May 2, 2021

IN THIS ISSUE: Ken Guest’s Chinatown tour; Baruch’s NFL project; faculty awards and other news; COVID Diaries winners; journalism alumni; Soléi Spears award and posthumous degree

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A Class Tour of Chinatown, Live via Zoom

How do you bring a remote-learning class on a walking tour of Chinatown? Weissman Professor Kenneth Guest showed his honors class around the neighborhood using a selfie stick, an iPhone, and Zoom.

Students watched from home while Guest visited sites like a storefront Buddhist temple, an empty mall impacted by the pandemic economy, and a 19th century church that has served waves of Irish, Italian, Cantonese, and Fujianese immigrants. Guest also talked about the gentrification pressures on Chinatown, pointing out a new art gallery and a gleaming 80-story building.

Watch this two-minute YouTube video to take a mini-version of the tour yourself, and to learn about Chinatown’s history and its uncertain future.

Faculty Achievements and Opportunities

AN ASSESSMENT TEST FOR THE NFL

It’s not every day that folks from Baruch get recognized by the NFL. But there it was in a press release: an official congrats for the NFL Player Assessment Test, which was developed by Weissman Psychology Professors Harold Goldstein, Charles Scherbaum, and Elliott Larson. The project won the 2021 M. Scott Myers Award from the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology for Applied Research in the Workplace, the most prestigious practice award in the field.

Goldstein and University of Maryland Professor Ken Yusko began working with the NFL in 2013 to develop the test, which is designed to predict performance while treating players from diverse backgrounds fairly, as well as providing insight into how players learn. The goal is to ultimately improve DEI in selection decisions in professional sports.

FELLOWSHIP FOR BLACK STUDIES RESEARCH

English Professor Erica Richardson has received a year-long career enhancement fellowship from the Institute of Citizens and Scholars (formerly the Woodrow Wilson Foundation National Fellowship) to develop her book project Empirical Desires: Data, Dispossession, and the Aesthetics
of the Negro Problem. The book will explore an archive of Black literary production, Progressive era reform, and American sociology to reveal how, from the 1890s to the 1950s, Black authors and intellectuals refashioned data about Black Americans using aesthetics and literary production to reflect the striving and presence of Black social life. Richardson is co-director of the Baruch Black Studies Colloquium.

**PRIZE FOR BOOK ABOUT NEWSBOYS**

History Professor Vincent DiGirolamo won the 2021 Vincent P. DeSantis Prize for his book, *Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys*. The prize was awarded by the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, which plans a Zoom event honoring DiGirolamo May 12, 7 p.m.

*Crying the News* also won the Frederick Jackson Turner Award from the Organization of American Historians; the Philip Taft Book Prize from the Labor and Working-Class History Association and Cornell’s Industrial and Labor Relations School; the Frank Luther Mott Research Award from the Kappa Tau Alpha National Journalism Honor Society; and the Eugenia M. Palmegiano Prize from the American Historical Association.

**MATH PROFESSOR HONORED FOR RESEARCH**

Math Professor Pablo Soberon-Bravo has received a 2021 Feliks Gross Award. The annual award, which recognizes outstanding research in the humanities or sciences, is named for one of the CUNY Academy’s founding members.

**FACULTY BOOKS**

English Professor Laura Kolb has a new book out, *Fictions of Credit in the Age of Shakespeare*. Reading practical texts alongside dramatic works, *Fictions of Credit* argues that credit developed in the interplay of language, conduct, and social interpretation. As a result, artful language and careful close reading constituted practical, profitable skills.

Modern Languages and Comparative Literature Professor Eric Tsimi is out with his first scholarly book, *Vous autres, civilisations, savez maintenant que vous êtes mortelles* (You civilizations now know yourselves mortal). Tsimi addresses “literature, terror, and decadence” in the 21st century, specifically in the period following the 2015 Charlie Hebdo terror attacks in France. “My interdisciplinary approach contributes to understanding the diverse processes through which counter-utopia evolved in France in relation to the ‘droitisation’ (a shift to the extreme right of the political scene) of European nation-states and societies,” Tsimi says.

**FACULTY JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS**

Natural Sciences Professor J.S. Gosnell, co-author, "Non-consumptive effects of predators on oysters differ based on predator identity and duration (but not frequency) of exposure," *Marine Ecology Progress Series*.


**FACULTY MEDIA MENTIONS**

Biology/Environmental Science Professor David Gruber's use of AI in efforts to decode the language of whales was written up in *National Geographic* and by *Harvard*. His encounters with biofluorescent fish in the Arctic, including a cool video, were featured by the *American Museum of Natural History*. 
History Professor Johanna Fernandez's award-winning book *The Young Lords* was featured by Axios.com.

Journalism Professor Eugene Marlow spoke about jazz in China in the *South China Morning Post*.

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**FACULTY OPPORTUNITIES**

The Office of Award Pre-Proposal Support at RFCUNY and SPAR at Baruch host a webinar, May 7, 10:30 a.m., about a new NIH research program: Support for Research Excellence, SuRE. SuRE's goal is to develop and sustain research excellence in U.S. higher education institutions that receive limited NIH support and serve students from groups underrepresented in biomedical research. The program provides students with research opportunities and enriches research environments at applicant institutions. Biology Professor Pablo Peixoto is among the speakers. Register [here](#).

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**Student and Alumni Highlights**

Congratulations to winners of the COVID Diaries essay contest. Pictured left to right: Weissman students Rosa Guevara '22, who won first place, $1,500, for her essay "La Casa De Capones" (The House of Stamps); Caitlin Cacciatore '22, who won second prize, $1,000, "The Arithmetic of Compassion," and Lylia Saurel '21, who took third place, $500, for "Side Effects."

"My essay is a personal one and focuses on food insecurity, an issue many college students like myself face," said Rosa, the grand-prize winner and a digital communications major minoring in journalism. She’s also a transfer student finishing up her first year at Weissman. "I can’t believe I’ve done so much my first year but it goes to show Weissman cares a lot about their students and the creativity around them."

A Zoom celebration and reading is planned for May 26, 4 p.m. (details to come).

The contest was funded by Baruch alumnus David Shulman '64 through his family foundation. Shulman wanted to do something to inspire student writers after reading *The World According to Fannie Davis*, a captivating memoir by Professor Bridgett Davis about her mother. Davis judged the contest with Professor Gisele Regatao, choosing from among nearly three dozen submissions.

Davis is funding three additional honorable mention prizes, $200 each, in her mother’s memory. Those winners are Maria A. Jacome, for "Our Covid Story," Andrea Blanco, "Covid Diaries–Sole Entry," and Trinity Hollis, "Breathing Machine."

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Our journalism alumni are doing great things. Dalvin Brown '18 is now the innovations reporter at *The Washington Post* and just won the Frederic Wiegold Prize for Business Journalism. The award honors a recent graduate who shows the greatest potential for a business reporting career. Dalvin also holds a master’s degree from CUNY’s Newmark Journalism School.

Yelena Dzhanova '19, a reporter focusing on politics and inequality for *Business Insider*, was editor-in-chief of *The Ticker* while triple-majoring as a Weissman undergrad. She’s now back at CUNY’s Graduate Center, pursuing a master’s degree in women’s and gender studies. "I love Baruch and still have deep ties to the college," she said. "I participate in regular mentoring programs, give talks in classrooms, and was just elected a board member to the school’s alumni association."


**Upcoming Events**

**May 4, 6 p.m.:** Baruch Asian Heritage Alumni Network event on Anti-Asian Racism: Past, Present and Change for an Inclusive Future. Zoom registration [here](#).

**May 11, noon:** Harman Writer-in-Residence Program’s Spring 2021 Prize-Giving Ceremony honors winners of the song and scene writing contest and the Jerome L. Schulman Memorial Poetry Contest. Zoom registration [here](#).

**May 13, 7 p.m.:** The Mishkin Gallery presents a conversation with CUNY Queens College professor/artist Chloë Bass about her newest public art exhibition Wayfinding.

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**Posthumous Degree and An Award in Soléi’s Honor**

Baruch will award a posthumous degree to Soléi Spears at the college’s May 27 commencement. An award has also been created in her name.

The Soléi Spears "Excellence in Action" Award for the Advancement of Social and Racial Justice will recognize the graduating political science major whose dedication to action in the advancement of social and racial justice best embodies Soléi’s values and commitments. The awardee will have advanced social and racial justice through academic work, in particular in political science; on-campus extracurricular activities (such as in student clubs); and/or service/activism outside of Baruch (such as in community organizations, internships, jobs). This year's honoree is Pabvitraa Ramcharan.

Soléi lost her life to gun violence on April 5. Nearly 100 people attended an April 27 online service celebrating her life through songs, stories, videos, and poetry, while paying tribute to her activism, her scholarship, her artistry, and her radiant spirit. “You may be gone, Soléi,” Baruch President S. David Wu said during the service, "but you will always be remembered by the impact you made on all of us."

Visit our website for past editions of the newsletter. Be sure to share your news with us at baruchwsas@baruch.cuny.edu.