

NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# NEXUS

*Your College Connection*

## VIBRANT STUDENT LIFE AT NASSAU

### Where "Community" is Our Middle Name

Ask any student: The campus of Nassau Community College is alive with clubs, concerts, outings, presentations and other fun and enlightening activities that are there for the taking. Student life at NCC is vibrant and ever-changing. "There's something for everyone at Nassau," said Laura Menocal, the student representative on NCC's Board of Trustees. "Getting involved in student life is one of the best ways to meet people and make new friends."

What exactly *is* student life? The short answer: a lot of things. Clubs, concerts, cultural programs, dances, outings, parties, pep rallies, athletics and more are all part of the NCC campus scene. All events are open to students and many are open to residents from the surrounding communities as well. Much of student life at Nassau is handled through the Office of Student Activities, headed by Prof. Phyllis Kurland.

**"Getting involved in student life is one of the best ways to meet people and make new friends."**

—Laura Menocal, Student Trustee

Most times, the students themselves plan and put on the events, with the assistance of a faculty advisor. "Students who participate in student life at NCC get a chance to practice the skills they learn in class in real life. They learn about leadership, teamwork, budgeting and planning as well," Prof. Kurland explained.

At Nassau, students can pick from over 110 clubs and associations,



with a club catering to most interests. Those in the Outing Club, for instance, go hiking, camping, cross-country skiing and other activities on the weekends. The Make a Difference Club is dedicated to volunteering and fund-raising activities for a variety of local causes and social issues. If a student joins Nassau Concerts, they can play a part in bringing interesting and sometimes famous musicians to campus. Then there's the Wall Street Club, the Muslim Student Association, the Media Arts Club and loads of other organizations covering many interests. If there's something students are interested in that isn't covered, they can start their own club.

In addition to clubs, students can try their hand at writing for the College newspaper, the *Vignette*, or *Luna*, the creative writing magazine that's published once a year. If a student is politically minded, they can get involved in the Student Government Association (SGA). The SGA has a programming board that is involved in the conception, planning and delivery of events like theme parties, trips to Broadway shows and the College's Springfest and pep rallies.

Each semester, the Cultural Program lets students and the community mix with top newsmakers of the day. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, legendary feminist Gloria Steinem and author Joyce Carol Oates are just a few of the people who have spoken at the school.

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# WHITE HOUSE LEADS FIRST-EVER SUMMIT ON COMMUNITY COLLEGES INITIATIVES ANNOUNCED TO STRENGTHEN “AMERICA’S BEST KEPT SECRET”

During the recent first-ever White House Summit on Community Colleges, U.S. President Barack Obama gathered with community college, business and philanthropy representatives; federal and state policy leaders; and workforce development experts to discuss the role that community colleges need to play to increase the number of college graduates and prepare those graduates to lead America’s 21st century workforce. The daylong summit focused on two goals:

“[Community Colleges] may not get the credit they deserve. They may not get the same resources as other schools. But they provide a gateway to millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life.”

—President Barack Obama

that by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world and that community colleges nationwide will produce an additional five million graduates.

Calling community colleges the “unsung heroes” of America’s education system, President Obama said, “They may not get the credit they deserve. They may not get the same re-

sources as other schools. But they provide a gateway to millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life.” President Obama believes it’s time to provide the resources to reform community colleges with affordable tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules and convenient locations.

In her remarks, summit host Dr. Jill Biden—a community college professor for 17 years and wife of Vice President Joe Biden—said, “For more and more people, community colleges are the way to the future. They’re giving real opportunity to students who wouldn’t otherwise have it...They are equipping Americans with the skills and expertise that are relevant to the emerging jobs of the future.”

Nassau Community College was mentioned by name at the summit in a video in which prominent people discussed the role community colleges played in their lives. NCC Class of 1968 alum Billy Crystal said, “I got a great education, I settled into myself, and then from there, it was a springboard into what I wanted to do.”



“For more and more people, community colleges are the way to the future.”

—Second Lady, Dr. Jill Biden

Through the Community College and Career Training Initiative, the Departments of Labor and Education will soon open competition to award \$500 million to community colleges over the coming year to help increase completion of degrees, certificates and other industry-recognized credentials.

During the summit, the Obama administration also gave an overview of the public and private partnerships that have been set up to give funds to innovative programs nationwide. These partnerships include a \$35 million competitive grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that aims to improve community college graduation rates in states that serve the largest population of low-income students and the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, a one million dollar annual prize to recognize, reward and inspire outstanding outcomes in community colleges nationwide.

## NASSAU RANKS TOPS IN NEW YORK STATE FOR NUMBER OF DEGREES AWARDED

Nassau Community College awarded the most degrees of all community colleges in the State of New York for the year 2009-2010. *Community College Week*, a publication that covers higher education issues and trends, reported in “Top 100 Associate Degree Producers” that the College awarded the fifth-most number of degrees nationally and the most of any other college in New York State. NCC also ranked sixth in the nation for criminal justice and corrections degrees awarded and seventh in the nation for the

number of business, management, marketing and related support services degrees awarded. The data is collected by the National Center for Education Statistics.

“While we are pleased with the recognition of being fifth in the nation for the number of degrees granted, we are excited about the high ranking the College receives in specific disciplines,” said Dr. Donald Astrab, President of NCC. “This report demonstrates the wide range of excellence our faculty brings to their students.”

# VIBRANT STUDENT LIFE AT NASSAU

## Plays, Art Shows and More

No mention of student life at NCC would be complete without mentioning the plays staged by the Theatre and Dance Department, the concerts put on by the Music Department and the exhibits available at the Firehouse Plaza Art Gallery. Theatre and Dance produces seven plays each school year, two of which are musicals. The Music department has several concerts each year featuring student and outside musicians. Exhibits on display at the Firehouse Plaza Art Gallery cover the gamut of painting, photography, sculpture, drawing and multi-media. Many of its shows are provocative and forward-looking. Often, the Theatre and Dance department and the art gallery work in partnership with other departments, celebrating events like Black History Month or the annual College-wide theme.

NCC is replete with both intramural and competitive athletics for men and women as well. Over the years, many student athletes from Nassau Community College have continued playing their sport at four-year schools and some have become professional.

Evening students get to participate in student life at Nassau as well. Evening activity



Rafael De Jesus of the Student Activities Office (left) works with a student.

hours have proven to be very successful, according to Prof. Kurland. A sampling from a recent activity included “Jam Cam”—which featured live music, spoken word, a dance-off and board games; a movie showing; an open mic gospel choir; and A Taste of Turkey, with information about Turkish culture, food and coffee.

Participating in student life activities at the College involves coming into contact with people from different cultures, age groups and backgrounds, said Prof. Kurland. Lorenzo Simpson, president of the Student Government

Association (SGA), is particularly pleased about that. “My involvement in the SGA and other aspects of student life has exposed me to different kinds of people, some of whom I wouldn’t have interacted with otherwise,” he said. Simpson encouraged all students to take part in campus life.

The College website, [ncc.edu](http://ncc.edu), is a good place to start if you’re interested in finding out more about student life at Nassau Community College. Students can also contact the Office of Student Activities at 516.572.7148.



## NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE & HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY SIGN A “2+2” JOINT ADMISSIONS AGREEMENT



This fall, Nassau Community College and Hofstra University signed a “2+2” joint admissions agreement in which eligible students entering Nassau will also be admitted to Hofstra. Students who participate in this program will complete their first two years of college at NCC and their last two years at Hofstra. These students will be able to utilize all their credits towards a Hofstra degree, which they can obtain in a total of four years.

In order to be eligible to participate in

the 2+2 program, students must sign up for it at the beginning of their Nassau career. If they’re admitted through 2+2, they will get course choice advice from an NCC adviser who will work in cooperation with a Hofstra adviser. Then, if they follow the advisement guidelines, remain in good academic standing and earn an A.A. or A.S. degree with at least the required cumulative GPA, they will be granted automatic admission to Hofstra with a waived application fee after they graduate

from NCC. They will also receive a Hofstra transfer scholarship—based on their Nassau GPA—and possibly an additional award.

NCC has joint admissions agreements with several other colleges and universities. More information about the 2+2 agreement and joint admissions in general can be found on the admissions office pages of Nassau Community College’s website, [www.ncc.edu](http://www.ncc.edu), or in the admissions office, which is located on the second floor of the Tower building.



# DONALD P. ASTRAB, PH.D, MPH INAUGURATED FIFTH PRESIDENT OF NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE



On Friday, October 1 Dr. Donald P. Astrab was inaugurated as the fifth president of Nassau Community College in front of an audience of over 500, including State University of New York (SUNY) representatives, local officials, other college presidents, and Nassau Community College faculty, administrators and staff. Dr. Astrab was officially inaugurated by SUNY Chancellor Dr. Nancy Zimpher in a ceremony that was video streamed throughout the campus. The event, which was emceed by Reggie Tuggle, Associate Vice President of Marketing and Communications, also featured posting of the colors by members of the Office of Public Safety.

In her speech, Chancellor Zimpher said, "I am confident that under Dr. Astrab's leadership, NCC will build on its strong tradition of excellence, innovation and opportunity for students from all walks of life and in every stage of life."

Several other people spoke at the inauguration as well. Michael Friedman, chair of the NCC Board of Trustees, said that it was a privilege for the board to work with Dr. Astrab. Friedman praised Dr. Astrab

"In a fundamental sense, [this inauguration] is also a work in progress in the long, great tradition of Nassau Community College—a progress that will be measured today and in the future through our individual and collective efforts to learn, to search and to serve."

—Dr. Donald P. Astrab, President, Nassau Community College

for his "leadership, thoughtfulness and innovativeness." Dr. Kimberley Reiser, chair of the Academic Senate, stated that the College was fortunate that Dr. Astrab was willing to serve its students with dedication, intelligence and compassion. Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano; Dr. Ken Saunders, Vice President of Academic Student Services at NCC; John Durso, President of the Long Island Federation of Labor and vice chair of the NCC Board of Trustees; Kevin Long, president of the Long Island Association; and Lorenzo Simpson, president of the NCC Student Government Association, were among the other speakers at the event.

Dr. Astrab also spoke at the inauguration.

First and foremost, he thanked his family for their love and support. He said he accepted the challenge that has been set before him to ensure that NCC remains one of the premiere institutions of higher education in the region. Mentioning the College's new Health Sciences building that is in the process of being erected on campus, Dr. Astrab concluded by saying, "As an inaugural event, this certainly does also represent a beginning. But in a more fundamental sense, it's also a work in progress in the long, great tradition of Nassau Community College—a progress that will be measured today and in the future through our individual and collective efforts to learn, to search and to serve."



## GEOFFREY PRIME, ESQ. APPOINTED TO NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Nassau Community College is pleased to announce that Geoffrey N. Prime, Esq. has been appointed to its Board of Trustees. Prime was appointed to a seven-year term by New York State Governor David Paterson over the summer.

"I'm very excited to be serving on the NCC Board of Trustees. I'm looking forward to further enhancing the image of the College and assisting it in fulfilling its mission," said Prime.

Prime, who is senior partner in the law firm of Prime & O'Brien, LLP in Garden City, deals with criminal, matrimonial and real estate law, as well as guardianship, wills and estates. He is also the mayor of South Floral Park, where he is responsible for hiring and

supervision of village employees, maintaining general upkeep and the creation and balancing of a \$413,000 budget. Prior to founding his own firm, Prime served for four years as an Assistant District Attorney in the Nassau County Office of the District Attorney.

Among the activities Prime has been involved in are the Elmont Boys and Girls Club, the South Floral Park Fire Department and the South Floral Park Neighborhood Watch. Prime has also been a mentor at Westbury Middle School and Lawrence Road Middle School.

Prime received his bachelor's degree from SUNY Old Westbury and his juris doctor from Pace University School of Law in White Plains. He is a resident of South Floral Park.



## NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE NAMES FRANK BILLINGS ASSOCIATE V.P. FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

Frank Billings has been appointed to the position of Associate Vice President for Effectiveness and Strategic Planning at the College. "Nassau Community College is very fortunate to have someone with Frank Billings' wealth of knowledge and experience join our College. He is a skilfull tactician who has a proven record of enhancing the effectiveness of post-secondary institutions," said NCC President Dr. Donald Astrab.

Billings has 25 years of progressive administrative and executive level experience, including seven years directing and managing institutional effectiveness and strategic planning initiatives and programs at Brevard Community College in Florida, which has four campuses and over 30,000 students. Among his abilities are those to execute plans, organize and manage diverse work

groups, promote communication and provide motivation for achievement of institutional goals and objectives. Billings is especially interested in utilizing the cutting edge technology that can significantly increase institutional effectiveness.

Billings, who assumed his duties over the summer, is excited about his position. "I am looking forward to working with Dr. Astrab, the Board of Trustees and the faculty and staff in advancing the mission of the College," he said.

In addition to his administrative and strategic experience, Billings—who has an Executive MBA and a master's degree in criminal justice—has taught for ten years, both in the classroom and online.





# 61 Charter Members Inducted Into the New NCC Athletic Hall of Fame

By Reginald Tuggle, Associate Vice President Marketing/Communications

This October, Nassau Community College inducted 61 former student athletes into its new Athletic Hall of Fame. The inductees came from as far away as California, Texas, Iowa and Florida to share this honor. Many brought their families with them to celebrate as former coaches and friends regaled the packed audience with exciting stories of their prowess on the gridiron, basketball court, volleyball court, lacrosse field, baseball diamond, track field, soccer field, swimming pool, wrestling mat and golf course.

Planning for the event started in the spring of 2010. “We were talking in the office one day about the fact that the College was old enough, at 50 years, to have a Hall of Fame,” said Michael Pelliccia, Director of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER) Department. He continued, “Many exceptional athletes from the 1960s and 1970s would soon be forgotten. We needed to honor them and those who came after them, as well as our athletic program as a whole, which has produced stellar results in athletes’ lives on the field and in life.” In addition to their successful private lives, many of the Hall-of-Famers have gone on to enjoy careers in professional sports, such as Brian Baldinger in the NFL, Arjun Atwal in PGA golf, and others in major league baseball.

## Title IX Opens the Door for Female Athletes

Eighteen of the Hall-of-Famers are women. This was made possible because of Title IX, which opened doors to female athletes in the

early 1970s, making the playing field level for both male and female students. After Title IX, all institutions of higher learning receiving federal funding were required to create equal opportunity for all students in sports and extracurricular activities.

Prior to Title IX, Nassau Community College female students participated in sports through the Women’s Recreation Association, an organization that allowed women to compete in intramural sports as well as with teams and individuals from other institutions.

One female athletic pioneer was Dolores “Curly” Faber, who was recognized for her relentless fight against gender injustice and who went on to become NCC’s first Director of the Women’s Athletic Program. In addition, Vija and Vita Grinvalds, two sisters recognized for their ferocious play on the volleyball court, went on to star on Hofstra University’s volleyball team. “Those two sisters were scary,” said Cherrie Sears, a professor in the HPER Department and a 2010 Hall of Fame inductee herself for her extraordinary basketball playing from 1972 to 1974.

Each person inducted in the NCC Hall of Fame has his or her own inspiring story—about

a successful career in business, education, law, medicine, science, etc. As Dr. Donald Astrab, President of the College, noted, “Whenever the College has an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments and contributions of student athletes who have excelled on the

“Whenever the College has an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments and contributions of student athletes who have excelled on the athletic field and in life, it’s a proud moment for us.”

—Dr. Donald P. Astrab, President, NCC

athletic field and in life, it’s a proud moment for us, because we believe that the College played a significant role in their lives.”

Congratulations to the first class of Nassau Community College Hall of Fame Inductees: You have made and continue to make all of us proud.



# FACULTY/STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

**Prof. Emanuel Boussios, Sociology**, received a grant for his research on terrorism from Stony Brook University's SEED program. His review of *Gangs in Garden City: How Immigration, Segregation, and Youth Violence are Changing America's Suburbs* (co-authored with Athanassia Boussios) was accepted for publication by the Center for Global & Local History, a unit of the Stony Brook Institute for Global Studies. Prof. Boussios also presented at a NEACJS conference on his research on public opinion and terrorism.

**Prof. Bob Costello, Criminal Justice**, had a book review of *Guantanamo Lawyers: Inside a Prison Outside the Law* accepted for publication by *Criminal Justice Review*. His review of *Judging Mohammed: Juvenile Delinquency, Immigration, and Exclusion at the Paris Palace of Justice* was accepted by *International Criminal Justice Review*. In addition, Prof. Costello co-authored with **Emanuel Boussios, Sociology**, an opinion piece which appeared in *The Populist Progressive*.

**Jennifer Drucker, Marketing and Communications**, participated in the Natura Ad Arte (Nature as Art) opening in Este, Italy in September. Four countries were represented in the show: Japan, Russia, The United States and Italy. Drucker was selected as one of six artists representing the U.S.

**Dr. Arthur Friedman, Coordinator, Office for Distance Education, Library**, chaired the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Long Island Library Resources Council Conference on Libraries and the Future. The conference was held at Dowling College on October 21 and 22.

**Prof. Jack Mandel, Marketing/Retailing/Fashion**, wrote an article titled "Summer's Over-Focus!" in the September issue of *Campus News* newspaper, distributed to downstate New York college campuses and one titled "Congrats Grad! ... But Now What?" for *Aspire* magazine. Prof. Mandel also appeared on the News 12 Long Island show *Long Island Talks*. He appeared with Robert Yeganeh, Founder and CEO of Love My Shoes discussing how Governor Paterson's tax package affects Long Island. Finally, Prof. Mandel conducted a consulting workshop at Syosset Public Library.

**Dr. Evangaline Manjares, Dean**, received an Outstanding Award in Community Service from Dumaguete City, Philippines-based Silliman University during its 109<sup>th</sup> Founders Day for her support of charitable organizations in the U.S. and the Philippines. Dr. Manjares lectured on The Role of Student Services in Higher Education and was also interviewed by media outlets regarding her experiences as a Filipino living in the United States.

**Prof. Abraham Mantell, Mathematics, Computer Science and Information Technology**, was presented with the Distinguished Service Award from the Metropolitan New York Section of the Mathematical Association of America and the Outstanding Contributions to NYSMATYC (New York State Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges) Award.

**Jermaine Miles, Head Coach; Football Assistant Coaches Ed Mack and Curtis Gilliam; and NCC Lions defensive back Antonio Fields** drilled junior and senior players from the Floral Park Recreation Center over the summer.

**Dr. Tom O'Brien, Biology**, was presented with the outstanding "Humanitarian Award" by Bronx Borough President, the Hon. Rubin Diaz, Jr., for his work in establishing and developing a charter elementary school in the South Bronx. In the past, Dr. O'Brien has received the President's Call to Service Award presented by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and The President Volunteer Service Award from President Barack Obama for his 50 years of volunteer work.

**Prof. Patti Tana, English**, presented "I Become Water," a thematic reading of her poems, at the LI Fringe Festival at the Tilles Center in September. In addition, Prof. Tana's poem "when you left home/the moon was an empty bowl" won the 2010 Performance Poets Association Haiku contest.

**Dr. Joseph Varacalli, Sociology, Director, Center for Catholic Studies**, has recently been elected to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors of The Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, an international, interdisciplinary academic organization in Catholic studies. Dr. Varacalli has also been reappointed by the SUNY Provost's Office to serve on the SUNY-wide Distinguished Service Professor Advisory Council, which recommends candidates for appointment to this prestigious rank.



© 2008 Sae A Lee, *Untitled*, oil on canvas

## Accelerate Exhibit at the Firehouse Plaza Art Gallery Through December 22

Accelerate, a juried exhibition of emerging artists with disabilities, is being shown at the Firehouse Plaza Art Gallery through December 22. For the Accelerate exhibit, emerging artists aged 16 to 25 were asked to consider the many personal reasons that accelerate their desire to create. This mixed media exhibition is organized by VSA Arts—the International Organization on Arts and Disability, an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts—with support from Volkswagen Group of America, Inc.

**The Firehouse Plaza Art Gallery is located in Room 140 of the College Center Building (CCB) on the NCC campus. It's open from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday and 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. All exhibitions are free and open to the public. For further information about the Accelerate exhibit, please call 516.572.0619.**



# NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## REGISTER FOR CLASSES WINTERIM 2010-2011 MINI-SEMESTER & SPRING 2011 SEMESTER

### THE WINTERIM 2010-2011 MINI-SEMESTER DEADLINES & DATES

- Classes Meet: December 27, 2010 to January 13, 2011
- Last Day for Faxed-In Admissions Requests:  
December 5, 2010
- Last Day for In-Person Admission Requests is  
December 23, 2010.

### SPRING 2011 SEMESTER DEADLINES & DATES

- Day, Evening and Distance Education Classes Meet:  
January 18, 2011 to May 13, 2011
- Weekend Classes Meet:  
January 21 2011 to May 15, 2011
- Last Day to complete the Admission Application for the  
Spring 2011 Semester is January 5, 2011.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT  
REGISTRATION AND ADMISSIONS, VISIT**

**[WWW.NCC.EDU](http://WWW.NCC.EDU)**

