



SUNY OLD WESTBURY

“IN THE NEWS”

SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER 2020

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SUNY Old Westbury



Cuomo: Focus shifting to college outbreaks in state's COVID-19 response

By Bart Jones and Newsday Staff

Updated September 8, 2020 9:45 PM

New York is seeing a growing number of COVID-19 cases on college campuses, with Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo saying Tuesday the state may suspend in-person classes for higher education institutions that register 100 or more confirmed positives over a two-week period.

The state also revised its travel quarantine list, adding Delaware, Maryland, Ohio and West Virginia to its advisory for travelers from places with high spread of the virus, who are required to self-quarantine upon arrival. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands were removed from the list.

As concerns grow over COVID-19 on campuses, Cuomo named seven schools that have seen outbreaks, including Hofstra University in Hempstead, along with SUNY Oneonta, SUNY Oswego, SUNY Fredonia, Cornell University, the University at Buffalo, and Colgate.

The state has ordered all Oneonta students to go home because of an outbreak there of more than 600 cases. Going forward, all colleges will be required to report to the state when they have more than 100 cases, and COVID-19 testing data from SUNY schools will be published online.

"In New York we have a problem," Cuomo said at a news briefing, as he listed the specific colleges. "That's all across the state, that's the entire state. That goes from Long Island all through upstate."

He added: "So this is going to be a problem. I am telling you that."

Hofstra took exception with Cuomo's remarks, with spokeswoman Karla Schuster calling his statements "misleading" and saying that a relatively small number of students had tested positive for COVID-19.

The university has seen 34 positive cases since Aug. 28, she said, a fraction of the 9,200 people on the university's campus. The school has followed testing, isolation, and quarantine protocols, she added, and has conducted "thousands of initial tests" while beginning surveillance and other testing.

But Cuomo spokesman Jack Sterne countered that Hofstra's confirmed cases are up to 74 among the student body. He said Cuomo "has been clear that COVID can easily spread on college campuses and must be monitored closely," adding, "there is obviously cause for concern at Hofstra, and the Department of Health will continue to treat this like what it is: an outbreak that must be watched."

Schuster later said Hofstra had not heard the number 74, "and we don't know what it represents or what period of time it represents." She said the school is following state guidelines in reporting positive tests "among enrolled students who are attending class on-campus, as well as employees, for a two-week period."

She added: "We went well beyond the Governor's guidelines in creating an aggressive initial testing protocol and ongoing testing."

An online database of COVID-19 cases at SUNY institutions shows other Long Island colleges also have recorded infections. In the last four weeks, there have been 22 cases at Stony Brook University, four cases at Farmingdale State College, and four cases at Nassau Community College, which the school said involved students taking remote classes only. Suffolk County Community College and **SUNY Old Westbury** did not report any cases in that period.

Cuomo said part of the problem with the colleges is that students are arriving on the campuses not just from different parts of New York State but from around the country and even the world.

Up to 108 colleges nationwide have accumulated 100 or more cases of COVID-19 even as the fall semester has barely begun, he said.

Increasing cases on campuses are "to be expected," he said. Many students want to socialize, but "those situations are increasing the spread."

He showed photographs of New York University students gathering in crowds at Washington Square Park in Manhattan during the weekend. Cuomo said many students at the gathering, which went on for hours, did not wear masks.

"Frankly, NYU security didn't do anything about it. The local police didn't do anything about it," Cuomo said. "You have NYU students who come from other countries."

In a statement, NYU spokesman John Beckman said the university "shares the Governor's concerns" and is investigating who participated in the gathering.

He said the event "was extremely troubling and inconsistent with the most basic recommendations about combating the spread of COVID-19, which NYU has been regularly communicating to students over the past months." In addition, Beckman said "NYU has been examining the videotape to see if any students were involved and can be identified," adding they will be "subject to sanction."

NYU has suspended more than 20 students this year for violations of its rules, he said, though the university has not found "any indications" that the event was organized "by anyone affiliated with NYU" and said its security officers have "no power of arrest" or jurisdiction on the city streets. NYU has conducted more than 22,600 tests, with a total of 27 positives, for a positive rate of approximately 0.1%, the statement said.

SUNY's LI Schools Look Good As COVID Tracker Debuts

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

By GREGORY ZELLER //

Note to the party crowds on SUNY's 64 statewide campuses: Big Doctor is watching.

With colleges and universities across the land reporting **significant COVID-19 outbreaks** – and a coronavirus cluster already closing one state university campus for **the entire fall semester** – Albany and SUNY are getting a little more proactive, with the launch of a system-wide COVID-19 tracking system.

The **new dashboard**, officially introduced Sunday by Gov. Andrew Cuomo and SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras, provides updated information on administered tests and confirmed cases across the university system, as well as daily counts of quarantined students, available per-campus quarantine rooms and other important pandemic-related data.

The dashboard can be configured to report on the entire system or any combination of SUNY's 64 campuses, including individual schools.

On Tuesday morning, for instance, the tracker reported 60 new positive cases across the entire system since SUNY reported 54 new system-wide positives on Sept. 1. But Long Island's SUNY schools – **Stony Brook University, Farmingdale State College, SUNY Old Westbury, Nassau Community College** and **Suffolk County Community College** – reported only two new positives since Sep. 1, when 17 were discovered.

Both of Tuesday's new SUNY/Long Island positives were reported at SBU, where all 17 of those positive cases were found Sept. 1.

The dashboard is being tailored on the fly and new tracking categories are in the works. The big ideas behind the publicly accessible tracking system are transparency and, in the case of an outbreak, more efficient containment efforts, Malatras said Sunday.

"As coronavirus cases spring up on our college campuses, we are reviewing real-time case data around the clock," the chancellor added. "This data is crucial to helping SUNY make quick, smart decisions that contain COVID-19 and protect our campus communities."

Cuomo called the SUNY tracking system an example of "immediate action," with **tens of thousands of U.S. collegians** suffering fresh COVID-19 infections and the long-foretold "second wave" looming.

"This new dashboard will help students, parents and faculty stay informed with the latest data," Cuomo said in a statement. "I urge our SUNY community to stay vigilant as the virus continues to be a national and global crisis – wear masks, socially distance and be smart."



SUNY names officer-in-charge at Old Westbury

There's a new leader at SUNY Old Westbury.

Theresa Miller, SUNY's senior vice chancellor for strategic initiatives and chief diversity, began to serve as officer-in-charge of the campus, on Sept. 1.

Miller is serving in this capacity as the search for a permanent president nears completion, according to SUNY.

She takes the helm after the campus' President Calvin O. Butts III stepped down after 20 years of service.

"Dr. Teresa Miller's commitment to diversity and depth of experience as a professor and a leader on campus and at SUNY system administration will benefit the SUNY Old Westbury community during their leadership transition and as campus begins the fall 2020 semester," SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras said in a statement.

"As a member of SUNY's leadership team as campus reopening plans were reviewed, Dr. Miller is well aware of the planning that has enabled campuses to resume classes and is prepared to make additional changes to keep our students and the communities we serve safe," he added.

"President Butts has led a rebuilding of SUNY Old Westbury both in growing enrollment with an increasingly diverse student body, and in renewing the campus infrastructure," Malatras said. "And, more importantly, he has inspired a generation of students passing through Old Westbury to earn their degree and has created a culture of community service. We thank him for his years of service to SUNY."

Miller will continue her role at SUNY during the SUNY Old Westbury leadership transition. In this

role, she works on the leadership and direction of strategic initiatives and sets the goals and expectations for diversity and inclusion across SUNY and its campuses. She also leads PRODiG, designed to increase diversity among faculty ranks and guide campus hiring.

She has been instrumental in leading diverse teams of individuals and coordinating university-wide strategies that ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Miller joined SUNY System Administration from the University at Buffalo, serving as a longtime member of the faculty at the university's Law School, earning her tenure and a promotion to the rank of full professor of law. She also served as the university's chief diversity officer and vice provost for inclusive excellence.

— ADINA GENN

POWER LIST

The 2020 Higher Education Power 50

The most influential leaders of New York colleges and universities.

Colleges and universities have been battered by the coronavirus pandemic, which continues to shut down campuses across New York. They're a center of debate and protest over police brutality and institutional racism, with students and faculty alike taking to the streets. And these institutions of higher education are also dealing with perennial challenges, such as rising costs and shaky funding. In response, college and university leaders are finding creative ways to adjust and adapt while maintaining an unshakable focus on their fundamental mission of educating students and preparing them for purposeful and productive lives. City & State's Education Power 50 highlights the chancellors, presidents, deans and other academic officers who are navigating New York's top institutions through this unprecedented period of crisis.

48. Teresa Miller

Officer-in-Charge, SUNY Old Westbury



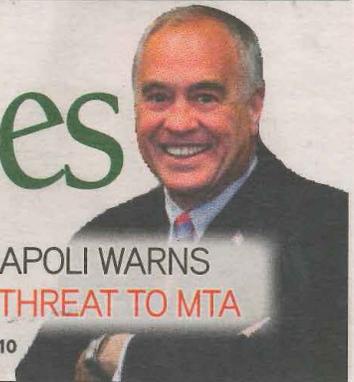
Teresa Miller recently stepped into the role vacated by the Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, who spent two decades at the helm of SUNY Old Westbury. As the college's senior vice chancellor, Miller was the driving force behind an initiative designed to increase faculty diversity and inclusion on campus. A respected legal scholar, Miller has spent decades working on prison reform initiatives in New York state.



BACK TO SCHOOL

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Roslyn Times



DiNAPOLI WARNS OF THREAT TO MTA

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MEN ARRESTED AFTER ALBERTSON BURGLARY

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SUNY official to lead Old Westbury

BY ROSE WELDON

The State University of New York has announced that one of its top officials will take charge of SUNY Old Westbury as the institution continues its search for a permanent president.

SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras said last week that Teresa A. Miller, who currently serves as SUNY's senior vice chancellor of strategic initiatives and chief diversity officer, would serve as officer-in-charge of SUNY Old Westbury starting Tuesday, after the school's current president, the Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, leaves campus following more than 20 years of service.

Prior to joining SUNY, Miller served as a professor of law at the University at Buffalo, also serving as that university's first chief diversity officer and vice provost for inclusive excellence, establishing an Office for Inclusive Excellence during her term, and founding the university's Inclusive Excellence Leadership Council.

As an academic, Miller, who attended Duke University for her undergraduate work and completed her J.D. at Harvard Law School, specializes in immigration law, criminal procedure and prisoner law, having written numer-



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNY

Teresa A. Miller, SUNY senior vice chancellor of strategic initiatives and chief diversity officer, will lead SUNY Old Westbury during its search for a new president.

ous journal articles on the subjects. Two of her most prominent projects include

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SUNY official to lead Old Westbury

Continued from Page 4

serving as a member of an American Bar Association task force that rewrote "The Standards on the Legal Status of Prisoners" in 2010, and "Encountering Attica," a documentary short about mass incarceration that she produced and co-directed.

"Dr. Teresa Miller's commitment to diversity and depth of experience as a professor and a leader on campus and at SUNY system administration will benefit the SUNY Old Westbury community during their leadership

transition and as campus begins the fall 2020 semester," Malatras said in a statement. "As a member of SUNY's leadership team as campus reopening plans were reviewed, Dr. Miller is well aware of the planning that has enabled campuses to resume classes and is prepared to make additional changes to keep our students and the communities we serve safe."

Miller's official title at SUNY Old Westbury will be "officer-in-charge" as the university continues its search for a new president upon the retirement of

Butts, who was originally scheduled to leave office in January.

"President Butts has led a rebuilding of SUNY Old Westbury both in growing enrollment with an increasingly diverse student body, and in renewing the campus infrastructure," Malatras said. "More importantly, he has inspired a generation of students passing through Old Westbury to earn their degree and has created a culture of community service. We thank him for his years of service to SUNY."

No. 528: Speak Softly, Celebrate Cultural Diversity, Raise The Titanic — And Enjoy A Blueberry Popsicle!

SEPTEMBER 2, 2020

BUT FIRST, THIS

The university of diversity: They're still mixing it up at SUNY Old Westbury, which has snagged a third straight Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from [INSIGHT Into Diversity](#) magazine.

Only 90 U.S. colleges and universities will claim 2020 HEED Awards in the November 2020 issue of INSIGHT, higher education's oldest and largest diversity-focused publication. The national honor, which recognizes U.S. colleges and universities for outstanding commitments to diversity and inclusion, has become a perennial feather in the cap for SUNY Old Westbury, which boasts a student body that's 60 percent non-white and now bills itself "the most racially and ethnically diverse institution of higher education in the SUNY system."

Teresa Miller – the SUNY senior vice chancellor for strategic initiatives and chief diversity officer who's serving as officer-in-charge while SUNY Old Westbury searches for a [permanent successor](#) to longtime President Calvin Butts III – called the third straight HEED Award a "proudful moment" for the school. "We have enjoyed extraordinary recognitions ... in recent years reflecting our commitment to improving access, understanding and engagement around diversity, equity and inclusion," Miller said.

No. 533: On Donkey Kong, Arctic Atmospheres And Neptune – Plus, Hollywood On The North Shore

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020

BUT FIRST, THIS

Lasting impression: The SUNY Board of Trustees has appointed the Rev. Calvin Butts III as president emeritus of the [State University of New York at Old Westbury](#), just months after the longtime president stepped down.

The trustees made the appointment at their Sept. 15 meeting, citing Butts' "20 years of distinguished service to the college." Among the feathers in the president emeritus' mortarboard: the longest tenure of any SUNY Old Westbury president, impressive growth in both faculty and student enrollment and more than \$200 million in capital improvements.

Upon the outgoing president's retirement earlier this year, SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras said Butts "led a rebuilding of SUNY Old Westbury" that focused on infrastructure, diversity and other critical factors. "More importantly, he has inspired a generation of students passing through Old Westbury to earn their degree and has created of culture of community service," Malatras added. "We thank him for his years of service to SUNY."

The Root 100 - The Most Influential African Americans in 2020 - 62: Ajón Crump

Oleg Dyachenko

September 21, 2020



When the coronavirus started making its way across America earlier this year, Ajón Crump spoke to a cousin of hers, a nurse in Florida, who said that her sneakers were wearing out because she was standing on her feet for hours while walking the floors of the hospital. It [sparked an idea in Crump](#) to gift new kicks to nurses working hard in hospitals across the country in the fight against the coronavirus. In April, while still a student at **SUNY Old Westbury**, she launched the [#NikesForNurses fundraising campaign on GoFundMe](#) (it's now called [#NursesKeepGoing](#)) in hopes of treating about 20 nurses to brand-new shoes on their doorstep. By the end of July, the campaign had raised thousands-making it possible for Crump to deliver sneakers to [more than 200 nurses](#), sometimes by hand. The Nurses Keep Going campaign is still going strong.

How To Open New Doors With Continuing Education Classes

TIMOTHY BOLGER
OCTOBER 15, 202

The coronavirus pandemic has many people exploring new career goals, hobbies, and expanding their minds. And one of the best ways to do all three is to enroll in continuing education courses.

Continuing education courses are noncredit classes offered at colleges and universities on Long Island as well as at local libraries and many area school districts. Offerings range from one-time classes on painting or boosting one's self esteem to a series of lectures on cooking or learning new technologies — and virtually every topic in between.

The best part? Many are now offered remotely due to COVID-19, making it easier for those who have trouble fitting continuing education into their busy schedules. Here is how to find such classes.

SUNY SCHOOLS

There are more than a dozen colleges and universities on the Island and of those, five are a part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system: Stony Brook University, Farmingdale State College, [SUNY College at Old Westbury](#), Nassau Community College, and Suffolk County Community College. Each boasts an array of continuing ed classes drawing on their top-notch professors' expertise. Find offerings online.

GCHS student accepted into robotics engineering program

September 10, 2020



Diego Andres Cadavid, a freshman at the Garden City High School, will begin attending The Robotics Program offered by the Institute of Merit. This program runs in conjunction with The Institute of Creative Problem Solving for Gifted and Talented Students, located at SUNY/College at Old Westbury, NY. This Robotics program consists of 12 Saturday sessions, starting in September, and continuing through the end of December 2020. This is a challenging and motivational learning experience driven by the student's own intelligence, invention and inspiration. Students will be working in small groups with an open-source electronic prototyping platform called Arduino. At the completion of the program, in order to continue their education, students will be allowed to take home their SnappyXO robotics kits.

Back in September 2017, while Diego was in 6th grade at the GCMS, he was accepted into the Institute of Creative Problem for Gifted & Talented Students. The Institute of Creative Problem Solving for

Gifted and Talented Students is one of the most competitive programs in the nation. Each year approximately 700 outstanding students are nominated by principals of schools on Long Island for 84 available spots. Selection by the Institute implies that a student is among the top one-tenth of one percent of all students in mathematics on Long Island in his or her grade. The Institute's mission is to enhance the problem-solving skills of exceptionally talented students using advanced mathematics and creative thinking.

The Institute is tuition free, providing equal access to all qualified students from Long Island and promoting underrepresented populations in the mathematics, science and engineering fields.

After completing the 20 Saturday program, in 2017-2018, Diego attended the BNL (Brookhaven National Lab) and MoMath gifted program from September 2019 to May 2020. This program is only available to students who successfully complete the Institute of Creative Problem-Solving Program. In November 2019, while at BNL, Diego had the opportunity to meet, in person, mathematician, Po-Shen Loh from Carnegie Mellon University. Dr. Loh is a Mathematics genius who devised a wildly simple new way to solve quadratic equations.

Besides being a member of American MENSA since 2015, Diego also plays tennis, clarinet at the GC school band and saxophone at GC school jazz band.

O. Westbury professor, Manhasset resident nabs grant

By **Rose Weldon**

October 16, 2020



Manhasset resident and SUNY Old Westbury professor Michael Kavic received National Science Foundation grant to research the burst of radio waves produced by the merger of two neutron stars.

A SUNY Old Westbury professor and resident of Manhasset has received a six-figure grant from the National Science Foundation in order to continue his work studying star collisions.

The school announced this week that Michael Kavic, an associate professor in the college's chemistry and physics department, has received a grant of \$189,233 from the foundation in order to research the burst of radio waves produced by the merger of two neutron stars.

Through the use of a long-wavelength array radio telescope, Kavic and his research partner will study the extreme conditions created in this explosion to test groundbreaking theories about the nature of space and time.

"The collision of neutron stars produces an energetic explosion that releases 200 million suns worth of energy, and in the process produces gold and platinum equal to the mass of several Earths," Kavic said. "This grant will allow us the opportunity to better understand that first burst of low-frequency light from this type of explosion. Because of its dramatic nature, this type of event opens a new window on the fundamental nature of the universe."

By studying long-wavelength radio waves emanating from space, Kavic and his colleagues are monitoring among the earliest signals available when neutrons stars collide in events termed a kilanova.

This work builds on Kavic's past research surrounding a kilanova found in 2017, where he was among researchers around the world witnessing the collision of two dead stars 130 million light years away.

Kavic, a resident of Manhasset, has worked at SUNY Old Westbury since 2018 and teaches such courses as astronomy and the structure of physics. He previously taught at Long Island University and the College of New Jersey.

Over the course of his career, Kavic has authored or co-authored a total of 55 journal articles, and his work has appeared in several publications including the *Astrophysical Journal*, *Journal of Cosmology and Astroparticle Physics*, and the *Journal of High Energy Physics*. Kavic earned a Ph.D. in physics from Virginia Tech, a master's degree in physics from the University of North Carolina and a bachelor's of science in both physics and astrophysics from the University of Minnesota.

The National Science Foundation funds research and education in many fields of science and engineering through grants and cooperative agreements with more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the United States. The foundation accounts for about one-fourth of federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

Roslyn Times



**ELECTION
GUIDE 2020**
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**ROSLYN DISTRICT
RANKED 5TH IN STATE**
PAGE 8

**CLAVIN, CURRAN CLASH
OVER TAX POLLS**
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O. Westbury prof nabs science grant

Manhasset resident to study stars

BY ROSE WELDON

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PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNY OLD WESTBURY

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Grant to study the stars

Continued from Page 2

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With NSF Boost, Deep-Space Detective Eyes Death Stars



Big-ish bangs: Kilanovae aren't the booms that started it all, but they could help explain it all, according to SUNY-Old Westbury astronomer Michael Kavic, who's taking a closer look.

OCTOBER 13, 2020

By GREGORY ZELLER //

A relatively small federal grant will propel a [SUNY-Old Westbury](#) instructor deep into the ocean of space, where he'll track radio waves produced by the spectacular collision of two long-dead stars. The [National Science Foundation](#) has awarded Michael Kavic, an associate professor in the SUNY College at Old Westbury's Chemistry and Physics Department, a mere \$189,233 – a pittance, actually, in an age of million-dollar research grants.

But the award will buy Kavic, a Manhasset resident and oft-scientifically published astronomer, valuable time on a long-wavelength radio telescope in central New Mexico – part of the [Long Wavelength Array](#), a low-frequency radio telescope managed by a host of academic and federal partners, including the [University of New Mexico](#), the [U.S. Naval Research Laboratory](#) and NASA's [Jet Propulsion Laboratory](#).

Not to be confused with the nearby [Very Large Array](#) (among Jodie

Foster's favorite haunts in "Contact"), the LWA is known for high-sensitivity, high-resolution images in the low-frequency range of 10 to 88 MHz – a previously unopened astronomical window through which scientists can view unexplored swaths of the electromagnetic spectrum.

Kavic and research partner John Simonetti, a [Virginia Tech](#) physics and astronomy professor, will use the telescope time to research the radio-wave bursts produced by the merger of two neutron stars – the collapsed cores of two supergiant stars, each as much as 25 times bigger than our own sun, drawn together by the relentless forces of gravity to create a stellar event known as a kilanovae.



The kilanovae converts all that dead star-stuff into immense amounts of energy and creates other extreme conditions – for instance, it releases gold and platinum in quantities equal to the mass of multiple Earths, according to Kavic, who will glimpse hi-res images of these distant, massive explosions through the LWA.



Michael Kavic: Neutron dance.

"The collision of neutron stars produces an energetic explosion that releases 200 million suns' worth of energy," the astronomer noted. "This grant will allow us the opportunity to better understand that first burst of low-frequency light from this type of explosion."

And that will help Kavic et al test groundbreaking theories about the nature of space and time, work that builds on the scientist's previous kilanovae research. In 2017, Kavic – who earned NASA research grants while teaching at [Long Island University](#) and the [College of New Jersey](#) before coming to SUNY-Old Westbury in 2018 – was part of a science team that observed an ancient kilanovae some 130 million lightyears away.

Among their discoveries: actual, detectable [space-time ripples](#), emanating from the kilanovae in waves.

Kavic, who earned his PhD in physics from Virginia Tech and has appeared often in peer-reviewed publications like the [Astrophysical Journal](#) and the [Journal of High Energy Physics](#), believes his small NSF grant will help answer some of the largest questions about nature itself, by helping him look back in time and track those hard-to-see radio-wave bursts.

"Because of its dramatic nature, this type of event opens a new window on the fundamental nature of the universe," Kavic said.

Tech-Agility Webinar: The Must Have Skill to Succeed in School and Business

LONG ISLAND PRESS
SEPTEMBER 15, 2020

Workers must hone their tech-agility — the ability to quickly adapt to new, different, disruptive, expansive, or convergent technologies — to succeed in a post-pandemic office environment, experts say.

The impact of the pandemic on our day-to-day life is unprecedented. COVID-19 changed the way we communicate and how we learn and conduct business. Tech-agility is no longer a buzz word but a skill set students and professionals need to possess to move forward in the post-pandemic world. That's the word from two deans of top business and technology colleges and universities on Long Island, who will share their advice with viewers of a free Schneps Media webinar dubbed Tech-Agility: The Must Have Skill to Succeed in School and Business

“Students are preparing for self-governed time, discipline, and keeping up,” said Babak D. Beheshti, Ph.D., dean of the College of Engineering and Computing Sciences at New York Institute of Technology. “Our future was going to happen. COVID-19 accelerated it.”

Also speaking at the Sept. 17 webinar will be Raj Devasagayam, Ph.D., dean of the School of Business at SUNY College at Old Westbury. Paul Trapani, President of Long Island Software & Technology Network (LISTnet), will moderate this informative discussion and interactive Q&A.

Devasagayam said that the flex learning — a variation of the hybrid learning model in which students learn from experts on their own schedule, instead of in a set time and location — currently being used in schools to curb the spread of coronavirus is a stepping stone for students to see how offices will operate in the future.

“They can learn from experts at their convenience which didn't exist and now is the norm,” he said. “The world of tech accelerated in response to COVID-19. As business teachers we need to adapt.”

Tech-Agility Webinar: The Must Have Skill to Succeed in School and Business is scheduled for 11 a.m. Sept. 17. To register, visit SchnepsMedia.com/webinars

Tech-Agility Webinar: The Must Have Skill to Succeed in School and Business

LONG ISLAND PRESS

SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

Workers need to proactively learn how to adapt to technological advances that businesses are increasingly employing amid the rise of telecommuting during the coronavirus pandemic, business and tech experts say.

That was the word from two Long Island college deans and a tech industry advocate who shared their expertise in a webinar titled *Tech-Agility: The Must Have Skill to Succeed in School and Business*, which was hosted by Schneps Media, the parent company of the *Long Island Press*.

"This has always been important as technology has really permeated all aspects of business and all businesses have had to adopt technology in one form or another," said Paul Trapani, president of Long Island Software & Technology Network (LISTnet).

But the COVID-19 crisis that forced many businesses to have employees work from home accelerated the pace at which new technology has been used in the workplace, the experts say. To keep up with the changes, workers need to be constantly learning.

"Working from home has brought a whole bunch of new paradigms with it," said Babak D. Beheshti, Ph.D., dean of the College of Engineering and Computing Sciences at New York Institute of Technology. "Employees need to be more agile and self reliant to teach themselves new techniques and concepts to keep functioning in a business environment that's now operating remotely."

He noted that with the lack of face-to-face meetings, workers need to be more convincing in pitching new ideas since they lose the personal touch.

"Technology has become the center of it all," he added. "We need to be digitally savvy and to adapt to technology very quickly."

Raj Devasagayam, Ph.D., dean of the School of Business at **SUNY College at Old Westbury**, said that while being a life-long learner is key to keeping up with the advances in technology, he cautioned that workers should pace themselves.

He quoted a saying commonly used in the military: "Slow is smooth and smooth is fast."

"When you're planning, when you're strategizing, slow is good," he said. "Once you're operational, quick is needed."



No. 540: LI's Best Chances, The 'Garbo Of The Skies' And 'Leaderism,' Explained

OCTOBER 16, 2020

BUT FIRST, THIS

Remote controls: Multiple SUNY College at Old Westbury professors, representing the college's School of Education and School of Arts and Sciences, have published new studies focused primarily on pandemic-inspired collegiate pivots.

First up are Professor Judith Lloyd, Associate Professor Ruomei Gao and Assistant Professor Youngjoo Kim of SUNY-Old Westbury's Chemistry and Physics Department, who collaborated on "A Desirable Combination for Undergraduate Chemistry Laboratories: Face-to-Face Teaching with Computer-Aided, Modifiable Program for Grading and Assessment." [Published in September](#) in the peer-reviewed Journal of Chemical Education, the article examines the delicate balance between traditional face-to-face instruction and remote learning, particularly regarding laboratory sciences.



Flying solo, meanwhile, was English/adolescent education Assistant Professor Nicole Sieben, who recently shared "[Tell Your Story ... Share Hope](#)" in Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education. The peer-reviewed article emphasizes storytelling as an educational tool and encourages students to "tell their stories amidst a pandemic that upended their semesters and, for many, their lives," according to the article's abstract, including "feedback on their level of comfort with the change of instructional mode from face-to-face to remote instruction."



Bayside resident Steve Behar announces campaign for City Council

By [Carlotta Mohamed](#)

Posted on [October 29, 2020](#)



South Bayside resident Steve Behar, who has been active in state, local and national politics for many years, has launched his campaign to represent Council District 23.

The district is currently represented by Councilman Barry Grodenchik, who announced he will [retire from office](#) when his term ends in 2021.

Council District 23 includes the neighborhoods of Bayside Hills, Bellerose, Douglaston, Floral Park, Fresh Meadows, Glen Oaks, Hollis, Hollis Hills, Holliswood, Little Neck, New Hyde Park, Oakland Gardens and Queens Village.

Behar served as Grodenchik's campaign manager when he ran for office in 2015, and stayed on as counsel handling legal and policy issues, including legislation.

He is also the owner of his solo-law practice, as well as a real estate business, and he is also a professor at [SUNY Old Westbury](#). His education background includes four degrees — three of which are masters degrees studying finance and management, a JD law degree and a master of laws in securities and financial regulation.

Behar's long-term experience as both an activist and a public servant has prepared him to serve as a councilman for the district, he said.

"I certainly know and understand the people and what's important," Behar said. "I know how to get things done, who to call, what buttons to press to do things, and have results on the ground."

This isn't the first time Behar is running for office. In 2009, he ran for City Council and then for State Assembly in 2010.

"I was waiting for an opportunity to run again and this wasn't the opportunity I was hoping for," Behar said. "I had hoped that Barry would run again for reelection and I would remain his counsel, but instead he has decided to retire and I am running for office."

Behar said his campaign is focusing first and foremost on the current government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The virus has become the biggest issue in the country and across the world. We need to make sure that people stay safe and healthy, especially the seniors," Behar said. "We also need to make sure that our schools are safe and kids can learn."

Another important issue on Behar's agenda is the creation of jobs and affordable housing for residents in the district.

"Our economy is in a depression and we need to work on jobs and not turn away jobs," Behar said. "Unlike some people, I don't believe that job creation and affordable housing are mutually exclusive. I think that we can create good paying jobs that give good benefits and healthcare, working to create affordable housing for people."

As for property tax reform, Behar said City Hall has balanced the budget on backs of middle-class homeowners and condo/co-op owners saying it's a burden that needs to be lifted, and is prevalent in the district.

"Co-ops and condos are taxed as commercial properties — that is a state issue, but the City Council can use its moral suasion to push Albany to fix that inequality," Behar said. "We want to make sure that people who have lived in this district their whole lives, don't get forced to move because property taxes and housing prices have gone up."

As the fight for social and racial justice erupted this year following the death of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers, Behar is on the frontlines committed to fighting for change, as he has done in the past.

"After the death of George Floyd, anyone can see on my social media that I've marched dozens of times for social and racial justice," Behar said. "Before that we were protesting Trump's Muslim ban at JFK Airport, and the administration's concentration camps and separation of children from their parents."

Over the years Behar has worked to make northeast Queens a better place to live and work.

A member of local Democratic clubs for decades, Behar is also on the board of directors and general counsel of the New American Voters Association (NOVA), which educates and helps immigrants become citizens, how to vote and the importance of voting.

Additionally, he has worked with civic organizations in the district and other parts of eastern Queens helping with pro-bono legal work. He has helped organized a legal establishment of the Haitian American Political Action Committee of NY (HAPAC) and the Muslim PAC of NY.

As for senior citizens in the district, Behar said he's committed to providing them with the resources they need.

"We have a lot of seniors who depend on their elected officials and the staff to help them through the maze to get the aide they need," Behar said. "There are seniors out there who need care and I think that is the job of our elected officials."

Fair Media Council dubs Long Island Press ‘Best Newspaper’

By [Bronx Times](#)

Posted on [September 23, 2020](#)

The Fair Media Council, a Bethpage-based nonprofit media watchdog group, honored the Long Island Press with the title of Best Newspaper at the 2020 Folio Awards, which were held virtually Tuesday.

The judges based their decision upon review of the [November 2019 edition](#) of the Press, the region’s premier news and lifestyle publication, which was submitted as one of the best examples of the monthly newspaper.

“Take me back to those times,” Lew Leone, the vice president and general manager of WNYW-FOX 5, who presented the award, joked while recalling the pre-pandemic holiday season in which the issue was printed.

Retired News12 Long Island anchor Carol Silva, who recently announced that she has beaten cancer, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the ceremony. In addition to Best Newspaper, three Press staffers shared two more Folio awards for their coverage of local news.

“For our judging process, we bring together about 50 distinguished community leaders with varied backgrounds and interests to judge news and social media campaigns using a scorecard method,” said Fair Media Council Executive Director Jaci Clement. “Developed with the help of Bob Greene, the late Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter from Newsday, reporting news stories are scored for relevance, quality, originality and completeness, which really illustrates the storytelling and editing ability of a newsroom grappling with the public’s diminishing attention span.”

Business reporter Claude Solnik won a Folio in the Consumer News category for his story about local water filtration sales representatives taking advantage of the public’s fears about the quality of drinking water on Long Island.

Solnik’s story, “[Water Worries: Companies Selling Costly Filters Target Long Island](#),” also won a pair of awards from the New York Press Association [last month](#).

Reporter Alan Krawitz and Editor-In-Chief Timothy Bolger also shared a Folio for Continuing School Story with their work on a [series of stories](#) about the troubled Hempstead School District, which has struggled with corruption scandals, low graduation rates, and other issues.

In addition to those honors, Press intern Brianna Knibbs took home a pair of Folio Awards for stories she wrote as executive editor of The Catalyst, the student newspaper at [SUNY College at Old Westbury](#).

Knibbs was a Folio for Best News Story for her story about [protest against mold](#) in campus dorms and Best Continuing Coverage for her coverage of [Sean Bell’s death](#) at the hands of New York City police officers.

LONG ISLAND

Illuminating history: Students' research lifts up stories of African Americans on LI

Updated September 29, 2020 10:53 AM

Maine Maid Inn: Myth vs. fact

By Wilko Martínez-Cachero Vas

It's easy to walk past One North Mediterranean Soul in Jericho without realizing that the seafood restaurant was once the Maine Maid Inn, a place at the heart of a debate about the Underground Railroad on Long Island.

Efforts are increasingly being made to correct the historical record, especially pertaining to slavery. The New York Times' 1619 project, an ongoing initiative that "aims to reframe" American history by discussing the "consequences of slavery and contributions of Black Americans," is part of the movement. Museums around the country, including on Long Island, are trying to change people's perceptions of an often-misrepresented chapter in U.S. history.

An Underground Railroad on Long Island could have presented a route to freedom for enslaved people, but historians and experts are struggling to determine whether it existed here.



In 2013, [SUNY Old Westbury](#) professor Kathleen Velsor published "The Underground Railroad on Long Island: Friends in Freedom," a book discussing the possibility of an Underground Railroad on the Island. The book posits that the secret system for helping enslaved people escape started around Hicks Street in Brooklyn Heights, went east past Queens into Long Island, then largely congregated around Jericho and Westbury. A stop in Oyster Bay allowed enslaved people to cross the Long Island Sound into Connecticut and eventually escape to Canada, according to the book.

Velsor's book is the only widely distributed work supporting an Underground Railroad on Long Island. The book includes a bibliography and 173 footnotes, many of which reference oral histories. "Nobody else has been able to put the story together, so that's why I'm the expert," she said.

Velsor's book describes Underground Railroad stops from the Jackson Home in Wantagh to the Ketchum farm and Jackson/Malcolm Home (related to the Wantagh Jacksons) in Jericho. These places were owned by Quakers, who led the abolitionist movement here. The Wantagh site takes its name from the Jackson family that was believed to have arrived on Long Island about 1643. Robert Jackson was among the Town of Hempstead's founders.

Velsor's book quotes an article from a local publication that said the Jacksons helped enslaved people escape from the South before the Civil War, potentially making their home a "final destination."

Velsor depicts Jericho as vital to the Underground Railroad, its families helping enslaved people to freedom. The area's most notable stop was the Maine Maid, according to her book. The inn, given town landmark status in 2012, was home to Valentine Hicks, a Quaker who was the son-in-law of prominent anti-slavery activist Elias Hicks. A secret stairway behind a linen closet supposedly led to a hiding spot for runaway enslaved people.

But the theory has its detractors.

"Give me a break," said Joysetta Pearse, manager of the African American Museum of Nassau County, in Hempstead. "They had cellars [to smuggle rum]. It wasn't a secret place to hide slaves."

Evidence of the Underground Railroad on Long Island relies on oral histories. Documents are few — understandable given the circumstances under which people would have housed runaways.

But if Long Island's Underground Railroad amounts to a campfire story, what is true?

For instance, Velsor writes that the Jackson/Malcolm House in Jericho is "believed to have maintained [the Jackson] family's interest in supporting the freedom efforts of enslaved people," while the Ketchum farm allegedly housed runaway enslaved people. Velsor points out, however, that such arrangements were a secret — even from members of the Jericho Quaker Meeting.

Setalcott Indians purportedly passed down stories of helping enslaved people in the Three Village area, accounts that rely on word of mouth.

Another possibility is that the Underground Railroad counted on American Indians' knowledge of waterways and hunting trails around the East End. They used their "expert hunting and maritime skills as guides," said Georgette Grier-Key, executive director and chief curator of the Eastville Community Historical Society.

"There's secrecy involved with [the Underground Railroad], so it's really hard as a historian to actually document it," said Jennifer Anderson, an associate professor of history at Stony Brook who is writing a book on slavery. "It's something that gets mythologized."

The Underground Railroad was further obscured after 1850 when the Fugitive Slave Act was passed. "It [became] a federal crime to help a fugitive slave to do anything, so that's when it really had to become secret," said Lynda Day, professor of Africana studies at Brooklyn College. "People were flouting the possibility of arrest by federal agents if they were involved in it."

Documenting the Underground Railroad 200 years later seems inconceivable.

"When people say, 'My home was a stop on the underground railroad' ... they were so secretive about it for obvious reasons that it's like the spy network," said Steve Boerner, archivist and president of the Cedar Swamp Historical Society in Old Brookville. Boerner said it is tough to separate fact from legend about the Underground Railroad. Nevertheless, he also thinks that the Quakers played an important role locally.

"With the maritime setting and this really strong Quaker heritage, there are very strong suggestions, but it's hard to say exactly like how formalized those things were," agreed Anderson.

And said Day, Quakers "did make their houses available for the Underground Railroad."

Much of the research in Velsor's book came through her husband's family, whose lineage can be traced to Quaker ancestors on Long Island. She points to those Quaker roots to support her work, but said those connections have caused skepticism.

Suffolk Closeup: Education in transition

By [Karl Grossman](#)

MY NEW SEMESTER as a professor at **SUNY/College at Old Westbury** began this week and I'm teaching online. Most classes at the college are online other than those dependent on campus facilities such as courses utilizing science labs, art studios and media production.

It's quite a transition from "face-to-face" to "virtual."

As a college professor — and I've been at **SUNY/Old Westbury** since 1978 — I emphasize performance in my teaching. This is, in part, from my own college experience, which included a few boring professors. Also, I think performance might be in my blood. My maternal grandfather, Joseph Hyman, as a child, was in the Yiddish theatre troupe of Boris Thomashefsky.

My brother, Stefan, is a famous blues guitarist. Our cousin, Steve Grossman, who died last month, was a jazz saxophonist who played with Miles Davis and Elvin Jones. Jon Fadem, a cousin's son, is an outstanding funk/rock/blues guitarist.

My barometer for teaching in my first year at **Old Westbury** was Stephen White.

Stephen couldn't stand being bored. When a presentation got dull, his eyes would close. Making my teaching lively and interesting and keeping Stephen wide-eyed and engaged became my mission and model for the next 42 years. He went on to graduate school at Stony Brook University and a promising career, but Stephen, an African-American, was shot dead by a police officer in Nassau County.

I think I do pretty well as a professor. I've been regularly promoted, and at SUNY/Old Westbury excellence in teaching is vital for promotion. Also important: writing books — I've authored six — and college and community service. I've risen up the academic ladder to full professor.

When the COVID-19 plague hit and we received training at the college for "distance learning" for the rest of the spring semester, and possibly beyond, I wondered how I'd be able to adjust my teaching to online pedagogy. Several decades ago, teaching "remotely" would have been impossible.

Now, with advances in computer technology and programs, notably Zoom, and most students computer savvy — far more than me — it can be done. The issue: the need for students to have the essential equipment and Internet access.

Is "online learning" the equal of "face-to-face?" I don't think so.

I'm comfortable with appearing on video online having for five years co-anchored the evening news on the Long Island TV station WSNL-67, and I'm now completing my 30th year hosting the nationally-aired TV program "Enviro Close-Up with Karl Grossman."

My major two courses are Investigative Reporting and Environmental Journalism.

How best to adapt them to online teaching?

In Investigative Reporting, my first assignment is students writing essays on a "social injustice" they've known. The aim is to help them understand the role a whistleblower often has in the investigative reporting process. As my syllabus says: This will be "an essay you will read to the class on a social injustice you have personally known — an inequity, a wrong that you have personally experienced. Whistleblowers, sources who reach out to investigative journalists, are generally people who have observed corruption, abuses, inequity, unfairness, danger."

Many of the stories the students tell are heartbreaking, upsetting, and some could be the basis of investigative pieces. For this exercise I have the chairs in the classroom placed in a circle enabling the students to feel support from each other. Will reading their essays from home, told one-by-one through a computer screen, also work? We'll see.

The course's next phase involves how to document and present, for print, Internet, radio and TV, the information that was the "conception" for an investigative piece. Then there are lectures and student readings on the history of investigative reporting.

I begin the Environmental Journalism course with the issue of environmental justice, also known as environmental racism. For decades, I've written and done "Enviro Close-Up" programs about this. A central focus is toxic facilities placed far disproportionately in Black and Latino communities.

Next week I'll show the students online my most recent "Enviro Close-Up" on environmental justice, send them articles to read, and via Zoom we'll have a discussion. The course includes students doing pieces on environmental issues and an examination of the history of a branch of journalism that started with nature writing and took its contemporary form with Rachel Carson and her landmark 1962 book, "Silent Spring," exposing the dangers of pesticides.

My other main teaching activity is running an Internship in Journalism and Media program in which students are placed at newspapers, Internet sites, TV stations and networks, radio stations, magazines and PR firms. (A college internship is how I got into journalism.)

To scam an investigative reporter: The Trump and Woodward interview

By Karl Grossman

September 12, 2020

"Trump's Agreeing to Talk to Woodward Shows Downside of Never Having Read a Book in Entire Life," was the headline of a satirical piece this week by Andy Borowitz of *The New Yorker*.

Borowitz declared: "While millions of Americans were astonished that Trump would voluntarily speak at great length to an author famous for his takedowns of Presidents, experts believe that a total obliviousness to books and what is inside them might have played a pivotal role."

The "The Borowitz Report" continued with a fictional expert, "David Logsdon, a University of Minnesota professor who studies the psychology of people who have never read a book in their lives" who "said that such people might be overconfident about how they would be portrayed if a book were ever written about them."

"If you've never read a book in your life, you might be under the impression that all books are flattering," he said. "You would have no idea that a book could portray you as a human dumpster fire."

Indeed, Trump's tradition of never reading anything and thus being oblivious to who investigative journalist Woodward is might indeed have been a factor. That's beyond a joke.

Also, his extreme narcissism likely was a factor.

But I think the prime reason why Trump went for an interview by Woodward—and 18 times at that!—is because as a con man he figured he could con even a great investigative reporter.

Scam artist Trump figured he could even snow Woodward.

For 42 years I've taught a course in Investigative Reporting at the [State University of New York/College at Old Westbury](#), besides being an active investigative journalist, and I teach a process for journalistic probes developed by Paul Williams.

The late Williams was also a professor of journalism, at Ohio State University, and also a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter, and his process—called the "Paul Williams Way" in the investigative reporting craft—contains what Williams termed "Key Interviews."

Preceding that, as Williams laid out in his landmark 1978 book, *Investigative Reporting and Editing*, are "Conception," "Feasibility study," "Go/no-go decision," "Planning and base-building," "Original research," "Reevaluation," "Go/no-go decision"—and then "Key Interviews."

He wrote in his investigative reporting handbook: "Key interviews are to be saved for the last. There may be only one, or there may be as many as half a dozen. However many, the reporter sets them up only after he is satisfied that he has isolated the central figures behind his central thesis."

Williams wrote "that there are three important points to remember about it: you should prepare for it carefully; you should keep control of it, and you should use it to gain new information."

"Reread all of the files. Bring the chronology up to date," he went on. "Check and re-check crucial documents. Study all of this material until you can talk about any aspect of it without fumbling. Write down the questions. Study them in a logical order, going from the most general and least difficult ones at the start to the toughest and most specific ones at the end."

"In most cases," Williams noted, "the interview becomes an intense contest of wills and wits."

He added: "Too many people think of the key interview only as the formality of letting the target person comment on or give excuses for the illegal or immoral activities that you have documented."

"Don't shirk the key interview," wrote Williams. "The target person may not want to see you, but don't use this as an excuse to avoid the interview. If he won't answer the phone, go to his house."

Some of my students, after I explain this part of the "Paul Williams Way," will always ask why someone would subject themselves to a "key interview" by an investigative reporter.

I respond that in my experience you are often investigating a person who lied, cheated, mislead, deluded, fibbed—and conned—through their lives.

And they presume they can con you, too. So, they agree to an interview.

By his questions, it's clear that Woodward, of course a superb investigative reporter, prepared well for the Trump interviews. He was ready.

The satirical piece by Borowitz concluded: "As for Trump," expert "Logsdon said that the President would 'definitely benefit' from reading a book someday, but added, 'It's a little too late for that now.'"

It's also too late for con man Trump to believe an investigative reporter wouldn't accept his BS. He has gone from scam after scam through his life. Indeed, in politics now he has successfully fooled a portion of the U.S. public. Why not an investigative reporter, too?

On a winter's day in New York City early in 2020, urban religion expert Tony Carnes walks down Broadway in Elmhurst, Queens, a boulevard that can be defined as crowded grit, with a single Starbucks as a concession to gentrification.

Some refer to the neighborhood as the most ethnically diverse in the nation, if not the world. The street is adorned with signs in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, and, occasionally, English.

Most would marvel at the diversity of ethnic dishes for sale. But for Carnes, there's more to see on this cold winter afternoon amid crowded streets that would later empty during the spring novel coronavirus crisis.

As he munches on lunch in an Asian food court, Carnes identifies the religious symbols adorning the modest food stands: a Filipino Christian cross, Buddhist symbols, and Islamic crescents.

For Carnes, the area is a faith cornucopia, a glimpse at a Big Apple he insists is one of the most religious places in the country. Move over, Bible Belt, he says: New York is where faith reigns and secularism takes a back seat. Although the novel coronavirus has shifted what some of the city's religious expression looks like, the city's vibrant religious identity remains even in the aftermath of pandemic.

A new look at an old city

Carnes, a sociologist, evangelical Christian, and former writer for Christianity Today, is a Texas native who has lived much of his life in New York. Today, he chronicles the rich and diverse faith life of his chosen home via his website, nycreligion.info, which highlights the religious dynamism of the nation's largest city.

As an evangelical, Carnes was regularly told by his religious compatriots that New York is Sin City. Or at least it is post-Christian, a place where religious faith just doesn't fit into the secular city's mores.

The hint was that maybe he should move to save his faith.

The media portray a similar narrative: At one recent gathering, the city's religious journalists decried the growth in numbers of so-called Nones—young adults with no religious affiliation. They noted the well-documented trend of Millennials abandoning organized church life, often in search of being "spiritual, not religious." Churches are emptying out, and their congregations are getting grayer. It's just a matter of time before Americans begin to mimic the faith observance of secularized Europe, they wrote.

But Carnes has heard that song before, and he has long been attached to a far different tune.

"I was told by people living in the suburbs that there were no Christians in New York. They meant that the church was declining and was irrelevant," Carnes says, speaking of the late 1970s, when he first began to explore faith life in the city.

At the time there was reason to believe the city's religious observance was in massive decline. Harlem had 199 synagogues at one point, but they were eventually whittled down to one. Black and Latino Christians were fleeing to the suburbs. Mainstream Protestant churches were closing, and Catholic parishes were struggling, eventually leading to widespread closures.

But as the city went through what was seen at the time as a precipitous decline, through near bankruptcy and sections of the South Bronx being burned to the ground, Carnes saw something different emerging. He saw a religious revival, even if no one else seemed to notice it. Beneath the embers something new was arising—a kind of resurrection, in Christian terms.

Take the case of Marc Rivera. In the late 1970s the native of the Lower East Side of Manhattan was working for IBM, safely ensconced in the suburbs. It was during the bad old days in a city veering on bankruptcy and rising crime. A church burned down in his old neighborhood, and, instead of just lamenting another sign of decline, Rivera returned and became its pastor, rebuilding the church. He is now one of the city's senior and most respected evangelical leaders.

From the ashes

As a sociologist and religion journalist, Carnes chronicles what he sees as the religious transformation of New York. As the world of electronic journalism began to develop in the 2000s, he obtained funding for his website and had young reporters trod the streets, describing what was happening in out-of-the-way nooks and corners. Street by street, his team jotted down the locations of storefront churches that were mushrooming throughout growing immigrant communities.

What they discovered was a new Protestant evangelicalism emerging, stately old hymns giving way to gospel rock, Sunday best attire conceding to casual Friday. Those megachurches appealed to hip urban professionals.

There was also the immigrant scene: Urban evangelicalism began developing a salsa beat, opening small churches for a growing Latino population, especially in outer borough neighborhoods such as Elmhurst.

This was just the beginning: The growing Asian communities in the city—Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, and Filipino—were creating their own congregations or forming groups within established churches.

Carnes studied sociology at the New School in Manhattan, long known as a bastion of secular thought. When his professors told him that urban life was sliding inexorably down the path of secularism, he insisted they were missing what was happening on the street.

"What secular city?" Carnes remembers asking, a reference to the landmark 1960s work by theologian Harvey Cox.

Carnes found African American evangelicals, independent churches, Hindu temples, Taoist and Hindu congregations, and a thriving Sikh community throughout New York's boroughs. One evangelical church in Brooklyn claimed 31,000 members. One South Bronx neighborhood reported 44 Christian churches; Carnes' researchers found there were actually 156. Previous studies indicated there were two Buddhist temples in Queens; Carnes discovered 14. Orthodox Jews, Carnes found, were now the largest Jewish community in the city, clustering in neighborhoods in Brooklyn, their large families gradually overcoming the numbers established by mainstream Jewish groups. Mosques, even after the attacks on Muslims after 9/11, numbered in the hundreds, not in the dozens as previously thought.

Although many see subway graffiti as a sign of moral decline, Carnes looks at it differently: He noticed that TAKI, a famous graffiti writer, often painted Christian symbols, reflecting his own Greek Orthodox background. A mural in the battered Bronx shows a crucified Christ, with needles in his arm, a faith statement about the scourge of drugs.

The religious stew pulsates through the streets of the city. It may be ill-defined in many places, sometimes not divided by neat denominational lines, but it is there nonetheless. Today on Carnes' website are articles and videos on global Hinduism in New York, urban Muslims, and how Catholics from the Dominican Republic living in Washington Heights are likely to identify themselves as charismatics, melding themselves into the storefront evangelical churches that dot the immigrant community, all the while participating in a traditional Catholic parish that overflows with worshippers on Sundays.

A Catholic revival

Catholics are a big part of New York's religious identity, says Carnes. But he thinks many Catholics are suffering a hangover from the church's sexual abuse scandals. There is, he says, a lack of confidence, a sense that the faith moment has passed American Catholics by.

But some immigrants are telling, and believing, another story. Although older groups of Catholics continue to settle in the suburbs, their immigrant replacements embrace faith in creative and different ways.

Before the novel coronavirus pandemic, St. Bartholomew Church in Elmhurst offered Masses in English, Spanish, Tagalog, Bengali, and Indonesian for some 5,500 parishioners. Even during the pandemic, thousands participated via online Masses in English and Spanish.

Flushing, Queens is home to the largest Chinatown in the city. A large Catholic Korean community lives in the neighborhood. Immigrants flock to baptismal classes at St. Michael's Church there, including hundreds each year entering the Catholic Church on the Easter Vigil.

Our Lady of Pompeii Church in Greenwich Village, Manhattan, founded for working-class Italian immigrants, now ministers to a more professional crowd. The pastor keeps up the Italian connection by reaching out via social media and continuing an arts program for Italian émigré professionals.

The Church of St. Paul the Apostle on Manhattan's Upper West Side, meanwhile, reaches out to young adult Catholics, including the city's large LGBTQ community, with an evangelization approach common to the Paulist Fathers who run the church. The Church of St. Francis Xavier in Chelsea, Manhattan, a Jesuit parish, is known for both its soup kitchen and its outreach to the LGBTQ community.

The Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn is a parish that never relinquished its immigrant vibe. It is now a haven for Central Americans, Mexicans, and Chinese—new immigrants who are attracted to the parish liturgies in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese—as well as a thriving legal advocacy for immigrants run by Redemptorist Father Ruskin Piedra, an octogenarian of Cuban background.

An ecology of faith

Back in Elmhurst, scholars study the neighborhood as a laboratory for how diverse religious communities function.

Richard Cimino, a sociology professor at the [State University of New York at Old Westbury](#) and editor of Religion Watch, spent much of 2018 and 2019 tracking religious life in the neighborhood with a colleague, Hans Tokke, a professor of sociology at New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn.

Within a few blocks, Cimino spent time with 15 religious congregations, including Buddhist, Jain, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Baptist, Muslim, and megachurch evangelicals. He found regular patterns.

In mainstream Christian churches, immigrant groups tend to operate on their own within the umbrella of a more established congregation. St. Adalbert's, for example, a traditionally Polish Catholic parish, now has services for Filipino Catholics as well. St. James Episcopal Church hosts a potluck parish food festival highlighting Indonesian fare.

There is little evidence that the great American melting pot works when it comes to Sunday, says Cimino, particularly in Catholic parishes. Instead, immigrant groups bring Catholicism from their home countries and, in a way, join together but separately, with regular liturgies for separate language and ethnic groups.

"Do they get along? Do they interact much? Not much," says Cimino. But Catholics in September 2020 particular, he says, are good at keeping people together, at least tenuously, under one church umbrella. Unlike other Christian groups, Catholics don't tend to split off into smaller congregations. The Eucharist remains a defining feature.

In Elmhurst the Catholic parishes have navigated changes from Germans and Irish, many of whom moved to the suburbs, to new immigrant groups, many from Asia and Latin America. "It's a neighborhood ecology approach," says Cimino.

Meanwhile, on Queens Boulevard, the other main thoroughfare that cuts through Elmhurst, two new megachurches have sprung up: New Life Fellowship and The Rock, a congregation that took over a historic movie theater. Each boasts more than 1,000 congregants.

The megachurches are separate but have a similar appeal to the groups at established Catholic parishes, says Cimino. These parishes, along with other established mainstream Christian churches, take in new immigrants and reinforce language and culture from the old countries. Their children, meanwhile, often gravitate toward megachurch congregations, which are sometimes seen as an aid to navigating professional work and family life.

Faith in the midst of pandemic

The religious ecology of the city was thrown out of whack during the pandemic. Carnes would be awakened by the sounds of ambulances on their way to Elmhurst Hospital, the city facility that led the evening newscasts, as thousands battling the virus waited outside during the early days of the pandemic in March. Some nights the hospital experienced more than a dozen deaths.

For many months, New York City had generated about a third of all the deaths from COVID-19 in the United States. The epicenter of that epicenter remained the immigrant communities of the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. Thousands died among the 600,000 people clustered around the 7 Train, which traverses Elmhurst and nearby communities.

By the end of May, more than 60 parishioners from St. Bart's had died from the virus. Other parishes reported similar tolls. At Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Corona, Queens, the toll included the illness of Father Raymond Roden, the pastor, and deaths and unemployment among nearly 10,000 parishioners, many of whom are undocumented immigrants.

Carnes, living in the midst of the pandemic, is already seeing patterns. Evangelical megachurches responded with a renewed focus on technology. Some megachurch pastors debated online about how long online sermons should be (some objected to 45-minute limits).

Carnes says Catholic parishes both were hit hard and responded effectively in many ways, including in online liturgies. In some cases, parishes became centers of food aid and support, directing assistance to undocumented immigrants, who are ineligible for most federal support programs. Catholic Charities ran food handouts in Elmhurst and Corona, as well as in Brooklyn neighborhoods. The Diocese of Brooklyn and the Archdiocese of New York were able to present regular televised Masses.

Priests, including Father Jorge Ortiz-Garay, a Brooklyn priest noted for his work among his fellow Mexican immigrants, were among the fatalities (Ortiz-Garay is thought to be the first priest in the United States to die from COVID-19). Parishes suffered with a sharp decline in income, as offertory collections became impossible.

"The priests are exhausted, and in some areas the number of people sick or dead is frightening," says Carnes. Catholics in particular missed the church's elaborate mourning rituals. Distancing often required those who died to do so alone, without their family or a parish priest. Cemeteries limited the number of family members who could visit a gravesite.

"The loneliness in death without a priest is devastating," says Carnes, noting Catholic sensibilities, especially acute in immigrant communities.

In the midst of the pandemic, an eerie quiet pervades the usually crowded streets of Broadway in Elmhurst, broken only by the sounds of ambulances rushing to the hospital. The devastation wrought to the now shuttered New York City restaurant industry leaves wide swaths of desperation, including immigrants, most without documents, unable to access government aid. Many rely on church charities.

The city's future is in serious question. Can a crowded metropolis emerge in an era of social distancing? Carnes, for one, will remain, the chronicler of religious life among the immigrants. Those churches, mosques, and temples, he believes, will have a say in how this epic story develops. Faith, in all its abundant forms in New York's immigrant communities, is sure to continue. Those religious symbols in the Asian food court assuredly will have more use.

In Memoriam: Florence Rosenfeld Howe, 1929-2020

Posted on Sep 16, 2020 | [Comments 0](#)



Florence Howe, educator and the founder of the Feminist Press, who is often referred to as the Mother of Women's Studies, died on September 12 in New York City. She was 91 years old and had suffered from Parkinson's disease.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Dr. Howe was student body president at Hunter College of the City University of New York, where she majored in English. She went on to earn a master's degree at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Howe began her academic career at Hofstra University and then Queens College in New York. In 1957, she joined the faculty at Goucher College in Baltimore.

In 1970, Professor Howe founded the Feminist Press, a nonprofit publisher focused on equality and social justice. A year later, she joined the faculty at the [State University of New York at Old Westbury](#), which became the home of the Feminist Press. The press is now affiliated with the City University of New York.

Dr. Howe was the author of the memoir, [*A Life in Motion*](#) (Feminist Press, 2011).

Florence Howe, 'Mother of Women's Studies,' Dies at 91

In 1970, she helped found the Feminist Press. It was hailed for making available "a legacy of writings by and about women."

By Bonnie Wertheim

Published Sept. 13, 2020 Updated Sept. 15, 2020

Florence Howe, a key architect of the women's studies movement and a founder of the [Feminist Press](#), a literary nonprofit dedicated to promoting social justice and amplifying overlooked voices, died on Saturday in Manhattan. She was 91.

The Feminist Press [confirmed her death in a statement](#). Ms. Howe, who lived on Manhattan's Upper West Side, had been in hospice care with Parkinson's disease, which was diagnosed in 2017.

When Ms. Howe began teaching in colleges and universities in the 1950s, women's studies was not an established academic discipline. In fact, it was rare to find a course catalog or syllabus that mentioned scholarship by women at all.

With the Feminist Press, founded in 1970, she sought to diversify the materials used in schools around the United States and beyond. She and her husband, Paul Lauter, were professors and knew firsthand that there was a gender gap in the books being taught.

"I was teaching women's studies at Goucher College in Maryland at the time, and there weren't enough materials," Ms. Howe told The New York Times in 1972. "The publishers I spoke to all said, 'Wonderful idea, but there's no money in it.'"

Mr. Lauter suggested that they publish the books themselves and came up with the name the Feminist Press. "It sounded magical," Ms. Howe said.

The Feminist Press began as a modest, D.I.Y. endeavor. Board meetings were run out of the couple's big yellow house in the Mount Washington neighborhood of Baltimore. And when Ms. Howe left Goucher for the [State University of New York College at Old Westbury \(now SUNY Old Westbury\)](#) in 1971, she brought the publishing house with her; the college, on Long Island, had agreed to house and support it.

More than a decade later, Joseph Duffey, a former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, [wrote in The New York Times Book Review](#) that the Feminist Press had "perhaps more than any other institution, helped to recover and make available a legacy of writing by and about women in American history and scholarship."

[Authors](#) whose titles have been published or republished by the Feminist Press include Zora Neale Hurston, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Barbara Ehrenreich, Willa Cather, Alice Walker and the members of the Russian feminist performance group Pussy Riot.

"I would say we started what has become an avalanche of the rediscovery of women writers," Ms. Howe [told The Baltimore Sun](#) in 1993. "We're not the only one who does this now." The article called her "the mother of women's studies."

Florence Rosenfeld was born on March 17, 1929, in Brooklyn to Samuel and Frances Rosenfeld. During the Great Depression, her father abandoned his dream of opening a home-furnishings store and became a taxi driver to support the family. Her mother was a bookkeeper until Florence's birth and later worked for an aeronautics manufacturer. She hoped that her daughter would become a teacher.

The family, including a son, Jack, moved frequently in 1930s for financial reasons — to Hoboken, N.J., the Bronx and elsewhere in Brooklyn.

In 1943, Florence was admitted to Hunter College High School in Manhattan, ranked among the top public schools in the country. She graduated early and enrolled at Hunter College, "the place in which I learned to think," she wrote in a memoir, "A Life in Motion" (2011).

Her activist spirit was also ignited as a Hunter undergraduate. She formed an interracial and interfaith sorority with friends and was elected student body president. She studied English with the intention of teaching in the public school system, but was encouraged by a professor and Hunter's president to pursue a master's degree, which she earned at Smith College. In 1951 she went on to study for a doctorate in English at the University of Wisconsin.

Within six years she married three times and took the surname of one of those husbands, Ed Howe. She married Paul Lauter in the 1960s; they divorced in 1987.

After three years of study at Wisconsin, Ms. Howe moved back to New York to teach at Hofstra College (now a university) and Queens College. She moved to Baltimore in 1957 and eventually joined the Goucher faculty.

Baltimore had by then become starkly divided along racial lines, with many white middle-class residents leaving for the suburbs. In 1963, Ms. Howe joined students in organizing a protest demonstration against a segregated movie theater near Morgan State College, a historically Black institution.

The next year she traveled to Jackson, Miss., as a Freedom Summer volunteer to help register Black voters. She was given the task of opening a Freedom School for Black children in the basement of a church and ran it with a staff of six college students.

There, Ms. Howe met Alice Jackson, a 16-year-old who made such an impression on her that she persuaded Alice's parents to let their daughter travel to Baltimore to attend school there. "I think I was a hard worker, but I was also fearless," Alice, now Alice Jackson-Wright, said by phone on Sunday.

Though Ms. Howe did not formally adopt Alice, she became a second mother to her. In addition to her, Ms. Howe is survived by Ms. Jackson-Wright's two children and four grandchildren, who knew Ms. Howe as Baba.

By 1969, Ms. Howe was frequently invited to speak on feminist subjects. In a talk titled "Should Women Read Fiction?" she criticized the fate that male authors often prescribed for female characters: marriage, death or some combination of the two.

In 1970, the same year the Feminist Press was founded, Ms. Howe was appointed chair of the Modern Language Association's Commission on the Status and Education of Women in the Profession, which sought to advance the study of scholarship by women and elevate female faculty members. In those conversations, whether she knew it or not, she was beginning to promote a growing discipline.

"A decade ago, it had no name," she wrote in The Times in 1976. "A few academics around the country labeled a segment of their freshman composition courses 'growing up female' or taught part of a sociology course on 'gender.'"

"But now," she continued, "in the wake of the women's rights movement, women's studies has taken its place in the curriculum and seems to be thriving."

Starting in the late 1970s, the Feminist Press began publishing its "Women's Lives/Women's Work" series, on the history of female labor. In 1982, the press released the "Everywoman's Guide to Colleges and Universities" in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The book provided statistics about rape reporting on campuses, information about child care for student mothers and gender breakdowns of faculties.

In 1984, Indiana University Press published "Myths of Coeducation," a collection of essays by Ms. Howe on the rise of the women's studies movement. The next year, she stopped teaching at Old Westbury to run the press full time out of the City University of New York. Though she continued to be designated a professor of English, she had stopped teaching regular courses.

Ms. Howe received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Fulbright Program, many of which supported her efforts to broaden the Feminist Press's reach internationally.

Beginning in the early 1990s the publishing house went on to release collections of women's writing from around the world, including "Women Writing in India," "Women Writing Africa" and "The Defiant Muse," a series of anthologies of verse from around the world.

"When you read the riches within these covers, you'll know that a Western male bias has left all of us culturally deprived," Gloria Steinem wrote in a blurb for the India collection.

Ms. Howe began blogging in 2010, albeit somewhat confoundedly.

"I need to be discreet and yet open," she wrote in her first post. "I need to be clear and yet mysterious. I need to be cheerful, even funny. And most of all I need to be read, and what do I know about who might want to read my blog?"

She began to share details about her aging and health, including her Parkinson's diagnosis.

The Feminist Press continues to publish out of CUNY, under the leadership of [Jamia Wilson](#). In 2020 it is celebrating its 50th year.

Correction: Sept. 14, 2020

An earlier version of this obituary referred incorrectly to "The Defiant Muse," one of the titles published by the Feminist Press under Ms. Howe. It is a series of anthologies of verse by women from countries around the world, including Vietnam. It is not solely a collection of Vietnamese poems.



Florence Howe, center, with staff members of the Feminist Press in 1972. "I would say we started what has become an avalanche of the rediscovery of women writers," she said. Credit...Robert M. Klein

TELEVISION

Zombies Eat Academic Brains in Misbegotten PBS Documentary *Exhumed*

GLENN GARVIN | 10.30.2020 2:30 PM

You've got an important television choice this week: Yet another medical pestilence to worry about along with the virus; or the scariest Halloween show ever. It's kind of a trick question, because I didn't say "best" Halloween show, just scariest: PBS unleashes a slavering pack of fanged academics on zombies, and the bloody brain cells and decapitated IQ points are scattered in all directions. Save yourself and stick to CBS' kidney-transplant sitcom.

Exhumed: A History of Zombies is a special broadcast episode of the streaming PBS series *Monstrum*, a weekly dissection of the history of monsters, myths, and legends hosted by Arizona State English professor [Emily Zarka](#). Like any respectable academic trying to explain her interest in something like zombies, she says she's asking, "What does their complex history teach us about ourselves?" The answer, as you've probably surmised, is nothing as simple as "We don't like to be disemboweled and have our brains eaten."

Zombie stories originated in Haiti, perhaps as early as the 17th century, where voodoo priests known as *bokors* were said to steal the souls of their enemies and reduce them to shuffling, blank-eyed slaves. *Exhumed* argues that the zombie stories are "an allegory for colonialism, imperialism, and oppression." But the tales were considered anything but folkloric allegories by Haitians, who in 1835 (long after white rule ended) outlawed the practice. And in any event, the original zombie stories sort of screw the metaphorical pooch; the supposed creators of zombies were not white planters but black voodoo priests.

Zombies remained largely unknown in America, or at least the white part of it, until U.S. Marines began returning from stints in Woodrow Wilson's 1915 military intervention in Haiti with lurid accounts of battles with them. By 1932, zombie fever had reached Hollywood, which for the next decade turned out a steady stream of films like *I Walked with a Zombie* in which sultry white maidens were besieged by giant shambling islanders.

Zarka and her colleagues are undoubtedly correct that there was at least an element of racism in many of those films. (Though when the zombies are white, as occasionally happened, the professors immediately launch cries of "cultural appropriation." And if you're about to ask if Zarka wonders if a show about black zombies produced by a pixieish blonde white professor might *also* be cultural appropriation, well, no.)

But it's hard to imagine how racism or slavery could be seen in the big bang of zombie creationism, the 1968 George Romero film *Night of the Living Dead*. It features flesh-eating creatures (Romero called them "ghouls," not zombies; it was fans who started using the z-word) who are turned not by voodoo priests but by radiation leaking from an exploded satellite, which reanimates recent corpses.

The only black character in the entire film is not a zombie but the hero, a truck driver who takes charge of the survivors—but he's killed in the film's coda by rescuers who mistake him for a zombie. "Lynch mob!" Zarka and her colleagues triumphantly declare. Actually, the black/white dichotomy in the casting was entirely coincidental; *Night of the Living Dead* was made for about \$100,000 in a rural town outside Pittsburgh, and nearly everyone in it was a friend or neighbor of Romero's. The director wanted a professional actor, no matter how thin his resume, for the lead, and Duane Jones, who taught drama at [SUNY-Old Westbury](#) and happened to be home on Christmas break, got the part.

Nonetheless, the lynch-mob theory is downright plausible compared to *Exhumed's* final doctrinal proclamation, that *Night of the Living Dead's* conclusion is somehow linked to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., who was killed by a white gunman in April 1968. The problem with that is photography on *Night of the Living Dead* was completed in December 1967, five months earlier. If renegade zombies were to eat the brains of Zarka and her coterie of PC-obsessed companions, they'd be hungry an hour later.

Westbury Public Library Offerings Are Virtual

By Westbury Times Staff

September 5, 2020

The Westbury Memorial Public Library remains closed, but patrons can order books for curbside pick-up. To reserve items, call the library at 516-333-0176. The library is located at 445 Jefferson St.

In addition, fall classes will begin virtually and transition to in-person when the library reopens. Patrons must have their own email address and a computer/tablet with video/audio to participate in the fall session, which runs from Sept. 28 to Dec. 18.

I See the Good in You

Wednesday, Sept. 30, 7 p.m. via Zoom

Join Donna Felton, **SUNY Old Westbury** alum, who will provide upliftment as she takes a poetic journey to see the good in people in her virtual showcase "I See the Good in You," explored through discussion and with an open mic exhibition where you can display the good in you. Welcome, poets, artists, painters, singers and musicians, and share your thoughts. To register, use [this](#) link.

Representatives of the Chinese Society paid a courtesy call on Chen Tao, the first Chinese director of the 62nd branch

Reporter [Huang Yiyi](#) /New York Report 2020-09-25 03:01



The 62nd branch of the Municipal Police, which is in charge of the Brooklyn (Brooklyn) Bansenhe, welcomed the first Chinese chief, Chen Tao. The local Chinese people were very excited. Many representatives of the Chinese society visited the 62nd branch on the 24th.

Chen Tao, born in Zhaoqing, Guangdong, China, immigrated to the United States at the age of 16, and majored in computer science at **SUNY College at Old Westbury**, then joined the police force and served in the jurisdiction of Brooklyn 8 The 66th and 72nd bureaus of Dadao are very familiar with the Chinese.

Chen Tao said that he is very honored to be in charge of the community branch where he

grew up. He also knows that local Chinese people usually encounter some problems, and even encounter discrimination and hatred but are unwilling to report to the police. He hopes that he can improve these situations.

Chen Tao said that the 62nd branch is the largest police station under the South Brooklyn Police Station. Based on the foundation laid by the former chief, he will further promote the relationship between local police and civilians, reduce crimes, and enable local people to live and work in peace.

He said, "The 62 sub-bureau area is considered to be a community with better public security, but in the past there have been some criminal cases of hate against Asians due to the impact of the epidemic . The Municipal Police Department attaches great importance to not only establishing an investigation team for Asian hatred cases, but also making the team permanent." In the past, in the anti-police voices, the Asian community has been actively supporting the police. Many Chinese communities have specially sent epidemic prevention equipment and meals to the police station. This moved the entire police force very much.

Liu Baozhi, the captain of the Asian Civil Security Team, Luo Tianfu from the Brooklyn Chinese Community Service Center, Huang Hanhua from the Brooklyn Chinese Association, Huizhu Zhou from the Brooklyn Community Service Center of Pines and Cypresses, and Chen Weixiang from the Haowang Restaurant all welcomed Chen Tao to his post. And wish him success in his post.

Nikita Gibson: A Female Entrepreneur Who Will Inspire You to Chase Your Dreams

October 15, 2020 · 5 min read

Wife, mother, entrepreneur, beauty influencer, and blogger - these are just some of the roles the multi-talented businesswoman, Nikita Gibson wears as she strives to provide anyone who steps into the doors of her two businesses, Manè Diva and Joire's Spa with the tools to feel beautiful both inside and out. Get to know Nikita Gibson as she changes the beauty industry by advocating the importance of self-love, self-appreciation and self-care.

Who is Nikita Gibson?

Brooklyn native, Nikita Gibson, founded her business when she was 25 years old with the goal of providing a one-of-a kind luxury experience.

She uses her Bachelor's degree in Social Health awarded from **SUNY Old Westbury**, and her years of experience to encourage people to strive for inner peace and to embrace her beauty. She founded her first business Joire's Spa & Studio in 2014, named after her late mother Marjorie who lost her battle to breast cancer. Using her dedication and passion for promoting love for oneself and others, Nikita expanded her business. In 2018, she broadened her scope and expanded her brand to two separate locations.

Nikita strongly believes in the concept that everyone, whether they're a student, homemaker, or an entrepreneur, should have a chance to find their inner peace and celebrate themselves everyday. She believes that by learning to love yourself first, you can learn to love others.

After all, you can't give what you don't have.

Behind Joire's Spa & Studio

According to Nikita, everyone has a hobby and hers just happens to be going to spas.

The relaxation and happiness she experiences after indulging in a spa session gave birth to the idea of starting Joire's. This was further emphasized by her strong need to share her experience with the members of her community. She wanted to make luxury treatments and services more accessible to both men and women in her community, people whose unique beauty has remained uncelebrated and overlooked throughout history.

It was imperative to her to provide equipment, products, and services that cater specifically to African American skincare needs and overall health.

Why Beauty Services?

Initially, Nikita wanted to provide women with a place they could call their own, allowing them to enhance their beauty with the help of her talented team. Through her experience in the beauty industry and educational background, she began to hear a deeper calling.

Realizing how many people felt unsure about themselves and harbored beauty related insecurities, she changed her goal to help both women and men feel better about themselves-a holistic approach. To do this, she encouraged her clients to indulge in self-care that addresses their needs both internally and externally.

Overcoming Challenges

Success did not come without its fair share of challenges for Mrs. Gibson. The biggest challenge she faced was overcoming her own insecurities and uncertainties - specifically, her fears about failing and reconciling that this was not an option for her nor her community.

Mainly, these fears stem from the pressure of running a business that's more than just a business - it's a form of advocacy that has helped not only her but many others to realize the importance of accepting who they are and allowing themselves to feel beautiful about who they are.

Joire's has become more than just a place of relaxation and luxury, it has become a self-care haven, allowing her clientele to feel comfortable in their own skin and embrace who they are.

Behind Her Success

Despite the challenges, she found success in her endeavors. She attributes her success to several things, first, she believes that she found success because of her willingness to strive for what she wants and her belief that with God and a pure heart, nothing is impossible.

Secondly, she attributes her success to her family, particularly her husband, whose unwavering support and belief in her allowed her to explore her own potential and her business's potential. She also believes that she could not have made it without her team at Joire's whose dedication to their cause rivals her own.

Their passion and dedication allowed her, as well as them, to provide excellent services to their clientele and overcome the various challenges presented to them - including the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

The Future of Joire's and Nikita

Nikita has many plans in store for her businesses, one of which is her own skincare line, "Joire's Skin," will offer natural based skin care products at affordable prices. Using organically grown, herbal ingredients, one of her most recent products, cleansing tea "Claritea," embodies her mission of providing accessible beauty that rejuvenates, both inside and out.

She has also authored "Self Care: A Guide to Holistic Healing: Internal & External", which informs readers on self-care best practices and herbal remedies.

Nikita Gibson's dedication and passion for her cause, along with the support and dedication of her family and team at Joire's, allows her to face and rise above the challenges of running a business that also serves as her advocacy.

Make sure to check her adventures out on Instagram, @mrsnikitagibson and @joiresspa and to purchase Nikita's self care guide, and keep updated with the newest and latest with Joire's at their official website.

Rev. Robert Stanley Kostreva

• Sep 28, 2020

JOHNSON CITY - Rev. Robert Stanley Kostreva, 71, of Johnson City, passed away Saturday, September 19, 2020, in the Johnson City Medical Center.

Robert lived in Johnson City since 2001, and the past 13 years have been in marriage with Linda Rowlett Kostreva. He was the son of the late Stanley and Lottie Lukaszek Kostreva, and he grew up in New Britain, Connecticut, where he was known as “Bobby” to his family and friends. Robert will be laid to rest on October 1st in New Britain at the Polish National Catholic Cemetery, alongside his father and his mother.

Robert graduated from New Britain High School, where he was captain of the tennis team, a member of the basketball team, and played the bassoon in the high school orchestra. Robert holds a Master of Theology degree with Cum Laude honors from Emory University’s Candler School of Theology, and also graduated with a B.A. in Creative Arts from the **State University of New York at Old Westbury**, where he concentrated in Jazz Music Performance. During undergraduate years, he also studied jazz piano in Boston at both the New England Conservatory and the Berklee College of Music. Most recently Robert combined his theology and music backgrounds at West Market Street United Methodist Church in Johnson City, serving as assistant to Reverend Paul Longmire. Robert also held ministerial positions at churches in Palm Harbor, Florida, Washington, D.C., and Cincinnati, Ohio, and his recent ministry in the Johnson City area included regular visitations with residents of local nursing homes and assisted living centers. Prior to his career in church ministry, Robert taught music in the schools in Hartford, Connecticut, and St. Petersburg, Florida, and was an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa, leading the students in the jazz band.

Robert performed with his own jazz groups at various venues for nearly 50 years, and his last performance was a concert entitled “The Jazz Visitors,” which was held at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Johnson City. Over the years he had the pleasure of playing with many fine jazz musicians, including a Grammy winner and a former member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra. Robert was always a prolific composer of jazz music, and he leaves a legacy of albums and CD’s, which include The Chopin Express, Train of Thought, Mixed Fruit, and Peace Be With You.

Sports was another keen interest that Robert had, and getting to see a particular game on an obscure TV channel often determined the restaurant where he and Linda dined on a given evening. He was a “southpaw” pitcher in baseball and had great eye-hand coordination for tennis, basketball and golf. His knowledge of various pro and college teams, and their present and former players, was immense. He authored columns for sports magazines, and he could converse with anyone about team and individual statistics, as well as particular plays that took place in games, whether it was soccer, football, baseball, or just about any other sport.

Survivors include his wife Linda Rowlett Kostreva; one son, Evan Kostreva and his wife Beth, as well as their son and Bobby’s grandson Evan Kennan Kostreva; two daughters, Katherine Kostreva and her husband Ryan Loya, and Mary Rachel Kostreva; one sister, Nancy Eleanor Biesinger and her husband John; one brother, Daniel Kostreva and his wife Casey Seaman; his nieces Amanda Kostreva and Liza Kostreva, both daughters of Daniel Kostreva and Casey Seaman; his mother-in-law June Fine Rowlett; his brother-in-law Rodney B. Rowlett II; four sisters-in-law, Sarah Lynn Rowlett, Polly Rowlett Mallory, Marian Rowlett-Cox and Heather Rowlett; and eight cousins, all from Connecticut.

A Memorial service to celebrate the life of Rev. Robert Kostreva, will be held in Johnson City at the West Market Street United Methodist Church at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 4, 2020, to be officiated by Reverend Paul Longmire. Another Memorial service will be held on Saturday, October 3, at 11:00 A.M. at St. John’s Church in Duxbury, Massachusetts, where his brother Dan’s family attends. The Duxbury service will be live-streamed over the internet so that people from virtually any location can participate in the celebration of Robert’s life by going to www.StJohnsDuxbury.org and clicking on “Live Service” on the Home Page.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made in Robert’s name to West Market Street United Methodist Church.

Memories and condolences may be shared with the Kostreva family via www.morrisbaker.com.

Morris-Baker Funeral Home and Cremation Services, 2001 E. Oakland Ave., Johnson City, is serving the Kostreva family. (423) 282-1521