



NYIT

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NYIT

MAGAZINE

WINTER
2018

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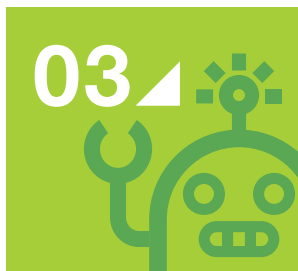


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NYIT.EDU

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Like what you see? Share your updates and feedback at nyit.edu/alumni_notes and connect at [@NYITalumni](https://twitter.com/NYITalumni), facebook.com/mynyit, and nyit.edu/linkedin.

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FIRST BYTE

By Hank Foley, Ph.D.
President



Alexander Berg

JUST LIKE TECHNOLOGY (as highlighted by the “T” in the title of this column above), NYIT is constantly evolving. We know that to be successful we must continuously examine and refine *how* we deliver learning experiences with a special focus on the *why* of technology, emphasizing that wisdom, understanding, and knowledge must complement one another. Put another way, our goal is to teach students not just what they *can* do with advanced tools in today’s world of blockchain and bitcoin, but also what they *should* do.

Take data science. This multidisciplinary field draws upon statistics, algorithmic development, and technology (and other fields) to extract knowledge from data. Researchers are awash with data, and within this digital ocean are opportunities to better understand complex systems and trends. It is vital that NYIT and other universities convey how to harness data science and other technologies to advance research that benefits the human condition and safeguards our digital world.

In this issue of *NYIT Magazine*, you’ll see how Assistant Professor Paolo Gasti, Ph.D., and other researchers are using biometric data to construct more secure digital authentication (p. 14). Their goal: To rethink the password model and use behavioral biometric tools to monitor how users interact with their devices in order to verify if the user is legitimate. This is just one example of work being done at NYIT that has the potential to impact millions of lives.

The humanization of technology will define an NYIT education—one that embraces a core of *critical creativity*, which combines critical thinking, problem-solving, and design thinking with data science and technology to devise solutions for the betterment of humanity. As a polytechnic institute, NYIT is an ideal hub for an intersection of disciplines that can produce new knowledge and data-driven results. Through *NYIT Magazine* and other channels, I look forward to sharing more success stories of faculty, students, staff, and alumni throughout 2018 and beyond. ■

Eisenman Up Close: A Titan of Architecture Visits NYIT

PETER EISENMAN is one of the world's most renowned designers and educators. His work spans decades and includes the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin; the Nunotani Building in Tokyo; the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Ariz.; and the City of Culture of Galicia in Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

In November, the architect reflected on his career at “Mentoring by Other Means,” a presentation hosted by NYIT School of Architecture and Design that welcomed architects, students, academics, and others to NYIT Auditorium on Broadway. Joining Eisenman were Maria R. Perbellini, dean of the School of Architecture and Design and one of Eisenman’s mentees, and Assistant Professor Mathew Ford, who served as an archivist at Eisenman Architects and curates exhibitions of his work.

“We were thrilled and honored to welcome Peter Eisenman,” said Perbellini. “He has influenced international architectural discourse with his extensive theoretical contributions, built critical design work that has been published, and presented around the world, obtaining countless prestigious awards and recognitions.”

One Perbellini- and Eisenman-related anecdote was the design process behind Eisenman’s provocative entry for the Church of the Year 2000 international competition. Hosted

by the Vatican’s office in Rome in 1996 and part of a wider initiative to build 50 new houses of worship in the suburbs of Rome by 2000, the contest invited six world-renowned architects to design a new church in a housing complex located in Tor Tre Teste, 30 miles east of the Italian capital. Eisenman’s entry (below right) exemplified his commitment to challenging convention and questioning the traditional idea of a church. “The church was an attempt to blur the relationships of the traditional bell tower, baptistery, façade, and nave,” Eisenman has said of this work.

It garnered him second place in the competition. Perbellini and Christian Pongratz, interim dean of NYIT School of Interdisciplinary Studies and Education, helped create the models and boards for Eisenman’s entry.

“Peter’s office was more like an atelier [teaching office], in which I had to come to terms with his discourse,” recalled Perbellini. “His recurrent need

for the different, for the experimental, and for the challenging created an intellectual tension that was always present. I was never told what to do. Peter’s office worked very differently from most places because there was no hierarchy.”

A common thread that defined Eisenman’s professional development was what it means to be both a mentor and mentee. “Tonight’s purpose was to acknowledge mentoring as a meaningful, generous, and intimate act intersecting aspirations, ambitions, purposes, and lives, with the great potential to influence a career path,” said Perbellini. “I wanted to celebrate Peter as a mentor, but also as an architect who has been learning from ‘fathers’ like Colin Rowe, Manfredo Tafuri, and Jacques Derrida.” She was also happy to see her former mentor. “Even though we hadn’t seen each other for a while, Peter and I immediately reconnected and everything felt familiar once again,” said Perbellini. ■



(Above) Assistant Professor Mathew Ford, Dean of NYIT School of Architecture and Design Maria R. Perbellini, and Peter Eisenman.

(Right) Competition model. Church of the Year 2000, Rome, Italy, 1996.



Ever wonder how cities will handle climate change? Or whether video games can benefit your health or career? Members of the NYIT community are finding answers to those questions and more. Read more at nyit.edu/box.



WHAT'S MINE IS MINE: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF "OWNERSHIP" Have you ever felt something is "yours" before you buy it—say if you've tried it on or added it to a shopping cart? The phenomenon, called "psychological ownership," isn't uncommon. Now, new research from NYIT School of Management Assistant Professor Colleen Kirk, D.P.S., provides evidence of consumers' feelings of infringement and the territorial behavior that may ensue.



bit.ly/Colleen-Kirk

PROMINENT ARCHITECT JOINS BOARD **Ted Moudis (B.S. '80)**, founder and senior principal of Ted Moudis Associates (TMA), joined the NYIT Board of Trustees in September. A fellow of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Moudis is the most recent graduate to contribute his expertise as a trustee to help strategically guide the school. Over the years, Moudis has remained involved with his alma mater. He sits on the architecture advisory board and conducts regular seminars for students in his offices.

Courtesy of Ted Moudis Associates



bit.ly/Ted-Moudis



Courtesy of Peter Douris

EXERCISE AND GAMING: CAN THEY DO A BODY GOOD? We're often told that exercising the brain is just as important as exercising the body, but what happens when you bring the two together? That's what **Professor Peter Douris (D.P.T. '07) Ed.D.**; **Professor John Handrakis (D.P.T. '10) Ed.D.**; and a group of physical therapy students set out to discover in a new study. Read about their findings online.



bit.ly/Gaming-Exercise



Martin Seck

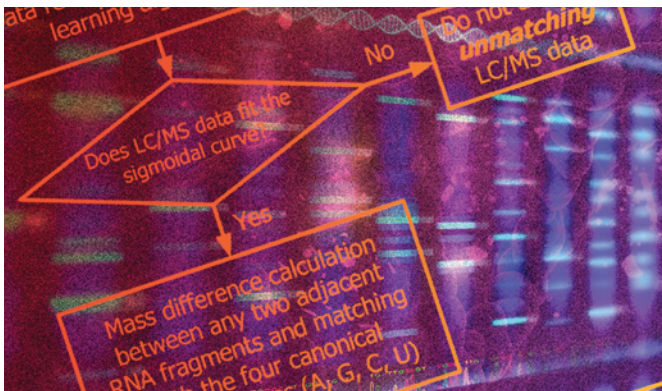
THE CLIMATE OF CITIES Two-thirds of the world's population is expected to live in cities by 2050. But cities also face environmental issues because of climate change. In an op-ed on *Forbes.com*, Jeffrey Raven, associate professor and director of the M.S. in Architecture, Urban and Regional Design, argues that mayors and urban leaders—together with urban designers—must cut emissions and help residents adapt to a warming planet.



bit.ly/Climate-Change-Cities



WATCH OUT FOR SONIC FOX Avid gamer and second-year NYIT student Dominique “Sonic Fox” McLean is one of the world’s top fighting-games players. Perhaps best known for winning *Mortal Kombat X* in numerous competitions, he was listed as the highest-earning fighting video games player in the recently released *Guinness World Records 2018 Gamer’s Edition*. Read more about his journey online.

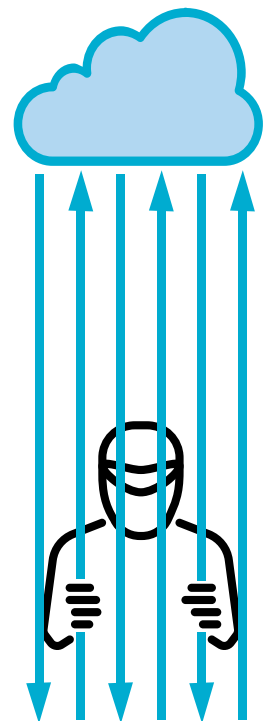


OUR GENOME AT RISK Assistant Professors Shenglong Zhang, Ph.D., and Wenjia Li, Ph.D., received a grant from the National Institutes of Health’s National Human Genome Research Institute to develop RNA sequencing methods that can be used to analyze RNA modifications in cells. Scientists can use these analyses to see how environmental and biological factors might affect the human genome when it comes to diseases like cancer and diabetes.



CYBERSECURITY IN VANCOUVER

Students, scientists, and engineers traveled from across the world to attend the third annual Cybersecurity Conference at NYIT-Vancouver from October 26 to 28, 2017. The conference was held in collaboration with Ryerson University, University of Delhi, and the University of Victoria. For three days, industry experts discussed the design, analysis, and implementation of dependable and secure infrastructures, systems, algorithms, and protocols as they relate to network computing, mobile and cloud systems, and the Internet of Things.



Michael Pirinque

“SEE A DOCTOR!” IS EASIER SAID THAN DONE There’s a U.S. physician shortage on the horizon, and for communities and states that are already lacking in physicians (last year, Arkansas ranked 47th), the depletion could spell disaster. Shane Speights, D.O., site dean at NYITCOM at Arkansas State University (A-State), contends that as practicing physicians reach retirement age, it is incumbent upon medical schools to educate the next generation of physicians to help provide care for medically underserved and rural communities. Read more about how NYITCOM at A-State is addressing this issue.



Cyber Lab Cultivates Talent and Research

MALWARE. SMARTPHONE AUTHENTICATION. IOT VULNERABILITIES.

Keeping our digital world safe has gone far beyond the PIN number. The booming and ever-evolving cybersecurity industry requires top-notch research and professionals in every sector to stay ahead of threats and cybercriminals. With the opening of a new cybersecurity lab on the Old Westbury campus, NYIT is making great progress in that fight.

On November 15, nearly 100 guests attended a ceremonial ribbon cutting for the facility, which was funded by a \$400,000 Empire State Development (ESD) grant. “There are thousands of

small- and medium-sized companies on Long Island begging for scientists and engineers,” said NYIT President Hank Foley, Ph.D. “NYIT wants to be their school of choice. Our students are ready to hit the ground running.” Joining President Foley for the ceremony were Dean of NYIT School of Engineering and Computing Sciences Nada Anid, Ph.D., ESD Program Administrator Barry Greenspan, Intelligent Product Solutions President Mitchell Maiman, and Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas.

NYIT School of Engineering and Computing Sciences has been designated by the National Security

Agency and the Department of Homeland Security as Long Island’s only National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense education. “Since 2011, the number of engineering graduates on Long Island has doubled, and NYIT is a big part of that,” noted ESD’s Greenspan, while Maiman said, “NYIT and this cyber lab address a real need and serve as an important source of talent for Long Island.”

“This launch exemplifies the spirit of entrepreneurship at NYIT—an institution where you can start with an idea and turn it into reality,” Anid said.

In addition, in order to fulfill a \$100,000 award from Northrop Grumman for “Training and Research Programs at NYIT’s Cybersecurity Research Center and StartUp NY Facility,” the school issued five mini-grants to seed faculty research in secure data networks, Internet of Things (IoT), and biometrics. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo also announced in December that NYIT has been recommended for another grant of up to \$150,000 from ESD.

Read more about password and authentication research being done at the school on p. 14. ■

CURRENT FACULTY/STUDENT
CYBER RESEARCH

Evaluating Practical Considerations of Behavioral Biometrics for Mobile Devices

Gastric Implant—Wirelessly Powered and Communicated

Identifying Mobile Malware Using Text Mining and Analytics

Using a Virtual Scene to Understand Freezing of Gait of People with Parkinson’s Disease

Motion Planning of Mobile Robot—Q-Bot 2

Nanofabricated Electrodes for Disease Diagnostics

Secure and Private Sensing for Driver Authentication and Transportation Safety

Visualization of Sensor Network Data for the Identification of IoT Security Vulnerabilities

When It Comes to Nutrition, Labels Matter

A SHOPPER IS CONSIDERING between two soda brands on the supermarket shelf. The label on the larger bottle says there are 150 calories; the smaller bottle says 200 calories. The one with fewer calories may seem like the obvious choice, but other factors, like serving size, may actually make it a poorer choice. For shoppers looking for the healthiest options, the answers are all on the label.

However, nutrition labels can be confusing, often leading the consumer to miscalculate calorie counts. In 2016, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) finalized a makeover that would make reading these labels easier. Now that upgrade has been delayed until 2020 because of lobbying by food and beverage manufacturers. According to Mindy Haar, Ph.D., RDN, associate dean of Undergraduate Affairs, and Lorraine Mongiello, DrPH, assistant professor in NYIT School of Health Professions, that decision will have negative implications.

“Knowing what’s in the food you eat is going to help you make better choices,” says Haar, who wrote about the issue in an op-ed published in *The Hill*. “Americans can’t afford these delays. The obesity epidemic is taking a major toll on our waistlines—and our wallets.”

Mongiello notes that “four of the leading causes of death in this country—heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, and stroke—are all associated with diet.” Those four illnesses kill nearly 1.6 million Americans every year and cost the nation almost \$700 billion. While many believe the solution to the obesity crisis is simply to eat healthier, Haar maintains that combating the epidemic requires federal lawmakers to enact two proposed regulations:

1. To require chain restaurants to include calorie counts on their menus so customers can make informed choices.

2. To update the Nutrition Facts Label (the black-and-white nutritional content box found on everything from soda cans to potato chip bags).

Arguing that transparent nutrition labels not only empower consumers to make healthier decisions, Haar notes that the changes will also prompt the food industry to eliminate unhealthy ingredients. Additionally, she advocates for manufacturers to provide realistic serving sizes.

While the FDA has finally announced that beginning in May 2018, restaurants will be required to post calorie counts on menu boards nationwide, Haar urges the agency not to give in to the persistent lobbying that has pressured regulators to postpone this rollout since 2010.

“The obesity epidemic will only worsen—sickening Americans and bankrupting the health care system—if regulators continue to cave to the food industry. It’s time for restaurants and manufacturers to tell Americans what’s really in their food,” she concludes. ■



Read the op-ed: [bit.ly/Nutrition-Haar](https://www.thehill.com/policy/healthcare/408111-nutrition-labels/)
Watch more: [bit.ly/Nutrition-Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/nyitmagazine/)

Courtesy of C+M



Lorraine Mongiello, DrPH (left), and Mindy Haar, Ph.D., RDN (right), discussed the importance of nutrition labels in a Facebook Live session.

Get to Know VIP

FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS, the NYIT Vocational Independence Program (VIP) has been helping young adults with learning differences and autism spectrum diagnoses live fulfilling lives on their own. “There are fewer than a dozen schools that provide all of the opportunities that VIP does,” says Paul Cavanagh, senior director of VIP. In the program, which recently relocated to the Old Westbury campus, students take noncredit classes in executive functioning, communication, independent living, and employment skills. Some also take NYIT credit classes on a nonmatriculated basis. “In addition, every student has a job coach, academic advisor, social counselor, independent living coach, and a banking coach,” explains Walter Mayer, associate director of Admissions and Development.

The program also offers work experience, extracurricular activities, and residential living—features that make VIP stand out. “Another key part of our curriculum is travel training,” says

Cavanagh. During their freshman and sophomore years, students take a course focused on learning how to use public transportation in order to get where they need to for fun, work, or other practical purposes.

After three years, students graduate with skills they need to live independently and find a job. “We had an 80 percent post-graduation employment rate for our May 2017 class,” says Cavanagh. “More than a third of the graduating class was hired directly out of our VIP-sponsored internships.” In the past, students have found internships at major hotel chains, large retailers, local restaurants, hospitals, animal hospitals, and other businesses. And guidance doesn’t end at graduation. “VIP offers continuous counseling to our graduates,” Cavanagh explains.

Because of its model, VIP is seen as an example of how to run this type of program successfully. “We were one of the first five programs in the country to apply for recognition from the U.S. Department of Education as a

(Below) Gina Frisina, director of Independent Living, shows students Olivia Mirabello and Max Zukin how to make matzo ball soup.

“Every student has a job coach, academic advisor, social counselor, independent living coach, and a banking coach.”

—Walter Mayer

comprehensive transition and post-secondary program, and we have had several institutions approach us to ask for guidance and advice in developing a program of their own,” says Mayer. He notes three factors that make VIP special: “Our environment, our history, and our staff. The program has been growing and evolving for 30 years, and there is a strong foundation of experience and institutional knowledge that guides our approach.” ■



Learn more: bit.ly/NYIT-VIP





Employer Spotlight: Liz Uzzo

H2M Architects + Engineers, a consulting and design firm based in Long Island, employs more than 50 NYIT graduates, including senior vice president of human resources **Liz Uzzo (B.P.S. '85, M.S. '95)**.

H2M values its nearly 400 employees—and many of them have worked their way up the company's ranks. CEO and President **Rich Humann (B.S. '91)** started as an intern in 1987 while he was still a student at NYIT. That same year, another NYIT graduate, Liz Uzzo, decided to leave her career as a pastry chef at a top New York City restaurant (and commercial fishing boat owner!) to take a job in H2M's payroll department. That decision changed her life. *NYIT Magazine* spoke to Uzzo about her career, how the human resources industry has changed, and the qualities that make a good hire.

YES, HUMAN RESOURCES IS A RESOURCE

With nearly three decades of experience in human resources, Uzzo has seen it all. When she started at H2M, she was a department of one that focused on transactional issues. Now, she oversees a full team of human resources professionals and is ensuring that H2M continues its mission to recruit and retain the best employees. Transparency is key to their success. "We've worked to be very employee focused," she says.

"No feedback is bad feedback ... because once I am aware of an issue, I can do something about it. We are always looking at different policies and tools to give managers so they can better manage our changing workforce."

TO MOVE UP, EMPLOYEES NEED TO ADVOCATE FOR THEMSELVES

When hiring, Uzzo looks for those who are not only strong workers, but who can also take initiative. "Too often, people look elsewhere instead of inside their own firms," she says. "If you see an opportunity somewhere else in the company, say something." To help employees do that, Uzzo's team works directly with groups throughout H2M so that employees feel empowered to have open conversations about their careers. "We council and coach everyone—it's a no-fear zone," she adds.

Uzzo points to herself as an example of why to speak up. When she started at H2M, she loved the company but felt her job in payroll wasn't a good fit. She pitched the idea of taking on the human resources role—even though she had no experience. The CEO took a chance, and Uzzo grew into the role, earned a

Uzzo (right) interviews students at NYIT's Recruit: Engineering, Architecture, Construction, Technology (REACT) Career Fair.

Andie Kopinski

master's degree in human resources from NYIT, and evolved the culture of human resources at the company. In 1998, she became the second woman and one of the few non-engineers/architects at the company to be made a partner.

CONFIDENCE MATTERS

Uzzo is a mainstay at NYIT career fairs. Even during the worst times of the recession, she returned to the university to find interns and recent graduates for entry-level positions. Hundreds of interviews later, she knows what makes a strong candidate—even if that person is just starting out in their career. "Take writing and public speaking courses," she advises, "because the confidence you exude in the meet and greet at a career fair will make you stand out ... or not." And don't forget about work ethic. "Do a decent internship or two, but if you can't, then at least work somewhere. Be realistic about your expectations and be ready to roll up your sleeves and work really hard." After all, that's what Uzzo did. ■



Want to recruit NYIT talent?
Call Career Services: **516.686.7527**

Cross Country

BY DIANE DIPIERO



The 2017 cross country season introduced the NYIT community to new stars and kicked off a resurgence of interest in track and field at the university.



ON OCTOBER 21, 2017, nine cross country teams gathered on NYIT's Old Westbury campus for the East Coast Conference (ECC) Championships. By the time the last runners crossed the finish line, the results were clear: NYIT cross country was back.

Hosting the ECC Cross Country Championships for the first time was a big win for NYIT. "We were able to showcase our beautiful campus as well as our new championship-caliber course," says NYIT cross country head coach **Lenroy Raffington (B.S. '95)**. The event also illustrated the strides NYIT has made in re-energizing the cross country program and signals what's to come. "Cross country has been a sport where we have struggled to enter the top echelon of the conference standings the past few years," explains Dan Vélez, director of athletics and recreation. "Hosting this championship on a dedicated course on our campus signifies to our student-athletes and to the rest of the league that we are serious about the sport."

The runners seemed to embody this renewed energy during competition. **Noah Simatei**, a freshman on the men's team, had a stellar season. He earned ECC Rookie

Makes Great Strides

(Left) Cross country team member Noah Simatei competes at the East Coast Conference Championships.

(Above) The team huddles up before a meet.

of the Year and first-team all-league honors after finishing second at the championships in October; he went on to finish 18th of 158 runners at the East Region Championships in November. On the women's side, freshman **Monicah Jebor** won her first career race at the CSI Invitational with a 6K time of 24:57:9 and was twice named Rookie of the Week during the 2017 season. Overall, cross country finished in the top five at three invitationals and placed seventh out of nine teams at the ECC Championships.

Accomplishments like these have athletes, coaches, and alumni feeling positive. "This was the first year in many years that we were in a position to recruit a few athletes to jump-start the program," Raffington says. "The idea that we are able to restore this program, which has been fortunate enough to have many great student-athletes, is enough to get any alumnus excited." The coaching staff is among that group. "Our head coach [Raffington] was an incredibly successful runner at NYIT," Vélez says. "Our assistant coach and head coach emeritus, Pete Zinno, is highly regarded in the running world as one of the best individuals at his craft."

Sprinting Forward

Running requires discipline, dedication, and determination—the same traits that help students succeed in the classroom and in life. What's more, cross country runners learn to strive for their personal best while cheering on fellow runners. "Cross country is a great sport because it encompasses team effort as well as individual performance," Raffington says. It's those advantages that the athletic department believes will bring more student-athletes to the program.

Increased interest could also lead to additional opportunities, including the reinstatement of track and field. “NYIT has a rich history in a few sports. Cross country/track and field is one of them,” Raffington says. Future goals for the program include becoming more competitive in the ECC, qualifying individual athletes for the NCAA Championships, and building the men’s and women’s teams to approximately 10 to 12 athletes each. Maintaining (and even exceeding) current academic standards for team members will also be part of that plan.

These goals coincide with an overall vision for the athletic program. “In order for us to achieve our goal of winning a Learfield Directors’ Cup [an award presented to higher education institutions exhibiting success in a variety of men’s and women’s sports], we need all of our sports to operate at a high level,” Vélez says. “I want to be the type of athletic department that people will look at and say, ‘Wow. They win championships in everything.’”



Staying on Track

All of this is great news for past student-athletes, including NYIT track star and former All-American **Melanie Austin (B.S. '00)**. As a single mother in her 30s, Austin enrolled at NYIT and developed the discipline required to succeed on the track, in the classroom, and in life. “It gave me the second chance of a lifetime,” she says about her experience as an NYIT student-athlete. “I had to work extra hard, but I had lots of support from faculty and coach [Pete] Zinno. He gave our team world-class exposure.” After graduating, she went on to practice occupational therapy and ultimately returned to NYIT as assistant professor and admissions coordinator for the occupational therapy department. This past year, Austin was named Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) and serves as NYIT’s representative in East Coast Conference and NCAA affairs.

Austin’s experience makes her well aware of the challenges student-athletes face. “They have a rigorous job ahead of them balancing life around athletics,” she says. In addition, much is expected of student-athletes at NYIT because they represent the school wherever they go. “They can’t hide in the crowd,” says Vélez. “Student-athletes become examples of success stories for the rest of the student body.”

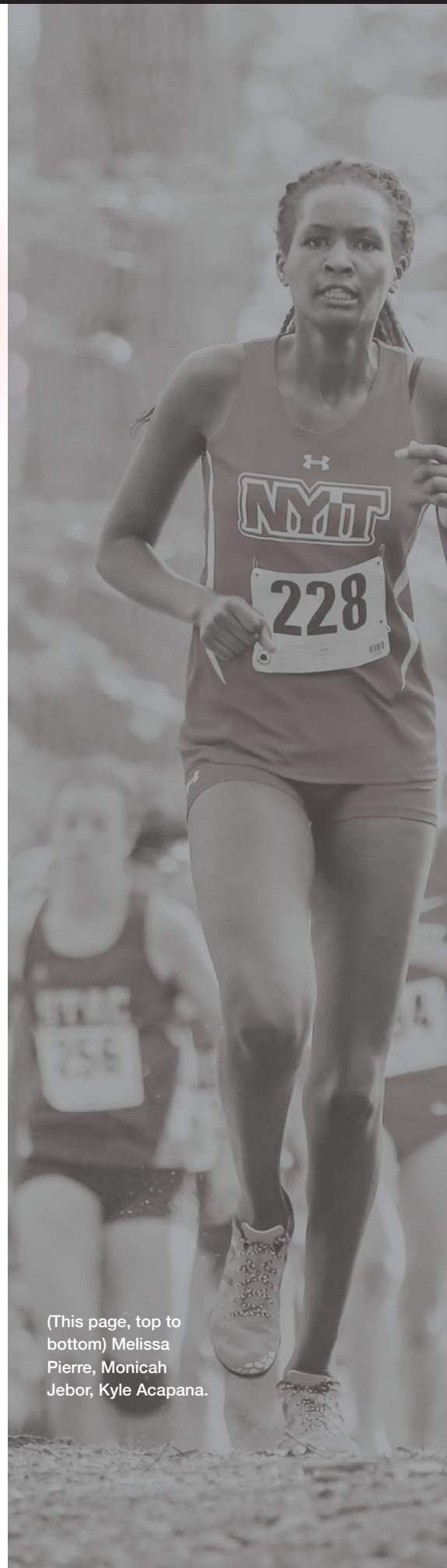
But NYIT has a reputation for giving athletes the academic and emotional assistance needed to thrive on the field and in the classroom. “NYIT has several mentoring programs to help motivate and orientate student-athletes to the college athletic life, including our long-standing Cubs to Bears program,” Raffington says.

For Jebor and Simatei, who both hail from the city of Eldoret in Kenya, that support has been invaluable. “The people I have met—professors, coaches, and students—are friendly, and this makes me feel good, even if I miss my home,” says Jebor. Simatei concurred: “You have to maintain a good GPA as a student-athlete to keep your scholarship.” Support from teachers and coaches makes that task more manageable. “The professors are jovial and helpful,” Simatei says. “You know that if you work hard, everything is going to be okay.”

Cross country resumes September 2018. ■



Follow the Bears: NYITBEARS.com



(This page, top to bottom) Melissa Pierre, Monicah Jebor, Kyle Acapana.

The Marathon to Tokyo 2020

MO'ATH ALKHAWALDEH (B.S. '09, M.S. '11) was a cross country standout at NYIT-Old Westbury. He ranked in the top five of ECC Championships two years in a row, was NYIT Star Athlete of the Year in 2008, and was ECC Runner of the Week three times in 2011. After graduating, Alkhawaldeh continued running while working for the World Bank and Generations for Peace in Jordan. Now, he's training to become the first Jordanian marathoner with a successful qualifying time to compete in the Olympics. Alkhawaldeh recognizes the role that college athletics has played in his success. "Being a student-athlete is an amazing experience that exists in the United States," he says. "The opportunity at NYIT opened a lot of doors for me."

Christian Pondella



Read more of his story: bit.ly/Marathon-2020

(Right) Erin Smith
(Below) The women's cross country course overlaid on a map of the NYIT-Old Westbury campus.



- Mile 1
- Mile 2
- Mile 2 continued
- Mile 3

Map source: Junior Salazar. Art: Marc Blaustein

NYIT Women's Cross Country Map

The
Password
Is
Dead.

£øng
L!ve †he
P@\$\$wo©d.

Is the password doomed?

And if so, what's next?

NYIT faculty members are uncovering the flaws of using passwords and finding new ways to authenticate users, drawing on everything from a person's location to their unique swiping style.

luckydog95

Password incorrect. Try again.

lucky!dog95

Incorrect. You have two attempts remaining.

Lucky!Dog!95!

Bingo.

We've all been there. With everything from email and social media accounts to banking, utilities, and online retailers requiring logins, the average person has an ever-increasing number of passwords to remember. Keeping tabs on them all is a big reason that one in three people continue to use variations of the same password (including, yes, "password") for multiple accounts, even though they know they shouldn't.

According to experts, the majority of user-generated passwords are vulnerable to hacking, even those with at least eight characters and a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols. NYIT Assistant Professor of Computer Sciences Paolo Gasti, Ph.D., is showing why that's the case. Along with researchers at Stevens Institute of Technology, Gasti utilized Generative adversarial networks (GANs) to improve the rate passwords are guessed over existing methods. Unlike most tools built to crack passwords, the PassGAN system used by the team takes existing information and learns from those patterns to make educated guesses.

For the purpose of testing PassGAN, Gasti and his colleagues started with 70 million leaked passwords. They ran the program for several days and generated 10 billion new passwords from that data. When they input a few million new passwords, Gasti says the machine was able to guess *roughly half of them*. "We knew passwords weren't great, but this research was able to quantify how bad

they are," he says of their results. "It's time to replace passwords or adopt better tools to protect them."

The need to find a better solution is urgent, thanks to recent breaches of companies like Deloitte, Target, Equifax, and even the IRS, which have exposed sensitive customer information, including millions of user passwords. That has also increased the demand for skilled experts in the field of cybersecurity.

"It is exciting to see the evolution of cybersecurity education and research at NYIT, which began in 2005 by offering one of the first master's degrees in Information, Network, and Computer Security (INCS) in the U.S.," says School of Engineering and Computing Sciences Dean Nada Marie Anid, Ph.D. "We are proud to be producers of students who have the right credentials in the high-demand field of cybersecurity, whether in business, government, or education."

Gasti is one of several NYIT faculty who involves students in his research. In

addition to his work with PassGAN, he is actively engaged in research about user authentication, in particular with regards to mobile devices. "Phones and tablets are really where we're going in terms of computing, and they are also more susceptible to loss or theft, so it makes more sense to focus on those," says Gasti.

It's also more difficult to type complex passwords on a phone than a computer keyboard. That's one reason mobile devices have moved to using biometrics to authenticate users (think fingerprint sensors or the facial recognition feature on the iPhone X). But although those methods are effective, they require a user to stop what they are doing to sign in and they don't protect the device after the initial login. "Have you ever had anyone take your phone from your hand and start using it?" poses Gasti.

Incidents like this are why engineers are looking into continuous authentication, but developing ways for devices to constantly determine that "you are who you say you are" is tricky. Imagine if your phone showed a pop-up asking for your fingerprint every 30 seconds. "It would be pretty annoying," says Gasti. "We're trying to improve authentication frequency and security, but without the annoyance."

Gasti and School of Engineering and Computing Sciences Associate Professor Kiran Balagani, Ph.D., co-direct NYIT's Laboratory for Behavioral





Authentication, Machine Learning, and Privacy (LAMP), which provides a conduit for research in machine learning and cryptography applied to authentication and privacy. With funding from DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency), they are studying hand movement, orientation, and grasp (HMOG) to continuously authenticate smartphone users.

Along with colleagues at the College of William and Mary, Gasti, Balagani, and visiting graduate student Zdeňka Sitová conducted a user study to collect a wide array of signals about user behaviors on smartphones.

“Everyone holds and swipes the phone in a slightly different way. We’re measuring how these movements happen and when and how long they last,” explains Gasti. “The goal is to be able to leverage that information to distinguish between the owner and somebody else. [The method for authenticating] would be completely seamless. You don’t even know it’s happening until somebody takes your phone and it locks automatically.”

The challenge with systems that run continuously in the background is that

they use a lot of power. “As the industry moves to using biometrics and away from passwords to authenticate a user, technology is needed to recognize users accurately and economically without draining a battery’s life,” says Balagani.

With funding from the National Science Foundation, a second LAMP project is underway to devise new techniques that reduce the energy cost of cryptographic authentication protocols on smartphones. “The goal is to be able to run the authentication with no impact on your battery,” says Gasti.

Ziqian (Cecilia) Dong, Ph.D., associate professor of electrical and computer engineering, focuses on a different aspect of authentication: a user’s location. With location services built into most devices, a person’s phone functions like a tracker. The device is also a sophisticated log of geographic locations a user is likely to visit. If those location patterns are disrupted, it could send an alert that the device or login has been hacked. “It’s called location-based authentication,” Dong says. “My research looks at using network measurement to detect the distance that you could be claiming from where you are.”

It works like this: Every computer or mobile device gives off a location via its IP address. If you ping another computer, there is an expected time measurement based on distance. “So, if there is a huge bias in terms of the norm of what I expect to see in a delay measurement, that should raise a red flag,” says Dong, who likens the process to when a credit card company alerts you that a purchase has been made outside your home country. “This could be added as another means of authentication,” she adds.

And there are more ways that engineers can exploit deviations in normal behavior to verify authentication. Assistant Professor Jonathan Voris, Ph.D., has developed novel techniques for addressing insider threats against both desktop and mobile platforms as part of the DARPA Active Authentication Program. Most people are creatures of habit. Every time they use their computer or their phone, they sequence through the same programs or files in a similar order. “You know what programs you’re going to launch when you log in, but someone else using your system for the first time would have to make a really educated guess at your normal workflow,”



Assistant Professor
Paolo Gasti, Ph.D.

Courtesy of NYIT



Associate Professor
Kiran Balagani, Ph.D.



Associate Professor
Ziqian Dong, Ph.D.

Marin Sack

Alexander Berg



Hi Frank!



says Voris. (He is also conducting similar research on driver authentication by how drivers operate their cars through funding from the University Transportation Research Center.) The thought is that even if a user's sign-in credentials are hacked, the computer can detect deviations from past user behavior. "It doesn't necessarily mean something malicious has occurred, but it raises a red flag that something potentially suspicious could be happening," Voris says.

With the increasing use of mobile devices by individuals and cloud-based storage systems by organizations, the importance of strong cybersecurity cannot be overemphasized. It's one reason NYIT has sponsored a major cybersecurity conference for the past eight years. "There's been a tremendous increase of personal information stored electronically," says Dong. "With all of this information in the cloud and all of these portable and wearable devices, there are increasing points of entry for hackers. Security needs to keep up." ■

Cybersecurity 101

NYIT EXPERTS OFFER TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SAFE

CHOOSE PASSWORDS WISELY. Everyone knows: Don't reuse passwords. While experts once recommended adding numbers and symbols to your password, Voris says that's no help if those characters are added to a standard "dictionary word." He says five or six words added together are a better option: "The added entropy provided by the longer sentence provides more randomness than a shorter password that just has a couple weird characters added in."

CONSIDER A PASSWORD MANAGER. "I would suggest a password manager that picks random and very long passwords and doesn't require anyone to remember them," says Gasti. "Make sure you have a very strong password for the password manager." And don't forget it.

BEWARE PUBLIC WIFI. When you're communicating on public wifi, anyone can eavesdrop. Not only that, it's possible for someone to intercept and alter communication between two parties. "It's called 'the-man-in-the-middle attack,'" says Dong. For greatest security, she suggests avoiding public wifi or using a trusted virtual private network (VPN).

THAT INCLUDES WHEN YOU CHARGE YOUR PHONE. In any airport, you'll see dozens of people charging their phones, tablets, and laptops while waiting for a flight. Bad idea, says Gasti, who says such devices are vulnerable to side channel attack. "I can't say how much is revealed through this side channel, but evidence shows it might not be safe to do that. The safest thing is to turn off your phone before charging."

USE DECOYS. And there are sneakier ways to thwart cybercriminals. Voris suggests downloading multiple banking apps on your phone. That way, if someone steals your phone, they have no way of knowing what accounts are legitimate and what are not. The same strategy can be applied to a home or work desktop computer. "Put 'high-stakes' fake files on your computer, such as fake tax returns," he suggests. "If those files are opened, that raises a red flag." ■

Barry Sloan



Assistant Professor
Jonathan Voris, Ph.D.



Building Resilient Communities

A new initiative between NYIT and Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement (HCCI) encourages collaboration and programming that benefits Harlem's Bradhurst community and NYIT students.

BY ALIX SOBLER

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Building Resilient Communities features four major components:

- 1 After-school programs that highlight STEM-based learning.
- 2 A community-led Neighborhood Design Center focused on urban housing.
- 3 A Parent University program to help families with the college application and enrollment process.
- 4 A community health care program.

INSIDE 263 W. 153RD ST. in Manhattan on a frigid Saturday in November, first-year NYIT student Aliyah Pimento was trying to stand out in the crowd. Armed with a soccer ball, a poster, and a big dose of enthusiasm, she pitched her idea for a new after-school program, Fun With Fitness, to children, parents, and members of the local community. “There’s no competition involved. It’s just for fun,” she told visitors. By the end of the day, she had a sign-up sheet full of names.

Pimento was one of dozens of NYIT students and faculty and staff members—representing all of the university’s schools and colleges—who attended an open house for Building Resilient Communities. Launched in fall 2017, the initiative is the brainchild of NYIT Senior Director of International and Experiential Education Amy Bravo and Malcolm A. Punter, president and CEO of HCCI.

Established in 1986, HCCI is committed to the redevelopment of the Harlem community. “HCCI fosters resilience by creating affordable housing and employment opportunities, but they wanted to increase their community outreach,” says Bravo. “NYIT’s involvement will add components of science, technology, and sustainability that will have an impact on multiple generations in fun and productive ways.” To accomplish that, the two organizations developed an ambitious five-year plan that will benefit NYIT students and strengthen a blossoming corridor in Harlem: 150th Street, between Bradhurst Avenue and Macombs Place, to 162nd Street along Frederick Douglass Boulevard. The community has designated the area as a safe space for all. “[Bradhurst] was dark in the daytime,” said Rev. Al Taylor, New York State assemblyman, at the open house. “Now it’s the place everyone wants to be. And if our kids are going to be stakeholders and remain in this community, they need the education and the tools to get to the next level.”

That’s where students like Pimento come in. With the support of NYIT, HCCI, and other nonprofits, volunteers are developing programming that addresses key concerns, such as sustainability and wellness. “Our hope is that we come up with great, innovative ideas that will make our communities better places for all of us,” says Bravo.

Photos: (Facing page) A view of the Bradhurst neighborhood of Harlem. (This page) 1. A student shows an open house attendee how to make slime. 2. The facade of 263 W. 153rd St. (the first LEED-certified building for affordable housing in New York City). 3. Participants in Parent University. 4. Associate Professor Sonia Rivera-Martinez, D.O., looks on as Bill Perkins, New York City Council, District 9 (left), volunteers for a wellness screening.

STEM and the Seeds of Learning

Make your own slime. Dig in the dirt. Play with blocks. Sounds like fun, right? But all three activities also tie to STEM concepts like chemistry, biology, and engineering.

In September, Building Resilient Communities officially kicked off with NYIT students delivering after-school enrichment programs for children. In addition to providing kids with a safe space, the programs integrate STEM-based learning. “These innovative programs will help young people get engaged with the latest technology,” says Punter. “These programs will help them become more marketable and have access to the greater educational community—a community that we have traditionally been cut off from in Harlem because of lack of access and lack of key partnerships.”

The “clubhouse,” one of HCCI’s spaces in 263 W. 153rd St., is where the activities take place. Originally designed by MIT, it is being re-envisioned as a maker space and is stocked with computers, 3-D printers, and even a green screen. After-school leaders use these resources to help participants build technology and communication skills and inspire their imaginations. Second-year NYIT student Muhammad Tanveer organized some of this fall’s after-school programs in partnership with startup Hands That Make a Difference. “NYIT students are able to apply lessons they are introduced to in their service learning classes, like gathering anecdotal data and applying critical thinking and problem-solving skills,” says Tanveer. “From my own experience, the best way to learn something is to teach it to another student.”

Service learning is a big component of the first- and second-year student experience at NYIT, and many of the students volunteering with Building Resilient Communities are doing so as part of their Foundations of Inquiry and Foundations of Scientific Process coursework. Jim Martinez, Ph.D., associate professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies and Education and a mentor to the students running the program, says that being able to apply concepts discussed in the classroom is essential to the learning process. “Part of my job as an instructor is to give students time to reflect on what happened. I’ll ask them, ‘What did you notice? Who was there? Tell me in detail,’” he says. “That’s where the inquiry part of Foundations of Inquiry comes in.”

Parents and Students Learning Together

While young children are just beginning their academic journey, high school juniors and seniors have another challenge: getting into college. Parents must also navigate a gauntlet of financial aid forms and admission packets—a process that becomes even harder when a parent doesn’t speak English as a first language or has never experienced the process before. It’s a problem many members of the Bradhurst community face. The Building Resilient Communities team found a solution in Parent University—an initiative that helps keep families engaged in their children’s learning. “NYIT’s Parent University program is unique in that it focuses on helping parents and their children through the university admissions process,” says Emily Rukobo, executive director of NYIT’s Global Engagement office.

Joining Rukobo to oversee the program are Jennifer Rubin, administrative assistant in the Office of Global Engagement and a Parent University instructor, and Gwen Lowenheim, NYIT adjunct and Parent University instructor. “I have found teaching this class really eye-opening,” says Rubin. “These parents are hardworking, present, and engaged, and this program gives them a chance to voice their concerns.”

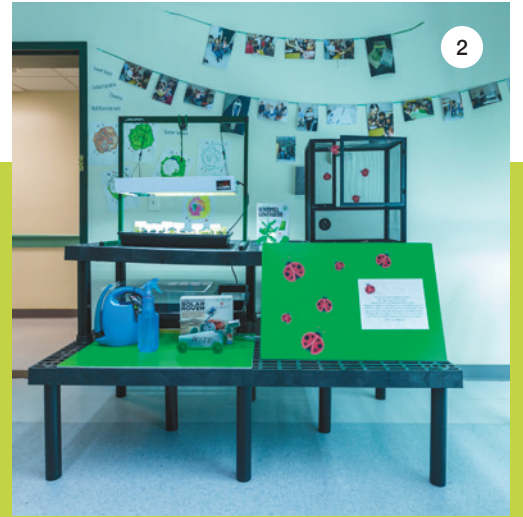
Programs like Parent University also have the potential to impact generations to come. “The future belongs to those who are prepared for it,” remarked HCCI Board Chairman the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Curtis at the open house. “People who participate in [Building Resilient Communities] will not only affect their own future, but their children’s future as well.”



Photos:

1, 2: Plants grow in the hydroponic garden, which is being used to teach children about nutrition and sustainability in the after-school program.

3, 4, 5: Students greet visitors, including the Rev. Al Taylor (below right), and present ideas for programs at the open house. Many of the after-school activities include STEM-based activities like designing an object online and then creating it with a 3-D printer.



“From my own experience, the best way to learn something is to teach it to another student.”
—NYIT student Muhammad Tanveer



The Road to Wellness

Building Resilient Communities wants to make a positive impact on the lives of everyone involved. The community health care program, another of the initiative's four core components, is planning to offer free monthly screenings by faculty members and students in NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine (NYITCOM) and NYIT School of Health Professions. "Research shows that students learn better when they use whatever they've learned in practice," says Lillian Niwagaba, Ph.D., director of NYIT's Center for Global Health and one of the faculty members leading the initiative. "Programs like this help us make sure our students get the practical skills needed for the 21st century."

In addition to wellness screenings, the team will also lead education sessions that align with the World Health Organization's calendar and focus on a different health issue each month. Special attention will be paid to medical issues that are prevalent in the Harlem community, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

"Community engagement is a big part of medical training for our students," explains Niwagaba. "As an osteopathic school, our students approach patient care in a holistic manner, focusing on the person, not just the disease. With Osteopathic Manipulation, students also use their hands to diagnose and treat instead of costly equipment, and they can make referrals to local clinics and hospitals where necessary."

Future-Focused Community Spaces

HCCI approaches affordable housing and community development in a future-focused way. The first LEED-certified building for affordable housing in New York City was 263 W. 153rd St. It boasts a green roof, back garden, and now an indoor hydroponic garden.

Associate Professor Kate O'Hara oversees the hydroponics system. "Our vision is to reframe the narrative around what you can do in urban spaces," she says. "Hydroponics is a term that may not seem relatable to people living in the city, but when you hear people say, 'I have a small windowsill garden,' or 'I have a planter in my home,' then the connection can be made that they can do the same thing, maybe even on a larger scale, by growing in sand or gravel, or in water—without any soil at all." In October, children in the after-school program planted cilantro, sweet basil, butter lettuce, collard greens, and red Russian kale. Over the next six weeks, they cared for the seedlings, monitored their nutrition and growth, and learned about hydroponic gardening and sustainability. "We had a bumper crop!" adds O'Hara. She also has her sights on the green roof, which she and Bravo hope to transform and make accessible.

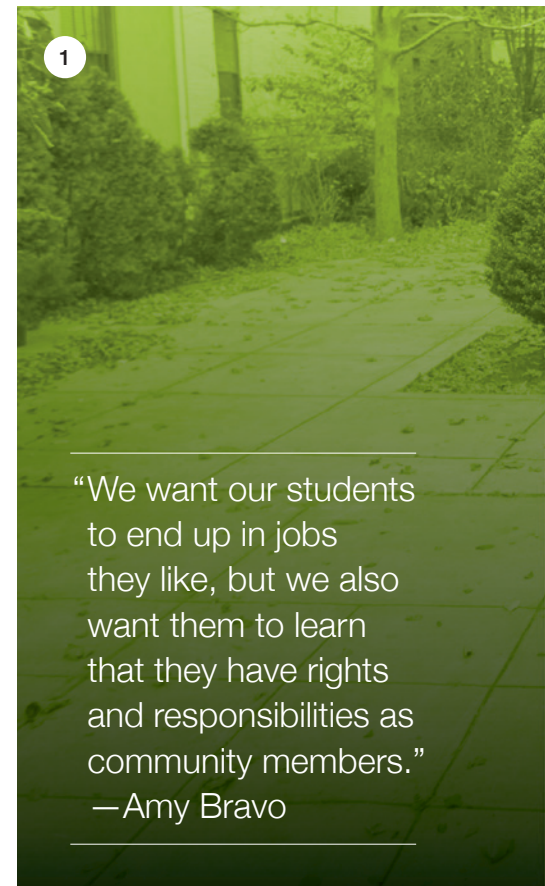
While a rooftop garden would be a boon for the building and its residents, Building Resilient Communities plans to address larger issues surrounding affordable housing. On Frederick Douglass Boulevard, construction is underway on a community-led Neighborhood Design Center. Helmed by Nicholas Bloom, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of Interdisciplinary Studies and Urban Administration, and Matthias Altwicker, associate dean of academics in the School of Architecture and Design, the design center will serve as a "housing think tank" where urban planners, architects, and community members can host programming about one of the city's biggest challenges.

"Right now, housing development is very top down," says Bloom. "Federal agencies and big architecture firms come up with ideas and then go out and try to sell them. We want to get a community-driven visioning process for housing, because it's the people who live in these neighborhoods and communities who are familiar with the real needs."

A Not-So-Secret Garden

A few blocks south from the Neighborhood Design Center on West 148th Street, a neglected park is about to get a makeover. NYIT School of Architecture and Design students are reimagining the space so that it better serves the community's needs and reflects the vibrant, growing neighborhood that surrounds it.

Photos: 1. Michael Riccardi and Gabrielle Redding tour the park being re-envisioned by Freedom by Design. The top student-generated designs, which are being developed using feedback and data from public meetings, will be presented to community members, who will choose a winner.

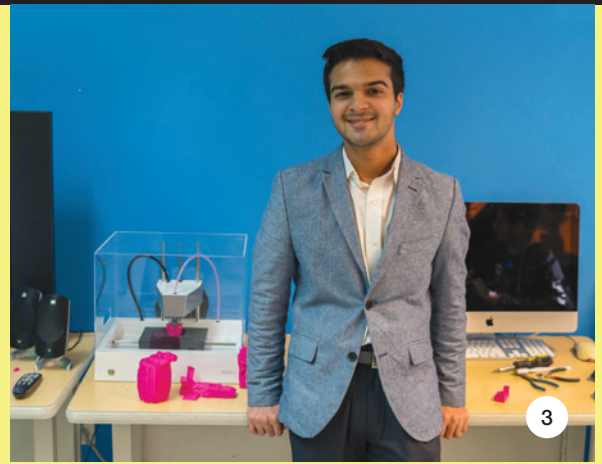


"We want our students to end up in jobs they like, but we also want them to learn that they have rights and responsibilities as community members."
—Amy Bravo



2. Amy Bravo, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Malcolm A. Punter, Deputy Borough President Matthew Washington, and Bill Perkins stand in front of what will become the Neighborhood Design Center.

3. Student Muhammad Tanveer leads after-school programs.



4. Volunteers at the open house solicit ideas for the community garden.



Heading up the project is Freedom by Design—an NYIT student organization that produces a design project each year in collaboration with a local community organization. During the fall, the team hosted design charettes and public events to gather feedback from community members about their vision for the space. “One of the popular, recurring concepts from the community is to keep the park open and ready for events, allowing them to use it for gatherings and birthday parties,” says architecture student and project manager Gabrielle Redding. Fifth-year architecture student Michael Riccardi acknowledges it can be challenging to meet everyone’s requirements. “But it’s all about engaging with the community and hearing what they want,” he says. “Finding the best route to make the most people happy can be really rewarding.”

Programs That Innovate and Motivate

Though Building Resilient Communities is still in its early stages, the initiative is striking a chord with the NYIT and Bradhurst communities alike. Speaking at the open house, a community member said the program was a great opportunity to motivate her granddaughter and to teach her that “as a young woman she can be anything she wants to be.” According to Bravo, the collaboration has the potential to significantly impact NYIT’s future as well. “We want our students to end up in jobs they like, but we also want them to learn that they have rights and responsibilities as community members.” And service learning doesn’t end with a diploma. Nearly 200 NYIT alumni live or work in the area, and Bravo is already thinking of ways to get the wider NYIT community involved. She’s planning a meet-up for the spring with the hope of engaging alumni in the project and deepening NYIT’s roots in the community.

“NYIT has a reputation for producing great ideas, engaged citizens, and solutions for the community,” says Bravo. “If we can do that in five years here, then we can replicate it in other places. There’s no limit to the positive impact we can make.” ■

 Want to get involved? Contact: abravo@nyit.edu

MENTOR/MENTEE

Whether you are interested in finding a mentor or becoming one, NYIT CampusTap enables you to connect with a powerful online network of NYIT students and alumni. By matching mentees with mentors who have similar career goals, geographic locations, and/or interests, the program helps each mentor/mentee pair develop a relationship that will lead to better career decision-making and stronger networks that can result in better job opportunities.

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ALUMNI

Alumni Notes

1960s

Retired accountant **BOB O'SULLIVAN (B.S. '65)** lives in Sunset Beach, N.C. and has four children and seven grandchildren. "After getting married, I returned from my honeymoon to graduate from NYIT," he says. O'Sullivan also received an award when earning his degree. "My mom and my wife of one week were sitting together in the audience," he adds. "To say I was beaming is putting it lightly. I have always been proud to say that NYIT is my alma mater."

Chinatown." Today, he lives in Florida with his wife, Laurie. They have two children.

MARK C. HEHL (B.S. '72) published *Amusing Confessions of an International Consultant*, which chronicles his experiences assisting organizations with operational excellence and technology transfer projects. He fondly recalls playing intramural sports at NYIT. "I was not a good athlete, though I made a play in the football championship and won it for my team," he says. "That was the only time I was ever a hero in sports." bit.ly/Mark-Hehl

The Long Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects presented the Community Service Award to **JOHN R.**

SORRENTI (B.A. '72, M.B.A. '78), founder and president of JRS Architect P.C. Of his time at NYIT, he says, "I developed some of my most important friendships there, and the teachers have always been supportive of the students. Professor Anthony DiSanto offered me a summer job after graduation, and I learned so much from him—he even took me on my first business trip to Chicago with clients." Sorrenti continues to support students through the Friends of the School of Architecture and Design, which helps fund a lecture series and other student-focused learning opportunities. "My memories of NYIT span almost 50 years and I'm still making new ones," he adds.

ROBERT PATRICK COOMBS (B.F.A. '76) received the Salmagundi Club's 2017 William D. Zahn Memorial Award for his painting "Sagamore Boathouse."

FRANK RELF (B.S. '76) demonstrated his love of NYIT and commitment to student success by establishing the Frank G. Relf '76 Annual Scholarship Award through NYIT's Office of Development. "Our business [Frank G. Relf Architect, P.C.] is growing, with multiple hires just within the past year, including many NYIT

1970s

ERIC JONES (B.F.A. '70) started working for ABC News as a desk assistant during his senior year. "The day I graduated from college, I moved to Los Angeles to break into the motion picture industry," he says. "After 150 film projects, multiple Academy Award nominations, and working on television projects that have won many Emmys, I retired." He advises: "Go for your dreams. Everything is possible!"

LENNY MUROFF (B.F.A. '70) worked in commercial broadcasting and later began videotaping eye surgeries. He enrolled in an ophthalmic technicians program at Baylor College of Medicine, and since then, he has spent more than 30 years working in the ophthalmic field. He holds two U.S. patents for E-Z Drops, a product that helps people get eye drops into their eyes. Muroff recalls two documentaries he produced with NYIT classmates: "One was titled *What Is Dirty, Ugly, and Gray?* and dealt with the New York City subway system and the other was *Worlds Within a City*, which covered Greenwich Village, SoHo, the Bowery, and

ALUMNI
SPOTLIGHT

grads,” he says. “We plan on continuing our efforts to inspire and be a voice for students of NYIT School of Architecture and Design.”

Retired New York City special investigator **MICHAEL SOLOMON (B.S. '77)** is a motivational speaker and best-selling author. “As a detective, my degree in behavioral sciences gave me deeper insight into the people I dealt with on a daily basis,” he says. After retiring from the NYPD, Solomon worked in the financial management and security industries. successtalkinc.com

1980s

CHRISTINE COSENZA-HERALD (B.S. '80) was one of 10 teachers selected from 130 to become a member of the National Science Teachers Association and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics STEM Teacher Ambassador program. In June, she will meet with Washington, D.C., leaders to discuss major issues, including federal STEM programs, the role and impact of STEM research, professional learning and growth, standards, assessments, and more.

CIO interviewed NYIT Board of Trustee member **PHIL FASANO (B.S. '80)** about the role a chief information officer plays in a company's executive leadership. Fasano serves as CEO of strategic advisor firm Bay Advisors. Previously, Fasano was executive vice president/CIO for AIG and held the same role at Kaiser Permanente. bit.ly/CIO-Fasano

GERARD LUCKMAN (B.S. '81) was named a 2017 New York “Super Lawyer.” He is a partner at Forchelli Deegan Terrana



Atul Kukar

(D.O. '00)

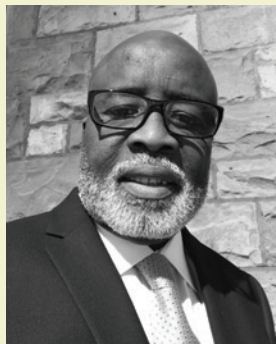
AT THE WHITE COAT CEREMONY for NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine's (NYITCOM) Class of 2021, keynote speaker and Alumnus of the Year **Atul Kukar, D.O.**, said, “Some say [the white coat] is just a symbol of the beginning of your career, but most feel it's much more. ... It's an official and public commitment to a lifelong practice in medicine.” Kukar has embodied that commitment throughout his career. As a student at NYITCOM, Kukar thought he wanted to be a pediatrician but changed his focus to cardiology after taking an elective in the subject. He went on to serve as a chief resident at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan and later earned a spot in a highly competitive cardiology and endovascular intervention fellowship at Lenox Hill Hospital. After working as an attending physician of cardiovascular medicine and associate director of peripheral intervention at Lenox Hill, Kukar changed direction and is now chief of cardiology at Mount Sinai Queens in Astoria.

Kukar has also dedicated himself to the education and wellness of the next generation of osteopathic physicians. “I got through medical school because of my friends and my family. I had everything I needed to be successful,” he says. But he also knows not everyone is as fortunate as he was. “It's as important for physicians to care for themselves as it is to care for their patients,” he says. “There's physician burnout, but there is also medical school burnout—and that is probably worse.” When he learned that NYITCOM students were building a new Healing Path on the Old Westbury campus to promote wellness and provide a serene space for reflection, he and his wife immediately donated to the cause. The Healing Path, which officially opened in October, and its messages of compassion, teamwork, and mindfulness resonate with Kukar, and he would like to do more to help medical students make the transition from student to practicing physician. Not only is he on NYITCOM's advisory board, but he and his wife also established an annual scholarship named for his father-in-law, who was also an osteopathic physician.

Kukar remembers well the difficult first years of medical school. To succeed, he had to rethink his studying habits and shift to a team/group approach. “It was a different kind of studying,” he says. “We taught each other the lectures, and we learned from each other. Group study got me through medical school. There is no right way to study; there is only learning what is best for you.” To help today's students, he plans to develop a program that matches a new medical student from day one with a mentor who has completed his or her residency and can help the younger student if they are struggling. “It's big sister/big brother sort of approach,” he says. “It's crucial for medical students to realize they are not alone.” ■

Steve Fann

LLP in Uniondale, N.Y. “As a corporate restructuring, business bankruptcy attorney, the lessons I learned in NYIT’s general business, accounting, and management classes have been invaluable,” he says.



Courtesy of Daniel Hammond

Retiree **DANIEL HAMMOND (B.S. '82)** (pictured above) writes that “I’ve had a rewarding career in banking and I owe NYIT much gratitude.” He earned his M.S. and M.B.A. degrees from the University of Colorado.

JIM CARDASIS (D.O. '83) treats patients at Taos Health Primary and Integrative Care in Taos, N.M.

The National Association of Corporate Directors recognized **PATRICIA GALLOWAY (M.B.A. '84)** as a Board Leadership Fellow. Galloway serves as president and CEO of Pegasus Global Holdings, a global management consulting company that specializes in strategic consulting, corporate governance, risk management, auditing and assessment, arbitration and alternative dispute resolution, and regulatory support.

Thirty-year veteran of the Suffolk County (N.Y.) Police Department **TIMOTHY GRAUER (B.S. '84)** was named the Suffolk County Police Steuben Association’s 2017 Man of the Year. He is a graduate of the 226th session of the FBI National Academy. “My favorite NYIT memory is carpooling to Old Westbury on Saturdays with classmates to attend class and all the great people I

met on campus,” he says. His degree in behavioral science proved helpful in his police career and convinced him to pursue a master’s degree.

JOSEPH WILLIAMS (B.F.A. '84) hosts *Memory in Top 40 Music*, a podcast that revisits the top music of the rock and roll era (available on iTunes and Stitcher). “My life’s journey has been a great one so far!” he says. “It has taken me in directions and to a career that I had not planned or foreseen. I supported NASA’s robotic space missions, and I progressed into management where I worked with NASA, the Air Force, and the U.S. Geological Survey. It would be easy to be deceived into thinking my communications degree didn’t apply, but when I saw how critical communication is with government customers, employees, senior management, and peers, only then did I understand how my NYIT education contributed to my success.”

RICH FALLER (B.S. '85) is IBM’s director of sales, public market, in New York City. He has more than three decades of experience working with government and financial services. “NYIT helped me get an internship at IBM while completing my degree,” he says. “I’ve been with them ever since.”

The Supreme Court of Florida appointed **ELAINE TERENZI (M.B.A. '85)** to membership on the Florida Board of Bar Examiners. Her term of office will extend through October 31, 2020. She currently serves as president of Independent Business Group LLC and as a volunteer for Guardian ad Litem, a program that protects the rights of children involved in court proceedings and advocates for their best interests.

Suffolk County (N.Y.) 10th District legislator **TOM CILMI (B.S. '86)** was re-elected to a fifth two-year term and selected to be minority leader of the Republican caucus of the Suffolk County Legislature. “There

is no doubt that the breadth of education I received at NYIT has proven indispensable,” he says. “From public communication to understanding how radio and television work to creative writing to management, marketing, economics, and business law—all of it has helped me as my career evolved from working in the music business to working in manufacturing to owning a small commercial printing company, and now in my political career.” In his downtime, Cilmi enjoys performing country music at local establishments.

JOHN DAAB, PH.D., (M.B.A. '86, M.P.S. '88) and his wife of 56 years, Irene, founded Scansen173 Museum in Princeton, N.J. The open-air museum features sculptures and other works of art. Of his NYIT education, he says: “My M.B.A. propelled me into the executive ranks, a professorship at NYU, 112 published articles, a Ph.D. in business, and running two preschools for more than 27 years.” Scansen173.com

RICH SORELLE (B.S. '86) is CEO of Abaco Systems, which specializes in open architecture computing and electronic systems for aerospace, defense, and industrial applications. Previously, he served as corporate vice president and president of its electronic systems division.

ROSEMARY DALY (D.O. '88) leads the Regenerative Wellness Clinic in West Palm Beach, Fla. She is board certified in anesthesiology and pain medicine, and she completed her anesthesiology residency at the Montefiore Medical Center at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

JEFF PATAKY (B.S. '89) is a program manager at Power Systems Manufacturing in Atlanta. “I started in aerospace, then moved on to commercial construction in the aircraft sector and now am in the energy sector,” he says. “To this day, my NYIT degree still opens doors.”

ALUMNI
SPOTLIGHT

1990s

STEPHEN CANNIZZARO (B.S. '90) is a volunteer for the Friendship Network, which helps those recovering from mental illness.

VERONICA LUBCZENKO (B.S. '90) is director of risk management for White Oak Commercial Finance's asset-based lending team in New York City. Previously, she served as vice president of credit approval and wholesale credit risk management at HSBC Bank, N.A.

RICHARD SAVIOR (M.B.A. '90) is an assistant professor of business management and economics at SUNY Empire State College. He received his doctorate from Fordham University and was a Fulbright Scholar at Princess Sumaya University for Technology in Amman, Jordan.

BEN CHEUNG (B.S. '91) is director of information technology at St. John's Senior Services in Rochester, N.Y. He has nearly three decades of IT experience and previously worked at RES Exhibits, a trade show and event management company.

RAN GORELIK (B.S. '91) is general manager of Cronos Israel/Cronos Group, which makes medical cannabis. He has more than 20 years of entrepreneurial and operational experience in biotech and health care.

DIANNE BAUMERT-MOYIK (M.A. '92) is senior manager for program communications at Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems. She serves on the NYIT College of Arts and Sciences Advisory Board and is a member of the NYIT President's Club. Her husband, Paul Moyik, retired from the Fire Department of New York Special Operations Command Squad 270 after more than 25 years. They now live in Melborne, Fla. with daughter Alyssa and chocolate lab Fudge.

Maureen Aladin

(M.S. '02)

“ALWAYS INTENDED TO FOLLOW A CREATIVE CAREER PATH,” says New York- and Los Angeles-based producer **Maureen Aladin**. Her first serious creative venture was as writer for a BET special on musician Terence Blanchard, who composed soundtracks for many of Spike Lee's films. When she decided to get her master's in computer science at NYIT, she says she felt sure “it was going to be nerdy.” Still, she wanted a degree that would help pay back her student loans—and ultimately aid her in her chosen field. “I hadn't taken any computer science classes before,” she says. “I had to rise to the challenge and learn at NYIT ... but the classes were small, and I never lacked for the attention I needed.”

What she learned in school has turned out to be invaluable. “It's been useful for producing, understanding how to build a website, and especially how to use the analytics and the back-end portion of what we're doing for marketing the content we produce,” she says. While studying at NYIT, she started an online music show called the *M-Spot*, which she describes as an “indie version of *AOL Sessions*.” She loved putting the show together, and it quickly developed a following. Eventually, in addition to the *M-Spot* online, Aladin produced a bi-monthly live-music version of the show at the Bowery Poetry Club in Manhattan. Following the 2010 Haiti earthquake, Aladin produced a music video, “Better,” with Grammy Award winners Melky and Wyclef Jean that helped raise money for the relief effort. The video got 1.4 million views on the video-streaming site Vevo.

In 2013, Aladin founded Twelver8 Media, which specializes in digital content production and social media consultation. She raised \$10,000 on Kickstarter to launch *Comida Caliente*, a reality-style online cooking show about a Mexican-American family from Houston. Then she took her proceeds from *Comida Caliente* and put them toward another project, *My Life Offline*, a web series that follows the lives of three top natural black hair vloggers. For Aladin, the project was political as well as entertaining. “Black hair has a history to it,” she says. “For a long time, the definition of black beauty was rooted in ideals of European beauty. A lot of women felt they needed to transform their beauty into something else.” By contrast, *My Life Offline*, she says, is about “enforcing self-love.”

Next up for Aladin is producing new seasons of her reality and fitness shows and marketing *Fragrances of Wine*, a line of perfumes that she runs with her siblings. “I come from a strong family. They've always made me feel great about who I was. People often see themselves as one-dimensional, but that's not true; we are multidimensional,” she says. “All these projects are a reflection of me.” ■



GAME DAY

This past fall, 50 NYIT alumni and friends gathered for the third annual Alumni Day at MetLife Stadium to watch the New York Jets in their home opener against the Miami Dolphins. Guests were treated to pregame on-field access to watch the two teams warm up, take photos, and get autographs from the athletes.



Join your classmates at an event.
nyit.edu/alumni/events

Zach Gilbert

Dun dun! **DYLAN SHERIDAN (B.F.A. '92)** is a graphic designer for the hit TV show *Law & Order: SVU*. After working in prop departments for TV and film for 13 years, he landed a design job in the industry. "I create whatever graphics are needed to tell the story," Sheridan says. "I continue to get work in this crowded field because of my ability to create things on a practical level in tandem with modern tools. Those practical skills I learned all those years ago at NYIT."

LIZ ARCHER (B.S.A.T. '93) was promoted to business development manager at Dewberry, a privately held professional services firm, in Bloomfield, N.J. Archer spent several years in positions focusing on marketing, community outreach, and affirmative action compliance for a construction company in New York City.

In December, cybersecurity expert **ERIC COLE (B.S. '93, M.S. '94)** explained why you should have at least six credit cards to *MarketWatch*. After being recruited by the CIA, Cole worked for The Sytex Group and Lockheed Martin and served on President Obama's Commission on Cybersecurity and as Bill Gates' cybersecurity advisor. He is currently founder and CEO of Secure Anchor Consulting. bit.ly/Eric-Cole

JAMES DRURY (D.O. '93) is medical director of Next Generation Village, an adolescent inpatient residential program in Sebring, Fla., which treats substance use disorders and co-morbid psychiatric conditions.

CHARLOTTE F. HUGHES (M.S. '94) spoke at the 2017 ATD Healthcare Summit. She currently serves as a strategic talent and organizational effectiveness consultant at Ascension Health. Hughes has worked with Fortune 500 companies, including Morgan Stanley, Kimberly-Clark, and Cox Media.

The *New York Times* described **THE REV. RICHARD FRECHETTE (D.O. '98)** as "seven people in one" in its heartbreaking story, "The Heroes of Burial Road." The article relates efforts in Haiti to help the dead receive proper burials. Frechette is the founder of the St. Luke Foundation for Haiti, which provides health care, education, and humanitarian relief to the country's poorest populations. bit.ly/Frechette

CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON (D.O. '99) is a general surgeon at Rochester General Hospital (N.Y.). He completed his residency at St. Barnabas Hospital Regional Trauma Center and is trained as a hand surgeon.

2000s

TARKAN CENG (M.S. '03) is the principal of Lenape Elementary School in New Paltz, N.Y. Previously, he served as principal for the Kent Primary School in Carmel, N.Y.

LEIGH MCMANUS (B.S. '03) appeared on *Megyn Kelly Today* to discuss why she helps pay off people's layaway debts as a way of fostering the spirit of giving during the holiday season. bit.ly/Today-McManus

ELIZABETH ACEVEDO-DANZI (D.O. '05) joined the primary care group affiliated with St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center in Smithtown, N.Y.

Vice President **JIM DALY (M.B.A. '05)** of Floralife/Smithers-Oasis was named chairman-elect of American Floral Endowment, a nonprofit that funds research and scholarships in floriculture and environmental horticulture.

RICHARD MEYER (M.B.A. '05) runs a blog, World of DTC Marketing, which covers the direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical market. worldofdctmarketing.com

ALUMNI
SPOTLIGHT

YELENA TSYBA, M.D., (D.O. '05) was recognized as a 2017 Top Doctor in New York. She is a board-certified obstetrician and gynecologist and operates a practice in New York City.

FARAH I. AL ALAMI (M.B.A. '06) is chief marketing and communications officer at UE Medical in Abu Dhabi, which oversees Danat Al Emarat Hospital, HealthPlus Network of Specialty Centers, and Moorfields Eye Hospital Abu Dhabi. She is a board member of the Middle East Public Relations Association.

RENITA OGLESBY (D.O. '06) is the owner of Montclair Medical Associates LLC in Livingston, N.J.



Courtesy of Alexander Parks

AUDREY PARKS (M.B.A. '06) (pictured above) is CIO for Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System in California. While at NYIT, she enrolled in online courses. “I had this preconception, which turned out to be incorrect, that taking an online course meant working in isolation,” she says. “I was pleasantly surprised to learn that I was wrong because the online posts and team assignments allowed for connecting with others in a meaningful way. NYIT made earning an M.B.A. possible while raising my boys and working full time.”

KYLE BARRY (B.S. '07, M.B.A. '12) is an engineering manager for Instagram. “After working with the security engineering team at Etsy in Brooklyn, I moved to the Bay Area



Bryan Silverman

(M.S. '89)

BRYAN SILVERMAN, entrepreneur, clinical nutritionist, and CEO of ObvioHealth, has had an unlikely career path. His favorite quote, “Chance favors the prepared mind” by famed microbiologist Louis Pasteur, suggests this is no accident. Silverman has always focused on finding opportunities to succeed despite the odds. As an undergraduate, he was set to play football at Ohio State University when an accident caused by a drunk driver put an end to his plans. “I went through the windshield,” he says. It took him six months to walk again. Without his athletic scholarship, he had to work full time while going to school. “It was incredibly difficult,” he adds.

Silverman refocused. He discovered a deep love of biochemistry and enrolled in NYIT’s clinical nutrition program. Under the mentorship of then Program Chairperson Susan Ettinger, Ph.D., he found his niche. “Dr. Ettinger educated me on how to understand diseases and how nutrition and exercise are related to that disease,” he says. “That education and that empowerment has been applicable in every job I’ve had.” Ettinger also encouraged his other area of interest: business. “Somewhere in my genetic nature exists this entrepreneur,” Silverman explains. “I joke about it—I have two degrees in nutrition, but I ended up as a CEO building software and technology.” At the time, clinical nutritionists followed relatively rigid career paths. “Most people thought they would work for an institution. I couldn’t do that—it wasn’t in my personality.” He started his own technology company focused on “wellness” (a relatively new concept at the time). “Now, wellness is a multibillion-dollar sector,” he says. “Nutritionists can go right from school and work for Apple.”

For the next 16 years, Silverman’s company The Rite Bite: Nutrition and Fitness Consultants designed worksite wellness programs for Fortune 100 companies including AT&T, Seagram’s, and Nestle. From there, Silverman worked for a new digital startup—WebMD—before launching three more companies that focused on wellness, obesity, and co-morbidities (such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension). “It’s reversible,” he says. “You do not have to be on medication. You have to lose weight, and people have to understand how to lose weight.”

As Silverman’s interest and involvement in new health care technologies grew, so did his global clients. In 2017, global health company PRIM reached out to him about forming a subsidiary group to develop digital clinical trials and universal medical marketing and ObvioHealth was born. His current projects include developing patient-medication solutions using virtual and augmented reality. To stay ahead of competitors, Silverman maintains a student mindset. “With technology, I am always learning,” he says, “and that allows me to be a better CEO.” ■

to lead Instagram's teams responsible for security, safety, and anti-abuse," he says. Barry is also a leadership coach at San Jose State University for a program that encourages underrepresented students to become leaders. Recalling his time at NYIT, he says, "The Greek system, clubs, and athletics programs all worked together to promote each other and activities across campus. The leadership opportunities my fraternity gave me helped shape much of what I do today."

ALLISON BAVER (M.B.A. '07) announced her retirement from short track skating to focus on her fashion career. In October, she partnered with the Susan G. Komen organization to donate a portion of her clothing line sales to support breast cancer research. allisonbaver.com

DAN SPINDLE (B.S. '07) anchors the morning and midday news for ABC 15 in Phoenix. He interviewed Ron Paul and Mitt Romney during their presidential campaigns and covered former Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords early in her political career.

BO HAYNES (M.B.A. '08) is an associate creative director of global infrastructure and transportation at Parsons Corporation in Pasadena, Calif. In 2017, he was recognized for his art direction, illustration, and design work when his company and his freelance work won three gold medals in the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals annual international MarCom Awards. "While my undergraduate degree is in economics and I'd anticipated a path that led straight to Wall Street, I have ultimately spent my 15-year career as a creative," he says.

JASON MARINGOLA (B.ARCH. '08), senior project manager at Streetsense, was interviewed by *Hospitality Design* magazine about his career and approach to architectural design. bit.ly/Jason-Maringola

Author **CHARLEEN "SHARKIE" ZARTMAN (M.S. '08)** is a professor of health and fitness at El Camino College in Torrance, Calif. As a volleyball coach, she won nine state titles. Zartman is a certified health coach through the Institute of Integrative Nutrition.

STEPHANIE (LANGDON) BLACK (B.P.S. '09, M.A. '12) was promoted to director of catering and events at Gotham Hall, a special events venue in Manhattan.

JOAN MCMANUS (M.B.A. '09) was promoted to chief financial officer at O3 World, a digital product design and development agency in Philadelphia.

2010s

NUMAN FATEH (D.O. '10) joined Geisinger Community Medical Center's Cancer Center in Scranton, Pa., as a hematologist/oncologist. He completed his internal medicine residency at Southampton Hospital (N.Y.) and a fellowship at Nova Southeastern University's Larkin Community Hospital in South Miami, where he was named chief fellow.

Diagnostic radiologist **EVGENIYA SOKOLOVSKAYA, M.D., (D.O. '10)** joined Riverview Medical Center in Red Bank, N.J., and Bayshore Medical Center in Holmdel, N.J. She specializes in body and breast diagnostic imaging.

The Fairy God Boss blog interviewed **JOANNE WEST (M.S. '10)**, director of student administration and operations at NYIT, about how being the mother of a child with special needs made her a better employee. "NYIT has been in my life for as long as I can remember as my father, Joseph K. Brooks Jr., graduated from

NYIT in 1978," she says. "It is certainly a source of pride in my family that I am both an employee and an alum of NYIT." bit.ly/Joanne-West

NEIL YAGER (D.O. '10) treats patients at Albany Medical Center's Division of Cardiology and is assistant professor of cardiology at Albany Medical College.

Psychiatrist **MELISSA CIRULLI (D.O. '11)** opened an outpatient practice with Nevada Regional Medical Center in Nevada, Mo.

Riverhead High School (N.Y.) teacher **LUKE FERLAND (B.S. '11, M.S. '16)** was named the Long Island Air Force Association's Teacher of the Year. He also earned top honors from BOCES for leadership and innovation related to learning with technology.

Oncologist **RONEN HAREL (D.O. '11)** joined Crystal Run Healthcare in Middletown, N.Y. He completed his residency in internal medicine and fellowship in hematology and medical oncology.

MATTHEW MCLAUGHLIN (D.O. '11) joined Tideland's Health Inlet Pulmonary, Critical Care, and Sleep Medicine in Murrells Inlet, S.C.

RAMNEEK NAKAI (D.O. '11) joined the allergy and immunology team of Altru Health System in Grand Forks, N.D.

ADAM CHEW (B.S. '12), co-founder of coworking startup Croissant, visited NYIT students in Adjunct Assistant Professor Orin Davis' class to discuss his career. getcroissant.com

MONIKA MALINOWSKA (B.ARCH. '13) joined the design team at winslow + partners in Phoenix. She has more than six years of architectural planning experience as well as a background in retail space planning and hospitality design.



SENIOR SEND-OFF

The Final Roar committee kicked off the year's festivities with the inaugural December Senior Send-Off on December 9, 2017, at the Sky Room in New York City. The event celebrated the achievements of seniors and graduate students completing their degree programs in December 2017.

(Left to right) Dina Ragab (B.S. '17), Matej Selecky, Rafal Charkiewicz, and Heemani Ruparel.



Learn more about spring Final Roar: nyit.edu/finalroar

Melanie Benyadi (B.F.A. '17)

GIANNA (CARUSO) MCEVOY (D.O. '13) is an obstetrician/gynecologist at the Center for Women at Mount St. Mary's Hospital in Lewiston, N.Y.

GAETANO NINO DINARDI (M.A. '13) is vice president of marketing at Sales Hacker in San Francisco, Calif. He addressed workplace diversity in his LinkedIn article, "Am I Just Another White Dude in Tech?" bit.ly/Gaetano-DiNardi

ROMAIN PERSUY (B.A. '13) is a creative and content strategist at Touchstorm in New York City, where he manages the digital video strategy of the company's clients.

On New Year's Eve, Nassau County Police Officer **JASON SMITH (B.S. '13)** helped a woman deliver her baby. Smith played lacrosse at NYIT and has a degree in criminal justice. bit.ly/Jason-Smith

CHANEL ADAMS (M.A. '14) is the founder of nonprofit The Slim Heart Campaign, which helps adolescents in New York. facebook.com/TheSlimHeartCampaign

NICHOLAS J. FUSELLA (D.O. '14) joined Gloversville Primary & Specialty Care Center in Gloversville, N.Y.

Lt. **KATHERINE BIGGS (D.O. '15)**, a U.S. Navy emergency medicine physician, boarded Military Sealift Command hospital ship *Comfort* last fall to deliver medical aid to Puerto Ricans impacted by Hurricane Maria.

JUNNAN LIAO (M.A. '15) is assistant director of international outreach at American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City. "I couldn't have launched my career without holding a master's degree from NYIT," he says.

HARALAMBOS MOUSELIMOS (M.S. '15) is chief visionary officer at Dover, Del.-based Hynergy, which delivers solutions to produce, store, and distribute hydrogen from renewable energy.

JULIANA BARCIA (B.F.A. '16) is a junior motion graphic artist for World Wrestling Entertainment in Stamford, Conn. In 2017, she hand-painted an image of wrestler Shinsuke Nakamura. Her work was featured on the WWE pay-per-view event *BackLash* and on *SmackDown Live*. Of her NYIT education, she says: "Associate Professor Patty Wongpakdee's graphic design classes were always my favorite. I met the best creative people and felt I was taught by one of the most intelligent, empowering professors at NYIT."

RAJEEV DALAL (B.S. '16) enrolled in the D.O. program at NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed a surgery rotation at Capital Health Regional Medical Center in Trenton, N.J. "After receiving my D.O. degree, I hope to practice in an academic medical center," Dalal says.

GINA DORSO (B.F.A. '16, M.A. '16) took part in a "Meet the PR Pros Panel" at NYIT-Old Westbury that was presented by NYIT's chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America. She serves as communication and events coordinator for the Health and Welfare Council of Long Island.

NIRMA HASTY (B.F.A. '16) is a video journalist for NBC News Digital and produces short documentaries focusing on current affairs, including immigration reform and social justice issues. She says: "My favorite memory at NYIT was helping out with my first event as the vice president of the PR club. The turnout was great, and it was surreal to see it all come together after working on the event for months with my fellow peers." nirmahasty.com

Aesthetica magazine featured the artwork of **RUBA BADWAN (B.F.A. '17)** along with an interview. "The journey to becoming a

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Marriages

KEITH BERNARD CASSAR (B.S. '93) to
Jennifer Reddin

GRAYSON PAUL CONNORS (D.O. '14) to
Katherine Book

Passings

HENRY L. BAIER (B.S. '69)

JACK LOEFFLER (B.S. '75)

EVERETT A. PARKER (B.S. '76)

JOHN A. SIEDLARZ (B.S. '86)

STEVEN PI (B.S. '91)

MICHAEL G. GUTTENBERG (D.O. '97)

PRACHI KHETANI (M.B.A. '11)

ALICE HERON-BURKE, Senior Director of
Counseling and Wellness

true artist can be a struggle, but one has
to be persistent about their own work and
what it stands for, otherwise we would all
live in a world of copy and paste," she says.
A graduate of NYIT-Abu Dhabi, Badwan
recalls presenting her fourth-year final
project to her professors. "After four months
of hard work on a project that paid off in the
end, I felt incredibly happy and fulfilled."
bit.ly/Ruba-Badwan

DAPHNE KOHAVY (M.S. '17) is senior
instructional technologist at Yeshiva
University (YU). "My role was created
to promote the integration of innovative
trends in teaching and learning and develop
new initiatives for faculty and the YU
community," she says. At NYIT, she worked
in the Center for Teaching and Learning.
"The work solidified my desire to pursue
faculty outreach in higher education."

MARYAM LARI (M.B.A. '17) is the founder
of Motion Studios of Performing Arts in
Al Zeina (Al Raha), United Arab Emirates.
The facility offers training in dance, singing,
acting, and more. "I was fascinated by
performing arts because it goes beyond
physical movements," she told *Gulf News*.
"Parts of the brain act together to turn a
body's motion into a physical art form,
which in turn improves health, mood, and
concentration."

KIERAN O'SULLIVAN (B.S. '17) is a staff
engineer at H2M architects + engineers in
Melville, N.Y.

SUBMIT

ALUMNI NOTES

**NEW JOB? ON THE MOVE?
TELL US AT NYIT.EDU/ALUMNI_NOTES
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ALUMNI
SPOTLIGHT



Maria Sastre

(B.S. '81, M.B.A. '83)

(above) Maria A. Sastre, President and COO of Signature Flight Support, seated in the company's Lear 60 aircraft.

MARIA SASTRE, president and COO of private aviation company Signature Flight Support, knows that it takes hard work to be successful. “I don’t like excuses or entitlement,” she says. “I have a real problem with the idea that everything should come easy.” Sastre, who was included in *Fortune’s* “The 50 Most Powerful Latinas of 2017,” has taken those words to heart. “My skull is cracked,” she laughs, “but the ceiling isn’t. ... In the world of business, 94 percent of the CEOs are men.” Still, she says she’s never worn her ethnicity or gender on her sleeve. “I have been more intent on setting an example and being an effective leader with core values who runs a team with the vision to be as engaged and tenacious as they can.”

Her own vision started in the 1980s. Eastern Airlines was one of the nation’s four major airlines, and their hub was in Miami, not far from where Sastre was studying at Florida International University. She discovered that Eastern had a management development program at NYIT and applied. “Eastern offered me the chance to finish my B.S. at NYIT. I passed all the tests and transferred.” But Sastre never had to attend class in New York because Eastern flew NYIT professors to Florida on the weekends. When Eastern implemented a two-year executive M.B.A. program with NYIT, Sastre took advantage of that opportunity as well. “What was really important was that I was working in a real-time business environment and taking business courses on the weekends—finance, statistics, organizational effectiveness, and marketing,” she says.

Sastre also started a family while she was pursuing her M.B.A. “I even did a project that explored embedding day care in a corporate environment.” After graduating, Sastre became one of the first two women in the finance department at Eastern. “The M.B.A. was my ticket to finance,” she says. She took on a larger operations role supporting Eastern’s international locations and then went into sales administration. Then Eastern went bankrupt.

Sastre moved to Continental Airlines and then to United Airlines, where she became vice president of 30 markets focused on international sales in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. She left the airline business to run hotel operations for Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises, then led a nonprofit for a year and a half before joining Signature as COO in 2010; she became president in 2014.

“Success is a marathon, it’s not a sprint,” she says of her career. As for budding executives wishing to follow in her footsteps, she advises, “Be persistent and work hard.” And don’t forget to challenge yourself: “Pace yourself and never stop learning. And always have a positive attitude. When failure happens, if you reframe it in a positive way as a learning experience, you will be very successful.” ■

NYIT Summer Academy

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE between the ages of 15 to 20 who would benefit from an immersive college experience at NYIT? Check out NYIT’s 2018 summer academy, which offers one- to four-week programs on a variety of subjects. Mention you are an NYIT alumnus on the application and receive 15 percent off tuition.

nyit.edu/academy

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