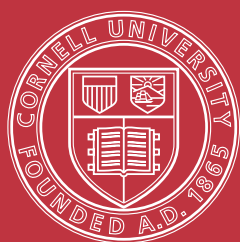


## Urban Semester Teaches Multiculturalism on the Streets of New York City

story page 6



Cornell University





## Message from the Dean

Friends,

One of the most exciting aspects of a university education today is the opportunity to study, conduct research, and work off-campus. That may seem counter-intuitive, given the effort we make to attract the best and brightest students to Ithaca. But for many students, off-campus programs will provide them with the experience of a lifetime, one that will ensure they maximize their Human Ecology and Cornell education.

In this issue of *HE News*, you will read about the experiences of several students who have taken advantage of off-campus offerings in a variety of ways. A number of our students participate in Human Ecology-sponsored programs such as the Urban Semester in New York City (featured on our cover) or the Capital Semester in Albany, which immerses students in full-time internships with legislators in our state's capital. Others participate in the Cornell in Washington Program, and each year nearly 100 of our students study abroad in places as far-flung as Australia and Zaire. There are hundreds of options for students to choose from in all corners of the globe, and the Human Ecology Office of Student and Career Development and the Cornell Abroad Office work closely with students and their faculty advisors to find the off-campus program that will meet the student's educational goals and needs. This may mean enrollment in a foreign university for a semester, conducting field research in support of an honors thesis, or working as an intern or extern to gain practical knowledge of one's career field of interest.

When we think of off-campus study, we often picture in our minds an undergraduate student, but graduate students also have many opportunities for research, study, and experiential learning outside Ithaca. For example, our master's students in the Sloan Program participate in intercession programs in New York and Washington, D.C., to learn first-hand about health care policy and management. And all Sloan students must complete an internship between their first and second years, virtually all of which take place in other cities.

Students have everything to gain by extending their education away from the shores of Cayuga Lake, especially in the face of a global society. They gain a deeper understanding of other cultures and hone their foreign language skills. The experience builds a student's confidence, for it takes courage to leave the familiar confines of the campus to venture off to an unknown place and pursue work or study that may be unlike anything they've done before. All of these things not only benefit the student in his or her personal growth and development but also may expand significantly the career options that are available upon graduation.

Off-campus study is just one of the ways that students truly maximize their Human Ecology and Cornell experience. I hope the tales of their adventures are as inspiring to you as they are to me!

*Lisa Staiano-Coico*

Lisa Staiano-Coico, Ph.D.  
Rebecca Q. and James C. Morgan Dean

## Podcasts from Dean Lisa

Did you happen to miss Dean Lisa's first-ever podcast? If so, please send your updated email address to [heaad@cornell.edu](mailto:heaad@cornell.edu) so that you can receive the latest news on the College of Human Ecology. For those new to this technology, podcasts are audio recordings distributed over the Internet for listening on mobile devices, like MP3 players, or personal computers. Download the dean's message from April 3 by visiting [www.human.cornell.edu](http://www.human.cornell.edu).

# Body Project Play Portrays Women's Quest for Perfection, with Music

A recent poll taken by the *Ladies' Home Journal* found that 75 percent of women are more afraid of spending a day at the beach in a thong than of having a root canal at the dentist.

Why are so many women—especially during this supposed, unprecedented time of equality—dissatisfied with their bodies? Last fall, *The Body Project*, a play with music inspired in part by the book of the same name by Joan Jacobs Brumberg, professor of human development, explored the vast disconnect between the myriad of choices and opportunities modern women have gained and the ever-growing dissatisfaction they feel with their bodies.

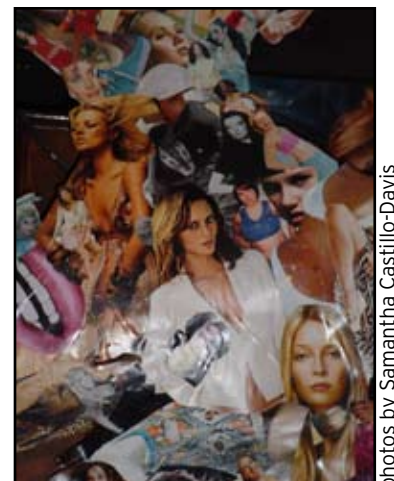
On October 28, 2005, Brumberg, who is also a professor of history and women's studies at Cornell, led a talk-back session after the sold-out performance to Human Ecology and Cornell alumni and friends. At other performances, post-show discussions were held with experts in the fields of medicine, advertising, and social work. These discussions focused on antidotes and solutions to the obsessive pursuit of physical perfection.

The play was created by a team of writers, and text and music were crafted through intensive workshops involving improvisation, writing exercises, and interviews with women of all ages from the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area.

Susan S. Lang



Female figures, created from images and graphics from women's popular magazines, served as the backdrop of "The Body Project."



A detailed view of the images that composed one of the female figures.

photos by Samantha Castillo-Davis



Rachel Scher '03 with Professor Joan Jacobs Brumberg.



Professor Brumberg with the playwrights and cast members of "The Body Project."

# Cornell University Library Hosts Donors to AAFCS Project Archives Fund



Courtesy RMC

**Donors to the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Project Archives Fund (l to r): Jennie Kitching, Francille Firebaugh, Sharon Nickols, Peggy Meszaros, Marjorie East, Queen Bowman, Carol Anderson. Cornell library staff: Sarah Keen (AAFCS project archivist) and Sarah Thomas (the Carl A. Kroch university librarian)**

On Saturday, October 1, 2005, the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections (RMC) of Cornell University Library hosted significant donors to the Project Archives Fund for the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) Historical Collection Project. Following words of welcome from university librarian Sarah Thomas, the visitors enjoyed viewing a showcase of items from the association's extensive historical records.

"It's a privilege to thank the women who have made it possible for the Cornell University Library to make accessible the archives of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences for those studying the history of the family and consumer sciences (FCS) profession and the organization as well," said Thomas. "The association's precursor, the American Home Economics Association, was established by strong women in 1909, and it is thus fitting that current leading FCS women scholars and administrators contributed toward making these historic materials visible to inspire other scholars, researchers, and practitioners."

The event gave Cornell and the AAFCS the opportunity to thank the donors for their generous contributions to the fundraising campaign mounted by the association. The funds are being used to support the

organization and preservation of the historical records of the AAFCS, which were transferred to Cornell in the summer of 2004. Through this funding, archivist Sarah Keen was hired in October 2004 to manage the three-year project.

"As we anticipate the celebration of our centennial in 2009, we are pleased to have the documentation of our history preserved at Cornell University," said Don Bower, president of AAFCS and professor and extension human development specialist at the University of Georgia.

Dean Lisa Staiano-Coico said: "Martha Van Rensselaer, pioneer in the founding of the College of Human Ecology, was a charter member of the AAFCS and served as its president from 1914 to 1916. Given the intersecting histories of the association and of the college, it is fitting that this historical collection is now at Cornell."

In addition to viewing items from the AAFCS Historical Collection, the donors viewed select items from RMC's extensive holdings. Charlotte Jirousek, curator of the Cornell Costume and Textile Collection, demonstrated the collection's online gallery and its searchable online catalog database ([www.human.cornell.edu/units/txa/cu\\_costume.cfm](http://www.human.cornell.edu/units/txa/cu_costume.cfm)).

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## David J. Skorton Named Cornell's 12th President

The six-month search for Cornell University's 12th president has ended with the announcement that David J. Skorton, president of the University of Iowa, will be assuming leadership of New York State's land-grant university and world-renowned research institution. The 56-year-old cardiologist, computer scientist, national leader in research ethics, and jazz musician will take up Cornell's highest office July 1.

Skorton also will hold a primary faculty appointment in Internal Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC), where he will join the Department of Pediatrics as well. In addition, he will be a member of the Department of Biomedical Engineering in the College of Engineering on the Ithaca campus.

Skorton will take over from Hunter R. Rawlings, Cornell's 10th president (1994–2003), who has been serving on an interim basis since Jeffrey Lehman, Cornell's 11th president, resigned in June 2005.

Franklin Crawford

## HumanEcologyNews

Cornell College of Human Ecology: Responding to human needs through research, education, and outreach.

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On our cover: Participants in the Urban Semester experience a wide range of cultures during their time in New York City.

## Human Ecology Launches New Web Site

Visitors to the College of Human Ecology web site ([www.human.cornell.edu](http://www.human.cornell.edu)) can now see a new design, integrated with the look of the university's home page. Behind the scenes new technology allows for dynamic, continuous update of the site's content.

The new site, which went "live" October 27, represents more than a year of planning and effort. It was built by the Instructional and Web Services division of Cornell Information Technologies (CIT).

"The launch of Human Ecology's new web site is an exciting milestone for our entire college community," said Dean Lisa Staiano-Coico. "The web is such an essential medium, and our web site is truly our face to the world. I am thrilled to have this opportunity to introduce our faculty, staff, and students to a whole new audience. We're now able to show the world what Human Ecology has to offer



and how valuable our work is in communities around the world."

The Human Ecology site is the first complete site on campus to use the university's recently adopted CommonSpot content management system, which allows designated users throughout the college to update pages easily, without any special knowledge of web technology.

The site showcases five departments and 14 other centers, institutes, and programs, including the Division of Nutritional Sciences, whose site—the only exception to CIT's involvement—was built by Spider Graphics of Ithaca. There also are overview sections for admissions, academics, research,

outreach and extension, college administration, and alumni affairs. Someone in each department or organization is responsible for that unit's content. Overall supervision is handled by the college webmaster.

Planning for the Human Ecology site, the first online update for the college in about six years, began in September 2004, with extensive discussions throughout the college. The site was launched with about 1,075 pages and 300 photos, plus 500 documents available for download in PDF format. One hundred sixty new photos were shot for the update.

Bill Steele



# InsideMVR

## Departmental Happenings

### Design and Environmental Analysis

**Franklin Becker**, professor, will spend a week at Hong Kong Polytechnic University as a visiting distinguished professor and give a keynote address on facility planning and management. He will also be a visiting professor at the Centre for Health Assets, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, for part of the spring 2006 semester doing research related to health and design.

Associate Professor **Jack Elliot** is on sabbatic in Grenoble, France, where he is conducting research on the implications of carbon trading on the built environment. He is documenting new significant examples of “ecologique” design and examining their environmental implications.

Professor **Alan Hedge** made two presentations in December at the National Ergonomics Conference and Exposition. The first was titled “Practical Solutions in Office Ergonomics: From the Frugal to the Flamboyant.” The second was titled “Best Practices for Site-wide Hospital Ergonomics.”

Professor **Joseph Laquatra** presented a paper (co-authored with Rolf Pendall and Robert King), titled “Sprawl and Residential Preferences,” at the International Conference on Social Science Research, Orlando, Fla., in December. He gave two presentations at the International Builders Show in Orlando in January and was a member of two panels discussing the topics “Utilizing Your University to Build and Sell Better Homes” and “Air Pressure in Homes,” respectively.

### Human Development

**Moncrieff Cochran**, professor, presented at the national symposium Improving Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care: Toward a National Strategy held in Baltimore, Md. He discussed findings from the national Sparking Connections project and the Rochester Caring Connections project.

**Richard Depue**, professor, presented an invited address to the Behavioral Medicine Institute at Uppsala University in Sweden on the topic “Variation in Neurobehavioral Aspects of Affiliative Bonding and Risk for Psychosomatic Disorders.”

Professor **Karl Pillemer** presented an invited address to the Department of Sociology at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, on the topic “Translational Research in the Behavioral Sciences: Promise and Challenges.” He also gave the keynote for a national conference on social isolation and loneliness among the elderly in Ireland, titled “Social Integration in Later Life: Causes, Consequences and Interventions.”

**Elise Temple**, assistant professor, and her students presented two studies at the annual Society for Neuroscience Conference in Washington, D.C.: “Verbal and nonverbal theory of mind: fMRI studies of children and adults” and “Brain effects of trauma: Evidence from fMRI studies of 9/11.”

**Ritch Savin-Williams**, professor and chair, gave talks at Arizona State University to the psychology faculty (“Who’s Gay? It Depends on How It Is Assessed”) and the human development faculty (“Are Gays Healthy? It Depends on How It Is Assessed”) in January. Savin-Williams also gave a plenary talk at the Atlanta meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality titled “Who’s Gay? It Depends.” This material was also featured in the November/December 2005 issue of the *Gay & Lesbian Review*, “The New Gay Teen: Shunning Labels.”

Professor **Wendy Williams** has been awarded, through the American Psychological Association (APA), a 2006-2007 G. Stanley Hall Lectureship. She will give invited addresses at the annual convention in San Francisco in 2007 and at regional APA meetings.

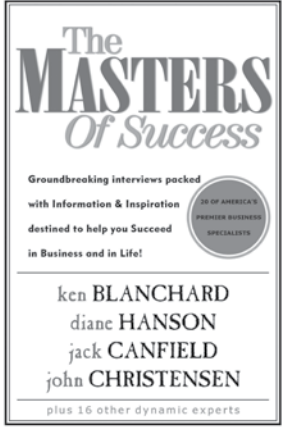
# New Books by Faculty, Staff, and Alumni

*Ken Blanchard AS ‘61, Ph.D. CALS ‘67, Diane Hanson ‘68, Jack Canfield, John Christensen, et al.*

**The Masters of Success**  
Sevierville, Tenn.: Insight Publishing, 2005

What does it take to be the master of success? How is success defined? Inside this book you will find more than one answer to both of those questions as well as tips and ideas on how you can be a success in your own life.

In today’s fast-paced business world, successful people face challenges that did not exist in years past. *The Masters of Success* contains conversations with several fascinating entrepreneurs who will give you inside information about how they have faced those challenges and persevered to become masters of success. You will learn how common sense can sometimes be more important than costly college degrees. *The Masters of Success* presents tips, techniques, stories, and illustrations in an interesting conversational style that will help you think “outside the box” and enable you to live your life in such a way that will make a difference and help you be a master of success. Featured authors include well-known speakers Ken Blanchard (*The One-Minute Manager*), John Christensen (*Fish! Tales*), Jack Canfield (*Chicken Soup for the Soul*), and Diane Hanson.



*Diane Hanson has been owner and president of Creative Resource Development, Inc., for the past 19 years. Before starting her own business, she was a sales manager at Wyeth Pharmaceuticals. Drawing on her own experiences, her insight in leadership makes her a top consultant in assisting organizations to create and sustain a successful environment. Her consulting assignments span the three worlds of corporations, government agencies, and non-profits. In addition to her B.S. from Cornell, Hanson has a master’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania.*

*Charles Brainerd and Valerie Reyna*  
**The Science of False Memory**  
Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2005

Children and adolescents—even adults for that matter—may report with all sincerity that they had been sexually abused in the past or witnessed a murder or other crimes. But sometimes the person, though earnest, is wrong: The memory is a false one.

Having false memories—“recalling” events that did not happen—is a real phenomenon that is vitally important to law and medicine. Since it has only been readily recognized since the early 1990s, the science of false memory is a complex and burgeoning field.

This new book brings together and makes accessible to the general reader the decade or so of intensive research on false memory.

The book explores four major topics: theories of false memory, adult experimental psychology of false memory, false memory in legal contexts, and false memory in psychotherapy.



Part I covers the history of the science of false memory, reviews the varied methods that have been used to study false memory, and discusses research regarding age changes in false memory and theories that have been used to explain and make predictions about false memory. Part II reviews the basic science of false memory, including theoretical explanations of false memory and laboratory research with adults, adolescents, and children. Part III covers the applied science of false memory, discussing false memory in criminal investigations, both with children and adults, as well as in psychotherapy, including recovered memories of previous lives. Part IV considers emerging areas for experimentation, including work to build on mathematical models, aging effects, and cognitive neuroscience.

The book is intended not only for researchers in experimental and clinical psychology, but also for child protective services workers, clinical psychologists, defense attorneys, elementary and secondary teachers, general medical practitioners, journalists, judges, nurses, police investigators, prosecutors, and psychiatrists.

*Susan S. Lang*

*Charles Brainerd and Valerie Reyna are professors in the Department of Human Development.*

*Eve Lederman ‘90 with Faye Lederman*  
**Letters from My Sister**  
(Squeeze the Stone Press, 2004)

*“Letters from My Sister* is a memoir of our lives in progress comprising a collection of correspondence. Our offbeat adventures run the gamut from men to careers to hair removal, and we blame all our frustrations and fears on our Jewish mother who used to buy an entire tongue pickled from the butcher. She’d plop the whole organ down on the table like an autopsy. We were traumatized by that tongue.

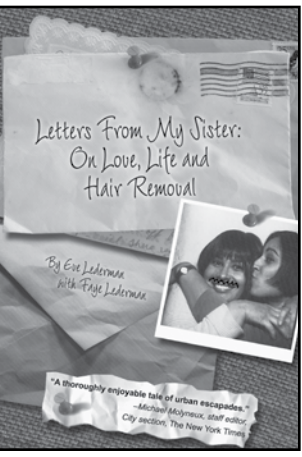
“Our book began with a simple letter about a bad job interview or a bad hair day, seeking comfort from hundreds of miles away. One letter plus its response became two, two turned into four, and we then accumulated more than 100 over the course of a year. During this time, we shared our struggles and became each other’s role models as we talked about careers and relationships and reassured ourselves that we are not alone in our search for the ultimate man, the ideal job, or the perfect hair removal method.

“We were independent but not quite adult, pursuing a career but not yet ‘career women.’ We worried about clothes and makeup, but still expected to be taken seriously; wanted a boyfriend but yearned for female role models; and we learned to face our challenges head-on, hoping to emerge as strong and sensitive, smart and sexy, feisty yet feminine. Though we confront our femininity, we are not confined by it; rather, we use it as a prism to critique many aspects of modern society including the corporate world, technology, academia, gender roles, urban living, and familial relationships.

“Even though Faye and I lived apart, we grew closer together, and an unbreakable bond emerged as our lives unfolded. Through our correspondence, we relate stories and reveal secrets in a way that only sisters can—with a raw openness and honesty derived from a lifetime of shared experiences that surpasses the bond of best friends.”

*Eve Lederman (from her web site)*

*Eve Lederman’s books include Shag’s Zodiac: Adventures in Astrology and Shag’s Little Book of Love: Dating, Mating, and Mischief Making. Eve and Faye co-produced and directed “A Good Uplift,” a short documentary about a bra shop on New York’s Lower East Side, which premiered on the PBS series Reel New York. Faye Lederman graduated from Northwestern University in 1996. She holds an M.J. in documentary film from UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism and is currently studying at NYU.*





## Excess Weight Seen as Societal Issue

Being fat used to be a personal problem. Now that nearly two out of three adult Americans are either obese or seriously overweight, excess poundage is increasingly seen as a societal issue, too. Why are so many people fat? And what are its consequences? Public health nutritionists, sociologists, and economists, including John Cawley, associate professor of policy analysis and management, are investigating.

An economist by training, Cawley considers obesity in an economic framework, which can mean many things: number-crunching the associated costs in private health insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare; or measuring decreased productivity, absenteeism, and other workplace costs. It can mean comparing the costs and benefits of nutritional labeling. It can also mean asking broader questions about how well the free market meets people's needs, whether government should intervene to affect the price of foods and offer incentives to exercise, and why so many of the country's public school cafeterias offer fast foods instead of more nutritional alternatives.

"This is such a new area of research that we haven't done even the most basic cost-benefit analysis on some questions, such as which treatments for obesity work best," Cawley says. He earned a Ph.D. in 1999 at the University of Chicago and came to Cornell in 2001, after spending two years as a Robert Wood Johnson Scholar in Health Policy Research at the University of Michigan.

The federal Centers for Disease Control, which Cawley has advised on issues related to obesity, estimated in 2000 that the cost of obesity in terms of medical expenses and lost wages was \$117 billion. Obese people are more likely than others to have heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, strokes, osteoarthritis, breathing problems, gallbladder disease, and depression. Other aspects of the condition are less well known, such as workplace discrimination, which Cawley has studied.

Cawley found that white women receiving welfare are three times more likely to be morbidly obese than the general population of white women (although black women receiving welfare are no more likely to be morbidly obese than other black women.) He also notes that laboratory studies have found evidence consistent with weight-based discrimination in employment. So when the Department of Health and Human Services reformed welfare in 1996 and required women to work outside the home to remain eligible for welfare, a new situation arose.

"If obese women are discriminated against, and obesity is a barrier to employment, then can we expect obese women to get off the welfare rolls in the same time as everyone else, or should we expect it to take longer?" Cawley asks.

Cawley, who was a member of the Institute of Medicine Committee on Prevention of Obesity in Children and Youth, is a proponent of nutritional labeling of restaurant food, and he is studying food advertising directed at children.

"You know what's in a bag of Doritos," he says. "Ever since the Nutrition Labeling and Education (NLEA) Act of 1990, the content of most packaged foods is listed on the Nutrition Facts panel. But you don't know what's in that chimichanga, how much butter and sour cream. It would be helpful to know."

"The benefits of labeling outweigh the costs many times over," he says. "A U.S. Department



University Photography

of Agriculture economist found that NLEA labels reduced obesity in white females enough to save about \$166 billion in work- and health-related expenses over 20 years. It's a huge winner for society to require those labels."

The Food and Drug Administration's position on foods eaten away from home is to keep nutritional information voluntary. Fast food restaurants resist labeling. In general, the food industry also resists changes in the way it markets foods to young people, even though the Institute of Medicine, a leading scientific advisory group, reported in early December 2005 that 80 to 97 percent of the food products aimed at children and teenagers are of "poor nutritional quality."

Cawley's latest research aims to establish the relationship between children's decisions about foods and the advertising they are exposed to through television and magazines. With colleagues in the College of Human Ecology he is studying the effect of advertisements for branded foods on children's food choices.

Cawley notes that while almost half of all high school students have no PE classes, almost all of them have access to vending machines and are served brand-name fast foods in school. "Government is responsible for creating a healthy school environment," says Cawley, adding, however, that research has shown that students who participate in physical education do not lose weight relative to students who do not. "It's really important to make decisions supported by evidence," he says. "We don't know yet if anti-obesity drugs work better than bariatric surgery. What we do know is that 95 percent of people who lose weight regain it. Even many of those who have had the surgery eventually gain it back."

"We think that with any medical intervention there must be behavior modification or there can be no long-term success," he says. "And yet, most insurance companies do not reimburse doctors for nutritional counseling. If we want Medicaid and Medicare to cover nutritional counseling, we need to do the studies that will show if it works or not. For all interventions, I say, 'Wait for the evidence.' It is irresponsible to intervene without evidence. Otherwise, you risk misallocating resources. You also risk people coming to believe that nothing works, and that the problem is insoluble."

Carole Stone

### America's Obesity Epidemic: What Can Be Done?

America's weight problem is the result of an environment that discourages movement and rewards consumption, and solving it will require attention to all of these factors.

This was the main message behind the Ecology of Obesity, a two-day conference held at the College of Human Ecology last June. The event featured talks on the many dimensions of obesity by legislators, policymakers, and researchers and was carried via Internet to 10 off-site locations around New York State.

Obesity is a serious health problem that affects a growing number of Americans. According to the Surgeon General, 65 percent of U.S. adults aged 20 years and older are overweight—defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as having a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher—and of those, 30 percent are obese (BMI of 30 or more). The obesity rate has doubled since 1980. An estimated 16 percent of children and adolescents ages 6 to 19 years are overweight, defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile of the CDC growth charts for age and gender. A high BMI is associated with greater risk for disorders such as hypertension, Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, and cancers of the endometrium, breasts, and colon. This in turn has substantial economic consequences for the U.S. health care system. In 2000, the total cost of obesity was estimated to be \$117 billion in medical expenses—primarily due to Type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, and hypertension—and lost wages.

The obesity epidemic is a "perfect storm" created by the mismatch between our biology and our environment, said James O. Hill, professor of pediatrics and medicine and director of the Center for Human Nutrition at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, in his keynote. As hunter-gatherers, humans survived in a food-scarce environment through constant physical effort. "So our biology says: Eat whenever food is available and rest whenever you can," said Hill. Today, companies profit by pushing large portions of high-fat, high-carbohydrate foods to a population that lives in car-centered suburbs and spends its leisure time in front of

a TV or computer screen, he said. In essence, "we have engineered physical activity right out of our lives," upsetting the balance between eating and activity that kept our ancestors lean.

Presenters agreed that turning this situation around will require a more complex approach than simply telling people not to eat high-calorie foods. "You need to alter the trade-offs people face by creating incentives for them to do what you want them to do," said John Cawley, associate professor of policy analysis and management. Maintaining a healthy diet and exercise program can be expensive and time-consuming, Cawley said, and many people—and school districts—conclude that they can't afford it.

Brian Wansink, a professor of applied economics and management in Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, described "consumption cues" such as the size of a serving vessel. For example, a larger plate makes a portion look smaller, encouraging the diner to eat more. "Use smaller bowls, but allow people to go back for seconds if they want to," he suggested. "Repackage foods into smaller packages. Use smaller serving spoons."

Alan Hedge, a professor of design and environmental analysis who specializes in workplace ergonomics, admitted that he and his colleagues have contributed to the problem by making the American workplace too comfortable. "We ergonomists have been focusing on labor-saving devices," Hedge said. "We should concentrate on activity-stimulating devices instead." He has retooled his own efforts to create cues and incentives for workers to get up and move around more.

In his speech, Hill called for a 40- to 50-year, widespread public health strategy promoting modest caloric decreases coupled with modest increases in activity to prevent Americans from gaining weight in the first place. Hill believes that, over time, this approach will bring obesity back down to the 1980 rate of 15 percent.

"If we do nothing to turn this around," he warned, "by 2008 some 75 percent of the population will be overweight or obese."

Claudia Wheatley



# Taking It to the Streets

## Can multiculturalism be taught?

In the classroom, the topic might seem a bit academic—trying to understand the coexistence of cultures and the ways they influence one another. On the streets of urban America, it's another story. That's why the College of Human Ecology's Urban Semester takes place in New York City.

"What I am trying to teach students is literally ethnographic research," says Sam Beck, director of the program and an anthropologist by training. "I teach them to mine their experiences because experiences are bona fide ways of learning. This requires knowing how to observe and listen with great sensitivity. It's certainly different from learning in a classroom with 300 other students."

The Urban Semester is a little like Cornell Abroad. Of course, students do not need to learn to think in a foreign language, but they do immerse themselves in foreign cultures, and they get to know New York City as a richly diverse cultural environment. Even students from the city, who say they liked the idea of going back there for a semester, invariably report that New York is a much more complex and nuanced place than they thought.

Cesar Tello '93, an animal science major and a graduate of the Cornell Veterinary College, is the founder of Noah's Ark Pet Clinic in Jackson Heights, the Queens neighborhood where he grew up. He enrolled in the Urban Semester as a senior.

"Sam Beck took us to the projects in the Bronx," says Tello. "He took us to Chinatown to speak with police officers. He took us to the Prudential on Wall Street. When would I have done any of that? Sam Beck is awesome."

"Plus," he says, "in our classes 10 of us were Black or Latino and 20 were white, and we represented the whole range of social and political ideas. Everyone gave his or her opinions and the exchanges were honest. Some conversations were tense and awkward. But we were all friends. And to have that kind of intellectual honesty at age 21 was phenomenal."

## Internships

The Urban Semester is organized around internships. Students arrange to work in one of several fields, including medicine, law, government, the not-for-profit sector, design and the arts, and the media. Three days a week they go to their internships and once a week they meet with Beck and fellow students in the course HE 490, Multicultural Practice, a seminar that teaches them to reflect on the organizational culture and diversity of the workplace.

"The work I did in my internship was really worthwhile," says Jason Eng, '07, a policy analysis and management major from Long Island who did an internship in financial literacy with the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation), the agency that supervises banks and helps maintain a stable and sound banking system (see profile, page 7).

Pre-med students, whose internship consists of a hospital rotation that includes pastoral care, the emergency room, and other divisions of Weill Cornell Medical Center, participate in a separate seminar, HE 495, Culture, Medicine, and Professional Practice in a Diverse World. Of the 30 or so students who enroll in the Urban Semester program each semester, about one in three is pre-med. Most, but not all, of the students are in the College of Human Ecology. Students live together, four to a suite, in a Cornell Medical College dormitory at East 69th Street and York Avenue, across from the New York Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center.

HE 490 and HE 495 both emphasize the ways multicultural issues are changing people's lives.

"Law, medicine, and business each have a corporate culture with borders for inclusion and exclusion, and these

borders used to be quite firm," Beck says. "These days half of the members of a medical school class are women. Ten percent are students of color."

"Generally, people see diversity as good—and profitable," he says. "Markets are global and rapidly changing, so you seek out people who bring in new talents, abilities, and perspectives. You want people who can go out and respond to new situations."

For Monique Sellas '98, the Urban Semester provided "a unique experience in the public health realm—namely working with pregnant adolescents." Her team developed a sex education curriculum that she taught in public schools. She also had the opportunity to work in a biomedical laboratory.

A human development major, Sellas graduated from Cornell and went on to Cornell Medical College. Recently, she was named chief resident at the Harvard-affiliated Emergency Medicine Residency Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

"It's unusual for undergraduate students to work with some of the top scholar-practitioners in the country, in either clinical work or research, but here they do that," Beck says. "By going on rounds with medical students, they get a leg up in terms of the highly jargonized language of the profession. Their journals and conversation demonstrate this."

## Voice Lessons

Throughout the Urban Semester, students keep journals of their experiences and earn academic credit for their daily entries and for midterm and final papers.

"I run the Urban Semester more like a program for graduate students than undergraduates," Beck says. "We have a genuine intellectual exchange of ideas. I prefer to reduce the tension between instructor and student and to maintain a friendly, joking relationship. Reduce the sense of intimidation and they can get into the learning process more honestly."

"Sometimes what I think I'm doing is giving students 'voice lessons.' Half the time they don't know they have a voice. They have to discover it, exercise it, be able to defend it, and also alter it after a conversation that might suggest adopting a new perspective."

"Professionals in the 21st century need to be innovative, critical thinkers. And they need to be people who are good at personal interaction and dialogue, treating each other as equals. We do not see enough of that in student-to-student interaction," he says.

## In the Community

In addition to internships and seminars, students learn to recognize the changing face of the city by working with children and youths of color in community-based programs through HE 408, Communities in Multicultural Practice. The course also introduces them to successful community leaders.

"There are many other Cornell programs where students can meet members of the leadership elite," Beck says. "I delight in introducing them to strong grassroots leaders. For example, I like to introduce them to the founder of the Williamsburg South Side Mission."

"There is such a great distance between these people and the social class that Cornell students aspire to," he says. "Yet I like to show them what an inspired and dedicated person can accomplish. The mission was started as a hospice for AIDS sufferers, it now provides a shelter to the homeless, legal aid to the undocumented, an after-school program for youths who aspire to college. And now they are raising the funds to build low- and moderate-cost housing."

"I want students to see that people who are poor are not necessarily inactive, they are not passive, they are in fact changing their communities," Beck says. He adds, "And I want them to think about comparing the worlds of a Cornell-bound high school student and an underprivileged youth, so I will ask an open-ended question such as, 'What would it take for one of these kids to come to Cornell?' I also ask them, 'Just how would you change this situation for the better?'"

## Site Visits

On Fridays, Beck leads students on field trips, or site visits, as part of their third Urban Semester course HE 470, Multicultural Issues in Urban Affairs. Lower Manhattan areas of immigration, the Customs House, and American Museum of the American Indian are among the sites where Beck and students explore the social and cultural history of New York City from its origins as Dutch New Amsterdam.

One year, site visits had a religious theme: Students visited a Roman Catholic church in Williamsburg; a voodoo priest and grassroots leader; a Korean Buddhist Temple in a brownstone on the Upper West Side; Guayanese Hindu fire-eaters; and a West African Muslim mosque.

"All of this shows, as much as anything, that what we think of as multiculturalism is the rich layering of history with waves of immigration and migration," Beck says. "Multiculturalism is changing people's lives. It is breaking through racial and other barriers in the workplace. Through the Urban Semester students learn to see this and to understand it. Students need to understand the nature of inequality in context, in the urban environment, and begin the struggle with whether they want to do something about this condition and, if so, what."

Carole Stone



photos by Sam Beck

The African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan, recently named a national monument, is a primary focal point for North Americans of African descent as a place for memorializing those who died in slavery and were buried in a potter's field outside the boundaries of the city. The people pictured here represent an African religious community that participated in one of the ceremonies carried out at the burial ground.



The Hasidim are a religious community amply represented particularly in Williamsburg Brooklyn. They represent a Jewish religious tradition that traces its origins to central-eastern Europe, an area called the Pale. The people who came to Williamsburg were remnants of that population, those who survived.



# Student Profile



Each semester, pre-meds participate in a unique seminar that introduces them to the culture of medicine. In this photograph the students are standing with Dr. Charles Bardes, who has a practice in internal medicine and is the associate dean of admissions of the Weill Cornell Medical College. (Left to right): Anna Aronova, Kitty Chen, Joshua Davis, Yoon-Hee Hong, Jenny Hun, Nakiyah Knibbs, Joleen Liburd, Jin Yoo Na, Eleni Souliopoulos



Two friends in Spanish Harlem

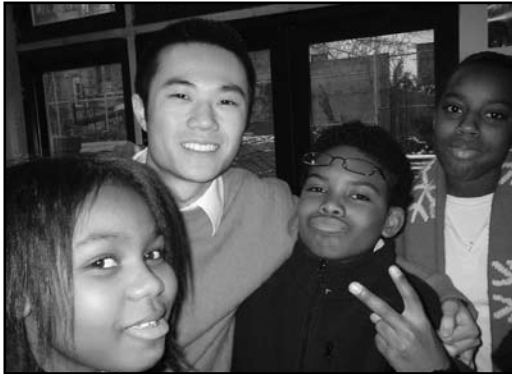


New York City is filled with ethnic community festivals. One of the oldest annual events, the San Genaro Street Festival in Little Italy, takes place during two weeks in September and can be found on Mulberry Street, between Canal and Houston Streets.



Isabelle Rostain was a pre-med student in the fall 2004 Urban Semester Program. Among her other activities, Isabelle shadowed and worked under the supervision of Dr. Maura Frank.

## PAM Junior Does Urban Semester with Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation



**Jason Eng (second from left) worked with children in East Harlem School during his semester in New York City.**

**Driving around the outskirts of Ithaca and interviewing families living in poverty so strongly affected Jason Eng '07 in his sophomore year that he redefined and reinvented himself afterward.**

"I had never seen anything like this: dirt driveways leading to trailers that were dirty and full of clutter," he says. "Where I grew up, in Farmingville, Long Island, all my friends were middle class like me. We weren't rich, but we had whatever we wanted. Seeing people living in poverty hit me hard. It made me think, why do I deserve to live better than other people?"

"I came to Cornell to major in policy analysis and management (PAM) so I could max out as an investment banker and make a salary in seven figures and have a mansion and nice cars," he says. "But then I realized that you don't need all that much to be happy. Chasing wealth is not the very best path in life."

Eng was not seeking a life-changing experience when Professor Gary Evans e-mailed him to ask if he would like to join a research team working on a longitudinal study of poverty and stress. Eng had simply done well in Evans's introductory-level course Introduction to Human-Environment Relations, and on that basis Evans invited him to be part of his 10-person team. In groups of two, the researchers fanned out to interview the adults and children in the study.

"Living in poverty has a demonstrable negative effect on health," Eng says. "Professor Evans's research group measures stress levels through stress hormones and blood pressure, and poverty by talking to people about how much money they have, what they owe, and so on. It's a bad cycle. When you have no money, problems arise, and you don't have money to fix the problems, and then the problems can make it so you can't make more money. Seeing this upset me so much that I redefined myself as someone who would help other people to improve their lives."

In conjunction with the research, which Eng did for academic credit, Evans assigned a final paper on a topic related to poverty, and Eng chose to write on poverty in the suburbs.

The following semester—spring term of sophomore year—Eng looked for a project of his own and found a good fit: a financial literacy and awareness

project. Barbara Bristow, an extension associate in PAM, heads up New York State Saves, an affiliate of a national program to promote savings and the reduction of debt, and Eng arranged to work for her. He performed basic economic analysis of poverty rates, employment, and so forth, in several New York cities including Buffalo, Cortland, New York City, and Rochester.

The following fall—his junior year—Eng went to New York City with the college's Urban Semester program and picked up where he left off with New York Saves. The core of the Urban Semester is an internship, and with Bristow's connections Eng went to work in the community affairs department of the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation). His assignment: the pilot project for New York City Saves, a component of the New York Saves campaign.

"We focused on the underserved—on minorities and others who don't have bank accounts—to try to get them into a bank close to home," Eng says. "Research shows that something like 2 million people in New York City don't have bank accounts. They don't think it's necessary when they have so little money, and they think it's inconvenient to have to go to the bank when they want to get their money.

"The idea is to get them to see that a bank account is safer than hiding money under a mattress, plus it pays interest, and you can do things such as wire it home to another country. To further encourage people, the banks agree to offer low or no-cost checking accounts with no minimum balance or fees for withdrawal and, of course, free checking."

Eng was in London in January 2006 when the pilot project was launched and will be there through tax season in April. He is studying at City University, an undergraduate business school, through Cornell Abroad. But he will stay interested in New York City Saves.

"It was the most interesting work of my short career so far," he says. "It opened my eyes to what can be done to make an impact in society. Public finance—it's great! It combines my limited capabilities in finance and business with something I care about—helping the underserved."

When he returns to Cornell from study abroad in England, Eng intends to apply to the graduate studies program of the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA). If accepted, by taking CIPA-required courses in his senior year he would complete a master's degree in one additional year and then get on with the kind of work he loves.

"When I think about it I know I could go into the private sector for a few years and make a lot of money and then go into the kind of work that I enjoy more," Eng says. "But there isn't that much time, really. So any work you do should be work you enjoy. It's better if your whole career is for a goal that's worthwhile and good.

"Is it hypocritical to want really nice things and at the same time to advocate that people save money? I feel bad showing up somewhere where people are poor, in a Lexus SUV, but that's the car my family bought. We got it used, it was not a financial burden for a middle class family. We were not reaching beyond our means to get it. But I still feel bad," said Eng, who has another year at Cornell and then graduate school, which may be time enough to work out the questions of personal sacrifice.

*Carole Stone*



## Annual Fashion Show Is Invaluable to TXA Students' Careers

**Every apparel design major knows that when it comes to landing a job, a strong portfolio can make all the difference.**

"Employers want to know an applicant's design capabilities, so hands-on work is an important part of students' education," says Anita Racine, senior lecturer in the apparel design program in the Department of Textiles and Apparel. Racine is the long-time adviser to the Cornell Design League (CDL), which was founded in 1984 by two students interested in showing their work on stage. Today, the league boasts 140 members and is one of several student organizations in the College of Human Ecology that serve as resources for textiles and apparel students. The league provides its members with opportunities to express creativity and build managerial leadership skills. The CDL's major activity is an annual spring fashion show—this year, the group sponsored its 22nd show on April 8, titled "Model Citizen." Organized entirely by undergraduates as an extracurricular activity, the show draws approximately 2,000 spectators from the Cornell community, colleague institutions, and the fashion industry.

Seniors in the apparel design major produce a full line of 10 to 11 styles for the show; freshmen usually contribute one item, sophomores two, and juniors five to seven complete ensembles. With the involvement of 80 or more student designers in the show, each designer has only three to four minutes of runway time to impress and inspire the audience. They achieve the intended reactions primarily with their clothing designs, but they also plan lively choreography and music to enhance their fashion statements.

In Racine's class on style, fashion, and the apparel industry, students prepare for the event by studying recurring cycles of fashion and viewing film clips that highlight period fashion shows, "Historical visuals help students formulate and launch new ideas about the presentation of garments from ready-to-wear to high fashion," she says.

Some of the visually exciting fashions that students create for the show emanate from techniques they learn in studio classes. Their in-depth studies of design, draping, and pattern making with traditional methods and now computers, as well as examining beautiful garments in the Cornell Costume Collection, help students formulate and launch new ideas about the presentation of garments from ready-to-wear to high fashion.

"Apparel design majors at Cornell are compelled to consider nuances of context as part of their studies," says Racine. "This broad academic approach ultimately contributes to development of the students' personal aesthetics about designing fashion in the 21st century."

"The Cornell Design League fashion shows have an impact on students beyond the academic components of their education," Racine explains. By their junior year, many students are ready to share the experiences and practical knowledge they have gained through field internships involving the planning, production, and promotion of fashion goods. Familiarity with apparel industry standards for high-quality shows, coupled with previous involvement in the league, work in tandem, she says, to increase the professionalism of the yearly productions.

From an industry point of view, the show's nonjuried and noncompetitive nature is one of its strongest points and sets it apart from other fashion schools. From the 11 eveningwear extravaganzas designed by a senior to a fashionable sportswear outfit created by a freshman, all the work for the CDL show is done outside class and is original. No commercial patterns or purchased items are used. The most important help students receive is from each other. One reason the show fosters talent year after year is this spirit of cooperation. Ninety percent of the designers who participate in the annual show are textiles and apparel majors who use the event as an important portfolio-building opportunity. Other students also participate with portfolios in mind—theater majors who design garments as costumes, architecture students who design the stage set, and musically talented students who cut CDs

timed to each model's two-minute stroll.

Students gain invaluable professional cachet from running the CDL event, a year in the planning and execution. They learn that success is hard won. As the event organizers, the textiles and apparel majors are the ones who design event T-shirts, vie for an available hall against the demands of other campus organizations, create and disseminate publicity, arrange the chairs, and generally tackle details until the last minute.

Cornell Design League students assume full responsibility for preparing publicity and promotional materials for the show. This would be a daunting task without a background in fashion illustration and graphic presentation skills. They sharpen these skills in drawing and portfolio development classes with Professor Van Dyk Lewis, where they learn to maximize the visual impact of their designs and bring design concepts into reality.

The two-hour event costs upwards of \$18,000 to produce each year. The presentation would not be as professional without financial and in-kind donations from small-business owners and industry sponsors. Some back the event with funding for a program brochure; others, like the Michael Antonio Company, donate fashion footwear for the runway models. In the spirit of supporting design education, local florists, photographers, videographers, hair stylists, make-up artists, and lighting and sound crews work for cost or significantly reduced rates. The university, too, deems this creative venture worth its support. The Student Assemblies Finance Commission, which sponsors student projects, makes an annual contribution to the Design League show. And the Cornell Council of the Arts invites portfolio submissions to its competitive student grants program. Typically, it awards six to seven apparel design majors with \$700 grants to help defray the cost of producing their lines for the fashion show. New this year are generous scholarship awards for textile and apparel students from the Barbara L. Kuhlman Foundation, Inc., to encourage creativity in students' design work encompassing fiber arts and wearable art themes.

*Metta Winter*



photo by Brenda Tobias

## Cornell Design League Makes Fashion Debut at NYC Fund-Raiser

Pouting models—including a Cornell Ag and Life Sciences student—and live music mixed it up at the W Hotel in Manhattan last May 1 as the Cornell Design League and Harvard's Veritas Records performed to raise money and awareness for thyroid cancer. The models were showing off original designs by 40 Cornell students before a packed house of 300.

The event was the New York City debut of the Cornell Design League (CDL), which has produced a fashion show on the Ithaca campus for 21 years. The designs (a slightly reworked selection from the Ithaca show) were a mix of modernized classics and edgy club wear, showcased to pulsating music. The audience included representatives from the fashion industry, friends and family, and New York City-based alumni. The show was held as a fund-raiser for ThyCa: Thyroid Cancer Survivors' Association. More than \$30,000 was raised.

On April 15, 2006, the group returned to New York City and appeared at Columbia University in cooperation with other Ivy League institutions to produce the "Ivy Artistic Benefit" to raise money for ThyCa.

*Brenda Tobias*

## Q & A: How has your membership in the Cornell Design League helped you in your career?

The design league has been a fabulous experience for me. I've been part of all aspects of planning and executing the show and the experience has been invaluable. When putting on a fashion show with the Cornell Design League you have to do everything from setting up lighting to choreographing models and managing volunteers while you design and construct all your own garments. You gain skills in negotiation, set design, people management, budgeting, advertising, styling, construction, time management, stress management, and flexibility. These skills have helped me plan events, manage people effectively, meet deadlines, and tackle new challenges ranging from starting my own business to running a theater company.

*Lindsay Lyman-Clarke '01,  
graduate student, TXA*

CDL gave me the chance to design and develop my own line from start to finish. Though it is an abbreviated process compared with real production, it was a great experience to have completed it firsthand. Designing in CDL during my junior and senior years also gave me a chance to apply merchandising knowledge to the lines I developed, and that is always something to keep in mind here at work. In the end, how you merchandise the product is just as important as how each garment is designed.

*Janet Zheng '04,  
associate designer for wovens in ALFANI  
Women's Wear, Macy's Merchandising Group*

The Cornell Design League was a great opportunity for designers in TXA and other majors, and the fashion show was its event. At the time I was a member, I was interested in active apparel, and my line allowed me to take a closer look at athletes and how the body in motion works. If I had any doubt whether that was the right path for me, it was quickly erased as I prepared for the show. I've stayed on that path and today I design technical shoes for serious athletes who rely on our shoes to perform.

*Alyssa Weitzman '97, senior footwear  
designer, The North Face*

The Cornell Design League helped give me an overall sense of all aspects that go into making a collection. In my first job after graduation I was in charge of 12 patternmakers, cutters, and sewers as well as working on concepting and design, fittings, fabric research, choosing music and models for the show, and so on. All this led up to presenting our collection in the Bryant Park tents during New York Fashion week. The long hours, last-minute changes, sewing mishaps, figuring out the "run-of-show," were certainly experienced on a smaller scale when I prepared my mini collection for the CDL.

*Wendy Friedman '94, knitwear designer,  
Tommy Hilfiger; owner, tOtem new york*



# Alumnae Profiles

## Karen Spilka Sets Aside “Dream Job” to Serve in State Senate

**Just four years ago, Karen Spilka '75 was having a great time in what seemed her dream job: a private practice as an arbitrator/mediator specializing in labor and employment law. She particularly liked that it allowed her enough time to enjoy first loves—her children and family, as well as community court mediation.**

“I thought nothing could ever get me to trade this in for anything else,” Spilka recalls with a laugh. Then, out of the blue, her representative to the Massachusetts legislature resigned.

“Within five seconds of hearing the news I knew I wanted to run for his seat,” says Spilka, who won that race, finished out the representative’s term, then ran again and won, spending a total of three years as one of 160 representatives in the Massachusetts state house. In January 2005, as the victor in a hotly contested state senate race for one of the 40 senate seats, Spilka was sworn in, assuming the responsibility for representing the interests of 200,000 citizens living in the MetroWest area. The area, located 25 miles due west of Boston and dipping toward Rhode Island, is second only to Boston as being the largest revenue source in Massachusetts.

Maximizing her constituents’ power to contribute to the Commonwealth’s growth is high among Spilka’s legislative priorities. That requires transportation reform.

Inexplicably, MetroWest is the largest region in Massachusetts with no public bus service. Spilka wants to change the law to



Spilka, her husband, Joel Loitherstein, sons Scott and Jake, and daughter, Heather, breed chocolate Labrador retrievers.

allow the formation of a regional transportation authority and/or allow the seven towns in her district (and areas surrounding them) to join existing authorities.

“We desperately need this,” says Spilka, a Democrat, who has garnered strong backing in the Massachusetts Senate. “If the state wants to have an economic recovery then MetroWest needs to lead the way and that won’t happen until we have a regional transportation authority.”

Yet Spilka is the first to say that public transportation is more than a matter of economics: it’s fundamental to the independence of many people. As a teenager growing up in Westchester County, N.Y., she took the bus to work. Her younger sister, who has Down syndrome, does still.

“I know how reliant people are on public transportation—teens, senior citizens, disabled people, and those who don’t or can’t have a car—to get to doctor’s appointments, jobs, and stores,” Spilka explains.

Her ability to discern the many facets of what constitutes the public good comes from

an unusual blend of talent, education, and work experience that equips Spilka to be effective in a legislative arena. It’s as if, she says, her life has come full circle.

Spilka’s desire to use her talents to foster positive changes for the well-being of others prompted her to come to Cornell in the 1970s because the college awarded a highly regarded bachelor in social work degree. After two years in her first job—as a counselor to special needs children who had been expelled from the Boston public school system because of behavior problems—Spilka applied to law school, intending to specialize in juvenile justice.

“I felt I could do more for kids and their families on a broader scale through the legal profession,” Spilka recalls.

While at Northeastern Law School Spilka became interested in labor law and spent the early years of her legal career working in behalf of unions and employees, negotiating collective bargaining agreements for all state employees and conducting litigation regard-

**“As a lawyer I used the skills from my social work and legal training, but here as a legislator it all comes together and fits so comfortably.”**

ing those contracts. She then went on to become the first labor and employment counsel for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority when this independent agency was building a huge sewage treatment plant in Boston’s harbor.

Spilka first visited the state house in 1998 when, as chair of the Ashland School Committee, she lobbied for change in education funding. Three years later her house seat became vacant.

“Through my work on the school committee I’d come to realize that one person can make a difference,” says Spilka of the drive behind her first legislative bid. “I’d been

meeting with people in the state house long enough to realize that my people skills combined with my background suited me for the task of being a legislator. Besides, I remembered how much I’d enjoyed being involved in government even back in high school.”

Spilka’s interests are wide ranging: she is lead sponsor or co-sponsor of over 50 bills, from those to improve health care, education, and public safety, to those that foster economic development, affordable housing, and environmental protection. As chair of the newly formed Joint Committee on Children and Families she’s afforded exciting opportunities to reform parts of the laws that protect youth at risk and the employment rights of people with disabilities.

Her background in social work is invaluable in pinpointing aspects of current law most in need of change.

“The whole idea that drew me to working with families and kids is the centrality of the family unit,” Spilka explains.

Her Human Ecology education serves her in good stead. In the area of welfare reform, for example, she is guided by a fundamental principle learned here as an undergraduate: that the goal is always to foster independence and self-sufficiency. With this in mind, Spilka has drafted a new program called the Family Well-Being Plan that ensures that disabled individuals are provided for, at the same time containing provisions to jump-start employment opportunities for those who want to work, if even for a few hours a week.

Spilka also says that being a long-time legal guardian for her disabled sister makes her a better legislator.

“Individuals and advocacy groups know I was an advocate for someone with disabilities long before I was a state rep,” Spilka says. “These issues will never fall off my radar screen.”

*Metta Winter*

## Randle Flies High in Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy Practice

**Christine Randle '85 knows what it's like to be awash in panic. And what it's like to soar with the elation that comes only from facing down fear and going at it full force.**

The competitor in Randle makes her the ideal psychotherapist.

“I know exactly what the children are going through when they’re at the top of a steep hill or in front of an obstacle they’ve never seen before,” says Randle, who, three years ago, opened an equine-facilitated psychotherapy practice in rural Massachusetts. “I push myself beyond what I am comfortable with—just as I do them—because I believe we are all capable of doing a lot more than we think we can.”

The reactions of her clients’ parents show the veracity of this philosophy. Their jaws drop (eyes, occasionally tear up, too), Randle says, when they see how happy



Randle and a former pony, “Buttons,” work with a client.

their child is when participating in the grooming and riding activities that accompany carefully constructed talk therapy. As a child’s self-esteem grows through meeting the challenges Randle sets for them in the barn, in the ring, and on the trail, parents’ expectations for their children—and consequently their behavior toward them—change, too. Even though she meets with clients six sessions a day (schooling her new mare in dressage and cross-country and stadium jumping in between), Randle has a sizeable waiting list. Referrals come from the schools and word of mouth.

Her love of working with children and horses stems from her childhood on Long Island when the neighbor kids paid her 50 cents for riding lessons. Her formal training began at Cornell with a degree in human development and family studies.

“Psychology came naturally to me,” Randle recalls. “I’ve always been interested in how people adapt and fit into the world together.”

The first five years after graduation Randle worked back in Smithtown, Long Island, at a center for adults and children with autism while completing a master’s degree at nearby SUNY Stony Brook School of Social Work. She then became an advocate for children and their families as a forensic social worker at the Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Division and, later, a clinical social worker at Community Counseling and Mediation, both in Brooklyn. While still in her twenties, Randle wrote home study continuing education course materials for social workers on topics ranging from the symptoms of serial killers to the treatment of Asperger’s Syndrome. Her book *It Takes Courage*, published in 1995, is a child’s fictional account of physical abuse.

The idea for a private practice came when Randle was unexpectedly laid off from a job with a demanding commute.

“OK, Christine,” she recalls saying to herself. “You went to Cornell—one of the top schools in the nation—you’re an experienced social worker who’s ridden for 35 years. Think about how to put it all together to benefit children.”

Equine-facilitated psychotherapy isn’t

therapeutic riding nor does it center on mastering equestrian skills. Rather, it’s a clinical experience in which the horse—a majestic, magical animal to children and adults alike—is a motivator, a catalyst, and a comforting companion to accomplishing the therapeutic goals of building self-knowledge and self-esteem, enhancing communication skills, promoting behavioral awareness, control and change, developing interpersonal skills and decreasing interfering behaviors such as depression, suicidality, and impulsivity.

“Children don’t usually run to their therapy sessions but they’ll run to see Duncan,” says Randle of the 16-year-old pony they ride. “The children pour out all of their emotions on him and experience a response from him, too. Children find that fun, very freeing.”

Although Randle sees the success of her program in the behavioral changes of her clients and their parents, she looks forward to the day when she has time to design research studies that show, empirically, just why.

*Metta Winter*

For more information on equine-facilitated psychotherapy, see Randle’s web site: [flyinghigh-farm.com](http://flyinghigh-farm.com).



# Alumni News

## Message from the HEAA President

In my last letter I reported that one of the HEAA's goals for the year is to revitalize and expand its Student Aid Grants Program. At the student luncheon we hosted last fall, we learned that many students did not know that the HEAA provides grants for research, travel to conferences, and other academic projects—awarding students between \$500 and \$1,000 for their pursuits. Thanks to the Student Affairs Committee, chaired by Rosanna Frank, both the grant guidelines and application process have been overhauled and the directors of undergraduate and graduate study for each department have been directly informed of the HEAA Student Aid Grants Program.

As of this writing, the committee has awarded eight grants totaling nearly \$5,300. We have received letters from several of our award recipients:

**Paulvalery Roulette** '07 (HD) was awarded a grant to fund summer study in biology. He wrote, "I learned the technique of gel electrophoresis to identify DNA in bacteria. I was informed that most college students in the country are not exposed to this technique unless they are doing research under a professor. I'm hoping my knowledge of electrophoresis will serve to make me a better candidate for a research position with researchers in Africa this upcoming summer. . . I could not have had this experience without the HEAA's generosity, and I am very thankful that you allowed me to experience this great opportunity."

**Farzon Nahvi** '07 (HBHS) was awarded a grant to conduct research in Tanzania. Farzon wrote: "When I discovered I would be able to spend the summer in Pemba, Tanzania, working on the Mama na Afya ("Mothers and Health") project, a study testing a low-cost, low-technology approach to treating and preventing anemia during pregnancy with Professor Rebecca Stolfus, I realized I had a rare and excellent opportunity and that the only thing holding me back was funding. The HEAA made this extraordinary experience possible."

**Bethany Ojalehto** '08 (individual curriculum) was awarded a grant to do independent research last summer. Bethany wrote: "One of the most exciting aspects of this past summer was the opportunity to expand and conceptualize my independent research. Last fall and spring I produced two theoretical research papers dealing with refugee children's psychological development and spiritual cognition. For my final



paper, I focused on the problems confronting unaccompanied refugee children as they enter U.S. borders. . . I am so thankful to the generous members of the HEAA for making this wonderful experience possible. It is my hope that in the future, I can repay this kindness through my contributions to others."

**Albery Melo** '09 (HD) and **Manuel Natal** '08 (PAM) were both awarded a grant to attend the First Annual Latino Ivy League Conference, focused on building leadership skills. At the conference, they were two of four students representing Cornell and they gave a formal presentation on opportunities available for Latinos on campus. Albery wrote: "I wanted to thank you for providing me with funding to attend this conference. It was an eye-opening event."

In addition to the students mentioned above, we have given awards to: **Yarden Kedar** (HD grad) for participation in the Fourth Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society; **Lauren Kline** '06 (PAM) for participation in a conference in the United Arab Emirates titled "Women as Global Leaders"; **Nancy Oyedele** '07 (PAM) for participation in a conference in Rwanda titled "Rwanda Human Rights Delegation"; **Tyrell Robertson** '08 (HD) for participation in the National Black Students Leadership Development Conference; **Hwajn Yang** (HD grad) for participation in a conference in California titled "Society for Personality and Social Psychology"; and **Jonathan Zember** '06 (PAM) for participation in the TESOL-Spain National Convention in Madrid, Spain, titled "Voices in the Classroom."

These students not only exemplify the best and the brightest, a hallmark of all Cornell students, they typify what makes Human Ecology students so special. Our students give real meaning to our motto of "improving the human condition." Human Ecology students truly make the world a better place. We at HEAA are thrilled to support them in their noble endeavors.

On the alumni front, our board members have been busy helping to introduce our pride and joy—Dean Lisa—to all of you. Special thanks go to our newest board members for hosting terrific receptions for the dean in their hometowns: Mary Kahn '79 (Philadelphia), Debbi Adelman '71, MS '74 (New York City), and Nanci Palmintere '73 (Santa Clara).

So I end this report as I do all reports – with a plea for your support and help! I ask every one of you who is not a member of HEAA to please join! We simply cannot continue to run programs that benefit students, like the ones you have heard from above, without needed membership dues. The dues of \$30 per year ensure that we can continue to operate effectively. Please consider becoming a Life Member for the one time fee of \$300. If you are not a member of the Alumni Association, please contact the Alumni Affairs Office at 1-800-453-7703. Do it today. Every membership counts! Thank you in advance for your support.

Marcy Sonneborn Fabiani '73

## Human Ecology Reunion Breakfast Reservation Form

*Note: You must register with the college for this hot breakfast.  
This event is not included in your Reunion 2006 registration.*

**Saturday, June 10, 2006**

**Belkin Courtyard, Martha Van Rensselaer Hall  
Cornell University**

**Registration: 7:15 A.M. Breakfast: 8:00 A.M.**

Please make \_\_\_ reservations at \$14.50 for HEAA members and \$16.50 for nonmembers.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please send the reservation form and check payable to Human Ecology Alumni Association to the Office of Alumni Affairs and Development, B12 MVR Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853 no later than June 1, 2006.

**Telephone reservations will not be accepted.**



## 1960s

**Margaret J. Drury MA '67, PhD '72,** LOCATION, has become a grandmother for the first time, with the birth of grandson, Dimitri, born October 3, 2005. She is very involved in grandparenting and says it is the best career she's ever had.

**Nancy Nichols Harvey '68, Cambridge, Md.,** retired in 2001 after 30 years of teaching science, 20 in Binghamton, N.Y., and 10 elsewhere. She now spends her time sailing, singing, and subbing. Nancy has twin daughters who are teaching art in Syracuse and Binghamton, N.Y., and she still comes back to Ithaca every summer to sail.

## 1970s

**Eleanor J. Zahler MS '78,** Cardiff by the Sea, Calif., reports that she has had short stories published bimonthly since July 2004, in *International Senior Traveler*, a division of Journal Publications, California.

## 1990s

**Margaret Feerick, Ph.D. '98,** Laytonsville, Md., has co-edited the book *Children Exposed to Violence*, which was released by Brookes Publishing in March 2006.

**Jason Miller '98,** Houston, Texas, and his wife, Jessica, both physicians, had their first baby, Ava Hailey Miller, born August 18, 2005. She is doing great!

**Kyle L. Snow, Ph.D. '98,** Laytonsville, Md., is co-author with Margaret Feerick of an article based on work done and data collected at Cornell and cited as follows: "The relationships between childhood sexual abuse, social anxiety and symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder in women." *Journal of Family Violence* 20(6): 409-19, 2005. Snow was recently asked to serve on the PBS advisory board.

## 2000s

**Lynn Bennett '02,** Saranac Lake, N.Y., married Chris Gosling '02 ENG in September 2005. Lynn is currently employed as a middle school counselor at the Lake Placid Central School District and Chris is employed at Paul Smith's College.

**Damon Clark '03,** Madison, Wisc., and his wife, Kate, had their first child, Finn, in August 2005.

**Abiola Dele-Michael '01,** Rochester, N.Y., was presented the Student Health Professional Award in 2005 by the International Society on Hypertension in Blacks. He was recognized for his "beginning efforts to improve the health and life expectancy of minority populations." Abiola is an '06 MD/MPH candidate and Jackson Heart Study research associate at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.

**Sean Esmende '02,** Los Angeles, Calif., reports that, after Cornell, he took a break from school and did genetics research for several years at Stanford. This past August, he started his first year at the UCLA Geffen School of Medicine. He says it's great to finally be closer to home, but he certainly misses the hill.

**Joshua Novikoff '03,** Washington, D.C., is working in the lead-based paint program at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He was recently matched with a "little brother" in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and is excited to begin his mentorship.

## In Memoriam

**Jane F. Herbert '32,** Erie, Pa., August 4, 2005

**Mary Ellen Davidson '33,** Waverly, Ohio, July 17, 2005

**M. Eileen Driscoll '36,** Oswego, N.Y., August 15, 2005

**Helen Huff '36,** Independence, Mo., March 13, 2005

**Eloise G. Jones '37,** Lexington, Ky., September 3, 2004

**Jean Childers '39,** Houston, Texas, August 29, 2005

**Eleanor M. Mitten '42,** Baltimore, Md., August 18, 2005

**Shirley M. Ketchum '44,** Averill Park, N.Y., September 28, 2005

**Elizabeth A. Martin '45,** Richmond, Va., September 21, 2005

**Jean Lankford '46,** Salisbury, Miss., August 4, 2005

**Harriet Hammond Erickson '47,** Chapel Hill, N.C., October 7, 2005

**Ruth Hollander '48,** Boynton Beach, Fla., February 27, 2005

**Dorothy S. Minville '48,** Southborough, Mass., October 9, 2005

**Helen P. Plass '48,** Pleasant Valley, N.Y., August 8, 2005

**June Yule '55,** Prescott, Ariz., June 23, 2005

**Geraldine G. White '57,** Pinellas Park, Fla., August 28, 2005

**Barbara H. Yates '58,** Toronto, Ont., August 30, 2004

**Joanne H. McDonald '61,** Washington, Pa., August 26, 2005

**Carolyn C. Driver '66,** Bridgewater, Va., April 13, 2005

**Diane Barton '80,** Moorestown, N.J., August 4, 2005

**Ellen-Lizette Cleckley '95,** Springfield, Va., May 9, 2005

## Alumni Calendar

**Faculty Speaking Event:**  
**William D. White**  
"Shopping for Health Care:  
Can Patients Really Be Consumers?"  
San Antonio and Houston, Texas  
April 21 and 22

**Sloan Board Meeting and  
Wagner Weekend**  
Cornell Campus  
May 5-7

**HEAA Senior Reception**  
Cornell Campus  
May 25

**Commencement**  
Cornell Campus  
May 28

**Cornell Entrepreneurship  
Network:  
HE Alumni Panel**  
Washington, D.C.  
June 1

## Human Ecology Reunion Events

**Friday, June 9**  
**HEAA Board Meeting**  
MVR Hall

**Sustainability Forum**  
Cornell Campus

**Sloan Alumni Reception**  
Six Mile Creek Winery

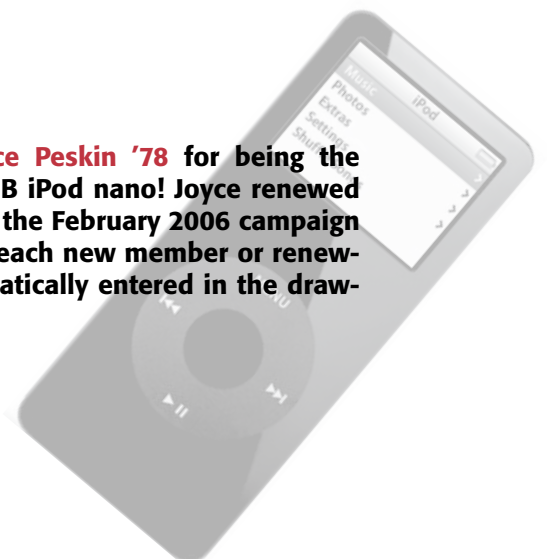
**Saturday, June 10**  
**HEAA Annual Meeting and  
Reunion Breakfast**  
MVR Belkin Courtyard

**Reunion Forum: Women  
in Science**  
G-73 MVR Hall

**HE Alumni-Faculty Mixer**  
MVR Belkin Courtyard

Did you take care of a DOMECON baby or know someone who did? Did you live in a practice apartment while at Cornell and take care of a baby there? If so, we'd like to speak with you for a documentary film we're making about these experiences. Please contact alumna Carol Jennings (607-274-3451, caj34@cornell.edu) or Nonny de la Peña (607-257-3439, Nonny@Nonnydlp.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

Congratulations to **Joyce Peskin '78** for being the lucky winner of the 2 GB iPod nano! Joyce renewed her HEAA dues through the February 2006 campaign for membership where each new member or renewing member was automatically entered in the drawing for the nano.





# Student Profiles

## HBHS Junior Gains Early Admission to Medical School

**For Alexandra Golant '06, early admission to Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City changed everything about her college career.**

It's a pre-med student's dream: early admission to a leading medical school, no cut-throat Cornell courses in organic chemistry and physics, no need to take the MCAT—and the chance to enjoy a couple of years of college instead of worrying about grades and getting in.

"It's a great relief!" Golant says, midway into her junior, and final, year at Cornell. "Between AP credits from high school, a couple of summer courses, and credits for taking Mount Sinai's pre-med science courses this summer, I'll be able to graduate a year early. I'd like to travel and help others before I start medical school. I know this is my one chance to do that."

A human biology, health and society (HBHS) major, Golant came to Cornell from Gainesville, Fla., where her mother is an attorney and her father teaches gerontology at the University of Florida. Educational television and science classes in school were her introduction to medicine. "I don't have a drop of medical blood in me," she says, referring to her family. She worked in a U. of Fla. genetics lab in the summers, and that introduction to medical research left her longing to practice medicine with whole, human beings, not just their genes.

This is not an easy time to enter the medical profession, Golant acknowledges: HMOs and malpractice insurance and lawsuits make it more challenging for doctors. Professor Roger Battistella's course PAM 435, The U.S. Health Care System, left her without illusions in that regard. And she is grateful for it.



The College of Human Ecology attracted her in the first place by its relatively small size and the HBHS major. But Cornell and Ithaca were a shock to her system.

"I will be honest," she says.

"Freshman year, I was not happy. But I have no one to blame but myself. My heart and mind were still in Florida where most of my friends were, and even though people were reaching out to me, I wasn't reaching back. Finally, things started to get better when I opened up to people."

Sophomore year was another story. A friend told Golant about Mount Sinai's early-decision program, she applied by November 1, she was interviewed after Thanksgiving, and on January 6, 2005, she found out she was in.

"Humanities and Medicine, Mount Sinai's early admission program, was "a God-send for me," Golant says. "I went to a competitive high school, and Cornell certainly was not calming. Early decision will let me acquire experiences that will allow me to become a more caring and sensitive physician. I am hopeful I can go to Spain to witness another country's medical system.

"I feel so fortunate to have opted out of the usual pre-med routine. Even applying is a long and expensive process, and even then it's hit or miss. Although I am concerned about the high cost of medical school, becoming a doctor has always been my goal. I feel very lucky. And it feels right to me to be doing what I'm doing now. In fact, nothing has ever felt like such a good fit as this."

*Carole Stone*

## Dietetics Internship Wows 2005 Grad

**Where does a passion for nutrition begin? For Shellen Goltz '05, it started in her mother's kitchen.**

Where is her passion sustained? On the balance beam, in her case, where performance improved by eating right. And where does passion become a career? In the College of Human Ecology's nutritional sciences major and postgraduate dietetic internship.

Goltz, who grew up in Fort Wayne, Ind., started gymnastics at age four, starred on the Cornell women's team, and is now in the Cornell Dietetics Internship program. She completed the first half of the work—in community nutrition and counseling—in Ithaca. The second half is in Rochester, N.Y., doing clinical rotations at Strong Memorial Hospital and a component on food service management. Working with FoodNet of Tompkins County, she created a research project of interviewing people who receive Meals on Wheels.

"I interviewed each person at five different times to see how having meals delivered affected their well-being, how it influenced their daily habits, whether it changed the way they socialized or the number of times they left the house," Goltz says. "It was a very rewarding survey. I learned their habits and I heard their stories, who they live with, who their family is. You might think nutritional counseling is only about food, but eating is such an important part of who we are that it's all about how we live."

Growing up in a family of four, Goltz enjoyed cooking with her mother and serving meals to their family.

"It always seemed such a loving activity," she says. And, because she had started doing gymnastics at age four, food as



fuel was also important to the young athlete. When Goltz was 12 her mother went back to work, and Goltz started packing her own lunches and after-school snacks. Before long, a diet

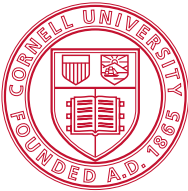
filled with pizza and ice cream worsened her performance in the gym. When she returned to more healthful foods she saw big improvement. That clinched for her the relationship between diet, sports performance, and health.

In her freshman year at Cornell, the women's gymnastics team members were Ivy League champions. Sophomore and junior years, she was All-American on the balance beam. Senior year, the College of Human Ecology named her an Outstanding Senior, a scholar-athlete who exemplifies one of the school's ideals.

"I love Cornell. That's one reason I came back here for the year," Goltz says. Two courses with Susan Travis—Nutrition Communication and Counseling and Nutrition and Exercise—meant a lot to me, personally. And [Associate Professor] Patrick Stover taught biochemistry in such an engaging way that I was surprised how much I liked it. Professor Colin Campbell's course on vegan nutrition was provocative."

In the future, Goltz thinks she might like to work with young people, such as amateur athletes like herself, to instill good health practices.

*Carole Stone*



Cornell University

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