



March 20, 2018

To: The Faculty and Staff

From: Barry Pearson, Provost

Dear Colleagues:

I am often privileged to know about work that's hard to see. In these *Notes*, I want to share some of the lesser-known successes in faculty/staff and program profiles. These profiles are not in any particular order, but I think each provides a wonderful sampling of the inspired work that goes on below the radar.

Faculty and staff profiles:

Although you may have attended the recent **Soul Voices** concert, you may not know about the work that **Pete Malinverni** (associate professor of music) and **Pamela Prather** (assistant professor of theater) did to pull this remarkable concert together. It was an incredibly exciting collaboration.

You probably don't know **Ian Driver**, Arts in Education Manager in the **Performing Arts Center (PAC)**. The yellow school buses are often the only visible sign to the campus of Ian's successful arts in education program, which serves thousands of K-12 students annually. What is perhaps even more remarkable about Ian's work, however, is our *Neighborhood Bridges* program, a fully immersive 6-8 week writing through the arts program initiated at Children's Theater Company in Minneapolis. The program is funded by generous grants from The Frog Rock Foundation and Arts Westchester.

**James Spione** (lecturer in film) collaborated with Myron Dewey, an indigenous media artist, to document the native-led peaceful resistance against the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock. They released the documentary *Awake, A Dream from Standing Rock* (2017), and put together a very successful screening and panel discussion with local Native American activists.

Through the Center for Political Activism, **Steven Lambert** (associate professor of new media) has recently collaborated with artists in Ghana and West Africa to develop strategies for fighting corruption in the region.

**Leandro Benmergui** (assistant professor of history) and **Michelle Stewart** (associate professor of cinema studies) have been collaborating with students on the transmedia oral project, producing and preserving the oral history of our campus and our surrounding communities.

**Lenora Champagne** (professor of theater), coordinator of Theatre and Performance, is collaborating with Daisy Torres-Baez, coordinator for diversity Initiatives at the Multicultural Center, to present *Out of Silence: The 1 in 3 Project*, for which a dozen playwrights across the

country adapted stories about abortion into short scenes that will be directed by five Theatre and Performance students and performed by students from different areas of the college.

Program and project profiles:

**Liberal Studies** has been piloting new interdisciplinary courses that seek to integrate disciplinary perspectives from across the humanities, arts, social sciences and natural sciences. The courses will emphasize the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration and the need to combine academic and experiential learning in confronting contemporary, real-world challenges.

The recent creation of the **College Success Seminar** course by Peter Polinski, Ryan Homsey, and past members of the Advising Center, is the department's effort to demonstrate *advising as pedagogy*. The course takes a holistic approach to foster student development through evidence-based studies related to the complexity of college life, while also responding to college-wide initiatives to support students in the "murky middle," improve writing skills, and increase retention.

The **Professional Staff Council** is working on its **Staff Mentorship Program**. The Professional Development Committee is matching mentors and mentees according to interests and goals. (JeanMarie would like to thank her mentor, Barbara Moore, for all of her guidance and support, thus proving that mentoring works!)

The **Humanities** faculty jumped in to help their colleagues in **Theater and Performance** with high advising loads. Rebecca Rugg, director of Theater Arts had a hallway conversation with Ross Daly, chair of Humanities, which led to the collaboration and shared effort.

Purchase College's **Cine Nomad Project**, a transnational film exchange program in its second year, led by Anne Kern (associate professor of cinema studies), is in its project development phase. The development phase will culminate with film shoots involving students from Benin, Haiti, and Purchase, during the month of June in the three locations.

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### **Reminder: Spring Faculty Award Application Deadlines**

Application/nomination deadlines are approaching for the following Purchase College faculty awards, please note all applications must be forwarded to your Chair/Director prior to the dates listed below. The dates below are when they are due in the Provost office and/or unless otherwise noted:

- [2018-2020 Fishbein Junior Faculty Research Award in the Liberal Arts](#): **March 30**
- [Jewish Studies Faculty Research/Professional Development Award](#): **March 30**

For more information, including application deadlines in spring 2018, please visit the [Faculty Awards](#) section on the Office of the Provost website. Information on awards and leaves offered through the New York State/United University Professions Joint Labor-Management Committees (JLMC) is available at [nysuup.lmc.ny.gov](http://nysuup.lmc.ny.gov).

## NEUBERGER MUSEUM

At the Neuberger, Kristen Lindberg has been working on various aspects of the museum's Open Classroom project, hosting faculty-sponsored student groups for dance, theater, and music productions. In the last year, students taught by Bradley Brookshire, Tara O'Connor, and Pete Malinverni from the Music Conservatory, Pamela Prather from the Theatre Arts Conservatory, and Nellie van Bommel and Rosalind Newman from the Dance Conservatory, among others, have performed in various capacities. She'd love to expand the program to different formats as well, to lectures, film, readings, and more. She's also been working on the Open Classroom space in the museum, a program which invites faculty to choose works from the stored collection correlating to course curriculum, and places them on view for the semester. So far this space has housed projects with the Art History, History, and Political Science departments, and has one in the works with the Environmental Science department. The Open Classroom program can also mean course-specific and less public collaborations between courses and works on view; Kristen has worked with a number of classes in this way. Please contact her with any ideas!

Please check out all other [Events](#) at the Neuberger Museum.

## Natural and Social Sciences

For the last few years Stephen Flusberg, Assistant Professor of Psychology, has been working with faculty in workshops and individually to improve teaching. Steve is a cognitive psychologist with particular expertise in issues related to teaching and learning. Because his efforts have been so successful, we decided to expand his responsibilities in this area to include such initiatives as providing (voluntary) classroom observations, addressing achievement gaps, and building a pedagogy community. In recognition of this, I have given Steve the title "**Faculty Director of Pedagogy Development.**" In observing Steve's teaching, I've been awed by his ability to design presentations that stimulate thought and bring students inside the content. His thoughtful course designs are truly inspiring.

## Performing Arts Center

The (New & Improved) PepsiCo Theatre at the PAC

As you know, this year The PAC is celebrating a major birthday (40!), and, as is often done, we've focused a lot of our celebrating on honoring our past. But in doing so we have not ignored a critical fact, that perhaps the best way to honor the past is to secure the future.

The future is the incubation of the next 40 years of great artists, right here on our campus. And modern work demands a modern venue, so we are thrilled about the grand re-opening of the fully upgraded PepsiCo Theatre, which will be officially celebrated – weather permitting - at the end of this month.

This upgrade was made possible via the generosity of PepsiCo, Inc., Lucille Werlinich, Chair of Purchase College Foundation, and our countless other donors to the project. To understand the deep power of these gifts, here's a very short but simple technical lesson. Built 40 years ago, everything in The PAC buildings was designed as analog. In 2018, the bulk of our technology is digital and wireless. The best artists in the world, the very artists we want creating on our stages, are using modern technology to tremendous effect and the fusion of technology with live performing arts is an important part of the answer to our national dwindling audience conundrum.

It sounds so simple — just get some new equipment, right? Well, thanks to PepsiCo, Inc.'s tremendous gift The PAC did get some clearly visible new technology. The speakers you can see above the stage, the surround sound you'll hear, the state of the art projection you'll see, plus the new chairs you sit in, your feet resting on the new carpet. But none of this is possible without the countless dollars and hours of work you don't see. You don't see it because it went to infrastructure in the walls, ceiling, and floors. You don't see it because it went to taking us from analog to digital. Thanks to what you don't see, when you are in the PepsiCo Theatre you now sit in a fully state of the art venue.

On behalf of everyone at The PAC and every audience member, we thank the people who tirelessly worked on the project. At The PAC - Christy Havard, Justin Herminhouse, Peter Wylie, Kimberly Cook, Dan Sedgwick. From our Institutional Advancement Office, Vice President Catherine Brod, Julie Pryor-Bennett, and Katherine King. Our Advisory Council, chaired by Jim Sandling. Gary Peck and everyone at North American Theatricals. Of course none of their work would have been possible without generous gifts. Our everlasting thanks to Lucille Werlinich and our sound system renovation fund donors, and, last but in no way least, to our friends and neighbors at PepsiCo, Inc. Thanks to you, we'll keep the curtain rising for another 40 years and more.

**It's our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – A Season of Celebration**

[Click to view the 2017-2018 season](#)

Tickets and more info about these and other PAC events can be found at [www.artscenter.org](http://www.artscenter.org). Student rush and faculty/staff discounts are available for most performances, keep an eye on your purchase.edu email and The PAC's social media accounts for details.