



NYIT



# NYIT MAGAZINE

WINTER  
2015

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**Like what you see?** Share your ideas, updates, and feedback at [nyit.edu/alumni\\_notes](http://nyit.edu/alumni_notes) and connect at [@NYITmag](https://twitter.com/NYITmag), [facebook.com/mynyit](https://facebook.com/mynyit), and [nyit.edu/linkedin](http://nyit.edu/linkedin).





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# Providing a Testing Ground for a New Age

Over the past half century, higher education has faced numerous challenges, including meeting the demands of globalization. This is the environment in which NYIT has come of age. As we approach our 60th anniversary, we couldn't be prouder of how the university is growing and evolving as a place where ideas come together and solutions are developed.

Craig Wallace Dale



UNIVERSITIES ARE A PRIMARY RESOURCE for bringing to light issues with global resonance and researching new scientific and technological breakthroughs. At NYIT, we continue to help find solutions to some of the world's most complex challenges. Our faculty members have recently been awarded millions of dollars in National Institutes of Health grants, an impressive accomplishment at a time when securing funding is increasingly difficult. One grant, to Assistant Professor Chung Hyuk Park, Ph.D., supports research using robotics to explore how music and physical activity can improve the social and emotional responses of children with autism spectrum disorder. It's a project that spotlights NYIT's commitment to interdisciplinary research and scholarship (see story p. 17).

Of course, universities do more than research. We are also a training ground for students and the public to learn about new approaches to key issues and ideas.

Last fall, NYIT organized its fifth cybersecurity conference in New York City, bringing together some of the world's foremost experts to share information, identify in-demand skill sets, and discuss actionable solutions. Our alumni were well-represented among the speakers, panelists, and attendees. A portion of the event, geared toward current and prospective students, focused on the future of cyber careers and supported our mission to provide career-oriented professional education, particularly to our youngest audiences (see p. 22).

Prospective students made another big impact this fall. While NYIT and other universities have experienced severe enrollment challenges over the past few years, we are proud to report a nearly 7 percent uptick in new student enrollment for 2014–2015. Most dramatic has been the increase in graduate students at our campuses in New York. The work of our enrollment services team in attracting them to NYIT and of our academic affairs staff and faculty in creating compelling curricular offerings that answer marketplace demands around the globe has been commendable.

In other areas of the university, new strategies abound. We're revamping aspects of student services, advising, campus dining, athletics, financial affairs, and more and evolving our brand identity and advertising campaign. And while change is good, we continue to celebrate the traditions that are core to NYIT's identity.

With the beginning of the new calendar year, I am reminded that the collision of disciplines, cultures, and opinions holds great promise and leads to great outcomes. Collisions drive creativity, which in turn drives innovation. I encourage all alumni to collide with NYIT and to experience anew the thought-provoking, compelling conferences and educational resources available here. Above all, I ask that alumni share their successes and demonstrate how they too are colliding with and shaping the world around us. Together, we have much to be inspired by and to celebrate.

Sincerely,  
**Edward Guiliano, Ph.D.**, President



READ MORE FROM PRESIDENT GUILIANO IN *THE HUFFINGTON POST* ABOUT THE ROLE BOARDROOMS PLAY IN CYBERSECURITY RISK MITIGATION. [NYIT.EDU/CORPORATE-DIRECTOR](http://NYIT.EDU/CORPORATE-DIRECTOR)



## Million Dollar Babies



NYIT'S OFFICE OF CAREER SERVICES is changing the way some employers view internships. Through efforts to educate companies about labor laws that require most interns to be paid for their work, NYIT interns are earning paychecks and experience at record rates. Wages from paid internships recently surpassed the \$1 million mark, and the number of paid internship positions available to NYIT students continues to grow.

"When you educate the community, you create a more equitable workplace," says Assistant Dean of Career Services Amy Bravo. "The misconception of many employers is that internships are cheap or a source of unpaid labor and that the company is not responsible for the student's learning. But with the rising costs of higher education, which require many students to work while attending school, paying for credits to work for free just isn't practical or fair."

Bravo's efforts are making an impact. In summer 2014, 73 percent of

NYIT interns were paid and earned an average of \$6,000—that's up from 60 percent and \$5,000 in 2013. More than two-thirds of the nearly 300 internships posted on NYIT's Career Net portal were paid positions. Many students also take advantage of NYIT's Internship Certificate Program, which includes one-on-one guidance and other professional enrichment activities.

"Now I can make my own money for food and transportation without having to always ask my parents," says Tahera Aktar, an intern at P.S. 51 in New York City. "This internship will help me in the future because I want to be a biologist and I'm tutoring children in science and math."

"It sounds very ancient when you talk about people working for free to pay their dues," adds Archana Srinivasan, (M.S. '10), a former intern who now hires interns as human resources generalists at Compass Group North America. "We always view our interns as professionals."

Tanisha Torres, a student in the interdisciplinary studies program who interns at the law firm of Nass & Roper, said the monetary benefits of her internship are crucial, as is the opportunity to see the inner workings of the legal profession. Partner Evan Nass (B.S. '02), an adjunct professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, hired her as the firm's first intern.

"The experience I'm getting at Nass and Roper Law is great," says Torres. "I'm already able to discuss legal issues with my friend in law school." ■



LEARN MORE ABOUT HIRING NYIT STUDENTS AT [NYIT.EDU/INTERNS](http://NYIT.EDU/INTERNS)

(Above) Students speak with potential employers at the 2014 Career Fair held on the Old Westbury campus.

## Career Success and Satisfaction? PAs Prove It's Possible



Bob Handelman

JOHN KARAPTIS (B.S. '03) figures he has harvested approximately 1,000 great saphenous veins in his 12-year career as a physician assistant. From small incisions in a patient's knee, Karaptis removes the body's longest vein so a surgeon can transplant a piece of it into the heart during a bypass procedure.

When he's not working in Bay Shore, N.Y., at Southside Hospital's busy cardiovascular and thoracic surgery department, Karaptis serves as an adjunct faculty member teaching future physician assistants, or PAs, at NYIT School of Health Professions. Now in its 16th year, the department boasts a growing number of alumni and student success stories.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 38 percent employment growth rate among PAs through 2022, and the median salary is more than \$90,000. NYIT has proved integral in training top professionals for this essential field.

Last year, more than 1,400 applicants vied for NYIT's 56 first-year seats. Graduates typically receive multiple job offers says Department Chairperson Lawrence Herman. NYIT's program (which transitioned from a B.S. to an M.S. in 2005) requires a four-semester classroom phase following an undergraduate education plus 48 weeks of clinical rotations.

The seven-member full-time teaching faculty averages 16 years of experience, and Herman notes no other PA program in the United States has two full-time faculty members on the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) board. (Herman serves as chair and is a former president of the AAPA. Associate Professor David Jackson, DHSc., is first vice speaker.) NYIT PA students also have access to what Herman calls "outstanding clinical clerkships at world-class medical

centers." Additionally, they work with robots and actors, alongside NYIT medical and other health professions students, on simulated cases in NYIT's Institute for Clinical Competence.

Trained as generalists—but with the ability to move into specialties—PAs practice under physician supervision in every discipline, including primary care, orthopedics, and emergency medicine. "The profession has grown by the sheer fact that we have been able to demonstrate our expertise and importance to the field," said Jake Ettinger (B.S. '03), former chief neurosurgical PA at North Shore University Hospital.

One of more than 400 NYIT PA alumni, Ettinger returned to clinical work because he enjoys the intense demands and rewards of treating critically-ill patients.

"You can take someone who's super sick, and if you intervene correctly and



# PA Grads Reap Research Rewards

(Left) PA students examine a volunteer “patient” as part of their practical in-class training.

aggressively enough within 24 hours, you can turn that around,” says Ettinger. “That’s why you’ve done all this training, jumped through fiery hoops ... so you can do that.”

One recent graduate enjoying that challenge is Mike Cox (M.S. '14). After retiring from a 26-year career in fire services, including a lengthy stint as a firefighter, he decided to pursue a career as a physician assistant. His experience as an EMT and his academic training in emergency medical care gave him clinical confidence. The program’s workload and intensity were rigorous, recalls Cox, but he upped his academic game and forged strong bonds with other students and professors.

At the annual white coat ceremony recognizing students’ transition into their clinical phase, his classmates—many of them decades younger—honored him with the Student Peer Award. Today, he practices family medicine in rural North Carolina, just miles from his home. He enjoys the interaction with patients of all ages and the variety of skills that family medicine demands.



READ MORE AT [NYIT.EDU/PA](http://NYIT.EDU/PA)

While job availability, high salaries, and professional flexibility are important, the desire to help others may be what is really behind surveys indicating PAs have high job satisfaction.

“Almost every day, I make somebody’s life better or I prolong their life,” says Karaptis. “Just being able to do that—to me, that’s a beautiful thing.” ■

DAYS AFTER THEY GRADUATED last May, three student physician assistant teams from NYIT earned high marks for their research posters at two national competitions.

At the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) student poster competition, an NYIT team won first place, out of 56 entries, for research that found PAs raised in underserved areas and speak a language other than English are the most likely to return to practice in those locales. “This finding may be applicable to PA school recruiters who are trying to find future PAs to serve in these medically underserved communities,” says Alessandra Capizzi (M.S. '14), lead author of the poster and an interventional cardiology PA at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center.



Physician Assistant graduates celebrate the completion of their schooling and supervised clinical internships at the 2014 white coat ceremony.

Another team won first place in the student category at the Association of Family Practice Physician Assistants (AFPPA) poster competition. Their research focused on medical professionals’ use of rules to diagnose ankle injuries. The project also placed third at the AAPA competition.

A poster on the use of electrocardiograms in sports physicals for African-American males was the runner-up in the family practice competition. “I learned how to properly read and review medical research and how to draw my own conclusions,” says co-author Frida Akbasheva (M.S. '14), who works in the surgical intensive care unit at North Shore-LIJ.

“We live in a society that values evidence-based care and answers, not just conjecture and popular beliefs,” says Associate Professor David Jackson, DHSc., who supervised the teams.

The students begin the projects in their second year and continue them while they complete third-year clinical rotations, providing valuable training in research and analysis. Research topics for students graduating in May 2015 include concussions, the flu vaccine, and music as an aid to memory. ■

# Jerry Balentine Named Vice President for Medical Affairs and Global Health

AS A FORMER emergency room physician at a busy trauma center in the Bronx and later the medical expert who helped create an urgent care center on Rikers Island, Jerry Balentine, D.O., has an unequivocal understanding of patient-centered care.

“You treat everyone equally as a health care provider,” says Balentine, who developed the Rikers Island center on behalf of St. Barnabas Health Care System. “Just because society considers you on the fringes, it doesn’t mean you shouldn’t get good health care.”

Balentine, NYIT’s new vice president for Medical Affairs and Global Health, began his academic leadership position on Nov. 1 with a plan to ensure that patient-centered care remains the foundation of NYIT’s medical and health professions curricula.

“Patients who are engaged in their care do much better,” says Balentine, noting that he’ll continually advance the best ways to teach patient-centered care in a changing health system.

Born and raised in West Germany, Balentine was originally interested in genetics and computers before deciding on a medical career. After shadowing an osteopathic physician and learning about the profession’s hands-on manipulation techniques, he attended Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and later completed his residency at Lincoln Hospital in New York City. He began working for the St. Barnabas system in 1992.

Balentine has been a faculty member at NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine since 1993, first as a clinical assistant professor and more recently as acting chair of the emergency medicine division within the Department of Medicine.

“There’s always a new challenge, there’s always something different, and it’s exciting,” says Balentine of his

emergency medicine specialty. At NYIT, Balentine is interested in exploring the possible expansion of health professions and health sciences to NYIT’s campuses abroad, the potential for new global health partnerships, and the growth of additional clinical opportunities for NYIT medical and health professions students.

Balentine says he’s admired NYIT’s growth in the past decade, along with a “positive vibe” he senses among students and faculty. Part of NYIT’s allure, he adds, is its variety of schools and natural opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration (with disciplines such

as technology or architecture) to advance ideas, concepts, and research.

Barbara Ross-Lee, D.O., who has led NYIT’s medical college and health professions school since 2001, will remain vice president for health sciences and medical affairs and will continue to oversee several osteopathic policy and leadership programs and serve as site dean for NYIT’s proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine at Arkansas State University. ■



READ MORE AT [NYIT.EDU/BALENTINE](http://NYIT.EDU/BALENTINE)

“Just because society considers you on the fringes, it doesn’t mean you shouldn’t get good health care.”  
—Jerry Balentine, D.O.



Jerry Balentine, D.O., took the helm as vice president for Medical Affairs and Global Health on Nov. 1, 2014.

Steven Gaines



# Office Hours



NYIT FACULTY MEMBERS brought their expertise to the public with a desert art installation, sculptures carved by robots, a book of upcycled designs, and plans for reforming Milan, Italy.

**Charles Matz**, associate professor of interior design, worked with architects from the London firm Red Deer to create Luz 2.0, an art installation resembling a luminous pyramid mounted in the Black Rock Desert at the 2014 Burning Man festival in Nevada. **Matthew Cornelius**, director of art media technology for the College of Arts and Sciences, helped vet ideas for the pyramid's interactive components, including sensors that react to sound and video input. The final design emitted a kaleidoscope of lights ignited by the sensory data of visitors walking and talking inside the installation. Victoria Nizarala, an architecture student from Brazil on a one-year study exchange at NYIT, helped the professors with the installation and spoke about her experiences at TEDxNYIT in October. [nyit.edu/burningman-2014](http://nyit.edu/burningman-2014)

This past summer, Cornelius also participated in the second Digital Stone Project workshop in Gramolazzo, Italy, with **Robert Michael Smith**, associate professor of fine arts, and Wang Xinggang, NYIT fine arts visiting scholar from Beijing's Capital Normal University. They made marble sculptures carved with a seven-axis robotic arm and finished by hand. From July to November 2014, their sculptures toured Italian cultural



Patty K. Wongpakdee

sites as part of the exhibition, "Robotic Sculpture and Tuscan Stone," with the last stop at the National Archaeological Museum of Florence. Xinggang will present the results of NYIT's digital sculpture activities in February 2015. [digitalstoneproject.com](http://digitalstoneproject.com)

**Patty K. Wongpakdee**, associate professor of fine arts, published the book, *Art Without Waste: 500 Upcycled and Earth-Friendly Designs*. In it, she presents the best "upcycled" works by international designers, illustrators, and artists, including handbags constructed of soda can tabs and hats woven with ribbons of cassette tape and polyester. In September, NYIT Gallery 61 hosted an exhibition featuring pieces from the book. [bit.ly/artwithoutwaste](http://bit.ly/artwithoutwaste)



Alessandro Figierio

**Giovanni Santamaria**, adjunct instructor of architecture, and **Michael Schwarting**, professor of architecture, traveled to the Milano International Architectural Workshop this past fall. Joining them were five graduate students from NYIT's Master of Architecture in Urban and Regional Design program and six undergraduate architecture thesis students. The team shared their ideas for revitalizing Milan's forgotten places and exhibited their class projects. Santamaria and Schwarting served as guest directors and gave public lectures. ■

(Above) A team installs Luz 2.0 at the 2014 Burning Man festival in Nevada.

(Middle) The cover of *Art Without Waste*, by Patty K. Wongpakdee.

(Below) Giovanni Santamaria, adjunct instructor of architecture, at the Milano International Architectural Workshop.



READ MORE FACULTY NEWS AND ACHIEVEMENTS AT [NYIT.EDU/FACULTY-NEWS](http://NYIT.EDU/FACULTY-NEWS)



## Paul Dangerfield Takes Over at NYIT-Vancouver

PAUL DANGERFIELD, an experienced leader in Canadian higher education, joined NYIT-Vancouver in August 2014 as campus dean and executive director.

Dangerfield comes to NYIT from British Columbia Institute of Technology, an NYIT partner institution, where he worked as vice president for education, research, and international. He also was an instructor and dean of business at Vancouver's Capilano University.

Drawn to NYIT-Vancouver because of the opportunity to work at a global institution where students earn career-focused graduate degrees, Dangerfield said, "I hope to work with the team here to create an exceptional learning

experience for our students that reflects the strengths of NYIT in New York."

Dangerfield is a Ph.D. candidate in human and organizational development at Fielding Graduate University. He graduated with an M.B.A. from Royal Roads University after earning a B.Sc. in chemistry from Carleton University. As a career officer in the Canadian army, Dangerfield also completed the prestigious Canadian Forces Command and Staff College program, where he specialized in strategic and operational planning. ■



MORE AT [NYIT.EDU/DANGERFIELD](http://NYIT.EDU/DANGERFIELD)



Karen Marie Behnap

## New Executive Director at NYIT-Abu Dhabi: Ahmad Tabbara

AHMAD TABBARA became NYIT-Abu Dhabi's new executive director during the summer of 2014. Tabbara has extensive experience as a university administrator, including 25 years of service at the Higher Colleges of Technology, the largest institution of higher education in the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E). Originally from Lebanon, Tabbara started his academic career as a math and physics faculty member before assuming academic leadership roles.

NYIT Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Rahmat Shoureshi, Ph.D., said, "Ahmad's breadth and depth of experience in higher education, particularly his emphasis on strategic planning, partnership and business development, and technology and process management, will be of great value to NYIT."

Tabbara added, "I am looking forward to increasing NYIT's capacity to help every student have an outstanding experience and leave here well-prepared for the U.A.E.'s workforce,"

NYIT has offered bachelor's and master's degrees in Abu Dhabi since 2005 and is Abu Dhabi's first accredited American university. More than 600 NYIT graduates now work in private and public organizations throughout the U.A.E. ■



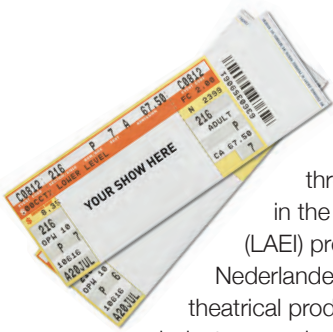
MORE AT [NYIT.EDU/TABBARA](http://NYIT.EDU/TABBARA)



Lee Hoagland



# So You Want to Be a Producer?



BEGINNING JUNE 2015, NYIT will train performing arts leaders through its new M.A. in Leadership in the Arts and Entertainment Industries (LAEI) program. Developed in association with Nederlander Worldwide Entertainment, a leading theatrical producing organization, the program offers industry experience and connections to students with some arts management experience, and who are ready to take the next step in their careers.

Program Director Janet T. Newcomb says, “We see our graduates taking on high-level roles in all areas of the arts— from producing and touring a Broadway production to serving

as executive director of a nonprofit theater to developing a performing arts facility in Paris, Texas, or even Paris, France.”

In addition to taking advantage of New York City’s vast theater resources, the program will focus on arts leadership in regional and global areas, including in emerging markets like China. Students will also benefit from business and finance courses, taught through the School of Management, that are specially tailored to the field of arts management. ■



[NYIT.EDU/ARTSLEADERSHIP](http://NYIT.EDU/ARTSLEADERSHIP)

## TEDx in Harmony



MORE THAN 15 SPEAKERS and performers explored “harmonic tectonics” in disciplines as varied as architecture, medicine, entrepreneurship, and music at 2014 TEDx-NYIT. Held at NYIT Auditorium on Broadway, the event featured discussions about the link between music and creativity. Presentations on topics such as “How Architecture Helped Music Evolve” and “Instruments and Your Brain” were supported by musical performances.

“This venue brings together some of the world’s most provocative thinkers, leaders, and paradigm shifters to share brilliant creative ideas from a myriad of different fields,” says program organizer and Associate Dean of NYIT School of Architecture and Design Frank Mruk. “The audience not only gained insight and inspiration from the ideas presented, but also from the space between these ideas. That is the real magic of a TEDxNYIT event.”

 [WATCH ON YOUTUBE.COM](http://WATCH.ON.YOUTUBE.COM)  
(SEARCH: TEDXNYIT)

Created in the spirit of TED’s mission of “ideas worth spreading,” the TEDx program is designed to give communities, organizations, and individuals the opportunity to stimulate dialogue through TED-like experiences at the local level. This year’s event followed NYIT’s inaugural TEDx in 2013, which focused on meta-resiliency and sustainable design. ■

(Top right to bottom left) TEDx presenters Barbara Corcoran (*Shark Tank*); Wolfgang Gilliar, D.O. (dean, NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine); Michael Young (Young and Ayata Architects); Too Many Zooz (performance trio); Victoria Nizarala (NYIT student, Burning Man participant); Jill Sherman (Modalyst founder); Joseph Swensen (conductor).



## Bring It On, Bro

**Matt Miller (B.S. '07)** won two national championships in 2003 and 2005 for the NYIT men's lacrosse team. Now an elementary school teacher and coach, his achievements helped pave the way for his brother, NYIT senior **Luke Miller**, current reigning NCAA DII National Player of the Year. As Luke begins his final season as a Bear, *NYIT Magazine* met up with the brothers to talk lacrosse and find out if competition still runs in the family.

**How old were you when you started playing lacrosse?**

**MM:** I was probably around 13 years old.

**LM:** I was about as young as you can be. When can you even start?

**MM:** Luke had to be 2 or 3 years old. He was our goalie. Now he plays offense.

**LM:** Once the shots got faster, I got out.

**Tell me about growing up together.**

**MM:** Luke's one of my best friends. He was always the ball boy at my games.

We were into sports, so it was great to have that dynamic—very competitive in the household.

**LM:** It was awesome. Our dad was the coach for a while so I got to always feel like I was part of the team. And my brothers were out in the backyard teaching me how to dodge, how to shoot. A lot of my success has come from them.

**Matt, you coached Luke in high school. Was that strange?**

**MM:** It was different, because I was new to teaching and coaching at that point. And here Luke was, he had so much success even then. I had to find that balance of family and coach, and I was starting out in my own career. But at the same time, Luke made it very easy. I was never





# Sports Briefs

Pictured: The men's soccer team celebrates after winning the 2014 East Coast Conference championship.



## MEN'S SOCCER CROWNED SECOND TIME IN FOUR YEARS

NYIT men's soccer advanced to its seventh NCAA Tournament and earned the No. 4 seed after winning the 2014 East Coast Conference championship with a 1-0 victory over neighboring-rival LIU Post in November. The Bears scored early off the boot of graduate student Javier Gallardo and limited the Pioneers to just four shots on goal for the entire contest. Senior Ivan Rico was named Most Outstanding Player for the tournament. NYIT compiled a 14-3-1 overall record and earned a share of the regular-season title with an 8-1-1 mark. Five Bears were named All-ECC with junior Gonzalo Barroso picking up Defensive Player of the Year honors and head coach Carlos Delcid (B.S. '97) named Coach of the Year.

## SPONSOR A WISH

The NYIT Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) needs your help. The Bears have set a goal for 2015 to sponsor a child's wish through the Make-A-Wish Foundation. NYIT Athletics has received \$1,000 so far in donations and needs your assistance to reach their goal of \$7,500. For more information and to give, contact Samantha Basile at [sbasile@nyit.edu](mailto:sbasile@nyit.edu). ■

forced to say, "Hey, you need to pick up the pace." Maybe it was from those backyard practices. It made me feel really good that I had his support as a player, especially somebody of his caliber and talent.

### Luke, how was Matt as a coach?

**LM:** We definitely had some hiccups along the way, but from the get-go, it was a cool experience. He was always there right after practice if I needed anything.

**MM:** We learned how to turn "coach" and "brother" on and off because there were times at games when I needed to be his brother, not his coach, and there were times when I needed him to be my brother and not my player.

### You both played at NYIT. What is it like being a student-athlete?

**MM:** I played under Coach Kaley, who is legendary in the lacrosse world. He was instrumental in a lot of the things I implement in my own life—from coaching to things that I do on a daily

basis. I also was fortunate to play under Coach Dunn on the defensive side of the ball. He was a great motivator.

**LM:** I love Coach Dunn. He's helped me out a lot off the field too. And on the field, he's a coach but he's awesome.

**MM:** It's not easy being a student-athlete. It's like having two full-time jobs. Having that ability to really understand what the responsibilities are and how to balance everything takes time. You have to cherish every moment that you're given.

**LM:** Our brother Andrew told me that in the moment, you feel like you have a lifetime. But after it's done, you look back and it's like, where did time go? Not many people get the chance to play at an institution like this, so it's definitely something you have to take advantage of.

### Luke, with all of the success you've had, what's next?

**LM:** Last year we lost in the first round of the ECC playoffs, so we can always go further and win the championship. I

mean, I know I have a chance to break the all-time scoring record here, but at the front of my mind is getting the wins and getting a ring. And then, one day I want to become a coach. Really, to stay involved with the youth leagues and give back—that's definitely a goal of mine.

### Do you guys still like to compete?

**MM:** We do anything we can to make a competition. Whether it's lacrosse, throwing a Frisbee, swinging a golf club—whatever. Thanksgiving usually results in a hospital visit. The alumni games are always fun for us to square up and see each other on the other side. My parents just love things like that. ■



FOLLOW LUKE AND THE BEARS WHEN LACROSSE RESUMES THIS SPRING. [NYIT.EDU/ATHLETICS](http://NYIT.EDU/ATHLETICS)

(Facing page) Luke (left) and Matt Miller reunited on President's Field.

FEATURE

BY JULIE GODSOE

# City Life, Country Life, Global Life

**Which NYIT campus did you attend? Did you walk from class to class along tree-lined paths in Old Westbury? Or did you gaze at Columbus Circle and Central Park? Perhaps you explored city streets in Nanjing, Vancouver, or Abu Dhabi. Whether it's been years since you stepped on campus or just a few hours, take a fresh look at the places the NYIT community calls home.**







(This page) The Edward Guiliano Global Center (EGGC) at 1855 Broadway, steps from Columbus Circle, serves as the campus's main academic hub and includes the library and labs with million-dollar views. (Facing page) The steel globe on the north end of Columbus Circle marks the start of the Upper West Side. A student waits for the bus outside the EGGC.

# Manhattan







# Old Westbury







About an hour from New York City, the Old Westbury, N.Y., campus is positively pastoral. (Clockwise from top left) Studying in Wisser Library offers inspiring views; snow-covered trees define winter in Old Westbury; medical students walk to class; student-athletes practice on the Angelo Lorenzo Memorial Baseball Field; Education Hall—formerly stables—is home to architecture and television studios.

Photos: Aerial New York, Karen Marie Belnap, Raed Elzenaty, Don Hamerman, Lee Hoagland, Albert Law, Asad Richardson, Diego Rios, Martin Seck.





# Nanjing



(Above) The library at Nanjing University of Posts and Telecommunications (NUPT) is close to NYIT's main building (NYIT-Nanjing students are also students of NUPT); the Xinjiekou district in Nanjing offers entertainment and other places to explore.

(Middle) Abu Dhabi students enjoy spending time outside during cooler months; Al Bahr Towers, famous for their innovative shading system, stand behind NYIT's campus.

(Below) NYIT's classrooms overlook Vancouver's city center; Harbour Green Park is a short walk from campus.



# Abu Dhabi



# Vancouver





# Big Funds for Breakthrough Research

BY RON GOLDBERG

**Five years ago, NYIT had just one National Institutes of Health-funded study. This year, there are six. At a time when fewer and fewer proposals are being funded, how does NYIT beat the odds?**

Kurt Amsler, Ph.D., associate dean for research at NYIT's College of Osteopathic Medicine, in a laboratory on NYIT's Old Westbury campus where he views 3-D images of epithelial cells through a Leica confocal microscope.

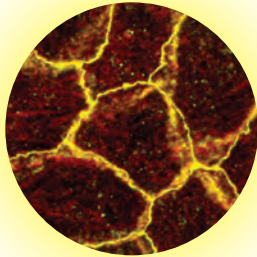


## IMAGINE:

A robot with an iPhone face helps an autistic child connect with her parents.

A lab rat's diet teaches us how the heart protects itself from disease.

A line of kidney cell cultures provides the key to preventing renal damage.



NYIT RESEARCHERS believe these scenarios are much more than pipe dreams. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) thinks so too—the studies represent three of the record six research projects at NYIT currently funded by the NIH.

In these days of limited resources, not every promising proposal receives an NIH nod. For the past five years, the agency's research budget has remained relatively static, wavering between \$29 billion and \$30 billion. "That's for everything by the major federal funding agency for medical research," explains Martin Gerdes, Ph.D., professor and chairperson of biomedical sciences at the College of Osteopathic Medicine, "all the medical research funding by the NIH—for AIDS, Ebola, cancer, heart disease—everything."

And the problem isn't just the stagnant numbers—demand for funding has increased dramatically.

When the government doubled the NIH research budget in the early 2000s, large numbers of students were encouraged to become researchers. But now that they've graduated and entered the field, the funding hasn't kept pace. "We built the infrastructure, then pulled the rug out," says Gerdes, a longtime NIH grant recipient. According to a statement by NIH Director Francis Collins in *USA Today*, the organization funded roughly

(Below) A student programs a robot in Chung Hyuk Park's lab. Park will be incorporating a mobile robot like this one, which uses an iPhone to show expressions, in his NIH-funded study.

(Left) Kurt Amsler's 3-D image of the immunolocalization of two different proteins within renal epithelial cells. When the proteins are located in the same place in the cells, the color turns yellow.

(Right) Qiangrong Liang's research shows that reducing calories benefits the heart. Shown are images of cardiac muscle cells, one cultured in low glucose (right) and one in high glucose (left). The red and green dots represent autophagic vacuoles; more vacuoles mean better heart health.





one out of three research proposals 10 years ago; it now funds just one in six.

Despite the gloomy prognosis, NYIT is bucking the trend. In fact, NYIT researchers received significant awards in very different areas. President Edward Guiliano, Ph.D., says “NYIT’s applied and basic research efforts continue to expand as the university hires a growing number of skilled researchers who work closely with our students to solve real-world problems.”

One of those researchers, Kurt Amsler, Ph.D., associate dean for research at the College of Osteopathic Medicine, notes that while many larger academic medical and research institutions are taking “a big hit,” in some cases losing as much as 10 to 20 percent of their funding, NYIT’s research funding has grown. “In relative terms,” says Amsler, “we’re doing as well, or even better than all the big players.”

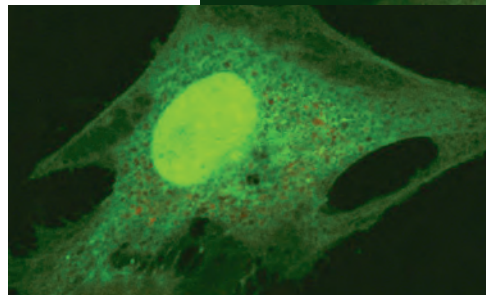
According to Provost Rahmat Shoureshi, the key is knowing what NIH reviewers are looking for. “They want something revolutionary,” he says. “They want to see what stands out.”

One way to do so is to submit a study that is interdisciplinary. “To get the attention of the reviewers and program directors, it is helpful to bring together untraditionally matched disciplines,” says Shoureshi. He also suggests including colleagues from other institutions whose expertise complements your strengths.

And if you really want to get noticed—do both.

### The Robot Connection

This method proved a winning approach for NYIT Engineering Assistant Professor Chung Hyuk Park, Ph.D., who received a three-year, \$692,000 grant for a study that uses robotics to explore how sound, music, and physical activity stimulate emotional and social



interactivity in children with autism spectrum disorder. Park’s project not only crosses disciplines but also includes investigators from two other universities.

For his research, Park will use two platforms. The first, a small mobile robot, features a mounted iPhone for a head that Park will program to move, emit sounds, and display animated facial expressions. The second is a humanoid model, roughly the height of a 2-year-old, that will walk, dance, play games, and gesture in response to musical cues. By monitoring the children’s reactions to the robots, Park hopes to create a mutual learning process for the children and their robot partners.

Although Park’s focus is on engineering, his goals are clinical. “We are not just trying to make robots more friendly to humans,” he explains. “We are working on promoting human-to-human interaction through the experience of human-to-robot interaction.”

Park’s grant is the first NIH grant received by a School of Engineering and Computing Sciences faculty member; it’s also his first external grant.

“It’s very impressive for a first-year faculty member to get an RO1 [the highest-level award for investigator-initiated research],” says Richard Simpson, Ph.D., associate dean for research in the School of Engineering and Computing Sciences. “It’s like hitting a grand slam at your first at bat.”

### The Built Research Environment

NYIT has substantially increased the number of external grants it has received in the past three years. Shoureshi credits this progress to a “four-pronged approach” that includes:

- hiring more competitive faculty researchers
- providing resources and support for faculty research and scholarship, including through the Office of Sponsored Projects and Research
- distributing seed grants to initiate research in areas that will lead to publication and external grants
- sponsoring faculty networking opportunities with funding sources

When Amsler was hired seven years ago, he helped map out a five- to ten-year plan to create a research hub at the College of Osteopathic Medicine. One major area of investment has been acquiring resources and equipment that enable faculty to pursue cutting-edge research and attract funding. That means everything from establishing cardiovascular and cell culture facilities to buying confocal microscopes to securing 3-D printers so faculty can customize lab instruments.

But the most important investment, everyone agrees, has been in people.

“A key hire,” says Amsler, “was Martin Gerdes.”

An internationally recognized cardiovascular researcher and a recipient of more than \$31 million in NIH funding, Gerdes arrived at NYIT in 2010 and won his most recent NIH grant—a five-year, \$1.8 million R01 grant for his preclinical study on the effect of thyroid hormones in preventing heart disease—the following year.

Gerdes' research shows that an imbalance of thyroid hormone in the heart can cause heart failure, even without other evidence of heart disease. "I honestly believe we may be sitting on the biggest breakthrough in the history of heart research," he says, "but only time will tell if I am right."

According to the American Heart Association, 65 percent of people with diabetes will die from some form of heart disease. But in a recently published study, Gerdes announced that by treating diabetic animal models with low-dose thyroid hormone, he was able to halt, and in many cases prevent, heart degeneration. "They still had diabetes," explains Gerdes, "but no heart disease."

In a second paper, just accepted for publication, Gerdes and his team showed that treatment with a low-dose thyroid

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Revolutionary research—and the funding that comes with it—will continue to play an increasingly important role in the identity of the university.

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hormone prevented 60 percent of heart arrhythmias in his animal models. He estimates that normalizing thyroid levels in heart patients could result in global health savings of as much as half a trillion dollars a year.

In addition to being a pioneer in cardiovascular research, Gerdes has been a "magnet scientist" for NYIT, recruiting top-level researchers to grow the biomedical science department.

One of his recent recruits is his former colleague from the University of South Dakota, Qiangrong Liang, Ph.D.

Liang, who joined NYIT as an associate professor in 2013, received a three-year NIH grant for \$431,700 to study how reducing caloric intake can benefit the heart. Liang believes that one way eating less protects the heart is by improving a cell's ability to monitor the efficiency of mitochondria. While the mitochondria are essential

for producing energy, they can also produce toxic agents when they get old or injured that damage the heart. Using a combination of heart cell cultures and mice models, Liang hopes to study the impact of a reduced diet on this cell monitoring process (which he calls "a very new direction" in heart research) that may lead to drugs that mimic this process.

### Going with the Flow

Now in the final year of his three-year \$486,000 grant, Amsler is focusing on the kidney—particularly, the mechanisms that cause the kidney to lose its ability to filter out toxic compounds when oxygen flow is stopped and then restored during episodes like heart attacks and transplants.

Amsler discovered that the kidney's epithelial cells, which facilitate the filtering process, behaved differently

Medical students Shirin Jaggi (left) and Angelina Voronina (right) use pipettes to measure and transfer liquids into beakers in Amsler's laboratory in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine.





# Research Gone Viral

Many NYIT alumni are just starting their research careers, especially given recent opportunities available to students, but J. ROBERT COLEMAN (M.B.A. '13) is already well on his way.



J. Robert Coleman is chief operating officer and a co-founder of biotech company Codagenix, Inc. A scientist and entrepreneur, he has a Ph.D. in molecular microbiology along with an M.B.A. from NYIT, which he acquired to develop his business and leadership skills.

At Codagenix, he and his colleagues create vaccines using Synthetic Attenuated Virus Engineering (SAVE), a computer software program they created. “All other vaccines are made through trial and error,” he says. “We’re synthesizing DNA. That’s functional. It’s what synthetic biology is all about.”

In two years, Codagenix has been awarded NIH grants of more than \$1.6 million. It recently won a two-year \$600,000 NIH grant for a study that uses SAVE to develop a live attenuated vaccine to protect against enterotoxigenic *E. coli*, a virus that affects more than 200 million people each year.

Coleman credits his company’s early funding success to the translational nature of its work. He also believes it’s important to conduct research with the potential to positively affect people’s lives—a goal he shares with his collaborator, Lisa Runco, Ph.D., who is also an assistant professor of life sciences at NYIT. Coleman says, “Even if you’re working on basic science, it has to have some sort of application to the clinic or a clear end goal that will make something clinically relevant.” ■

than those previously studied in the intestines. In fact, the two proved to be almost diametrically opposed. “The people in kidney research weren’t all that excited. But the people in intestine research were shocked,” he says.

Both Amsler and Liang are recipients of R15 grants, which emphasize the involvement of students. “An increasing number of students are asking about research opportunities,” says Amsler, “and we’re doing our best to accommodate that interest.”

“I was extremely happy when I found out there were research opportunities at the College of Osteopathic Medicine,” says Angelina Voronina, a student working with Amsler. “After seeing how research is carried out in the lab and being a part of such a great team, I plan on continuing to participate in research throughout my time in medical school and in my career.”

Students also play an important role in the research of another NIH grantee, Aleksandr Vasilyev, M.D., Ph.D. He studies the transparent zebra fish to tackle the problem of how the kidney recovers

from injury and repairs itself. Vasilyev came to NYIT in 2013 from Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School, bringing with him a five-year “career development” grant for his study investigating the role of collective cell migration in kidney development, and an R03 investigator-initiated grant to study the role of collective cell migration in kidney repair after injury.

Both Amsler and Vasilyev say they anticipate working together on future projects. One such venture, investigating whether the processes of kidney injury and cyst formation in kidney disease are interlinked, was recently submitted to the U.S. Department of Defense for potential funding.

## The Future of Research at NYIT

So now that NYIT research studies are receiving this level of NIH funding, what does the future hold?

With its cardiovascular group reaching critical mass, the medical school is looking to expand its research hubs, building two more groups using a similar model.

As for the university, Shoureshi says next steps include identifying interdisciplinary areas to develop into successful research centers. For the past two years, he worked with faculty to identify areas that draw on NYIT’s unique strengths and expertise. “You must be aware of your competition,” he says. “You can’t pick an area where someone next door is already established.”

One cluster under serious consideration is a combination of engineering, computer science, and medicine. Other likely candidates include a global media center and a cybersecurity hub.

And even as education remains the central mission of NYIT, revolutionary research—and the funding that comes with it—will continue to play an increasingly important role in the identity of the university.

“We believe scholarship and research by both faculty and students are part of the education we need to offer,” says Shoureshi. “It is part of the NYIT evolution.” ■



# Crack the Code on a Successful Cyber Career



The 21st century has introduced categories of crime that would have been unimaginable in “days of yore.” Household brands from Sony to JPMorgan Chase face high-profile data breaches and cyberattacks and ensuing public relations fallout. New kinds of professionals are needed to engineer systems that safeguard information and protect companies and consumers from modern threats.





NYIT HAS LONG RECOGNIZED the demand for well-rounded engineers with a foundation in cybersecurity, and the university trains students for these careers through academic programs, research collaborations, and industry initiatives. *NYIT Magazine* spoke to members of our community about what it takes to make it in the field.

### Hone Your Crossover Skills

The ability to think critically about systems in order to solve problems is the most important skill a cybersecurity professional can have, according to Jonathan Voris, Ph.D., assistant professor of computer science. He teaches students to use threat modeling to forecast attacks that could potentially impact the security of a computer network or mobile application.

"It's about getting people to think in a security-oriented mindset," says Voris.

Sandra Kopecky (B.S. '88, M.S. '12) constantly ponders security in her job as a database analyst and programmer for SpecPro Technical Services. Her experience includes helping clients to gather and customize their proprietary information to show trends and analysis over weeks, months, and years. While big data is a boon for companies looking to understand customer behaviors, it's a lure for hackers on the prowl. Information Technology (IT) professionals at every level must assess the risks.

"There used to be hardware people and software people each having their own security issues," says Kopecky, who is also an adjunct instructor of computer science at NYIT. "Now you have to think about security across hardware, software, programming, applications, and design."

### Ride the Edge of Technology

From 2007 to 2013, cybersecurity job postings grew by 74 percent,



as noted in a recent study by Burning Glass International Inc., a U.S. firm that uses artificial intelligence to measure career data. Successful candidates must be well versed in an array of new technology, and NYIT graduates have the skills to rise to the top of the pool.

Students learn all facets of the industry in NYIT's M.S. program in information, network, and computer security, offered at the New York, Abu Dhabi, and Vancouver campuses. NYIT also offers a minor in network security for computer science and IT majors.

Outside of a traditional major course of study, NYIT's Research Experience for Undergraduates pairs students with faculty experts and immerses them in studies of the latest technologies shaping the field. This past summer, Kazi Raihan, a senior majoring in electrical and computer engineering, investigated wireless body area networks and their energy consumption as they encrypt and transmit files from a mobile device to a back-end server.

"We learned about the state of the cybersecurity field and ways in which hackers launch attacks on networks and individuals," says Raihan. "Researchers told us about how they attempt to catch malicious activity through big data analysis and ways to detect and catch hackers."

### Create a Better Marketplace

"People don't always realize the value of investing in security issues," says Steven Rubin, J.D. (B.S. '94). As a partner at law firm Moritt Hock & Hamroff, Rubin chairs the patent practice and co-chairs the cybersecurity practice at his firm. He works closely with an interdisciplinary group to address clients' legal concerns about



data breaches. (Read Rubin's thoughts about legal lessons learned from the Sony hack at [bit.ly/Rubin-Sony](http://bit.ly/Rubin-Sony).) To explain the intersection of technology and the law, he relies on the engineering training he received at NYIT.

Rubin says, "Clients think, 'Hey, I'm too small. I don't want to spend the money on cybersecurity.' They need to realize that if you can show you're protecting your data better than your competitors, you create a marketplace differentiator."

Rubin emphasized this point and more during NYIT's Cybersecurity Conference in September 2014. Industry, government, and academic professionals, including Kopecky and Voris, came together for a day of presentations and events to discuss challenges facing the field. Nearly 250 guests attended the annual event, which provides a much-needed forum to advocate for cyber leadership and gain access to career opportunities. Speakers also noted the important role universities play in training lifelong learners who are able to navigate the evolving field.

"There's an influx of new technologies and systems, faster machines, and wearable data," adds Kopecky. "There is always something to learn and explore. Things are always changing."

That advice is taking hold. This year, for the first time, the conference hosted a panel on cyber careers geared toward high school and college students. Top professionals spoke about their field and the possibilities that await young engineers on the cusp of developing radical cybersecurity solutions. Already these young minds are thinking ahead to how they too will find new ways to combat the ever-shifting threats of hackers and cyberattacks. ■

## ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

## Admissions Ambassadors Bring the NYIT Experience Full Circle

NYIT's nearly 100,000 alumni preserve, share, and enhance the NYIT experience for future students and alumni all over the world. The Alumni Admissions Ambassador program is the newest way for you to get involved. By sharing information about your career, academic background, and NYIT experience with prospective students, you demonstrate the value of attending NYIT. And if you've ever wanted to give back and become someone's mentor, becoming an ambassador is a way to establish a connection with someone looking for guidance.

Depending on where you live, you can meet with prospective students and their parents at college fairs; communicate with them via email and phone; or attend events on campus, such as Open House and Preview Day. You may also volunteer from anywhere in the world. Admission ambassadors currently reside everywhere from the United States to Taiwan to Turkey.

Christopher Appoldt



Calvin Xu (B.S. '12) (right) receives his award from Dean of Career Services John Hyde.

The Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations honored one of its first alumni ambassadors, **Calvin Xu (B.S. '12)**, at an event this past October. Xu, who was named the 2014 Alumni Admissions Ambassador of the Year, began working with the Office of Career Services when he was a freshman. As an NYIT student, he completed internships and studied abroad in Germany and China before graduating with a degree in computer science. Today, Xu is a regular presenter at admitted student preview days and has encouraged his fellow alumni to connect with prospective students. The evening also honored 2014 alumni mentor **Anthony Epifane (A.A.S. '85, B.S. '86, M.B.A. '09)** and 2014 alumni employer the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). ■

**BECOME AN ALUMNI ADMISSIONS AMBASSADOR:**  
[NYIT.EDU/ALUMNI/AMBASSADORS](http://NYIT.EDU/ALUMNI/AMBASSADORS)

## 1970s

**JOHN SABATINO (B.S. '70)** retired as practice leader of special inspections, a department he started at Urban Engineers in New York City. He also spent 21 years developing corporate real estate for Merrill Lynch. His family surprised him with a retirement celebration that kicked off with a tour of the place his architectural career began: NYIT's Manhattan campus.

For 35 years, **JEFFREY VISOTZKY (B.S. '70)** has worked for the New York State Office of the Medicaid Inspector General. He is an avid photographer and traveler married to his college sweetheart, **MICHELE (B.S. '70)**, a semiretired advertising account executive. They have two children, including daughter **FALLON (M.S. '12)**.

At the 2014 International Cost Engineering Council's IX World Congress in Milan, Italy, **FELIX BARTHOLOMEW (B.S. '72)** presented his paper, "Job Stress: What PMs Can Do About It!" He discussed the causes of job stress for program and project managers in the architecture field and suggested ways to cope. Bartholomew drew on his 40 years of experience working on major infrastructure design, engineering, and construction projects.

**BILLY BRILL (B.F.A. '72)** is the CEO of Billy Alan Productions, a talent-buying company for American Indian casinos in Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington. He strategizes with casino owners on entertainment, marketing, and promotional campaigns. [bit.ly/BillyBrill](http://bit.ly/BillyBrill)

**SALVATORE ESPOSITO (B.F.A. '73)** retired in January after working 25 years as a special education teacher (most recently in Levittown, N.Y., school district) as well as a 13-year stint at IBM. He and his wife, Susana, plan to relocate permanently from Bellmore, N.Y., to their second home in The Villages, Fla.



ALUMNI  
SPOTLIGHT

**LAWRENCE REOCH (B.S. '73)** has served as a community volunteer in Westerville, Ohio, since retiring from his job as purchasing manager at American Electric Power in nearby Columbus.

What do the U.S. military and Elizabethan theater have in common? A fascination with heraldry and symbols of national heritage.

**CHARLES MUGNO (B.S. '76)** explored the topic at a presentation that coincided with the exhibit, "Symbols of Honor: Heraldry and Family History in Shakespeare's England," at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Mugno parlayed 29 years as a U.S. Marine and his studies of military insignia into his role as director of the United States Institute of Heraldry. The institute designs medals, flags, badges, and other heraldic items for the Executive Office of the President of the United States, federal agencies, and branches of the military.



Courtesy of Leslye Abbe

*Buffalo Nation: The Children Are Crying*, a documentary by filmmaker **LESLYE ABBEY (B.S. '79)** (above), was screened as part of the Real-to-Reel Documentary series this past October in Huntington, N.Y. It depicts the lives of members of the indigenous Sioux tribe living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. In 2014, her film won best feature documentary at the Long Island International Film Expo and received accolades at the Indie Gathering film festival and convention in Hudson, Ohio. [snowflakevideo.com](http://snowflakevideo.com)

**JAMES OLIVERI (B.S. '79)** published the memoir, *The Frost Weeds, Vietnam: 1964–1965*. It chronicles his experiences on the U.S. Army advisory team during the Vietnam war.



# Shuguang Dong

(M.B.A. '11)

**S**HUGUANG DONG WANTED A CHALLENGING CAREER that allowed him see the world. To do so, he needed to make a change. "If I hadn't quit my job at the steel factory, I might never have had the chance to chase my ultimate goal in life," he says. Today, Dong is director of the administration department for the China Investment Corporation (CIC), the world's fourth-largest sovereign wealth fund, where he oversees administrative work and cross-cultural initiatives.

His path started with a return to school. "I studied Western economics at Huazhong University of Science and Technology," he says. "It really opened my eyes, and I became interested in the finance and investment industry." He studied at Tsinghua University School of Law in Beijing for three years and then began working in banking. After a few years, he took a position at UnionPay, a bank card association based in China that competes with Visa and MasterCard and operates all over the world.

At the same time, Dong looked for an M.B.A. program where he could develop his cultural perspective to meet the needs of a global economy, grow his professional network, and get an American degree. NYIT's M.B.A. program offered in conjunction with Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics (JUFE) met all of his requirements. "The curriculum is very interesting—courses are cutting edge and offer new ways of thinking and approaches to finance and global issues," he says. "The program also has a strong alumni circle in China." After graduation, Dong joined CIC.

While his experience at NYIT helped him better understand the differences between Chinese and American cultures, it also allowed him to develop "a new way of understanding my culture." He is drawing on this perspective while supervising CIC's latest project, a Chinese art museum in New York City founded in collaboration with several Chinese entrepreneurs. "We are passionate about sharing Chinese culture with the world," he explains. The museum will showcase a range of Chinese art, including painting, fine china, and jewelry.

He hopes the project will also provide him with the opportunity to visit NYIT's Manhattan campus and share his knowledge with students. "You must find out where your passion is, no matter how late it is," he advises. "Do not be afraid of failures and difficulties, as they will eventually lead to your definition of success." ■

Courtesy of Shuguang Dong



## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

TUNE IN to Internet radio show *That'll Play with Matt & John*. Developed by **MATT CANDELA (B.F.A. '07)** and **JOHN NUZZI (B.F.A. '07)**, the weekly podcast covers film, music, technology, and topical news. "The beginning stages of *That'll Play* started while we were both attending NYIT and producing a radio show at WNYT, the local college radio station," the two explained. "The education and training that we received at NYIT sparked a creative motivation with both of our professional aspirations." Stream the show on iTunes, Stitcher, TuneIn Radio, Player FM, or their website [thatwillplaypod.com](http://thatwillplaypod.com). ■

**Matt Candela (left) and John Nuzzi (right) in their studio hosting *That'll Play with Matt & John*.**

## 1980s

**PHILIP FASANO (B.S. '80)** was named executive vice president and chief information officer of American International Group (AIG). This is a new position at the global insurance company, which serves people in more than 130 countries and jurisdictions.

"I'm enjoying my creative projects including writing, music, and photography," says retiree **PETER LEE (M.A. '80)**. "My biggest kick is driving my 1956 Studebaker Hawk around Long Island's East End."

**RENEE CREAGER O'BRIEN, PH.D. (M.A. '82)** is professor of photography at SUNY Adirondack in Queensbury, N.Y. She lives in the nearby Saratoga Springs-Lake George area with her husband, Tom O'Brien, a commercial illustrator and sculptor.

**GEORGE HOLZ (B.ARCH. '83)** is director of planning, construction, and facilities for Sleepy's. He is based in the mattress company's office in Hicksville, N.Y.

**MARIA SASTRE (B.S. '81, M.B.A. '83)**, president and chief operating officer of Signature Flight Support, joined the Associate Member Advisory Council of the National Business Aviation Association.

**KATHLEEN FLOOD (B.S. '84)** took her first vows as a sister of the congregation of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

**PATRICIA GALLOWAY (M.B.A. '84)**, Ph.D., received her Certificate in Dispute Resolution from the Straus Institute for Dispute Resolution at the Pepperdine University Law School. In April, she was the first non-lawyer elected to the College of Commercial Arbitrators. She is pursuing her diploma in International Commercial Arbitration and has completed the first requirement at Oxford with expected completion in March 2015. In November, Galloway gave a TED Talk, "Are Engineers Human?" at TEDx Manhattan Beach. Watch her presentation on YouTube. [tedxmanhattanbeach.com](http://tedxmanhattanbeach.com)

Read about the airline industry in *Final Destination: Disaster*, by **GEORGE JEHN (B.S. '85)**. For 18 years, Jehn served as a pilot for Eastern Air Lines and participated in many facets of the union that represented the pilots, including during the events that led to the company's demise. Jehn says, "Although there have been some books previously written about Eastern Air Lines and the subsequent consequences of the Texas Air takeover, none delved into the reasons behind why Eastern was handed to Texas Air." His book is available in bookstores and online. [bit.ly/GeorgeJehn](http://bit.ly/GeorgeJehn)

**BILL SOTOMAYOR (B.S. '86)** oversees business development and client relationships as regional director of the New York City office of architectural firm Ware Malcomb. The office opened in 2014 and is one of 16 locations in North America operated by the award-winning firm.

**BABER MALIK (M.B.A. '87)** is the director of human assets and administration for Abu Issa Holding in Doha, Qatar, a top trading organization for retail and wholesale distribution of perfumes, cosmetics, and fashionable clothes. He discusses the changing human resources field and the skills needed to succeed at it with the *Qatar Tribune*. [bit.ly/BaberMalik](http://bit.ly/BaberMalik)

Career changer **DOMINIC CURATOLA (B.S. '88)** spent several years working in the hospitality industry before going to medical school. He is now a board-certified physician and owner of a podiatry practice in Rockville Centre, N.Y. He specializes in foot, ankle, and wound care.

"After many weekends and nights of writing and editing, my first book has just been published," says **ANTHONY GIOELI (B.S. '88)**, author of *International Business Expansion: A Step-by-Step Guide to Launch Your Company into Other Countries*. [bit.ly/AnthonyGioeli](http://bit.ly/AnthonyGioeli)



ALUMNI  
**SPOTLIGHT**

**DOUGLAS O'DELL (M.S. '88)** is the interim executive director of SCO Family of Services, a nonprofit that helps vulnerable New Yorkers plan for their future.

**KIM MOSER (B.S. '89)** teaches students computer programming at Palm Beach Code School in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. [bit.ly/KimMoser](http://bit.ly/KimMoser)

**NOREEN SADUE (B.F.A. '89)** was one of two headliners in the fall 2014 art show, "Designs in Nature," at Paul Smith's College in Paul Smiths, N.Y. [bit.ly/NoreenSadue](http://bit.ly/NoreenSadue)

In January 2015, **BRIAN SILVA (M.S. '89)** became chair of the board of directors for the Society for Human Resource Management, an organization with more than 275,000 members made up of human resources professionals around the world. The society has an active NYIT student chapter. Silva is also a member of the NYIT Center for Human Resources Studies.

## 1990s

The Queens, N.Y., Chamber of Commerce honored **DENISE SAVINO-ERICHSEN (B.S. '91)** as a Business Person of the Year. She is the president of Automatic Industries, a provider of washing machines and dryers to residential buildings in New York City and Long Island.

As dean of curriculum and instruction at Rasmussen College, **SUSAN MAGYAR (B.S. '95)** leads a team to support curriculum design across the college's disciplines and 24 campuses, including online. She is based in West Fargo, N.D.

**DISCELL CHARLTON JR. (B.S. '96)** completed his third master's degree: an M.S. in management with a concentration in federal acquisitions and procurement

# Laurie Cantileno

(B.S. '85)

**WE ARE THE COMPANY** that runs the Internet." It's a big statement, but a quick tour around Cisco Systems' Manhattan headquarters makes it clear that **Laurie Cantileno** isn't exaggerating. Cisco's hardware and software solutions are omnipresent, powering most of the world's top companies and governments. Odds are, you're running a Cisco product right now. As a solutions delivery executive, Cantileno spends her days considering the needs of the workplace of the future and keeping her clients ahead of the curve.

Becoming a "tech oracle" was never really part of Cantileno's plan. "I either wanted to fly rockets to the moon or be a hairdresser," she remembers. Growing up on Long Island, Cantileno had some early exposure to technology but struggled to find her niche. "I was a shy child," she says. "I could not walk up to the counter at the deli and buy a piece of gum." A good student with a natural aptitude for math and science, she built her confidence through team sports like softball and volleyball. "My personality started to change, and I wasn't afraid of things anymore," she recalls. Still, when it was time to choose a college, she didn't want to stray too far from home. A search for the best local universities led her to NYIT. Cantileno enrolled in the computer science program, where she learned cutting-edge programming. "I joined the 'co-op,' which was what we called the internship program back in the day, and they found me positions where I could get real technical experience."

After graduation, Cantileno went to work as a programmer full-time. "Around that time, a lot of women started going into technology," she says. "But it was tough—I would walk into a room, and I would immediately be judged. I had to prove myself." That all changed when she found a mentor. "Getting guidance from a female executive really woke me up in my career," says Cantileno. "She's still at Cisco, and she's still my mentor."

Cantileno pays it forward by mentoring and sponsoring young women interested in technology careers. "A sponsor is someone who promotes you, who sticks their neck out for you. And sponsorship is what men often get that women do not," she explains. "That's my mission. I want girls to know that it's OK to be smart. It's OK to be bold. That people understand what you're going through, and they'll take a chance on you, if you earn it."

As for the future, Cantileno sees nothing but potential. "There's a change happening in the way we relate to technology. Soon, your imagination is going to drive technology," she says, pointing to her smartphone. "The ship that sent people to the moon was less powerful than this." ■

management from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

**RUSSELL SCHOMBER (M.S. '98)** is vice president of engineering for Tower Cloud, Inc., a backhaul transport and wireless infrastructure company headquartered in St. Petersburg, Fla. He oversees the company's expanding network of wireless backhaul customers and led the launch of its Ethernet Private Line services.

Improving the health of underserved mothers and their babies motivates **YANICK VIBERT (D.O. '98)**, a neonatologist at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia. She has traveled the world to train doctors and volunteer at medical clinics in Uganda, Africa, and Haiti. For her outstanding service, the March of Dimes (Southeastern Pennsylvania Division) named her its 2014 Roosevelt Award for Services to Humanity Honoree.

## 2000s

**ALBERT STARIKOV (D.O. '01)** represents obstetricians and gynecologists in *The Leading Physicians of the World*, a publication that highlights top doctors in various medical fields chosen by the International Association of HealthCare Professionals. Starikov owns and operates a private medical practice in Bay Harbor Islands, Fla.

**EVAN NASS (B.S. '02)** is a civil rights attorney at Nass & Roper Law, LLP, in New York City.

After working as an editorial desk assistant for NBC's *Nightly News with Brian Williams*, **ERICA AYISI (B.F.A. '03, M.A. '10)** is now a "one man band" TV news reporter for *Worcester News Tonight* in Massachusetts.

**KENNETH LOBB (A.A.S. '03)** published his first novel, *We Picked Up*, about his

cross-country hitchhiking trip in 1971. "It's about my search for the soul of America and for my own wholeness," he says.

**LAURA HANSHE (B.F.A. '05)** is a designer for Meadows Office Furniture Company in New York City.



Courtesy of Jessica Lee

A designer for News 12 Long Island, **Jessica Lee (B.F.A. '05)** (above) nabbed two Emmy award nominations for her graphics and animations. She is also the



### FROM STEAM TO SPEED: ALUMNI HELP STUDENTS NETWORK

NYIT ALUMNI PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE helping students begin their careers. At the STEAM Career Fair in October, alumni met with students about internship and job opportunities in science, technology, engineering, architecture, and mathematics. Many companies, like Henegan Construction and Superstructures Engineers and Architects, already employ a number of alumni and attend to recruit more talent. Alumni present included **MICKY PATEL (M.B.A '09)**, senior manager at Cavalier IT; **JOSEPH CHIARELLI (B.S. '92)**, executive vice president and operations manager at T.G. Nickel & Associates; and **JASMINE BRENNAN (M.S. '14)**, human resources specialist at Canon.

Also this past fall, students received a crash course in the art of the "meet and greet" at NYIT's first speed networking event. Alumni volunteers, including **DIRK ANDERSON (B.S. '04)**, **NANCY VAN PATTEN (M.B.A. '94)**, and **DENNIS MELE (B.ARCH. '83)**, spoke with graduate and undergraduate students in quick, 10-minute rounds, moderated by Dean of Career Services John Hyde. To attend an event or take advantage of career resources, visit [nyit.edu/career\\_services](http://nyit.edu/career_services). ■

Student and Maker State employee Mohammed Zen Algram at the STEAM fair.

Stephanie Miller



ALUMNI  
SPOTLIGHT

recipient of a New York Press Club Award and Press Club of Long Island Awards.

The global infrastructure firm Gannett Fleming promoted **JOE TULUMELLO (B.ARCH. '05)** to business unit leader of its New York City office. He previously led the firm's architectural group, which more than tripled in the past five years thanks in part to his focus on new construction, major renovations, and more.

"I use my interdisciplinary studies background obtained at NYIT to engage my community in open dialogue about multiple sclerosis (MS)," says **SHAWN DUFFY (B.S. '06)**, recipient of the Excellence in Mission Advancement Award from the Maryland chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. He participates in several groups to raise awareness about MS, which he was diagnosed with in 2009.

**MELISSA JURGENSEN ROSE (M.A. '06)** is an assistant marketing manager at Alcott HR, a professional employer organization in Farmingdale, N.Y.

As chief of station operations for AFN Europe, **CHRISTOPHER VADNAIS (B.S. '06, M.A. '08)** oversees 17 U.S. Department of Defense radio and television stations serving American audiences in more than 50 countries.

Pablo Mason



*Engineering News Record (ENR)* named **ANTHONY DAMON (M.B.A. '07)** among its 2014 Top 20 Under 40 Construction Professionals. Damon is design director for Jeff Katz Architecture in San Diego,



# Peter Hoare

(B.F.A. '05)

**PETER HOARE BEAT THE ODDS** when he sold his first screenplay, *Killing Hasselhoff*. Now the "celebrity death pool" comedy, which stars Ken Jeong alongside a crew of celebrities as "themselves" (including David Hasselhoff), is generating buzz and readying for a spring release. We sat down with Hoare to learn how he went from 9-to-5-er to comedy screenwriter.

**OFFICE SPACE** After graduating, Hoare landed a job as a production assistant for MTV and then producer for MTV digital. Seven years later, he decided to shift gears. "I was working at MTV digital. One night, I was sitting in my car and just knew I had to get out," he says. Hoare spent the next nine months researching television shows and movies and writing his first script. "I always wanted to make unapologetically big-budget comedies, like the first *Hangover* and *Old School*," he says. He quit his job, then the real work began. Although he was a communications major at NYIT, he had never taken a screenwriting class. "I downloaded every screenplay I could find. When I finished my first script, I realized it wasn't good. I had to figure out a way to make it work. It was like a puzzle."

**BEST IN SHOW** To stand out from hundreds of other aspiring screenwriters, Hoare submitted his scripts to every competition, agent, and manager he could find. Eventually he won a screenwriting competition and got feedback from a manager. Hoare wrote several more scripts before *Killing* landed on the desk of David Hasselhoff—who loved it. "He saw the title and said, 'I'll do it!'" remembers Hoare. "The first day on set was a religious experience for me. I was very enthusiastic about it."

**FUNNY OR DIE** "I keep running lists of things I want to work into my scripts—funny stories, bits of dialogue, scenes, anything I want to remember." The idea for *Killing Hasselhoff* came from one of Hoare's buddies in Long Island. "My friend asked me to be in a celebrity death pool at his firehouse, and I said no," he explains. "I didn't want the bad karma ... but I thought it was a great idea for a movie." Hoare loves the film's absurd premise and welcomes feedback of any kind. "If this thing is nominated for a Razzie, I'll ride in on a steed," jokes Hoare. "All I care about is that it's super funny."

**THE PLAYER** Hoare recently sold a second script and is working on projects for Comedy Central. While screenwriting is unpredictable at best, he tries to stick to a schedule, writing during the week and keeping the weekends for himself. Looking back, he's glad he made the jump to doing what he loves. "It's a victory if you can laugh at your own stupid jokes all day long," he says. ■

Follow him on Twitter @PeterHoare

Martin Sack

Calif. He received an American Institute of Architects Special Recognition Award for his design of the University of California San Diego Medical Center Switch Station (pictured previous page). He also received accolades for his work on the Fairbanks Ranch Fire Station, including *ENR's* Outstanding Project of the Year, American Public Works Association's Project of the Year, and *Fire Chief Magazine's* Notable Design Award.

**TIM GLOWA (M.B.A. '07)** published the e-book *Measuring Customer Satisfaction*. He is co-founder and partner of Bug Insights, a marketing analytics company in The Woodlands, Texas.

**RASSEL KASSEM (M.B.A. '07)** headlined the first event of the new alumni speaker series at NYIT-Abu Dhabi. He returned to campus in October 2014 to talk about his experiences as head of organizational development for the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department. He is also a member of NYIT's U.A.E. advisory board.

**JOEL NOWAKOWSKI (M.B.A. '07)** is vice president of commercial banking for United Bank in West Hartford, Conn. He also serves on the Alumni Association Board of Directors of Eastern Connecticut State University.

Since graduating from NYIT, **FRANCES BROWN (B.A. '08)** completed her M.F.A. in creative writing at Lesley University and has three books coming out in 2015: her memoir, *Maternal Threads*, and two novels, *Phantom Traces* and *A Taming Season*. [francesusannebrown.com](http://francesusannebrown.com)

**BRIAN DOHERTY (B.S. '08)** is the general superintendent for the Pulaski Skyway bridge rehabilitation in Jersey City, N.J., a \$345 million project being performed by general contractor CCA Civil Inc. Doherty oversees a crew of more than 300 laborers, iron workers, and operating engineers, and a staff of 30 construction superintendents

and field engineers. The bridge will be 4–5 miles long with a full deck and structural steel replacement bolstered by 1.5 million tons of structural steel and 4,000 precast panels installed during a three-year period. He says the project is moving along ahead of schedule.

**ASHLEY SIMELA (D.O. '08)** serves as director of minimally invasive spine surgery at Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center in Bronx, N.Y.

*In the Heights*, *Choir Boy*, and *Love, Whitney* are just a few of the shows produced at New Venture Theatre. The company was founded by artistic director **GREGORY WILLIAMS (M.B.A. '08)** in Baton Rouge, La.

**HASSAN ABBAS (M.S. '09)** has served as a SharePoint solutions developer in Canada for nearly five years. He recently led an engineering team to successfully build an intranet portal for his employer, Brookfield Residential. He looks forward to developing an external portal for collaboration with third-party vendors in 2015.

## 2010s

**CHRISTOPHER GOONAN (B.ARCH. '10)** successfully passed the Architectural Registration Examination and is now licensed to practice in New York and Pennsylvania. He lives with his two children in Conshohocken, Penn., where he is co-founder of the Workshop of Collaborative Architecture. He also teaches and competes in the art of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

**ALEXANDRA VENUTO (B.S. '10)** studies business and sports management in the M.B.A. program at the University of New Haven in Connecticut. She also works as a graduate assistant in the university's athletics equipment room.

**BEN ALLING (B.ARCH. '12)** joined KSQ Architects as an architectural intern in the firm's office in White Plains, N.Y.

Four NYIT alumni, **ARIANNA ARPELLI (B.ARCH. '12)**, **ISHAAN KUMAR (B.ARCH. '12)**, **WAGDY MOUSSA (B.ARCH. '13)**, and **DAVID SEPULVEDA (B.ARCH. '13)**, joined forces to create a proposal for preserving cultural relics in cities. Their project, DEFACED, responds to the demolition of 5 Pointz, an outdoor art exhibition space touted as a "graffiti mecca" in Long Island City, N.Y. View their architectural renderings and read commentary online. [bit.ly/Defaced](http://bit.ly/Defaced)

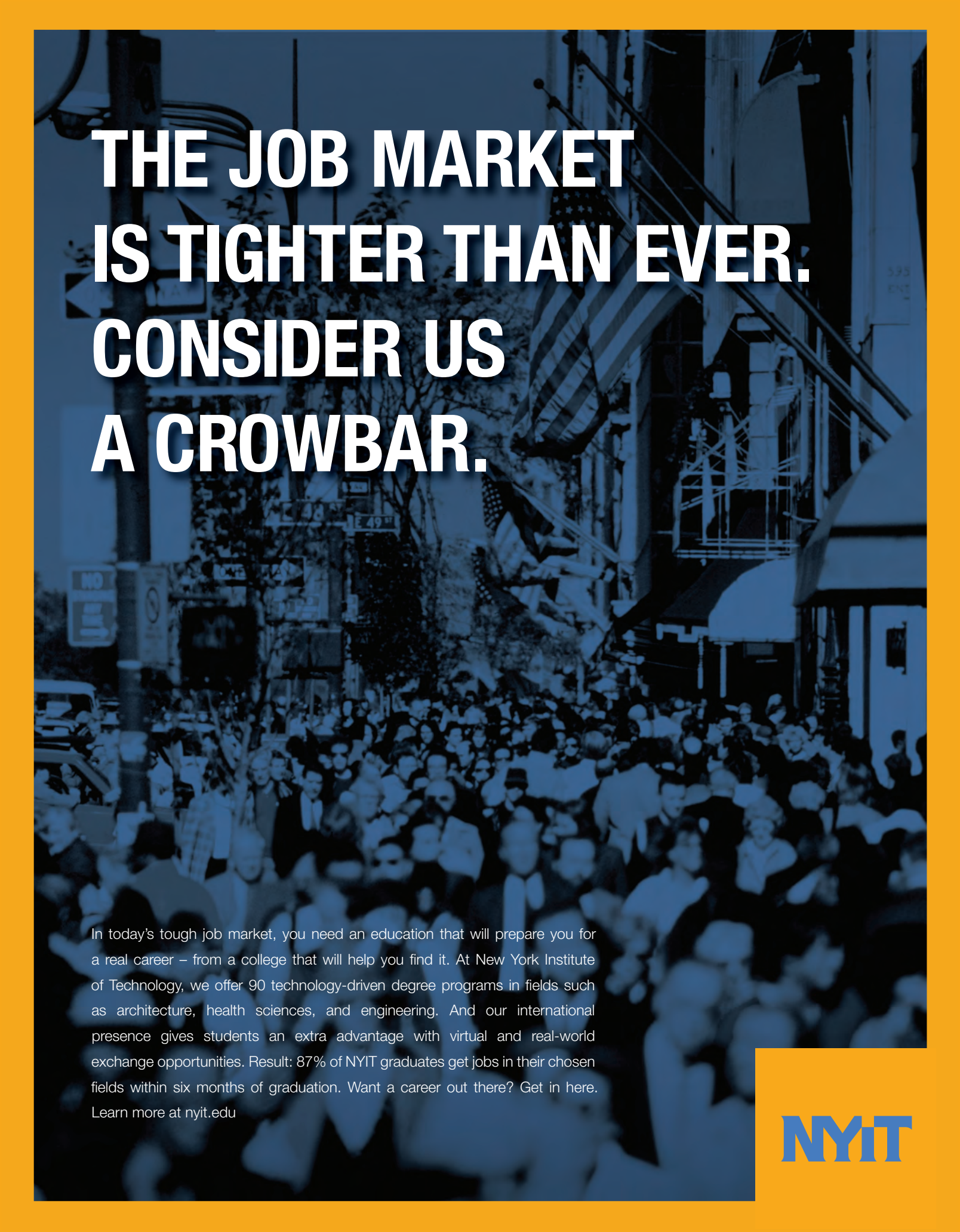
Graphic designer **IAN BORNEMAN (B.F.A. '12)** co-founded the business South Shore Customs, a screen printing company in Wantagh, N.Y. [southshorecustoms.com](http://southshorecustoms.com)

**ANITA HARIDAT (B.S. '10, M.S. '12)**, senior primary care coordinator at Weill Cornell Medical College and candidate for a Ph.D. in health care management, published her first nonfiction book, *A Ph.D Takes Your B.S. to a Whole New Level*. She also launched the Healthy Spectator, a blog that provides resources for wellness, positivity, and empowerment. [bit.ly/PhDNewLevel](http://bit.ly/PhDNewLevel)

The American Institute of Architects New York State organization elected **DAVID FLECHA (B.ARCH. '11)** as associate director and **JAMES YANKOPOULOS (B.ARCH. '11)** as New York region representative to its National Associates Committee.

**THERESA PICCOLO (B.S. '12)** is following her passion for helping individuals on the autism spectrum. She earned her M.A. in rehabilitation counseling from George Washington University in May and now manages the Autism Bridge to Learn and Empower program run by ServiceSource, an organization that provides services to people with disabilities. She is also a member of the Virginia Autism Council.





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NYIT Magazine welcomes submissions, story ideas, and feedback. Unsolicited manuscripts, related materials, photography, and artwork will not be returned. Please include your year of graduation, degree completed, and major or program of study.

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**JOSHUA RUBEL (B.P.S. '12)** is a financial representative of Forest Hills Financial Group with offices in the Greater New York City Area. He says, "I offer proven strategies that emphasize protection before risk to help secure clients' financial futures."

York City chapter of Women Who Code. She is a software engineer for the Wikimedia Foundation and blogs at [SmarterThanThat.com](http://SmarterThanThat.com).

**Marriages**

**JAMES KOBRYNICH (B.S. '05)** married Candice Nurnberger on July 5, 2014.

**Passings**

**ARTHUR DALEY (B.F.A. '85)**



**CINDY COBO (B.F.A. '13)** (above) co-founded Frezit. The disposal unit works by removing the heat, thereby eliminating the build up of odor-causing bacteria. She says, "Our smart technology turns on Frezit once it senses waste in the bin and adjusts it below room temperature." [freezeit.co](http://freezeit.co).

**JOHN SANTAMARIA (B.F.A. '13, M.F.A. '14)** is a game logger at CBS Sports Network and a public address announcer for NYIT Athletics, Molloy College Athletics, and the Long Island Rough Riders soccer team.

**MICHAEL CERULLO (B.S. '14)** landed a job as a community liaison for Dramatic Health, a startup in New York City.

**MORIEL SCHOTTLENDER (M.S. '14)** participated in the panel discussion "Opportunities in Free and Open Source Software for Women," hosted by the New



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ALUMNI  
**SPOTLIGHT**

# Francis Coiro

(B.S. '78)

Martin Seck

**F**RANCIS COIRO'S FIRST LOVE was set design. His father, on the other hand, suggested an alternative. "He said, 'You can design something that's going to be knocked down or something that will stand for life,'" says Coiro, "so I decided to study architecture." Over the course of his career, he has managed to follow both his father's advice and his own dreams. As a project executive in design and construction, he has overseen the development of some of New York City's most recognizable sites, including the renovations of Radio City Music Hall and the New Amsterdam Theatre.

Today, Coiro is working on another iconic project slated to open this spring: the One World Observatory (pictured above). The three-story observatory and multimedia experience atop One World Trade Center is being developed by Legends, where Coiro serves as vice president of project management and project executive.

As an architecture student in the 1970s, Coiro's NYIT experience was rather different than it is for today's NYIT students, and not only because the Manhattan campus was located on Seventh Avenue and 57th Street. "There were Vietnam vets on the GI Bill along with 20-year-olds who thought that *Animal House* was a guide to college," he recalls. "The two different planes of people made things interesting." Although he had some architecture experience, he had to manage a steep learning curve. Nevertheless, the curriculum suited his style. "NYIT taught us the technology of architecture. They pursued people like me, who had a passion for the way buildings worked. And they put a lot of smart building people into the industry."

After graduating, Coiro took a job with New York Telephone handling its construction projects. There he found his niche and decided to focus on being a liaison between business executives and design and construction firms. In addition to working on numerous building projects, Coiro supervised the design and construction of the studios for *CBS This Morning* and oversaw MTV's design and construction projects at 1515 Broadway while at Viacom.

Coiro isn't sure what project he'll work on after One World Observatory opens, but he's excited about the possibilities. He also has advice for graduates who hope to chart a similar course. "There's no such thing as too robust a network," he says. "Make a good impression everywhere you go, draw on your experience, and always be willing to take your skill set and apply it to something new." ■

## WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

Want more great news between issues of *NYIT Magazine*? Add *The Box*, NYIT's new blog featuring all the latest campus news, to your Internet routine. Find out about events for alumni; view photo galleries and watch videos; and

read feature content about students, alumni, and NYIT academic initiatives. [nyit.edu/box](http://nyit.edu/box)



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Participate in the next Career Fair on April 2, 2015. [nyit.edu/careerfairs](http://nyit.edu/careerfairs)

Attend the 10th Annual Golf Outing on June 15, 2015. [nyitbears.com/alumni/golf\\_outing](http://nyitbears.com/alumni/golf_outing)

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Manhattan students make their way into the subway near Columbus Circle and Central Park.