Lehman Helps Advance a ‘Culture of Peace’ Through Academic Conference in Hiroshima

In 1989, Lehman College and Hiroshima, Japan, began a unique relationship that survived and grew despite the difficulties of distance and changing economic conditions. Seventeen years later, as the 2006 academic year began, that connection helped to produce a major international peace conference dedicated to “building a just and sustainable peace.”

The meeting in Hiroshima drew scholars, students and activists from a score of nations and included Nobel Peace Laureates Shirin Ebadi and Jody Williams and U.N. Under Secretary General Anwarul K. Chowdhury. It is the cornerstone for the College’s plans to develop a Center for Peace and Human Rights Education—the only one of its kind within CUNY. For more on the conference, see page 8.

Above: Messages of peace were created for the conference by young people from around the world. Left: A scholar takes notes. Other conference sponsors included IHAN (International Health Awareness Network); the Mission of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh to the U.N.; the Office of the U.N. Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; The Ribbon International; The University of the District of Columbia; and Abington College of Penn State University.
New Appointments Made

New administrators have joined Lehman’s senior staff. With the departure of Provost Anthony Garro, who moved on to UMass at Dartmouth, Dean of Natural and Social Sciences William Tramontano has been named Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; in his place, Dr. Marc Lazarus (Chemistry) was named Acting Dean of Natural and Social Sciences.

Dr. Robert Troy has been appointed as Associate Provost and Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management. He was a Professor of Chemistry and Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Central Connecticut State University. A new position—Vice President for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer—has also been created and is being filled on an acting basis by Dr. Zong-Guo Xia of the Environmental, Geographic and Geological Sciences Department.

Dr. Tramontano

Dr. Lazarus

Dr. Troy

Dr. Xia

Professor Collins

Distinguished Professor Billy Collins (standing, center) surrounded by some of his students: (seated, from left), Dorian Geisler, Mary Lindsay, Lauren Barke, and Daniel Chen and (standing, from left) Raphael Sugarman, Amy Soricelli, Ellen Liberatori, and Anne Leighton.

Campus News

Master Poetry Class with Billy Collins Draws Students from Egypt—and from the Past

There aren’t many major prizes for poetry, but ten lucky students won a great one this fall: a six-session master class with recent U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins, who is a Distinguished Professor of English at Lehman.

Professor Collins opened the class to all interested CUNY students, as well as published and aspiring poets in the community, who sent in samples of their poetry for consideration. The class that emerged, out of the dozens who applied, included writers of diverse ages and backgrounds—and a former student from twenty-five years ago.

Amy Soricelli ’79 (B.A., English) and ’81 (M.S.Ed.) took an introduction to poetry course with Professor Collins in 1978 and won the English Department’s Grace A. Croff Memorial Award that same year. Since then, she has published her work in Grub Street and on Poetrybay.com. She applied to the class to “learn how to be more concise—simpler...better.”

Others, like Ellen Liberatori, also wear a variety of professional “hats” while pursuing their love of the poetic form. Liberatori, a freelance writer and poet who has lived for the last three years in Cairo (Egypt), has had a twenty-year career working for various foundations and non-profit organizations. She heard about the course through a radio interview link on the Web, sent to her by a colleague, and had always wanted to attend a class given by Professor Collins. “I was surprised and delighted to have this opportunity,” she remarked.

Daniel Chen, meanwhile, is a physical therapist who has been inspired, through his patients and their stories, to write his experiences and observations as poetry.

“The class has been good in analyzing the poetic form. Liberatori, a freelance writer and poet who has lived for the last three years in Cairo (Egypt), has had a twenty-year career working for various foundations and non-profit organizations. She heard about the course through a radio interview link on the Web, sent to her by a colleague, and had always wanted to attend a class given by Professor Collins. “I was surprised and delighted to have this opportunity,” she remarked.

Daniel Chen, meanwhile, is a physical therapist who has been inspired, through his patients and their stories, to write his experiences and observations as poetry.

“The class has been good in analyzing the devices poets use in writing poetry,” he reports, “especially when it comes to analyzing each other’s poems. I really like the small personal class size. It feels more amiable.”

Mary Lindberg, whose book of poems, The Tang of Glue (Pudding House Publications), was published this year, wanted to study with Professor Collins because of the impact he has made on contemporary poetry through his books and Poetry 180 project. The class has proven to be “very valuable,” she says, “with interesting assignments and respectful ambiance.”

Anne Leighton, who has taken classes at Lehman since 2001 and is working toward her degree from SUNY at Fredonia, has published her poetry in several rock magazines, has a day job as a music publicist, and has also written about the supportive relationship between people and their pets.

“Getting into Professor Collins’ class is an affirmation that I can write poetry,” she says happily. She also took the class to help with long-range writing projects, including a play and a poetry book inspired by her favorite poet, Walt Whitman (although, she admits, “Dr. Seuss runs a close second”).

Leighton liked, in particular, the assignments that began with a “role-model” poem, such as "When I Was a Child" by Frank O’Hara. The class followed some of the guidelines of that poem’s format for their own new poems.

"Professor Collins would say, for example, ‘Give your poem four lines for four different verses, have it start out with “When I was a Child,” and end the last verse with “Now I am ________’ and an exclamation point’."”

She also paid close attention to his advice “to give readers some clarity, words they can hold on to so they can be coaxed into a poem no matter how deep you take them.”

One result, Leighton believes, is that “this class will help poets truly respect our readers.”

Professor Collins plans to continue offering the master class in future semesters.
College’s New Marketing Campaign Asks: That’s senior Kermit Ureña surrounded by books in the campus bookstore. He’s one of a dozen students and alumni portrayed in the College’s new marketing and branding campaign.

The campaign—built around the edgy theme “Who do you think you are?”—was suggested by the Chicago firm of Lipman Hearne, market-tested on area high school and college students, and further refined by senior College staff. It debuted this fall in a slew of new recruitment material, as well as radio ads on news stations heard by millions of daily commuters.

According to Dr. Anne Johnson, vice president of institutional advancement, “Many high school students are unsure about what their futures hold, but want to know what they need to succeed after college. They are thinking about their own growth and development and want an individualized atmosphere in which they are allowed and encouraged to be themselves. Seventeen-year-olds resonated enthusiastically to the ‘Who do you think you are?’ theme.”

Dr. Johnson noted that the campaign includes a new graphic identity for the College (left). The shield takes its shape from the facade of the Music Building and “combines history and tradition with a forward and futuristic look.”

Susan Hoeltzel not only directs the Lehman College Art Gallery but is also an artist in her own right (and an adjunct member of the art faculty). She created Garden Dress, 2006 on canvas (at right), using mixed media. The work, which hung in the Gallery this year as part of a Faculty Art Exhibit, is similar to one previously purchased by a private collector.

When the painting sold, she was not finished with the subject, so she decided to create another one in a similar vein. For the last several years, many of her paintings have been based on the plants in her flower garden, which number over a hundred different varieties of perennials.

“For the paintings, I am more fascinated by the weeds and never use the flowers,” she explains. “I’m most interested in the line and structure of the plant, so they are usually monochromatic.”

Weeds, Not Flowers, Fascinate Faculty Artist

Library Renamed In Honor of President Lief

Chancellor Goldstein, President Fernández, and both current and emeriti faculty were on hand in May to salute Dr. Leonard Lief, Lehman’s founding president, as the College Library was renamed in his honor.

Dr. Lief, who guided the College through its critical formative years (1968–1990), confronted turbulent times on the national scene and also within CUNY, with the change to an “open admissions” policy, imposition of tuition, and a municipal fiscal crisis that brought campus construction to a halt.

Despite these challenges, President Lief built a faculty of remarkable distinction, helped the arts and sciences to prevail, championed the role of the arts in the life of the campus and the borough, and oversaw the building of magnificent new structures, including the new Library, Lehman Center, and the Speech and Theatre Building.

The dedication plaque reads in part: “...Through national political turmoil and restraints imposed by a severe fiscal crisis, he persevered with an enlightened, inclusive vision of higher education that still inspires the College today. His insistence on high standards established its academic framework; his keen sense of aesthetics guided construction of its principal buildings, including the Library; and his deep love of the arts transformed Lehman into a campus where these disciplines flourish. May his contributions resound among new generations of students, as they pursue the gift of learning in the Leonard Lief Library.”
SEEK Program at Lehman Celebrates 40 Years of Helping Students Achieve

Over the last forty years, the SEEK Program (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) has helped thousands of Lehman students enter the educational and professional mainstream. Faculty and staff in the program continue to provide the support needed to guide young men and women whose academic and economic backgrounds would normally have prevented them from pursuing a college degree.

“SEEK provides a supportive environment and encouragement,” says the program’s director, Dr. Annette Hernández. “We also expect the highest performance from our students; this is our formula for success. Since the program’s inception at Lehman, its graduation rate has continued to increase. More recently, that rate has come very close to matching the College’s six-year graduation rate.

“We must make sure that Educational Opportunity Programs remain in our colleges to provide access to higher education. The impact of getting a college degree not only has an effect on the individual but also on the community and the State as a whole. Data collected in 2003 indicate that graduates from all New York State’s Educational Opportunity Programs had contributed, to that point, over $500 million in New York State taxes. The impact also goes beyond the economics. Everyone gains from our students’ accomplishments.”

From Welfare to Ph.D., SEEK Alumna Beat the Odds

When Marguerite Coke-Maxwell graduated from high school, her aunt urged her to find a job as a domestic worker, but the teenager knew she wanted something better for herself. After earning her Ph.D., publishing two books, and founding her own real estate company, this Lehman alumna is glad she had the courage to pursue her big dreams.

“I came from a place where you were not supposed to succeed,” says Dr. Coke-Maxwell, whose family had been on welfare for as long as she could remember. “I decided that I did not want to be like that. Without the SEEK program, I wouldn’t be the person I am today.”

Arriving at Lehman in 1969 was an intimidating experience. No one in her family had attained this level of education, and she feared failure and rejection by her peers. Once here, however, she decided that she would do whatever was necessary to graduate and become successful.

During freshman year, she took only remedial classes. The SEEK program provided a tutor and a counselor throughout her undergraduate years and paid for all her college expenses. In 1975, she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in family and consumer studies. As it turned out, that was only the beginning of her academic career.

She stayed on at Lehman for another year and earned her teaching certification, which the SEEK program also supported, and went on to receive her master’s in social work from SUNY at Stony Brook. She began working with the elderly in a senior citizen program and then with the New York City Department of the Aging, where she remained for ten years, eventually becoming the union representative for that agency. Continuing her education, she earned her Ph.D. in gerontology in 1989 from Fordham University.

“I knew that I had a gift with older people and that I could be of help to them,” she says. She has written two books in the field: The Correlates of Life Satisfaction Among the African American Elderly (Garland Press, 1991) and Satisfaction in Later Life: The Black Elderly (Hathworth Press, 1996).

Dr. Coke-Maxwell became the graduate head of human services at the College of New Rochelle in 1994 and later director of the John Cardinal O’Connor campus, a position she held until 2005. Since relocating to the Tampa, Florida, area, she teaches part-time and runs the real estate company she built with her late husband.

Reaching this level of achievement was something she could have imagined. “SEEK gave me hope, courage, and a belief in who I am and what I can do. I’m really thankful for it,” she says. During her career, she received several awards and honors, including selection by The New York Daily News as “Woman of the Year.”

“Remember, I was a welfare child, but I broke that curse. I worked very hard and with SEEK, I beat the odds.”

‘06 SEEK Grad Now an R.N.

When Jicel Espinosa entered Lehman through the SEEK program, she was not sure what she wanted to study; she just knew she wanted to help people. Today, the nursing graduate thanks Lehman for helping her excel in a field she loves.

Espinosa emigrated from the Dominican Republic when she was 13. “It was a very hard transition,” she says. “When I started high school, I barely knew English. I didn’t even know how to say ‘hi’.”

She had many interests and explored several of them at Lehman, including computer science, accounting, and recreation education. Nursing, she decided, was the best fit. She began interning at Bronx Lebanon Hospital, where her work schedule rotated through different departments.

“I really liked ER and ICU, where you get to be more personalized with the patient,” she said, adding that being bilingual was not a handicap and will probably make her more marketable.

A member of the Hispanic Nursing Association, she participated with the group in the AIDS and Asthma Walks. Espinosa is proud of her accomplishments, and so is her mother. As the first in her family to attend college, the aspiring nurse worked and attended class full-time and made the SEEK Honor Roll. She also helped her mother support their household. “I want to be able to make her life a little easier,” she says.

This summer, Espinosa passed the State NCLEX exam on the first try, became an R.N., and plans to pursue a master’s in nursing. “I want to really grow in the profession.”

— Anita Spearman

Dr. Coke-Maxwell

Jicel Espinosa at Commencement with mom Jisela Vargas and brother Victor.
First Honors College Class Graduates from Lehman

They came to Lehman as freshmen in Fall 2002, straight out of high school and ready to build on their impressive academic records. Four years later, the first graduates of the CUNY Honors College at Lehman were ready to leave—headed straight for a career or graduate school or some free time to think about where they want their lives to lead. Here’s a quick look at what some of these new alumni are doing:

- Shari Andrews is at the College of Medicine at Downstate Medical Center;
- Mishal Bawa is working toward her M.A. in English literature at Hunter College, concentrating on the Postcolonial Literature of South Africa;
- Carmilla Hill is in the M.S.W. program at Lehman and interning at Moshulu Montefiore Community Center;
- Christina Pagan is a staff member of Lehman Stages, costume designer for Bronx Repertory productions, and Latin dance instructor at Bronx International High School;
- Tom Roopchand is assistant divisional controller at Garan, Inc., a clothing manufacturer headquartered in the Empire State Building; and
- Matthew Segreti is pursuing his master’s degree at Lehman in Social Studies Education (7-12) while working for Allstate Insurance Co.

With Honors College Director Dr. Gary Schwartz (center) are, from left, Tom Roopchand, Christina Pagan, Laurie Worby, and Matthew Segreti.

‘After babysitting for an autistic girl who did not speak until she was seven, Laurie Worby felt she could make a difference...’

Honors College graduate Laurie Worby became interested in the field of speech pathology very early on. After babysitting for an autistic girl who did not speak until she was seven, Worby felt she could make a difference in the lives of people with similar needs.

Drawn to Lehman by the reputation of the Speech–Language–Hearing Sciences Department and the small class sizes, Worby says she appreciated that she did not feel lost in the shuffle at Lehman, as she may have felt at a bigger institution.

“I got a really good and well-rounded education here,” she says. “As a speech pathology major, I loved the faculty because all of my classes were challenging. Italian classes were great, too.”

Worby’s love of that language led her to take so many Italian classes that it became her second major. She minored in Early Childhood Education.

Worby had the opportunity to study in Rome in 2005—actually her second time visiting Italy. “It was amazing,” she recalls. “I studied at an Italian institute, so it was strictly in the Italian language. I was forced to speak it all the time, which was really fun.”

Worby began working on her master’s degree in speech pathology at New York Medical College this fall. She has not yet decided on a specialization. She wants to work with kids, but also recognizes the need for adult rehabilitation.

Worby’s sister, Kelly, is following in her footsteps. She’s in her first year in the CUNY Honors College at Lehman.

Remembering the Queen

Queen Elizabeth visited the campus this semester—Elizabeth I, that is, as part of a national traveling exhibition hosted by Lehman’s Leonard Lief Library. Lehman was the only New York State venue selected for “Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend,” which commemorates the 400th anniversary of the death of England’s first Queen Elizabeth. The Library also sponsored a six-part lecture series to accompany the exhibition.

Featuring were photo reproductions of items such as Elizabeth’s Great Seal, letters and speeches in Elizabeth’s own hand, a drawing from 1587 of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, and more than 100 books, manuscripts, maps, letters, paintings and artifacts. Numerous portraits dating from Elizabeth’s early reign to her last days on the throne were also on hand.

The Newberry Library’s Center for Renaissance Studies organized the exhibition, in collaboration with the American Library Association’s Public Programs Office. It was made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The New York Council for the Humanities, the Vance Family Fund, and the University of Illinois at Chicago also provided major support.

Laurie Worby
Graduation Marks a New Beginning—for All Degree Recipients

When Maria Peralta came to New York from the Dominican Republic in 1995, she spoke no English. Now, the mathematics graduate and mother of three plans to pursue her master’s degree in education at Lehman and become a high school teacher. Maria Peralta Loves Math

Pursuing her bachelor’s degree was not easy, however. She had to find a place for her children to stay while she went to class, and her responsibilities as a mother forced her once to discontinue her studies for an entire semester. “In comparison to what I do at home, math is easy,” she says. The strong family support she received made the journey a little easier. She also took part in the CUNY Immersion Program, designed to strengthen academic skills in incoming freshmen and transfer applicants. Dr. Christina Sormani (Mathematics and Computer Science) helped Peralta schedule her classes to balance out her family responsibilities and is proud of Peralta’s progress. “She persevered,” Dr. Sormani said, “and worked hard to catch up on material she missed between semesters. She is a strong role model for our students.”

Peralta’s children are her primary motivation for excelling academically. “I want to provide a better life for them,” she says. “They can see what I went through and see there’s no reason they can’t do this.” She says that Lehman helped to prepare her in other ways as well. “I not only learned math, but life skills, too.”

—Gabriela Frias

Philomena Winigah arrived in the U.S. from Ghana in 1988, not knowing what to expect and carrying only hope about what her life and future might hold. Enrolling in Fall 2001 in Borough of Manhattan Community College, she saw her classrooms in Fiterman Hall destroyed a few week later during the 9/11 attack. Undeterred, Winigah completed her studies with honors and transferred to Lehman as a Social Work major. “I was born and learned to crawl at BMCC,” she says, “but at Lehman, I learned to walk.” Winigah graduated summa cum laude and is working toward her M.S.W. at New York University.

Social Work Major ‘Learns to Walk’

Health Services Administration Grad Finds Tools to Better Serve Community

As an intern at the Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY), Victor Mosquera had a knack for customer service and administrative support that not only earned him a profile in the VNSNY annual report but also a full-time job as the organization’s administrative coordinator for the Business Development Department.

Mosquera, who graduated cum laude with a major in Health Services Administration, credits Lehman’s Health Sciences Department with giving him the tools to better serve his community. “What I find exciting about my work,” he explains, “is the opportunity to learn from top management how to further improve patients’ experience in a healthcare environment.”

At Lehman, his grades and passion for learning landed him in the McNair Scholars program and the National Honor Society.
John Rodriguez ‘01: ‘Writing Himself into Existence’

From homeless shelter to CUNY Grad Center, John Rodriguez ‘01 is a shining example of what is possible if one dares to follow his dream. He passed his Ph.D. orals in English with distinction this spring and is on his way to becoming the first McNair Scholar from Lehman to earn his doctorate.

“When you have almost nothing, all you have is your mind,” says Rodriguez. “I didn’t have, but I was gonna be.”

Rodriguez had always loved the written word. He was a prolific poet and taught poetry part-time at Urban Horizons, a Manhattan-based organization that assists families coming out of the shelter system. During this time, Rodriguez himself became homeless and wound up living in a Brooklyn men’s shelter. There he was given the choice to either work or go to school. He chose the latter, although he was not that confident about his ability to succeed.

But he took a chance and began to explore his literary voice as a Lehman English major. Every morning, Rodriguez would leave the shelter before breakfast was served to travel to Lehman—even on days he had no class.

Gradually, he became more confident in his writing and discovered his love of poetry. He excelled in the McNair and Lehman Scholars Programs, became a popular voice on the poetry slam circuit, and published several of his works in anthologies.

While tutoring at Lehman, Rodriguez started to consider teaching as a career choice. He applied to the CUNY doctoral program in English and was accepted on a Magnet Fellowship. Now he’s working on his dissertation.

Rodriguez is grateful for the support he received over his nine years at Lehman, a mix of full-time and part-time study. “I had that classic transformation through knowledge,” he says. “That this corner boy from Gunhill and Decatur could write himself into existence, that’s the dream.”

Lehman Students Heed the Doctors’ Advice

“If I hadn’t gone to Lehman,” Dr. Camille Stewart ’99 told the crowd in Davis Hall, “I wouldn’t be where I am today. So many people want to help you at Lehman and want you to succeed.”

Dr. Stewart, a graduate of Albert Einstein College of Medicine and an anesthesiology resident there, was one of four alumni physicians who returned to Lehman this fall to advise and encourage prospective pre-med majors. She urged the students to form study groups, as she and her classmate and friend, Dr. Andrea Borghese Apolo, had done, to help master difficult science courses. Dr. Borghese Apolo also graduated from Albert Einstein and completed her Internal Medicine residency at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Cornell.

The other members of their study group, Dr. Obi Anyaogu, Dr. Camille Stewart, pre-med advisor Dr. Clarence Branch, Dr. Andrea Borghese Apolo, and Dr. Uzo Anyaogu, were likewise succeeding. One, she reported, is an attending physician in the Lincoln Hospital Emergency Room; the other is studying pediatrics at SUNY Stony Brook.

Besides Dr. Borghese Apolo, twin sisters from the Class of 2000 were also on the panel. Both have pursued medical careers while becoming mothers. Dr. Uzo Anyaogu earned her M.D. at George Washington University and is applying for an Internal Medicine residency in the New York City area. Dr. Obi Anyaogu graduated from Wright State University in Ohio and is an Obstetrics/Gynecology resident at Albert Einstein.

The panel stressed the need for perseverance. “Ups and downs shouldn’t be a block,” said Dr. Obi Anyaogu. “They’re just something you get past and then continue on.”

HRA Director Doubles As Romance Novelist

Alexis G. Thornton (’89) completed her M.P.A. degree at John Jay College in 1994, has been married for over 20 years, and is the mother of three sons. But that’s only one side of her life. There are more.

Thornton dreams of sitting on the couch next to talk show host Oprah Winfrey and discussing her new African-American romance novel “Family, Friends, Husbands and Lovers...The Best of Enemies.” She describes her book, published under the pen name of “Gigi,” as “an urban tale of love and relationships gone awry in the Bronx, with shattering loss and shocking discoveries.”

Thornton’s fictional world can be found both at Barnes and Noble and on Amazon.com.

Most of the time, though, the author is dealing not with the lives of her imaginary characters but with the life-and-death struggles of real New Yorkers. As a director for the New York City Department of Human Resources Administration, she supervises a staff that arranges housing and other services for homeless individuals with HIV or AIDS.

Retirees Spring Meeting Dates

Retirees, please mark your calendars for the spring meetings of the Lehman Retirees Association:

Wednesday, March 14, 2007
Wednesday, May 16, 2007
Beginning in 1990, Lehman operated a branch campus in Hiroshima that attracted Japanese students eager for both the American-style academics offered and the opportunity to learn about another culture.

The program called for students to attend classes in Hiroshima for their first two years, and on the Bronx campus for their next two years.

Thanks to industrialist Tatsuo Tanaka, whose vision and support made the project possible, the exchange involved not only Lehman faculty, who comprised the teaching staff, but also a group of Lehman students who were able to travel to the Japan campus.

When a recession in Japan forced the experiment to close in 1995, the connection between the city and the College was kept alive by that same spirit of exchange and understanding.

Over the years, Japanese students continued to travel to the Bronx from time to time to earn their degrees at Lehman. Alumni of the Hiroshima campus, meanwhile, maintained strong ties with one another and also with the College—one even joined the Lehman faculty.

The College, likewise, pursued efforts to promote peace, organizing events like the 2004 conference on “The Role of Women in World Peace and the Role of Men and Boys in Gender Equity.”

Speaking at the Hiroshima conference, President Fernández reminded the audience that protracted conflicts like the Thirty Years’ War had made people think that war was humanity’s natural state.

“Through treaties and enlightened leaders,” he said, “we have come to believe otherwise. Peace can be the natural state of nations, but we cannot leave it to others to secure. We must think, dream, work and yes, dare, to lay out another course.”

Mayor Michael Bloomberg proclaimed the conference days as “Global Peace Days in the City of New York.”

Professor Asako Tochika (Languages & Literatures), an alumna of the Hiroshima campus, invited students in her second- and third-year Japanese class to design a peace ribbon (above) for inclusion in the Ribbon Ceremony concluding the conference. The students later learned their ribbon had been chosen as part of the permanent collection of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. “Even though we are thousands of miles away,” observed one of the students, “the message of peace is universal.”
Prominent Alumnus Urges Students to Take Time to ‘Learn About You’

Entrepreneur and CEO Richard Rakowski ’74 returned to Lehman this year—first as a teacher and then as the principal speaker at Convocation. In both cases, he passed along wisdom, advice, and encouragement to the students who once sat where he had.

"On September 13, 1969, when I came here," he said at Convocation, there was "absolutely nothing" he knew about himself that was relevant to his life today—and that "didn’t get discovered here at Lehman College."

Rakowski discussed the philosophies that enabled him to build his career and how Lehman students can unleash their own potential for success. As a student, he recalled, his decision to challenge the legality of parking tickets routinely being issued on the streets adjacent to the campus led to greater involvement in student life, development of his leadership skills, and realization of his marketing abilities.

After graduating with a degree in political science, Rakowski was a Rotary Foundation ambassador of good will in Germany, where he studied the Holocaust. Over the past 20 years, he has succeeded in such diverse fields as manufacturing, consulting, business development, and marketing. He is currently the chairman and chief executive officer of Klinger Advanced Aesthetics and a principal in the Connecticut-based investment firm of Kidd & Company.

Previously, he was president of American Healthways; founded New Paradigm Ventures, a consulting and investment firm in the healthcare and food industry; and was a partner at Marketing Corporation of America. During the spring term, Rakowski gave a series of lectures to the marketing research and consumer behavior courses taught by Professor Matthew Nagler (Economics, Accounting, and Business Administration). They were so well-received that another series was scheduled for the Fall 2006 semester.

In concluding his presentation at Convocation, he left the audience with several messages:

"Message #1: There’s an enormous hidden potential lying inside of you, dormant inside of you—not some of you, not most of you, ...but every single one of you has this potential."

"Message #2: While you’re learning about literature, mathematics, science, astronomy, while you’re learning about nursing, while you’re learning about engineering, make sure you understand one of the primary missions in your time here is to learn about you.

"Message #3: Perhaps the greatest thing I discovered, now that I am 54 years old and have been through this amazing place...is that the number one place...to discover ‘you’ is right here at Lehman.

"Why does that seem like such a large statement? It’s because to discover ‘you,’ you have to be truly free, you have to be truly safe, and you have to be truly nurtured...Those smiles from 1969 that I saw, I saw again today. Nothing has changed at Lehman College.”

Lehman College Foundation Elects New Officers, Adds Directors

The Lehman College Foundation Board of Directors recently elected David H. Levey as its chair. An economics graduate of the University of Chicago and Harvard University, he has served as Managing Director for sovereign credit ratings at Moody’s Investors Service and contributes to Foreign Affairs and other publications.

“Increasing private fundraising is vital for expanding educational opportunity at Lehman College,” he emphasizes.

The Board also elected Aramina Ferrer ’73, a retired educator from the New York City public schools, as vice chair and Dr. Deena Bernstein, chair of Lehman’s Department of Speech–Language–Hearing Sciences, as secretary. A new member of the Board is Beverly Bartner, a leader in New York City performing arts and other philanthropies. She and her husband are Broadway producers; their plays have received the Pulitzer Prize as well as Tony nominations.

Also joining the Board is Myrna Rivera ’75 (M.S.), founder, president, and chief executive officer of Consultiva Internacional. The firm, with offices in Puerto Rico and New York City, designs investment policy and strategy for institutions, individuals, and families. She chairs the Foundation’s Investment Committee.

The Lehman College Foundation raises, manages, and allocates charitable contributions that support students and the mission of Lehman College. In recent years, it has awarded approximately a half-million dollars annually in student scholarships.

The Foundation is sponsoring a number of special events this semester, following two major events last year, and is taking a leadership role in the College’s upcoming fund-raising campaign. A formal planned giving program is underway. To learn more or find out how to make a gift, call 718-960-8766.
Dr. Alex Johnson ’73: An Inspiring Educator Helps Bring New Orleans Back from Hurricane Katrina

Dr. ALEX JOHNSON IS CHANCELLOR OF DELGADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE in New Orleans. Before that, he was President of the Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland. He earned his doctorate from Pennsylvania State University, his master’s degree from Lehman College, and his bachelor’s degree from Winston-Salem State University.

Dr. Johnson serves on the board of the American Council on Education (ACE) and is a member of the Commission on Women of ACE and the Commission on Research of the American Association of Community Colleges. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, he is not only leading the drive to rebuild his own institution but also contributing his expertise to the recovery effort as a member on committees of Mayor C. Ray Nagin’s “Bringing New Orleans Back Commission.”

Dr. Johnson has received Phi Theta Kappa’s President of the Year Award; the Frank G. Jackson, Mayor of Cleveland, Ohio, Visionary Award; and the Innovator of the Year Award from the League for Innovation in the Community College. Recently taking time from his hectic schedule to take part in an electronic interview for Lehman Lightning, he comments that “my rewarding educational experiences, particularly at Lehman, are surpassed only by the enjoyment of my wife and two children. For a poor kid who grew up in the rural South in the 1950s, and the tough streets of Harlem and the South Bronx, and who struggled in school, I have much to be grateful for. I thank Lehman Lightning for the chance to share a part of my life’s journey.”

Tell us about your childhood.
I was born on September 6, 1950 in Harlem Hospital. My childhood days were split between Harlem and a small town in North Carolina called Concord.

Why did you choose to attend Lehman?
After I graduated from college, I became a lead teacher at Tremont-Monterey Day Care Center in the Bronx, where Lehman professors and their students would come to observe the children for their research and clinical studies. I was so impressed by the work of one professor, Dr. Mariann Winick, that I enrolled in one of her classes and under her tutelage completed a master’s degree in early childhood education in 1973.

Why did you decide to pursue a doctorate?
I felt I still had a great deal more to learn about young children, especially those with developmental disabilities. So, I enrolled in a doctoral program at Penn State.

What was your most memorable moment at Lehman?
I had a really tough time with a required statistics course. I made it through, and that experience provided a great foundation for success in my three statistics courses and a computer course required in the doctoral program at Penn State.

While at Lehman, did you expect that you would find yourself Chancellor of a college?
No, but I was inspired by Dr. Winick to pursue college teaching. After graduating from Penn State, I served on the special education faculties at Bowling Green State in Ohio and at my alma mater, Winston-Salem State University. There I was asked to serve in an interim administrative role. I did not return to the classroom. After several more administrative jobs, coupled with a fellowship with the American Council on Education and participation in programs at Harvard and Carnegie Mellon Universities, I secured my first presidency.

Have you published any scholarly writings?
Writing is something I have always enjoyed. As a result, I have published at least 75 articles and book chapters, which chronicle my research and administrative interests, principally.

Please talk a bit about your journey to becoming Chancellor of Delgado.
Delgado is my second CEO position. It came during a rewarding experience as president of one of the campuses of Cuyahoga Community College. My work there was productive, characterized by new facilities, attractive programs, productive partnerships, successful fundraising, and great people.

But one fateful day, I received a call from a search firm indicating that I had been nominated for the chancellor’s position at Delgado. What an honor! I knew of the school’s status as the oldest and largest community college in Louisiana, its stellar reputation in teaching, and its success in training nurses and allied health professionals.

So, I decided to apply for the position. The rest is history.

What do you love about the position?
The culture of commitment among the faculty and staff is tremendous. New Orleans is a great city. The people are remarkable and do not allow you to say no to invitations. My wife, Daphne, and I have very close friends here despite our relatively short time in the city. Louisiana is a great state and very close-knit. You know everyone, and everyone knows you, even the Governor!

How has Delgado progressed since Katrina?
On August 29, 2005 the entire Greater New Orleans region succumbed to Hurricane Katrina. At Delgado, we experienced damage at each one of our five sites. Hardest hit was our City Park Campus in the Mid City area of New Orleans, where wind and flood waters damaged or destroyed 20 of its 25 buildings. Thanks to a resilient faculty and staff, who were overcoming their own personal losses, we opened, in part, at all college locations in mid-October, with students taking courses principally on the Internet. More than 10,000 of our 17,400 pre-Katrina students returned last spring. This fall, we enrolled 12,000 students. This is a pretty good recovery so far by an institution nearly wiped out by a natural disaster.

Currently, we are working on rebuilding our facilities and developing educational programs for the thousands of displaced residents who wish to return to their homes and communities and need training.
Honoring Her Parents, Who Nurtured Her Education, Retired Faculty Member Supports Today’s Students

S

r. Beryl Herdt, O.P., Professor of Allied Health and Coordinator of Graduate Studies at the Dominican College of Blauvelt, recently pledged a generous donation that is being applied to the Leonard Lief Campaign in memory of her late mother and father, Clifford and Eda Herdt.

This generous award to the Clifford and Eda Herdt Fund responds to a vital call addressing the needs of Lehman College and directly supports students’ efforts to stay in school despite overwhelming challenges, including rising costs for tuition, books, living expenses, and transportation.

Sr. Beryl received her B.A. and M.S. in health and physical education from Hunter College and her Ph.D. in psychology from St. John’s University. Maintaining a close association with CUNY by teaching at Hunter College High School, Sr. Beryl began teaching as an adjunct at Hunter College in 1955 and joined the full-time faculty on Hunter’s Bronx campus in 1957.

Over the next 32 years, as a professor and administrator, she worked with Dr. Leonard Lief, who became the first President of Lehman College, Dean John W. Wieler, and other notable administrators and faculty at Lehman. One of her goals in supporting the campaign, she explains, is to “encourage Lehman students not only to continue their studies but also to return to the community the same selfless generosity that they received when they choose career paths in medicine, social work, and teaching.”

This award is also a tribute to her parents. Her father was an electrical contractor, and her mother the bookkeeper for the business. A lifelong learner, Sr. Beryl’s mother took various undergraduate courses at Lehman. One of the most significant influences in her life, Sr. Beryl noted, was the fact that “my parents nurtured my continued education.”

After retiring from Lehman in 1989, Sr. Beryl continued her educational and spiritual journey and pursued a more personal vocation, making her final vows as a member of the Dominican Order in 2003.

Young Theatre Grads Present New Play

Three recent Lehman graduates—Angel Dillemuth, Henry Ovalles, and Samuel A. Rivera—staged a new play this fall at the Manhattan Repertory Company. Always sold out two shows and was written by Dillemuth, who also starred in the leading role. Ovalles directed the production.

The three alumni took courses together in the Lehman theatre program and had already collaborated on other projects. They all are grateful for how well-prepared they were for this first-of-a-kind endeavor as a trio.

The play, originally conceived in Lehman Professor William Hoffman’s class, is about two young men coming to terms with contemporary sexual issues. Always addresses the issues of love, marriage, acceptance, and violence in contemporary culture. Asked about the genesis of his work, Dillemuth said that at Lehman he “found another love in theatre aside from acting. Professor Hoffman taught me the fundamentals of writing plays, which, for the most part, is that drama is conflict. Give characters different objectives and circumstances, and watch what happens.”

Calling All Track and Field Alumni

Were you part of the Cross Country Track and Field teams while you were at Lehman? Coach Lesleigh Hogg would like to get in touch with you.

He hopes to help the members of the current teams at Lehman become aware of the College’s great history and traditions in these sports. He’s putting together a newsletter that includes a look back at the past as well as updates on developments in the program. If you would like to contribute your experiences as part of this record, please email Coach Hogg at the following address: <lightningtrackfield@gmail.com>
Welcome Home
by Susan Greenberg Schneider

The year was 1969. I had applied to three colleges: Lehman, City, and Queens. I had grown up in the Bronx, gone to Bronx Science, and now the hope was that I would be able to take the same bus to school for my college education. I never considered going away to school, and the topic was never broached.

My parents were first-generation Americans. They were proud of their high school diplomas and their place in the middle class. They worked hard to give us a lifestyle that was comfortable. My brother, Marty, and I grew up in the projects, where we had tons of friends and never felt that we were missing out on anything. We lived in hand-me-down clothes and rode bikes that our cousins had outgrown.

On the weekends we played with our friends in the playground right next to our building. Every Sunday, my two maiden aunts, Anna and Betty, and our favorite bachelor uncle, Charlie, came to visit. The aunts would join my parents on the bench, while Uncle Charlie would come and play with the kids. He would swing us so high on the swings that we were sure we would touch the sky, he'd sit on one side of the see-saw while my friends and I would all balance on the other side, and he'd play paddle ball with Marty and his friends. He never tired, and always was ready to have fun, and so we just accepted Uncle Charlie as one of us.

Marty graduated from Lehman in 1970, having been at the school during its transition from Hunter-in-the-Bronx to Lehman. I graduated in 1973, with my B.A. in art history. He was the first person in our family to graduate from college, and I was the second. We headed out into the world, without looking back.

It took us nearly thirty years to find Lehman again. Marty received his master’s degree from Yeshiva University in social work and is currently the executive director of UJA Federation in Stamford, Conn. I received my master’s from City College and own an art consulting firm. We are both married, and each of us has two wonderful grown children.

Our beloved Uncle Charlie died in 2000 at the age of 90, having played ball, taught tennis, and volunteered as a coach for the tennis team at Lehman, dedicating more than twenty years of his life to a school he never attended. He never married, and Marty and I were his only heirs. We wondered, how can we best honor his memory? We decided to honor both his life and “his school” by creating the Charles Greenberg Endowed Scholarship at Lehman, and were invited to the Athletic Hall of Fame for his post-humous induction.

So began my transformation from an inactive alumna to the president of the Board of Directors of the Alumni Association. Having not set foot on the Lehman campus for more than two decades, I am still amazed by the beauty of this school. I have attended lectures by Billy Collins, concerts at the Performing Arts Center, and dinners in the Faculty Dining Room. I have been instrumental in starting some new Lehman traditions, including Family Day and Homecoming, and I have never felt prouder. I know my Uncle Charlie is watching and beaming, and I thank him for bringing me home.

To all Lehman graduates, new and old, I ask you to join us. Come and play games, eat lunch outdoors, and make new friends at Family Day. Come and cheer your team to victory at Homecoming. Ask about joining the Alumni Association and adding your voice to ours. Come and be a part of Lehman, just as you were before.

Welcome Home, Alumni.
Alumni News

Family Day 2006 at Lehman turned out bright and sunny, with a strong October breeze blowing—just enough to get everyone in the mood for huddling around the barbecue fire and enjoying some vigorous frisbee-catching with other alumni and their children. At the end of a day filled with a variety of activities, adults were left to ponder that age-old question, ‘Do kids ever get tired?’ Not at Lehman, they don’t. There’s too much fun to slow them down. ◆

Fall Brings a Glorious Saturday For Alumni Families

GISc Alumni on the Rise

Alumni of Lehman’s GISc (Geographic Information Science) certificate program find their skills are in great demand in the marketplace. Dr. Juliana Maantay directs the program, and several GISc alumni—Karen Kaplan, Thomas Paino, Christopher Herrmann, and Andrew Maroko—wrote case study chapters for Part II of her book GIS for the Urban Environment, published this August by ESRI Press. The studies reflect the diverse interests of the authors and the variety of uses to which GIS can be put, such as estimating available rooftop acreage for green roof environmental projects; studying the spatial pattern of graffiti in a mixed-use neighborhood; and conducting a cluster analysis of the distribution of automobile thefts.

2003 (GISc Certificate) Maria Cadavid has started work toward her master’s in environmental health at Hunter College and is working for the New York City Department of Health on asthma initiatives in Harlem.

Dellis Stanberry ’04 (B.S., geography) will put her GIS skills to good use in Florida for the City of Lauderhill’s Department of Environmental and Engineering Services. She finished her thesis for a master’s in GIS from the University of London, Birbeck College.

Andrew Maroko spent a week this summer in an intensive research study program at NOAA–NESDIS (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information System), working with scientists on a project dealing with West Nile Virus vectors and habitat characterization using satellite imagery.

2004 (GISc Certificate) Greg Studwell has moved to the Boston area, where he is working for TRC, an environmental consulting company in Lowell.

2005 (GISc Certificate) Brian Morgan is a geography major at Lehman and completed his second summer as a New York City Parks Department GIS intern, working on the Geographic Information Features Identification project. He mapped areas of interest regarding accessibility and facilities for disabled people in New York City’s public parks.

Viliame Vakasisikakala has been accepted in the GIS master’s program at the University of Leeds.

Dates to Remember

Don’t miss out on other alumni activities planned for the year ahead. The Alumni Association and the Office of Alumni Relations have scheduled these events to draw alumni into the life of the College and students into Association activities.

Lehman Staff Alumni Reception – January 11, 2007
Homecoming – January 20, 2007
Charlie Greenberg Scholarship Event – April 14, 2007
Graduating Seniors’ Brunch – May 5, 2007
Spring Final Exam Week Coffee Hour – May 22, 2007
Spirited Cruise – TBA
Lehman Scholar Kevin Broadbelt ’00 Wraps Up Ph.D. And Works on Postdoc Research at Harvard

Kevin Broadbelt ’00 says that his decision to attend Lehman College was accidental because he didn’t know too much about colleges at the time. Born and raised on the small Caribbean island of St. Kitts, he left there at 16 to live with an aunt in New York and attend college.

But, he adds, Lehman’s reputation and beautiful campus didn’t hurt, either. Turns out, he had made a good decision. Today, the June 2000 Lehman graduate has earned his doctorate and is a postdoctoral research fellow in the Pathology Department of Children’s Hospital of Boston, Harvard Medical School.

Once he had his undergraduate degree, the biology major enrolled directly in the Ph.D. program at the CUNY Graduate Center. “After doing my senior research work and independent research with a lab at Lehman, I was convinced that this is what I wanted to do.”

There are definite advantages to this route, Dr. Broadbelt reports, citing an almost limitless choice of institutions at which to study, and qualifying for fellowships and tuition waivers among the best of them. Those benefits, he explains, are not necessarily available in a master’s program alone. And through the Ph.D. program, he also earned a master’s degree in philosophy. CUNY has the program, he adds, that allows doctoral students to take classes in a consortium that includes Columbia and other universities, while paying the lower CUNY tuition.

Dr. Broadbelt’s favorite experiences in the Lehman Scholars Program involved cultural activities, such as visits to the Metropolitan Museum. One of his most memorable moments was finding out he was one of only three men to register for a science seminar on childbirth and midwifery. He stuck it out and would recommend the class to any student.

At Children’s Hospital, the vast resources available and the staff he has met have made the experience enjoyable. He works in a fast-paced environment around people who are members of the National Academies of Medicine and Science. His position allows him to develop a project and work out the details. Then, he gets to do the bench science, which, for him, is the fun part.

As for future goals, Dr. Broadbelt hopes to become an independent scientist, apply his training, and make a significant contribution to the scientific community. He has already published several scholarly articles in his field, and if his academic career is any indication, more are sure to follow.◆

In Memoriam

Regina C. Furnari Berenback (B.A.), 53, of Barrington, R.I., died April 14, 2006 of pancreatic cancer. She worked at Brown University as a Grant Proposal Coordinator in the Department of Bio/ Med Research Administration and, before moving to Rhode Island, had worked in the Registrar’s Office of the Fashion Institute of Technology; in the Education Department of the New York Botanical Garden; and in the Recreation Department of the Village of Larchmont, N.Y., where she was also a Trustee of Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian Church. She earned an M.A. degree from Fordham University.
Anita Brown ’92: First Winner of New ASCAP Award Excels at Composing Big Band Music

The apple, as the saying goes, does not fall far from the tree. Anita Brown’s parents are both jazz musicians who studied with famous jazz artist Lennie Tristano. Maybe it was inevitable, then, that their child would study music. Surely, though, they could not have imagined the heights she would reach.


Brown began writing “The Lighthouse” following the photo shoot in Montauk, L.I., for her CD, “27 East.”

“I decided I had to write a melody while I was sitting on a rock at the foot of Montauk’s lighthouse and wouldn’t allow myself to leave that spot until I was finished,” she explains. “I gave myself a self-imposed deadline, and in 40 minutes I was done.” Due to the deadline for her upcoming recording sessions, however, she decided to temporarily put the new work aside.

“The melody haunted me during that time, and I couldn’t ignore it,” Brown remembers. “It spoke to me, so I decided to finish it.” In fact, she completed its orchestration in two weeks’ time and decided to include it on the CD.

“I only write to express something from within myself,” she says. “A composer needs a performing ensemble and an audience—without these, the music is just ink on paper.”

Brown has worked hard to establish both. She is the founder and composer of her own jazz band, Anita Brown Jazz Orchestra. In 2003, the group recorded its debut CD. In 2005, Brown was commissioned to write and conduct two arrangements for Nnenna Freelon to sing at the opening of the Center for Jazz Composition at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

Brown’s career has blossomed, with exceptional opportunities to perform her music. For eight years, she was an active, contributing member of the Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI) Jazz Composers’ Workshop. On January 13, she will perform with her band in New York City in the Sheraton’s Metropolitan Ballroom. For more information, visit www.anitabrownmusic.com.

—Gabriela Frias

Remember struggling to write? Ellen Rush ’90 does. She returned to college as an older adult, ultimately adding awards for poetry to those she had already garnered for singing. This spring, she won the Sheila Smith Hobson Award from Kappa Delta Pi at the Education Division’s LUTE ceremony. For that occasion, she reflected on the experience of “staring at a blank paper in a writing course.”

English 282
My blank sheet of paper still stares at me as my pencils, pens and eraser wait for the birth of an essay, a poem or a story, while my thoughts meander, traveling through intrinsic crevices in the labyrinth of my dormant creativity, until “His” silent voice whispers in my ear, urging my creative instincts, leading my hand, compelling concepts, ideas and feelings to flow, as line after line of words travel across my blank sheet of paper, emerging from deep within my “mind and soul.”

Anita’s CD cover, with “The Lighthouse” in the background.

Alumni Notes

1977
Reginald Stroughn (M.S.) is the principal of Hempstead High School. He was honored by the United People of Freeport for his leadership and commitment to students and the community.

1980
Marion Caryl Somers (M.S.) is the President and founder of Elder Health Resources of America, Inc. and has published a book entitled Elder Care Made Easier: Dr. Marion’s Ten Steps to Help You Care for an Aging Loved One. Her website contains information on the frail elderly, including topics and links to other sites dealing with eldercare issues (www.DoctorMarion.com).

1987
Anthony E. Weir (B.A.) is Director of Student Support Services at Oregon State University (OSU), where he is managing a U.S. Department of Education grant to assist first-generation low-income students. He has been a photography instructor at the OSU Craft Center since 2003 and has shown his work in regional exhibitions and at an invitational exhibit of five artists at OSU and Kaye Academic College of Education in Beer-Sheva, Israel. This summer, the Art in the Valley Gallery in Corvallis, Ore., featured an exhibit of his fine art photographs of women, entitled “First Exposures.” Weir told the Corvallis Gazette-Times that growing up in the Bronx, with people constantly ebbing and flowing, helped to shape his photographic sensibility. “My aim,” he said, “is to show the grace and strength within each portrait, to lay bare the essence which links us each to the other.”

1988
Carol Gracie (B.S.) has coauthored Wildflowers in the Field and Forest: A Field Guide to the Northeastern United States, which provides a guide to 1,450 of the 2,000 wildflowers growing in this region of the country. Gracie and her coauthor, Steven Clements, liken wildflower identification to solving a puzzle. The book guides the non-expert in identifying wildflowers based on the “clue” each wildflower provides, such as color, leaf arrangement, leaf type, or number of flower parts. Nearly all of the species are illustrated with color photographs. When not writing field guides, Gracie organizes and leads international natural history tours for the New York Botanical Garden, where she is a research assistant. Her photographs have appeared in numerous books, magazines, and scientific journals. Clements is Vice President of Science at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.
Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, under the direction of Eva Bornstein, has scheduled the busiest season since the Center opened in 1980. From classic comedy to classical music, from heart-pounding dance to soulful divas, Lehman Center is offering something for everyone. Don’t wait to call the Box Office or order your tickets online — many of these events are bound to be sellouts.

Saturday, January 13, 2007 – 8 pm
GRUPO NICHE / Tickets: $45, $40, $35, $30
The most popular salsa group in Colombia.

Saturday, January 20, 2007 – 8 pm
PATTI LABELLE / Tickets: $100, $85, $75, $55
This diva spans four decades of music.

Sunday, January 28, 2007 – 3 pm
PHILADANCO! / Tickets: $35, $30, $25, $20
The Philadelphia Dance Company takes control of the stage, with passion, power, skill, and diversity.

Saturday, February 10, 2007 – 8 pm
FOREVER FREESTYLE
With Cynthia, George Lamond, Judy Torres, The Cover Girls, Coro and Lisette Melendez
Tickets: $35, $30, $25, $20. The freestyle phenomenon of the late 80s, with its hottest artists performing their chart-topping hits.

Sunday, February 11, 2007 – 3 pm
TOSCA / Tickets: $35, $30, $25, $20
This opera overflows with passion, love, and treachery.

Friday, February 16, 2007 – 8 pm
TORMÉ SINGS TORMÉ

Saturday, February 24, 2007 – 8 pm
THE O’JAYS / Tickets: $55, $50, $45, $40. One of the most important Soul Music groups of the past 30 years.

Order tickets over the phone (718-960-8833) or on the Web (www.lehmancenter.org)

Friday, March 2, 2007 – 8 pm
CHERISH THE LADIES

Saturday, March 3, 2007 – 8 pm
PAPO LUCCA Y LA SONORA PONCEÑA and JOSE ALBERTO “EL CANARIO”
Tickets: $50, $45, $40, $35. Directly from Puerto Rico.

Sunday, March 11, 2007 – 3 pm
THE HUNGARIAN STATE FOLK ENSEMBLE
Tickets: $35, $30, $25, $20. “… marvelous — cracking with dancing that snaps like a whip…. ”

Saturday, March 31, 2007 – 7 pm
MOSCOW FESTIVAL BALLET in SWAN LAKE
Tickets: $35, $30, $25, $20. Presented with all the splendor worthy of an epic, fairy tale love story.

Saturday, April 14, 2007 – 8 pm
ROBERT KLEIN and JOAN RIVERS
Tickets: $50, $45, $35, $25.
If laughter is the best medicine, prepare to be healed.

Saturday, April 21, 2007 – 8 pm
SAEKO ICHINOHE DANCE COMPANY
Tickets: $25, $15, $10. A unique group that bridges Eastern and Western as well as contemporary and ancient cultures.

Sunday, April 22, 2007 – 7 pm
JOHNNY MATHIS / Tickets: $85, $75, $65, $45
Johnny Mathis celebrates his 50th anniversary as a recording artist.

Saturday, April 28, 2007 – 8 pm
BERNADETTE PETERS

Sunday, May 20, 2007 – 3 pm
THE FLYING KARAMAZOV BROTHERS

Saturday, June 2, 2007 – 8 pm
LATINOLOGUES / Tickets: $35, $30, $25, $20
A collection of comedic and poignant monologues about the Latino experience in America.