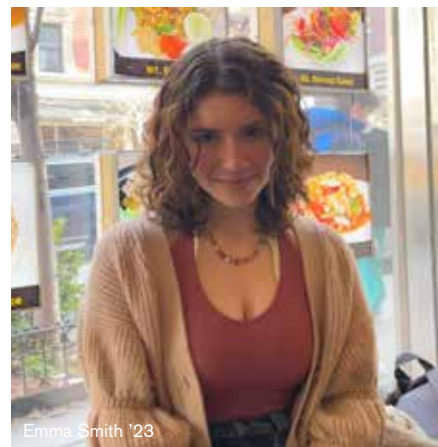
Jiayang and Kamila aim to hold one concert per month and recently organized a performance at the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House during the week after Thanksgiving.

While virtual concerts seem to be the new normal, the club is optimistic about its future

endeavors. "Hopefully, by the end of the year, they'll be able to make music in-person, hopefully at one of the senior centers, the way it's historically been," Mr. Randall said. "I remember walking into their rehearsals during Tuesday Activities in room 333, and there would always be laughter," he added. "Seeing them work hard towards their goal and seeing the friendships and camaraderie was always the best part for me, and I hope we can return to that soon."



Ariela Lopez '23



Emma Smith '23

The editorial team of *The Observer* wants stories from YOU!

Founded in 1981, *The Observer* is the official independent newspaper of HCHS. Published monthly, it is currently advised by high school faculty members Kim Aioldi and Lois Refkin.

Hunter's student editors seek stories from alumnae/i as they launch a new section in *The Observer* -- "Alumni Diary," a twist on *The New York Times'* Metropolitan Diary.

The Metropolitan Diary publishes 100-word short stories about New York, and *The Observer's* editorial team invites Hunter alumnae/i to submit 100 word stories about Hunter from your time as students.



VOL. XIE, NO. 1

THE OFFICIAL INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER OF HUNTER COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL SINCE 1981

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2021

Interested? Send your stories to eic.hchsobserver@gmail.com!

REMEMBERING “GRANDMA” INEZ SEWELL

JUNE 21, 1928 – AUGUST 9, 2021



In the Fall of 2021, we were informed by retired HCHS Science Department Chair **Marge LANDSBERG Goldsmith '61** of the passing of retired Laboratory Technician Inez Sewell. Serving the high school from 1990 until her retirement in 2014, Mrs. Sewell was affectionately known by students as “Granny.” Her daughter, Alicia Felder, kindly shared details of her mother’s journey in life, including the path that led her to Hunter.

Born in Havana, Cuba, Inez was the third of five children. At the age of five, Inez’s family moved to Kingston, Jamaica, and then to the Parish of Saint James. Her mother was a seamstress and dressmaker, and her father was a farmer and a butcher. Inez loved school! She had to walk 5 ½ miles to and from school each day. She attended a one room school-house - Pear Tree Hill School - at 6 years old, which was divided into seven sections to accommodate students from kindergarten to sixth standard. When Inez was in elementary school, she lived vicariously through her least favorite classes, history and geography. The country that captivated her imagination was America, and the state was New York. She wasn’t good at remembering historical dates - but focused instead on the beauty, luxury and opportunity America had to offer to anyone who was willing to work hard and enjoy life.

At 15 years old, Inez moved back to Kingston with her family. She was sad to leave her life in Saint James behind. She was a tomboy – she loved to climb trees, roam around the countryside, and had lots of friends and her own baseball team. Sadly, she had to quit school because there were no government high schools, and her mother could not afford the cost of a private high school. Her mom was so sad, but Inez told her “Don’t worry - I will get my education one day.”

On January 24, 1958, she left Kingston to come to America with \$1,000 - her life savings. Inez’s first job was at Mary Immaculate Hospital working in the dining room serving the medical staff. It was not the job she wanted

- but she figured that by getting her foot in the door, it would allow her the opportunity to move into what she really wanted to do, which was work with the sick. One day, she went to work and approached the Sister (nun) in charge of her department and asked her if she could be transferred to a department where she could work with the sick. Luckily a position was just opened on the Pediatric Floor, she interviewed, and was hired on the spot. Inez loved all children, and it broke her heart seeing children get so sick and even die. She worked on the Pediatric Floor from 1958-1963.

On June 11, 1963, Inez became an American citizen. She was the first of her family to emigrate to America. She attended evening High School in Jamaica, Queens. She married in 1963 and had Anthony, her son, in 1964. After her son’s birth, Inez became a stay-at-home mom. She cleaned houses for four years to pay for her son’s nursery school tuition. When her daughter Alicia was born in 1970, she decided to start a nursery school at her home for working mothers in the neighborhood. She started with four children from 6:00am – 9:00pm. Her business expanded and thrived for four years until Alicia started nursery school, at which time Inez decided to close it.

Eleven years had passed between attending evening High School in Queens and being able to attend classes to get her GED, which she earned in a year. Inez then started at Bronx Community College (BCC). For Work-Study, she applied to the Chemistry Department. The scrub work would be her job, but she took it anyway. She loved and excelled in science and math and majored in Industrial Chemistry. After learning the names of all the glassware, she began supervising the other Work-Study students in preparing the drawers for the incoming Chemistry students, and after taking enough Chemistry classes, she was also hired as an Adjunct College Laboratory Technician (CLT). She graduated from BCC with an Associate Degree in Applied Science in January 1981.

From there, Inez attended City College of New York (CCNY). Again, she was hired for Work-Study in the Chemistry Department. At the same time, she continued to work at BCC as a CLT, which enabled her to pay for school tuition. At CCNY, she became a full time CLT. She received her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry in February 1990. Absolutely obsessed with learning and education, Inez then attended Herbert H. Lehman College and received a Bachelor of Science in Accounting in June 1995, and a Bachelor of Science in Computing and Management in June 1998.

I still remember her interviewing for the job at Hunter, and when she was hired. She was elated. After all the struggles – finally she was stepping into a great job with security working with kids. She was hired at Hunter College High School in 1990 as a College Laboratory Technician.

Hunter was my mom's life and her heart. She loved being around students and sharing her love of chemistry with everyone. She loved all the students and was affectionately known as "Grandma". She believed all children were worthy of love and respect and believed wholeheartedly that all children could learn. Sometimes they just needed to be held accountable and know that someone cared. My mom told me many stories of kids who were having difficult times academically at Hunter – and making them sit in her office and do their homework. She wanted every child to succeed. Working with my mom for school service was hard work – but if she picked you, and you were up for doing what she asked – you would learn a lot.

Inez was devoted to her work. She was extremely knowledgeable and passionate about chemistry and lab work, skillful, precise, by the book, always extremely well prepared, organized, and very concerned with the safety of students and colleagues. For 24 years, she was responsible for ordering all the lab materials, reagents, and the maintenance of supplies and equipment for use in Physical Science, Chemistry and AP Chemistry Department, and the disposal of all solids and solutions in a safe manner either by discarding them or recycling them with other campuses of the University. She was instrumental in reducing departmental expenditures on chemicals, materials, and waste by preventing contamination, and reducing waste by creating creative color-coded systems and working directly with teachers to revise lab procedures. At times when Hunter did not have a Biology Lab Technician, Inez set up all the Biology labs as well. She created an inventory system to keep track of Hunter's Chemical inventory and provided documentation for all labs she prepared for Physical Science, Chemistry & AP Chemistry. She was unusually resourceful in acquiring materials from other parts of the University that were no longer being used for use in the department. Inez provided guidance for colleagues who taught courses they had not taught in several years. She also made repairs to major pieces of equipment to keep them in service within the department.

Department Head Marge Goldsmith described my mom's commitment and devotion to her job at Hunter best in one of many glowing Annual



Evaluations: "Inez earned the confidence and respect of colleagues in her preparations by testing all setups and reagents before they were brought into the classroom. She has high expectations for herself, the teachers, and their students. These characteristics can only benefit the department. She anticipates what is needed and prepares well in advance. She is demanding in terms of cleanliness and quality control and expects the teachers in each course to be responsible as well. This is important; for it helps to develop a sense of responsibility for each lab section and helps to promote safety and preservation of our lab supplies. Inez has a wonderful rapport with students. She talks to them in the hallway and cajoles them into keep-

ing up with their work. Their nickname for her, "Granny," is meant as a term of endearment. She is delighted when Seniors come up to her and thank her for her concern and encouragement over the years. Her willingness to walk the halls and talk to kids is a boost for our department, as is her participation in many labs: helping the teacher and the students. Inez does not need to participate in the labs unless she chooses to do so. Her availability in the prep room or in 344 is always an asset in terms of safety and support. Inez's knowledge, experience, attention to detail and willingness to try out new demos has added markedly to our Chemistry program. Her attention to the students on a personal level has given them a school based 'Granny.' Thank you!"

Inez retired in 2014 at the age of 83, and moved to Atlanta, Georgia to be closer to her granddaughter Layla. My mom died shortly after celebrating her 93rd birthday in Atlanta, Georgia.

Alicia Felder

Ms. Felder plans to have a memorial service for her mother on Zoom. If you would like to learn more about her plans for a memorial for Mrs. Sewell, please email her at aliciafelder@mac.com.

Tribute to Inez Sewell

"Inez could be demanding and protective of the equipment and her prep space. Her goal was to make sure that the lab prep provided the precise needs for the teachers and the exacting lab experience for the students.

She nurtured many students by walking the halls to greet them and check on homework. In private she had quite a humorous streak. Generations of physical science students benefitted from her expertise and care."

-Marge LANDSBERG Goldsmith '61, Science Chair (retired)

"Inez had a keen sense of organization and keeping things in order. She was always available to help things run smoothly."

-Dr. Judith Klein, Science Chair (retired)

"Mrs. Sewell was a quintessential Laboratory Technician. Her preparation work was always perfect. The cart of reagents and equipment she brought to the lab each time was exactly what we needed. She didn't make mistakes. She would stay in the lab to provide both an extra pair of hands and her own vast expertise for the class. Mrs. Sewell LOVED working with the students, and they loved her in return (they affectionately called her Granny).

Beyond the classroom, Mrs. Sewell would serve as Mentor for students that she felt needed help. She would check their homework each day and they appreciated her care and attention.

Outside the classroom, Inez Sewell and I became close friends. She kept most of her colleagues at a distance, but I was lucky enough to break through. She was fiercely loyal to those she held close, and I treasured her friendship."

-Fran Salzman, Chemistry and AP Chemistry Faculty (retired)

ALUMNAE/I NEWS



CALLING HUNTER HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Just as being a Hunterite creates a special bond, so too and perhaps more so does surviving the Holocaust. An unknown number of 1940s, 50s and 60s alumnae are Holocaust survivors. They are unknown because they tended to be secretive about their history.

The four Hunter survivors featured in the spring 2021 Alumnae Holocaust Remembrance Day webcast, **Eve KANNER Kugler, Jan. '49, BEM; Joan KENT Finkelstein '54, Ph.D.; Susanne KLEJMAN Bennet '55; and Lisa GOLDIN Rabinowicz '59** agreed that it is important to get to know each other, share our history and how we coped at Hunter and over the years with the trauma of living through the Holocaust.

So this is a request to Hunter survivors to identify themselves by notifying the Alumnae/i Association via email at info@hchsaa.org. Their names will remain confidential and used only with fellow survivors. Once identified, the group can decide what kind of contact

they would like, whether electronically or otherwise.

Children of Holocaust survivors, the so-called second generation, form a second substantial group of Hunter alums. As their life experiences and concerns are different from those of survivors, a separate group can be set up by them also.

Survivor and second-generation testimony continue to be welcome at the Hunter Holocaust website: www.shatteredcrystals.net/hchs

To see the video of 2021's Holocaust Remembrance Day program, please visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bM3nkj_7F5w. The HCHSAA hopes to continue offering such programs annually for alumnae/i and also for students.

Eve KANNER Kugler, Jan. '49, BEM

Alumnus Chairs Board of Yahoo!

In September 2021, **Reed Rayman '04** was named Chairman of the Board of internet giant Yahoo! A partner at Apollo Global Management, Rayman leads many of the private equity firm's tech and media investments, including spearheading Apollo's acquisition of Yahoo! (formerly known as Verizon Media) from Verizon for approximately \$5 billion this past fall. Along with Yahoo!, which is the world's third-most-visited internet site, the collection of assets in the Verizon Media umbrella sold to Apollo also include AOL, TechCrunch, Engadget, and a number of other digital media and consumer internet businesses. Rayman attributes his initial interest in media to his time at HCHS, where he was co-Editor-in-Chief of *What's What*.

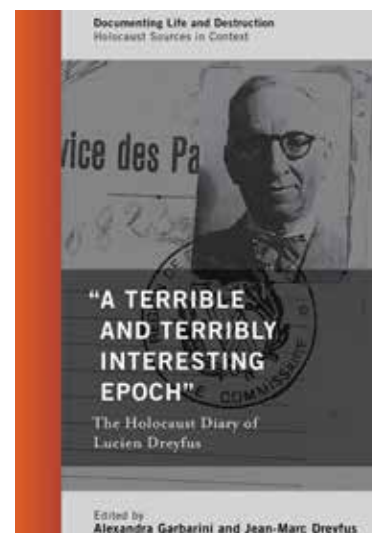
Rayman was recently interviewed in *Bloomberg News* about the transaction and his plans for the company.



A Diary Chronicling the Holocaust in France

Two decades ago, **Alexandra (Ali) Garbarini '90, Ph.D.**, historian and professor at Williams College, discovered an extraordinary Holocaust diary in the archives while researching her dissertation. Long hidden, the diary by a French Jewish man named Lucien Dreyfus can finally reach other interested readers. *"A Terrible and Terribly Interesting Epoch": The Holocaust Diary of Lucien Dreyfus*, co-edited by Garbarini and her colleague, Jean-Marc Dreyfus, was published by Rowman & Littlefield in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2021.

Lucien Dreyfus was a teacher at the most prestigious public high school in Strasbourg, an editor of the leading Jewish newspaper of Alsace and Lorraine, the devoted father of an only daughter, and the doting grandfather of an only granddaughter. In 1939, after the French declaration of war on Hitler's Germany, Lucien and his wife, Marthe, were forced by the French state to leave Strasbourg. They resettled in Nice, and his diary entries provide a rare glimpse into the daily life of French and foreign-born Jewish refugees under the Vichy regime. His daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter escaped France as part of a Quaker-organized transport bound for the United States in the spring of 1942, but Lucien and Marthe were not so lucky. They were rounded up by the SS in a raid in September 1943, and two months later they were deported and murdered in Auschwitz. As the only diary by an observant Jew raised bi-culturally in French and German, Dreyfus's writing offers a unique philosophical and moral reflection on the Holocaust as it was unfolding in France. The diary's publication in France in 2018 inspired memory activists to lay *Stolpersteine* commemorating Lucien and Marthe in front of their apartment building in Strasbourg.





Alumna takes the Lead at Storm King Art Center

Nora Lawrence '97 was recently appointed Artistic Director and Chief Curator at Storm King Art Center in New Windsor, New York. Lawrence will serve as the institution's first artistic director, a newly created role. In 2018, Lawrence graciously welcomed a group of nearly 50 HCHS alumnae/i and current Hunter art and art history students to Storm King and treated our group to a private tour of the institution.

Joining Storm King as curator in 2011, Lawrence established several programs that have enabled artists to develop works for the museum's breathtaking and spacious grounds. In 2013, she initiated the Outlooks residency, where an emerging or mid-career artist is invited to create a site-specific work for the art center.

In addition to this artist's residency, Lawrence has also led the cultivation of many notable acquisitions and commissions that have enhanced Storm King's permanent collections, its roster of special exhibitions, and its series of publications. She began her work as artistic director and chief curator in January 2022.

Writing of Diversity in Corporate America

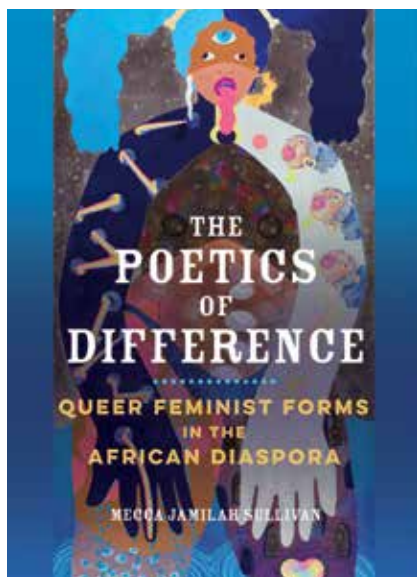
Edith Cooper '79, retired partner at Goldman Sachs and the first Black woman to attain that position at the corporation, authored an opinion piece for *The New York Times*. In her article, Cooper wrote about people of color and their service on company boards, addressing the issue of implicit bias that is still present in the corporate world. To read her article, visit <https://nyti.ms/3qq66w2>.

Delving into the Creative Histories of Queer Black Women Artists

In her recently published book, *The Poetics of Difference: Queer Feminist Forms in the African Diaspora* (University of Illinois Press 2021), author **Mecca Jamilah Sullivan '99, Ph.D.** explores the powerful forms of cultural expression created by queer Black women artists. **Laurie Prendergast '80** was copy editor for the work.

In commentary related to Sullivan's book, it was stated that "Black women's literary cultures have long theorized the complexities surrounding nation and class, the indeterminacy of gender and race, and the multiple meanings of sexuality. Yet their ideas and work remain obscure in the face of indifference from Western scholarship."

Drawing upon the rich histories of such well known figures as **Audre Lorde '51**, Ntozake Shange, and Suzan-Lori Parks, Sullivan delves into new spaces of creative theory and practice. These writers and artists have taken on the invention of language, corporeal movements, and genres to create an array of artistic work through which they have made their voices known. The *Poetics of Difference: Queer Feminist Forms in the African Diaspora* is part of the University of Illinois Press' *The New Black Studies Series*, highlighting scholarly writings on Black theory and culture.



An Alum on the Move

Sewell Chan '94 was named Editor-in-Chief of the *Texas Tribune*, a nonprofit media organization based in Austin, Texas. Chan, who was most recently Editorial Page Editor at the *Los Angeles Times*, began his work in the field as a student writer at Hunter, where he led reporting for *The Observer*. He has had a lengthy career in journalism, serving in multiple roles at *The New York Times*, including as International News Editor.

Chan began his new role at the *Texas Tribune* in October 2021.

An Award for Outstanding Service

Carolyn Herbst '60 received the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) 2021 Award for Outstanding Service to local, state, regional and national Social Studies Councils for over 50 years, including the Association of Teachers of Social Studies / United Federation of Teachers - New York City (ATSS/UFT-NYC), the New York State Council for the Social Studies (NY-SCSS), the Middle States Council for the Social Studies (MSCSS) as well as NCSS.

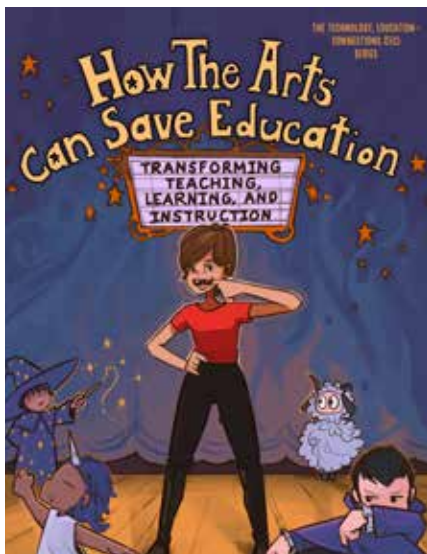
Herbst was a High School Social Studies Teacher in New York City Public Schools for 37 1/2 years, officially retiring in 2001. She has served as Officer, Board Member, Delegate, Committee Chair, Workshop Presenter, Publications Contributor, Exhibits Chair, Conference Planner, Event Co-Ordinator, and Resolutions Writer among her professional activities with the Social Studies Councils over the years. The award was presented at the week-long NCSS virtual conference in November 2021.



The Importance of Arts in Education

Erica ROSENFELD Halverson '93, Ph.D. has authored an important book on the subject of arts and learning. Entitled *How the Arts Can Save Education: Transforming Teaching, Learning, and Instruction* (Teachers College Press 2021), Halverson puts forth a bold vision where she encourages educators to reimagine learning environments with the arts as an essential foundation.

A professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Halverson has published extensively in the subjects of Arts Education, Media Arts, Technology + Learning, and Theatre. She posits that now, as students return to the classroom following a year of remote learning due to the coronavirus pandemic, is an optimal time to reimagine education. Among the models she shares are innovative approaches to core subjects like literacy, math, and social studies that embrace the social, cultural, and historical assets that students at all grade levels bring to the classroom.

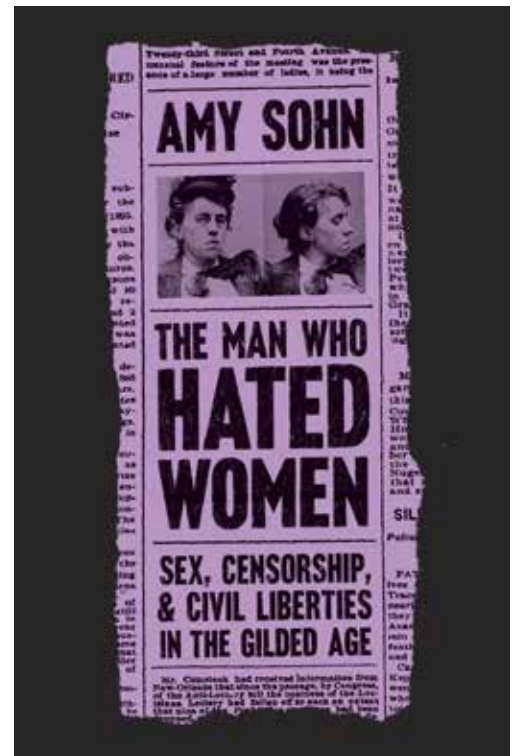


Fighting for Women's Rights in the 19th Century

New York Times-bestselling author **Amy Sohn '91** has written a groundbreaking book, *The Man Who Hated Women: Sex, Censorship, and Civil Liberties in the Gilded Age* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2021).

Anthony Comstock, the man who hated women, was a US Postal Inspector and anti-vice 'activist.' In 1873, under the Grant administration, he passed an eponymous law criminalizing both contraception and the mailing of obscene material. Comstock was obsessed with the idea of sexual purity, and his interest in women's health stopped at contraception and abortion (which he often conflated). The lasting impacts of Comstock's oppressive—albeit short-lived—regimes would ripple throughout the country for almost a century, and we wouldn't be where we are today without the heroic actions of a few brave women.

While *The Man Who Hated Women* provides a biography of Comstock, the real heroes of this book are eight remarkable, largely forgotten women who gave their careers and their lives to fight against Comstock's tyranny over their rights. Among these women are Emma Goldman, anarchist and labor organizer; birth control activist Margaret Sanger; Ida Craddock, a free speech advocate who condemned Comstock in her suicide note; the woman known as Madame Restell, a Manhattan abortionist; and Victoria Woodhull, the first female presidential candidate. These women were largely regarded as eccentrics even within their own movement, and most have been written out of progressive history, feminist history, and the history of reproductive health. They were too sexual, too leftist, too anarchist, too ahead of their time. But in their willingness to take on Comstock, they paved the way for the sexual and reproductive health revolution.



Miranda Family Fund Provides Support to Nonprofit Organizations

Lin-Manuel Miranda '98, through the Miranda Family Fund, donated \$225,000 to organizations engaged in immigrant rights and policy reform across the country. The grants, made in honor of the Fourth of July, allowed for unrestricted use, and will benefit immigrant Arab, Asian, and Latinx communities.

To read more about the 2021 gifts made by the Miranda Family Fund, visit <https://bit.ly/324xmaU>.

Chronicling the Life of a Science Pioneer

In March 2022, the publication *Carbon Queen: The Remarkable Life of Nanoscience Pioneer Mildred Dresselhaus* (MIT Press 2022) will be released. Written by MIT Press' Deputy Editorial Director Maia Weinstock, the book first details Dresselhaus' (nee Spiewak) childhood in the Bronx where, in the 1940s, she was taught that there were only three career options available to women: secretary, nurse, or teacher. After graduating from HCHS in January 1948, Mildred Dresselhaus began her college studies in the sciences, where she broke barriers to become a prominent researcher, scientist, and engineer and one of the first female professors at MIT. Her exploration into the properties of carbon helped pave the way for innovations in electronics, aviation, medicine, and energy.

An alumna's novel adapted for the screen

Like No Other (Razorbill 2015), the young adult novel written by **Una Lamarche '98**, will be adapted as a film. The book chronicles the meeting, and eventual romance, between a Hasidic girl and a secular boy who live in the same Brooklyn neighborhood. Their relationship, which would be forbidden by their families, is kept secret as the two begin to grow closer.

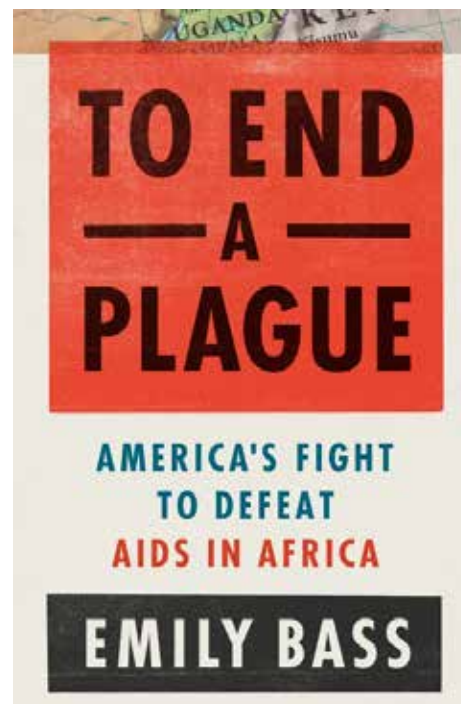
Casey McIntyre, Vice President and Publisher of Razorbill, an imprint of Penguin Young Readers, will serve as Executive Producer of the film.

Combating the AIDS Pandemic

Journalist and activist **Emily Bass '91** has released a book, *To End a Plague: America's Fight to Defeat AIDS in Africa* (PublicAffairs 2021), that delves into the global AIDS pandemic and how it has been contained.

With his 2003 announcement of a program known as PEPFAR, George W. Bush launched an astonishingly successful American war against a global pandemic. PEPFAR played a key role in slashing HIV cases and AIDS deaths in sub-Saharan Africa, leading to the brink of epidemic control. Resilient in the face of flatlined funding and political headwinds, PEPFAR is America's singular example of how to fight long-term plague—and win.

To End a Plague is not merely the definitive history of this extraordinary program; it traces the lives of the activists who first impelled President Bush to take action, and later sought to prevent AIDS deaths at the whims of American politics. Moving from raucous street protests to the marbled halls of Washington, and the clinics and homes where Ugandan people living with HIV fight to survive, it reveals an America that was once capable of real and meaningful change—and illuminates imperatives for future pandemic wars.



An Alumnus takes on Position of Leadership

Richard Reich '92 was promoted to Senior Vice President and General Counsel at New Jersey Resources (NJR), a Fortune 1000 company that, through its subsidiaries, provides safe natural gas and clean energy services to over half a million customers in the state.

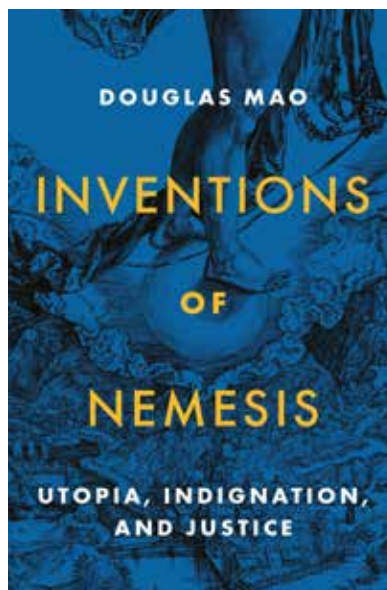
In this position of leadership, Reich is responsible for directing the efforts of New Jersey Resources' legal department, developing and leading the corporate legal function, and overseeing corporate compliance.

Prior to his appointment as Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Reich was Interim General Counsel and Corporate Secretary at the organization. He first joined NJR in 2006 as Associate General Counsel.



Reflections on the Nature of Utopia

In *Inventions of Nemesis: Utopia, Indignation, and Justice* (Princeton University Press 2020), **Douglas Mao '83** offers a fresh take on utopia's essential project. In examining writing about ideal societies from Greek antiquity to the present, Mao—who is currently Russ Family Professor in the Humanities at Johns Hopkins University—was struck by how often utopian imagining has been propelled by an angry conviction that society is badly arranged. This led him to see that although utopia is often associated with happiness, order, or material security, its most fundamental goal is justice, where “justice” names a condition in which all have what they ought to have. *Inventions* also shows how anti-utopianism has been associated with a fear that utopia would transform humanity beyond recognition, doing away with the very subjects who should receive justice in a transformed world. And it shows how utopian writing speaks to contemporary debates about immigration, labor, and other global justice issues. Along the way, it connects utopia to the Greek concept of *nemesis*, or indignation at a wrong ordering of things, and advances fresh readings of dozens of writers and thinkers from Plato, Thomas More, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Edward Bellamy to John Rawls, Ursula Le Guin, Octavia Butler, and Chang-Rae Lee.



Reality Comes to Broadway

Kudos to **Jane Dubin '74** for wrapping up another Broadway production! As co-producer of *Is This a Room*, Dubin played an integral role in adapting the real-life story of Reality Winner, a military contractor questioned by the FBI for mishandling of classified information, for the stage. Based entirely on a transcript of events, the skilled cast and crew brought the production to life. It was described by *The New York Times* as one of the “thrillingest thrillers to ever hit Broadway.”

Documenting AIDS Activism in New York

Sarah Schulman '75 published an extensive history of AIDS activism in New York. Her book, *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP New York, 1987-1993* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2021) chronicles the actions taken by AIDS activists to bring attention to the lives of those suffering from the disease.

Widely known as a queer writer and thinker, Schulman captured the essence of the movement. “In just six years, ACT UP New York, a broad and unlikely coalition of activists from all races, genders, sexualities, and backgrounds, changed the world... it took on the AIDS crisis with an indefatigable, ingenious, and multifaceted attack on the corporations, institutions, governments, and individuals who stood in the way of AIDS treatment for all.”

A television adaptation of the book is being produced as a narrative series by Concordia Studio and Killer Films.

An Alumnus Returns to Live Theater

In October 2021, **Brent Morden '15** made his return to live New York City theater by conducting four performances of his original musical *Infernal*. This one-act musical featured sixteen songs composed, orchestrated, and music directed by Morden, replete with choreography and visual design. *Infernal* played to enthusiastic crowds at the 120-seat Flea Theater in TriBeCa. Following the success of this run, Morden and his team are gearing up to expand and produce *Infernal* off-Broadway in summer 2022.

About the show: “*Infernal* is a new rock musical based on Dante’s *Inferno* that explores consequences, remorse, and our own inescapable demons. Drawing from Dante’s text, the Bible, Catholic Tradition, and Jewish Mysticism, in this coming-of-age story, heaven and hell are made human.”



Photo courtesy of Misha Mullany

A Scholarship for Graduate Study Abroad

Nina Potischman '17 is among this year's winners of the prestigious Marshall Scholarship. The award, which funds graduate study at universities in the United Kingdom, is bestowed upon top undergraduate university students and recent graduates in the United States. The program began in 1953 to thank the citizens of the United States for support that the United Kingdom received after World War II through the Marshall Plan. To date, over 2,200 scholarships have been awarded.

This year, 41 scholars were selected out of a pool of nearly 1,000 applicants. Potischman, an English major at Pomona College in Claremont, California, will further her work in creative writing, critical theory, and autoimmune illness research. It is anticipated that her time of study in Great Britain will culminate in two master's degrees.



To learn about Potischman's scholarship, visit <https://bit.ly/32qeuml>. For more information about the Marshall Scholars program, visit <https://bit.ly/3ssaCwl>.

Landing a Starring Role in Moulin Rouge! The Musical

Jamie Boygo '11 took on a leading role as Christian in *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* in London's West End. The production, which was adapted from the 2001 film, was first staged on Broadway, and won 10 Tony Awards, including best new musical. The work, about the famed Parisian nightclub, also won the 2020 Drama League Award for Outstanding Production of a Musical. Boygo, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, made his debut in the musical in December 2021.

All About the Blues

Elly GREENBERG Winger '67 has released her latest album, *The Blues Never End*. In her album, which includes thirteen songs and four original compositions, Winger draws upon a range of influences including Cajun, ragtime, jazz, and country, styles of music that have influenced the blues. The album can be purchased from Earwig Music Company.



CROSSING BORDERS

We Yearn to Get Away

by Kinshasa Peterson

With the effects of the coronavirus having an impact upon so many areas of our lives, it is perhaps travel that has been affected most dramatically. The ability to pack one's bags and voyage overseas was completely curtailed as many nations shut their borders, adding to the stresses and anxiety caused by the pandemic. Our now familiar culture of social distancing and isolation required many to put travel plans on hold; rethinking how we spend our leisure time. Some of us took advantage of the ability to travel domestically, by train or by car, instead of by plane.

As the world cautiously navigates its way out of lockdown and initiates steps towards reopening, small advances towards reactivating travel are taking place. We can now visit other locations and experience the casual interactions of being a tourist: having a night at the theater, going to nightclubs, and dining out. The emergence of new COVID-19 variants, however, still gives us pause as we plan to resume our short or long-distance sojourns, as governments worldwide are considering new lockdowns.

In this feature, we check in with some of Hunter's alumnae/i who have made travel a part of their lives. Crossing borders at pivotal times in life, and for personal as well as professional reasons, these alums give unique perspectives on domestic and international travel. We are also pleased to share with you an essay by *New York Times* bestselling author *Jean Kwok '86*, who tells her life story of being an immigrant as a child and again as an adult, moving to the Netherlands.

VENTURING FAR FROM HOME

TRAVEL IS AT THE CORE OF LIFE FOR THIS QUEENS NATIVE

Audrey Maurer '51, Ph.D. retired after 40 years of teaching at HCHS. In 2019, she bade farewell to the Brick Prison, its halls, and the generations of students that she instructed. For retirement, she chose to relocate to the Hawaiian Islands, settling in Honolulu.

Education has been at the core of Maurer's life; she knew that she wanted to be a teacher from the time that she was seven years old. While a student at P.S. 49 in Queens, her teachers told her that she was eligible to take the Hunter entrance exam. Upon hearing that it was a "school for smart girls in Manhattan," she was intrigued by the possibility of attending. When she learned that she was accepted, she had to convince her grandmother, who was head of the family's household, to let her go to Hunter High. Her grandmother did not want to let her go to a school in another borough. Maurer, of German and Irish descent, came from a family that believed in the importance of educating women. Her grandmother, described by Maurer as a "German Cook," encouraged her to keep out of the kitchen and stay inside and do her homework. As a result, a passion for learning was founded.

Once Maurer began her studies at Hunter, her grandmother became an enthusiastic supporter of her education at the school. There were two teachers whose instruction and guidance were influential in her life, Dr. Corrigan, who taught Latin, and Madame Louise Faure, who taught French. Curious about the lives of her teachers, Maurer asked her family why Dr. Corrigan was called "doctor." They explained to their young relative that her teacher had completed advanced studies. Maurer then knew that she wanted to obtain a Ph.D.

When it came time for Maurer to identify a college, her grandmother encouraged her to continue on to Hunter College. Instead, she chose Queens College for her undergraduate studies as it had campus grounds, and she initially declared French as her major, later switching to English. A few years after receiving her bachelor's degree, she began to travel. She often vacationed with a close friend from Queens College. Her friend suggested that they visit Hawai'i. Their first visit to the islands was one month before Hawai'i attained statehood. Their next visit was shortly after the islands were made part of the United States. Making multiple trips to the islands over the years, she became accustomed to and attracted to the lifestyle there. She has also taught summer school in Hawai'i as a means of becoming familiar with the state's

educational system.

In between her travels, Maurer pursued her graduate and, eventually, doctoral studies. She changed course in her life and became a flight attendant on Pan American Airways. The usual round-trip routes were New York - London - Istanbul - Karachi - Hong Kong or New York - Rome - Teheran - Hong Kong. Flying with Pan Am provided a fulfilling career for women and furthered Maurer's desire to explore the globe. The policy at Pan Am was that one would have to stop working for the airline if they got married or relocated to a part of the world that was not on its scheduled routes.

After nearly two years with Pan Am, she married and moved with her husband to Africa, which was outside of the airline's routes. She spent nearly twenty years on the continent, teaching English and French. Moving between Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, and Senegal, she gave birth to three children and raised her family in those countries.

She sought opportunities for advanced study in Africa, but there was no reciprocal program of certification available between the American and French educational systems. Instead, she began to study Russian at the Soviet Embassy in Dakar, Senegal. Eventually, she and her family returned to North America, resettling in New York. There was an open position at HCHS for a French teacher and she was elated to be offered the job. Once back at HCHS, she realized her calling and began to instruct Hunter students in French, Latin and Russian.

Her love for travel was shared with her students, as she always felt that they were "wonderful observers." For several years, she took a group of students to the Soviet Union to connect them with youth in that nation, bridging political differences. One day, while she was teaching a class, she was informed that some people were waiting to speak with her. She was pulled out of class and discovered that representatives from the FBI were waiting for her! They asked why she was taking groups of students to the USSR. When she explained that it was for cultural exchange and enrichment, they were satisfied. From that point on, Maurer's group was given special permission to travel to the Soviet Union.

While teaching at Hunter, Maurer also obtained her Ph.D. from Hunter College. For her dissertation, she interviewed fifty American women who were captured by the Japanese in the Philippines during World War II. She conducted her interviews by travelling to where the women lived, including the Philippines. In many



cases, Maurer was the only one with whom these survivors had ever shared their stories.

Having seen much of the globe, when asked what her most memorable trip was, she immediately turned to Hunter. In 2018, she accompanied a group of 25 students to Peru to visit Machu Picchu. She stated that she always learned a lot through them, and she, her students, and their chaperones hiked up to that ancient citadel together. She split the group of students in half and walked in between them; one group at her front and another at her back, providing protection in case she might fall.

When she announced her retirement from the high school, her students and colleagues were dismayed. In one class of seniors, her students said that "We are not going out of this school without learning the rest of your [life] story." Maurer acquiesced and spent three days of class time telling of her decisions and travels. She explained that, in each case, she followed a path that would lead to the possibility of an experience. During those three days, she also counseled them: "Don't shy away from the possibility of an adventure."

Now, in retirement, Maurer has kept active by taking on new hobbies. She is learning hula and line dancing and has performed in hula. She has also been working on some writing projects. Though she lives in one of the more attractive locales in the world, there are some things she misses about New York, including the theater, restaurants, and her New York friends. There are a number of people who regularly ask when she plans to return to the East Coast!

JUST ANOTHER GIG WORKER

ALUMNA MAKES TRAVEL A CAREER

Linda WEISS Spiegler '59 is a travel agent with significant perspective in the industry. She was born in Manhattan and grew up in Yorkville, a neighborhood on the Upper East Side. Her mother, a homemaker, arrived in the United States from Hungary at age seven and was educated in New York City schools. Her father was a Holocaust survivor born in the region of Transylvania, which was then part of Hungary. He was the sole member of his family to survive the Auschwitz death camp and left Europe for Cuba at eighteen years of age, remaining in Havana for fifteen years. Once he arrived in Manhattan, he learned English as a third language. Spiegler's grandparents gave him money to open a candy store in the neighborhood. That remained her father's occupation until the end of his life. She and her siblings now had two working parents, as New York candy stores were open from 6am to midnight, which required two-person "shift work". In tribute to her father, whose family had perished in the Holocaust, when the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum opened in Washington, DC in 1993, Spiegler became an inaugural volunteer, guiding visitors through its history for nearly two decades.

Spiegler attended kindergarten at P.S. 190, across Second Avenue from their apartment. Speaking only Hungarian at home, she quickly picked up English at age five in school. One day her kindergarten teacher had her come to the front of the class and announced that she had been selected to go to another school, Hunter Elementary. Fearing that change, she began to cry. When the school principal asked her mother if Spiegler could be taken to Hunter's campus for schooling, her mother told them that it would not be possible as she was taking care of a newborn, a relief for the kindergartener.

The chance of attending Hunter came again in sixth grade. Once again, she was called to the front of the class, and it was said that she had been selected as a student for HCHS. This time her family was able to let her attend. During her years at the high school, she thrived but felt an intense pressure to excel in a more challenging environment. Spiegler was deeply impressed by Hunter's teachers and recalls her world history classes with Dr. Helen Witmer and Latin with Mr. Irving Kizner. In tenth grade her Geometry teacher, Miss Dorothy Geddes, made mathematics accessible to her students; she taught in such an engaging manner she was selected to teach math on television!

After graduating, Spiegler attended New York University, and was among the first class of 100 women admitted to the school's formerly all-male Bronx campus. At NYU, she excelled in the courses offered and met her future husband

there when she was seventeen. They married in the middle of her junior year at NYU, went to Puerto Rico for their honeymoon, and moved to Washington DC—all in the week between semesters! Her new husband was serving in DC as a Naval officer during the Cuban Missile Crisis and Vietnam war, while she finished her undergraduate and graduate degrees at American University there.

In the nation's capital she taught World History and found herself emulating Dr. Witmer's teaching style. But she soon discovered that many of her students were unable to read at grade level and felt ill-prepared to deal with their needs. She left teaching to work at VISTA, the volunteer corps that was part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, writing articles to recruit volunteers and preparing Congressional presentations.

Spiegler and her husband initially planned to stay in Washington for only his time in the Navy but, when her husband was accepted into medical school in DC following his tour of duty, she became sole breadwinner for the next several years.

Later, at home with two children, she came across the travel profession quite by accident. When taking her son to the doctor, there was a travel agency in the same building. Looking for part-time work, she asked the owner if she could work there as an independent contractor, setting her own hours, a concept that did not exist in selling travel in 1977. Though having lived in London earlier during her husband's senior year in medical school, travel was not something she'd contemplated. The only other positions that offered flexible hours and working as an independent contractor were in real estate, which held no interest for her. So travel it was.

Spiegler became an independent contractor decades before today's gig economy first surfaced. Upon landing her job, she negotiated with her employer to cover her health insurance costs, unheard of for independents. When she began her career as a travel agent, airline tickets were still being handwritten. Airlines paid travel agency commissions as did hotels, cruises, and tour operators. Splitting that commission was radically different in a world of agency owners and salaried employees. Through the decades Spiegler has cultivated a sizeable pool of connections and taps into that network to gather recommendations for her clients' travel itineraries. Serving customers equally for business and leisure, a good number of her repeat clients are now in their senior years.

As in many other industries, COVID-19 is having an impact on her business, with many trips



being cancelled. Yet while international borders have been shut, a good number of her clients have continued to travel in the U.S., whether by air or, more often, driving to their destinations. As the nation slowly emerges from the ravages of the coronavirus, Spiegler has noticed that people are booking larger trips and securing those journeys much further in advance. Planning travel to such faraway destinations as Antarctica has become increasingly common. She has also found that many individuals kept a credit for their cancelled travel plans, putting them on hold until conditions improve, rather than asking for a refund. Overall, sales have begun to increase for trips in 2022.

Travel has also been a part of Spiegler's personal life. Making use of her knowledge, she has taken many trips throughout Europe in particular. Among her most memorable journeys have been trips to Morocco with friends, visiting Israel with family, and several trips to Italy, where she could sense history through the country's monuments and streets. In January 2020, Spiegler and her husband returned to Puerto Rico for a second honeymoon. Their 58th wedding anniversary was spent at the Condado Vanderbilt Hotel in San Juan, where they first voyaged after their wedding. Their stay coincided with the centennial anniversary of the hotel, and the hotel's historian chronicled their stay 58 years earlier, sharing the Spiegler's wedding photos in the book they published celebrating the hotel's 100th anniversary! History and travel have played a large role in Spiegler's life and Puerto Rico's warmth made for a very sweet return.

ART AND ITS TIME

GROWING A CREATIVE PRACTICE NORTH OF THE BORDER

For **Barbara Scales '68**, art is deeply interwoven with politics. Through the company she founded and still leads, Latitude 45 Arts in Montreal, Quebec, she has cultivated a practice that represents performing artists globally. She began her work in Canada's cultural sector in 1981 and provides expert services to musicians in all aspects of arts management including the development of marketing and communications strategy, the securing of touring engagements, as well as other forms of support including website and career development. The artists she works with hail from many nations and have performed before audiences on five continents.

Scales' youngest years in New York were filled with music and with politics. Her maternal grandmother was trained as a pianist and singer but, coming from an Orthodox Jewish family, she was not allowed to perform professionally. She shared her love of music with Scales' mother, Gladys, who grew up in Brooklyn and became a teacher. Scales' maternal grandfather, a business leader, died by suicide during the Great Depression.

Her father, Junius Scales, grew up in North Carolina and came from a wealthy, landowning family, where his great uncle was the former governor of the state. Scales father was raised largely by his parents' gardener and nurse, and he later joined the Communist Party in college, where he worked to support integration efforts and the organization of working people in the South. He met Scales' mother through the Party, and they lived in North Carolina. Shortly after the birth of their only child, there was a warrant for his arrest, and he went underground for over a year.

The family lived for a time in the Bronx, then moved to Harlem. Scales' parents were friends with other leftists in the area, including the son and daughter-in-law of Paul Robeson. Scales went to public school in the neighborhood and



in sixth grade was invited to take the Hunter test. During this time, her father had been arrested and stood trial for eight years, going twice to the Supreme Court. Ultimately, her father was convicted and sent to prison, serving fifteen months of a six-year sentence.

After the 1956 invasion of Hungary by the Soviet Union and the revelations concerning the brutality of Stalin and the Soviet regime, her parents had cut their ties to the Communist Party. Nonetheless, Gladys, even armed with a master's degree in reading and language skills, could not teach in New York City public schools due to an obligatory oath to never have been a member of the Communist Party. Thanks to support from colleagues, she was hired by a school district in Westchester with a large black population to become the reading specialist in the district. Twenty years later she would be named Educator of the Year in the United States.

While incarcerated, her father was repeatedly approached by his jailers to give up names of other party members to gain an early release, an offer he refused on principle. Junius Scales was the first political prisoner in the U.S. whose cause was championed by Amnesty International. Though his sentence was commuted by President Kennedy, he was in prison when Barbara took the Hunter test and then began her studies at the high school. She de-

scribes the experience of her father's imprisonment upon her childhood as "wounding."

Hunter's coursework had a deep impact upon Scales, who entered the high school as an eleven-year-old. She recalls Mrs. Jane Greenspan's Political Science class in which she did a research paper on the Supreme Court decisions affecting her father. She also remembers the courses of Miss Dede Condon, which introduced issues underlying the sexual revolution of the 1960s. Madame Luisa Ghnassia gave her pupils an in depth, rigorous immersion into French language and literature.

It was an arts course with Dr. Ralph Dale, though, that had the most profound effect on her life. Head of the Music Department, Dr. Dale offered a class called "Integrated Arts." A core text from that class was Arnold Hauser's four-volume, *The Social History of Art*. Hauser's book highlights art as a function of its society and of its time. The perspective she gained from that class prepared her for the career that she would eventually embark upon.

For college, Scales was accepted at the University of Chicago, but chose instead to go to McGill University in Montreal as the tuition was significantly lower and the French language and culture of Montreal would be a welcome adventure, thanks to her six years of Hunter French courses. Her parents also approved of her move to Canada, feeling that it



would be good for her to gain perspective from outside of the U.S.

As an immigrant in a new city, she became aware of differing political tensions. In Quebec, the movement to bring French language studies to McGill was one of the important struggles at that time. She attended demonstrations where police inflicted violence upon activists to control crowds. During her college studies, she occasionally left to work in a hospital in New York and later to run the first Feminist and Gay bookstore in Montreal. She eventually returned to McGill, obtaining her master's degree in philosophy, on a topic that her Hunter studies had richly provoked: what does it mean to say that art belongs to its time.

Scales chose to remain in Montreal after completing her college studies and became a permanent resident, then called a "landed immigrant." Eventually, she would become a Canadian citizen with dual citizenship in the U.S. She came upon her line of business when she met with a musician who invited her to plan a tour for him. She quickly learned the challenges and intricacies of the work that supports live performance and was approached by many other performers. Soon, her profession took shape and Latitude 45 Arts was established and later incorporated.

Canada views culture, along with defense and trade, as an essential component of its for-

eign policy. Scales and her artist clients were able to receive state funding for travel required to plan and execute tours. Over the past 40 years, she has built a network of business and personal relationships that facilitate her work nationally, as well as internationally. In addition to her work representing artists, she also stays connected to the community through attending and speaking at conferences, universities, and festivals, and mentoring younger newcomers to her profession.

Prior to COVID-19, Scales had developed strong connections in China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, as well as in Europe, Mexico, and other parts of the Americas. The pandemic, in addition to recent geo-political shifts, led to the cancellation of many performances; others were adapted, through video production and streaming, to virtual events. As the world struggles to reopen, Scales is looking ahead to visiting previously untapped markets in Europe, where there is a strong desire to engage with artists from former colonial nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, along with the indigenous cultures of Canada.

She still travels to New York on occasion and is nostalgic for the city that she left behind, noting that development has changed the five boroughs in which she came of age. In 2018, Scales attended her 50th Reunion,

where she delivered the class speech at the General Assembly. Speaking before a group of milestone alumnae/i that spanned seven decades, she encouraged a recognition of the good work of the current generation of high school and college students like Malala Yousafzai and the surviving students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, for whom traumatic events had led to the embrace of social strategies and causes larger than their own lives.

Scales has also reconnected with Hunter alumna **Helen Epstein '65**, who was an important figure in her high school years. Through Epstein's digital publishing company, Plunkett Lake Press, run with her husband, Patrick Mehr, Scales was able to see her father's memoir, *Cause at Heart: A Former Communist Remembers* (University of Georgia Press 1987, 2005), become available digitally, in time for his centenary, giving new readers a chance to learn about his life.

AN IMMIGRANT'S PERSPECTIVE

WRITER CREATES BONDS IN THE US AND IN EUROPE

BY JEAN KWOK '86

After I moved to the Netherlands and before I became a full-time writer, I taught Business English for Leiden University. I had a repertoire of tricks to get my students talking that I'd built up from years of teaching in the US. One I liked to use to teach the conditional was having them finish the sentence, "If I were an animal, I would be a..." I loved hearing the wild and unpredictable answers my students would give, naming everything from stick insects to Chewbacca, and then explaining why.

When I tried this with my adult Dutch students, this was the result:

Student: "If I were an animal, I would be... but I am not an animal."

Me: "Yes, I know you're not an animal. This is an exercise. Just pretend."

Student: "I am a man."

Me: "I understand you're a man. But if you were an animal, you'd be..."

Student: "I am a man."

Similarly, when I tried to rile them up with a debate about abortion or euthanasia, the discussion would go like this:

Me: "Obviously, the right to take a life, even one's own, is a complex issue, fraught with moral and religious considerations. What do you think of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide?"

Student 1: "No problem."

Student 2: "Same. It is your right."

Student 3: "Yep."

Clearly, I needed to do some readjusting. I'd never imagined living in Europe. I was born in Hong Kong and moved to New York with my family when I was five years old. We were extremely poor and lived in a Brooklyn apartment without a working central heating system for much of my childhood. Even as a small child, I worked with my family in a clothing factory in Chinatown until late into the night. I didn't speak any English and therefore was in the lowest reading group. I did all of my homework while on the subway or during breaks at the factory. I did better in school once I learned the language and by the end of elementary school, the other kids called me the "Queen of the Brains." I would sink into my seat when the teacher lectured them about me. When I tested into Hunter, it was a miracle.

My traditional Chinese family had already made it clear to me by then that there were two paths open to me: a life toiling at the factory,

hitting my peak as one of the young women who worked at the sewing machines, then declining to become an old woman who cut thread off of buttonholes; or marrying a man, cooking and cleaning for him, and if I was very lucky, bearing him sons, although this second option was considered quite dubious due to my disastrous cooking and housekeeping skills. I considered these options carefully. I decided I would go to Harvard instead. That was the only school my parents had heard of, and I knew it had a need-blind admissions policy.

The world opened up to me at Hunter. Although I always loved English, I never considered doing anything as artsy fartsy as becoming a writer. I needed a career, a real job that would keep me safe from the factory. I was admitted to Harvard early with a concentration in physics, ready to get my masters in four years. Four years later, I graduated with a degree in English and a burning desire to be a writer. Somewhere along the way, I'd realized I could follow my dreams instead.

After graduation, I worked as a professional ballroom dancer for a few years while I was trying to write, then applied to the Columbia MFA program for a degree in Fiction. I took the summer off before entering Columbia. I wanted to travel somewhere warm but had no money. I wound up backpacking through Central America. On a beach on an island off the coast of Honduras, I fell in love with a Dutch guy, who is now my husband. We had a long-distance relationship for the next three years while I completed my MFA and he finished his degree in psychology at Leiden University. After that, we had to decide where we'd live. As an English teacher and wannabe writer, it was much easier for me to relocate. I was curious what it'd be like to live in the Netherlands anyway.

Of course, it was only when I was away from America that I realized how very American I had become. This was my second immigration experience, so I understood how important it was to learn the language. However, I soon re-



Photo Credit: Chris Macke

alized it was much easier to understand Dutch lectures at the university than jokes in the bar involving Saint Peter and nuns. Meanwhile, I was teaching English and learning that I missed the freewheeling originality of many Americans, their insistence on walking their own path regardless of what others might think.

The Dutch are infamous for their bluntness and many days, I'd feel bruised by casual encounters. On the other hand, I began to understand that this seeming brusqueness was rooted in an honest respect for each other's opinions. In the Netherlands, it's perfectly acceptable for an employee to criticize his or her boss, and most times, the boss will take this feedback into account. Contracts here mainly protect the employee, not the employer. Once you have a permanent contract, which is not uncommon, it's very difficult for your boss to fire you. Paid leave, a month of vacation per year, and end-of-the-year bonuses are all fairly standard.

Living in the Netherlands has helped shape me into the person that I am. I wrote my debut novel in the attic of my house here, and now, I've just finished my fourth novel. I'm grateful I'm able to be an American author while living abroad; I'm grateful to always need to choose between the Chinese, American or Dutch way of doing things. After all, it's only when you're forced to choose that you realize you always have a choice.

BOUNDLESS SOUNDS

COMPOSER CREATES WORKS THAT CROSS GENRES

Judd Greenstein '97, a widely travelled and celebrated composer, is the eldest of three siblings – sisters **Lael Greenstein '00** and **Adra Greenstein '03** – who attended Hunter Elementary as well as HCHS. Founder of the Ecstatic Music Festival in Manhattan, and co-founder of the Apples & Olives Festival in Zurich, Switzerland, Greenstein's exposure to musical composition came early in life; he began playing the piano at the age of four and started composing music when he was nine.

Greenstein views his time at the Campus Schools among the most formative years of his life. He recalled a pivotal moment in his education at the high school when he was in seventh grade. His music teacher, Mr. Philip Rosenberg, introduced his students to the work of Philip Glass, playing excerpts from the well-known opera *Einstein on the Beach*. Deeply moved upon hearing portions of the opera, Greenstein went to Tower Records and used a gift certificate he had to purchase a copy of the recording.

Music was near the center of Greenstein's experience as he progressed through the years at Hunter. He listened to classical music but, like many adolescents growing up in New York, he was also very much influenced by hip-hop. He recorded sampled tracks that his friends rhymed over and took his tapes to parties. Though these two forms of musical expression are widely divergent, they each had a place in his world. Today, there is frequent melding of classical, rock, jazz, and hip-hop tunes in what has become known in some circles as post-genre or genre-fluid music; music that goes beyond a single genre.

Active in the U.S. and Europe, Greenstein's first trip to Switzerland put him in contact with musicians who were producing works similar to artists he knew in the United States. A natural synergy developed amongst these performers, and they found reason to continue to share their works; thus, the Apples and

Olives Festival was born. Founded in 2014 and held biennially in Zurich, Apples and Olives is known as the country's first Indie Classical festival, where performers and composers collaborate on works that draw upon influences from across a wide landscape of classical and vernacular music.

Greenstein has also built connections with musicians in the States through the Ecstatic Music Festival, which he curates annually. Held at the Kaufman Music Center on the Upper West Side, the festival brings together composers and performers from a variety of musical backgrounds. Also, as Co-Artistic Director and Executive Director of New Amsterdam Records, he keeps current on the works of emerging artists and aims to promote their compositions and recordings.

His role as festival organizer on two continents has given him insight into the formation of cultural events. There are significant differences between artmaking in Switzerland where, as in much of Europe, the arts are largely funded by the government. In this civic relationship, there is a sense that public spaces and artworks belong to the general populace, encouraging civic interaction and engagement by citizenry. On the other hand, this also lends a degree of bureaucracy to the planning of any such events, as there is more centralized control. In the United States, support for the arts is largely funded by the private sector and through donations. Though this places a heavy reliance on fundraising, creative expression is kept open.

As a travelling artist, his ability to have his work performed was dramatically curtailed with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Living in central Massachusetts, Greenstein returned

to New York about twice a month before the nation went into lockdown. Like many of us, he began to use virtual means to release his work, as well as for the artists he represents for New Amsterdam Records. In 2020-21, the Ecstatic Music Festival was held virtually, including performances by Angel Bat Dawid, Bell Orchestre, Conrad Tao, and Seth Parker Woods. In January 2022, an in-person program is anticipated with the Bang on a Can All-Stars.

With COVID-19 restrictions slowly being lifted, Greenstein has resumed in-person performances. In October 2021, he conducted excerpts from his opera, *A Marvelous Order*, at the Brooklyn Public Library's Central Plaza. *A Marvelous Order* is centered around the contentious relationship between urban planner Robert Moses and neighborhood activist Jane Jacobs, who opposed one another in the controversial proposed redevelopment of Lower Manhattan in the 1960s.

Greenstein's opera has been developed through a multi-year residency at The Pennsylvania State University and is due to premiere there in the Fall of 2022. Interest in staging *A Marvelous Order* has come from cultural institutions, but also from urban planners and city officials; there are plans to perform the piece in New York as well as in Sweden.

He has travelled domestically, by car, with his wife and children during the height of the pandemic in 2020 and has plans to return to Europe in 2022. Greenstein has a standing engagement in Switzerland for the Apples and Olives Festival in March and has been invited to perform his works for another festival in the Netherlands.



Photo Credit: Anja Schutz

Giving Voice to Diversity

AN INTERVIEW WITH CRISTIAN SERNA-TAMAYO '02, M.D.

Cristian Serna-Tamayo '02, M.D. arrived with his family in the United States as an undocumented two-year-old. Born in Bogotá, Colombia, he is the first college graduate in his family and the first physician amongst his relatives. With the twentieth anniversary of his graduation from HCHS drawing near, he looks back on his years at the high school with gratitude.

Serna-Tamayo's parents settled their family in Astoria, Queens, a neighborhood that is home to many immigrant communities. To provide for their children, his father worked as a janitor and his mother was a homemaker who helped support the family with cleaning jobs. At his elementary schools, P.S. 70 and P.S. 122, Serna-Tamayo excelled academically and was frequently at the top of his class. When his teachers informed him about the possibility of attending Hunter, he was excited about the opportunity to go to a school in Manhattan.

Once he arrived at HCHS, Serna-Tamayo quickly noticed the socio-economic differences between the neighborhood in which he lived and the affluence of the Upper East Side. Issues related to class in the student body arose in daily activities – like buying lunch and snacks nearby the school or going to the movies on half-days – with a limited “allowance” from family. He also was aware of the fact that there were not many Black or Latinx students in his seventh-grade class. Entering the school at age twelve, he did not know that Hunter had been much more diverse in prior years and there was no frame of reference for those Black and Latinx students to become grounded in that history. As he advanced through the years at the school, he noted that some of his Black and Latinx classmates left Hunter; it was felt by several Hunterites that many left due to a specific lack of support for students of color.

When considering his classes and schedule, Serna-Tamayo had envisioned learning a third language at the high school, possibly taking courses in French or Latin. His parents, however, insisted that he take Spanish, the language he spoke at home. While he was disap-

pointed not to have a chance to learn a new language, the rigorous and creative instruction of Hunter's Spanish faculty benefitted him. Given his proficiency in the language upon entering Hunter, he was advanced two years in Spanish. Through coursework that included immersion into Spanish media including songs and films, he strengthened his reading and writing skills in his native tongue.

With an advanced placement in Spanish, he took Señor Jose Diaz's AP Spanish class in ninth grade; a course that was primarily taught to eleventh graders. He credits Señor Diaz as being a very important advocate for him and his family during his formative years at Hunter. Another faculty member who had a positive impact on his life was fellow Spanish teacher Señor Larry Ling, who was faculty advisor for the HOLA (Hunter's Organization of Latin Americans) club in his junior and senior years. Señor Ling guided the development of a student-led cultural show that the club produced featuring poetry and dance.

In ninth grade Biology, Serna-Tamayo's passion for the sciences was ignited, where he recalls being fascinated by the physiological world. In his later years at HCHS, he took AP courses in Biology, Chemistry, and Calculus. As a young adult, he became concerned with issues related to social justice. His love for science combined with a desire to help others fostered a natural path towards studying medicine.

For undergraduate studies, Serna-Tamayo attended Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, as a biology major and Latino studies minor. He then pursued his medical degree at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School in Newark, New Jersey. After obtaining his medical degree, he



trained in internal medicine and palliative care. He relocated to Washington, DC in 2021 after accepting a position as a Clinical Fellow at the National Cancer Institute, which is the largest institute of the National Institutes of Health. Each of the patients he works with is on a clinical research protocol to research innovative and effective methods of treatment. An internist with a specialty in supportive oncology, Serna-Tamayo works with a team that provides physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and emotional support to patients facing serious illness. He works with patients' families and his medical colleagues to maintain and improve patients' quality of life, aiming to mitigate suffering.

Reflecting on his Hunter years, Serna-Tamayo definitely feels that attending the high school changed his life for the better. He has a strong interest in giving back to today's Hunter students who may be navigating complex socio-political issues at the high school involving ethnicity and race without an extensive network of support.

In anticipation of his 20th reunion, Serna-Tamayo joined the Class of 2002's reunion planning committee. As a Class Coordinator, he looks forward to shaping events for Reunion weekend and to reconnecting with his former classmates in June.

THE ALUMNAE/I ASSOCIATION

Nominations to the HCHSAA Board of Directors

The Alumnae/i Association invites interested alums to apply to join its Board of Directors for the academic year beginning July 1, 2022. If you have skills in areas such as fundraising, business, finance/audit, law, investment, marketing, nonprofit management, events planning, technology, grant writing, human resources, or communications and would like to be considered for Board service, we would like to hear from you. If you know of other alums who meet these criteria, please nominate them.

HCHSAA is a volunteer social and charitable organization committed to the recruitment, development, and advancement of the gifted students and alumnae/i of Hunter College High School. Our mission is to sustain a social and professional network for alumnae/i and to

provide support to the high school and its students. The Board of Directors is comprised of women and men from various classes who feel strongly about giving back. Accepting this position requires quality time to attend and actively participate in several board meetings annually and committee work throughout the year. Board members serve as active ambassadors of the school, and candidates should have strong communication skills and work well in collaborative environments.

Board terms are three years. Directors may serve up to two consecutive terms and then serve again after a one-year hiatus, but priority will be given to well-qualified candidates who have not previously served on the Board.

Please submit your letter of interest and résumé by April 1, 2022 to governance@hchsaa.org or the address listed below. Virtual interviews will be held starting in April, with the AA membership voting on a final slate at the annual members' meeting on June 4, 2022.

Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association
Hunter College East, Room 1313B
695 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10065
212-772-4079

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Members of HCHSAA will also be held on the afternoon of June 4th, following the reunion program. All classes are encouraged to join the meeting, where the Members of the Alumnae/i Association elect new directors and receive information on the work of HCHSAA.

As with the Reunion, we hope to hold the Annual Members Meeting both virtually (via Zoom) and in-person but we will not have a determi-

nation regarding the feasibility of the in-person portion of the program until early June.

The Governance Committee of the Board of Directors is exploring ways to improve the nominating, balloting and annual meeting process. Details regarding changes to those procedures will be provided in the spring.

Celebrate Your Time Together

HCHS Reunion 2022

Saturday, June 4

Get Ready for Reunion!

If your graduation year ends in "2" or "7" 2022 is your Milestone Reunion Year and we encourage you to attend Reunion on Saturday, June 4th!

In response to continued health and safety concerns, the HCHSAA plans to host this year's Reunion as a hybrid program, with a portion of the event in-person and another portion virtually. CDC guidelines and policies adopted by Hunter College High School will ultimately determine if we will be able to hold the in-person portion of the event at the high school. Given the challenges and changing nature of the pandemic, we will likely not have a final determination regarding the feasibility of the in-person portion of the event until early June. We realize that this will make travel plans difficult and will endeavor to keep you updated via email and at hchsaa.org.

If you have questions, please reach out to the HCHSAA at reunion@hchsaa.org.

VOLUNTEER FOR REUNION AS A CLASS COORDINATOR!

Share your Hunter pride as a Class Coordinator for the **2022 All Class Milestone Reunion**! The following milestone classes urgently need an alum (or 2) to volunteer as class coordinator: Classes of Jan. 1942, 1947, Jan. 1947, 1952, Jan. 1952, 1957, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2012, and 2017. The Program Committee and staff will assist new coordinators as they plan for reunion.

Class Coordinators play a vital role in the success of Reunion and are integrally involved in planning the many festivities throughout

reunion weekend. Perhaps best of all, as a Class Coordinator you have an inside track to reconnecting with old friends after two years of social distancing and isolation. We also encourage you to generate enthusiasm for your classmates' contributions to your Class Gift.

We would like to thank the following alumnae/i who have already signed up to coordinate their class reunions. If you are interested in joining them, please contact us at reunion@hchsaa.org.

This Year's Class Coordinators	NAME	EMAIL
1942	Anne STERN Peskin '42, Ph.D.	annber5@juno.com
1962	Roslyn ABT Schindler '62	rozschind@aol.com
1967	Andrea GUTERMAN Polk-Stephenson	andreavolt@earthlink.net
1967	Roseann EPPOLITO Needleman '67	needlemanr@gmail.com
1992	Sara Clemence '92	saraclem1@gmail.com
2002	Seth Alexander '02	setha@hey.com
2002	Haewan Bae '02	haewanbae@gmail.com
2002	Cristian Serna-Tamayo '02, M.D.	cris.erna@gmail.com
2007	Stephanie Chan '07	stephaniekoachan@gmail.com

Board Member Spotlight

In this issue, we hear from HCHSAA Board Member and entrepreneur **Alexandra Friedman '00**, who recently served as Chair of the board's Membership Committee.

AlumNotes (AN): Why were you inspired to apply for HCHSAA Board membership?

AF: I wanted to give back to the community where I spent my formative years. I wanted to contribute to preserving the specialness of Hunter and do my part to ensure the Hunter experience can be as high impact for the next generation of students as it was for me.

AN: What aspects of your career do you feel prepared you to sit on the HCHSAA Board?

AF: I'm an entrepreneur and I currently run a start-up company that I founded 7 years ago. Running a high-growth brand has trained me to focus only on what matters and figure out how to impact those things. A big focus of my company is inclusive community building, and I've done my best to draw from that toolkit as I contribute to the Hunter alumni community experience.

AN: What aspects of your education at HCHS do you feel prepared you for Board membership?

AF: Hunter is where I learned how to lead, how to partner, and how to follow. As a 7th/8th grader, I looked up to older kids who led clubs and teams; as a 12th grader, I remember leading clubs and teams. Effective board contribution requires comfort and active engagement in a variety of ways. As a Board member, I've led committees, partnered as a peer in full board

strategic discussion, voted in support of others' programs/initiatives, and worked in small group settings alongside other Directors to drive impact to the school and alumni base.

AN: What can you share with other HCHS alums to encourage them to apply for Board membership?

AF: I'd encourage all alums to consider it at some point! It's a nice way to give back to the community. It's also a nice way to reconnect with the Hunter community (and so many different pockets of the community). And more generally, I think non-profit board participation can be a dynamic environment to continue to develop yourself professionally.

AN: What do you feel is the most important contribution you've made?

AF: I led the work that recommended a more inclusive membership model for Hunter alums and eliminated paid dues from that model. The old dues model simply wasn't resonating with most alums, and we're working now to develop an engagement model that drives value more broadly among the alumni base.

AN: What has been your greatest satisfaction serving on the board? What is the biggest challenge?

AF: The greatest satisfaction has been



working on a team of smart and accomplished Hunter alums, all working together to support a place and legacy we care about very much. The biggest challenge is that it's a volunteer board, so everyone involved has plenty of other commitments, and a lot of the work we do is self-directed, so sometimes progress happens more slowly than we'd like!

AN: Do you serve on the board of other schools or organizations?

AF: I am a Director on the Board of Directors of my own company, LOLA. That's it!

AN: Have you made any interesting connections being on the board?

AF: Many! Because the Board is ever evolving, every year on the Board has felt like a new chapter of getting to know the folks who joined before me and meeting the newbies.

#GIVINGTUESDAY 2021

Originally created in 2012 to encourage people to do good, GivingTuesday has grown into an international generosity movement and global day of giving. GivingTuesday connects individuals with their communities and encourages everyone to give back to important causes, whether you have \$5 or \$5,000 to spare.

This year, Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association (HCHSAA) received \$17,886 from 60 donors on GivingTuesday. Donations are used to fund HCHSAA's grants, which provide much-needed financial support to the High School. These contributions support today's Hunter students and make an impact.

Thank you to all our GivingTuesday donors!

HCHSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS RALLIED TO RAISE FUNDS!

Gifts to HCHSAA are used to provide grants to the High School, supporting everything from the Debate Team to the Robotics Club to Diversity Workshops for staff to Visiting Artists for the Music Program and more. At the end of 2021, the HCHSAA Board of Directors committed to inspiring robust philanthropic support to expand what we can offer to the High School. Therefore, they stretched their own giving and pooled their resources to offer a year-end match. All donations up to \$7,500 received by December 31, 2021 were matched 1:1, doubling every gift!

As always, donors have the option to allocate their gift among four priorities:

General Operating Support

Promoting Diversity

COVID-19 Emergency Fund

Specialized Learning Services and Individualized Learning

It's not too late to make a gift! Visit hchsaa.org/donate and make your contribution today!

A 2021 UPDATE FROM HCHSAA'S DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

We would like to update the alumnae/i community on some of the initiatives and plans organized by the HCHSAA Diversity Committee. Detailed below are outcomes of important programs and events including the Hunter entrance exam, a proposed mentoring plan formulated by the Diversity Committee's Retention sub-committee, and ongoing student internships.

For the better part of two years, COVID-19 impacted our world and changed how we lived. Though efforts are being made for society to engage in activities to regain a sense of normalcy, there is a new normal in how we connect and communicate with others. The expanded use of computer platforms for online meetings provided increased opportunities to reach out and engage in active communication across the country and the world. The HCHSAA has been using this to its advantage. We have expanded our outreach to alums outside of the New York area and are involving more of you in the conversation and activities of the Diversity Committee.

Throughout 2021 the various stakeholders of Hunter College Campus Schools continued with their advocacy for increased diversity in the school. The restrictions of COVID-19 brought a unique opportunity for a review and overhaul of the admissions criteria, including the entrance exam, for admittance of its September 2021 entering class. Ultimately, Hunter College, which governs the Campus Schools, decided that an exam would still be given for the 2021 7th grade admission and held it in June.

This was not what many advocates of admissions reform wanted to hear. Much effort was made to present Hunter's administration and the Hunter community with a rationale for developing alternative criteria for accepting students into the school to increase the diversity of the student body. However, the ongoing advocacy for change in the admissions procedures may not have been entirely in vain. Adjustments to the exam were made and, testing sites were expanded into the Bronx and Brooklyn. These tweaks in the process appear to have contributed to the increase of Black and Latinx students taking and passing the exam and an increase in the numbers of Black and Latinx students entering HCHS in 2021. We hope to obtain a full report from the high school with specifics in numbers shortly.

Of course, this was good news, but it does not mean mission accomplished. It shows that slight adjustments within the testing process can have a positive impact on increasing the diversity of the students admitted. There is room for further adjustments to be made. As of the date of this writing, plans for the 2022 exam have not yet been announced.

The HCHSAA Diversity Committee has been continuing its work with issues related to diversity within the high school, exploring all avenues of interventions. After a year of research and analysis of surveys to present and former HCHS students and their parents, the Retention sub-committee finalized its report. Recommendations included the development of educational responses to instances of racism, professional development, and faculty support in the area of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. Also recommended was the hiring of more Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) faculty, including the addition of a guidance counselor or therapist with expertise in BIPOC mental health and support and mentoring for students. In 2021, the HCHSAA student summer internship program took place for its second year in a row with great success. Under the direction of the Chairs of the Recruitment and Retention sub-committees and members of those and other Diversity Committee sub-committees, ten high school interns worked on expanding its mission to be more inclusive of student populations and developing various projects.

The projects included but were not limited to working on technical support to the Diversity Committee, creating a specific program of community outreach to schools to promote HCHS as an educational choice and to enrich and enhance students' early academic experiences, and developing an alumnae/i survey.

The students were offered a stipend for their summer service. Many of them are continuing their work as interns during the academic year. They have officially become members of the Diversity Committee and are engaged in regular meetings. The students look forward to publishing a full report of their projects in the future.

As mentioned earlier, the Diversity Committee has increased its outreach to alums over the past two years. Part of this outreach was in the form of a recent survey developed by the student interns and sent out to alums to solicit

interest and gather information in the development of a student mentoring program.

There were over one hundred responses from alums from a wide range of graduating classes. They provided information about themselves which included their interest in serving as a mentor for students with professional, social/emotional, and extracurricular areas of expertise and interest. The student interns are grateful to all of you who responded and they are now developing a pilot program for the mentoring project. We will keep you updated as the program develops. The Diversity Committee is looking forward to extending invitations to alums and others in the Hunter community to join virtual programs in the works. Please look out for announcements. We are also grateful to all who have made donations to the HCHSAA with specific earmarks for diversity.

These funds are used for projects such as the student internship program and will also finance future recruitment and community outreach programs and programs within the high school. The committee has been fortunate to have so many alums volunteer their time and talents in working with the student interns or on specific projects related to increasing diversity in the high school. We need your participation in these endeavors especially as we develop our mentoring program for the HCHS students. If you are interested in joining the Diversity Committee and have a specific skill you would like to offer or project you would like to work with, please let us know by emailing diversity@hchsaa.org.

Judith Daniel '79

Member, HCHSAA Board of Directors
Diversity Committee Chair



EVENTS ROUNDUP



AN HCHS WRITERS' NIGHT

In September 2021, HCHSAA hosted a writers' night, marking the publication of works by HCHS alumnae **Emily Bass '91** and **Amy Sohn '91**. Their books – *To End a Plague: America's Fight to Defeat AIDS in Africa* (PublicAffairs 2021) and *The Man Who Hated Women: Sex, Censorship, and Civil Liberties in the Gilded Age* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2021) – each provide an enlightening account of important social issues and the role of women in society.

The virtual talk with Bass and Sohn was moderated by retired HCHS English faculty and published poet Kip Zegers. Together, they engaged in a wide-ranging discussion that touched upon women's rights, the politics of the times, and strategies devised to combat a pandemic. Among the many questions and comments that came in from alums and Hunter faculty, including **Irving Kagan '82**, were several shout outs to the Class of '91 and plans to keep talking online after the formal program ended.

You can learn more about their books on pages 13 and 14 of this issue of *AlumNotes*.



SUPPORTING THE RETURN OF IN-PERSON THEATER IN NEW YORK

November 2021 saw the HCHSAA host its first in-person event since the start of the pandemic in March of 2020. Alums and their guests assembled to see *Morning Sun*, the latest work by acclaimed director **Lila Neugebauer '03**. Nearly two dozen tickets were reserved for the performance, which sold out on the HCHSAA website in a matter of minutes!

HCHSAA Program Committee Chair **David Stefanou '87** described the performance and post-show talkback as follows:

"The first in-person Alumni program in nearly two years was a sold-out success. Simon Stephens' play was a fascinating portrait of a life well-lived in New York. The talkback with Lila and the entire cast - Edie Falco, Marin Ireland and Blair Brown - was candid and a wonderfully revealing look into the process of putting the piece together. Lila brought the intelligence and insight one would expect from a fellow Hunterite."

IN MEMORIAM

Hilda STANGER Klyde '39 passed away unexpectedly on August 24, 2021, at her home in Kew Gardens Hills, Queens, shortly after celebrating her 100th birthday on August 12.

A graduate of Hunter College, Klyde attained a master's degree from New York University. A stint at Amos Parrish and other advertising agencies followed, where she worked her way up from "paste-up girl" to Art Director -a "Mad Woman" in the Mad Men era! As Art Director for Macy's, perhaps her most recognizable work is her design for the annual Fourth of July Fireworks display, which the company used unchanged for many years. She attained Lifetime Membership status in the prestigious Art Directors Club.

After her children attained school-age, Klyde became a teacher. She inspired students for twenty-five years, initially at elementary and junior high schools, and later at Washington Irving High School and the High School of Art and Design, where scores of her students won awards, attended renowned art colleges, and became outstanding professional artists. She also taught commercial and advertising art at the Rhode Island School of Design.

After retiring in 1990, Klyde became president of the venerable Association of Retired Teachers of the City of New York, and taught herself to play bridge, earning numerous Master Points. Hilda was the sister of Dr. Henry S. Stanger, an optometrist in Rockefeller Center for many decades. She was the adored daughter of Adolph Stanger, a professional musician (trumpet, first chair) who played with the Paul Whiteman Orchestra and the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini, and the former Sophie Fleigelman, who instilled in her daughter a lifelong love of books and education, and an outstanding work ethic. Hilda was married for twenty-two years to the love of her life, Judge Charles J. Klyde (Lt. Col., U.S. Army, Ret.). Surviving are Klyde's three chil-

dren, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, plus loving nieces and nephews. Her greatest legacies are her family and her students, who loved and admired her, and will forever miss her inspiration, wisdom, wit, and compassion. She was a compassionate animal lover (as exemplified by the longevity of her record-setting 64-year-old river cooter pet turtle) and donations in her name may be made to the animal charity of your choice.

Arlene Janice BRAND August, Jan. '41 was a woman ahead of her time. She was a wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, advocate, educator, and philanthropist. August passed away peacefully on August 23, 2021, at a young 97.

August was born in Brooklyn on July 17, 1924, to Morris and Jessie (Weiss) Brand and was the eldest of three sisters. She received her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts from Hunter College. In her first year of college, she met the love of her life, John Howard August (predeceased, March 1995) whom she married on August 20, 1944. After John's return home from the war, the couple spent time in Texas and California before settling in Elmsford, New York in 1953 where they raised five children.

In her suburban home, August developed a love of plants and birds and discovered her green thumb. She later pursued a doctorate at New York University while working full time and raising a family. None of this slowed her down; she was always at the top of her class. A lifelong educator, August started her career teaching high school but soon joined Pace University as Associate Professor and Instructor in 1966. She was a pioneer in teaching word processing and office information systems to adults. Later, she started a program educating women with children receiving social service benefits. She received many honors and professional awards for her outstanding contributions before retiring from Pace as Professor Emeritus in Resi-



Arlene BRAND August, Jan. '41

dence. She developed meaningful relationships with students and colleagues alike and leaves behind a legacy of wide-ranging impact.

August remained in Elmsford until she relocated to the Brightwater retirement community in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina in 2014. Her time at Brightwater was very special, and she made friends wherever she went, many for life. She was an advocate for education and was a long-term member of the American Association of University Women. She was an avid reader, loved to dance, sing, play bridge, and attend special events, especially with family. August did the Sunday Times crossword in pen, and she spared no one her wrath at Scrabble.

August is survived by her five children, 10 grandchildren, and 9 great-grandchildren. She had two loving sisters; one of whom she leaves behind and the other of whom predeceased her. She was loved and cherished by numerous nieces, nephews and many dear friends. Donations can be made to

The Smithsonian, American Association of University Women, or St. Joseph's Indian School.

Marjorie FISHER Alfus, Jan. '43, of New York and Palm Beach, died on November 22, 2021, at her home on the Upper East Side. She was 94, which she reminded those close to her daily.

She was born Marjorie Fisher on March 30, 1927, in New York City. Always crafty, curious, and quick, she graduated from high school at 15. After a year at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, she transferred to The Ohio State University and graduated at the age of 17.

A person who fearlessly tested the limits and pushed the boundaries, Alfus became a biochemist when medical schools wouldn't accept a 17-year-old woman. She quickly shifted to become a producer of daytime television when the medium was new. After marrying Albert Alfus in the early 1950s she went into business with him and manufactured trend-setting leather clothing for women, opened a



Rebecca (Becky) RAND Wasserman-Hone '54

knitwear line with factories in Italy, and ultimately a store at the top of the Spanish Steps in Rome, on Via Sistina. The leather legacy continues to this day, re-imagined by her son as Libra Leather.

A true visionary, in 1969 Alfus took her daughter for a job interview at a summer day camp in Westchester and left only after deciding to buy the camp. She winterized and sold the 16 attached bungalows and invited her son's football coach to be her partner. Camp Nabby was recently voted one of the top camps in Westchester County.

In the 1970s Alfus became an attorney and worked for 20 years as in-house counsel for K-Mart Apparel. The ultimate entrepreneur, she started their first outsourcing division traveling to Russia, Mexico, and Africa to source fabric and manufacture product.

She was simultaneously a real estate developer and a skilled investor. In the 1990s she created the Marjorie Alfus/C200 fund at the Harvard Business School, dedicated to crafting the first Case studies with female protagonists.

At the age of 82 she designed a Health Advocacy program for the University of Miami, recognizing the

need for professional certification in this developing field.

An avid golfer, bridge player, lover of chocolate, ice cream and Costco hot dogs, she read *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, and *The Wall Street Journal* religiously. CNBC was always on in the background, louder and louder over the years. She adored her grandchildren and spent decades loving them at their family estate in Greenwich, Connecticut.

She is a woman who did what she wanted, when she wanted to do it with no regret or apology. A warrior woman with a loving heart, a wildly facile mind, and a sassy sense of humor.

Alfus is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, her son, five grandchildren, and her great granddaughter.

May KANTER Chariton, Jan. '43, passed away peacefully in her home in Grand Junction, Colorado, on July 10, 2021, with loving family present. She was 95 years of age. Her son, Mike Chariton, had the pleasure and honor of facilitating her attendance at the 75th reunion of her class in May 2018. "I cannot overstate the sense of pride and

abundance of great memories she treasured in connection with HCHS for her entire life," he said. A retired medical librarian, Chariton lived independently in Rockville Centre, New York until age 88, when she moved to Colorado to be near family in her later years. Her surviving family thank everyone connected with HCHS for all that is done for the high school's students and the community of alumnae/i.

Edith ROLLMAN Wormser, Jan. '46, passed away peacefully on September 12, 2021, at 93 years of age. She is survived by her son, two daughters, three grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband of 68 years, Hans H. Wormser and her youngest daughter Cheryl W. Trevithick.

Wormser was born in Offenbach, Germany in 1928 to Sigmund and Nelly Rollman and was the eldest of two daughters. She along with her family fled Nazi persecution in July 1938 by immigrating to the U.S. and settling in New York City. Wormser married her husband in New York on August 1, 1948, and they lived in Indianapolis, Indiana, Providence, Rhode Island, and Me-

dia, Pennsylvania before settling in New Milford, New Jersey in 1959. She earned a B.S. degree in Bacteriology at Rhode Island College (now University of Rhode Island) in 1950 and was a certified Medical Technologist and laboratory technician before starting their family. Wormser also worked at various times as a substitute teacher in the New Milford Public Schools and as a laboratory technician for LaRocca Laboratories. She and Hans became members of Central Unitarian Church in Paramus, New Jersey in 1960 where they were highly active in a variety of leadership and volunteer roles for over 55 years. They moved to Fellowship Senior Living in Basking Ridge, New Jersey in 2010 where she lived until her passing. Contributions in Wormser's memory may be made to Central Unitarian Church, Paramus, New Jersey, or The University of Delaware Cheryl W. Trevithick Scholarship Fund.

Rebecca (Becky) RAND Wasserman-Hone '54*, the American-born wine exporter who championed the wines and the small artisanal producers of Burgundy, her adopted home, died August 20, 2021, in Beaune, France. She was 84.

The cause was heart failure, her son Peter Wasserman said.

Wasserman-Hone, known as Becky, and her husband at the time, Bart Wasserman, an artist, moved to Burgundy with their two young sons in 1968. The light was splendid, she often explained, and her husband liked wine. They bought a farm that dated to the 14th century in the tiny town of Bouilland, population about 150.

When the marriage faltered, Wasserman-Hone needed work, fast. A neighbor owned a renowned cooperage firm and asked her to help him sell his oak barrels in the United States. She had never sold anything but hit the road alone, hawking barrels from a rental car through California wine country. Because of where she lived, as she travelled, she was often asked her advice about the lesser-known Burgundy wine producers, the small-batch vigneron — the people who grow and make wine on their ancient family farms. Soon she was out of the cooperage business, working first as a wine agent for importer Kermit Lynch, based in Berkeley, California, and then on her own.

Of her transition from selling barrels to selling wine, she often said, "The content of the barrel was in the end more enticing than the barrel."

Alice Feiring, a wine writer and journalist, said in an interview: "Becky was the godmother to generations of Burgundy growers, introducing the smaller domaine wines of Burgundy to Americans and the rest of the world when all they knew were the big producers." In the mid-1970s, when she got her start, she and the head of Hillebrand Beaune, a shipping company, came up with an innovation: consolidating the wines of many producers to fit into a standard



Rebecca (Becky) RAND Wasserman-Hone '54

shipping container, which took about 1,200 cases. This allowed the explosion, as her son Peter put it, of "small production exports."

She was the rare woman — often the only woman — in a male-dominated business. At a tasting in Detroit, she was pelted with bread rolls; at another, in New Jersey, half the audience walked out.

Feiring recalled her once saying that for a woman to sell Burgundy in America in the '70s "required the zeal of a missionary, the stubbornness of a mule and the ability to change clothes in a telephone booth."

In 1987, *The New York Times* called Wasserman-Hone a "folk heroine," citing her reputation as a "first-class judge of wine and a tireless promoter, especially in the United States, of the lesser-known estate-bottled vintages of the region."

She was a champion of what she called sincere wines, as she told the *Los Angeles Times* in 2004 — "wines made by people doing their level best to be true to what they are, winemakers who are interpreters of the terroir, not stylists imposing their ideas on the terroir."

Rebecca Louisa Rand was born Jan. 18, 1937, in Manhattan. Her mother, Yolanda Dragos, was a prima ballerina originally from Romania. Her father, Louis Rand, was a stockbroker with his own firm who

sold railroad bonds.

Wasserman-Hone attended Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania for a year. An early marriage to Dennis Andrew, a student at Harvard, ended in divorce.

Trained as a harpsichordist, she hoped for a time to become a classical performer but never did. She met her second husband, Wasserman, in a composition and harmony class. Among other jobs, she worked as a copy writer for a department store.

In Burgundy, Wasserman-Hone got drunk at her first wine tasting, because as an American she thought spitting was bad manners. (She recalled staggering home, using the houses on her street as handholds.) But she was a quick study.

She had poor eyesight, which she often said strengthened her other senses, particularly those of smell and taste. A grower taught her about soil — one aspect of the different terroirs, or microclimates, that mark a grape — by handing her a spoon. One can taste the difference from parcel to parcel, her son Peter said of the land: "Every single one has its own personality, just like people."

Wasserman-Hone was no wine snob; she said she'd rather drink a simple red Burgundy on its old vines than a grand cru on its fourth

leaf, which, her son Peter pointed out, "is a baby; it can barely translate its place."

And she had no patience with the flowery language of contemporary wine descriptors, the jam, fruit, and spice adjectives employed by some connoisseurs. She might say, rather, that a young Corton made her think of Mick Jagger, because it had a strut.

But she felt it was important for people to talk about wine in their own ways.

"We have too many words today to describe something that's fairly simple," she told Levi Dalton on his wine podcast, "I'll Drink to That!" in 2017.

She met her third husband, Russell Hone, a British wine representative, at a wine tasting in London. She was so flustered, she later recalled, that all she could think of to say was "I like your shirt." When they met the next day at another event, he had bought her an identical shirt as a gift. They married in 1989, and he joined her company, Becky Wasserman & Co. His job title is "aubergiste," which means "innkeeper," and he is often the company chef.

Dinner at the Wasserman-Hone household, Feiring said, was one of the most coveted invitations in Burgundy. Restaurateur Michel Troisgros, wine arbiter Robert Parker,

and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor have all made the pilgrimage. Tasting wines during a meal was one of the many ways that Was-

es, Florida for over 20 years, and formerly of Norwalk, Connecticut and Queens, New York, passed away peacefully on September 12,



Debora RUSSELL Banner '69

sserman-Hone and her colleagues, who included her sons, Peter and Paul, nurtured their growers, asking wine to be sent to their office so they could sample it at lunchtime. "Sounds of appreciation are weightier than words," she once told the *Los Angeles Times*. "We grade by 'oohs' and 'mmms,' six being the ultimate accolade." In addition to her sons and her husband, Wasserman-Hone leaves three stepchildren and six step grandchildren. Wasserman-Hone's business motto was "Non vendimus quod non bibimus" — "We won't sell what we won't drink." As she told Dalton, "A wine is not to be discussed; it is to be drunk and give happiness and joy and a nice feeling to people; that is the point of it all!"

*Reprinted from *The New York Times*

Constance Mary KOHNLE Konatsotis '60, a resident of The Villag-

es, Florida for over 20 years, and formerly of Norwalk, Connecticut and Queens, New York, passed away peacefully on September 12, 2021. She was surrounded by the love of her family and friends. Konatsotis was born on December 9, 1942, in Ayers, Massachusetts. She was the daughter of the late Walter and Grace Kohnle. She was predeceased by her husband, Nicholas Konatsotis. She graduated from Drexel University in Philadelphia with a bachelor's degree in Retail Management and Merchandising. Her passion for Fashion and Design remained a constant in her life, in addition to her love of science, the arts and the New York Mets.

After graduation, the couple married and moved to Norwalk where they raised their family and created an active life together. She was a full-time working mother, entrepreneurially spirited, and had a long career in the financial services industry. She also co-owned multiple restaurants and a very successful catering company with her husband.

The two were avid boaters for much of their lives and loved spending time on the Long Island Sound.

Konatsotis had many talents and loved to sew, create ceramics, entertain family and friends, and cook. She enjoyed playing a weekly game of mahjong with her friends and was always up for a healthy political debate. In retirement, she was very active in many clubs in The Villages including the Genealogy Club, Celtic Club, New York Club, Drexel University Alumnae, and the American Association of University Women (AAUW), which was very dear to her, as it promotes equality, empowerment and opportunities for girls and women to further their education and careers.

Her memory will remain in her hearts of her three children and three grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to The Connie Konatsotis Scholarship Fund. To honor her memory and her legacy of promoting gender equality and the education of women, the family would like to provide camp and college scholarships to young girls who are interested in pursuing a career in STEAM. Please consider donating to: <https://bold.org/scholarships/connie-konatsotis-scholarship/>

Debora RUSSELL Banner '69 passed away on November 29, 2021, at age 70, in Washington, DC, with her son and daughter by her side. She was born on September 16, 1951, to the late Margaret (McGuirk) and Alfred Russell in Superior, Wisconsin, and was raised in New York City where she took two trains and a bus each day from Queens to attend HCHS.

She continued her education at Washington University, St. Louis (B.A., '71), New York University (M.A., '81), and The State University of New York at New Paltz (Certificate of Advanced Study, '91). Banner's life passion was education. For over 45 years she oversaw, taught, or volunteered in schools in Missouri, New York, Georgia, Puerto Rico, and Texas. She volunteered with struggling kids when she was in high school and college, began her professional career as an elementary and reading teacher, taught math and study skills to underprepared

students at Dutchess Community College, and later became a school administrator.

Banner spent the bulk of her career in the New Paltz Central School District, first as the Assistant Principal of Duzine Elementary, then as the Director of Educational Services and Personnel, and as Assistant Superintendent for her final 12 years before retiring in 2013. After she retired, she moved to Texas to be closer to her daughter. She continued to make an impact: volunteering at two schools in Houston, supporting the professional development of teachers she worked with, joining Community Voices for Public Education, and campaigning for a Houston school board candidate who shared her views on the value of public education.

She moved to join both of her children in Washington, DC in 2019. She treasured afternoons spent with her two grandchildren, reading Cam Jansen mysteries and building with Legos. She is remembered and loved by her two children, their spouses, her grandchildren, her sister-in-law, her mother-in-law, and her cousin, and numerous friends and colleagues whose lives she touched.

To respect her dislike for funerals, plans are being made for a celebration of Banner's life to be held in the Poughkeepsie, New York area in Spring 2022. In lieu of flowers, we ask that you remember her deep commitment to ensuring every child could, and loved, to read by donating to First Book, which provides children's books to those in need.

WE HAVE ALSO BEEN NOTIFIED OF THE PASSING OF:

Lori Stein '60
on November 5, 2021

Rebecca Hantin '81
in September 2021

Memories of an alumna's life, shared by former student and friend
Margreth DEISSENERGER Schmitt '61

Natalie SCHNEIDER Olsen '52, German teacher and Guidance counselor for many years, died on July 20, 2020, in Jupiter, Florida. After high school, she went on to Hunter College where she met her future husband, Ronald Olsen. She graduated in 1956 magna cum laude and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and numerous other honorary societies. Olsen received a Fulbright Fellowship to study in Germany for two years. When Mrs. Harriet Schueler, who had been the HCHS German teacher for many years, became ill, Olsen's return to New York was ideally timed and she promptly stepped in to teach German. Although she originally wanted to teach History, she was fluent in German and an excellent teacher. She also taught at least one class of Economic Geography. For several years, she took coursework at Hunter College to obtain her master's degree in Guidance and worked in the Hunter Guidance office as well. After about 10 years at Hunter, she lived and taught in several other states and implemented Guidance programs in both the German and Japanese school curricula.

Olsen (Miss Schneider, then) lived a few blocks away from me in the Bronx, and we often saw one another on the Subway or walking home. We would have long conversations and I learned that, although our families were not acquainted with one another, we did have many family friends in common. We had gone to the same elementary school and had many of the same teachers there. Natalie was the first girl from P.S. 3 to be accepted by Hunter; **Ana PAYERCHIN Miklas '56** was the second, and I was the third and last. I learned that as a senior, Natalie had been both President of Sigma, our Honor Society, and editor of *Klub und Klasse*, the German literary magazine. When she married Ron Olsen in 1959, she

invited all her students to attend the wedding.

Natalie was my German teacher for three years at Hunter and was instrumental in enabling me to take a fourth year of German at Hunter College. She also served as advisor to both the German Club as well as *Klub und Klasse*.

The last time I saw her, she (now Mrs. Olsen) was very pregnant with her first child, Erik. A few years later, she had a daughter, Kristin. She moved around much, as did I, and I lost contact with her. But, in 2010, through a HCHS student directory, I obtained an address for her in Virginia, not far from where my daughter lives. I phoned and later wrote to her, trying to arrange a reunion. Unfortunately, she moved to Florida

before I could arrange the Virginia visit. We continued to write to one another, often every month or so until 2013 when my husband and I were in Miami and drove to Jupiter, Florida to see her. We must have hugged one another for a full five minutes. I had a plane to catch so the meeting was short, but I was so glad to have seen her once again. She looked just as I remembered her, and the time went by much too quickly.

We continued to write long letters to one another, including memories of our days at Hunter – working on *Klub und Klasse*, singing German songs, putting on German plays and going to German movies or ice

skating outings and holiday parties. But then the letters stopped coming and Ron wrote me that she had experienced an event which prevented her from responding to my letters. She had been my German teacher for three years, but she was my very good friend for decades. There is a place in my heart where memories of her live on. I shall always remember her with love and miss her deeply.

On behalf of all her former students as well as fellow Hunter faculty, I wish to extend my deepest condolences to Natalie's husband Ron as well as to her children and grandchildren.



L to R: Natalie SCHNEIDER Olsen '52 and Margreth DEISSENERGER Schmitt '61

Take pride in your alma mater and show your support of the school with a purchase of HCHS Alumnae/i Association items.

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Use this form to make a donation or purchase merchandise. Checks should be payable to HCHSAA and mailed in the enclosed envelope. You may also pay by credit card at our website (www.hchsaa.org)

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

As reported in earlier *AlumNotes*, the HCHSAA, in an effort to encourage wider participation by our diverse alumnae/i community, decided to remove membership fees as a barrier by reducing them to \$0.

In keeping with the requirements of our by-laws (hchsaa.org/by-laws), to renew your annual membership or to join for the first time, you may complete the form provided in this issue and mail it to our offices, providing your current contact information, or register for an online account at hchsaa.org and follow the instructions provided under "hchsaa.org/register".

In place of membership dues, we hope you will consider making a donation to support programs for students and alums of Hunter College High School. Tiers for giving are listed below.

CONTRIBUTIONS

DONORS			HONOR ROLL OF GIVING			PURPLE SOCIETY				
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____			Donor	Patron	Sponsor	Associate	Fellow	Founder	Principal's Circle	Director's Circle

☐ This is my Milestone Reunion Year. Please count this towards my Class Gift

MERCHANDISE Cost includes postage and handling. Please circle your choices

Quan.	Item	Size	Price	Quan.	Item	Price	Subtotal.
	Cotton T-shirt, Black	L- XL-XXL	\$18		Water bottle, Metal	\$20	\$
	Cotton T-shirt, Purple	L- XL-XXL	\$18		Water bottle, Plastic	\$20	\$
	Baseball Cap		\$20		Cotton Apron (Out of Stock)	\$25	\$
	Canvas Tote	Small	\$25		Notebook	\$20	\$
	Canvas Tote	Large	\$30		Sweater Bear	\$20	\$
	Reuseable Tote		\$8		Pennant	\$3	\$

☐ THIS IS MY MERCHANDISE SUBTOTAL \$ _____

☐ My check is Enclosed -or- ☐ Charge to My AMEX DISCOVER MC VISA # _____ EXP _____

Name _____ Year _____ Preferred Email _____

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Hunter College High School Alumnae/i Association

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