



SUNY OLD WESTBURY

# *“IN THE NEWS”*

MARCH TO APRIL 2019

Prepared by  
The Office of Public and Media Relations  
SUNY Old Westbury

# Leaving a higher calling

The Rev. Butts III is stepping down from SUNY post

BY JOIE TYRRELL  
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The Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, president of SUNY Old Westbury for nearly two decades and the dynamic pastor of historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, said Thursday he will retire from the college post early next year.

"It's just time. Twenty years in a college presidency is a long time," Butts, 69, said in an interview. "It's been a joy, and it's been a joy to be part of the state university system."

He said he will go on study leave for the spring semester of 2020 and at that point will not be responsible for the college's day-to-day operations. He plans to be a professor, likely teaching American Studies, as of the fall semester of the 2020-21 school year.

Butts expressed appreciation to his staff for their support and to state and local officials who have helped the college through the years. He also thanked donors and fundraisers, including former President Bill Clinton and the late Amy Hagedorn, the local philanthropist who was the school's largest contributor, giving more than \$14 million to expand programs for students.

"These men and women helped to set a tone, to show an interest, and as I told Newsday when I first came on board, 'The college is just about dead, and you got the right guy, as I am in the resurrection business,'" Butts said.

SUNY Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson called him "an inspirational leader for SUNY Old Westbury's campus and the entire system, serving a monumental 20 years in this role."

"As a strong advocate for access to an affordable, high-quality education, he will leave behind a lasting legacy that will live on at the campus," Johnson said in a statement.

There was no immediate plan Thursday to name a re-



The Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, president of SUNY Old Westbury, at his office on Thursday.

**“As a strong advocate for access to an affordable, high-quality education, he will leave behind a lasting legacy that will live on at the campus.” — SUNY Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson**

placement, permanent or interim, to the position, according to State University of New York officials.

Appointed by SUNY trustees in 1999, Butts has led the college through a period of transformative change.

"I wasn't sure what I was getting into when I walked into this office. There was nothing here," he said. "But then the challenges came — enrollment had to be increased and ... we had no money. The buildings were leaking, the faculty was upset, the Foundation was in trouble. Each time you meet

the challenge and ... then it grows on you. You become a part of Old Westbury."

During his years at the helm, the college earned accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and created its first-ever graduate programs, which now include degrees in accounting, adolescence education, childhood special education, literacy education, forensic accounting and taxation.

Enrollment, which dropped sharply in the 1990s, has seen large gains, and buildings have sprouted on the 604-acre cam-

pus — a gleaming new academic center, a student union and residence halls.

Andrew Mattson, who chairs the Faculty Senate and has been at the college for 23 years, said Butts stabilized and strengthened SUNY Old Westbury.

"He really deserves a lot of credit for that," Mattson said. "He is a leader of people."

Kevin S. Law, president and chief executive of the Long Island Association, noted the rise in enrollment during Butts' tenure and said the college has spurred the region's economic growth.

"He has been like a brother to me and a close partner with the LIA, working together to keep Long Island a great place to live and work; and his impact will continue to benefit the region long after his retirement," Law said.

Butts is the longest-serving president of the school, which was chartered by SUNY trustees in 1965 and began operations three years later. It has

been in its current location since 1971.

He already was well-known as the influential pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church when he was appointed to lead SUNY Old Westbury. His move into academic administration — an arena in which he had no prior experience — was both surprising and controversial.

At the time, the college had some of the lowest graduation rates and student test scores in SUNY's system and once was marked for possible closure.

Butts recalled Thursday that SUNY officials had approached him about teaching at the college and then offered him the leadership position.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, told of the announcement, had high praise for the fellow minister and activist with whom he at times has been at odds.

"He ran a school for decades that excelled. He did this while pastoring a historical black church, all at the same time," Sharpton said in an interview. "He had the ability to master all of that because he is a man of unusual strength and gifts."

With Butts in charge, the college invested about \$200 million in capital construction and renovation projects, introducing cutting-edge technologies and completing five new residence halls, the union and the 147,000-square-foot academic center.

From a student body of 2,995 in 2000, enrollment has risen nearly 60 percent to the current 4,777 undergraduates, according to data from the school. With graduate students included, the college's 5,077 enrollment is its largest ever.

Full-time faculty has grown too, from 113 to 170 employees.

The student retention rate also has shown improvement, with more freshmen returning for their sophomore year. That rate of 66 percent in fall 1999 now stands at 78 percent. The graduation rate of 48.5 percent is up from 25 percent in 1999, according to the college.

The academic profile of entering students has shown improvement. The average SAT score of new enrollees increased from 848 in 1998 to

1055 in fall 2018, according to the school, and the high school grade-point average of entering freshmen for the same time frame rose from 76.9 to 84.5.

The leaders of other Long Island higher-education institutions joined the chorus of plaudits.

"Dr. Butts has been a stalwart leader, not only for SUNY Old Westbury, but also for the broader Long Island community," Molloy College President Drew Bogner said.

Stuart Rabinowitz, president of Hofstra University, called Butts "a dynamic leader who shepherded SUNY Old Westbury through a period of tremendous growth and change. As a pastor and a college president, he has been a tireless advocate for improving education at all levels. His energy, commitment and contributions will serve as an inspiration to students and educators for years to come. We will miss his advice and counsel on the Long Island Regional Advisory Council on Higher Education."

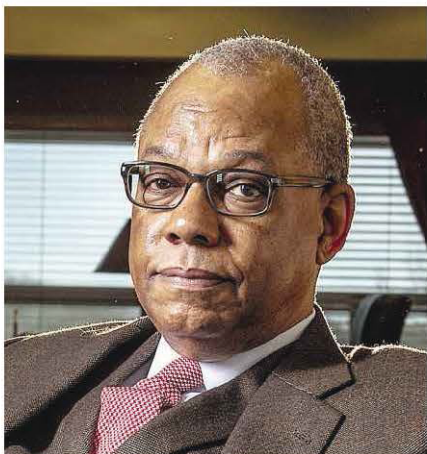
A native New Yorker, Butts earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Morehouse College in Atlanta in 1972, a master of divinity degree in church history from Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan in 1975 and a doctor of ministry in church and public policy from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, in 1982.

Throughout his 20 years as SUNY Old Westbury's president, Butts has continued as pastor of Abyssinian, which traces its beginnings to 1808 and is one of the oldest Baptist churches in the United States.

Long a powerful presence and advocate for African-Americans and people of color, Butts has spoken out against racial profiling and police brutality, built coalitions to foster economic development and job growth, and mobilized support for the plight of Christian minorities being persecuted abroad.

He and his wife, Patricia, have three children and six grandchildren.

With Monte R. Young



NEWSDAY / J. CONRAD WILLIAMS JR.



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## spectrum

### **SUNY Old Westbury President, Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III Announces Retirement**

The Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III, the longest-serving president of SUNY Old Westbury and pastor of the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, has announced his retirement, effective the spring semester of 2020.

"It's just time. Twenty years in a college presidency is a long time," says Butts. "It's been a joy, and it's been a joy to be part of the state university system."

Butts, 69, says he will go on study leave during the spring 2020 semester and will no longer be responsible for the college's daily operations. He has plans to be a professor beginning the fall 2020 semester and will likely teach in the American studies department.

Butts is "an inspirational leader for SUNY Old Westbury's campus and the entire system, serving a monumental 20 years in this role," says SUNY chancellor Kristina M. Johnson. "As a strong advocate for access to an affordable, high-quality education, he will leave behind a lasting legacy that will live on at the campus."

Under Butts' two decades of leadership, SUNY Old Westbury experienced transformative change, such as earning accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and established its inaugural graduate programs, which today include degrees in accounting, adolescence education, childhood special education, literacy education, forensic accounting and taxation.

"He ran a school for decades that excelled. He did this while pastoring a historical black church, all at the same time," the Rev. Al Sharpton says. "He had the ability to master all of that because he is a man of unusual strength and gifts. And I say all of this even though he and I publicly disagreed sometimes. ... He is one with an equilibrium that made the work he did seem simple when for anyone else it would have been insurmountable."

Butts earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Morehouse College, a master of divinity degree in church history from Union Theological Seminary and a doctor of ministry in church and public policy from Drew University.



# Longtime President of SUNY Old Westbury to Retire

The president of the only public liberal arts college on Long Island says he plans to retire early next year.

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March 15, 2019, at 12:29 a.m.

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**OLD WESTBURY, N.Y. (AP)** — The president of the only public liberal arts college on Long Island says he plans to retire early next year.

The Rev. Calvin Butts III, president of the State University of [New York](#) at Old Westbury, says two decades in a college presidency is a "long time." Newsday reports Butts plans to go on study leave for the spring semester of 2020, and plans to become a professor teaching American studies by the time the fall semester comes around.

Appointed by SUNY trustees in 1999, Butts has led the college through a period of transformative change. Under his leadership, the college created its first-ever graduate programs and saw large gains in student enrollment.

Butts also serves as pastor of the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem.

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Information from: Newsday, <http://www.newsday.com>

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# SUNY Old Westbury President Butts to retire, mulls running for office

By Teri West - March 18, 2019

The Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III, SUNY Old Westbury's president, will retire from his post at the university next January, he announced last week, and as he moves on from the job he has held for nearly 20 years he said a potential run for political office is on his mind.

"I think I have the zeal still," he said. "I may be able to run a city like New York. Or I like the United States Senate. Maybe something will happen there."

During his tenure, the university has seen new buildings – including a student union – pop up on campus, deepened investments in facilities and the expansion of academic departments. It has all been paired with an enrollment increase of more than 50 percent.

Now that Butts has outlived the average university president's tenure about three times over, it's time to bring in some new blood to lead the university, he said.

In addition to leading SUNY Old Westbury, Butts is a pastor at Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist Church and chairs the board of directors for the Abyssinian Development Corporation, whose mission is uplifting and rebuilding the city's historic black neighborhood. Throughout his career, he has advocated on behalf of communities of color.

"I have had plenty of opportunity to run for office and I never did, but now who knows," said Butts, who is 69. "Maybe something's going to happen."

For now, though, he said his post-retirement plans are to instruct at the university, a place that he said represents the opportunity the State University of New York system offers for students of all backgrounds to obtain a meaningful education.

When he became SUNY Old Westbury's president in September 1999, its mission was in place but the campus was in terrible physical condition, he said.

"The school was disrespected by the state system," Butts said. "SUNY had not invested in the school at all, and it was certainly not highly regarded. And that's an understatement."

The university's Faculty Senate chairman, Andrew Mattson, who had been teaching at SUNY Old Westbury for several years before Butts' arrival, said the faculty were unsure of what to expect from Butts, who had never been an academic administrator.

"When someone new comes in, you can be a little nervous that they will change the direction of the college," Mattson said. "We have a real commitment to social justice and diversity and those can be just words, but for President Butts he really is an ethical person who has a commitment to social justice and diversity."

Butts' presence on the campus provided stability for students and their parents looking for someone to defend their education, the president said. It also awakened Albany, and even Washington, D.C., to the school's needs, he said.

"I spent a lot of time talking to key people," Butts said. "For instance, a dear friend and supporter was William Jefferson Clinton, the president."

Butts has a presence about him that elicits attention and respect, both Mattson and Alumni Association President Lionel Chitty said.

"When you first see him, you get this air of prestige, but once you start talking to him he's a real person," Chitty said.

He dresses sharply and can move a room with his words, Mattson said. His experience as a minister allowed Butts to bring solace to the campus during difficult times, such as the 9/11 attacks, he said.

"I will readily confess that I think my being president of SUNY Old Westbury in terms of providing a sense of confidence, stability, integrity was real," Butts said. "And I think the students as well as some of the students parents felt that was very important."

Butts said he was optimistic about the future of the university.

"It's a magical place, and I think it will become even stronger and continue to create leaders for the real world," he said.

News of wealthy individuals using bribes to gain admission to elite colleges for their children was not news to him, he said, but was a reminder of why he values the university he presides over.

It's a place that welcomes individuals from low-income households and students ready to earn a degree later in life, he said.

"The cost of a liberal arts education for all of us is way too high, and that's why I'm proud to be a part of the state university system because I think that we provide access and affordability to students without regard to their wealth or their influence," Butts said.

Without Butts at its helm, SUNY Old Westbury won't be quite the same, Chitty said.

"It will be a new era," he said. "I hope we get someone who's at least as half as good as he is."



SUNY Old Westbury President the Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III with former university president John D. Maguire in 2011.  
(Photo by John Butler and courtesy of SUNY Old Westbury)





# Rev. Calvin O. Butts III to Retire as College President of State University of New York at Old Westbury

March 15, 2019

The Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, president of SUNY Old Westbury for nearly two decades and the dynamic pastor of historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, said Thursday he will retire from the college post early next year.

"It's just time. Twenty years in a college presidency is a long time," Butts, 69, said in an interview. "It's been a joy, and it's been a joy to be part of the state university system."

He said he will go on study leave for the spring semester of 2020 and at that point will not be responsible for the college's day-to-day operations. He plans to be a professor, likely teaching American Studies, as of the fall semester of the 2020-21 school year.

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There was no immediate plan Thursday to name a replacement, permanent or interim, to the position, according to State University of New York officials.

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"I wasn't sure what I was getting into when I walked into this office. There was nothing here," he said. "But then the challenges came — enrollment had to be increased and ... we had no money. The buildings were leaking, the faculty was upset, the Foundation was in trouble. Each time you meet the challenge and ... then it grows on you. You become a part of Old Westbury."

During his years at the helm, the college earned accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and created its first-ever graduate programs, which now include degrees in accounting, adolescence education, childhood special education, literacy education, forensic accounting and taxation.

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He already was well-known as the influential pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church when he was appointed to lead SUNY Old Westbury. His move into academic administration — an arena in which he had no prior experience — was both surprising and controversial.

At the time, the college had some of the lowest graduation rates and student test scores in SUNY's extensive system and once was marked for possible closure.

Butts recalled Thursday that SUNY officials had approached him about teaching at the college and then offered him the leadership position.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, told of the announcement, had high praise for the fellow minister and activist with whom he at times has been at odds.



[Click here to read more.](#)

Source: Newsday

# THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

## Transitions: First Female President for Colorado State U., New Provost at U. of Maryland-Eastern Shore

Appointments, resignations, retirements, awards, deaths

*Compiled by Julia Piper* | MARCH 21, 2019

### CHIEF EXECUTIVES

#### *Retirements*

The Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, president of State University of New York College at Old Westbury since 1999, plans to retire in early 2020.

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## Calvin O. Butts III Announces Plans to Step Down as President of SUNY Old Westbury

Filed in Breaking News on March 25, 2019



The Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, the longest serving president in the history of SUNY Old Westbury, has announced his plans to step down early next year. He will go on study leave for the spring semester of 2020 and plans to return as professor of American Studies during the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Dr. Butts was appointed to lead the college by SUNY trustees in 1999. During his 20-year career as president, the college earned accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and created its first-ever graduate programs, which now include degrees in accounting, adolescence education, childhood special education, literacy education, forensic accounting, and taxation.

Under President's Butts leadership, the college's enrollment greatly improved after experiencing sharp declines in the 1990s. Additionally, buildings all over campus have been renovated and a new academic center, a student union, and residence halls were built.

In addition to his presidency, Dr. Butts serves as the pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. He has previously served as an adjunct professor of urban affairs in the African Studies department at City College, part of the City University of New York. He has also taught a course in Black church history at Fordham University.

"It's just time. Twenty years in a college presidency is a long time," Dr. Butts said in an interview. "It's been a joy, and it's been a joy to be part of the state university system."

Dr. Butts is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, where he majored in philosophy. He holds a master of divinity degree in church history from Union Theological Seminary in Manhattan, and a doctor of ministry degree in church and public policy from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.



## SUNY Old Westbury President To Retire

After serving for 20 years, SUNY Old Westbury Rev. Calvin O. Butts III announced he will retire.

By Stephen Romano, Patch Staff | Mar 14, 2019 5:14 pm ET | Updated Mar 14, 2019 5:16 pm ET



SUNY Old Westbury President Rev. Calvin O. Butts III announced today he will retire from his post after 20 years.

Butts told [Newsday](#) he will "go on study leave for the spring semester of 2020 and at that point will not be responsible for the college's day-to-day operations."

Butts, 69, is also the pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. He plans to be a professor and teach American Studies.

Butts was named president in 1999 after teaching Urban Affairs and serving as an Adjunct Professor in the African Studies Department at City College. A native of New York City, he also taught Black Church History at Fordham University, and has been a guest speaker at many other universities and colleges.

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**LONG ISLAND'S MOST INFLUENTIAL PLAYERS**



**Rev. Calvin O. Butts, III**, President, SUNY Old Westbury College

In addition to leading the college to its largest enrollment in 15 years, Butts is also the outspoken pastor of Harlem's renowned Abyssinian Baptist Church, was instrumental in establishing the Thurgood Marshall Academy for Learning and Social Change, and has served on a long list of nonprofit advocacy group boards.



LONG ISLAND / EDUCATION

## Transferring from SUNY Old Westbury to SUNY Downstate made easier under pact

Students can begin applying later this year, with the first ones entering the program in June 2020, said SUNY Downstate spokeswoman Dawn Walker.



A view of Student Union building at SUNY Old Westbury. Photo Credit: NEWSDAY STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/David L. Pokress

By David Olson

[david.olson@newsday.com](mailto:david.olson@newsday.com)

Updated April 10, 2019 6:00 AM

Students from SUNY Old Westbury will be able to more easily transfer into programs at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn under a new arrangement between the institutions.

Up to 23 SUNY Old Westbury students each year will be given advance priority admission to SUNY Downstate — up to 15 in the undergraduate nursing program, four in the master's-level physician assistant program and four in the undergraduate and doctorate-level physical therapy program.

Acceptance into the competitive program will be based upon academic performance and factors such as the commitment and initiative of the student, said SUNY Old Westbury spokesman Michael Kinane.

Students can begin applying later this year, with the first ones entering the program in June 2020, said SUNY Downstate spokeswoman Dawn Walker. The United States has a shortage of nurses that is expected to increase as the population ages. The new agreement, though, will not increase the number of slots in the SUNY Downstate nursing program or in the other two programs, Walker said.

Kinane said the arrangement gives SUNY Downstate “a guarantee of people who come from very diverse backgrounds. Our campus is one of the most diverse in the country, and this gives an opportunity for people from those underrepresented communities to access careers they might otherwise have a hard time getting into.”





April 08, 2019 05:30 AM 8 hours ago

## AT A GLANCE

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**ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP:** SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn has established priority enrollment into graduate programs for a limited number of students at SUNY Old Westbury interested in careers as physician assistants, physical therapists and nurses that meet admissions standards.

<https://www.crainnewyork.com/health-pulse/retirement-plan-payout-boosted-mount-sinai-ceos-pay-above-12-million-2017>

# SUNY Old Westbury in new partnership with SUNY Downstate

By: Bernadette Starzee

April 8, 2019



Through a new partnership with SUNY Downstate Medical Center, select students from SUNY Old Westbury can receive priority enrollment consideration at Downstate to pursue careers as physician assistants, physical therapists and nurses.

The partnership is the first of its kind between Downstate in Brooklyn and another SUNY institution. Downstate plans to pursue additional agreements with the goal of increasing the region's healthcare workforce.

Under the new partnership, up to 23 Old Westbury students who meet admissions standards and deadlines will be given priority enrollment consideration at SUNY Downstate each year. A maximum of four students will be accepted into Downstate's Bachelor of Science/Doctorate of Physical Therapy program and up to four students will be accepted into the Master of Science Physician Assistant program in Downstate's College of Health Related Professions. A maximum of 15 Old Westbury students will be accepted into the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program offered by Downstate's College of Nursing. Old Westbury does not offer these degree programs on its own.

"Developing pathways like these for our students is of critical importance so they can access these important opportunities in the medical field," SUNY Old Westbury President Calvin Butts III said in a statement. "The number of opportunities available may not be large, but we believe having this relationship will provide an incentive to those students who have a true passion and inclination for these fields. The education provided by Downstate is excellent, and we look forward to seeing our students excel once they enter these programs."

SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson said she looks forward to seeing more partnerships between Downstate and other campuses of SUNY.

"At a time when our nation's healthcare needs are becoming increasingly complex, these campuses are working together to build up our healthcare workforce and provide more opportunities to our students," she said in a statement.



SUNY Old Westbury President Dr. Calvin Butts III (Photo courtesy of SUNY Old Westbury)

# Old Westbury, Downstate Medical Mark A SUNY First

APRIL 9, 2019

By GREGORY ZELLER //



Eastbound and Down: Through a unique partnership, select SUNY Old Westbury students can now earn "accelerated" healthcare degrees from Brooklyn's SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

Long Island hasn't gained a new medical school, technically, though it has picked up a slew of new med students.

Billed as a first-of-its-kind agreement, SUNY College at Old Westbury and the SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn have partnered on a slate of programs allowing students to "pursue graduate and accelerated degrees," according to the state university system – essentially, providing Old Westbury students with Downstate Medical degrees.

The collaboration, announced this week by SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson, will give as many as 23 Old Westbury students "priority enrollment consideration" at Downstate

Medical each year, with a maximum of four students accepted into Downstate's Bachelor of Science/Doctorate of Physical Therapy program.

Up to four more will be accepted into Downstate Medical's physician's assistant master's degree program, and a maximum of 15 into Downstate's accelerated bachelor's in nursing program.

The idea is to efficiently expand the regional healthcare workforce, with a focus on faster, better training of physician assistants, physical therapists and nurses. Old Westbury students will be required to complete rigorous classes in biology, chemistry, psychology and other appropriate disciplines, and a slate of eligibility requirements – including faculty recommendations and undergraduate degrees for all PA and nursing programs – awaits applicants.

But those who make it in, and make in through, will be able to quickly "access important opportunities in the medical field," according to SUNY Old Westbury President Calvin Butts III.

"Developing pathways like these for our students is of critical importance," the president noted. "We believe having this relationship will provide an incentive to those students who have a true passion and inclination for these fields.

"The education provided by Downstate is excellent," Butts added. "We look forward to seeing our students excel once they enter these programs."

Downstate Medical President Wayne Riley trumpeted a "fitting partnership" between the two schools.

"Our nursing program is known for training tomorrow's workforce, and we are excited that this collaboration with Old Westbury will enhance our collective commitment to educational excellence while preparing our nurses to meet the healthcare challenges of a changing population," Riley said in a statement.

The partnership is also something of a litmus test, with further collaborations between the Brooklyn medical school and other SUNY campuses to follow, according to Johnson.

"At a time when our nation's healthcare needs are becoming increasingly complex, these campuses are working together to build up our healthcare workforce and provide more opportunities to our students," the SUNY chancellor said Friday. "I look forward to seeing more partnerships between Downstate Medical and our other campuses, and to SUNY's growing role in strengthening the state's healthcare system."



Calvin Butts III: "Critical" collaboration.





**PEOPLE & PLACES**

# New Programs

BUSINESS SCHOOLS ANNOUNCE CURRICULUM REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS.

**APRIL 19, 2019**

This fall, classes will begin for the online master's in accounting degree offered by the School of Business at the **State University of New York at Old Westbury**. This is the college's first fully online degree offering. The program emphasizes not only technical knowledge, but also ethical judgment and strong communication skills.

## **New Programs: Public Relations, Catholic Leadership, Data Science, Public Policy, Canine Management, Students With Disabilities, Psychology**

By [Scott Jaschik](#) // March 15, 2019

0 COMMENTS 

- [Boise State University](#) is starting an online bachelor's program in public relations.
- [Franciscan University of Steubenville](#) is starting an online master's program in Roman Catholic leadership.
- [Minnesota State University at Mankato](#) is starting a master's program in data science.
- [Pennsylvania State University](#) is starting a master's program in public policy.
- [State University of New York at Cobleskill](#) is starting a bachelor of technology program in canine training and management.
- [State University of New York at Old Westbury](#) is starting a master's program in students with disabilities.
- [Western Carolina University](#) is starting a doctorate in psychology.

Read more by [Scott Jaschik](#)

The Office of the Nassau County Comptroller hosted its seventh annual Comptroller's Entrepreneurial Challenge on March 29 at [SUNY Old Westbury](#).

The Challenge featured more than a dozen student-led teams from public schools across Nassau County creating a fictional organization's comprehensive business plan and elevator pitch in a "Shark Tank"-style format. The student teams were instructed to tailor their pitches to the theme of civic innovation within one of two categories: technology and social entrepreneurship. The program was geared to inspire students to not only create a successful business plan, but also give back and make a positive impact in their communities.

"The Challenge is designed to give students with different backgrounds and passions an opportunity to get involved and pitch their ideas to create businesses that will do good for our communities while doing well in front of local business and nonprofit leaders," Nassau County Comptroller Jack Schnirman said. "Any young person can make a difference in their community and be a citizen superhero through civic innovation or social entrepreneurship, and the Challenge is a great platform to showcase the next generation of leaders in Nassau County."

A total of 18 teams from 12 schools each comprised of five students took part in the competition. Each student was tasked with filling different executive roles of a start-up technology company or community-oriented nonprofit. Throughout the school year, the teams developed an organizational plan and ultimately presented it to a panel of judges during the challenge event.

"We're excited to host this innovative business competition, bringing more than one hundred high school students and future business leaders on campus to pitch their creative ideas," said Dr. Raj Devasagayam, dean of the School of Business at [SUNY Old Westbury](#). "Bringing this competition focused on entrepreneurship to our campus is a natural fit to enhance the experience for students."

The "Shark Tank"-style judging panel was comprised of community business and civic leaders, and the event was sponsored by Bethpage Federal Credit Union and [SUNY Old Westbury](#).

The judges for the event included: Robert Suarez, Bethpage Federal Credit Union; Shalei Simms, [SUNY Old Westbury](#); Marissa Hoffmann, [SUNY Old Westbury](#); Jillian Weston, Jillian's Circus; Brian Berkery, Creative Vibe Advertising; Shari James, James Consulting Group LLC; Retha Fernandez, Urban League LI; Jacob Dixon, Choice for All; Stacey Sykes, Hofstra University Center for Entrepreneurship; Rebecca Sanin, Health & Welfare Council; Dexter Hedgepath, Nassau County Office of Minority Affairs; and Dr. Carolyn McCummings, Nassau County Department of Human Services.

"Congratulations to all teams involved on developing some tremendous plans for businesses and nonprofits here in Nassau County," Schnirman said. "I was blown away by the unique ideas tailor-made to thrive in our communities, and I'm honored to recognize this year's winners."

## Technology Category

### High School/Team Name

1st place: New Hyde Park Memorial Nubis

2nd place: East Meadow High School Drop Cycle

3rd place: Floral Park Memorial Team Beta

### Honorable Mentions:

Carle Place High School GreenScore

New Hyde Park Memorial Biobox

JFK High School SkySource

## Social Entrepreneurship Category

### High School/Team Name

1st place: East Meadow High School CollegePro

2nd place: Syosset High School Tota Vita

3rd place: MacArthur High School Planet Earth Hydro

### Honorable Mentions:

North Shore High School Advise

Massapequa High School Let Us Eat

Baldwin High School Life Coach Watch



GOOD NEWS FROM THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

# The Positive Community™

April 2019

[thepositivecommunity.com](http://thepositivecommunity.com)

EDUCATION  
FOCUS



  
SUNY OLD WESTBURY

## Students Choosing SUNY Old Westbury in Higher and Higher Numbers

**M**ore and more students are continuing to choose SUNY Old Westbury. With more than 5,000 students registered for classes this year— the largest student body in its history — the College completes a decade in which it achieved enrollment growth of approximately 45 percent.

The growth in enrollment last fall to 5,077 students follows a trend that has developed over the past 10 years. In fall 2008, the College's enrollment was 3,505.

"The future is bright for our students and our college," said College President Calvin O. Butts, III. "More and more students are responding to SUNY Old Westbury's combination of challenging academic coursework, commitment to the enriching value of human diversity, personal attention, real-world opportunities, and a vibrant campus life."

Included in the 2018-19 student body is the largest freshman class in College history with 751 students, the third consecutive year that record has been broken. SUNY Old Westbury this fall also welcomed the first students in its new graduate degree programs in Forensic Accounting and Childhood Special Education.

"We are proud that students and families continue to recognize that SUNY Old Westbury offers the best of both worlds — a small college environment with academic programs that challenge the mind and prepare students to own their futures," said Butts.

### Emphasizing Student Success

A large focus of the College is the implementation of its "Student Success Initiative," which encompasses campus-wide efforts to keep students on track to graduation, informed of the services and opportunities available to them, and moving forward toward the completion of their degrees.

"Our formula is simple: when our students succeed, we succeed," said President Butts. "Our growth is a by-product of the efforts to continually enhance our offerings and services, to raise our profile across Long Island and the metropolitan area, and to ensure more students complete their degrees."

From intensive advising to the increased use of collaborative learning spaces in its new or newly renovated academic and library spaces, the "small-college" atmosphere of Old Westbury coupled with the

focused attention on individual needs and support is empowering students to own the futures they envision for themselves.

### Recent National Recognitions

Growth in enrollment isn't the only symbol of the quality of SUNY Old Westbury. The College in August was ranked by Money Magazine in its 2018 "Best Colleges" issue among the colleges and universities that are the best value in America.

SUNY Old Westbury was also one of only 96 institutions nationwide to receive the 2018 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, the only national honor recognizing U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion across their campus. ■

*Learn more about the recent successes of SUNY Old Westbury and its nearly 70 undergraduate and graduate degree offerings by attending Open House on Saturday, April 27, 2019.*

*Call 516-876-3200 or visit [www.oldwestbury.edu](http://www.oldwestbury.edu) to register.*

# At Old Westbury's MAC Awards, A New Media Buffet

APRIL 25, 2019

By GREGORY ZELLER //



Drink it up: Topnotch illustration, writing and media production (including nominee Dan DeAmeller's "One More Shot") will be on display May 1, when SUNY Old Westbury hosts its 12th Annual Student MAC Awards.

They're rolling out the red carpet, literally, for SUNY College at Old Westbury's 12th annual Student MAC Awards.

The yearly Media Arts Celebration – which salutes outstanding student work in digital arts, new media, television, radio, print and video – will fill the SUNY Old Westbury Campus Center's Maguire Theater May 1, beginning with a traditional red-carpet procession at 6 p.m.

More than 80 student nominees are competing for 30 MAC Awards this year, in categories ranging from Best Podcast and Best Radio Show to Best Interactive Project and Best Web Portfolio.

This year's eight-member panel of judges includes a smorgasbord of industry professionals, including New York Times Senior Staff Editor Vivian Giang, ABC-TV Senior Producer Melia Patria, CBS Sports Radio Associate Producer Peter Bellotti Jr. and Newsday Editor Lawrence Striegel, among others.

Produced each spring since 2008 by SUNY Old Westbury's Visual Arts Department and American Studies Department, the MAC Awards feature the best in student writing and production. All SUNY Old Westbury students involved in on-campus TV, radio, video, journalism, digital arts and new media programs and activities are eligible for nomination.

Several programs featured on OWWR – Old Westbury Web Radio, the college's official radio station, which streams audio and video content 24/7 – are among the nominees. Also heavily featured are contributors to The Catalyst, SUNY Old Westbury's monthly print newspaper, as well as an impressive slate of podcasters, videographers and digital artists.

The official awards program is slated to begin at 7 p.m., following the red carpet procession. More information on the 12th Annual Student MAC Awards, including the full list of 2019 nominees, is available [here](#).



Winner: Luis Diaz's poster advertising the annual MAC Awards is the contest's first official 2019 winner.



# Foster care youth get college tours from New York City's Administration for Children's Services

Updated Apr 29, 2019; Posted Apr 29, 2019



Youth in foster care gather with NYC's Administration for Children's Services staff in order to tour SUNY and CUNY colleges on Monday. (Photo Courtesy of New York City Administration for Children's Services)

By Albert Rizzi | [arizzi@siadvance.com](mailto:arizzi@siadvance.com)

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Youth in the foster care system had the opportunity to browse CUNY and SUNY colleges on Monday with the NYC's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) staff in an effort to experience a variety of career pathways and inspire them to further their education.

ACS is also offering internship programs that expose potential candidates for careers in public service.

The full-time positions offer \$15 per hour for undergraduate students and \$23 an hour for graduate students who also learn about other mentoring and college support programs, which include, the Year-Up Program, Foster Care Initiative, Youth Matter and ACS/CUNY Dorm Project.

Each program is designed to provide services for college-bound youth in foster care through peer-to-peer support, academic counseling, career development and housing assistance.

"ACS is committed to expanding opportunities for youth in foster care by putting them on a path to academic success and economic independence," ACS Commissioner David A. Hansell said.

"The Spring College Tour encourages youth in foster care to pursue a higher education by allowing them the opportunity to better visualize what it would be like to attend college," he said. "After sitting in college classrooms and walking around college campuses, it is our hope that youth will be encouraged to reach their full potential."

This initiative seeks to increase college enrollment and graduation rates, especially among those who have limited educational resources.

In 2017, ACS launched a new program in partnership with First Star CUNY Staten Island that is designed to support a group of rising ninth-grade students successfully through high school to college, promoting educational and life skills.

Colleges on the tour included the Borough of Manhattan Community College, SUNY at Old Westbury, City College of New York and Rutgers University in Newark, N.J.



## Union members lead the way feeding the hungry on campus

Author: Liza Frenette Source: NYSUT United



Caption: From left, Sarah Smith, Jim Shevlin and Bonnie Eannone, members of the United University Professions chapter at SUNY Old Westbury help out at the campus food pantry. Students — and some faculty — rely on the pantry to battle hunger on campus. Photo provided.

Beneath the noises of co-eds talking in campus crowds, far less noticeable than music belting out from the open windows of dorm rooms, the sounds of hunger are coming from students who do not have enough to eat.

According to a 2016 Hunger on Campus study, about 25 percent of students at community colleges are food insecure. The study, published by the National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness, found a nearly similar number of students at four-year schools struggling with the same problem — about 20 percent.

There are multiple factors manifesting student hunger. Financial aid has not kept pace with rising tuition and housing. More students are parents. Often there is a choice between costly textbooks and meals. Transportation for college students is often limited, resulting in reduced access to food.

So many campuses are home to students with significant food insecurity that, last year, Gov. Cuomo mandated State and City University of New York colleges to set up food pantries or provide stigma-free access to free food to meet the needs of students.

The mandate bolsters the actions that unions have been taking to get food into the hands of hungry students, and some adjunct faculty, as well, who work for meager pay.

At the University at Albany, union faculty and staff formed a food pantry committee in 2015. They successfully obtained NYSUT Chapter Action Project grants to set up and host UUP Fight Campus Hunger 5k fundraisers, said Greta Petry, a former

pantry committee member and a member of the United University Professions chapter.

Initially, the Fight Campus Hunger group opted to use the services of the local St. Vincent de Paul's Food Pantry to help students. For its second 5k, the committee partnered with Sodexo campus food services and raised \$10,000, which was split between St. Vincent's pantry and a regional food bank distribution center.

The college set up a system so students could order food online from St. Vincent's. Upon picking the food up, it was brought to a central location on the uptown campus for students. St. Vincent's is also close enough to the college's downtown campus for students to walk there.

The next step in serving the school's hungry students is on the horizon. The university's Neighborhood Life department recently won a \$55,000 grant; a campus pantry is scheduled to open at UAlbany this fall.

At SUNY Plattsburgh in upstate New York, the UUP chapter hosts food drives three to four times a year at its union gatherings to support a campus pantry set up about four years ago. Students and the community also donate food through food drives.

Recently, Plattsburgh college librarians and staff listened to a campus talk about how the number of students in need of food is growing. They banded together and collected money to purchase a freezer for the pantry, which was just delivered on Tuesday.

Students accessing help are very grateful, said Michele Carpentier, a SUNY Plattsburgh UUP member and assistant vice president for student affairs. The pantry is located with discreet access in Student Support Services so students will not be embarrassed. It's also stocked with personal care products.

"Particularly the feminine products — we have girls who can't afford them," Carpentier said.

At Monroe Community College in western New York, a 2016 study from the Wisconsin HOPE Lab reported more than half of MCC students either skipped a meal or ate less because that's all they could afford. The study also said one in 10 of the college's students was on the verge of homelessness.

Last month, the Wegman's Charitable Family Foundation donated \$3 million to MCC Foundation for food scholarships, emergency grants and other types of student support.

Meanwhile, CUNY reported food pantries, or services that provided food, at 18 of its 20 campuses in 2018.

Sarah Smith, assistant professor of public health and a UUP member at SUNY Old Westbury, said faculty and staff tapped their colleagues at nearby Nassau Community College for guidance in setting up a food pantry. NCC already had one established.

The Old Westbury pantry gets much of its food from Island Harvest, a regional distribution food pantry supplier. Student groups, faculty and staff also hold food drives.

"There are a lot of staff that use the food pantry," said Bonnie Eannone of Old Westbury. "There's a stigmatization of food inequity that is still tough, especially for faculty."

LONG ISLAND / RELIGION

# At Westbury interfaith service, prayers for victims of synagogue shooting

"What unites us today as people of faith in our own particular communities - Christians, Muslims and Jews - is we are all in mourning now; that what we share is grief," said Rabbi Michael White of Temple Sinai in Roslyn.

By **Rachelle Blidner**

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Updated April 28, 2019 10:20 PM

A day after a shooting at a Southern California synagogue, people of many faiths prayed and feasted at a Westbury mosque to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Passover and break down barriers.

The Islamic Center of Long Island hosted the interfaith Passover seder on Sunday that reminded nearly 100 attendees of the story of Jews being freed from slavery in Egypt and the similarities between their religions.

Saturday's shooting in the San Diego suburb of Poway and the Easter church attacks in Sri Lanka imbued some of the prayers at the mosque — including for peace and an end to oppression — with renewed meaning.

"What unites us today as people of faith in our own particular communities — Christians, Muslims and Jews — is we are all in mourning now, that what we share is grief," said Rabbi Michael White of Temple Sinai in Roslyn, who presided over the seder. "All of our communities have been victims of terror recently, and we are all in mourning periods for their victims and for what it says about the world today and the cloud that hangs over us."

The seder was planned by the Interfaith Institute of the Islamic Center of Long Island months before Saturday's shooting at the Chabad of Poway, where a gunman shouting anti-Semitic slurs killed one and injured three, officials said.

Dr. Faroque A. Khan, chairman of the institute's board of trustees, said the shooting made him "anxious" about Sunday's event and question whether to host it. Khan said he felt comfortable moving forward after contacting Nassau Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder. Two police officers with rifles and bulletproof vests were stationed outside the event.

The seder began with a moment of silence for the victims of recent attacks, which religious leaders condemned.

"Those who assemble in the houses of God, seeking peace and tranquility, should not have to experience terror and violence," Khan said.

Rep. Tom Suozzi, who is on the interfaith institute's board, commended attendees for working to bridge divisions, which he said are emphasized by all the "hate-filled tragedies" that counter what America stands for.

The violence has become so commonplace because "we don't know about each other's religions," said Rafat Sada, an Islamic Center congregant from Melville who also belongs to an interfaith Jewish-Muslim group.

"There's too much anger in the world and it's the time to come together and learn about each other," said Sada, a **SUNY Old Westbury** admissions counselor.

Religious leaders highlighted the significance of Passover in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Mufti Mohammad Farhan, the Islamic Center's executive director, noted that the Quran mentions the story of Passover and Moses — the prophet who led the Jews out of Egypt — more times than any other story or prophet. Retired Rev. Tom Goodhue, formerly a minister with the United Methodist Church, said that Christians celebrated Passover for the first three centuries of the religion.

Hema Virani, who is Hindu, said she loved seeing the diversity among those who turned out.

"My heart was singing because it was amazing to see imams, rabbis, pastors, the swamis, everybody under one roof — along with politicians — just talking about how we can make things better," Virani, of Bayside, Queens, said. "There needs to be more of that" to prevent violence in the future.

## EDUCATION

# DREAMS For Youth Scholarship Lends A Helping Hand

LONG ISLAND PRESS MARCH 13, 2019



Kristyne Ramirez

After enduring unspeakable abuse as a child at the hands of a family member, Kristyne Ramirez not only survived, but is now thriving as a freshman at [SUNY College at Old Westbury](#).

But as the daughter of a single, student loan-wary mother, the question of how the family would afford tuition loomed large. That is, until her mother, a social worker, heard about the DREAMS For Youth Scholarship program — and Ramirez won.

“When she found out about it she just thought it was a perfect opportunity to tell my story,” the 18-year-old Glen Cove woman says.

Since its inception in 2002, the nonprofit United Way of Long Island, which runs the scholarship program, has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships and grants to college students.

Ramirez, a Great Neck South High School graduate, is now majoring in psychology and minoring in neuropsychology with the help of the scholarship. The money helped her afford textbooks and two semesters of tuition.

“I was actually very surprised,” Ramirez says of when she learned she won. “It was very surreal because everyone was very concerned and they cared about how my grades were and how we were doing financially. It was very moving for me.”

Once she graduates, her goal is to become a neuropsychologist in her own private practice, drawing on her own experience to give a voice to the voiceless.

“I just want to let people know just because you come from a hard time or hard place or you’ve been through hard things, it doesn’t determine your future or what you want to do with your life,” she says.

Kristyne’s story is proof of that, as her dreams are on their way to becoming a reality.

To apply for the DREAMS For Youth Scholarship, visit [unitedwayli.org/dreamsforyouth](http://unitedwayli.org/dreamsforyouth) The deadline is April 19.



## A Photography Exhibition Corrects a Mainstream Museum's Failure

*Our Land*, mounted as a reply to a controversial show at the Brooklyn Museum, features contributing artists from North Africa and West Asia and their diasporic communities.

Hakim Bishara 22 hours ago

In the spring of 2016, Brooklyn-based, Egyptian-American photographer Anthony Hamboussi visited the Brooklyn Museum to see the exhibition *This Place*, eager to view works by world-renowned photographers that he admired. But after seeing the controversial show, his excitement quickly gave way to anger.

*This Place* was an exhibition on Israel and Palestine featuring works by 12 photographers including Josef Koudelka, Stephen Shore, and Rosalind Fox Solomon. The show faced backlash for “art washing” the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and for accepting funding from organizations that support and fund Zionist causes. “It was a propaganda project,” Hamboussi told Hyperallergic. But what irked him most about the show, he said, was the total lack of representation of Palestinian or Arab photographers in an exhibition depicting their native landscapes. In response, Hamboussi has organized and curated a new exhibition featuring the photography and video works by West Asian and North African artists.

As its title intimates, *Our Land* focuses on the landscapes of Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain; its contributing artists hail from these countries or their diasporic communities. Its aim is to reclaim the genre of landscape photography from its colonialist and Orientalist origins and to allow photographers from the region to tell their home countries’ stories as they see them.

A standout of the exhibition is Lebanese photographer Fouad ElKhoury’s three-channel video projection “Ruins” (2011). ElKhoury is a pioneer of modern Arab photography and the co-founder of the Beirut-based Arab Image Foundation. “Ruins” juxtaposes images taken of Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War and the Israeli invasion of 1982; it also includes photographs from a 1991 expedition ElKhoury took, where he retraced Gustave Flaubert’s journey to Egypt in 1849. From the pairing of Beirut’s shattered buildings and rubble-filled streets with the awe-inspiring relics of Egypt, a question surfaces: Which ruins are to be preserved, and which removed?

This problem is at the center of an ongoing debate over the changing face of downtown Beirut. A real estate boom, aided by foreign investment, is erasing landmarks in favor of exclusive development projects for the rich. Lebanese-American photographer Manal Abu-Shaheen’s works reveal a city in which buildings blown out by wartime bombings find themselves clothed in the wall-to-wall vestments of large-scale advertising. The billboards captured by Abu-Shaheen reveal the increasing domination of the cityscape by Western ideals — of luxury, prosperity, and happiness — while at the same time they hint at how a shift to a neoliberal economy will transform this Middle Eastern city. In “Beirut/Big Ben” (2014), the colossal jeans ad dominating the image superimposes the streets of London over a cramped Beirut neighborhood in the background. In some of the billboards, advertisers explicitly evoke war themes to sell their products. An ad for Johnnie Walker places its iconic striding man logo on a bombed bridge. (The 2006 campaign was responding to Israel’s destruction of several of the city’s main bridges.) The caption on the billboard reads: KEEP WALKING.

Images from Rhea Karam’s book *Breathing Walls* (2009) trace the political posters of Beirut and explore how the city’s walls serve as canvasses onto which political conflicts are mapped. The wall in “Hariri” (2007) shows peeled-off posters of the assassinated former Prime Minister Rafik El Hariri, while a makeshift barrier in “Red Cars” (2009) features posters of the Hezbollah party, which was suspected of orchestrating the assassination in 2005.

Egyptian artist Rana ElNemer’s photographic series *The Khan* (2010–2016) turns its lens on the abandoned desert town of Khan El-Azaizah, an ambitious “smart city” project that quickly deteriorated into a real estate flop. Another testimony of Egypt’s flailing economy is Youssef Chahine’s semi-documentary film *Cairo As Told by Youssef Chahine* (1991). The film was banned by the Egyptian government for its all too realistic portrayal of the hardships of the city’s residents. Hamboussi’s own images of the decrepit resorts of Nuweiba in the Sinai desert, a once thriving tourism attraction, continue that narrative: a lonesome unemployed camel under a palm tree in a barren yard; an empty, rusted pool at the Safari Hotel Resort (both from 2016).

Palestinian artist Yazan Khalili’s photographic series *Landscape of Darkness* (2010) takes on the point of view of cities cloaked in a nighttime military curfew. In one image, the winding bypass roads that are designed for Israeli settlers to avoid entering Palestinian towns in the West Bank curl like a serpent. In a video recording, the night lights of the coastline city of Yaffa shimmer over the expanse of darkness covering a hilltop near the West Bank town of Birzeit, where Khalili holds his camera — the video was taken during the Israeli incursion of 2002, on a night when the artist and his friend had broken curfew and snuck out. The far-off lights of Jaffa — a city that Palestinians from the West Bank are not allowed to enter — beckoned so temptingly that they decided to walk all the way there. But as dawn broke and they saw more clearly just how far away they still were, they realized that their quest for freedom was an illusion prompted by a more forgiving landscape of darkness.

The restrictions imposed on Palestinians’ freedom of movement in the West Bank are also addressed in activist-photographer Aisha Mershani’s series *Apartheid Wall* (2003–2005). Mershani, born of a Moroccan father and a Jewish mother, produced her work during a transformative visit to Palestine in 2003 as part of her peace studies. “I traveled to the Middle East to conduct fieldwork, only to realize that there was no conflict at all, but instead a violent Israeli occupation,” she writes in the catalogue. It was then that she picked up a camera for the first time to follow the popular resistance against the 26-foot-high wall that Israel built around and between Palestinian cities. Much like Khalili’s, although more direct and confrontational, her images show the fragmentation of space and time that characterize the Palestinian condition.

The theme of displacement cuts through the entire exhibition, but it takes on a less somber point of view in the works of Bahraini photographer Camille Zakharia and Saudi Moath Alofi. Zakharia’s *Al Bar* series (2008–2016) captures an arid tent city that stands empty for half of the year due to the punishing desert heat. When the weather cools off, the colorful tents are inhabited by people of all walks of life who seek a closer connection to nature, and a refuge from the gulf’s blustering consumerist culture. Alofi’s *The Last Tashahhud* project (2015) traces the path leading to Al Madinah Al Munawara, the holiest city for Muslims after Mecca, through the mosques encountered on the way. These temples — often little more than stucco boxes crowned with miniature minarets — are the antithesis of the most famous mosques of the region. It’s a geometry not often associated with the Islamic temple — all ninety-degree angles and meager flat roofs — but Alofi captures their unlikely beauty with reverence.

In a better world, an exhibition like *Our Land* shouldn’t be an oppositional project with a corrective statement. This comprehensive survey, although modest in production value and physically remote (approximately an hour and a half by car from downtown Manhattan), leaves the Brooklyn Museum and other institutions in New York a model to follow.

*Our Land* runs through March 13 at the Amelie A. Wallace Gallery (on the campus of [SUNY Old Westbury](#), Long Island, New York). The exhibition was curated by Anthony Hamboussi.



Exhibition view of *Our Land* at the Amelie A. Wallace Gallery

# Bronx woman creates scholarship to help women of color study abroad

Posted: Apr 13, 2019 6:02 PM EDT  
Updated: Apr 14, 2019 5:57 AM EDT



THE BRONX - A Bronx woman has started her own scholarship fund to help women of color study abroad.

THE BRONX - A Bronx woman has started her own scholarship fund to help women of color study abroad.

Alhia Harris says she wanted to give the gift of adventure, pay it forward and remind women of color to "just take the chance."

Harris herself studied in China, leaving [SUNY Old Westbury](#) on Long Island to visit the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Harris is planning to give three lucky students \$500 each to put toward their own experiences abroad.

The students must be enrolled in a college or university, have a great GPA, an abroad program acceptance and must fill out a personal statement.

Harris has been receiving applications from all over the country. She says she'll receive her last application on May 1 and alert the winners on June 3.



## LI BUSINESS

A33

### LI People ON THE MOVE

#### EDUCATION



**Shalei V.K. Simms** of Brooklyn, associate professor at **SUNY Old Westbury**, has been promoted to director of graduate business pro-

grams.



# Grossman Talks Sag Harbor's Jewish History

APRIL 9, 2019

By JUSTIN MEINKEN



Independent/Justin Meinken

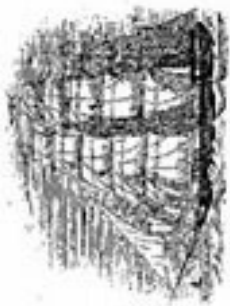
Author and syndicated local news columnist Karl Grossman lectured on the history of Jews on the East End on Sunday, April 7 at John Jermain Memorial Library. A professor at SUNY Old Westbury, Grossman's family settled in Sag Harbor more than a century ago despite "the anti-Semitism they faced in an area where the KKK was extremely active and Nazis marched at their Camp Siegfried in Yaphank in the 1930s."

Grossman also indicated that "historically 15 percent of the Sag Harbor population in the 1900s was Jewish." Grossman's lecture also touched on the various houses of worship on Long Island, including one of the oldest synagogues on Long Island, Temple Adas Israel in

# Progressives pressure senators to make good on health care promise

March 21, 2019

## The Observer



By MATTHEW

Local activists on Democratic including Senator to stay true to the New York Health

With the state Democratic of passing the greater. The introduced by Gottfried in 19 statewide comprehensive healthcare system health insurance

Under the replace all costs, like and co-pay taxes. The all medical including specialist, reproductive vision, prescription supply cost bill also home care

As the campaign would have way even department public ever had

While in the Executive bills in a sports and Association

A bill legislative since the state

Despite there seeming to be an endless amount of hurdles, Dr. Martha Livingston, a professor at SUNY-Old Westbury and chairwoman of the university's public health department, is still optimistic New York State will become the first state to establish a single-payer healthcare system.

"It is really looking like a reality and like it might happen soon," she said in a phone interview with **The Observer**. "It is extraordinarily exciting for those of us who have been fighting for healthcare justice forever."

The point Dr. Livingston wanted to drive home is that a single-payer system will be good for everyone. It will cover people who aren't covered now, it will save people money who struggle to pay the bills, it will maintain the current delivery structure for people who like their doctors and hospitals, and it will provide an unwavering sense of health and financial security for all New Yorkers.

"I frankly think once we get this done, give it two to five years, people are going to say, 'Oh my God, can you imagine that we ever thought this was going to be bad for us,'" she said. "And, we will realize how much of an extraordinarily qualitative leap it was for us to have healthcare security."

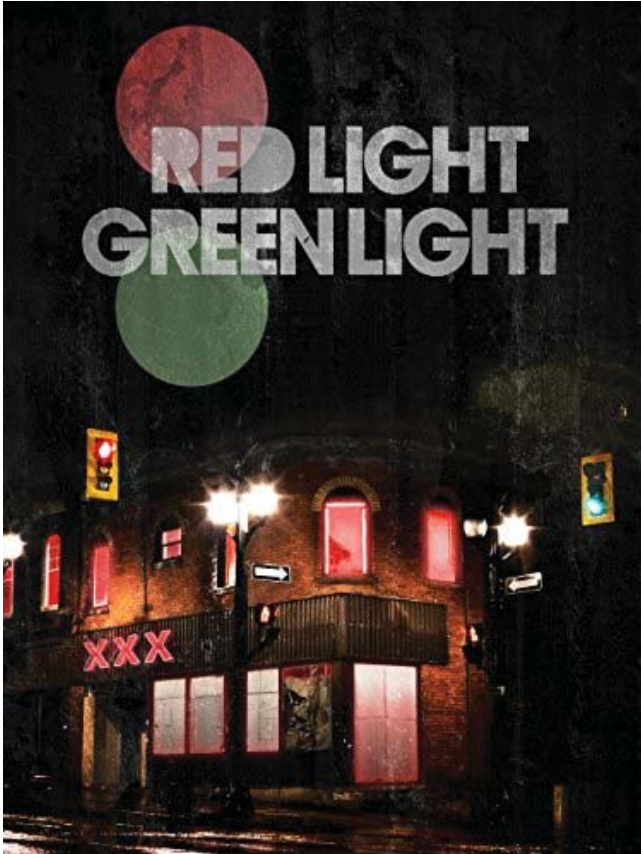
The future of the NYHA is still uncertain, though at the same time, more promising than ever. But for Dr. Livingston, the end goal isn't necessarily to pass the NYHA.

"People sometimes say to me that our ultimate goal is improved Medicare-for-all or single-payer. And I say, no, that is not actually our ultimate goal," she said. "Our ultimate goal is to get great-quality health care to people, and the way that you do that is by first being able to pay the bills for everybody. And then, once you do that, then we can start making strides in terms of the quality of the care we get."

that he hasn't considering he single-payer since aid. "[LIA] told was the number da. We spelled it tire delegation." that Senator e it clear during orsed by the LIA, cy group with over n page 19)

# Documentary tackles the issue of sex trafficking

By The Island Now - March 1, 2019



On Monday, March 11 at 6 p.m., the Cinema Arts Centre will partner with Sociologists for Women in Society for a special screening of “Red Light Green Light” (USA; 2013; 77 min.; NR; Dir. Michelle and Jared Brock), a film that examines the issues surrounding sex trafficking.

Following the film there will be a discussion with panelists including: Jennifer Hernandez, Empowerment Collective of Long Island; Prof. Heather Parrott, LIU Post; Prof. Margaret Abraham, Hofstra University; Prof. Jennifer Rogers-Brown, LIU Post; and Prof. Diana Papademas, [SUNY/Old Westbury](#).

As nations around the globe attempt to fight sex trafficking, many consider legalizing prostitution. Two filmmakers travel across 10 countries to explore the issue, attempting to answer the question: “How can we prevent

sexual exploitation before it happens in the first place?”

Though governments are getting better at prosecuting traffickers and providing after-care to victims, it is time we begin to ask the question of what lies at the root.

Tickets to the screening and panel reception are \$11 for Cinema Arts Centre members and \$16 for the general public.

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FEATURE

# How to mentor ethically

Mentoring the next generation of psychologists is one of the most important contributions you can make to the field. Here's how to avoid ethical pitfalls while ensuring your mentees' professional and academic success.

By Chris Palmer

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Fresh from a research-oriented PhD program, "Dr. Smith," a new assistant professor in a clinical PsyD program, was frustrated and mystified when some of her brightest doctoral students transferred to other advisers. The program's training director confided to her that several of these students reported feeling pressure to pursue research careers although most of them were interested in professional practice. After some soul-searching and consultation with a seasoned faculty member, Smith realized she'd been attempting to clone her students in her own image, losing sight of the need for transparency around expectations of mentees and her ethical obligation to understand and promote her students' autonomy in selecting their career paths. This scenario illustrates just one of the many ways psychologists who mentor trainees can inadvertently step into ethical trouble.

"Psychologists are generally conscientious and ethically minded," says Fred Millán, PhD, director of the [SUNY Old Westbury](#) graduate mental health counseling program and chair of APA's Ethics Committee. "Most ethical lapses are inadvertent and may come from a lack of awareness of ethical considerations rather than from malfeasance."

To minimize harm and maximize the quality of mentoring relationships, experts offer this advice, starting at the beginning stages of the relationship.

**Prepare.** Before becoming a mentor, consider the time, energy and emotional capital that you will need to invest to support a trainee's academic and professional growth. "There's an implicit assumption on the part of most university leaders that if you have an advanced degree like a PhD, then surely you can mentor," says Brad Johnson, PhD, professor of psychology at the U.S. Naval Academy and author of four books and dozens of journal articles about mentoring. "But that's not always true."

Mentoring can take many forms, including helping students choose coursework, overseeing research projects, providing emotional support, and helping trainees build networks and find jobs. Even experienced mentors have to be honest with themselves about the limits of their mentoring capabilities, says Drew Appleby, PhD, a professor emeritus of psychology at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis who mentored more than 750 students during his time at the university.

"You want to make absolutely sure that if the student needs more than you can give, that you don't try to bluff them into thinking you can help them," he says.

**Manage expectations.** In a related vein, be clear with yourself and your potential mentee about the parameters of your relationship. Spell out how long the mentorship will last, how often you will meet and the amount of time you're prepared to offer, advises Nadine Kaslow, PhD, professor of psychiatry and behavioral science at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta and past president of APA. That includes clarifying fuzzy relationships. "Sometimes people think you're their mentor, but you don't think you're their mentor," she says. "And so, in an unspoken way, they may expect things from you, and when you don't provide them, they can become disappointed." To head off such misunderstandings, talk with potential mentees early on about what they, and you, expect from the relationship.

**Be inclusive.** It's also ethically imperative to mentor diverse students, not just those who are similar to yourself. While such relationships may take more time and care to develop than those with demographically similar students, evidence shows that cross-gender, cross-race and cross-sexual-orientation mentoring relationships can be just as effective and produce the same outcomes (Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2009).

To reach out, attend conferences hosted by diverse organizations at your campus and tell your college's academic advising officers that you would like to mentor diverse students.

Similarly, find ways to reach out to shy or underperforming students, says Chris Brown, PhD, chair of counseling and educational psychology at the University of Missouri–Kansas City. "Highly successful students might find it easier to seek out mentoring relationships compared to students who see themselves as possessing characteristics that might make them appear as less desirable prospects," she says. "We certainly want all students to have equal access to mentoring opportunities and don't want unfair discrimination to occur when faculty are making decisions about who they would mentor."

**Protect mentees' privacy.** Mentees benefit when they perceive mentorships as safe spaces for divulging their fears, concerns and perceived failures. As a general ethical guideline, mentors should always work to protect mentees' privacy while remaining mindful that mentor-mentee communications are not privileged in a legal sense, nor confidential in the sense of psychologist-client communications. But while keeping mentee disclosures private builds trust and enhances the value of a mentorship, training faculty also have a simultaneous responsibility to register serious concerns about a mentee's competence, both with the mentee and with clinical training leaders.

"If you become aware that your mentee or your mentor is doing something unethical, you have a responsibility to do something about it," says Kaslow. "Some people feel trapped and unable to do the right thing because of their perceived role as the mentor," Millán agrees. "What happens if the mentor finds out their mentee has a substance use issue, for example?" he asks. "As the mentor, you're an ally, but you also have a professional obliga-

tion to act on certain kinds of problems." Ongoing discussions with your mentee about how you plan to protect his or her privacy while also insuring that competence concerns are addressed can help mitigate any surprises for the mentee.

**Make sure the mentee gets deserved credit.** A significant number of mentees work on collaborative projects with their mentors. Whether a project was initiated and largely carried out by the mentee, or whether the mentee played a supporting, but significant, role in an existing project, figuring out how to assign credit can be tricky. However, there are clear ethical guidelines regarding publication, Johnson says. "If it's a dissertation or a thesis, clearly the student should be the first author," he says. "But if you're talking about something less formal where a mentee has a great idea and then lo and behold the mentor's taking credit for that or writing a paper about the idea without including the student, it's potentially exploitative."

Even when mentors give their hard-working protégés all the credit they deserve, there's a danger that mentees can be exploited in terms of the amount of work they are assigned. "Junior faculty may see mentoring as a low-risk way of enhancing their opportunities for career success, but it is important to make sure that trainees are being mentored in a way that will be professionally beneficial," Brown says.

**Maintain boundaries.** Avoid blurring the relationship's boundaries and having it morph into the inappropriately personal. While it's OK to be friendly, avoid being a mentee's friend—at least at first—and steer clear of acting like his or her therapist, Kaslow advises. And remember that your aim is to help your mentees fly on their own, says Appleby. "There's going to be a time where the mentee's going to have to move on to the next step," he says, "and you want [him or her] to have the confidence to do so."

An obvious no-no is entering into a sexual relationship with a mentee, but attraction and romantic feelings can begin to intrude in a mentorship long before any egregious boundary violations occur. Some warning signs for mentors to watch out for include finding themselves thinking about and looking for opportunities to spend more time with a mentee and making very personal disclosures to a mentee.

In addressing such feelings, says Johnson, a mentor should be careful not to abruptly withdraw and leave the mentee wondering if he or she did something wrong. It's also important not to burden or confuse the mentee by sharing your feelings of attraction. A far better strategy, Johnson adds, involves seeking consultation with a trusted colleague, discussing appropriate options for keeping the mentorship professional and helpful for the mentee, or if necessary, devising a process for gracefully transferring the mentee to a different adviser. Whatever the ultimate decision in such a situation, it is a crucial time for a psychologist to rely on guidance and support from his or her own "competence constellation," which can come from a trusted core group of colleagues (Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, Vol. 44, No. 5, 2013).

**Minimize multiple roles.** In many instances a mentor holds considerable power relative to the mentee—a power differential that can be problematic if the mentor also serves as an adviser, supervisor or classroom instructor. That's why mentors should advise mentees to seek balance by ensuring that other psychologists fulfill these important roles in their education.

Also, because some mentors and mentees have overlapping duties in their roles, such as co-presenting at conferences or writing grants together, a mentor may be less likely to critically evaluate a mentee's work. "Mentors have an obligation to avoid engaging in multiple relationships that could impair their objectivity and thereby risk exploitation or harm to their mentee," Brown warns. "This concern for impaired objectivity when engaging in multiple relationships is noted in our code of ethics."

**Advocate, but evaluate.** Over time, mentorships evolve to become more reciprocal, bonded and close. As the relationship develops, it's natural for the mentor to become the mentee's advocate or sponsor—to tout the mentee's virtues in the public arena. But it's not in the mentee's best interests for the mentor simply to be a cheerleader for him or her, Johnson says.

Praising mentees in public and then later objectively criticizing their work in private can be confusing for them, he says. "Also, you don't want to overlook opportunities for development if they're having problems." Especially in psychology, where many trainees go on to provide supportive services for others, mentors need to take seriously their responsibility to vet and prepare mentees for the sake of the clients and systems they'll be working with, he adds.

"Intentional ethical mentoring requires self-awareness and, always, a focus on each mentee's best interests," Johnson says. "Modeling ethical behavior in the context of a personal developmental relationship can pay dividends by inspiring mentees to care for the ethical commitments and aspirations of their profession."



# Jordan Peele's "Us" Is a Middle-Class Guilt Trip

April 14, 2019

BY Nicholas Powers - Truthout

Editor's Note: This article contains spoilers.

Imagine at night, seeing a stranger in the shadows. You ask who it is but there's no answer. They run toward you and press their face on the window. It's your face but harder, scarred and angry. It is who you would have been if born poor or in a war zone. How would you react if that other "you" came back for the life they should have had?

In Jordan Peele's latest film, *Us*, doppelgängers represent the repressed side of the "American Dream." Critics have praised Peele for his craftsmanship, Hollywood homages and rich political subtext. What they miss is the film's conservatism. *Us* is a Black, middle-class guilt trip, and the catharsis it gives the audience comes at a price. The terror in *Us* is not the pain of the "American Dream," but the terror of not maintaining it.

## Mirror, Mirror

*Us* begins with text, saying under the United States are "thousands of miles of abandoned tunnels and mineshafts." In the next scene, a family strolls through a carnival on the Santa Cruz beach. While dad is busy winning a game, his daughter Adelaide (a shy Madison Curry) strays into a house of mirrors. She descends into its dark rooms, sees her reflection; it smiles evilly and grabs her.

The conflict driving *Us* is that doppelgängers, grotesque doubles called the "Tethered," live underground and mime the lives of those above. The government made clones, telepathically linked to citizens to control the public but the experiment failed and the clones were abandoned. Unable to think, they toil away like desperate shadows, "tethered" to those on the surface. And they hunger to be free.

The Tethered are the U.S.'s repressed memory. *Us* is a neo-Freudian drama, where Adelaide's childhood trauma symbolizes the nation's racial and class trauma — both are repressed, build pressure and erupt to the surface. Peele uses horror film aesthetics to translate this return of the repressed in masterful sequences of feint and foreshadowing. The plot spirals inward like a repetition compulsion as an older married Adelaide Wilson (played with ferocity by Lupita Nyong'o) returns to Santa Cruz to vacation with her middle-class family. Reluctantly, she goes with her kids, Zora (a convincing performance by Shahadi Wright Joseph) and Jason (savvy Evan Alex) and husband, Gabriel (a humorous Winston Duke) to the beach, but when they come home, a strange family, shrouded in shadows stands in the driveway.

Here Peele invokes themes of Black art to layer the film's neo-Freudian drama with a political subtext. He uses W.E.B. Du Bois's double-consciousness from *The Souls of Black Folk*, where he wrote how Black consciousness in a white supremacist society is painfully aware of stereotypes being projected because we are "looking at oneself through eyes of others." So when Gabriel tries to scare the strangers off, they break in and force the "real" family to see their racial doppelgängers. Dressed in red prison jumpsuits, the Tethered are Black caricatures of the Wilsons. Gabriel's double is a brute. Jason and Zora, evil pickaninnies. Adelaide, a prison Sapphire. They are the lower-class shadows of the middle-class family.

Red is the Tethered of Adelaide and says to her in a dry, croaking voice, "Once upon a time, a girl had a shadow. The two were tethered together. The shadow hated the girl." Red slashes a pair of giant gold scissors, symbolic of her mission to cut the tether, kill Adelaide and be free.

## Enemy Mine

In *Us*, the bloody battle between the families is, for all its bone-crunching and neck-stabbing gore, meant to do one thing: reassert middle-class supremacy. Adelaide is the main protagonist, and it is through her eyes that the film's "gaze" is set. We see through her flashbacks, her panicked stare and her rage. Beyond her, the film's "gaze" shifts to the other Wilsons, say Gabriel or Zora or Jason, as they kill their Tethered.

Identifying with the Wilsons means identifying with the middle-class "gaze" that sets the stakes for each fight. What threatens them, threatens us. What saves them, relieves us. No wonder as they struggle, each Wilson grabs a middle-class object. Gabriel wrestles with his doppelgänger on a boat he rented to show off. He turns on the engine to shred it. Jason takes hold of a New Age crystal sculpture to bash in a Tethered, and Adelaide wields a fireplace poker like a medieval sword.

*Us* stages a struggle between the middle class and its unconscious fear of poverty, symbolized by the Tethered, who all wear prison-esque red jump suits as if on a giant jail break. Only twice does the film break the middle-class gaze. The first is when the Wilsons' friends, a white couple named the Tylers, are hacked down with gold scissors by their doppelgänger. Stepping over a pool of blood as N.W.A.'s "Fuck Tha Police" plays, the Tethered of Kitty Tyler (a sardonic Elisabeth Moss) sits at her bedroom table and tries on lipstick. The smile is ghoulish but it is also the first time we see a Tethered's desire to be "real."

The Tethered want the "American Dream." The revolutionary violence they commit represents politics in an age of austerity and the near impossibility of the masses being able to live as middle class. Peele alluded to this in an interview on the film's origin, "It starts with the fear that I can't explain ... if I saw myself on the street, you immediately know that one of you might go. There's only room for one. And on top of that, if you see yourself, and yourself smiles back at you, you know the other one has the upper hand."

The Tethered do more than smile and kill; they demand recognition. Holding hands, they form lines across cities. Gabriel looks agape and asks, "Is it performance art?" It resembles a Black Lives Matters protest, which lends the Tethered a strange morality. They're monsters, created by the state to control real people, now demanding full citizenship. The Wilsons look like inheritors of privilege as their other halves, languished in a pain-filled, phantom world.



## The Lottery of Birth

Doppelgängers are a way for us to reconcile with the repressed parts of ourselves and our body politic. Peele's *Us* picks up the baton from other moments in Black culture, where the double was an instructive reflection of our hypocrisy.

One example of a class-based doppelgänger was in 2011. Rhodes Scholar and White House Fellow Wes Moore published a book called *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates* where he followed up on the life of another boy in his neighborhood named Wes Moore, who unlike him, became a convicted murder. Another, of all places, was "Family Matters," where Steve Urkel's cousin, Original Gangster Dawg, visits, and hijinks ensue. The goal of these stories is to point out how a change in zip code determines one's life. Yet almost always, the split between "us" and "them" ends with a stronger middle-class identity, purged through a violent catharsis of doubt. Usually it happens when they get "gangsta" themselves and embrace their repressed parts in an act of revitalization. Peele's *Us* is no different.

The second time when the middle-class gaze breaks is the climactic fight between Red and Adelaide. Red dragged Jason into her subterranean world. Adelaide searches for him, fireplace poker in hand, and attacks Red, who calmly sidesteps the blows and tells her about Tethered life. We see the U.S. from her viewpoint — a society blissfully ignorant of the suffering of the invisible. Soon after, Adelaide kills her and leaves with Jason.

In the ride out of Santa Cruz, Adelaide has one final flashback, and we see again her as a child, staring at her Tethered in the mirror, who grabbed her, tied her to a bed, took her clothes and left to replace the "real" Adelaide. In a powerful reversal, we see the film's central gaze belonged to a Tethered who "passed" into the real world.

Is it possible this reversal exposes the fear Peele said in his interview that he "can't explain"? Is it that double consciousness torments the Black, middle-class family in *Us* with internalized racist imagery and also imposter syndrome? Red passed as Adelaide and when the Tethered Revolution began, she trembled in terror of being outed. She killed the other Tethered who attacked the Wilsons to keep her secret. Her reward was that at the end, she successfully integrated into a real family, who will never know, except for a now suspicious son.

Maybe *Us* made \$155 million at the box office because it touches our vulnerability that we're not who we think we are, and we are in fact an accident of birth. All the shadows in our minds are evidence of parallel lives that exist next to this one. *Us* offers a guilt-ridden, middle-class catharsis. Yes, the Tethered hold hands across the U.S., but the Wilsons are fleeing to a safe zone in a van. Adelaide's sinister smile tells her son and the audience one thing: As long as no one tells the truth, we can escape.

Nicholas Powers

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# Clark Parole: Exception That Reaffirms the Rule

By RICHARD STEIER

Apr 19, 2019



**STRONG DISAGREEMENT OVER 'OPPORTUNITY':** Not surprisingly, the parole of Judith Clark (left) after spending 37-plus years in prison for her role in the robbery that led to the murders of a Brink's guard and two Nyack police officers produced strong reactions, with ex-cop and current John Jay Professor Gene O'Donnell (center) calling her actions 'unforgivable.' But Gloria Zwernman (right), a Sociology Professor at SUNY Old Westbury whose pointed questions three decades ago forced Ms. Clark to examine her conduct and begin atoning for her behavior, said that 'parole is not an act of absolution: it is an opportunity that an inmate earns to continue rehabilitation in the realm of civil society.'

In explaining why he dissented from his two colleagues on the state Parole Board panel who April 17 granted Judith Clark her release after more than 37 years in prison for her role in the 1981 murders of Brink's guard Peter Paige and Nyack Police Sgt. Edward O'Grady and Police Officer Waverly Brown, Commissioner W. William Smith Jr.'s most-gripping argument concerned the slain men's families.

Speaking directly to Ms. Clark, he wrote, "In time, the thousands of written comments in opposition and in favor of your release will be put in storage. Media coverage will lessen. What will not diminish is the loss felt by the loved ones of [those who were killed]. The sound of their weeping will remain."

It was a powerful truth, one that to a great degree informed the comments of others, including Police Benevolent Association President Pat Lynch, who criticized the 2-1 decision in Ms. Clark's favor.

If it had a flaw, it lay in putting the weight for the loss and the tears squarely on her shoulders. Besides essentially fitting her with a smoking gun although she hadn't been one of the shooters, it was offered to the exclusion of everything she had done over 30-plus years to atone for the madness that had convinced her it was a revolutionary act to rob an armored truck in the name of financing a new homeland within the South for her comrades and those they viewed as oppressed black citizens.

75 Years More for Attitude Than Deed

Her continuing to spout that rhetoric in a Rockland County courtroom was what prompted the judge in the case to banish her from the courtroom, then sentence her to 75 years to life because he was convinced she was incapable of reforming.

But while her role in the crime as one of the getaway drivers rose to the level of felony murder, her actions weren't nearly as heinous as those of the shooters, including Mutulu Shakur, the stepfather of Tupac Shakur and one of the masterminds behind the crime, who received a 60-year prison term that he is still serving. Nor did it rise to the level of another female defendant, Kathy Boudin—a fellow member of the Weather Underground—who when the U-haul in which she was driving the shooters was stopped by cops including Sergeant O'Grady and Officer Brown, convinced them they had the wrong vehicle and persuaded them to lower their weapons.

That gave her comrades the opportunity to emerge and start blasting with the cops still lulled into relaxing by her performance.

Ms. Boudin, the daughter of a prominent civil-liberties lawyer, Leonard Boudin, was at least as responsible for the murders of the two Nyack cops as the men who pulled the triggers. But unlike Ms. Clark, who cursed out her working-class father when he admonished her for believing that a violent robbery could be justified, Ms. Boudin was sane enough to listen to the advice of her father and his law partner and keep her mouth shut while they negotiated a deal under which she was given a sentence of 20 years to life.

When she was paroled in 2003, it was an outrage: I wrote at the time in an editorial that someone involved to the degree that she was should have remained in prison for life, regardless of the degree to which she had rehabilitated herself behind bars.

A 2012 New York Times magazine piece by Tom Robbins focused both on Ms. Clark's more-peripheral role in the killings and the extent to which she had transformed her life after being confronted five years later by a sociologist who was interviewing her about the gap between her regrets that her daughter, who had been 11 months old at the time of the crime, was growing up largely without a mother and her lack of empathy for the two cops and security guard whose children would never again speak to their fathers.

As the piece described it, Ms. Clark burst into tears and began the transition from unrepentant ideologue to someone who took responsibility for her crimes and tried to make amends. After that, she taught college courses to fellow inmates and instructed them in both AIDS education and pre-natal care, and trained puppies to be service dogs for both law-enforcement officers and disabled veterans. In the process, she won praise from both the Warden at the Bedford Hills prison where she has done her time and from some conservative officials impressed by her transformation.

## 'Wrong Message' Reconsidered

It forced me to reconsider the words I had written when Ms. Boudin was paroled as they applied to Ms. Clark: "the fact that she may have spiritually redeemed herself, in our opinion, is not reason enough to release her from prison. We believe it sends the wrong message about the extent to which this society values life to parole someone involved in such a horrific crime, regardless of the good work they may have done afterwards...They do not deserve a chance at a new life outside."

I concluded that her lack of a direct role in the shootings made her an exception to the rule I had set out more than 13 years earlier. Governor Cuomo nearly five years later reached that same conclusion at the end of 2016 when he commuted Ms. Clark's sentence to 35 years to life, making her immediately eligible for parole.

The strong reaction from law-enforcement officials to his decision, including a petition containing more than 10,000 signatures opposing her release, made clear they disagreed. The three Parole Commissioners who ruled against her release in April 2017 were swayed by their argument, judging by language in their decision that focused heavily on her crime and gave short shrift to what she had been doing to make amends for more than three decades.

Ms. Clark's lawyers sued over the denial, and a State Supreme Court Justice ruled that the Parole Commissioners had given too much weight to her crime and not enough to her rehabilitation, ordering a new hearing that wound up being the regularly scheduled one earlier this month. While the number of elected officials supporting her release grew, the law-enforcement campaign against parole was less prominent than two years ago.

## Angry Response to Parole

That didn't mean the reaction was any less vehement when parole was granted April 17, with the two commissioners who approved it stating they had found "ample evidence of rehabilitation, remorse and transformation and we conclude that you are likely to remain at liberty without once again violating the law and that your release is compatible with the welfare of the overall community."

Contradicting language used by the 2017 Parole Commissioners in denying her release, commissioners Tana Agostini and Ellen Alexander added, "In view of this evidence of transformation and serving 38 years in prison, we no longer believe that your release would so deprecate your offense as to undermine respect for the law."

The PBA statement from Mr. Lynch denounced Ms. Clark as "a murderer and a terrorist. Because of her actions, three families have been permanently deprived of husbands, fathers and sons. Those families can not escape their loss, but Judith Clark will be allowed to escape accountability for her crimes."

It was hard to buy into the claim that a woman who entered prison at 31 and would be leaving just six months shy of her 70th birthday had evaded accountability. And a later sentence in Mr. Lynch's statement—"The New York State Parole Board has proven once again that it does not value the rule of law or the sacrifices of the police officers who uphold those laws—" seemed a clear allusion to the parole last year of Herman Bell, who like the shooters of the two Nyack officers was a member of the Black Liberation Army, a radical organization with no redeeming features whose agenda consisted solely of committing armed robberies and murdering cops.

## Crime Paled Before Bell's

If there were large disparities between Ms. Boudin's role in the fatal shootings near the Nanuet Mall and Ms. Clark's, the gap grew even greater when the comparison placed Ms. Clark's crime against Mr. Bell's. In May 1971, he was part of a hit team that used a false report of a cop in distress to set up an ambush of Police Officers Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini in Harlem. Officer Jones was killed instantly by a bullet fired by one member of the ambush team. Officer Piagentini was initially wounded, and while lying prone and pleading for his life, was shot numerous times by the three BLA members, including Mr. Bell. Three months after the murder of the two officers, he was involved in the fatal shooting of a San Francisco Police Sergeant.

The cold-blooded executions were egregious enough that his professed change of heart about his actions earlier this decade should have been ignored when he came up for parole. But in March 2018, his release was ordered by Parole Commissioners who cited his age and those rehabilitation efforts. Mr. Bell's parole was disgraceful; Ms. Clark's situation wasn't remotely analogous.

But the visceral reaction of retired officers as well as active ones and their union to those involved in police killings became clear during an hour-long phone conversation with Gene O'Donnell, an ex-cop and former prosecutor who's now a Professor of Law and Police Studies at John Jay College, the morning after Ms. Clark's parole was announced.

"I was at those funerals," he said, referring to the 1981 services for Sergeant O'Grady and Officer Brown. He made clear that despite her lack of direct involvement in the shootings, he believed Ms. Clark's culpability was severe enough that she should stay behind bars at least until she's 80, if not for the rest of her life.

## 'Shouldn't See Light of Day'

He cited an unwritten rule to which more than a few cops subscribe: "You leave two people dead on the street, you don't see the light of day. If that's not enough to get somebody incarcerated forever, then why not look at the rest of the prison population? Our society doesn't have the courage to say: when you take two lives, sorry is never enough."

Mr. O'Donnell said that while he believed a sentence of life without parole was preferable to capital punishment, "This is exactly what people said would happen when they got rid of the death penalty—a constant rollback of the sentencing. If she shouldn't be in prison, then why should anybody? This is a heinous murder—on the scale of 1-10, it's a 10-plus."

He regarded her already having served 15 years more than Ms. Boudin despite the vast gulf in their culpability for the murders as virtually irrelevant, arguing that the injustice in the latter woman's not serving a life sentence rather than getting a teaching job at Columbia 10 years after her parole did not create a basis for what he called a second miscarriage of justice.

"She shouldn't have gotten the death penalty. I don't think," he said, it had been in effect at the time of the killings, Professor O'Donnell said. "But she got to live her life; the victims did nothing wrong and lost their lives."

He bristled at the argument made by one of Ms. Clark's longtime supporters, former City Councilwoman Ronnie Eldridge, that her rehabilitation made her "a model of what [parole is] all about. All the facts show that the recidivism rate for people over 60 is very low."

## Senior-Citizen Reductions?

He said he believed such attitudes opened the door for other inmates convicted of chilling crimes to be paroled based on their age rather than whether they deserved to be released, and spoke of a relaxation of standards elsewhere in the criminal-justice system that he said was promoted by "those who don't believe in punishment."

What particularly bothered Professor O'Donnell was that he believed Ms. Clark would emerge from prison as a celebrity who would become a coveted guest on the talk-show circuit.

"Two people got murdered—that's unforgivable," he said, referring to the two cops but not the Brink's guard, Mr. Paige. "It's supposed to be a stigma to be a part of this. [Parole] is the erasure of the stigma. She's going to come out and be famous. Nobody can name the victims, but she's going to get fame out of this. She'll be a shining symbol that you can murder two people and still have a life after that."

It was hard to imagine that anyone would chart a career path based on spending nearly four decades behind bars with the expectation of fame and fortune if they rehabilitated themselves enough to gain the support of prominent champions. And Mr. O'Donnell's caricature of Ms. Clark's supporters being a liberal cabal overlooked their including such beacons of the justice system as ex-Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau and one of her lawyers, Michael Cardozo, who earned a hard-nosed reputation as city Corporation Counsel during Michael Bloomberg's mayoralty.

## 'Us vs. Them' Pitfalls

A prime reason it took Ms. Clark so long to feel remorse over her role in the robbery that led to the three killings was because she was under the delusion that she was a soldier in a revolution, and the slain cops were collateral damage in a battle of Us vs. Them. It is the same myopic viewpoint some cops have been accused of carrying through their work in troubled city neighborhoods, allowing them to make judgments based on who's part of the team and who can be dismissed as outsiders or even "skels."

Minimizing other people's humanity is one danger inherent in such attitudes; another is a tendency to close ranks behind colleagues whose conduct should make them outlaws, or at least persons to warn their superiors about.

This is why there were no cries of moral outrage from the PBA for a stunningly light sentence for a Police Officer named Joseph Gray for a 2001 crime that wiped out a family. Mr. Gray's drinking problem began its descent into ruin during two hours of post-shift beers with fellow officers and a Sergeant in a parking lot across the street from their Brooklyn stationhouse. He kept it going for another 10 hours before, speeding along a Sunset Park street, running down a pregnant woman, her 4-year-old-son and her teenage sister.

No denunciations from law-enforcement groups were forthcoming when convictions on four counts of manslaughter and reckless and drunken driving produced a sentence of just 10 years in prison for Mr. Gray. None of the other cops involved in the early drinking wound up becoming menaces on the road later that day, but that didn't make the crimes committed by Officer Gray any less foreseeable than an armed robbery turning into a bloody shootout.

That helps explain why, wrenching as Ms. Clark's parole is to the survivors of the gun battle, as well as some of the children of the three men who were murdered (the son of Sergeant O'Grady told a Times reporter at the time Mr. Cuomo commuted her sentence that he could live with the pain her release might bring if it offered comfort to her daughter), their feelings and those of police unions are not the determining factor in parole decisions.

## She Opened Clark's Eyes

And so in looking for a public servant who can speak with moral authority as well as clarity about Ms. Clark's parole, it makes more sense to look to Ms. Zwernman. She is an admittedly biased observer, having stayed in contact with Ms. Clark since she first began visiting her at Bedford Hills in 1985 while doing research into female political radicals who turned to violence. But she is also the person who delivered the figurative slap in the face that knocked Ms. Clark off her revolutionary perch and began her journey from, to paraphrase the song, a wretch who was lost to a human being found.

Ms. Zwernman at one point more than 30 years ago said to her, according to Mr. Robbins's article, "I understand how you did this to yourself. What I don't understand is how you did this to your daughter."

When Ms. Clark burst into tears, Ms. Zwernman told her, "You can't cry for yourself and Harriet and not see that the children of the men who were killed cried the same way for their fathers."

Ms. Clark would later say it was as if she had been stripped of her psychic armor, forcing her to confront what she had become and the damage she had done.

In an e-mail response to questions about the parole, Ms. Zwernman, who is in her 39th year as a Professor of Sociology at SUNY Old Westbury, wrote, "For Judy Clark, rehabilitation entailed more than coming to terms with her participation in a brutal crime. It involved confronting an identity and a set of long-held radical political beliefs that justified her actions."

## 'Struggled With Self-Doubt'

She continued, "I watched as Judy gradually examined and reassembled pieces of herself. I watched as she struggled with self-doubt, overwhelming guilt and trepidation about asking for mercy and searched for ways to express remorse that are genuine and meaningful. To my knowledge, no one involved in the crime has put themselves through such a thorough process of self-examination, taken the degree of personal responsibility or apologized so publicly and actively as Judy Clark has done."

Asked about Mr. O'Donnell's assertion that Ms. Clark once free would attempt to "cash in" on the heinous crime in which she'd been involved and the long imprisonment and rehabilitation that followed, Professor Zwernman replied, "The wreckage of her crime remains. Judy Clark will never be free and she knows it. But parole is not an act of absolution: it is an opportunity that an inmate earns to continue the process of rehabilitation and repair in the realm of civil society. Judy Clark has earned this opportunity."



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LOCAL NEWS

## Single-payer universal health care proposal: What will it mean to you?

*April 2 forum in Riverhead will examine impacts of New York Health Act.*

By **Denise Civiletti** - Mar 26, 2019, 8:58 am

An informational forum on the proposed single-payer universal health care bills pending in Albany will be held in Riverhead on Tuesday, April 2.

The New York Health Act would provide comprehensive, universal health care coverage to all New Yorkers, paid for by the state. It would replace private insurance coverage in New York.

According to the legislative memorandum filed with the bill this year, every New York resident would be eligible to enroll, regardless of age, income, wealth, employment, or other status.

There would be no network restrictions, deductibles, or co-pays. The benefits will include comprehensive outpatient and inpatient medical care, long-term care, primary and preventive care, prescription drugs, laboratory tests, rehabilitative, dental, vision and hearing care.

“Everyone would choose a primary care practitioner or other provider to provide care coordination — helping to get the care and follow-up the patient needs, referrals, and navigating the system. But there would be no ‘gatekeeper’ obstacles to care,” according to the legislative memo.

The sweeping reforms, first proposed by NYC Assemblyman Richard Gottfried in 1992 and passed by the State Assembly in each of the past four legislative sessions, may for the first time this year pass the State Senate, which Democrats took control of in the 2018 elections, with most Democratic candidates pledging support for a universal, single-payer program.

It is not clear whether the measure would become law even if passed by both the Assembly and Senate. Citing cost concerns, Gov. Andrew Cuomo has been opposed to single-payer healthcare on the state level and did not include the program among his priorities for 2019.

The East End Action Network and Indivisible North Fork are hosting Tuesday’s forum, which is free and open to the public, at the Dark Horse Restaurant’s Peconic Room, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Professor Martha Livingston, chair of the public health department at [SUNY/Old Westbury](#), will present an overview of the legislation, the changes to New York’s current healthcare system and the resulting impact on all New Yorkers.

An audience question-and-answer session will follow Livingston’s presentation.

Complimentary light refreshments will be served.

The organizers request people interested in attending the forum to RSVP [here](#).

# HELL'S PRINTING PRESS

The Blog of the Blake Archive and Blake Quarterly

Q&A

## Q&A with Chris Hobson: Baldwin and Blake

MARCH 18, 2019

The patchy morning clouds had just begun to dissipate when the Tri-Rail train pulled out of the Pompano Beach station, and Chris Hobson wrote the main article, "Blake, Paul, and Sexual Antinomianism," in the winter 2018–19 issue of *Blake*. In the course of our correspondence he told me that he'd just published *James Baldwin and the Heavenly City: Prophecy, Apocalypse, and Doubt*, and that he sees Baldwin and Blake "as very similar figures despite the obvious differences in century, nationality, race. They share ideas of social change adapted from Revelation (for each, the central Bible text), as well as on sexuality and a rejection of false holiness." Thus the germ of this Q&A was planted; many thanks to Chris for taking part.

**Which author did you encounter first, and what are the themes their works share that are of interest to you?**

I read Baldwin first, starting with *The Fire Next Time* on publication (1963), then *Giovanni's Room* (extremely influential for me) a year or so later, then *Another Country*—Baldwin's breakout 1962 social conflict novel—a couple of years after that. I didn't read the rest of Baldwin until the 1980s, and, except for some of the *Songs*, I hadn't read Blake seriously until then. So I read a good part of each author more or less in the same period. I was struck by how many central issues they shared: social conflict and possible liberation, understood in biblical and apocalyptic terms; sexuality, the holiness of the body, and hostility to moral law; prophecy as a literary mode. (A real understanding of the religious ideas in both came more gradually.) That two such writers so widely separated in time and background cultures share so much has long fascinated me. The commonalities extend even to secondary matters—for example, Baldwin uses "the righteous" and "the damned" in *If Beale Street Could Talk*, his fifth novel, almost exactly in the inverted, ironic-polemical way Blake uses "the Elect" and "the Reprobate" in *Milton*. Yet, judging from actual quotations, Baldwin knew little of Blake besides some *Songs*, "Auguries of Innocence," and (importantly) "The Everlasting Gospel"—some of the more accessible works found in an anthology such as Alfred Kazin's *The Portable Blake* (1946).

**How does Baldwin's religious background compare to Blake's?**

It's different. Blake, we know, had the Church of England as a primary reference, and may have been influenced by various earlier and contemporary antinomian and "enthusiastic" currents, including his mother's Moravian history. Baldwin's family were Baptists and he was lastingly influenced as a teenager by African-American Holiness and Pentecostal churches, in which he was briefly a youth preacher. He probably knew next to nothing of the currents that have been theorized as influential for Blake. The Holiness-Pentecostal theologies descend from John Wesley's Methodism, but Wesley was notably non-apocalyptic—these theologies added their apocalypticism, so influential for Baldwin, much later—and Wesley was also sexually very conventional. It wasn't easy, in other words, to account for the similarities I saw on the basis of a common religious heritage.

**Your recent article discusses ways in which Blake revises and challenges Paul's teachings. How does Baldwin use the Bible?**

That is one of the resemblances I see. They use the Bible—meaning the King James or Authorized Version for both—in some very similar ways. Most specifically, the centrality of Paul in Christian sexual ethics is a point of connection. Baldwin, I argue in my book, gets to his sense of the body's holiness by rejecting Paul's flesh-spirit dualism but also by appropriating Paul's teaching that God favors the world's despised, much as, in my article, I argue that Blake both contested and appropriated Paul. More generally, both use biblical (and for Baldwin, gospel music) references everywhere; both structure their works around the Christian pattern of Eden, fall, redemption, and apocalypse; they use some of the same books and even the same passages, such as the Valley of Bones in *Ezekiel*. And both contrast a liberatory potential in the Bible—a counter-tradition, which is why Baldwin's knowledge of "The Everlasting Gospel" is important—to actual church practice. Baldwin, however, is not a believer as an adult, so these uses of the Bible are analogies for him, but with a genuine holiness at their core.

**How would Baldwin react to Blake's statement that everything that lives is holy?**

In *Another Country*, Reverend Foster, a Harlem minister, is speaking the elegy for Rufus, a major character who has committed suicide. In reference to the idea that suicides shouldn't be buried in holy ground, he says, "All I know, God made every bit of ground I ever walked on, and everything God made is holy." Rev. Foster is talking only of this one issue, yet he is stating a deep belief. Readers, however, have an additional dimension, since they know, as Rev. Foster doesn't, that an hour or so before he died, Rufus was standing at a urinal, "holding that most despised part of himself loosely between two fingers of one hand." For readers, Rev. Foster's words make the same point that the body's sacredness must not be despised that Blake is making with his words, whether in *America*, *Marriage*, or *Visions*, and this is, in the whole context of Baldwin's novel, a central thematic point. I think, then, that Baldwin not only would approve Blake's formula, but replicates it. It's possible he remembers it from some reading of one of these works; he never quotes it directly.

**Do you see parallels between the evolution of Blake's and Baldwin's ideas?**

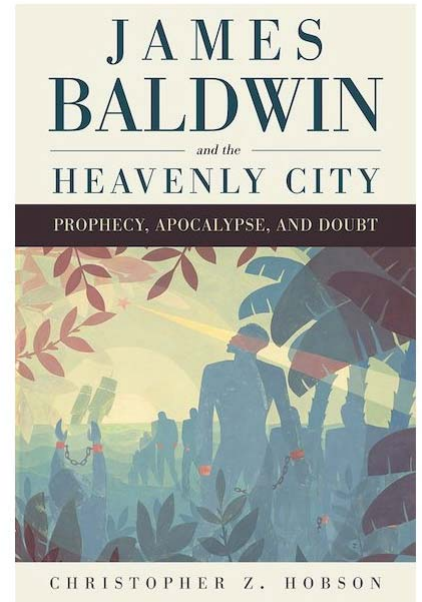
Some parallels, yes. For instance, both begin as religious iconoclasts—*Go Tell It on the Mountain*, Baldwin's first novel, is quite commonly read as declaring his opposition to Christianity, much as *Marriage*, *Urizen*, and other early Blake works expose religious hypocrisy and power-seeking. Both later make a kind of truce with the religious attitudes of ordinary people. Both also begin with a sense of the holiness of the body and sexuality, which *Giovanni's Room*, Baldwin's second novel, emphasizes with a sudden flood of biblical and sacred language as its protagonist comes to terms with his homosexuality; and both keep this sense, but add to it a later conviction of our deep imperfection. And, finally, both are deeply influenced by living through periods of near-revolutionary social struggle, the 1790s and 1960s respectively, but both later witness the collapse of these struggles and must work to maintain and recalibrate their faiths against temptations of doubt and acceptance of the world as it is.

**One theme in your book is a focus on blues and gospel as representing sensibilities in Baldwin's work. Are there parallels with Blake's mythology?**

A partial parallel. For Baldwin, gospel is the music of transcendent hope and represents, quite directly, the eschatological perspective of the later prophets and the "good news" that is the literal meaning of gospel; blues is the music of life as it is, struggle, betrayal, and endurance, and represents the perspective of the biblical *Ketuvim*, the Writings in the Jewish *Tanakh* that deal with the existing world. Baldwin uses gospel quotations along with allusions to Revelation and other New Testament apocalypticism to suggest a possible new world; the similarity between these literary devices and Blake's depictions of eschatological renewal and an end to the "Covenant of Priam" are clear, though the modes of expression are different. Parallels with Baldwin's blues are more indirect. Blake's evocations of ordinary life on the ground, whether in "The Echoing Green" or in the injunction in *Jerusalem* to "attend to the Little-ones" (55.51) are a rough parallel. But for Blake, ordinary life is profoundly divided, partly sustaining and partly terrible and destructive. For Baldwin, the blues bridges this division in a kind of half-rueful, half-joyous recognition of human fallibility, a way to experience daily calamity and, as he says in a 1964 essay on blues, "sort of ride with it." It's a very African-American sensibility, and one wouldn't expect an exact parallel in Blake.

**Would the title of your Baldwin book be equally good for Blake if the names were changed?**

I love this question! For most of the terms in my title and subtitle—"the Heavenly City," "Prophecy," and "Apocalypse"—the application will be plain to Blake people. As for my last term, "Doubt," in his final novel, *Just above My Head*, Baldwin dramatizes this idea through the contrasting outlooks of the protagonist, a gospel singer who eventually loses his sense of vocation and the purity of his art, and his brother, the narrator, a worldly skeptic who still desperately needs to believe in the gospel vision. For Blake, I'm finding in ongoing work, the presence of doubt is real, if less obvious. It's apparent, for example, in the struggle between Los and his Spectre, one that is by no means as triumphal as it may seem. So yes, William Blake and the *Heavenly City: Prophecy, Apocalypse, and Doubt*—why not?



Cover image courtesy of Michigan State University Press; artwork is Aaron Douglas, *Into Bondage*, (c) heirs of Aaron Douglas/licensed by VAGA, used with permission.

# Bob Allen to retire from TFCU helm

By: Bernadette Starzee

April 25, 2019



Robert Allen, longtime president and CEO of Teachers Federal Credit Union, will be retiring at the end of May.

Robert Allen, longtime president and CEO of Teachers Federal Credit Union, will be retiring at the end of May, the Hauppauge-based credit union announced yesterday.

Allen, who took the helm of TFCU in 1988, has presided over a period of extraordinary growth. The credit union's assets have risen from \$250 million to more than \$7 billion today, while its branch network has expanded from seven locations to 31, with a geographic reach that now extends from Riverhead to Manhattan. TFCU currently has 325,000 members and more than 800 employees.

During his tenure, Allen managed the acquisition of more than a half-dozen credit unions, including three in 2018 – LOMTO Credit Union, Melrose Federal Credit Union and Projector Federal Credit Union – which combined brought aboard more than 25,000 members and more than \$1.3 billion in assets.

Allen is a respected leader in the broader credit union community. He has chaired and been actively involved with several credit union organizations, including serving on committees of the Credit Union National Association, and has played an instrumental role in policy development and legislative initiatives to protect and promote the credit union sector's mission.

Prior to joining TFCU, he was president and CEO of United Nations Federal Credit Union. He currently serves as a trustee of the [SUNY Old Westbury Foundation](#) and a member of the Staller Center for the Arts Advisory Council. He holds a bachelor's degree in finance from [SUNY Old Westbury](#).

"I would like to thank the board of directors, my executive team, our managers and every staff member of TFCU for giving me the opportunity to serve in a leadership role," Allen said in a statement. "Over the years, we have faced many challenges and we have been presented with many opportunities. Together we addressed the challenges of the Great Recession and rapid advancements in technology. We have leveraged opportunities for expansion. I leave TFCU in a strong position for continued growth."



# Teachers FCU CEO to Retire

Robert G. Allen says, "Leading TFCU has been a rewarding experience for me ..."

By Tina Orem | April 25, 2019 at 04:14 PM



Robert Allen

The CEO of one of the country's largest credit unions has announced that he will retire at the end of May.

Robert G. Allen, president and CEO of Hauppauge, N.Y.-based Teachers Federal Credit Union, will end his 30+ year tenure at the \$7.2 billion credit union on May 31. He has been at the helm since 1988 and has been in the credit union industry for over 48 years.

"The credit union sector has experienced a tremendous transformation over the time I have served as president/CEO of TFCU," Allen said in a TFCU news release announcing his retirement. "There has been significant growth in credit union membership as well as consolidation accompanied by peaks and valleys in economic condi-

tions. It is humbling to know that we have been able to manage these changes and strengthen our organization. Leading TFCU has been a rewarding experience for me and I respect and admire the people that I have worked closely with over the years. We have an exceptional executive team, managers and staff who work tirelessly to serve our members."

Before joining TFCU, Allen was president and CEO of Long Island City, New York-based United Nations Federal Credit Union, which currently has \$5.5 billion in assets and about 133,00 members. He has been involved with CUNA committees, as well as with state- and national-level policy development, legislation and credit union advocacy efforts. He also served on the Federal Reserve Bank of New York Community Depository Institutions Advisory Counsel and chaired the New York State Shared Branch Corporation (UsNet), as well as Empire Corporate FCU and the **SUNY Old Westbury School of Business Advisory Board.**

During his tenure at TFCU, Allen witnessed the advent of the Digital Age in home and mobile banking across the industry, and he oversaw the acquisition of more than a half dozen credit unions. Over more than three decades, he helped the credit union's assets rise from \$250 million to over \$7 billion and grew its branch network from seven to 31 locations. TFCU has 329,000 members and over 800 employees today.

"Over the years, we have faced many challenges and we have been presented with many opportunities," Allen said. "Together we addressed the challenges of the Great Recession and rapid advancements in technology. We have leveraged opportunities for expansion. I leave TFCU in a strong position for continued growth. I would like to thank the board of directors, my executive team, our managers and every staff member of TFCU for giving me the opportunity to serve in a leadership role."

April 2, 2019 / Gay City News Impact Awards

## The 2019 Gay City News Impact Honorees

[Enlarge this image](#)



CORAZON AGUIRRE

The 2019 Gay City News Impact Awardees.

BY PAUL SCHINDLER



Chynna Pitlock.

### CHYNNA PITLOCK

A native of Minnesota who grew up in Upstate New York, Chynna Pitlock has been director of the Queens Center for Gay Seniors since 2015, having joined the Center — part of the Queens Community House — the year before as assistant director. As director, she has been instrumental in expanding outreach, community awareness, and advocacy for LGBTQ older adults in the borough. The Queens Center for Gay Seniors provides a culturally-rich environment where LGBTQ older adults engage with peers, enjoy a hot meal, take classes, explore new interests, and give back through volunteer and advocacy opportunities.

The same year she assumed leadership at the Center, Pitlock began work on her master's degree at Hunter College's Silberman School of Social Work. Working full time and attending school full time at night, she also managed to find the time to complete a social work internship at Generation Q, Queens Community House's LGBTQ youth drop-in center. In her thesis to complete her social work degree, Pitlock created an intergenerational LGBTQ program curriculum for integrating a senior center with a youth center in order to create a mentoring program. She completed her master's, with honors, last year, with a concentration in aging and clinical work.

Pitlock moved to New York City from upstate in 2010 and was recruited to play goalkeeper on the women's soccer team at [SUNY College at Old Westbury](#). Joining the campus LGBTQ group PRIDE, she became president, supervising a four-member executive board serving a 50-member club. She led PRIDE in presenting educational forums on LGBTQ issues and rights for the Old Westbury undergraduate community and the college's staff. When she graduated with high honors with a degree in psychology and a minor in social work, Pitlock was named Student Leader of the Year and one of the 50 most influential student leaders of the previous decade.

In her first job out of Old Westbury, she served as a youth specialist working with LGBTQ incarcerated youth in Brooklyn, helping them adapt back into their communities and families upon their release.

Pitlock is a member of the board of the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club of Queens and also serves on the events committee for Queens Pride. Her leadership has been recognized with awards from the Queens borough president and gay City Councilmembers Daniel Dromm and Jimmy Van Bramer.

## Ones to Watch: Accounting

By: Bernadette Starzee April 19, 2019



Joseph Calamia II

### **Joseph Calamia II**

#### **Partner**

#### **Sales Tax Defense**

Joseph Calamia II was recently promoted to partner at Sales Tax Defense, a tax consulting firm in Dix Hills. Calamia, who has worked in the state and local tax field for nearly a dozen years, is a certified public accountant with a master's degree in taxation from **SUNY Old Westbury**. He advises clients on taxability issues in addition to representing taxpayers in sales tax audits, administrative hearings and trials. He has presented at multiple National Conference of CPA Practitioners events and published articles on topics within his area of expertise.





## Ed Easton Jr.

Ed is a graduate of [SUNY College At Old Westbury](#). He is currently a contributor for FanSided's Empire Writes Back and Hoops Habit. Ed also works for Disney Streaming ( Formerly MLB Advanced Media) and Entercom's 1010 WINS radio in New York City. He is the founder of Keeping It Real Sports LLC ([KeepingItRealSports.com](#)) & Host of "Sports Social with Ed Easton Jr" on iHeartRadio.



 Contributor



NEW YORK YANKEES 1 d



### Yankees hope Opening Day reflects season long success

by Ed Easton Jr.

The New York Yankees started the 2019 season by successfully defending their home turf and providing hope for a championship fall. This was the...

# A Modern Day Fairy Tale



• GIVEAWAYS • BIBLE JOURNALING • CRAFTS • RECIPES • BEAUTY • PR STATEMENT

## THE BULWARK ANTHOLOGY BOOK TOUR + GIVEAWAY

MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2019



The Darkness  
The Bulwark Anthology Book 8

by Brittney Leigh

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Bulwark- a wall or stockade that protects or sometimes hides the truth from the outside world. Bulwark, a quiet town... or is it? Four best friends, Sophia, Scott, Chloe and Chris, are just trying to manage their senior year at Bulwark high school when Sophia realizes that her feelings for Chris are really meant for Scott. Before she can deal with that though, the four friends then stumble upon Bulwark's darkest secrets when a spell is cast on Bulwark High. Students have been disappearing and no one has any clues as to their whereabouts. With a town curfew set and parents on edge, the four friends decide to take things into their own hands. Will they break the spell, or will Bulwark High and the town be changed forever? Based on Bulwark, a paranormal thriller by Brit Lunden, The Darkness is the eighth volume in the multi-author Bulwark Anthology.

**Brittney Leigh** is gracing the Bulwark anthology as a debut author. She is a proud graduate of **SUNY Old Westbury College**, with a bachelors degree in Media & Communications. Gifted in singing, acting, and dancing, she finds her voice reaches its highest ground in writing. She resides in Long Island where the darkness of New York City comes to sleep.

Website • Facebook • Twitter • Goodreads



## St. Timothy celebrates new pastor during Installation Services

By **leslie** - March 29, 2019

515 0



THE COMMUNITY IS invited to the Installation Services for the new pastor of St. Timothy Community Church, Rev. Dr. Rameen M. Jackson, on Sunday, March 31 at 3:30 p.m. Pictured above (l-r) with Pastor Jackson (center) are two installation committee members, Mary James and Rosie Washington, followed by St. Timothy's church staff, Wanda Joshua, Janice Austin, Claude Dowdell and Roy Hytche.

St. Timothy Community Church located at 1600 W. 25th Ave. in Gary, will celebrate the installation of Rev. Dr. Rameen M. Jackson as senior pastor on March 31 at 3:30 p.m.

The afternoon of worship and fellowship will feature guest choirs and ministers Rev. Dr. Thomasina Reid, senior pastor of Union Baptist Church of Virginia Beach, Virginia and Rev. Dr. William Smith, senior pastor of Second Missionary Baptist Church of Kokomo, Indiana.

Rev. Jackson began his ministry assignment at St. Timothy on October 1, 2018. Prior to that, he served seven years as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Logan Park in Norfolk, Virginia.

A native of Long Island, New York, he attended the Riverhead Schools and graduated with his Regents Diploma. Dr. Jackson furthered his education by attending the **SUNY Old Westbury** University in Westbury, New York and completed his B.A. Degree in Industrial Labor and Relations. After accepting his call into ministry, he decided to further his theological studies at New Brunswick Theological Seminary completing a Master of Divinity degree and then completed his Doctoral Studies in Ministry at Virginia Union University Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology, graduating in May of 2017.

He has demonstrated over the years faithful service in working with youth, mentoring young men, helping the poor and giving back to the community. He uses his gifts in preaching, teaching, singing, worship and praise leader, song writer and a musician all to the Glory of God.

For more information regarding the installation services, contact the church at 219-977-0079 or visit the website at [www.sttimothychurch.org](http://www.sttimothychurch.org).



## DiRico Named SUNY Old Westbury MSOC Head Coach

By [sleterfc](#) - April 19, 2019



*New SUNY Old Westbury head coach John DiRico.*

For nearly a quarter century, John DiRico prowled the sidelines at Dowling College where he served as head coach of the men's soccer team.

Now, he is returning to the Long Island college soccer scene as head coach of the SUNY Old Westbury's men's soccer team. Since his final season in 2015 from Dowling, where he coached for 24 years, DiRico held head coaching positions at Five Towns College and Concordia College.

"I am honored to have been selected to lead the SUNY Old Westbury men's soccer program," he said. "I want to thank director of athletics Lenore J. Walsh and the administration for this privilege and I look forward to continuing to build on the program's success both on and off the field."

SUNY Old Westbury officials are hopeful that their new head coach can replicate the success his teams had at Dowling. During his tenure with the Lions, DiRico had a career record of 286-124-52. This included a 22-0-2 mark in 2006 when Dowling won the Division II National Championship.

Overall, the new SUNY Old Westbury head coach guided Dowling to 13 trips to the NCAA Championship Tournament, including six appearances in the NCAA semifinals from 2001-10. His tenure with the college, which was based in Oakdale before closing in 2016, included 14 East Coast Conference (ECC)/New York Collegiate Athletic Conference (NYCAC) regular season championships and six post-season titles.

A three-time National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) Northeast Regional Coach of the Year, he was named the 2006 NSCAA NCAA Division II National Coach of the Year. He was also the ECC/NYCAC Coach of the Year nine times and earned the BigAppleSoccer.com College Coach of the Year on two occasions and was its Person of the Year selection in 2006.

A lifelong contributor to Long Island soccer, DiRico was awarded the prestigious Adelphi University Woodruff Award in 2007.

Prior to his time at Dowling, DiRico served as an assistant varsity boys' coach at St. John the Baptist High School in West Islip as well as the head men's coach at SUNY Old Westbury.

He has also served on the coaching staff of the Long Island Junior Soccer League (LIJSL) Boys Select Program as well as with the Eastern New York Boys Olympic Development Program.

DiRico, a member of U.S. Soccer and United Soccer Coaches, holds a U.S. Soccer National B Coaching License and is a former member of the NCAA Division II Regional and National rankings and selection committees.

## Francis Prettitore among three invited to Ducks' spring training

Catcher, pitcher Brandon Sherman and outfielder Jesse Russo impressed Wally Backman, Ed Lynch, Lew Ford and president and GM Michael Pfaff.

By Jordan Lauterbach

[jordan.lauterbach@newsday.com](mailto:jordan.lauterbach@newsday.com) [@jlauterbach1](https://twitter.com/jlauterbach1)

Updated April 14, 2019 2:19 AM



The Long Island Ducks held open tryouts on Saturday, April 13, 2019, at Bethpage Ballpark (Credit: Newsday / Melissa Kramer)

It was Saturday afternoon and Bayville's Francis Prettitore already knew he'd be calling in sick on Monday. No, he didn't have a case of the flu. This was more like Ducks fever.

The 23-year-old catcher earned an invitation to spring training after performing well at the Ducks' open tryout at Bethpage Ballpark in Central Islip.

"It feels amazing," said Prettitore, who graduated from Mitchell College in Connecticut in 2017 and played in a men's league last year. "Playing baseball is my dream. I missed every second of it when I wasn't playing, and now that I get another opportunity to go out and compete, it'll be fun. I can't wait."

Prettitore, along with pitcher Brandon Sherman of Island Park and outfielder Jesse Russo of Westbury, emerged from a group of approximately 30 players hoping to impress Ducks manager Wally Backman, pitching coach Ed Lynch, hitting coach/outfielder Lew Ford and president and general manager Michael Pfaff. The trio

will have a chance to officially make the team out of spring training, which begins Monday. The Ducks will begin their 20th season, and Backman's first managing the club, on April 26 in York, Pennsylvania.

Players opened the morning with running and infield/outfield drills, followed by a scrimmage. Prettitore caught Backman's eye with his hustle and obvious passion for the game.

"I expect everybody to play hard for me," Backman said. "When I see a guy that's never played professional baseball busting his butt and doing the things that he did, I want to give him another look."

Prettitore, who works at GallettAir in West Babylon, said Backman pulled him aside and offered encouraging words, a boon for the young catcher's confidence.

"I think he'll be a good manager," Prettitore said. "I think he likes to get on people about working hard."

The Ducks already have two catchers with major-league experience on their roster, Ramon Cabrera and Hector Sanchez, but with catching talent at a premium in the Atlantic League, a surplus is always welcome.

"Catching is in short supply and Francis blocked balls well, covered the plate well and had a good, strong arm," Pfaff said. "Both Ed and Wally remarked about how much they liked the way he approached the game."

Russo, who played for Hofstra and SUNY-Old Westbury, played for Alpine (Texas) of the independent Pecos League last summer.

"He had a good swing, he doubled, hit a single, and the one out that he made was a hard out," Pfaff said. "He also stole a base. He showed good instincts, had a good nose for the ball in the outfield and definitely produced offensively as well as anyone in the tryout."

Russo, who gives private baseball lessons, said he isn't ready to stop playing professionally and praised the Ducks for a tryout that was "much more organized" than similar ones he's been to.

"I know that I want to keep playing professionally," said Russo, 22. "It would be great to play here. I figured I had a shot if I came here and did my thing. I'm very excited. It was an honor to be here among all these guys that come here, try hard, play and show themselves off. Only a couple stand out and those guys are the lucky ones. I just want to keep playing."

Sherman, who oozes confidence, impressed with a lively breaking ball — "nasty stuff," as Ford told Pfaff.

"I want to make the team," said Sherman, 23. "I want to play with the Ducks. I've got a lot of confidence in all my pitches. I'll face anybody. I'll face anybody in the major leagues, it doesn't matter. I'll throw against anybody."

If the next week and a half goes well, Sherman will have a chance to throw against the best that independent baseball has to offer.

SPORTS / HIGH SCHOOL / **SOFTBALL**

# Softball players to watch in 2019

**By Owen O'Brien**

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*March 25, 2019 4:49 PM*

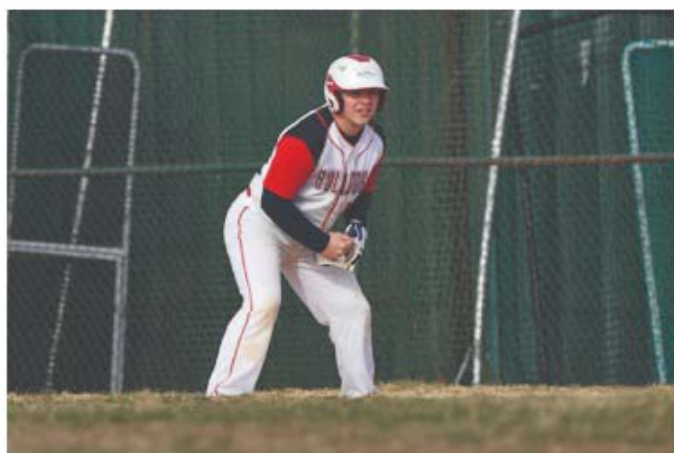
## **Christina Hassett, Farmingdale, P, Sr.**

Committed to **SUNY Old Westbury**, she hit .443 and had a 3.23 ERA and 86 strikeouts.



# Athlete Of The Week: Charlie Eisele

By Joseph Wolkin - April 18, 2019



Island Trees High School senior Charlie Eisele is heading to [SUNY Old Westbury](#).

(Photo by Island Trees School District)

The lactic acids are building up. The pain is becoming more severe. But that's OK. It's part of the game.

That's the mentality out of Charlie Eisele, a catcher for the Island Trees High School Bulldogs baseball squad. The senior plays through the pain, knowing the outcome is worth it in the end.

"I'm just worrying about taking it one game at a time," Eisele said. "I don't want to take it for granted. It's a wonderful time to be with the team."

Eisele is a three-year starter for the Bulldogs. He started the season as hot as anyone on the boys varsity baseball team, going eight for 15 with four doubles, a triple and seven RBIs.

"Baseball is his number one passion," head coach Joe D'Auria said. "He's been a starting catcher for us for three years. He's a great kid, hard worker and a good student."

But it isn't Eisele's offensive prowess that stands out to D'Auria. Rather, it's his ability behind the plate.

"He's great at framing and blocking balls in the dirt," D'Auria said. "He works all winter on it. Framing is a very important part of the game. He controls the game with his blocking ability."

Eisele catches at least three bullpen sessions per week during the winter. Not only does it keep him fresh, but it enables him to try out new techniques.

However, being a catcher means there is plenty of pain that comes with it. Fortunately for Eisele, he's been playing for so long that he has it down to a science of his own.

"After a game, I'll usually go for a run to get all of the lactic acids out of my knees and shoulders," he said. "I let it move around my system, so my body can break it down. Then, I'll ice, take a hot shower and get ready for bed."

The biggest concern for any catcher is the knees. Any minor injury can develop into something much more painful and extensive, possibly ruining any shot at moving up the ladder. But it's that toughness that Eisele believes has helped make him a leader on and off the field.

"You live and you learn," Eisele said. "I enjoy it. It's one of the most demanding positions on the field. I feel like my priority is being one of the toughest guys on the team."

Now, Eisele is wrapping up his high school career. The next stop is [SUNY Old Westbury](#), where he'll play Division III men's baseball. Until then, he's making sure he enjoys his last few months with the Bulldogs.

"There are so many great moments," he said, recalling his time with the Bulldogs. "Getting called up in my freshman year for a playoff game was a great experience. Getting a walk-off in the final home game last year was a wonderful experience. I loved it."

## Rafters add Guy and Quinn

🕒 MARCH 23, 2019 / 💬 0

### For Hub City Times

WISCONSIN RAPIDS — The Wisconsin Rapids Rafters have announced the addition of Liberty University utility player Jaylen Guy and Old Westbury right-handed pitcher Patrick Quinn to the 2019 roster.

Guy, a true freshman out of Greensboro, NC, has started all 16 games at center field for Liberty this season. He leads the team with nine stolen bases and is one of just three Liberty players to start every game. The six-foot utility player has hit .273 for the Flames, while driving in four runs and slugging .375. Jaylen started the season strong with two hits and scored three times in the opener. He has carried that hot start through the first half of the season as the Flames have taken down North Carolina and Wake Forest. Both teams are ranked in the top 20.



Guy

In high school, Jaylen was a two-time all-state honoree at Southeast Guilford High School and was chosen as part of the 2018 All-USA North Carolina All-Star team. In addition, Guy was a multi-sport athlete at Southeast Guilford and earned all-state honors in football as a junior.



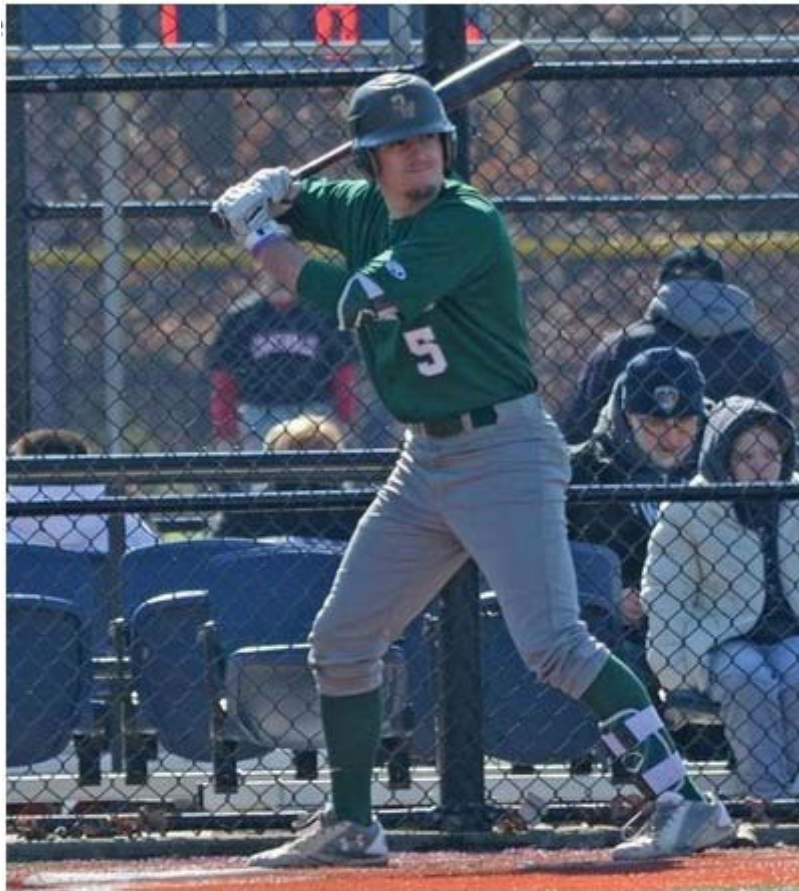
Quinn

Originally from Queens, NY, Patrick Quinn attended Robert F. Kennedy High School where he was a Public Schools Athletic League All-Star. This season, Quinn has totaled three appearances for SUNY College at Old Westbury. All three appearances were starts, where he has recorded nine strikeouts and surrendered seven hits over 9.2 innings of work. Old Westbury baseball was picked to finish sixth in the Skyline conference preseason poll and is currently 3-5-1 in Division III this year.



Posted: April 27, 2019

## Springfield and WPI play marathon day



*SUNY Old Westbury came away with 10-9 and 5-1 Skyline Conference regular-season finale wins Saturday afternoon against the Mount Saint Mary College Knights (12-16, 6-10 Skyline) from Jackie Robinson Athletic Complex. Old Westbury (20-14-1, 12-6 Skyline) improve to a 7-5 mark against Mount Saint Mary dating back to the 2015 campaign. The Panthers advance to the postseason for the 12th-straight season and will await seedings for next week's Skyline Conference Championship.*

Old Westbury athletics photo



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Monday's Sports Transactions

By The Associated Press

## COLLEGE

SUNY OLD WESTBURY — Named Anthony Vertuccio assistant softball coach.