

Nassau Community College Nexus

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Where Success Starts...And Continues

Nassau Raises the Bar

Paralegal Studies Program Continues to Grow at NCC

The paralegal profession is one of the fastest growing career paths in the United States. Several years ago, Nassau Community College anticipated the increasing need for paralegals and was among the first colleges in the area to offer students the opportunity to pursue this exciting career. Paralegals are employed in law firms, courts, banks and insurance companies, as well as in numerous federal, state and local agencies. There are many career possibilities open to those entering this field.

There are two types of paralegal programs available at NCC, both of which have received the American Bar Association's coveted approval. Our students pursue an associates degree with the option of either immediately entering the workforce upon graduation or transferring to a four year institution to complete their bachelor's degree, and perhaps then going on to law school. Alternately, students may enter the program already having an associates or bachelor's degree before they come to Nassau, in which case they would look to obtain a certificate in paralegal studies. Some students use the certificate program as a stepping stone to law school while others take advantage of NCC's affordability and the insight the paralegal program provides into the rigors of studying law before committing their time and expense to a legal education. Whatever path a student pursues, a degree or certificate from NCC in paralegal studies opens doors and creates options.

The paralegal program educates a wide variety of students, from the traditional high school graduate to the adult reentering the workforce to those contemplating a change in career. "The diversity of our students is one of the many



lto R: Justice Edward G. McCabe explains nuances in the law to paralegal students Donna Colorio (brunette), Bella Feldman and Leroy K. Clarke, as Prof. Phylis Sherman, their faculty advisor, looks on.

assets of the paralegal program," said Justice Edward G. McCabe, Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, Second Department, and Chairperson of NCC's Paralegal Advisory Board. "The wide range of students and the perspectives they bring to the classroom, coupled with the distinguished paralegal faculty—all of whom are attorneys or judges—add an interesting dynamic to the classes and help make them unique."

Developing practical legal skills is a key component to the program. Students are taught to conduct legal research and prepare a plethora of legal documents utilizing state of the art technology and software. Various computer applications, such as Westlaw, Lexis and Lois Law, are incorporated into the training. Enhancing a student's personal development is the first priority of the program. At Nassau, they are not only given a solid legal education

via courses in contracts, real estate, litigation, family law, wills and trusts, etc.; they are also provided with internships in various law firms and courts. In addition, resume and interview workshops are available to help make students' transition into the workplace as easy as possible. In fact, the paralegal program at NCC even offers placement assistance to its graduates and many potential employers contact us before resorting to classified ads. "The program is simply excellent," said Justice McCabe. "It gives students a competitive edge in today's legal marketplace."

Outside of the classroom, the College's Paralegal Society supplements the education provided with a host of activities designed to peak students' curiosities, teach them even more and allow them to have fun in the process. The students take trips to various trial and appellate courts to observe firsthand how a trial is conducted and

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Chris Botta, Vice President of Communications NY Islanders, NY Dragons - Class of 1985

by Chris Botta

On April 25, 1985 the New York Islanders dynasty was in its final days. During the previous five seasons they had captured four Stanley Cups and lost once in the final to Wayne Gretzky's Edmonton Oilers. In the spring of 1985 they were about to lose in the second round, a clear signal the franchise would have to rebuild.

I was finishing my associates degree at Nassau Community College. During a break between classes, I purchased two tickets for that night's playoff game at Nassau Coliseum. If you had told me that less than three years later I would be working in the front office of the Islanders—and that I would hold a management position today—I would have said you were out of your mind.

But sure enough, a dream came true. As a Long Island kid—Hicksville High Class of '83, NCC '85—sports fan, ISLANDER FAN, street hockey player—I feel very blessed and one of the most fortunate people in the world.

And I owe so much of it to Nassau Community College.

I went to NCC because my parents felt staying home for two years might be good for me, a nicer way of saying I wasn't mature enough to leave the nest. I didn't know what to expect at Nassau but I was determined to make the most of it. Frankly, I was an average student. What interested me most about college life was the opportunity to become involved in things outside of the classroom. On my first day at NCC, I went to an event in the Student Union building in which professors, students and staff discussed extracurricular activities.

It's important to note that, at age 18, I still had no idea what I wanted to do when, and if, I grew up. The only thing I knew I could do reasonably well (and just as important, enjoyed doing) was write. The Activities Fair led to my volunteering for the *Vignette*, NCC's school newspaper. After about a week, I was named Entertainment Editor. It was a cool way to get a chance to write about movies and music. I'll never forget the buzz of the NCC Folk Festival, run by the amazing Prof. Phyllis Kurland, and getting to

*"I brought the lessons
I learned at Nassau
with me."*

interview Tom Paxton, Suzanne Vega and the Washington Squares.

As a theater lover, there was an added perk to being Entertainment Editor. Broadway press agents, smart enough to know the importance of reaching the masses of students at Nassau, would sometimes invite the *Vignette* to performances. I'll forever cherish taking my Dad to see *Glengarry Glen Ross* at the John Golden Theatre. No one in this terrific play, (including the playwright, David Mamet) was famous when it debuted. Today just about everyone in the production is well known in Hollywood and on Broadway.

It may seem like I've digressed, but that's not true. I tell you about the Folk

Festival and Broadway because it was the most important lesson I learned at Nassau. You could actually make a career doing something you loved! I had no idea, really. That's why I owe it to people like Prof. Richard Conway, our advisor at the *Vignette*, a wonderful writer and person who thankfully is still there today. That's why I still have great memories of many of the professors in the English department, who made an impression on me with their passionate devotion to their craft.

When Nassau wouldn't let me stay beyond earning my associates, I went to La Salle University in Philadelphia, majored in communications and brought the lessons learned at Nassau with me. Instead of entertainment, my attention turned to sports. A position as Sports Editor at the university paper led to internships at WIP (Philly's version of WFAN) and the Philadelphia Flyers. In my one season with the Flyers, the hockey team beat the Rangers and Islanders in the 1987 Stanley Cup playoffs, but not before I made a ton of contacts with both teams, the NHL office and the media.

After serving in a variety of positions, I now oversee the public and media relations, publishing and broadcasting departments for the Islanders. Making the drive from my home in Rockville Centre, I always see Nassau right in front of me as I make the right-hand turn into the employee parking lot. If you don't think I smile at the sight of NCC every day as I make that turn, you're wrong.

Paralegal Studies continued from page 1

to witness oral arguments. NCC paralegal students have visited the United States Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., New York State's highest court in Albany, the Court of Appeals and various law schools. Each year, the Paralegal Society invites students to participate in moot court competitions where they demonstrate their hard earned legal skills by researching and writing the law applicable to a hypothetical case and then arguing that case before a panel of judges. Guest lecturers are also brought in to discuss legal topics of interest to the students. Alumni nights, in which current students hear from NCC alumni already working in the field and have the opportunity to have their questions answered, have proven to be popular as well.

"I'm so glad I got involved with this program. The faculty is terrific and they're eager to help you, and the trips are inspiring. I'm going to seriously think about law school now, because the program has not only given me employable skills, it's really boosted my confidence," noted Donna Colorio, one of NCC's paralegal students poised to graduate this May.

As the need for paralegals continues to grow, many will enter the profession via a degree or certificate from Nassau Community College. The College has been and will continue to be committed to providing its students with a well-rounded, quality education.

Former Iraqi POW Shoshana Johnson Speaks at Nassau Community College



Photo by William Baker

Nassau Community College was honored recently to be the site of the debut speech made by Shoshana Johnson, who was the first African-American female Prisoner of War (POW) in U.S. history. Johnson, a Retired U.S. Army Specialist, came to the College as part of its Black History Month celebration. During her presentation, Johnson spoke about her experiences in the army.

A second-generation army veteran, Shoshana Johnson was born in the Republic of Panama and currently lives in El Paso, Texas. She joined the army in September 1998. In February 2003, Johnson received orders to deploy to Iraq for duty as a Food Service Specialist with the 507th Maintenance Company. On March 23, during Operation Iraqi Freedom, she was in a convoy that was ambushed in the city of an-Nasiriyah. Johnson received a bullet wound to her ankle, causing injuries to both legs. She and five other members of the 507th Maintenance Company were captured and taken prisoner. The ambush and its aftermath became world news headlines. House raids conducted by U.S. marines in the city of Samarra, Iraq resulted in the successful rescue of seven P.O.W.s on the morning of April 13. Johnson and six other prisoners came back to the U.S. to a hero's welcome, with a cheering crowd of over 3,000 people at Biggs Army Field. Johnson retired from the army on a temporary disability honorable discharge on December 12, 2003. Her awards and decorations include the U.S. Army Service Ribbon, the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart Medal.

When she spoke at NCC, Johnson discussed the challenges she encountered in basic training as well as how her experiences as a soldier overseas and a POW affected her. Commenting that she felt like a survivor, not a hero, Johnson reflected on her admiration for and closeness to her fellow soldiers. Johnson also encouraged listeners to pursue their dreams and not give up when conditions become difficult. Many in the audience were greatly touched by Shoshana Johnson's words.

FACULTY/STAFF Highlights

Prof. Michael Anzelone, English, Prof. Mark Lipset, Biology, Prof. Abraham Mantel, Math/Statistics/Computers, and Prof. Robert McGowan, English, were each selected to receive a Distinguished Educators Award from the East Meadow Civic and Community Service Association in October.

Fred Downs, Assistant Director of Human Resources, was presented with an award commemorating National Disabilities Awareness Month. The Rehabilitation Institute nominated him because of his efforts to assist those with disabilities achieve success in the marketplace. Downs was also honored by the New York State Rehabilitation Association.

Prof. Emeritus Deanne Flouton, Foreign Languages, was featured in an article along with illustrations of her art and photos in the newspaper *Diario de Menorca* published in Spain. Prof. Flouton, who lives in Spain during the summer, continues to teach Spanish online for NCC's College of the Air.

Dr. Hadassah Guttmann, Music, Prof. Emerita, performed at Lefrak Concert Hall at Queens

College. In addition, the Long Island Composers Alliance will premiere her new work for mezzo-soprano and piano. Finally, Dr. Guttmann performed three solo piano concerts at Merkin Concert Hall for the 50th anniversary of the Lucy Moses Music School.

Prof. Ken Jenkins, African-American Studies Department Chairperson, has been invited by Sibyl F. Moses, Reference Specialist, African-American History and Culture, Library of Congress, to forward a copy of his 1966 publication *Last Day in Church* to be included in the national historic listing of African-American authors.

Prof. Emeritus Robert Karmon, English and Creative Writing, has been named the first place winner of the 2003-2004 Clayton State Theater International Playwriting Competition for his play *Caliban and Miranda*.

Dr. Maria Mann, Foreign Languages, recently published a book entitled *Gaetana Passerini, RIME*. The book is the first modern edition of the complete works of an 18th Century female poet from Umbria, Italy and is part of the *Umbrian Literary Classics* collection published in Italy by Fabrizio Fabbri Editore.

Marilyn Monroe, Director of The Center for Excellence and Innovation in Education, has been appointed Board Treasurer of the Caribbean American Mission for Education Research and Action, Inc. (CAMERA). This not-for-profit corporation will build links between Caribbean education entities and those in the U.S. Monroe also recently presented the GEAR UP and Liberty Partnerships Program initiatives to the Caribbean Ministry of Education in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Dr. Richard Renoff, Sociology, presented the paper "Two-Ton Tony Galento: Buffoon, Bum, Negrophobe, and Contender, True or False?" in Boca Raton, Florida, at the 36th annual conference of the American Italian Historical Association.

Dr. Paula Wheeler-Carlo, History, presented a paper entitled "Piety and the Paltz: Religion in Colonial New Paltz." Her research on the Huguenot and Walloon founders is used to train historic interpreters at the Huguenot Street National Landmark in New Paltz.

Nassau Community College

Presents

The 33rd Annual Folk Festival

Wednesday - Friday

March 24, 25 & 26 at 8:00 P.M.

Scheduled guests: The Holmes Brothers, Free Flowing Salt, Battlefield Band, Khac Chi, Joyce Anderson, Robin Greenstein, Richard Shindell, Lucy Kaplansky, Harlem Blues and Jazz Band, Spirit Wing, NCC Vocal Ensemble, Reggie Cabico and NCC Poets, Peter Yarrow, Bethany Yarrow, Little Toby Walker, Hip Hop Hoodios, Buddy Merriam and Back Roads, K.J. Denhert, Eric Schwartz



Peter Yarrow (Peter of Peter, Paul and Mary) and daughter Bethany Yarrow

Craft Fair All Three Evenings

The NCC Folk Festival is free and open to the public. All programs will be held in the Nassau Community College College Center Building. They are sponsored by Nassau Concerts and the NCC Faculty/Student Association. For further information and schedule of the performers, please contact Phyllis Kurland at (516) 572-7153.

Nexus

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