New Fellows

It is with great pleasure that we announce and welcome our new Fellows. From a most competitive pool of applications, 17 new Fellows have been selected to join the City College Fellowships Program in the spring semester, 2014.

The new City College Fellowship Fellows are:

- Orubba Almansouri, English
- Jose Benjamin, International Studies
- Gabriella Clemente, Mathematics
- Shannon Culpepper, Economics/Mathematics
- Maria Gavrutenko, Biology
- Laura Hoffman-Hernandez, Psychology
- Nadia Hossain, History
- Samuel Inniss, Computer Science
- Angelo Laine, Psychology
- Ivana Lazaroska, Political Science/History
- Sophia Monegro, English
- Andrew Moore-Hargrove, Sociology
- Seth Rodriguez, History
- Zulai Romero, History
- Joel Sati, Philosophy
- Sara Seweid, Psychology
- Samina Sirajuddowla, History

The City College Fellowships Program supports Fellows’ independent research across the disciplines and in far-flung locations. Below, three Fellows describe recent research experiences that have prepared them to pursue doctoral studies.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

We look forward to spring 2014 semester with excitement and optimism. I am delighted to announce that CCNY won a four-year MMUF renewal grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that provides $495,000 to support the CCNY Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) through 2017. In January, four of our Mellon Mays Fellows traveled to Cape Town, where they joined other MMUF from the U.S. and South Africa for an intensive week-long seminar on the complexities of South African politics. Please see our program's website for the news story. They will also speak at the luncheon panel of the NY Regional MMUF conference that we will host at CCNY on April 11.

No less exciting is the admission of seventeen new City College Fellows to our community, from an applicant pool that has never been larger (38) or stronger. They represent a diverse group intellectually and culturally and promise to enrich our community with their insights and humanity. We are delighted to welcome each one of you and look forward to learning from you and growing with you.

Our seniors not only look forward to graduation; many are awaiting acceptance to doctoral programs in varied fields at universities across the country. Indeed, some have already received acceptances. We expect this to be a stellar year, filled with new beginnings, opportunities, and challenges.

None of the success of the Fellows would be possible without the commitment and generous support of faculty mentors who encourage Fellows to push themselves to reach their academic potential. Heartfelt thanks to all the mentors who help transform the lives of CCNY students. In particular, we owe a debt to Prof. Joshua Wilner (English) who led our fall workshop on writing the personal statement, as he has done for many years. Thanks are also due to CCNY MMUF graduate Justino Rodriguez who led our fall workshop on building academic skills and passed on to current Fellows lessons he has learned. And we greatly appreciate the warmth and wisdom of Laine Goldwert, PhD, of the CCNY Counseling Center, who led a beneficial workshop on managing stress.

Please join us on Friday May 2 for the City College Fellowships Program 12th Annual Research Conference. Everyone is welcome to attend the panels on which Fellows will present their research and to join the discussions that follow.

Susan Besse

APRIL 7, 2014
SUMMER RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

Proposals for funding for summer research are due to Prof. Besse on Monday, April 7. For instructions, please read the CC Fellowships Program Guide: “Funding for Research, Training, Travel: Guidelines for Requesting and Using Research Monies.”
Tamra Lepro (English). For a week in January, I conducted research in the Boswell Collections housed at Yale University’s Beinecke Rare Books & Manuscript Library. I started by consulting the collection’s catalogs, which are annotated by the numerous editors of the Boswell papers. Much of what I read was the unpublished correspondence of Boswell. A binder of “Family Correspondence,” which includes extensive annotations by editors and previous generations of scholars, connected me to the long tradition of scholarship that makes mine possible.

I learned that scholarship is a bridge: not only across time, but among people. Although I am still an undergraduate, the archivists treated me as though my research mattered as much as the research of the two other scholars in the room. I also benefited from the support of Yale Professors Turnbull and Caudle, who are both interested to see my completed project.

Finally, I discovered that archival research is physically strenuous and mentally demanding. By the end of the week, I had scanned thousands of pages of text, following

SPRING 2014 SCHEDULE

SPRING 2014 CCFELL SCHEDULE

* Required attendance for all Fellows
Please see the “Guide” for other events required for Fellows at different stages.
All events begin at 12:30 in NAC 6/309 and lunch is served, unless otherwise noted.

TH Jan 30: Orientation for all new Fellows

FRI Jan 31: *Fellowship Dinner
(6:00 meeting with graduated Fellows;
7:00 dinner in NAC 6/316)

TH Feb 13: Workshop: The Mentoring Relationship

TH Feb 27: Workshop: Balancing Career and Life


TH Mar 27: Workshop: Public Speaking

TH Apr 10: *Workshop: Applying to Graduate school

TH Apr 24: Round-table: Applying to Graduate school
(Q&A follow-up discussion)

FRI May 2: *City College Fellowships Program
Annual Research Conference (9 AM - 5 PM)
(Held in 6/316 and 6/309.)

DEADLINES

TU Feb 25 (NAC 6/316): Recruitment meeting for MMUF

MON Mar 10: DUE: MMUF applications

MON Apr 7: DUE: Applications for summer research funding

TU Apr 8: Submit paper titles for CCFELL Research Conference

TU Apr 8 (NAC 6/316): Recruitment meeting for CCFELL

TH May 1: DUE: Applications for City College Fellowships

MMUF EVENTS

MON Mar 10: DUE: Submit paper titles and synopses for MMUF Research Conference

FRI Apr 11: Twelfth Annual NY Regional MMUF conference, CCNY, CUNY

FRI May 16: MMUF Annual Dinner

The Twelfth Annual City College Fellowships Research Conference

The Twelfth Annual City College Fellowships Research Conference is Friday, May 2, 2014, from 9 AM – 5 PM in NAC 6/316. All students, faculty, family members, and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend. Fellows who wish to present their work at the Research Conference must submit a title by Tuesday, April 8, 2014.
leads and investigating gaps in the material, trying to find the thread of the narrative I am piecing together. When it came time to leave on Friday, I felt genuine regret that there was still so much information that I hadn’t had a chance to look at. This experience solidified my desire to go on to graduate school and become a professional scholar so that I can continue to engage deeply in research.

Haiming Deng (Physics). In early July, I traveled alone to Paris to pursue an internship in physics at the École Polytechnique. The challenges of adapting to a new academic and social environment offered many opportunities for me to learn and grow. During my stay there, I explored the possibility of growing nanowires and films by electro-deposition and of using this technique to study the new class of material, Topological Insulators. We hoped to achieve a new way of making TI nano-devices or structures. Because I was the only student working on this project, I was free to try every new idea I had and to do everything by myself. This made me feel like I was making progress toward realizing my dream to become a research scientist. I participated in almost daily discussions with my advisors about both technical difficulties and new ideas. As the days went by, I grew closer to my advisors; we became friends and they told me a lot of stories about building a career in science. In mid-September when I returned to New York, my CCNY advisor Prof. Lia Krusin was so interested in the data I had obtained in France that she ordered new equipment in order to be able to continue this research here in NY.

Glenda Ullauri (Anthropology). I spent my summer in the small municipality of Muna in the Yucatan, Mexico researching how some traditional Maya agricultural practices continue to be used alongside modern state mandated agro-industrial techniques. Living with a local Maya family and immersing myself in the community gave me valuable insights into my project, but most importantly, into my future as an anthropologist.

My daily routine started by waking up at five or six in the morning to help Doña Olivia tend to her habanero seedlings. I cherished time spent with her; our conversations touched on technical matters, such as the acidity of the groundwater, and stayed to joking and the telling of folktales about the aluxes, the dwarves who lived in the fields and would throw stones at the shade house signaling that it was time for us to go home for the day.

I had to find creative ways to reciprocate the family’s generosity. I tutored the family’s three youngest kids in English and used my camera to photograph their special occasions, like Isamar’s graduation. Eventually, when Doña Olivia allowed me to pick up the broom and sweep, I felt less like a “guest.” Sharing daily responsibilities strengthened my relationship with the family, which then facilitated the progress of my research. I learned that I must first form these relationships based on trust and respect in order to answer my research questions.

By the third day, the Barbosa family had introduced me to the rest of their family and to many community members who provided assistance in my research. This created a snowball effect, with each contact introducing me to others who felt comfortable and trusted me because of the personal connection. Campesinos were very eager to recount stories, for example about the days when they grew giant watermelons and would proudly walk to market with a watermelon on each shoulder.

The experience challenged me to reflect on my privilege as a U.S. college student and researcher, and it brought me face to face with the legacies of anthropological research that was designed to facilitate colonization and the spread of “modernity.” When I arrived in Muna, many people thought I had come to tell them what to do; even the Barbosas initially expected me to tell them how to improve their business and production techniques. Unfortunately, the Mexican government’s technical assis-

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GRE PREP COURSE

Just a reminder that the City College Fellowships Program will cover the cost of GRE Prep for all Fellows (up to $650), whether they choose to enroll in: a “Prime Prep” course, offered by Prof. Pilette; or any Kaplan GRE-prep course (at the CCNY discounted fee); or any GRE online tutorial (such as Magoosh). Fellows may also receive reimbursement for the purchase of any GRE prep materials, up to a total of $650 for all GRE prep course fees and materials. For Prime Prep information and schedules, please contact Prof. Pilette at: prep@primeprep.com. If you would like to take the Kaplan course, you MUST apply for the CCNY discount. To receive the CCNY half-price discount, you must:

• Enroll individually by contacting Kaplan directly (1-800-KAPTEST = 1-800-527 8378)

• Provide Kaplan with your CCNY email address and copy of CCNY ID.

• At time of enrollment, students must be prepared to pay at least 1/3 of the final cost (after the discount). You must obtain approval from Renee (Renee.Philippi@verizon.net) before registering for any of the courses mentioned above or before purchasing GRE prep materials.
tance endeavor reinforces the message that outsiders are the experts; agronomists sent into small communities to “assist” in enhancing productivity too often ignore local knowledge and impose “modern” technology. Finding myself caught up in this historical mess, I decided not to introduce myself as a student from New York. Much more difficult, however, was knowing what to say—or whether or when I could say anything at all—to defend the oldest daughter who complained about being the target of stares and catcalling by some of the male employees. All these experiences taught me so much about what it means to do research and the challenges ahead as I pursue a career as an anthropologist.

Fellowship workshops foster camaraderie among the Fellows and provide useful information and guidance. Below, three Fellows reflect on what they gained from a few of these events.

**Mayelin Perez** (English). The first very rough draft of my statement of purpose was nearly five pages long, and my mentor had basically told me to scrap it altogether. So, by early October, I still had no draft. Thankfully, the workshop on writing the statement of purpose gave me the push I needed, forcing me to produce a draft as soon as possible. I completed a somewhat mediocre draft, but it was a start. My draft was chosen for workshopping along with two others. Though it was difficult to have my writing publicly dissected by so many people, I was very satisfied with the outcome. I knew that my draft needed work, but I was ecstatic when Professor Joshua Wilner—the workshop leader—gave me such favorable comments on my research project. After all, I can revise my statement, but if my research project is no good, I would have very few options left. Needless to say, I left this workshop invigorated by a boost of confidence.

**Joshua Liveris** (Philosophy). Of the fellowship events I attended this semester, the most beneficial to me was the event on building academic skills, where graduated Fellow Justino Rodriguez discussed techniques for time management and becoming a better reader. The event made me think about how I might manage my time better, and the exercise that had us diagramming out the time we spend during the day was fairly beneficial. If I am accepted into graduate school in the fall, I will definitely have to learn how to block out my time better to get specific tasks done within a certain amount of time. I have begun to implement some of these techniques into my school schedule, but the real test will be implementing these techniques if/when I am in graduate school.

**Conor McGlone** (English). As the end of the semester approached, I wished to drop it all. The feeling that I was unable to confront the pile of work that was before me made me desire abortion over failure—but the only effect of this mode of thought was to incapacitate me. I see now that it was through an unanticipated aspect of the CCNY Fellowship program that I was able to find the objectivity that endowed me with the ability to finish the semester.

I do not remember what made me start going to the non-required fellowship meetings, but it was through these I was exorcized from my slump. Our workshops on time and stress management were incredibly apt given the dilemmas I was dealing with, and I did benefit greatly from the ideas presented during these sessions. However, it was the realization that I was not alone in my feeling helpless and that I was only one of a community of students dealing with the same crippling issues that gave me the objectivity to remobilize myself.

It is so easy for me to picture my education as a solitary ascension toward some cloud-swallowed summit, but this is an irrational, fantastic image whose retention will get me nowhere. The City College Fellowship programming has much to offer Fellows, but it is the existence of this community and of the students heading towards graduate school together that allowed me to escape the claustrophobic head space I fell in as the deadlines built near the semester’s end. While solitary contemplation is a requirement of intellectual growth, so is the ability to see oneself as one of many small pieces who, together, compose a living whole. I do not intend to sound as sappy as I do; the point is that the objectivity one gathers from the observation that he or she is ultimately insignificant is imperative to the cultivation of his or her work toward something of significance.

City College Fellowships Program is an umbrella program that administers several undergraduate fellowships. See our website for information:
http://fellowshipsprogram.ccny.cuny.edu

The City College Fellowships Office is located in NAC 6/316, 212/650-8388.