New York City is the most global of urban spaces in the United States. Its historic dynamism arose from its diversity as a magnet for talent within the country and a refuge for waves of aspiring and talented immigrants from every part of the planet.

This issue of *SIPA News* focuses not only on New York’s amazing patchwork of languages, cultures, and ethnicities, but also on the individual lives, communities, and institutions they are building, transforming, and rebuilding again. In this vast and fast-changing social landscape, government leaders and agencies struggle to keep up. They must anticipate and respond to future needs, restore but also conserve and protect declining neighborhoods, provide the essential services that keep the city running, and promote the tolerance and respect that help people work together.

New York occupies a uniquely central place in the developing globalization of U.S. culture, society, economic life, and even politics. As this issue of *SIPA News* demonstrates, globalization represents a great opportunity for the city, but an opportunity that can be threatened unless great care is taken to protect the human rights of all the people who live here.

SIPA serves New York City by training skilled professionals who serve the public interest not only in city government, state agencies, and regional authorities, but also in international organizations, not-for-profit institutions, and the private businesses large and small that must constantly replenish their human capital to stay afloat and prosper.

And the city serves SIPA not only because it provides an immense laboratory for the policy research of students and faculty, but also because it is home to a vast pool of talented and experienced professionals from which SIPA can select its exceptionally distinguished practitioner faculty.

In the next few years, SIPA will plan its move to a new building in Manhattanville, acquire greater financial and academic autonomy, implement a comprehensive curriculum reform, develop new partnerships with The Earth Institute and Columbia’s other professional schools, and become a key player in Columbia’s globalization efforts.

SIPA will also deepen its partnerships with institutions around the globe, raise its international research profile, incorporate science into its curriculum, create interactive classrooms with courses taught simultaneously at locations abroad, significantly enhance its commitment to policy research, teaching, and service in New York City, and offer leading scholars, policymakers, and practitioners new opportunities to collaborate with Columbia faculty and students.

Marshalling the human and material resources to turn these goals into realities is an immense challenge. Success will make SIPA the top public policy school on the planet and an essential hub of interdisciplinary thought and action at Columbia. Fortunately, SIPA has incomparable advantages in working toward this goal: its outstanding faculty and superb staff, its enthusiastic and loyal alumni, its growing reputation for excellence, its place at the center of one of the world’s greatest research universities, and its location in the most global of U.S. cities.

John H. Coatsworth
Dean
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Class Notes
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Punjabi Deli employee Gurjinder Singh sells CDs and samosas at the store on the corner of 1st Avenue and 1st Street.
Every day more than 12,000 commissioned cabs take to the streets of New York to get busy New Yorkers where they need to go. They navigate through New York City’s 322 square miles and transport millions of the city’s denizens and visitors throughout its five boroughs, 24 hours a day, rain or shine. These cabdrivers and their cars are for many around the world the iconic image of this bustling metropolis.

While it has been said that the men and women who drive these cabs know this city and its people better than anyone, it cannot be said that much is known about them.

What exactly is it that these men (out of approximately 40,000 cabbies, 407 are women) are quietly chatting about on their hands-free mobile phones as they drive New Yorkers about town? Surely politics must be one of the topics of interest. To learn more, the editors of SIPA News went to First Avenue and East First Street to Punjabi Deli, a popular hangout for many of New York’s South Asian cabdrivers, right across the street from Katz’s Delicatessen, to eat and chat with New York’s cabdrivers.

During our visit to Punjabi Grocery and Deli, SIPA News met people like Mohammad Rahman, a native of Bangladesh and a 14-year resident of New York who has been driving cabs for eight years. Back home he worked in the travel industry, but he says he loves living here in New York. When pressed, he says his only complaint is the high cost of living. He supports Hillary Clinton in the coming election because, in his view, the current administration has tarnished its image with far too many mendacities: “This current government has not been so good in their actions,” he told SIPA News.
Taxi Drivers on U.S. Politics

If he were to advise Senator Clinton on her foreign policy, “the first thing I would do would be to leave small countries alone. Why does the United States need to control everything?” — Mohammad Khandaker

“They tell too many lies. Senator Clinton would be different.”

Indeed, almost all the cabdrivers we spoke to expressed a longing for the Clinton era, with many of them claiming to have been more prosperous during the 1990s when Bill Clinton occupied the Oval Office. Hillary Clinton, it seems, has benefited from a Bill halo effect. Mohammad Khandaker, who has lived in the U.S. for nine years and has worked as a cabdriver for just one year, exemplified this attitude. He told SIPA News that he firmly supports the Democrats and Hillary Clinton. “She was a great first lady and has plenty of experience,” he said. “I loved Bill Clinton, and I haven’t changed my feelings about the Clintons.”

Khandaker has high hopes for a second Clinton era and was quick to offer the New York senator some advice should she become the next president. “She should be more like Bill,” Khandaker said. “She should take a policy of nonviolence and try to make the world more peaceful.”

While Awan believes that Senator Obama has the intelligence and leadership qualities to be a successful president, he expressed doubts over how effective Obama might be against Senator McCain. “This country will choose McCain over Obama; even though I think Obama is the better leader, the Americans will choose the white man.”

Although most of the cabbies spoke to supported Hillary Clinton, there were some men who were adamant supporters of Barack Obama. Wahid (he declined to give his last name), a driver from Cairo, insisted that he and most of his Egyptian friends would definitely support the senator from Illinois.

While at first Wahid said he would only talk until he had finished his cigarette, 10 minutes after his last puff, he was still pontificating on America, Obama, Israel, and the Iranian nuclear program.

Like many of the other cabdrivers, Wahid’s biggest concern right now is the reputation of the U.S. around the world because of the wars waged by the Bush administration in Afghanistan and Iraq. He thinks Clinton “talks the talk of peace but doesn’t necessarily walk the walk.” Senator Clinton and her husband are very smart,” Wahid said, but he finds them, in general, to be disingenuous. Barack Obama would be different because he could get “all the countries together with a simple smile.” Wahid added that he was confident that Obama “wouldn’t engage in any more wars.” In Wahid’s view this would be a good thing, since “today, perhaps even on Mars, the U.S. has a very bad reputation.”

When Wahid learned that one of SIPA News’ reporters is Iranian-American, he turned his attention quickly to the Iranian nuclear program and questioned the intelligence of America’s current policy in aiding Israel. “Iran has the right to peaceful nuclear weapons; why should I or the U.S. deny you [Iran] that right? It only serves to make more enemies.” On the question of Israel he said, “Israel is the central problem when it comes to the Middle East. We spend billions and billions of dollars to protect them and we get nothing in return.”

Many of the drivers we spoke to had a passion to talk about their native countries. When asked about his native Pakistan, Awan characterized the Bush administration’s support for President Musharraf as a “blunder” and pointed out that “not one person in Pakistan supports Musharraf. The Americans have not paid any attention to our [the Pakistani people’s] psychology. They teach a few elites and don’t teach the whole class.” Referring to the results from the early 2008 elections in Pakistan, Awan said this was the strongest proof that Musharraf did not enjoy popular support there.

“Senators Clinton and Obama represent positive change and give everyone hope.” But they must be careful to avoid the mistakes of previous administrations, Awan cautioned. He referred to a recent New York Times Magazine article, “Who Shrunk the Superpower?” (“written by an Indian,” he told the other SIPA News reporter—who is from India), Awan agreed with the central premise of the article: the U.S. needs to pay attention to the rise of Asian powers such as China and India. “They [the U.S.] are no longer the biggest guys. The American GPA is declining and the image of the U.S. abroad is suffering,” Awan believes the way to reverse this trend is to pull out of Iraq immediately. “The U.S. is being viewed as an invader, not a liberator!” Awan ended our conversation by saying, “the way to conquer the world is to conquer people’s hearts.”

In stark contrast to the insightful, if slightly cynical Awan, Ricky, from Punjab in Northern India, claimed he has no interest in politics, especially U.S. politics. But that didn’t stop him from taking a stab at public policy analysis. Ricky told SIPA News that if he were mayor of New York, the first thing he would want to do is ban all trucks from entering the city. Once that was accomplished, he would impose a ban on drivers from New Jersey. What if he were president? That’s easy. “No war,” he says.

Matteen Mokaila is a second-year Middle East concentrator and co-editor of SIPA News. He is originally from Napa, California.

Nilanjana Pal is a second-year International Security Policy concentrator and co-editor of SIPA News. She is originally from Kolkata, India.
Clockwise from top: A taxi cab parking lot at the La Guardia Airport in Queens, New York; Mohammad Rahman, taxi driver; aerial view of Times Square; Ricky Singh, taxi driver.
Now that my eyes are open to them, I find them everywhere I go in the city—selling clothes and bags to tourists on Fifth Avenue, driving cabs, running their own businesses, and among my colleagues at Columbia. I see that last name, Mbacke, and immediately think of Sheikh Amadou Bamba Mbacke, the Muslim holy man of Senegal, the poet and Sufi murshid (guide), who in the late 19th century assembled the believers of Mouridism, one of the two largest Sufi orders in Senegal, to help rid the nation of their French colonizers. On a random Thursday evening, I see his name again, on the identity placard posted on the back of a New York City cab. “You are from Senegal aren’t you?” I ask. “Yes, he replies with great surprise. “You are a Mouride? A follower of Bamba?” “Yes! He was my grandfather.” We exchange some pleasantries in broken Arabic. “I am learning Arabic so I can understand the Koran better,” he tells me, “Don’t worry,” I say, “I am only learning too.” $10 later plus a tip, and I am home again.
Moeutar Mbacke prays outside Sopey Chekhoul Khadim. Like many other Mourides, he is a descendent of Sheikh Amadou Bamba Mbacke, the founder of Mouridism.
What many fail to consider is that Islam can be and often is practiced in many ways. In his seminal work on the coming of the faith to Iran, Islam: The View from the Edge, Columbia Professor Richard Bulliet argues that although Islam began with Arab tribes in Mecca and Medina, the faith flourished under various peoples from Europe, Africa, and Asia. These people made Islam their own, oftentimes taking the new faith and melding it with their own local traditions. That is why travelers to Shiraz, Cairo, Jakarta, or Touba in central Senegal (the holiest city for Mourides besides Mecca and Medina) will see such vast differences in the practice of Islam. Of an estimated 1.1 to 1.8 billion believers, the Arab community now constitutes only 20 percent.

Today, a short stroll across Morningside Park just west of Columbia University leads into Le Petit Senegal, a stretch of West 116th Street between Malcolm X Boulevard and St. Nicholas Avenue. Here one can see the diversity of Islam right in the heart of West Harlem. The artwork featuring the iconic image of Sheikh Bamba and his white garb is scattered throughout the neighborhood. Senegalese Muslims casually walk the streets and chat with one another before going about their day’s business. Senegalese women wearing beautiful head-covering garments stroll by the countless African-owned stores and restaurants plastered with signs advocating Barack Obama for president and urging residents to keep an eye out for a wanted felon. While many of these women are just going about their daily shopping, some stop and drop off their children to learn Arabic at Sopey Chekhoul Khadim, an Islamic book store and meeting place for the Mouride brotherhood, which is believed to be one of the largest Sufi communities in New York.

The tradition of Islam in Senegambia—the land that comprises the modern nation states of Senegal and Gambia—began around the 13th century when Arab traders began commercial ties with western Africa. These traders brought with them their faith and thus began the process of conversion. But Senegal, which today is 90 to 95 percent Muslim, did not become Muslim overnight. As Professor Mamadou Diouf, director of the Institute of African Studies at SIPA, says, “It was a long process of conversion that was only achieved upon the completion of colonial rule. But it was not a conversion by means of conquest.”

In Senegambia, by the mid 15th century, Islam was no longer exclusively taught by the learned Arab men of the faith, but instead by the non-Arab Africans who were rising to prominent positions such as advisors to the kings. By the 17th century, Islam was at the center of the resistance against the trans-Atlantic slave trade. A few centuries later, it was again at the center of the fight for political and social justice, this time against the colonial rule of France. It was around this time that Sheikh Amadou Bamba Mbacke, through his preaching, his activism, and his poetry, became the beloved man that he is today for Senegal’s millions of Mourides, the Sufi order that he founded.

Back in West Harlem, inside the Islamic store, where a large tapestry of Bamba is ever present, one is immediately surrounded by the sounds of Wolof (one of the dialects spoken in Senegal), Arabic, and French. As a recording of the Koran plays in the background, Imam Abo Sylla, 37, from Touba, can be seen running around the backroom of the store, which serves as a meeting place and prayer area. If Sheikh Bamba was right when he famously declared, “To work is to pray,” Sheikh Imam Sylla is praying very hard. He is tending to the children, listening to the concerns of some of the men, helping to run the all-volunteer shop, and performing his required prayers, all while trying to give me an interview for SIPA News.

Since the imam is temporarily unavailable, Khouye Sarr, the assistant general secretary of the store, steps in to help out. Sarr, who lives at a community house for Mourides on 137th Street, is eager to tell me about his faith and his experience with it. He is happy that I am interested in Sheikh Bamba. “He is more than a king,” he tells me. I am curious though about his experience as a Muslim in New York; surely the practice of his faith must be different here as opposed to in Senegal. “Living in Senegal is the best,” he says, “but, of course, I like it here in New York.” He says that after 9/11 the Senegalese Muslim community did not face problems, unlike many in the Arab and South Asian communities. “Back home they told me to be careful and that Americans
were different. They said, ‘watch out they [the police] will take you to jail for no reason.’ But when I came here I learned, if you don’t do anything against the law, if you just focus on your work, you will have no problems.”

And Sarr has good reason to think highly of New York. When he first came to America three years ago, he was pleased to see that July 28 in New York City is officially “Sheikh Bamba Day,” where every year a parade is held that goes from 110th Street all the way to the Federal Building on 125th Street in Harlem. As Sarr notes with a beaming smile on his face, “why would the police bother us? The police protect our entire parade!”

As I wait for my interview with the imam, I cannot help but make a few observations about the Mourides whom I meet. I am the only non-black person in the store and prayer area that afternoon, but I never feel out of place. Sarr says that everyone is welcome to pray and join the Mouridiya and notes that their community in New York has white and African-American members. Throughout the afternoon, men and women pop in and out of the store and prayer area, chat with each other for a bit, shake hands, and are off. Whenever I am acknowledged, it is with an extended hand and a friendly, salam ’aleikum (peace be with you).

For many of the Senegalese Mourides who come to New York, the experience of the city makes them “better Muslims.” One man, Abu Ndeya, says that when he first came here eight years ago, he realized that he would have to work much harder than he did back home. In Senegal, “I went to school and then played football [soccer] all the time.” But in New York all he does is work, volunteer at the store, and then go home to read the Koran. He tells me that before coming to America he would always ask questions about religion. “I used to ask my parents, ‘why should I be a Mouride? Why shouldn’t I be a Christian?’ I would look at the benefits of both religions, and I decided Islam was best for me.” Like his friend Khoye Sarr, Ndeya donates as much money as he can to his faith community. When I ask, he is more than eager to show me some lectures about Islam and Mouridism in English. As I watch one of the videotaped lectures, Sarr assures me he can bring me a tape in Persian if I would like. “We have people here who speak many different languages,” he says.

When Imam Abo Sylla emerges from his duties, he is happy to see me and answer my questions. He has spent the last three years in New York City and, prior to that, six years in Detroit. He loves America, he says, because “we have freedom here, I do my thing, and others do their thing. Masjed [mosque] here and church there, we all get along. That’s why I love New York.” He tells me that at first New York took some getting used to and notes that he has met many people who say, “I am a Muslim,” but who don’t really follow Islam. That, coupled with all the drinking, and less modest dress of New Yorkers were a definite change from Senegal. Nonetheless, he says the problems of his community are similar to those back in Senegal, because the basics of life remain the same. Whenever someone comes to him with problems, he applies the same techniques of comfort that he used in Detroit or in Touba. “I go to the Koran and I teach,” he says. “The best lessons are there.”

Abu Ndeya, one of the volunteers at Sopey Chekhoul Khadim.
Farah Taslima reached tentatively for a sip of her hot chocolate as she waited for my next question. I smiled at the poised 12-year-old girl sitting across from me in Lerner Hall and realized I would not want to be anywhere else on a rainy Sunday afternoon. Here was the composer of “Serenity Unleashed,” a tiny gem of a piece that was performed by the New York Philharmonic during its historic visit to North Korea last winter. The composition was played on February 27, a day after the main concert at the East Pyongyang Grand Theatre, which was broadcast (supposedly) all over North Korea and to the rest of the world.

Jon Deak, associate principal bassist of the Philharmonic and an active participant in its Education Program, described the moments leading up to the performance of “Serenity Unleashed” in an interview with the Guardian: “At the conclusion of the performance, Mr. Dicterow [the concertmaster] gestured to me and, shaking, I brought up to the stage an original composition by a young girl from a New York school, which she’d dedicated ‘To the children of Korea.’ She is Farah Taslima, an American, born in Bangladesh. The Americans and Koreans then sight-read it perfectly. I told them it was a gift from the heart of one child to another.”

When I asked Farah what she thought was the most important part of the New York Philharmonic’s visit to North Korea, she said it was the opportunity to teach the children in that country that they too can compose music that is then played by one of the world’s leading orchestras. “Who says you can’t do anything just because you are 12? I am an example of how you can take all the noises you hear around you and turn it into music. The kids in North Korea who

Farah Taslima, the 12-year-old New York schoolgirl who composed a piece for the New York Philharmonic’s historic visit to North Korea this year.
heard my piece loved it." By all accounts, Farah’s composition was a big hit in North Korea, but can music transcend the rift between that country and the United States?

Certainly, this idea of using music as a diplomatic tool did not originate recently, and the New York Philharmonic is not the first major U.S. orchestra to participate in such an exchange. In September 1956, the Boston Symphony toured the Soviet Union as part of an effort to expose that country to the outside world, and the New York Philharmonic followed soon after, with a visit to the Soviet Union in 1959. Then, of course, there’s the famous “ping-pong diplomacy” of the 1970s that marked a thaw in relations between China and the U.S. and paved the way for the Philadelphia Orchestra’s performance there in 1973.

How successful these visits were in introducing new ideas and promoting “openness” in these societies is subject to debate—the Cold War continued until the end of the 1980s and China remains irresolutely under Communist rule. Nor are there any delusions of achieving a breakthrough in relations between the U.S. and North Korea as a result of the Philharmonic’s visit. Orchestra members are optimistic but realistic about the effect of this exchange, as Jon Deak is quick to point out.

But the New York Philharmonic is not just an orchestra; it’s an institution, which is perhaps why the North Korean government invited it to Pyongyang in the first place. Diplomatic relations may be initiated in Washington and then implemented by State Department officials, but that need not be the only avenue for building bridges between countries. Where the traditional language of diplomacy has failed, music has often stepped in to fill the role. And perhaps no one understood this quite as well as the legendary Leonard Bernstein, conductor of the New York Philharmonic from 1958 to 1969. In December 1989, Bernstein conducted the now-iconic Freiheitskonzert (Freedom Concert) on both sides of the Berlin Wall, as it was being dismantled. The concerts were unprecedented gestures of cooperation, the musicians representing the former East Germany, West Germany, and the four powers that had partitioned Berlin after World War II.

The New York Philharmonic seems particularly well placed for this type of cultural diplomacy, being from a city that is uniquely American and yet quintessentially global. No other orchestra in the world can lay claim to such an enviable hometown. But I wondered if this was my newfound (but misplaced) New Yorker pride speaking and asked Farah the same question. What if she had grown up in a different city? Faced with a question she had not yet encountered in her interviews, she was momentarily perplexed. “But I would not have learned music if I wasn’t in school here!” Farah doesn’t think it’s possible to have the same breadth of programs and teachers anywhere else in the world. It was through a composition class (supported by the Philharmonic) for public schools in New York City that Farah had the opportunity to develop her aptitude for writing music. These musicians identified her talent and then nurtured her growth as a musician and composer by encouraging her to draw from the images and sounds around her and translate these into music.

And while the 106 members of the orchestra are by no means ordinary, to Farah they are her friends and mentors, people who care about (and understand) her interest in classical music. There’s a sense of camaraderie among classical musicians of all ages in this city, and the New York Philharmonic is at the center of that community. Particularly through its Education Department, the New York Philharmonic has transcended age barriers, and Farah hopes her composition may inspire North Korean children to do the same.

She wrote the music for “Serenity Unleashed” when she was in fifth grade (two years ago) and remembers when it was first played by the Philharmonic at one of its Young People’s Concerts. But why did she choose this particular phrase as the title of her composition? Farah first named it “Peaceland,” which was surprisingly prescient of its future debut in a land that is not quite at peace yet. She then heard her composition repeatedly, trying to “figure out if the name felt right.” Eventually she settled on its present title because it describes the composition: “quiet in the beginning, a lot of noise at the climax, and then letting out at the end, becoming quiet again.”

New York City is Farah’s home, the only place she has ever known, but she was inspired to write her composition by the imagined sounds of her parents’ home country, Bangladesh. Although she has never been back to Bangladesh since she arrived in this country as a baby, she has grown up listening to her parents’ stories of the noise and bustle of the chaotic streets of Dhaka, the many quiet, peaceful rivers, and images of boats, green fields, and fishermen. In her composition class, teachers from the Philharmonic encouraged Farah to capture what she felt when she heard about the sounds and images of life in her father’s hometown, and after several tries at the recorder, “Peaceland” was born.

While its new title sounds surprisingly sophisticated for a 12-year-old, it created unprecedented challenges in North Korea. The interpreter did not know how to translate “unleashed” in Korean and it was difficult to explain the meaning of the word. The Korean translator was perplexed: was this related to “freedom?” Did it mean “escape?” How can you “free” serenity? But once the four musicians from the New York Philharmonic and their four North Korean counterparts picked up their bows and started performing in unison, it didn’t matter.
GOVERNING THE 21ST-CENTURY GLOBAL CITY: LESSONS FROM NEW YORK CITY

BY ESTER R. FUCHS

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg delivers his State of the City address in Brooklyn in January 2007.

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg delivers his State of the City address in Brooklyn in January 2007.
When Mayor Michael Bloomberg took office in January 2002, New York City was only beginning to recover from the devastating terrorist attack on its World Trade Center. Many experts believed that New York’s economy would never rebound, and even the Federal Reserve Bank was telling the financial service sector to decentralize its operations—which in effect meant moving its jobs out of the city. The mayor responded defiantly that “New York was open for business.” At a critical time in its history, New York City was fortunate to have a mayor who had the wisdom and the courage to lead. Instead of giving in to fear and defeatism, Mayor Bloomberg chose to invest in the public sector and outlined a bold vision for a 21st-century New York City that embraced accountability, economic growth, and livability.

In order for New York City to thrive as a sustainable global city in the 21st century, it must be a place where working people want to live and businesses want to locate. There is a certain irony in discussing the challenges that a growing global city must face. With real estate values increasing, affordable housing becomes a politically charged issue and housing can become too expensive, creating an added burden on the middle class taxpayer. There is increasing demand for public transportation and for updating and expanding infrastructure for new roads, sewers, clean water, and clean air. Maintaining the balance between development and open space is also an extraordinary challenge. Yet, as the mayor of New York is fond of saying, it is infinitely preferable to the alternative—declining property values, making policy and planning for a city in decline, a city where business and the middle class are leaving.

Yet, the challenge remains. The old formula of providing tax abatements to business cannot really work for American cities. Tax abatements can always be undercut by a neighboring or very distant competitor in the global economy. Cities in authoritarian developing nations that have cheap labor, cheap land, and little or no environmental regulations will always have a competitive advantage over modern democratic cities. New York has developed a strategy for succeeding in the global economy, without relying on that simple unsustainable formula as the cost of doing business.

By considering the specific elements of New York’s economic development, job growth, and global competitiveness strategies under Mayor Michael Bloomberg, other global cities can learn from New York’s successes and continuing challenges.

LESSON 1: Quality of life services or what we call “livability initiatives” must be a critical part of any city’s strategic plan for economic growth.

Livability means safety and security, quality public schools, affordable housing, efficient mass transit, and open space. According to FBI statistics, New York City remains the safest big city in America, with crime steadily declining and homicides at their lowest number since 1963. A new Real-Time Crime Center uses technology to put millions of criminal records a phone call away from detectives so they can stop crime spikes from becoming trends. The city has also become a national leader in Homeland Security by establishing its own counterterrorism bureau with 1,000 police officers.

Improving the city’s public schools has been a signature issue for Mayor Bloomberg. The city now has direct control of its school system for the first time. The mayor has taken decisive action restructuring the entire system: ending “social promotion” in the third, fifth, and seventh grades; giving struggling students intensive intervention during the school day, after school, on weekends, and in the summer; creating a citywide core curriculum for literacy and math; providing math and reading coaches, conducting interim assessments, establishing classroom libraries, and offering intensive professional development for teachers and principals. Test scores overall are at record highs.

In New York City mass transit is administered by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). It was created in 1968 to unify regional mass transit policy for the city and seven suburban counties. New York’s subway and bus system is one of the best in the world; the city, however, still bears a disproportionate fiscal burden for mass transit.

New York is revitalizing its waterfront in all five boroughs. Learning much from Sydney’s creative mixed-use approach, New York has also developed 260 acres of new parkland and a $400 million capital plan to renovate existing parks, ball fields and playgrounds. The mayor’s initiative on affordable housing promises 165,000 units over ten years. It leverages $200 million of support from leading banks, tax-free housing bonds, inclusionary zoning that provides a 33 percent bonus in floor space for private developers of affordable units, and grant money from the state and federal government.

LESSON 2: Government must be accessible to individuals and businesses and accountable for high quality effective services.

Mayor Bloomberg developed a customer service approach to city government through the creation of the 311 telephone information and complaint line. 311 gives residents a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week service, where information about city government is available from a real person and with an average waiting time of only 30 seconds. 311 can also be translated into 170 languages and averages more than 40,000 calls...
It is also a powerful management tool that gives government a better idea where problems are. 311 has helped lead to the cleanest streets in 30 years, faster action on potholes, and better access for businesses and individuals to government services.

**LESSON 3:** Government must be business friendly and support workforce development initiatives that target training programs to the needs of the business community and in economic sectors projected for growth.

In 2003, New York City consolidated its employment department with its Small Business Services Agency so that the city could offer industry specific training programs. It has already helped more than 3,000 businesses hire 10,000 workers. More than 2 million New Yorkers work for small businesses that employ fewer than 100 people. New York has targeted services to assist small businesses through its Business Solutions Centers and has developed a 311 for small businesses that serves as an Internet portal for business interaction with government. Services include marketing classes, one-on-one financial counseling, information on government grants, workforce training facilities, and placement services. They also help entrepreneurs find out what regulatory requirements they must complete to start a business.

**LESSON 4:** Land use planning must engage community residents, business, and government in a politically legitimate process.

Since difficult decisions will have to be made that balance the need for economic development with environmental sustainability, open space with density, and citywide interests with the interests of local communities, successful planning will ultimately depend on the leadership of elected officials.

One interesting example of balanced development is the $2.5 billion Atlantic Yards project in Brooklyn. This has been a highly contentious development, which has gone through New York’s planning process. The project includes a Frank Gehry–designed world-class arena that would be the home of the Brooklyn Nets, along with commercial, retail, and six acres of new public open space. The development will span 21 acres and is adjacent to Atlantic Terminal. The project is expected to create more than 12,000 construction jobs and approximately 8,500 permanent jobs. Half of the 4,500 units to be built will be affordable housing, and a community benefits agreement will ensure minority contractors get a substantial amount of the work.

**LESSON 5:** Finally, economic growth must be financially sustainable. This will involve cost sharing with state government, the national government, and regional partners, especially for building and maintaining infrastructure.

New York City has a $53 billion budget with responsibility for an extraordinary range of services from police, fire, and sanitation to education, community development, planning, and human services. It taxes property, personal income, and businesses and can borrow money for operating as well as capital expenses. At the same time, more than half of New York’s budget is nondiscretionary or mandated expenditures.

New York offers a cautionary tale for other global cities. What appears to the casual observer as extraordinary local autonomy is in reality a constant struggle with its state and the federal government for its fair share of government resources. New York City pays more than $13 billion in federal taxes than it receives from federal spending and $11 billion more in state taxes than it gets back in state funding.

What can global cities learn from New York? To ensure economic growth and competitiveness, cities must promote quality of life initiatives that are developed with the broadest possible public engagement. At the same time, government must create a business-friendly environment, which includes the efficient delivery of public services. But for economic growth to be sustainable, government leaders must guarantee that costs are shared equitably across the region, the state, and the nation.

Ester R. Fuchs is professor of public affairs and political science at Columbia University and director of the Urban Policy concentration at SIPA. She served as special advisor to the mayor for Governance and Strategic Planning under Mayor Bloomberg from 2001 to 2005.
Citizen Dinkins
*SIPA News* Talks to the Former Mayor and Current Prof about New York

Interview by Matteen Mokalla and Nilanjana Pal
When one walks into David Dinkins office, it is very clear that he has done great things in his life and has made many friends in the process. The room leading into his office is adorned with countless plaques and awards (he has been awarded too many to display on his wall, we learn during our visit, and more plaques are stored at his home). Step into the room where he does his work, and your eyes will turn immediately to a myriad of photographs. There’s one of Dinkins with Colin Powell, Dinkins with both Bill and Hillary Clinton, Dinkins and Nelson Mandela.

There is no doubt that Dinkins has worn several hats in his long life: he is now 81 years old, has been an activist, a lawyer, a husband, a father, a grandfather, and now a SIPA professor. This last job is one that he truly loves: “What better laboratory for a student to learn in than New York?” he tells us. In New York City, everyone knows him, after all, as the mayor. In almost any other city in the world that may not be a big deal, but here the mayor is the person in charge of governing a city with a population larger than that of countries such as Denmark, Jordan, or Ireland. Contained within five very different boroughs, New York is a city with a diverse population and a rich culture—it is a city that truly matters.

Q: We want to know more about you as a citizen here in New York. Are you a Mets or Yankees fan?

A: I am a Brooklyn Dodgers fan. In my day the rivalry was between the Dodgers and the Giants. It was all National League, we didn’t care about the American League. We didn’t care about the Yankees in the ‘40s and ‘50s. We used to say the Giants were all right, but it’s just their fans. Today I am a fan of all New York teams.

Q: One of the articles in this issue of SIPA News is about the New York Philharmonic going to North Korea. We are curious. Are you a classical music fan? An opera fan? Or do you prefer other types of music?

A: I am not an opera fan like Mayor Giuliani is. I like music, but I like jazz and blues. I am on the Board of the Jazz Foundation of America.

Q: Are their any jazz players in particular that you like?

A: They are all mainly gone, but I was a big Billie Holiday fan. In the old days you could go to 52nd Street and buy a beer for 75 cents and stand at the bar and catch the whole show. I also think Ella Fitzgerald could sing the telephone book and people would listen. I have a fondness for Lena Horne, who is still with us.

Q: Do you have a particular borough you prefer?

A: I was the Manhattan borough president, so I have a fondness for Manhattan. But as mayor I came to appreciate all the boroughs, even Staten Island, where I received very few votes. The city is like our country—you can travel around the country and find beautiful places. You can be helicoptered into places here in this city blindfolded, and you wouldn’t be able to tell if you are in Louisiana or Connecticut. Right here in Manhattan, we have places that look like suburbia.

Q: As mayor of New York City, you have responsibilities that mayors of other cities such as Tokyo, Dallas, or Toronto do not have because New York is such an international city. Can you talk about this?

A: The mayor traditionally marches in all parades. My staff used to put me in the national attire for the country that was organizing the parade. One year, I think it might have been a Korean parade, and the attire from countries like that are comfortable and loose fitting. I showed up at the start line to march in the parade and every living soul came in Western attire, suits, and ties. But it was a hot, humid day in New York, and I was more comfortable than they were.

Q: It’s a great city, we have almost as many ethnic identities here as there are member states of the United Nations. That’s why when I was a kid in school, they used to say, “this city is a melting pot.” But I prefer to say that it is a gorgeous mosaic. That’s also why we have a parade about every hour-and-a-half.

A: It’s a great city, we have almost as many ethnic identities here as there are member states of the United Nations. That’s why when I was a kid in school, they used to say, “this city is a melting pot.” But I prefer to say that it is a gorgeous mosaic. That’s also why we have a parade about every hour-and-a-half.
I have always been a fan of the United Nations, recognizing some of its weaknesses, but realizing that if we didn’t have it we would still need something like it. Some of my predecessors have not been too fond of the UN. One former mayor said we should level it and make it a parking lot. But when we took office, the city was in such dire fiscal straits that we were concerned about a variety of things, including the UN. It’s not written anywhere that the UN has to be in this country, let alone New York. But we would have lost a lot of jobs and lot of revenue without its presence here.

International tourism is a big deal in this city, too. Take the U.S. Open, in two weeks it generates more revenue in the city than the Yankees, Mets, Knicks, and Rangers combined in a half season. I believe the figure is between $450 and $500 million, because people come and stay in hotels and eat at our restaurants. Mike [Mayor Bloomberg] understands this and comes out to the Open every single year. He even stays there all night. Mayor Giuliani, on the other hand, did not come out once in eight years. He didn’t even come out the night we dedicated the stadium to Arthur Ashe.

Q: Do you have good relationships with the former mayors of New York? It is such a small brotherhood, after all.

A: I have a strong relationship with Mayor Bloomberg, who has asked me to serve on several task forces and so forth. I get along with Mayor Koch, even though I defeated him in a primary. I flew with Mayor Bloomberg up to David Patterson’s inauguration. Ed and I get along, even though we don’t agree with each other on everything. We both love the city, and that’s what matters.

Q: What can you teach about public policy in New York City, given that so much of your expertise is dependent on experience?

A: What I teach them is, in the end, from experience and not from books. I love the students, and they are a lot smarter than I was when I was in school. The course I teach is “Critical Issues in Urban Policy.” I also invite guest lecturers to my class. My course is not required for the degree. Therefore, when I get somewhere between 40 and 60 students, I know they are there because they want to be. They know who I am and what my philosophy is. My students are terrific.

Q: As mayor you must have learned so much every day about urban policy and running a city. It must be difficult to try to translate experience into the classroom. What is your strategy to impart your knowledge?

A: One, you can’t teach everything anyhow. Even if I were an expert, and I don’t profess to be, you can’t explain how things happen and you can’t do everything by yourself. Anything I was able to achieve while I was in office is due in part to the team of wonderful people I had with me. You need good, dedicated, committed people—that’s what I would remind the students.

Q: You have said that you can’t take credit for everything because it takes lots of people to run a city like New York. But let’s say you could snap your fingers and change anything you wanted about New York City overnight. What would be the first thing you would do?

A: Education and health care are way up high on my list. Mayor Bloomberg has made great strides, imperfect to be sure, but this is so important. Just today I was in the Westbury Friends School and I told the children there, “All over the world, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, kids just like you are going to be tomorrow’s leaders. That’s why you are so important.” And I believe this. I try to instill in children self-confidence and pride. I always tell kids, “You are as good as anybody and better than most.” I also tell them, “Don’t be a bully because it’s uncool.” I don’t know if every child listens, but you can always get your message through to one or two.

Q: If you were put in a time machine and you arrived in New York 50 years from now, what do you think the biggest changes would be in New York City?

A: I certainly intend to be around in 50 years! I hope that there would be a city where all kids are educated, irrespective of income, and there would be universal health care. I would hope there would be an absence of bigotry.

But we have been making progress on that front. When I was born in 1927, we were told, “You Negroes shouldn’t be so pushy. They only lynched five last year.” That’s how they said things back then. I hope we come to a time where, as Dr. King said, “We will be judged by the content of our character and not the color of our skin.”
"Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody," wrote legendary urban philosopher Jane Jacobs more than 50 years ago, “only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” Jacobs had insights like these while watching the West Village from her apartment window, at a time when the neighborhood was still home to many Italian and Irish immigrants. From there she celebrated the community and social attentiveness of ethnic, working class neighborhoods everywhere. Society’s newest members, it seemed to her, were the greatest assets to its urban landscape. They created the city, too, even if they had just arrived.

Today, immigrants continue to create New York. They provide the five boroughs with a deep and abiding international flavor, each in their own way. Although gentrification and economics have moved the ethnic working class solidly out of Manhattan, it is alive and well in the outer boroughs, where you can emerge from the R train in Jackson Heights or the D train in Brighton Beach and feel as though you have stepped into New Delhi or Soviet Russia.

There is another neighborhood, however, on the banks of the East River just across the Queensboro Bridge, that is less obviously foreign, but just as rich in its diversity. Astoria, in Queens, has hosted innumerable waves of immigration in the last 80 years, including Germans, Italians, Irish, Greeks, South Asians, Egyptians, and, finally, former Yugoslavians. With its hodgepodge of prewar apartment buildings, renovated row houses, and brick tenements, it is an unassuming but dignified riverside outpost where housing is cheaper, the city is nearby, and excellent Greek souvlaki is around the corner.
Although changed by its newcomers, Astoria has been left intact at the same time. Its international identity runs deep but is not worn on its sleeve, and its immigrant treasures require a careful eye to find. But they are there, and discovering them is the thrill of walking around immigrant neighborhoods like Astoria, and one of the joys of being in New York.

We began our undirected tour of Astoria on a dreary winter day with snow still lining the sidewalks. The N train deposited us at 30th Avenue and Broadway, in the middle of a typical, squat borough-like neighborhood, with delis and diners stretching out on either side of the great arch of the elevated subway tracks. Within a block of the station, though, we came across our first immigrant landmark, which is usually some incongruous thing—a sculpture or an odd storefront—that tells you a neighborhood has a distinctly non-American influence. In this case, it was a small, corner park. At the front of the park stood a six-foot Athena in a warrior’s helmet, and at the back sat a thinking Socrates, flanked by three free-standing Greek columns. Socrates and Athena looked a bit cold in their togas on this winter day, and someone had jokingly placed a snowball in the philosopher’s upturned hand.

We had come across Athens Square Park, which commemorates the Greek era of Astoria immediately following the Immigration Act of 1965. The Act allowed the issuance of an unlimited number of family reunification visas, and Greeks poured into Astoria at a rate of 15,000 per year after it was passed. Dmitri Pinos, a 53-year-old grocery clerk from Tripolis who arrived in Astoria in 1979, belongs to this wave of immigrants. As he manned the feta and sausage counter at Mediterranean Foods, a Greek grocery store tucked around the corner from Athens Park, he told me why, and when, New York began to feel like home. “When your children are born here,” he said, “then you feel like you are more here than there.” He let me sample a Cypriot-style olive, and before long he sent me packing with some briny giardinera, a chunk of feta dołonis, and spicy ajvar. When I asked him the top reason why immigrants choose to live close to one another in a new country, he smiled and said, “I think it’s the food.”

While Dmitri may have a point, sociologists and urbanists have a more general explanation for the phenomenon of immigrant neighborhoods. The cultural familiarity of these enclaves shelters newcomers from the pressures of rapid change, they say, and provides the emotional security necessary for movement up the economic ladder. The Greeks of Astoria have apparently made that journey, because they have been leaving the neighborhood in droves over the last decade. This, too, is a typical phenomenon of immigrant neighborhoods everywhere. Astoria’s Greeks have made enough money in coffee shops and construction to move to more spacious homes in Bayside in Queens or Roslyn on Long Island. As they recede from the neighborhood, they leave behind unique landmarks that nonetheless blend into the landscape more and more as successive immigrant groups move in.

One of those groups is Bosnians from the former Yugoslavia. Their migration to Astoria in the early 1990s presents one of the common mysteries of displacement, which is why ethnic groups in conflict or even at war with each other back home still choose to live side by side in the States. Between 1991 and 1994, about 11,500

A happy customer surveys a fleet of hanging sausages at Muncan Deli.
Bosnians obtained refugee status to emigrate to the U.S., and many of them settled in Astoria. Their choice to settle alongside Croats and not far from the Serbian community in Ridgewood is puzzling to the outside observer.

Senad Huskovic, a 30-something Bosnian refugee whose family owns “Sarajevo,” a popular Bosnian restaurant on 34th Avenue, helped me understand the seeming contradiction of wanting to resettle next to your enemies. “Home is where your traditions are,” he told me as his mother cooked cevapići, a Balkan dish of grilled minced meat, on the grill behind him, “I miss the life back home, but not the politics.” The Mediterranean and Balkan flavor of Astoria, he explained, gave the Huskovic family back some of that life when they moved here in 1994.

However illogical it may seem, sociologists say that refugees are especially attracted to ethnic neighborhoods because they are often separated from family members and suffer from intense isolation. Bosnian Muslims in particular had no significant community in the U.S. at all before the early 1990s, but now one million of them have resettled here.

After the blue-and-white culinary wonderland of Mediterranean Foods and a cevapići snack at Sarajevo, our eyes (and stomachs) were trained to notice small ethnic accents throughout the neighborhood. Tiny neon Greek flags blinked in bar windows alongside droopy blue-eyed ovals meant to ward away the evil eye. A toy model of an Olympia jet hung suspended in a travel agent’s window just across from the deli where customers emerged with exotically spiced sausages.

With our newfound keen sense for foreign details, we noticed a green awning with the word “Rudar” on it over the entrance to a nondescript building. Curious, we entered and found ourselves in the bar of an Istrian Croat soccer club with 30 years of Yugoslavia-era memorabilia on the walls. The kind bartender quickly gave us two Karlovacko beers and a glossy book on the club’s history, while a nearby local, Franco, painstakingly described the art of collecting Istrian truffles. As we sat in the middle of yet another cultural find in the heart of Astoria, I read the words of Milan Verbanac, Rudar Club president: “Once again together in New York, we found our path through Rudar to make our journey less painful. As we looked at New York, it seemed to us a sea of lights with many skyscrapers and strangers. We found our safe place.”

“I think it’s the food.”
—Dmitri Pinos, a grocery clerk from Tripolis, on why immigrants choose to live close together in new countries

Jackie Carpenter, a second-year International Media and Communications concentrator, is also pursuing a certificate from the Harriman Institute in former Soviet Union countries.

David Trilling is a second-year International Media and Communications concentrator.
Not surprisingly, New York City’s hometown teams, enjoying brand recognition worldwide, are at the forefront of exporting baseball. However, cultivating an international audience and global talent pool is not always easy.

The New York Mets have begun grassroots efforts to introduce the game in Ghana and plan to establish training academies in the West African nation.

Meanwhile, the New York Yankees are placing their bets on China. In June 2007, the Yankees signed two young Chinese players into the minor leagues, a first for any American baseball club. They are also working with the Chinese Baseball Association to introduce the game—still relatively unknown—in China, where it was banned by Mao Zedong in the 1960s.

In March, Major League Baseball made its debut in China. Two weeks before the 2008 regular season opened, the San Diego Padres and the Los Angeles Dodgers played two exhibition games at Wukesong Baseball Field, the Olympic baseball venue. The timing is key. With all eyes on Beijing, MLB is hoping to ride the momentum heading into the 2008 Summer Games in order to tap into the Chinese market, a potential goldmine of talent and fans alike.

But can baseball be the next big thing in China? As the Chinese middle class grows and incomes rise, increased wealth will translate to a growing demand for leisure activities and entertainment and maybe for baseball. Sal Galatioto, president of Galatioto Sports Partners, a sports advisory and financing firm based in New York, sees enormous potential in China, while Alan Klein, author of Growing the Game: The Globalization of Major League Baseball, is more skeptical. “It’s too late for baseball,” he says. According to Klein, 300 million Chinese—roughly the size of the U.S. population—already play basketball.

Some say that attempts to develop an authentic global market for baseball have been slow to take root, especially compared to the success of soccer and basketball. Similarly, efforts to internationalize the game at an institutional level have been limited.

“They were so myopic culturally and nationally,” says Klein of the league’s approach to expanding abroad, though he does acknowledge that MLB has achieved significant gains in a short period of time. What Klein found most surprising in his research was just how late this venture has come. While its origins are in fact international, the decidedly American game has been played in the United States since the 1840s. Alexander Cartwright, who established the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club in 1845, is credited with standardizing the game with what became known as the “New York City rules.” In New York, baseball began as a gentrified game; most of the names on the early rosters were English.

But by the late 1870s, having achieved enormous popular success, the game evolved from amateur to professional and, inevitably, winning became the top priority. To win, clubs needed talent, and they found it in Irish and German immigrants. At the end of the 19th century, playing professional baseball translated to upward financial mobility. “Ballplayers were being paid $1,000 a year, three to four times as much as the average annual income,” says Sol Gittleman, University Professor and former Tufts Provost, who has also written a book on the Yankees. Later, baseball served as the way up and out for Jews and Italians, he added.

This connection is still relevant today. “Poverty is an important motivator; people are constantly looking for opportunities of upward mobility,” says Klein. He attributes the success of baseball in the Dominican Republic to both poverty and competition among sugar fields.

Today, baseball players from the Dominican Republic are successful and fabulously wealthy. Pedro Martinez, now pitching for the Mets under the club’s Dominican-born general manager, Omar Minaya, and Yankee infielder Robinson Cano represent that dream for young Dominicans fans in Santo Domingo and in Washington Heights, alike.

The demographics have changed and the game is, without a doubt, more diverse. In 2007, 246 foreign-born players made up 30 percent of big league rosters, according to MLB’s Web site. Latin America and the Caribbean remain the biggest...
source for international talent. The New York Mets were the most diverse club, with 15 foreign-born players, while the Yankees were close behind, with 13. These numbers will only continue to rise.

In the Minor Leagues, some 3,098 players, or nearly half, were born outside the United States. And don’t forget the power players, those who have been elevated to single-name celebrity status. Pedro, Ichiro, and now Daisuke Matsuzaka (better known as Dice-K) each garnering a multi-million-dollar contract and generating a tremendous following among fans, in both America and their native countries.

Baseball is entertainment and competition, brand and personality, guts and glory, all tied into one. “Baseball is a template for all things American. It is integration, immigration, race, business, corruption, and competition,” says Gittleman. For this New York is legendary: age-old rivalries and historic ballparks—Shea Stadium and Yankee Stadium—which are soon to be replaced. Then there are the heroes—Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, and, of course, Brooklyn Dodger Jackie Robinson, who is credited with breaking the color line in 1947, leading the way for generations of young black players.

Dynamism is the name of the game. As in any sector, to remain competitive in a global economy, industries small and large are forced to adapt to changing business conditions. Expansion into new markets is essential. And not only is it important for increasing revenues, generating ad dollars, and selling more jerseys. To a greater extent, the goal is to foster passion and love for the game, which ultimately translates into both viewers and players. In other words, it’s not just about selling baseball; it’s about growing the game, a fundamental distinction needed to move the industry forward.

Achieving this competitive edge does not come cheaply. Players’ salaries are astronomical, and even signing bonuses have gone up dramatically in recent years. Players once signed for as little as $4,000; Pedro Martinez was signed for $10,000. This year, the San Francisco Giants signed a 16-year-old for $2.3 million, which Klein says, is comparable to first-round draft money. But, he adds, “Clubs are taking a phenomenal gamble,” when it comes to signing young talent based purely on a tryout.

A worthwhile—even lucrative—gamble, perhaps. “If you can find one diamond in the rough, it gives you a huge competitive advantage,” says Galatioto. In this spirit, big and small market teams are turning their attention to international scouting and player development. “Some teams have realized the way to keep a team competitive in the long haul is to invest in your minor league system and scouting. The Yankees have heavily invested in their farm systems, and you can see it,” explains Galatioto. There is a consensus that this can only be good for the game. The deeper the talent pool, the better the quality of play.

Yet the problem remains: what does it take to replicate this experience—in other words—how do you export not only a sport, but one steeped in American culture and rich in tradition? “It has a different rhythm. It’s the only sport where time doesn’t matter. In baseball you can have a big lead, with two outs in the bottom of the ninth, and still lose the game,” says Galatioto.

Leela Parker is a second-year International Media and Communications concentrator from Boston.
Juan Lopez works at a deli on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, stocking refrigerators and carrying boxes. His body, colorful with tattoos, may give the impression to an undiscerning observer that he’s a tough Latin gangster from Mexico City or San Salvador. But his smile, a disarming ear-to-ear grin, quickly proves one wrong. It gives way to the gentle demeanor of a responsible father, which he is.

Lopez is an illegal immigrant from Mexico. He moved to New York City 12 years ago with his wife, two brothers, and his niece after a harrowing trip across the Mexico-U.S. border, arranged by a coyote—someone who, for a fee of $2,500 per person, arranges illegal border crossings. He and his family eventually arrived in New York City, all in search of the American dream but without a cent to their names.

Lopez speaks basic English and is learning how to use the Internet, but it is really sports that pique his interest—soccer and baseball in particular, Mexico’s two most popular sports. Before riding the 7 train to work from his home in Jackson Heights, Queens, Lopez picks up a copy of El Diario/La Prensa, New York’s largest and most popular Spanish-speaking daily newspaper. His early morning and late night subway commutes are the only times when he can read up on his favorite teams, the New York Yankees and Club America, a leading soccer team in Mexico.

“When immigrants from Latin America arrive in New York City, many are unable to integrate into American life simply because they do not speak English,” said David Ramirez, executive news editor of El Diario/La Prensa or “The Daily/The Press.” “El Diario/La Prensa is a way for Hispanic immigrants to stay connected to their country of origin and their neighborhood in New York, be it Jackson Heights, Queens, or the Bronx.”

In many ways, Juan Lopez is a typical reader of El Diario/La Prensa—a hard-working immigrant from Latin America who has some high school education, earns $10,000 to $29,000 per year, and works at least 12 to 14 hours a day.

“I think people who read El Diario are like me, from the working class and probably arrived to this country illegally,” Lopez said.

Nicknamed “El Campeon de los Hispanos” (“The Champion of the Hispanics”), the 95-year-old El Diario/La Prensa—does just that through its readership size alone. The tabloid’s daily circulation tops 53,000 and is the go-to source of New York City news for more than 266,000 readers, the majority hailing from the Dominican Republic, South and Central America, and Puerto Rico.

“Since the paper’s inception [in 1913], our target audience has always been New York’s burgeoning immigrant community from Latin America, and our overarching goal is making sure they stay informed,” Ramirez said.

But unlike other general market New York City dailies, El Diario/La Prensa’s readership numbers are growing. Scarborough Research, a consumer behavior analysis group, announced that the tabloid experienced a 25 percent growth rate in its daily readership since 2006, while its circulation jumped 5.8 percent.

El Diario/La Prensa’s numbers are skyrocketing with good reason. With nearly 4 million people of Hispanic descent living in the New York City area, it is the second largest Hispanic market in the United States behind Los Angeles. Not only is their population sizeable, but New York Hispanics’ buying power is strong. In fact, they are some of the most affluent in the country, with an average national household income of $48,000 and more than $47 billion in total buying power.

In light of the paper’s steady rise in popularity, El Diario/La Prensa must be increasingly sensitive to its readers and their origins, Ramirez explained.

“As a paper for New York’s Hispanic community, we can’t forget this means we have to be understood by all Hispanics—Argentines, Mexicans, Dominicans—and although technically we speak the same language, the paper has to be written in a way that is easily digested by every member of this city’s huge Latin American community,” he said.

This search for language neutrality has led to some challenging situations for the paper’s reporters.

“Whether we are writing about a shooting of an
Ecuadorian in Jackson Heights or a domestic violence incident involving a Dominican couple in the Bronx, we have to make sure the language we employ transcends national boundaries,” he said. El Diario/La Prensa’s consistent growth, however, is indicative not only of an increased demand within New York City’s growing Hispanic population, but also of a steady rise in Hispanic influence in the United States.

“This is a very exciting moment for the Latino population in the U.S. not only in New York . . . but also in Los Angeles, where you have the first Latino mayor in more than a hundred years,” said Alberto Vourvoulias-Bush, executive editor of El Diario/La Prensa, in an interview with Hispanic Magazine. “You have a moment in the Latino community, politically, where that community is stepping up. Demographically, you have a Hispanic population that is more than 40 million strong, in which one of every five children in the U.S. is now of Hispanic descent.”

Lopez’s eleven-year-old daughter, Daisy, is one of them. Being of the young generation that is comfortable with computer technology, she keeps virtual tabs on New York happenings and fills in her father on important news.

“She’s the only one in our family who knows how to use the Internet, so she updates me on everything,” Lopez said sheepishly. “She thinks I’m slow because I don’t speak English and can’t use a computer, and I think she has a point.”

So, while Lopez prefers to flip through the paper-and-ink pages of El Diario/La Prensa, Daisy clicks her way through the online version rich with podcasts, videocasts, and blogs. She is one of the 247,400 unique visitors who visit the Web site each month. They both read typical fare in the New York news, sports, and culture sections. But the tabloid also includes sections unlikely to appear in mainstream daily news sources, including immigration and “nuestros países” (or “our countries”) with news from readers’ home countries—Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela, to name a few.

The movement of people like Lopez across national borders prompts a new look at the interconnectivity of culture, and, as Vourvoulias-Bush pointed out, readers of El Diario/La Prensa embody these trends that are reshaping societies.

“We are, and I include myself, the children of globalization,” he said. “The money we send home is more important to the Dominican Republic than sugar, to Guatemala than coffee, and to Mexico than oil. We are at the forefront of citizenship and dual nationality issues both for the countries we left and the city we live in. Our facility and comfort with multiple cultural traditions and languages make us key interlocutors in an increasingly interconnected world.”

This idea of interconnectivity can begin with a simple conversation, much like that with Juan Lopez in an Upper West Side deli, to recognize that local stories have international implications. And it’s this exact purpose that El Diario/La Prensa serves.

“ar Bronx is affected intrinsically by events that happen in Santo Domingo, in ways that are immediate and instantaneous,” Vourvoulias-Bush said. “This is the new geography of the world, one in which spatial relationships are far less important than the connections that exist across cultures transnationally . . . And that’s exactly what El Diario needs to cover, that nexus, that conjunction.”

Luis Montero is a second-year International Media and Communications concentrator and is originally from Peru.

Julie Payne is a second-year International Media and Communications concentrator and is originally from Canada.

*Although all details contained in this story are true, some people’s names have been changed to protect their respective identities.*
It’s an icy day in February, and the wind whips off the Atlantic. Coney Island is desolate, save for a few elderly joggers shuffling down the boardwalk’s weathered wooden planks.

The skeleton of the neighborhood’s legendary parachute jump looms over a vacant lot overrun with weeds. Just yards away, the Brooklyn Cyclones’ $39 million Keyspan Park waits for summer, when cheering fans will fill its stadium.

Indeed, in this iconic neighborhood on Brooklyn’s southernmost tip, winter is a time for waiting. But if Mayor Bloomberg has his way, that may soon change. The city has proposed an ambitious development plan that seeks to revitalize Coney Island, turning it from a gritty seasonal outpost to a year-round, economically viable neighborhood.

Should the plan succeed—and it may very well not—it will be a case study in the way that government intervention in the form of clever rezoning strategy, skillful political maneuvering and consensus-building, can redefine the urban landscape, literally and figuratively.

At the very least, the plan has already accomplished what a ragtag army of burlesque queens, bartenders, and angry senior citizens could not: it has effectively stopped a speculating investor from turning Coney Island’s fabled amusement district into an all-too-familiar scene in New York—a wall of luxury condominiums.
In its heyday in the early 1900s, Coney Island was a vacation spot for the city’s upper classes. In the 1920s and 1930s, when the subway made its beach and famed amusement parks accessible to the masses, Coney Island became known as “the poor-man’s getaway,” where a family could enjoy sun, rides, cotton candy, and Nathan’s famous hot dogs for pennies. As was the case with many public spaces in urban America after World War II, Coney Island went into decline. The beach bungalows that had lined the neighborhood’s inner pockets were razed to make way for large public housing high rises, which became hotbeds of crime and racial unrest during the late 1960s and early 1970s. While conditions throughout the city improved during the 1980s and 1990s, efforts to revitalize the area were limited at best. Empty lots and burned-out buildings peppered Surf Avenue, the neighborhood’s main thoroughfare; residents complained about a lack of job opportunities and limited public transportation.

In 2003, the city established the Coney Island Development Corporation (CIDC), in order to develop and implement a comprehensive planning process and economic strategy for Coney Island. The CIDC—which comprises 13 community officials appointed by the mayor and City Council—had 13 community officials appointed by the mayor and City Council—is, in essence, a group of advisors to the city’s Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

While the CIDC worked on its plan, a developer by the name of Thor Equities began buying a significant amount of property in Coney Island. Thor was headed by a Brooklyn-born businessman named Joe Sitt, who had made his fortune through a chain of plus-size clothing stores catering to urban African-American women. Sitt’s plans for the area were unclear, and no one was quite sure how they fit in with CIDC’s strategy. One thing seemed certain, though: Coney Island was about to change, and there was a feeling of insecurity in the air. Rumors about high-rise luxury condominiums began to circulate, and the blogosphere buzzed with angry protest. By fall 2006, Thor had purchased Astroland, the gritty amusement park at the neighborhood’s core. Sitt began to peddle the idea of a glitzy new Coney Island, complete with enclosed rides, sit-down restaurants, hotels, and shopping—a metamorphosis, he stressed, that would remain true to the area’s history.

And then Thor admitted that its plans did, in fact, include those luxury condominiums after all. And yes, some would be built in the heart of the amusement district.

With the battle largely maturing into a nuts-and-bolts discussion of policy, most residents seem to agree that if carried out properly, a revitalization of the area could be good for the neighborhood.

Left: Coney Island’s boardwalk and surrounding area. Above: Swimmers wading at Coney Island, 1928
to the developers of Keyspan Park, the Brooklyn Cyclones' minor league baseball stadium, who, he says, considered the structure to be an eyesore.

The Giuliani administration, in turn, contended that the roller coaster's undulating frame was not sturdy enough to safely remain standing. Activists argued that there were other, more innovative ways the city could have dealt with this piece of Brooklyn's history, rather than simply tearing it down. And in 2005, says Zigun, Mayor Bloomberg did just that when he used his own money to stop the auction and sale of the B & B Carousel, another nostalgic structure. Indeed, Zigun said, "the city's intentions are good."

"Mayor Bloomberg, Brooklyn Borough President Markowitz, and City Councilman [Dominic] Reccia combine into a trifecta of elected officials more pro-Coney Island, more pro-amusement park than any other NYC administration since the 1920s."

Indeed, the Bloomberg administration seems to understand that, for many, the fight for Coney Island is a fight for Brooklyn's soul. Coney Island represents something intangible: nostalgia, authenticity, a sort of democratic identity.

On November 8, 2007, Mayor Bloomberg addressed a group of civic and political leaders at Gargiulo's restaurant, a 100-year-old Coney Island institution. Over plates of veal Milanese and rigatoni, the mayor unveiled CIDC's new strategic plan. At its heart, he said, was a new rezoning framework. "City government has worked with local communities to cast off outdated zoning restriction," he said.

The city's plan essentially divides Coney Island into three distinct zoning areas: Coney North, West, and East.

Coney North—currently a hodge-podge of weed-filled lots and vacant buildings—will be rezoned for retail and residential use, with a proposed 100,000 square feet of retail space and up to 1,800 new apartments, including a certain amount of affordable housing.

Coney West, which is mainly city-owned land with the legal designation of "parkland"—albeit not the kind with trees and grass—is now used as parking for Keyspan Park. The area would be demapped and readied for some 2,700 apartments and 360,000 square feet of retail space.

In turn—in an effort to meet the legal requirement to create at least as much "parkland" as is eliminated, the 15-acre swath of land from Keyspan Park to the edge of the current amusement district would be marked as public parkland.

Coney East, as the city is calling it, is Coney Island's amusement district—the land currently owned by Thor Equities. By rezoning it as parkland, the administration would effectively be squashing any plans Thor Equities had in regard to luxury condominiums in the heart of the amusement district. Joe Sitt's hands were now tied.

In addition, the city would restore the area around landmarks like the Parachute Jump and the restored B & B Carousel, with the goal of creating a revitalized amusement district with historical integrity. It would also commit $100 million over the next four years for landscaping and "other amenities that will make the area more attractive to private capital."

"We're confident it will lead to $2.5 billion in private investment over the next ten years and create at least 3,000 new permanent jobs and 20,000 construction jobs in this community over the next 30 years," Bloomberg said.

The zoning process, known as the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), is a public one, open to feedback and criticism and subject to a vote by the City Council. The process is slated to be completed by early 2009.

As part of the ULURP process, the city must create an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS),
which analyzes the effect of the plan on its physical, economic, communal, and logistical environment; public feedback is taken into account.

In a five-page, single-spaced document provided to SIPA News, Community Board 13, which encompasses Coney Island, outlined its concerns over the rezoning plan, including issues such as infrastructure, job creation, affordable housing, off-street parking, and the condition of the Boardwalk.

“The Boardwalk is in dire shape,” the document says, mentioning “loose wooden boards, gaping holes, and other trip hazards.”

Chuck Reichental, Community Board 13’s manager, is particularly concerned by the city’s interpretation of what constitutes “affordable” housing, in a community in which 40 percent of residents rely on some form of public assistance.

“Let me put it this way,” he says. “According to the numbers I’ve seen, I couldn’t afford to move in.”

But whether or not the CIDC’s plan is perfect, its effect has been to quiet the fiery, almost instinctive initial backlash against “gentrification.”

With the battle largely maturing into a nuts-and-bolts discussion of policy, most residents seem to agree that if carried out properly, a revitalization of the area could be good for the neighborhood.

Lisa and Willy Montalvo, the owners of Animation Odyssey, a video game store on Surf Avenue and West 15th, say that the city’s plans are “a beautiful thing.”

Noting that their business suffers at the end of the summer season, Lisa Montalvo says that any infusion of capital into the area will be good for the store: “All it can do is help—not hurt.”

Similarly, Molly Pollack, a senior citizen who has lived in the neighborhood for 23 years, believes that the economic revitalization will be good for the community. “Anyone who lives here and expects to stay wants to see it built up,” she said. “The more it’s built up, the safer it is.”

Pollack, who was raised in the Bronx, was first introduced to Coney Island as a child, when her parents rented a summer bungalow in the adjoining community of Seagate. “[Coney Island] was a wonderful and exciting place back then,” she said. “There was always something to do . . . I think that if they build it up again, it can really become a place to visit.”

Indeed, the initial furor over Coney Island seems to have died down, with even die-hard preservationists grudgingly admitting that the city has done an admirable job trying to save the neighborhood.

 “[The city’s] Strategic Plan has balance and merit,” says Zigun. “[It is an] artful, politically skilled compromise.”

But where does this leave Joe Sitt? Stefan Friedman, a spokesman for Thor Equities, says that the company has scrapped its plans for residential units in Coney Island and is “trying to work with the city to come up with a plan that benefits everyone.”

“Joe Sitt is from Brooklyn and has a vision for Coney Island that involves preserving the iconic nature of the area.”

Yet EDC spokeswoman Janel Patterson seems less than enthusiastic about Sitt’s vision.

“We do not agree with his plans,” she says, flatly. “And he can’t do anything with the current zoning—the city controls that.”

The neighborhood’s honky-tonk, artsy underbelly seems to be safe for a while longer, as well. In a posting on Coney Island USA’s bulletin board, David Gratt, the organization’s managing director, said that “the Mermaid Parade will continue until global warming raises the ocean levels and the mermaids have to swim the route instead of march[ing] it.”

Paula Margulies SIPA ’07 was the co-editor of SIPA News in 2006–2007. She spent a summer in high school working at Ruby’s Bar and Grill in Coney Island.
A prisoner awaits trial in Iraq. Some parallels have been drawn between the treatment of detainees at Brooklyn’s Metropolitan Detention Center and detainees at Abu Ghraib outside Baghdad.
NEW YORK CITY boasts the third largest Arab-American population in the United States and is home to more than 600,000 Muslims. Since first coming to New York in the late 19th century, members of these communities have prospered in a city with a long history of incorporating new immigrant communities. Everything changed after September 11, 2001.

In the wake of the devastating terrorist attacks, these communities found themselves the target of a large-scale government program to round up Arab, Muslim, and South Asian men and detain them for months and even years, violating their constitutional rights of due process and subjecting them to systematic physical and verbal abuse. And while the world reacted in horror to images of abuses in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, little attention has been paid to the constitutional and human rights violations occurring right here in New York City.

Under the directive of then-attorney general John Ashcroft, who famously stated “let the terrorists among us be warned: If you overstay your visa—even by one day—we will arrest you,” the Department of Justice (DOJ), Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and FBI initiated a policy of preventative detention, using minor immigration violations as the pretense for detaining thousands of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian men and holding them for coercive questioning.
This nationwide program hit New York City the hardest. In the first two months following the September 11 attacks, more than 1,200 individuals were investigated, with 60 percent of those detained being arrested in the New York City area. Many of these men caught in antiterror sweeps ultimately landed in Brooklyn’s Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC).

Nicknamed “Brooklyn’s Abu Ghraib,” because of its reputation for physically abusing Arabs and Muslims after the September 11 attacks, the MDC served as one of the primary holding sites for many of the so-called “9/11” detainees. According to the DOJ’s own investigation into the program, the Office of the Inspector General found strong evidence of “a pattern of physical and verbal abuse” at MDC, including the common practice of slamming inmates’ heads against the walls.

Dr. Shakir Baloch, a Pakistani national and Canadian citizen who had recently moved to New York to seek temporary employment to support his wife and teenage daughter, was one such unlucky man. He found himself caught in a horrific nightmare not unfamiliar to thousands of other New Yorkers held as a result of the government’s policies in the war on terror.

A little over a week after September 11, a group of heavily armed INS, FBI, Department of Labor, and NYPD officers stormed Baloch’s apartment. Having come initially to speak with Baloch’s roommate, who was away at the time, the Joint Task Force questioned Baloch instead, with an impromptu claim that he was affiliated with terrorists.

During the four-hour interrogation, Baloch was never advised of his rights. The agents conducted a search of his apartment without his consent and seized his laptop and other personal items, which were confiscated and never returned. Deeming his behavior to be suspicious, the officials arrested Baloch. After finding him in violation of his visa, which did not permit him to work in the United States, the INS processed Baloch for removal. However, instead of respecting Baloch’s right to appeal the charges or allowing him to agree to a voluntary deportation in accordance with longstanding immigration practice, Baloch was taken to the MDC in Brooklyn. During his transfer to the MDC, Baloch testified that the guards hit and kicked him, threw him into a tiny cell, calling him a “[expletive] Muslim terrorist” and taunting him: “For what you did to us, we will kill you.”

Although Baloch was detained on minor civil immigration violations, he was designated as a “high interest” detainee and placed in solitary confinement in the highly restrictive Administrative Maximum Special Housing Unit. During his incarceration, Baloch was held in a communications blackout, repeatedly strip searched, subjected to sleep deprivation, prohibited from practicing his religion, and deprived of food and medical care. According to Baloch’s testimony, at one point guards threatened to cut off Baloch’s hands with iron cutters.

Baloch repeatedly requested to speak with an attorney, but he was prohibited from making any phone calls. When the Canadian Consulate inquired as to Baloch’s whereabouts, the MDC denied that Baloch was even detained at the facility and did not allow him to contact his consulate for three months. For his family and friends, it seemed that Baloch had simply disappeared.

According to Rachel Meeropol, an attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), who represents Baloch, although the 9/11 detainees were “only charged with civil immigration violations . . . they were detained as if they were charged with the most serious of crimes.” Acting on anonymous tips, the FBI, INS, and NYPD were dispatched to investigate “leads,” resulting in the detention of thousands of people based on little more than their racial and religious identity.

After more than six months of incarceration, Baloch was taken to Newark Airport and, without any personal identification or money, placed on a plane to Toronto. Since his incarceration, Baloch has tested positive for tuberculosis for the first time, which he believes he contracted during his detention at the MDC. He is also being treated for severe depression, making him unfit to practice medicine in Canada. “In addition to the horrible conditions of his confinement, Mr. Baloch’s prolonged confinement has taken an enormous toll on him emotionally,” stated Mathew Strugar, another CCR attorney representing Baloch. “His ability to concentrate, work—even relate to his family—have all been profoundly affected.”

While New York City was the location of all that went wrong in the lives of men like Baloch, it was also the place where talented individuals and groups worked to bring these men redress. As the communication blackouts slowly began to lift at the MDC, detainees were finally able to reach out to legal aid organizations and inform their families of their whereabouts. In an unprecedented effort, New York City’s community groups, legal aid, and civil rights organizations came together to help shed light on the secretive detainment policies and provide individuals with their rightful legal support.

After being deported to Canada, Baloch joined the first and largest class action civil rights lawsuit on behalf of September 11 detainees. In *Turkmen v. Ashcroft*, the New York–based CCR is representing Baloch and six other plaintiffs who were rounded up in the immigration raids. CCR, a nonprofit legal and educational organization, has charged John Ashcroft, FBI director Robert Muller, former INS commissioner James Ziegler, and employees of the MDC of violating the constitutional rights of the post–September 11 detainees. The suit is currently being decided by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, and a decision is expected in the next few months.

In addition to the *Turkmen* suit, other cases concerning the detention and treatment of individuals rounded up after September 11 have emerged. More recently, in 2007, 11 guards at the MDC were indicted on charges of beating two inmates, which many welcomed as a step toward revealing the long history of institutionalized abuse at the Brooklyn prison.

Unfortunately, the majority of those detained in the wake of September 11 have yet to find redress for the abuses they suffered at the hands of the U.S. government. Of the thousands of individuals detained in the immigration sweeps after 9/11, only four were ever charged with criminal offenses, and of those, two were acquitted.

As Strugar concluded “not only did these massive roundups fail to connect anyone to the September 11 attacks, but this kind of racial and religious profiling is completely counterproductive from a security standpoint. Such a large-scale violation of civil liberties only makes Arab, South Asian, and Muslim communities become insular and distrusting of law enforcement, while the goal should be to develop relationships and trust in these communities.”

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Over the last few decades, monumental changes in the political, legal, and social fabric of American society have had a significant impact on minority voting patterns. Civil rights legislation embodied in the Voting Rights Act and the influx of foreign immigrants have significantly changed the profile of the American electorate. The dramatic rise of powerful minority policymakers from Los Angeles to New Orleans, who make ground-breaking public policy by pushing political agendas that have never been given voice before, are ultimately shaking up the landscape of political engagement across the United States. One particular demographic, the Hispanic/Latino community, continues to soar year after year and is claiming new political capital.
NATIONAL LANDSCAPE
Today, Latinos are among the fastest growing ethnic and racial groups in the United States. The Latino population now constitutes 14 percent of the U.S. population and is projected to double by 2030 to 73 million. However, the rate at which Latinos are elected to office does not coincide with the growth of the Latino population nationally. Over the last 20 years, the Latino population increased by 150 percent, while the number of Latinos elected to office increased by 55 percent.

WHY LATINO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION HAS INCREASED NATIONALLY
The Voting Rights Act and the creation of majority-Latino electoral districts are two of the most influential tools that have empowered Latinos across the United States. Since Congress extended the Voting Rights Act in 1975, Latino political participation has increased significantly. More than two million Latinos voted in the 1976 presidential election. Latino voting jumped to 7.6 million in 2004, and 2008 is expected to be a record-breaking year in terms of the Latino vote.

NYC LATINO LANDSCAPE
In a seminar on Latino politics last fall, SIPA professor Rudy de la Garza pointed out that “New York is the first real Latino city of the United States.” As the largest city in the United States, two-thirds of New York’s eight million residents are either black, Latino, or Asian. New York’s Latino community comprises approximately 2.2 million people. Of the approximately 700,000 registered Latino voters in New York City, 70 percent are of Puerto Rican descent. Hispanics’ average turnout rates in primary and general elections are 25–30 percent and 65–70 percent, respectively.

Unlike other American cities with large Latino populations, New York boasts a diverse Latino population with differing interests, ideologies, and approaches. Interviews with Latino political consultants reiterated this point by highlighting the extreme fragmentation that characterizes the Latino community in New York. A senior consultant of Burgos and Associates, a leading strategic planning and lobbying firm, concluded that each ethnic group within the Latino population is at a different stage of development. As the historically dominant Puerto Rican bloc begins to leave the city, Dominicans, Mexicans, and Ecuadorians grow in number and demand their piece of the political pie.

Puerto Ricans have a claim on New York City. They have laid the political groundwork for Latino political representation, although many professionals and young families are leaving the city. The Dominicans have leveraged the success of the Puerto Ricans and continue to make political gains, although they have experienced some political infighting and turf wars in the recent past. In terms of political ideology and voting trend data, Ecuadorians and Guatemalans in Queens and Brooklyn tend to be more moderate and conservative in their voting. On the other hand, the Puerto Ricans and Dominicans are more liberal, on average, according to the consultant for Burgos and Associates. Given the term limits on City Council seats, many Latinos are now running for Assembly seats after their terms expire, looking to continue as career politicians. And there is a new wave of Latino elected officials such as 35-year-old Ruben Diaz, Jr., who represents the 85th Assembly District in the Bronx. This new generation of young political elites combine old New York politics with a more youthful view of the world.

One would expect blacks and Latinos to combine forces with white liberals to form strong political coalitions in majority city politics throughout the United States. This is not the case in New York. Unlike other large cities with nonwhite majorities, New York did not elect a black mayor until 1989 (David Dinkins, serving only one term), long after Philadelphia (Wilson Goode, 1982), Los Angeles (Tom Bradley, 1973), and Chicago (Harold Washington, 1983). Instead, white mayors courted and captured the middle-class vote to champion issues such as economic development, fighting crime, and fiscal conservatism.

Additionally, in 1989, both blacks and Latinos were strikingly underrepresented on the 35-member City Council, making up just 28.6 percent. After the 1991 creation of majority-minority districts through redistricting and a new City Council of 51 members (the result of a new city charter), minority membership increased to 41.2 percent. Today, blacks and Latinos hold 25 of the 51 City Council seats, 6 of the 14 Congressional districts, 27 of the 65 State Assembly seats, and 12 of the 36 State Senate seats.

Most recently, New York witnessed a billionaire Republican, Michael Bloomberg, narrowly beat the Democratic nominee, Fernando Ferrer, the first Latino to ever win the nomination of one of the two major parties. Interviews with political scientists John Mollenkopf of the CUNY Graduate Center and Angelo Falcón of SIPA indicate that
Fernando Ferrer actively courted the Latino vote, depending primarily on the Puerto Rican and Dominican vote, which turned out in low numbers. A growing Ecuadorian population in Queens, marginalized by Ferrer, voted primarily for Bloomberg because it viewed him as a “self-made” man. Bloomberg captured 35 percent of the Latino vote versus Ferrer’s 65 percent, which constitutes a significant achievement for a non-Latino running against a Latino in New York City.

Political elites and advocates in New York find the creation of majority-Latino districts extremely important, yet controversial, with regard to Latino political participation. In an interview, Fernando Ferrer said that “majority-Hispanic districts extend the opportunity for Hispanics to elect one of their own. It’s just the people don’t like to talk about it.” Other interviewees were hesitant in answering questions about the impact that the Voting Rights Act and majority-Latino districts have had on New York City Latinos and asked that their responses be kept off the record. Racially polarized voting, a particularly popular topic, continues to be an issue that prevents Latinos from electing a candidate of their choice in certain districts. And in cases where a Latino candidate goes up against a black or white candidate, voters, on average, will vote for their own candidate. Juan Cartagena, general counsel for the Community Service Society, observed that “robust majority-Hispanic districts remain the primary avenue for electoral success for Latinos.”

At the Assembly level in New York City, 5 majority-Latino districts were created during the 1992 redistricting, and 11 more were created in 2002. Today, there are a total of 14 majority-Latino Assembly districts in the five boroughs. One might expect greater Latino turnout in districts that are strengthened by Latino populations due to redistricting. In fact, vote histories from top-ballot contests in the 2002 and 2006 gubernatorial and 2004 presidential elections show a clear pattern that Latino turnout increases after districts become more Latino. These trends do not actually tell us the causes of Latino voting behavior. What makes Latinos actually turn out and vote?

Some political elites such as Fernando Ferrer say Latinos in New York City, like most voters, are self-interested and vote based on personal issues such as the bottom line in their financial statements, violence at their children’s grade schools, affordable housing, or access to prescription drugs. Others, like Jackson Chiu of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, say Latinos vote according to the political climate, especially when confronted with politically and emotionally charged issues such as immigration, bilingual education, and racial profiling. And there are those who say Latinos vote when there is a candidate who looks like them, acts like them, and speaks like them.

So, do Latinos turn out in greater numbers if a Latino is on the ballot? A random selection of three majority-Latino Assembly districts (39: Corona, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights in Queens; 72: Washington Heights, Inwood, and Marble Hill in Manhattan; and 79: Morissania in the South Bronx) illustrates that there is no clear indication that Latino voter turnout increases when there are Latinos on the ballot (2006 Democratic Primary data). For example, District 79 had one Latino candidate (Sigfredo Gonzalez) and two African-American candidates, with only 11 percent Latino voter turnout. And although this district is majority-Latino, perhaps Michael Benjamin, the current assemblyman in District 79, is the candidate of choice for the Latino community in this instance.

New York City’s history of racially discriminatory practices at the polls continues to have a ripple effect outside the city. Although gains have been made, problems such as harassment at the polls, defective voting machines primarily in Latino and black neighborhoods and the lack of bilingual voting materials still exist within the five boroughs. The battle is just beginning in the surrounding areas of Long Island, Westchester, and Yonkers. These areas need to organize their communities to fight for their right to cast votes on Election Day without fear, intimidation, and processes or devices that intentionally prevent Latinos from voting.

Policymakers today should continue to support policy that makes the legislative halls of America reflect the racial make-up of the neighborhoods they represent. In a time of recession, war, and the declining respect for the United States internationally, 2008 is a landmark year, when Americans will go to the polls and choose the next president. Who will decide? Some political pundits assert that independents and swing voters will determine the outcome. Others say Latinos will be the decisive factor, especially in states that have areas of growing Latino population and influence. One thing is clear: the Latino vote has become an essential driver of democracy in the United States.

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Former Bronx Borough President and former mayoral candidate Fernando Ferrer with New York State Senator Ruben Diaz, right, at a rally in the Bronx.
Unlike other major cities, New York City’s identification as an international metropolis has been built on the presence of diverse communities that maintain ties with their homelands all across the world. While this fast-paced city of rapidly talking people, fast moving currency, and quickly moving markets is daunting to some, for others New York’s dynamism produces expectations that continually inspire courageous individuals to immigrate by necessity or by choice.

In Harlem at the corner of Frederick Douglass Boulevard and 114th Street sits the restaurant Café 2115. Inside, Sierra Leonean, Malian, and Guinean dialects compete with a flat screen television showcasing West African music performances. The menu boasts an assortment of dishes like tortillas, dibé (braised lamb), hamburgers, fried chicken, and waffles.

The restaurant and its union of American and African cuisines represent owner Abe Fofanah’s belief in the “American dream” and the motivational force of its diverse society.

“I decided my restaurant is not only for the African community; it’s for the international community in Harlem, wherever you come from,” Fofanah said in an interview with SIPA News. In accordance with this belief, Fofanah strategically added an American to the restaurant’s staff when he hired Paula Coleman, a frequent diner, to be the manager.

While it appears straightforward and sounds like the classic American entrepreneurial stroke of luck, Fofanah’s life has been anything but easy. The establishment of Café 2115 on September 17, 2006, represents a milestone in Fofanah’s 18-year journey in New York.

During the winter of 1987, 23-year-old Abe Fofanah arrived in New York from Freetown, Sierra Leone, on a yearlong tourist visa. He came to the United States to “educate myself, to better the life of my family and community.” Confident in himself as a Sierra Leonean in the United States, he began taking business training courses at Hunter College in 1989. There he met Jasmine Simmons, a native Harlem resident, whom he married in 1990.

Despite the good fortune of finding his future wife, Fofanah was dissatisfied with the slow pace of his advancement at Hunter. He left school after six months and took a job at Hotline Delivery, a messenger service, making deliveries for the high fashion magazine Harper’s Bazaar.

For an unimaginative person, the job would have become the employment version of purgatory; for the self-assured Fofanah, it was an American opportunity that came knocking. “I’m a very outgoing person, I’m a very open person, I like to meet people and know people. So working for that magazine, I was able to get to know people,” Fofanah said.

With private loans and a client list built from his previous position as a messenger, Fofanah started his own courier service in 1994—the same year that Sierra Leone erupted into civil war. Despite the establishment of his promising enterprise, Fofanah had a choice to make: personally save his nine siblings and parents, who were located in the diamond-rich Kono District, or leave them to a grisly fate.

“The concept of family in Africa is always big—everyone is just an extension of the local family, and from this standpoint we are always involved in the family ceremony and family ritual,” said Sekou-Koureissy Condé, a Columbia University professor at the Center for International Conflict Resolution.

With his wife’s support, Fofanah returned to Sierra Leone in 1994, the first of two dangerous trips home. “I thought I would never make it back to the United States, but if I gotta go over there, I will die in the cause to save my family,” he stated.

Fofanah helped all of his immediate family leave the Kono District, except for his father and brother, Omar Fofanah, who remained to protect...
his gem-trading concern. His mother and remaining siblings resettled in the capital, Freetown, and in Conakry, Guinea, where his parents were born.

However, the political turmoil in Sierra Leone did not confine itself to the Kono District, and in 1996 Abe Fofanah’s brother Omar, in the midst of conflict, helped his father and the remainder of the family leave Sierra Leone by walking along footpaths and crossing miles of rivers to settle in Guinea.

Despite the distance, Fofanah remained in contact with his family. This common human desire to retain connections with family members and communities supersedes any one culture, but it was especially important to Sierra Leoneans during the civil war.

“The family network is a powerful phenomenon in Africa. So you are not excluded wherever you are. You can probably check the phone bills from the United States, [which] are much longer from Africa than for any other community,” Professor Condé explains.

Makuta Kande, the former financial manager of Progress, the now defunct Sierra Leonean newspaper, indicated that Sierra Leonean expatriates, who are mainly Muslim, live and work all over New York City, with a major concentration in the Bronx. “I would estimate the community in New York to be more than 5,000 people,” Kande said.

In 2000, Fofanah worked to help his family emigrate from Guinea to the United States. While his father and mother have returned to Sierra Leone, the siblings who have remained in the United States are thriving.

“Many Sierra Leoneans are interested in going back home, and I think peace on the ground in Sierra Leone is facilitating the community life in New York, and the community life in New York is supporting the peace process in Sierra Leone financially and through the media.”—Professor Sekou-Koureissy Condé

“Many Sierra Leoneans are interested in going back home, and I think peace on the ground in Sierra Leone is facilitating the community life in New York, and the community life in New York is supporting the peace process in Sierra Leone financially and through the media,” Professor Condé said.

However, while Fofanah and others living in the United States are experiencing peace, they are also helping to secure peace in Sierra Leone through their community contacts. And Fofanah is helping to build Harlem through social and financial investments.

The corridor of 116th Street is filled with West African shops and restaurants that generate tax revenues that are in turn utilized by the city to fund local schools. Many West African Muslims make contributions to local mosques, whose charitable organizations aid the needy.

Some, like Fofanah, are making their own quiet contributions to the community. Every Friday, after the noon prayer at the Masjid Aqsa (Aqsa Mosque), anyone—rich or poor—can come to Café 2115 for a free meal in honor of thanksgiving to their homeland, their God, and to the people who have contributed to their success and safety in the United States.

Yoyce Jones is a second-year International Media and Communications concentrator and is originally from Los Angeles.
John H. Coatsworth has been appointed as dean of the School of International and Public Affairs. In a letter to the Columbia community, University President Lee C. Bollinger said, “John has done an outstanding job as acting dean of SIPA this past year, and it will be a pleasure to continue working with him in this permanent role. This will be a critical period in the history of SIPA, especially as the School prepares to move into its own building in Manhattanville. In the short period of time in which John has been leading the School, he has been able to galvanize the SIPA community to begin preparing for its future. This will be absolutely critical in determining the course of SIPA over the next several years, which will in turn be extremely important in shaping the character of the University, particularly on the matter of our collective engagement with a wide range of public policy issues and globalization.”

Coatsworth is a leading expert on Latin American economic and international history. He taught at the University of Chicago from 1969 until he joined the Harvard faculty in 1992. From 1992 until 2007, he was Monroe Gutman Professor of Latin American Affairs at Harvard, where he also served as the founding director of the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies from its creation in 1994 until 2006. In addition, he chaired the Harvard University Committee on Human Rights Studies. His other academic posts have included visiting professorships at El Colegio de México, the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the National University of Buenos Aires, the Instituto Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires, and the Instituto Ortega y Gassett in Madrid.

A onetime Guggenheim fellow, Coatsworth is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Council on Foreign Relations, and numerous professional associations. He is a former president of the American Historical Association and was recently elected to the presidency of the Latin American Studies Association. He first came to Columbia as a visiting professor in 2006–2007 and joined the faculty in 2007 before becoming acting dean of SIPA.

Following President Bollinger’s announcement, Professor Robert Lieberman, chair of the Department of International and Public Affairs and a member of the search committee, said, “It’s been a pleasure to work with John during his year as acting dean. He learned the ins and outs of the School very quickly and gained the confidence of students, faculty, and staff. Under his leadership, SIPA has already made a lot of progress in critically important areas such as reforming the curriculum and developing a strategic plan for the School’s future. I’m delighted with the choice.”
SIPA in Ten Years—Radical Changes on the Way

By Democritos Mavrellis

The School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) is set to undergo radical changes in the near future, including a new dean, a streamlined and revised curriculum, budgetary independence from the Arts and Sciences, and a new building in Manhattanville. These changes promise to vitally transform SIPA for the 21st century.

The proposal to move to Manhattanville reflects a major commitment by the University to SIPA’s long-term future importance as a center of interdisciplinary thinking, teaching, and public policy research at Columbia. While the proposed move to Manhattanville is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2015, the planning for the new building has already begun. Phase One of the Manhattanville project includes a new building for SIPA, to be located at the northwest corner of 12th Avenue and 130th Street. Other new buildings that are scheduled to be built during Phase One include the Business School, the School of the Arts, and the Jerome L. Greene Science Center, which will house Columbia’s interdisciplinary Mind, Brain, and Behavior Initiative.

The proposed SIPA building will have approximately 250,000 square feet of space and state-of-the-art technologies for research and teaching. According to Dean John Coatsworth, the planning phase will involve students as well as faculty and staff, with the aim of making SIPA’s new home as user friendly as possible. Still undecided is whether other parts of the University closely affiliated with SIPA, such as the regional institutes or the Departments of Political Science and Economics, will move with SIPA to Manhattanville or remain on the Morningside Heights campus.

The curriculum review process is well under way. During her tenure as dean, Professor Lisa Anderson initiated the curriculum review in an attempt to streamline SIPA’s sprawling offering of concentrations and to focus the curriculum on a few areas of academic and research excellence. According to Professor Robert Lieberman, the co-chair of the review, the core curriculum of the MIA and MPA programs will not undergo a dramatic change, reflecting the strength and relevance of the current core.

A small but important change under consideration is the addition of a mandatory management class for all MIA students, much like the current public management class in the MPA program. Expanding the role of workshops is also being considered, making these capstone projects mandatory for all MIAs to give students more experience working with practitioners and real-world clients.

The biggest change, for students as well as faculty, will be the overall reduction of concentrations—through the merger of existing concentrations—to create five or six “super” concentrations that focus on major areas of public policy. Each concentration will be organized around a group of academic and practitioner faculty who work in these areas. This will create fewer and more focused concentrations and make better use of the School’s resources. Economic and Political Development (EPD), International Security Policy (ISP), and Human Rights will remain as they are. However, the current energy and environment programs will be merged together, as will International Finance and Policy (IFP) and International Economic Policy (IEP); and Social Policy and Urban Policy. International Media and Communications (IMC) and Management and Advanced Policy and Economic Analysis (APEA) will no longer be concentrations; instead, they will be among a set of specializations—providing advanced skills available to all students that will strengthen students’ career prospects by making them more competitive in the job market. Every student will be required to have a concentration as well as a specialization. Dean John Coatsworth hopes the curriculum changes—which are likely to be implemented in the fall of 2009—will provide a better organized, more coherent education and will allow students to better prepare themselves by choosing policy concentrations and skill-oriented specializations tailored to the professional careers they are seeking.

Also on the agenda is a plan to give SIPA greater financial and academic autonomy from the Arts and Sciences, thereby providing the School with more control of its own resources. Under this proposal, SIPA would maintain a beneficial academic relationship with the Arts and Sciences, yet gain increased budgetary and administrative independence. This will put SIPA on a similar footing with the Law School and the Business School by allowing the School to have more say in its faculty appointments and in determining its academic and research needs. According to Dean Coatsworth, the time frame for financial autonomy is two to three years, with academic autonomy to follow.

These are all issues that will dramatically transform SIPA from the way it is today. And these are all issues that Dean Coatsworth will have to confront as he ushers SIPA into the 21st century.

In ten years, the hope is that SIPA will be in a new building appropriate to the needs of its ambitious faculty and students; the School will have substantially increased student fellowship support, allowing it to draw the most talented students from around the world; and its faculty will have a much more visible research profile.

With these resources secured, SIPA will be able to fulfill its aspiration of working to solve the world’s most challenging public needs, acting as a bridge between the academy, the public sector, private corporations, and nonprofit organizations.

Democritos Mavrellis is a second-year International Economic Policy concentrator.
IMC’s Media Ace Retires  By David Trilling

In his herringbone jacket and regimental striped tie, with immaculately parted hair and a kindly, bemused smile, Professor Donald “Pete” Johnston has cut the figure of an eminent scholar in the halls of IAB for the last 18 years.

To IMCers past and present, he is the star of our program and the wise mentor of our experience here at SIPA. This year, though, he is retiring as the International Media and Communications concentration director, and we will miss his guidance.

Johnston’s life itself is inspiration to us. It exemplifies the classic newsman tradition so many of us still seek, with 25 years as a journalist at the country’s top publications. What few people know, though, is that Johnston led a life of adventure before his career even started. He was seriously injured and nearly killed in World War II. He calls it “sort of irrelevant now,” but in 1944, eight missions shy of his discharge, Red Dog—as his Air Force buddies knew the sprightly red headed 20-year-old—survived the crash of his B-17 Flying Fortress over Italy.

“I was knocked out because I was in the nose; lucky I wasn’t killed right away,” he shyly admits after a little prodding. “But my left leg was all mangled; it was broken and the ligaments around the knee were all chewed up, and by the time I gained consciousness, it was hurting like the dickens.”

Johnston spent the next two years in and out of military hospitals undergoing surgeries to repair the knee, a source of trouble his whole life.

Finally, he returned to Cornell—where he had completed three-quarters of a year before entering the service—on the G.I. Bill. There he met his wife, Jane, when they were both studying in a summer program. A group blind date at the beginning of the semester turned into a lifelong partnership. “Jane is so sick of me telling this story,” he giggles.

The first day of classes “I spotted her right away and made sure I sat next to her. That was the beginning of it. I saw her every day that summer and was completely hooked and fortunately she was too.”

As Johnston reflects on his postwar life, it sounds defined by a boundless excitement for the world and the future. After completing his master’s at Columbia’s Journalism School, he and Jane decided adventure was more important than furniture for their veteran’s apartment, and they traveled on a shoestring budget through Europe, purchasing a little Renault they would sell upon their departure—“it was a toy, really.”

Returning, he followed a lead from his brother, a sports writer in Buffalo, and signed up as one of two reporters for the 10,000-circulation Tonawanda News. Johnston covered “the school board, the village council, the fire department, the police department . . . I learned quickly, but it was sort of boring; I was aiming higher than that.”

He moved to the Buffalo office of United Press (which later became United Press International) for four years before transferring to the foreign bureau at UPI’s New York headquarters. For another nine years Johnston reported for UPI—four from the United Nations—until he grew restless again. “Believe it or not, I saw an ad in the New York Times for a position in the New York Times,” he says, laughing at the irony.

He took a job writing and editing in the Week in Review section. From New York, he wrote about Vietnam and the race for space. These were the feature stories that characterize the elegance of that Sunday section: “It was exciting. I liked it because I knew the Week in Review was read all over the world.”

But Johnston was always searching for the next great thing. “It was hard to leave the New York Times; that was the top for most writers.” But when a friend asked him to interview at Columbia’s Journalism School, he decided to visit and see what was happening. Within a few years he was academic dean and teaching a full roster of newspaper and magazine courses at his alma mater.

He came to SIPA in 1990 to design and implement the IMC concentration. One year became two, and despite plans to retire, he was hooked: “I’ve found the students here really intelligent and interesting, and the whole environment challenging. It has more dimensions than I found at the J-School. The students have been around; they know the world and have experiences. I like that so many are international students.”

In his characteristically soft voice, he says of his time here: “I was stimulated; I still am. I like to see what the students do and the progress they make. I’m absolutely thrilled to see students’ bylines on stories all over the world.” Indeed, in class he speaks fondly about his former students with both pride and encouragement.

Luckily for SIPA and the next generation of students, Professor Johnston will continue teaching his coveted writing course next fall. Anyone who hasn’t had the benefit of his guidance would be foolish to miss the instruction of one of Columbia’s best-kept secrets. Those of us entering a career in writing and media will follow his insight and counsel for years to come.

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SIPA MPA Alumni Return to NYC for 30th Anniversary Celebration
By Rebekkah Schear

On February 16, 2008, SIPA hosted a daylong event to celebrate the 30th anniversary of its MPA program. The occasion drew alumni from the New York vicinity, from out of state and from abroad, from recent years, and from the first graduating classes—1979 and 1980. Alumni joined current SIPA students, faculty, and staff to mark a milestone for the MPA program.

SIPA professor of political science Ester Fuchs moderated a panel discussion on “The Future of New York City,” reflecting the MPA program’s deep ties to the city. The panel included Neil Hernandez (MPA’98), commissioner of the Department of Juvenile Justice, Lloyd Kass (MPA’98), director of the Energy Department of the New York City Housing Authority, and Venetia Lannon (MPA’97), senior vice president of the New York City Economic Development Corporation.

Their discussion focused on each organization’s respective successes in making New York a competitive city in regard to quality of life, economic stability, public safety, the educational system, and environmental sustainability.

Venetia Lannon discussed the need to reclaim the city’s waterfront, for a variety of uses—commercial and residential. Key to the city’s future will be using waterways for more sustainable forms of transportation. “Freight movement will increase 47 percent by 2025,” she stated, which makes barge transport a superior option to truck transport as the city’s population continues to grow.

Lloyd Kass also spoke about the increasingly green mentality of the Housing Authority’s projects. “We are changing the world one light bulb at a time,” he commented, in reference to the city’s replacement of incandescent bulbs with energy-efficient, compact fluorescent bulbs in thousands of NYC apartments.

Like his copanelists, Neil Hernandez discussed how his organization, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), is “heading in the right direction.” In particular, he spoke about recent initiatives that the DJJ has undertaken, including the Collaborative Family Initiative, which he described as a “discharge planning and reentry initiative that seeks to provide treatment and family-focused supports to youngsters returning to the community from secure and nonsecure detention group homes.”

The NYC panel, in conjunction with the two others held during the event, “Public/Private Partnerships” and “After Bush: Creative Ideas for U.S. Climate Policy,” highlighted the talent and creativity that MPA alumni possess. It also showcased the ways in which alumni have put to use the skills they acquired at SIPA to influence and transform the world. As Fuchs commented, “[Our MPA alumni] are a dedicated group of public servants who are not afraid to put their hearts and heads into problem solving.”

The day’s festivities culminated in a cocktail reception with a moving keynote address by New York Congressman Charles B. Rangel, who concluded by thanking SIPA alumni for having dedicated their careers to public service.

Rebekkah Schear is a first-year concentrator in Economic and Political Development.

The C. V. Starr Scholarship Fund

SIPA is pleased to announce the creation of its newest fellowship fund with the receipt of a $250,000 gift from the Starr Foundation. The fellowship will be known as the “C. V. Starr Scholarship Fund” and will be awarded to SIPA students beginning in the fall of 2008 on the basis of merit and need. The Starr Foundation has endowed C. V. Starr Scholarship Funds at more than 100 colleges and universities and selected secondary schools.

The Starr Foundation was established in 1955 by Cornelius Vander Starr, an insurance entrepreneur who founded the American International family of insurance and financial services companies, now known as American International Group, Inc. Mr. Starr, a pioneer of globalization, set up his first insurance venture in Shanghai in 1919. He died in 1968 at the age of 76, leaving his estate to the Foundation.

The Foundation is currently one of the largest private foundations in the United States. It makes grants in a number of areas, including education, medicine and health care, human needs, public policy, culture, and the environment. SIPA is proud to be among the Foundation’s recipients.
Neil Hernandez, MPA ’98, began working at the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in 1998, the same year he received his MPA from SIPA. In December 2001, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg appointed him commissioner. As commissioner, Hernandez is responsible for ensuring public safety by caring for youth ordered to detention by the judiciary, while simultaneously providing critical intervention in the areas of health, mental health, psychiatry services, recreation, and voluntary religious services as part of the department’s case management and discharge planning model.

As part of the Bloomberg administration’s juvenile justice reform efforts, the department has implemented initiatives to reduce unnecessary detention, as well as develop partnerships with juvenile justice stakeholders and community-based organizations to identify supports for youths and their families upon returning to the community. One such initiative, the Collaborative Family Initiative (CFI), which links youths in detention with mental health needs—two-thirds of detained youths—and their families with community-based organizations that have mental health and psychiatry capabilities, ensuring continuity of services when youths return home.

Hernandez took time from his busy schedule for an online interview with SIPA News.

**SIPA News:** Why did you choose to attend SIPA?

**NH:** I chose to attend SIPA for a combination of reasons, from the curriculum offered to the opportunity to be taught by professors like Mayor David Dinkins and Dr. Ester Fuchs.

**SIPA News:** What were you doing before coming to SIPA?

**NH:** I was an assistant district attorney in Suffolk County, New York. However, I wanted to branch out within the criminal justice field into the areas of policy and public management, while advancing social justice issues.

**SIPA News:** What was your best experience at SIPA?

**NH:** I enjoyed the workshops because they gave you a practical tool to apply in the public sector, especially, working collaboratively with your classmates.

**SIPA News:** Tell us about your current post as the Juvenile Justice Commissioner?

**NH:** Since graduating from SIPA a decade ago, I have worked in various roles at DJJ, including commissioner. It’s the critical work of the department that surpassed my expectations because while we protect public safety by maintaining custody of youths ordered to detention by the judiciary, the department also looks to be responsive to the youths’ needs by redirecting their lives with an array of services provided while in care. In addition, the department links youths and their families with community-based organizations capable of serving the needs identified in detention as a way of ensuring that there is no disruption in services once the youth is released back into the community.

**SIPA News:** What is most rewarding?

**NH:** Being affiliated with the department’s dedicated employees that do such a hard job and have such an influence on the future of the city and celebrating their accomplishments and career choices at the department’s End-of-the-Year Recognition Ceremony is the most rewarding.

**SIPA News:** How did SIPA prepare you for the job?

**NH:** My first job at the Department of Juvenile Justice immediately upon graduating from SIPA was as an operations manager in a detention facility. The MPA degree gave me the foundation to hit the ground running and to put what I learned into practice.

**SIPA News:** What do you like most about New York?

**NH:** I’m biased because I was born and raised here. However, it’s the capital of the world, where prospective students can find any opportunity to meet their career aspirations, and its diversity in general are just a couple of reasons why I love New York.

**SIPA News:** Who have been key influences in your life?

**NH:** Being fortunate enough to have access to a scholar and practitioner like Dr. Ester Fuchs through my time at SIPA and in the Bloomberg administration has been very significant to me.

Ana Maria Currea is a second-year Urban Policy concentrator.
 Alma Profile: Enhancing New York City Preparedness the McSweeney Way

By Liat Shetret

Moorningside Heights native and ’07 MIA graduate Dan McSweeney has recently become acquainted with an unusual side of New York City. As the executive coordinator for Counterterrorism Strategy for the Fire Department of New York City (FDNY), McSweeney is helping to accomplish the department’s mission to improve the city’s ability to anticipate and respond to emergencies. He works at the FDNY’s Center for Terrorism and Disaster Preparedness.

His position brings him in contact with firehouses across the city and with out-of-state colleagues. International relationships are also being developed. McSweeney’s efforts to cultivate links with other organizations reflects the implementation of a comprehensive plan to increase the efficiency of emergency preparedness in the “all hazards” environment. This includes terrorist threats, natural and man-made disasters, and other potential emergencies.

“The FDNY is an icon, an organization that has earned its status over many years,” says McSweeney. “We are working to ensure that our efforts complement those of law enforcement and other public agencies.” He adds, “One of the main things our firefighters bring to the table is a high standing in the communities in which they work. I’d like to be part of the effort to develop greater situational awareness and interoperability for them.”

McSweeney’s personal background, his professional experience, Marine Corps service, and graduate training make him the right man for the job. Prior to beginning his graduate work at SIPA, he was deployed overseas several times. In 2003 his unit entered Iraq at the end of a nine-month “float” that included operations and exercises in the Balkans, Europe, and Africa. His military experience is mainly in public affairs, civil affairs, and information operations. Shortly after graduating, he was deployed to Iraq to work on communication issues, mainly in Baghdad and Fallujah.

In describing his work in Iraq, McSweeney shared an amusing yet sobering anecdote of being pushed to the front lines of the war with a horde of reporters and journalists in tow—an attempt to accurately record and report the realities of war. He tells SIPA News that after his war experience, he often watched the events in Iraq unfold on news broadcasts, frustrated by the lack of nuance, detail, or context in many reports.

“There is an assumption by editors that your average news consumer in America is unsophisticated,” he says. “Our news coverage overlaps with the entertainment culture, and that plays into the larger issue that many Americans have no desire to get involved in advocacy. Pressing issues are not communicated in detail.”

McSweeney left the Marine Corps’ active duty to attend SIPA, where he concentrated in International Security Policy (ISP). He remembers courses such as “War, Peace and Strategy” with Professor Richard K. Betts, and “Terrorism and Globalization” with Major Reid L. Sawyer. His SIPA education helped him understand how policy is made and implemented, hone his writing skills, analyze organizational dynamics, and recognize the increasing relevance of domestic first responders. His time at SIPA also helped him develop a greater historical and theoretical framework.

Joining the FDNY represents a homecoming for McSweeney: He is back in New York and working in a position that allows him to draw on all of his strengths and experiences to date. The practical side of this experience is clear: “We need to continue our commitment to developing a robust, well-coordinated, responsive, and innovative strategy for the fire department,” he says.

His advice to current SIPA students includes recognizing the tremendous value of living in the heart of New York City. At SIPA he saw the importance of not just reading about issues, but also of going out to experience them.

McSweeney’s closing comments were particularly insightful: “New York is a place where people were hit really hard on 9/11 and came back really hard. The city is taking the steps it needs to take to increase awareness, improve communication, and become a safer city, but we still have a lot of work to do.”

Liat Shetret is a first-year International Security Policy and Middle East concentrator originally from Israel.
New $1 Million Fellowship Fund at SIPA

SIPA is very proud to announce the generous gift on behalf of Drs. David and Marina Ottaway for the creation of a new fellowship fund at SIPA. With their gift of $1 million, the Ottaways will create the Ottaway Fellowship Fund, which will provide full tuition for two students at SIPA, with special consideration given to students from underrepresented socioeconomic groups.

Besides two long and distinguished careers in the field of international affairs, David and Marina Ottaway have demonstrated a deep, philanthropic commitment to furthering the educational attainment of disadvantaged students. Over the years, they have created fellowship funds at a number of educational institutions, including scholarships for doctoral students at Columbia University’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, undergraduates at Harvard and Colby College, and for African-American students at Lawrenceville School in New Jersey and Sidwell Friends in Washington, D.C. “We strongly believe that education is the best way to level the playing field for all Americans regardless of color, creed, or ethnicity by making accessible to them the best schools and universities.”

David Ottaway graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University in 1962 and obtained a PhD in 1972 in political science from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University. In addition, he completed the distinguished International Fellows Program at SIPA in 1963. Dr. Ottaway’s interest in foreign affairs developed during his time at Harvard when he studied for a year in Paris and visited both Algiers and Tunis for his undergraduate thesis in history. His family’s lifelong involvement in newspaper publishing explains his strong attraction to journalism.

Dr. Ottaway worked for The Washington Post from 1971 to 2006: from 1994 to 2006, he was an investigative/special projects reporter; from 1990 to 1992, he was the Central and Southern Europe bureau chief based in Vienna, Austria; from 1985 to 1990, he was a national security correspondent; from 1981 to 1984 he was the Cairo bureau chief; from 1973 to 1979, he was the Africa bureau chief based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Lusaka, Zambia; and from 1971 to 1973, he was the assistant foreign editor. Earlier, he was a New York Times/Time Magazine correspondent in Algiers, Algeria.

In 2004, Dr. Ottaway and Washington Post reporter Joe Stephens received the 2004 Gerald Loeb Award for business, financial, and economic journalism for their series “Big Green,” which looked into activities of The Nature Conservancy. The same series made them a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and won them a top award from the Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. In 2005, they won the George Polk Award in Foreign Reporting for their critical exposé of the U.S.-led reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and the U.S. Agency for International Development’s misuse of Congressional funds for those efforts. In 2003, Dr. Ottaway shared the National Press Club’s Edwin M. Hood Diplomatic Correspondence Award with Post former managing editor Robert Kaiser for a series on U.S.-Saudi relations in the wake of 9/11. He is also the recipient of several Overseas Press Club awards.

Dr. Ottaway is currently a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., having been a fellow there during the 2006–2007 academic year. His expertise is in Middle East politics and Saudi Arabia, and he is currently finishing a book on U.S.-Saudi relations from 1973 to 2007 entitled The King’s Messenger, Prince Bandar bin Sultan and the Tangled U.S.-Saudi Relationship. Bandar was the Saudi ambassador to Washington from 1983 to 2005.

Dr. Marina Ottaway is also a graduate of Columbia’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, receiving a PhD in sociology in 1974. She is the director of the Middle East program at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and specializes in democracy and postconflict reconstruction issues, with a special focus on problems of political transformation in the Middle East and reconstruction in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and African countries. She is also a senior associate in the Democracy and Rule of Law Project, a research endeavor that analyzes the state of democracy around the world and the efforts of the United States and other countries to promote democracy. Her most recent book, Uncharted Journey: Democracy Promotion in the Middle East (co-edited with Thomas Carothers), was published in 2005. She carried out research in Africa and in the Middle East for many years and taught at the University of Addis Ababa and the University of the Witwatersand in South Africa.

“I am deeply touched by this extraordinary act of generosity on the part of David and Marina Ottaway,” stated Dean John H. Coatsworth. “The Ottaway Fellowship will have a lasting impact at SIPA, providing needed financial support for SIPA students for decades to come.” Dr. David Ottaway is currently a member of SIPA’s Board of Advisors and a member of its Executive Committee. The Ottaway Fellowships will be awarded beginning in the fall of 2008.
In recognition of Lisa Anderson’s significant accomplishments as dean of SIPA (1997–2007), SIPA’s Office of Development is pleased to announce the creation of the Lisa Anderson Fellowship Fund, established on her behalf by SIPA’s Advisory Board, close friends, and colleagues to acknowledge her leadership during her tenure as dean.

Lisa Anderson’s decade as dean of Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs was characterized by bold initiatives that modernized the curriculum, enhanced the scholarly reputation of the School, and expanded SIPA’s reach far beyond Morningside Heights. She recruited numerous distinguished faculty, doubling the size of the faculty and building a research profile that today is widely recognized in the policy world and in the social sciences. Pointing to increased connections between international and domestic policymaking, Anderson advocated closer integration of the Master of International Affairs and Master of Public Administration programs, so that the two student and faculty communities now share common goals, perspectives, and identities.

Dean Anderson also oversaw the development of several new initiatives that strengthened the School’s connections with New York City’s professional communities. In 1999, with the support of a multimillion-dollar gift from former dean Harvey Picker, she created the Picker Center for Executive Education and the Executive Master of Public Administration program. The Picker Center now runs executive training programs for public officials from the Fire Department of New York, the Federal Aviation Administration, members of the Northern Ireland Community Builders Association, government officials from China, and executives from China Central Television, among many others.

SIPA’s Center for Energy, Marine Transportation and Public Policy was established under Dean Anderson’s leadership with support from several major corporations, including ExxonMobil, and a multimillion-dollar gift from the Onassis Foundation. In collaboration with The Earth Institute, Anderson developed innovative programs that combine public policy with natural science research, including the MPA in Environmental Science and Policy, with its pioneering natural science curriculum for policymakers, and SIPA’s first doctoral program, the PhD in Sustainable Development. This program offers a unique, interdisciplinary doctoral education combining economics with other social and natural sciences.

Over the last decade, Dean Anderson has cultivated relationships with public policy schools around the globe, promoting an association of leading graduate institutions known as the Global Public Policy Network (GPPN). The Global Public Policy Network fosters collaborative public policy research, faculty exchanges, team teaching, case study development, global executive training programs, student exchanges, and international dual degree programs. SIPA’s network currently includes collaborations with the London School of Economics, Sciences Po in Paris, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, the Centro de Investigaciones y Docencias Economicas (CIDE, Mexico City), the University of Tokyo Graduate School of Public Policy, and the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin.

Under Dean Anderson’s guidance, SIPA saw its admissions, career services, and student affairs operations professionalized. She revitalized and institutionalized the Dean’s Advisory Board and, through the celebrations of the School’s 60th anniversary in 2006, renewed the School’s alumni outreach and strengthened its global community of scholars. More than 40 percent of SIPA’s alumni graduated during her tenure, and many of them are actively involved in alumni activities in the 155 countries where they live and work.

The Lisa Anderson Fellowship will be awarded for the first time in the fall of 2008. We would like to thank SIPA’s Board and other close friends whose generosity made the Fellowship possible. The Anderson Fellowship will not only create a lasting tribute to Professor Anderson, but it will also help to build fellowship support at SIPA, which remains a key priority for the School.
Harvey Picker: SIPA’s Former Dean and Longtime Friend  By JoAnn Crawford

Harvey Picker, third dean of the School of International and Public Affairs and a generous donor to the School, died on March 22, 2008, at the age of 92, in Camden, Maine.

When he became dean in 1972, Picker had already been a successful businessman and innovator. Though at the time, appointing a dean without academic experience was noted as an unusual choice, in hindsight, Picker’s career path exemplifies the spirit of SIPA. Like the students who would follow him, Picker bridged both the private and nonprofit sectors, combined practical experience with imagination, and embodied the adage to “think globally, act locally.”

A graduate of Colgate University (1936), Picker received an MBA from Harvard and studied at Oxford, before going to work for Picker X-Ray, the company that was founded by his father in 1914 and acquired by General Electric Co. Ltd., of England in 1981.

Picker’s commitment to public service and generosity dates back to World War II, when Picker X-Ray, in collaboration with the U.S. Army, developed X-ray equipment compact and sturdy enough to be parachuted into the field. Unwilling to profit from the war, Picker and his father sent the U.S. Treasury a check for $3 million, their share of the equipment’s profits.

Picker made a further contribution as a lieutenant commander in the Navy. He was chosen to work with a team of physicists on the secret development of radar at an MIT lab. After the war, Picker became president of Picker X-Ray (a position he held for 25 years), leading the company in advancing cobalt therapy for cancer treatment and nuclear imaging diagnostics, among other innovations.

Picker’s business acumen and public spiritedness served both him and Columbia well when he made the transition to the academy. During his tenure as dean, the School tripled in size, its second degree program—the Master of Public Administration—was added, and the School of International Affairs was renamed as the School of International and Public Affairs.

“The vision of SIPA as a global public policy school would not have been possible without the work that he did to establish policy analysis and public management as core disciplines in this school. His contribution to the development of SIPA was profound and fundamental,” said Steven Cohen, director of the MPA in Environmental Science and Policy and executive director of The Earth Institute at Columbia University.

“Your generosity is a defining quality of Mr. Picker’s character.” —WILLIAM EIMICKE, director of the Picker Center.

“I will never forget Dean Harvey Picker’s personal intervention to ensure that, as a poor foreign student, I received the necessary funding to attend Columbia University’s School of International Affairs. Finding out that I was of Armenian origin, he added with a reassuring smile, ‘Armenians are on the top of every list!’” —HARUT SASSOUNIAN MIA ’75 (GLENDALE, CALIF.)

Picker’s commitment to SIPA and to public service did not end with his term as dean. In 1986, he created the Picker Institute, a global, independent nonprofit dedicated to advancing patient-centered care and creating patient satisfaction surveys to improve the delivery of medical services worldwide.

“Understanding and respecting patients’ values, preferences, and expressed needs is the foundation of patient-centered care,” Picker said.

Harvey Picker’s interest in SIPA continued as well. Over the years, he funded the upgrading of SIPA’s Computer Lab, which bears his name, travel grants for students’ summer internships, the Picker Prize for Public Service awarded annually at SIPA’s graduation ceremony, and the Picker Center, which oversees the Executive MPA program and a growing list of nondegree programs.

“Without the generosity and insight of Harvey Picker, there would be no Picker Center, no EMPA program, no outstanding executive training initiatives such as the Northern Ireland Community Builders, or the FDNY Officers Management Initiative. Dean Picker thought like the outstanding businessman he was but made decisions with both his head and his heart,” said William Eimicke, director of the Picker Center.

Even in retirement, Picker continued his volunteer and philanthropic work. He began the Camden Conference, a yearly forum on international topics, founded the Maine Health Care Foundation, served on numerous local boards, including the Camden Public Library, the Camden-Rockport Development Committee, the Penobscot Marine Museum, the Maine Medical Assessment Foundation, and the Mid-Coast Forum in International Affairs and was the owner and operator of Wayfarer Marine Corp. in Camden. In 1995, he was named Townsperson of the Year by the Camden-Rockport-Lincolnville Chamber of Commerce.

An article in MaineCoastNOW.com summed it up best: “Throughout his life, Mr. Picker believed in the challenge of, and took great pleasure in, finding ways to empower people through education. He believed in personal responsibility, and in being answerable for the consequences to others of decisions made by people with power over others. He believed that identifying problems and solving them was the most fun a person could have other than sailing along the Maine coast on a sunny September afternoon. Finally, he believed that he had been graced with an enormous amount of luck and good fortune in his life, and he never ceased to express his gratitude for it.”

Surely, it was SIPA’s good fortune as well, and the School is grateful to his family and friends for his lasting generosity, leadership, and inspiration.

JoAnn Crawford is managing editor of SIPA News.
1968
Martin Belsky, MIA
JD Law ’68, IF ’68
On January 1 of this year, Martin became the dean of the School of Law and Randolph Baxter Professor of Law at the University of Akron.

1974
James Bruno, MIA
James has published two novels. The political thrillers Permanent Interests and Chasm deal with treachery and abuse of power at the highest levels. Distributed by Ingram Books, the novels are being carried by major book retailers worldwide. He’s also a graduate of the U.S. Naval War College and served as a diplomat with the U.S. State Department for 23 years. His third novel will soon be published. He lives with his wife and two daughters in upstate New York.

1977
Allan I. Grafman, MIA
IF ’77, MBA ’80
Allan has been elected chairman of Majesco Entertainment, a video game company. He recently joined the board of OnNetworks: www.onnetworks.com, a company that raised $12 million in November 2007. He has also been elected to the board of ZVUE, a global digital media company.

1978
Jill Gay, MIA
Jill is working as a consultant for CHANGE (www.genderhealth.org), assessing U.S. policies on comprehensive sexual and reproductive health in the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, and Botswana. She serves as a member of the internal NIH IRB. Jill’s daughter, Dani Prados, graduated from Lewis & Clark College in Oregon and has been doing theater work in Chicago and the UK. Her youngest daughter, Tasha Prados, is a first-year student at UNC-Chapel Hill and spends her summers working in rural El Salvador in a former FMLN zone. Jill’s stepdaughter, Kini, is a first-year student at Brown University. Jill’s recent work travel includes DR, Ethiopia, Uruguay (for IPAS on abortion rights), Vietnam, and India (for ICRW).

1981
Sichan Siv, MIA, IF ’81
Ambassador Siv has recently authored Golden Bones: An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia to a New Life in America, to be published on July 1, 2008, by HarperCollins. Golden Bones tells of an extraordinary escape from Cambodia’s forced labor camps to an American journey from apple orchards to the White House. For more information on the author or to preorder a copy of Golden Bones visit http://www.sichansiv.com/.

1983
Glenn Kessler, MIA
Glenn has been diplomatic correspondent for the Washington Post for the past five years. In September, St. Martin’s Press published his book The Confidence: Condoleezza Rice and the Creation of the Bush Legacy, an account of Rice’s diplomacy that former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski lauded as “timely and important.” Glenn is married to Cindy Rich (MIA ’84), a senior international policy analyst at Morrison & Foerster, and they live in McLean, Virginia, with their three children.

1984
Mark Spitz, MIA
Mark is general counsel at Pomeroy IT Solutions, Inc., in the Cincinnati, Ohio, area. The company is in the computer products and services business. While his current company does not do a lot of international business, at previous companies and law firms he found the SIPA experience and degree to be of great use. Mark has lived in Cincinnati for 17 years, since finishing law school, and has been married to Mona for 23 years. They have a daughter who is a college freshman and a son in 10th grade. Mark would love to hear from any classmates or other SIPA grads.

1986
Catherine O’Neill, MIA
Cathy has retired from the United Nations, where she had worked as the director of the UN office in Washington, D.C. She was responsible for working with congressional committees and keeping Congress posted on UN activities. She has spent more than 29 years as an advocate of refugee women and children’s issues. She founded the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children—which is based in New York City and is still going strong. It received a $1 million grant last year from the Gates Foundation to support its work. She has been a board member of the International Rescue Committee for more than 20 years and is now a member of the board of overseers.

1990
Harry Sullivan, MIA
Harry assumed his duties as consul in Lyon, France, where he’ll remain until 2010. He’ll promote economic and cultural ties between the U.S. and the southeast French regions of Rhone-Alpes, Burgundy, and Auvergne.

1992
Kevin O’Neil, MIA
Over the past several years, Kevin has been the Events Coordinator for the CLI alumni chapter in Cleveland, Ohio. He has organized several afterwork socials at local wine bars and restaurants, held two buffet and summer concert events at Blossom Outdoor Music Center, a Spring Tea and Garden event at the Rockefeller Greenhouse, and an upcoming Columbia author reading. The events have had a great group of participants from all schools.

1993
Sichan Siv, MIA, IF ’81
Ambassador Siv has recently authored Golden Bones: An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia to a New Life in America, to be published on July 1, 2008, by HarperCollins. Golden Bones tells of an extraordinary escape from Cambodia’s forced labor camps to an American journey from apple orchards to the White House. For more information on the author or to preorder a copy of Golden Bones visit http://www.sichansiv.com/.

1995
Helen Drusine, MIA
GS ’66, MS Journalism ’71
Helen has just started teaching Pilates in Chelsea and on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. You can visit her Web site at www.helendrusinepilates.com.
1991

Dawn Murdock, MIA, EPD
Dawn is working as a fund-raiser for Church World Service, an international relief and development agency based in New York City. She specializes in major foundations and corporations grants. Dawn lives in New Jersey with her husband and three sons.

1992

Andrea Goldstein, MIA
Andrea was appointed deputy director of the Heiligendamm Dialogue Process Support Unit, an appointment that became effective on January 15, 2008. An Italian citizen, he was previously a senior economist at the OECD Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, in charge of the Project on Freedom of Investment, National Security, and Strategic Industries. He joined the organization as a young professional in September 1993 and has worked at the Economics Department and the Development Centre. Before joining the OECD, Andrea worked as an economist at Consob, the Italian Securities and Exchange Commission. He has also worked at the World Bank Group in Washington and consulted for the Inter-American Development Bank and the UK Department for International Development. Andrea is the author of five books in international economics and 26 articles in refereed journals.

Alfred LaSpina, MIA
Alfred and Audrey LaSpina are proud to announce the birth of twins (a girl and a boy). Their new little bundles of joy arrived on Tuesday, September 4. Alexander Sebastian was born at 7:55 a.m. and weighed 6 lbs, 3 oz, followed by Ava Southern at 7:56 a.m., who weighed 6 lbs, 12 oz. They join older sisters Isabella, 4, and Mia, 3. They now have four children under 4 and are tired but happy parents. Alfred is a marketing manager for Osram Sylvania’s automotive consumer lighting division.

1993

Lisa Dokken, MPA
Lisa recently accepted a position at Ameya Preserve located in Bozeman, Montana, as director of Community Relations/Environmental Policy. Lisa was previously employed at the United Nations Development Programme as environment director of Capacity 21 for Latin America. After years of living overseas and raising two daughters, she is helping launch Ameya Preserve. Ameya Preserve is developing a sustainable development community like no other in the Northern Rockies, celebrating the arts and sciences while protecting the fragile ecosystem of the Greater Yellowstone Region. Check out its Web site at ameyapreserve.com.

Sharon Epperson, MIA
Sharon has been a correspondent at CNBC for the past ten years and has written on personal finance for Time, USA Weekend, Essence, and Self. Her recent book, THE BIG PAYOFF: 8 Steps Couples Can Take to Make The Most of Their Money—And Live Richly Ever After, hit stores in May 2007. In the book, she talks about how she and her husband have juggled work, family, and finances. They have two children ages 6 and 3. With guidance from dozens of financial experts and anecdotes from many couples, the book offers an eight-step plan to help couples get a handle on their finances and meet their financial goals. You can check it out at http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/006074488X/harpercollinspub/.

William Wechsler, MIA
William was recently promoted to managing director at Greenwich Associates, where
he leads the firm’s consulting to asset managers around the globe. He lives in Westport, Connecticut, with his wife Helaine Klasky and their two young sons, Alexander, 5 and Daniel, 3.

1994
Haoliang Xu, MIA
Haoliang Xu was recently promoted to UN resident coordinator and UNDP resident representative in Kazakhstan from UNDP country director in Pakistan.

“I am most pleased to share the news. It is the first time a Chinese national is appointed to this position. I am grateful for the SIPA education, without which my career development would not have been possible.”

1995
Ramendra Basak, PEPM
After graduation, Ramendra had been out of the loop, but now she is trying to reconnect with her fellow classmates. She has attempted to connect with Sanjeev of India, Martin Amadou of Ghana, Wismana Suryaprada of Indonesia, Nguyen Trong of Vietnam, Carmen of Canada, Shola Mahoney of Africa, Darlene Harris, and others. She urges her classmates to update their information so that she can contact them.

Kedin Kilgore, MPA
Kedin recently accepted a position at JP Morgan Chase in New York as head, Environmental Markets. He recently was employed at RNK Capital LLC as head trader, Environmental Markets.

Carlos Santiso, MIA, IF ’95
Carlos has recently been appointed manager of the Governance Division at the African Development Bank and posted in its headquarters in Tunisia, after five years with the United Kingdom Department for International Development in Lima, Peru, and Glasgow, Scotland. Carlos’s new job entails supporting African countries in their efforts to promote good governance and fight corruption. Carlos has been married to Anja Linder since 2003, when they wed in Cusco, Peru, near Machu Picchu. He can be found in Facebook.

1996
Balbina Hwang, MIA
Balbina recently accepted a position at the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., as senior special advisor to Christopher Hill, assistant secretary for East Asia. She will be working primarily on negotiations with North Korea but also Asia at large. Balbina completed a PhD in International Relations at Georgetown University and was dividing her time between teaching there and working at a think tank.

1997
Jennifer Chang Chernick, MIA
Jennifer would like to share some news about her professional development with faculty, staff, and classmates. Two articles about her work in China appeared in Time magazine (June 28, 2007) and the Taipei Times (April 15, 2007). They may be accessed, respectively, at http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1638166,00.html and http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2007/04/15/200356798/print.

Shelly Cryer, MIA
Shelly is happy to announce that her first book, The Nonprofit Career Guide: How to Land a Job That Makes a Difference (Fieldstone), is being released this May. It is an up-to-date and comprehensive guidebook on nonprofit sector careers targeted to college students, young professionals, and potential “sector switchers” who are interested in public service careers. The book provides current data on the size and scope of the nonprofit sector and an overview of the types of organizations working in it.

Shelly has been a consultant to nonprofit organizations for 18 years. She is the founder of American Humanities’ “Initiative for Nonprofit Sector Careers.” She is living in New York City with her husband Michael Stern (music director of the Kansas City Symphony) and their daughter.

Paula Flores, MIA, MSW
Paula has returned to school again after several years of working as a consultant in nonprofits, both in Argentina and New York. Wanting her fieldwork to go even deeper into the grassroots level, she is getting a master’s in social work at Hunter College. If any SIPA
alums have also gone into social work, please feel free to e-mail her to compare experiences. She is particularly interested in how others have used their MIA and MSW degree combination in their career choices.

Scott Licamele, MIA
Scott is a vice president at Renaissance Capital and is based in Kiev. Renaissance Capital is the leading independent investment banking firm operating in Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The firm serves both domestic companies and international clients investing in the CIS. Since its inception in 1995, the firm has raised more than USD 50 billion for its clients—more than any other financial institution in the region.

Joshua Lockwood, MIA
Joshua was recently promoted to executive director at Habitat for Humanity-NYC. Habitat-NYC is a leading affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International and builds affordable homes for ownership in New York City’s five boroughs. Josh is taking Habitat-NYC’s helm at a watershed time in its history, as it embarks on larger-scale, environmentally friendly, affordable housing.

Jennifer Morris, MIA
Jennifer and Greg Love (MIA, ’97) are proud to announce the birth of a baby girl, Haily Wray. She was born on September 14, 2007.

Jonathan Waterbury, MIA
After nine years in the San Francisco Bay Area, Jonathan Waterbury and Ana Maria Enriquez (MIA ‘98) have returned to New York. Ana Maria was appointed program manager for the International Initiative to Strengthen Philanthropy at The Ford Foundation, and Jonathan was promoted to finance director at TriNet. He currently works from home, heading up the company’s M&A work.

1998

Jennifer Chang Carmichael, MIA
Jennifer didn’t plan to take her SIPA degree and try to qualify for Hong Kong’s 2008 Olympic Show Jumping Team, but that’s what she’s been up to. She went to Hong Kong nearly seven years ago with Wintar’s point-to-multipoint startup wireless telecom venture and has landed in the world of international show jumping, chasing a dream that began long ago. She sends all the best to her classmates.

Kelly Clark, MIA
Kelly and Brandon Beck are happy to announce their engagement. The wedding ceremony will take place on August 31, 2008, in Lancaster, New York. Brandon and Kelly have been dating for more than three years, and after the wedding, they are looking forward to moving to Chicago.

Alina Rocha Menocal, MIA, MPhil ’03
Alina moved to London in 2001 and has really enjoyed it. She and her husband had a baby boy, Teodoro, in July 2006, and he is pure joy and happiness. Alina has been working at the Overseas Development Institute, a leading think tank on development issues, since 2005. Laure-Helene Piron, also from her year at SIPA, was there for a long time as well. Alina has seen other classmates when they were in London, including Ana Cutter (now Patel), Brad Myers, Eric Moen and Melissa Magallones, and their son Joaquin, who moved to London last year, and Gwyn Wansbrough and Andres Dussan, who also have recently moved to London with their children Diego and Daniela. She is in very close touch with Irma Hidalgo, whose son Patricio is just a bit older than Teo and lives in Mexico, Natalia Royo and her family in Madrid, and Jose Luis Vinuesa, whom she visited in Addis Ababa not too long ago. She wishes everyone well, and here’s to London!

Teresa (Bergada) Turiera, MIA
Teresa is currently living in Barcelona. She is in search of her classmates from 1997 and 1998. She wanted to contact, specifically, a colleague from the class of ’98, Ragi (nickname), from India, who was active at the International Student House and was also
working on environmental issues. Teresa hopes to reconnect with her classmates and urges them to contact her.

1999

Barry Blackmon, MIA
Barry retired from the United States Army on November 1, 2007, after more than two decades of service. His last assignment in the military was as a Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty mission commander, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He and his family will remain in the national capitol region, and he will be seeking employment in the government sector or with a defense contractor. For now, Barry is enjoying a relatively peaceful vacation before the “next storm.” He sends his best wishes to all.

2000

Laura Ballman, MIA
After graduation, Laura joined the U.S. Foreign Service and spent several years in Western Europe. She is currently working at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, following a stint in Iraq and D.C. Please look her up if you’re in Afghanistan—she is in the Political Section. Meanwhile, her husband is holding down the fort in Geneva. Their door is always open to friends, so please let her know if you’ll be passing through the canton!

2001

Erika (Neutz) Jakisch, MIA
Erika had taken a couple years off her career track as a financial analyst to raise her 2-year-old twins. Now she is planning to get back into the job market, preferably in sales. She is a German-American citizen and can speak German fluently. She would appreciate any contacts fellow classmates might have in Munich, Germany.

Brooke Pomerantz, MPA
Brooke was recently licensed in the state of California and works as a licensed clinical social worker. In addition to her full-time job at UCSF-Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute, she started a private practice this year for individual, couples, family, and group therapy in the financial district of San Francisco.

Sarah Richards, MIA, MS Journalism ’01
Sarah received a book contract with Simon & Schuster for The Clock Ticker’s Reprieve: The New Frontier of Egg Freezing and How It’s Transforming the Baby Race. The narrative nonfiction book follows four women who have had their eggs frozen and chronicles the impact on their romantic, professional, and reproductive lives. It also explores the changing cultural norms of coupling, mating, and parenting as well as the greater social implications of “stopping the biological clock.”

Shannon Lightner, MPA
Shannon recently appointed deputy director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, where she oversees the Illinois Office of Women’s Health. She also got married this year to Edward Gomets, (MIA ’01), and they have made Chicago their home.

2003

Claire Adida, MIA
Claire is entering into her final year at Stanford’s political science PhD program and is about to apply for academic jobs for the fall. She recently got back from a year of field research and data collection in West Africa (Ghana, Benin, Nigeria, and Niger) and is acclimating to life back in Palo Alto, which she is not finding difficult! She would love to reconnect with any SIPA ’03 alumni.

Dara (Wax) Erck, MIA
Dara and Dan Erck are proud to announce the birth of a baby boy, Leo Charles. He was born on January 4, 2008, in New York and weighed 6 lbs, 1 oz.

Rebecca Morgenstern, MPA
Rebecca (Morgenstern) Brenner and Jacob Brenner are proud to announce the birth of a baby boy, Morgan Forest. He was born on May 14, 2006, and weighed 7 lbs, 4 oz.

Fredrik Wesslau, MIA
Fredrik recently left Kosovo after working in various capacities for the United Nations and the OSCE for nearly four years. His latest job in Kosovo was as special advisor to the SRSG. This spring, he is starting his new job as political advisor to the EU special representative for South Caucasus.

2004

Eduardo Rivas, MIA
Eduardo is currently working in Silicon Valley as a corporate attorney for O’Melveny & Myers LLP. He lives in Palo Alto and so far things are going well in Northern California. He will be temporarily relocating to Mexico City this fall/winter on a corporate assignment.

Canapathy Venkatachalam, MIA
Deepak recently accepted a position at ABN AMRO Bank in Singapore as vice president and regional advisor.

2005

Yemisrach Benalfew, MIA
Yemisrach recently completed a one-year fellowship at Refugees International in Washington, D.C. She found it an invaluable experience, working with a humanitarian advocacy organization and interacting with the U.S. Congress, State Department, and the NGO community. She was focusing on the Central African Republic’s conflict and its humanitarian impact and found it challenging to raise the country’s profile. Now, back in New York, Yemisrach is looking for an opportunity that involves analyzing field-based research and writing on the political and humanitarian situations in
Africa, especially the Horn. As an Ethiopian, the Horn is a special place for her, and she feels that she knows the region well. She would greatly appreciate links to organizations working on this issue in New York.

Maria Ma, MIA
Maria and her husband, Benjamin Sand, are happy to announce the birth of their daughter, Ivy Qun-Zhen Sand, on October 8, 2007, in New York City. They moved back to New York from Islamabad, Pakistan.

2006
Adam Cherson, MPA
In January, Adam published *Geocide: Placating Humanity’s Environmental Demons* (Eutopia), a monograph covering global environmental science and policy, along with specific action points for decision makers and civilians. The book addresses questions such as what we can do to prevent the apparent environmental catastrophes facing our world. Besides climate warming and oil addiction, the terrain includes deforestation, food production, biodiversity loss, water management, population growth and immigration, waste disposal and raw materials, human health and psychology, nuclear proliferation, and terrorism. A book-specific Web journal, *Enviromentality* (www.environment-policy.info), updates the field periodically for geocide watchers and forestallers. Adam would like to wish all of his friends from SIPA a transformative remainder of 2008.

Danielle Garbe, MPA
Danielle recently completed her one-year assignment as special assistant to Secretary Condoleezza Rice at the U.S. Department of State. She is now one of two Turkey desk officers based out of Washington, D.C. She specializes in the political aspects of the bilateral relationship between Turkey and the United States, including counterterrorism.

Thomas Glaissyer, MIA
Thomas has returned to Columbia, after a year in the full-time working world building networks of foreign policy advocates in Washington, D.C. After spending the year in the advocacy community, he wanted to gain additional theoretical knowledge about networks and social software. In the fall of 2007, he began the PhD program in communications at the Journalism School. Please look him up if you’re around Columbia University.

Tania Tanvir is a second-year Economic and Political Development concentrator.