

# Alumni News

Westchester Graduate Campus of Long Island University


Dear Westchester Graduate Campus Graduate:


You are looking at the premier issue of the Westchester Graduate Campus Alumni News. Like all beginnings, starting up the News is both exciting and promising. The excitement stems from the possibilities presented for networking and for communicating with one another. The promise lies in the ease and consistency with which the Westchester Graduate Campus will be able to share with you-along with members of our community and our region-events, programs and opportunities.

The Westchester Graduate Campus is eager to stay in touch with you and to facilitate your staying in touch with your fellow students, our faculty and administration. We cordially invite you to continue your relationship with our school by participating in our Alumni Association. To assist us in serving you, please return the enclosed survey or respond via the alumni page of [www.liu.edu/westchester](http://www.liu.edu/westchester). We hope that you will help us make the News the best venue possible for sharing personal events, as well as information of a professional nature, that may be of interest to your fellow graduates. If you have obtained a job, been promoted, gotten engaged or married, become a new parent or received a reward, we want to share your good fortune.

We especially thank Ellen Brief, Janet Stander and all those whose contributions helped bring the News to life. Please assist us by replying to the survey and by sending items you think appropriate for inclusion in future issues to [george.pietarinen@liu.edu](mailto:george.pietarinen@liu.edu).

Sincerely,

  
Associate Provost  
Academic Dean

  
Prof. George Pietarinen  
Chairman, Alumni Committee

## Check Out the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program

Many Westchester Graduate Campus students pay for their education through student loan programs such as the Stafford Loan Programs. If you are teaching in a Low Income district, you may be eligible for loan forgiveness of up to \$5,000, or in the case of certain math, science and special education teachers, up to \$17,500. This currently applies to individuals who applied for loans after October 1, 1998, and before October 1, 2005, but a proposal to extend loan forgiveness indefinitely is currently before Congress and has a strong likelihood of being passed. For further information on which districts are considered Low Income and on all of the program details, check the following link: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALS/WebApp/students/english/cancelstaff.jsp?tab=repaying>

## Free E-Newsletter on Special Needs Issues

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest professional organization for those who work with individuals with special needs. The Web address for the National CEC organization is [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org). If you go to that Web site, you will find a host of valuable resources, including the opportunity to sign up for a free e-newsletter, "Smart Brief." While aimed at special educators, it contains links to various media stories and reports that cover a broad range of educational issues and concerns.

The Westchester Graduate Campus is home to CEC Chapter 615, one of the largest professional chapters in the country. This local chapter features several programs of interest each academic year. A recent program on autism was attended by over sixty people. An annual awards program held each June recognizes the contributions of those helping individuals with special needs. This year's program will be on Tuesday, June 13th at 4:30 p.m. For further information on CEC membership and Chapter 615 activities, contact Professors Simon, Rich, Goldberg or Stander at the Westchester Graduate Campus.

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## New NYC Housing Incentive

New York City will offer an innovative housing subsidy program to attract experienced math, science and special education teachers to the city's most challenging middle and high schools. Teachers do not need to reside in New York City to receive the subsidy, but they must have at least two years' experience. Current NYC teachers are not eligible. An initial \$5,000 will be paid immediately and may be used for relocation, mortgage down payments, security deposits or mortgage or rental fees. Participants then will receive \$400 each month for two years. Thus, the total stipend will be \$14,600. Applicants must qualify to teach math, science or special education in middle or high school and must sign a contract agreeing to work in a school identified by the Department of Education on the Teachers of Tomorrow list of schools. For more information, contact David M. Cantor or Keith Kalb at (212) 374-5141 or visit [www.teachnyc.net](http://www.teachnyc.net) and click on Teach, What's New.



## M.B.A. News: 'The Capstone Experience'

The Capstone Courses, Business Policy I & II, were discussed at the meeting of the M.B.A. Advisory Group on Thursday, January 26. Two recent M.B.A. grads, Harriet Oomen of MBIA, Inc., and Nino Domini of PepsiCo, joined Professors Ed LuBell and Fred Strom to review "the capstone experience" for Advisory Group members.

Professors LuBell and Strom described the Business Policy I & II courses as providing an opportunity for students to integrate knowledge and skills gained in their previous coursework.

Oomen and Domini, describing their experiences in the capstone courses, both said they learned a great deal from the case studies and the computerized simulation. Both also suggested that the simulation be spread over more than eight weeks and that more time should be spent analyzing the decisions taken and their consequences.

Dr. Lynn Johnson, M.B.A. director, reported that a new "Capstone Night" tradition has taken hold, in which M.B.A. faculty members take the graduating students out to dinner to celebrate following their final class in December.

## Interview with Dr. Rebecca Rich

Dr. Rebecca Rich received her doctoral degree from Teacher's College, Columbia University. She is currently director of Literacy Programs here at Long Island University's Westchester Graduate Campus. Dr. Rich has authored and co-authored a number of articles for professional journals and is the co-author with Dr. Shapiro of "Facing Learning Disabilities in the Adult Years" published by Oxford University Press.

The News recently interviewed Professor Rich regarding publication of her second book "Teaching Students with Learning Problems in the Inclusive Classroom," co-authored with Dr. Lisa Freund and published by Prentice Hall.

*What inspired you to write this book?*

This is my area of expertise and I like to write. I have over thirty years' experience working with children with learning problems and enjoy sharing my knowledge. The whole process encouraged me to continue to be a reflective practitioner in the field. I had a positive relationship with my publisher, Prentice-Hall. Writing with Dr. Lisa Freund, my co-author, enabled me to hone my thoughts and produce a work we are both proud to have written.

*How many times did you revise before final submission?*

Revision was an ongoing process. Each chapter became a separate research paper that was revised several times. It was good to have a co-author to question me continually. She was an audience for me as I was for her. We helped each other revise and edit by giving each other constant feedback.

*How would you tell writers to avoid plagiarism?*

Reference everything. When I write, I tend to pick out a phrase from a source, build my paraphrase around the phrase and then reference.

*Do you have any other advice for aspiring writers?*

It is most important to write about something you know. Over time you will develop your voice. YOU are YOU.

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# Spotlight On

## **Kieran O’Gorman, M.S.Ed., May ’04**

I am a Special Education teacher in the Learning Resources department at Fox Lane High School in Mount Kisco, N.Y. I teach English and resource room in a program for emotionally fragile students called KEA (Keys to Emotional Awareness). My training in the Long Island University program prepared me for many of the challenges I have experienced working with these special needs students. My training in collaboration has been invaluable as I work with a team of professionals as well as with general education teachers, administrators and parents to help our students succeed academically and emotionally. The strategies and methods I studied at Long Island University have prepared me to differentiate instruction for this diverse population of students. I also have found that my professors and fellow students at Long Island University helped me become a more thoughtful and reflective educator. I reflect daily on my performance and greatly value this quality.

## **Vincent Denich, M.B.A., January ’06**

What can be said about my experiences in the M.B.A. program at the Long Island University, Westchester Graduate Campus?

Over the past two-and-a-half years, the MBA program has not only helped me to grow my professional career, it has also helped me gain confidence and the edge required to succeed in today’s difficult and rapidly changing business environment. Our cohort was exposed to a great deal of training in the area of leadership skills, business

ethics, financial management and analysis, marketing, organizational behavior, strategy and change management. All of these areas of focus have proven to be valuable in propelling me into a new career as an Information Systems Group Manager for Strategy and Planning at a large consumer products company.

The financial, leadership, strategy, and change management aspects of the program have been most useful in my new career. Undoubtedly, the others have been equally important, but these areas have had the greatest contributing factor to my continued growth and success. Thanks to the program, I now also read The Wall Street Journal on a daily basis, which helps me keep abreast of broader business and economic trends.

The program has helped me to overcome some personal challenges related to social and business situations where I felt uncomfortable in the past. In essence, the small group experiences in the program are a great way to learn to engage in situations that cause many people significant distress. The non-threatening atmosphere created by the experienced staff in the M.B.A. program eases students into situations where they may not be comfortable. Mastery of these skills helps in interviewing and in the business world in general.

In closing, I’d like to thank my fellow cohort mates from the 2006 graduating M.B.A. class and all of the professors for one of the most enriching experiences in my life. It is my intention to continue to contribute to Long Island University in every way possible in the future and I look forward to continued interaction with my peers and colleagues.

We hope you enjoyed this premier issue of Alumni News. You are invited to be a contributing writer or be one of the graduates spotlighted in future editions. Please participate in our alumni survey and help us expand our alumni connections!

**WESTCHESTER  
GRADUATE CAMPUS**



# Got the Job

## ... and More Alumni News

### School Counseling and School Psychology

- **Jill Gisondi**, M.S.Ed., School Counseling, January 2005, has accepted a position as the Middle School Counselor at Putnam Valley Middle School.
- **Paige Feinberg**, M.S.Ed., School Counseling, January 2005, has accepted a position as College Admissions Counselor at Lehman High School in the Bronx.
- **Julie Mitchell**, M.S.Ed., School Counseling, September 2006, has accepted a leave replacement position at Pine Bush High School in Rockland County.
- **Brenda Giancaspro**, M.S.Ed., School Counseling, January 2005, has been working as the Homeless Student Liaison for the Port Chester School District.
- **Reagan Halifax**, M.S.Ed., School Counseling, January 2006, has accepted a position as a Counselor at the Port Chester Middle School.

### Teacher Education

- **Lindsay Lauzon**, M.S.Ed., is teaching math at the Bronx High School of Science.
- **Robert Peeples**, M.S.Ed., is teaching science at Hastings Middle School.
- **Ron Posner**, M.S.Ed., has a fourth-grade teaching position at Siwanoy Elementary School in Pelham, N.Y.
- **Latisha Combs** is teaching biology and chemistry at New York City's Bronx High School of Business.
- **Christine Fata Moccia** is now teaching fourth grade at West Patent Elementary School in Bedford, N.Y.
- **Kristin Fata** (currently in the M.S.Ed. Program) has a new position teaching at The Graham School.

### M.B.A.

- **Harriet Ooman**, M.B.A., joined MBIA Insurance Corporation in Armonk, N.Y. as an analyst in the Public Finance Group.
- **Vincent M. Denich**, M.B.A., wants everyone to know that he and his wife are expecting their first child in May, 2006. He has accepted a position as Group Manager, IS Strategy, for Diageo North America in Norwalk, Conn.

*Let us know where you are working and inform us of important events in your life. Be part of our ever-expanding network of former Westchester Graduate Campus students.*



## ALUMNI NEWS

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ALUMNI NEWS is published three times annually by the Westchester Graduate Campus of Long Island University.

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