

DECEMBER 2018

# STUYVESANT

ALUMNI SPECTATOR

## MILLION DOLLAR GIFT CHANGES THE FUTURE OF STUYVESANT ROBOTICS



*Wildcard, the prototype for the first-place robot Mildcard*



*Stuyvesant Robotics Team at Hudson Valley Rally*

The Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association (SHSAA) received a \$1 million donation to build a Robotics Lab from alumni brothers **Alfred Lin '90** and **Edwin Lin '93**. Both have illustrious careers in finance; Alfred is a Partner at venture capital firm, Sequoia Capital, and Edwin is Head of Global Fixed Income at a leading hedge fund, Citadel.

This past September, the Robotics Team enjoyed success at the Hudson Valley Rally, a New York-based robotics competition, where one of their robots ("Mildcard") placed first. However, the Team faces some serious challenges. "Today's Robotics room is so crowded [...] Many students have no choice but to work in the hallway. On top of that, many of the machines we use to prototype and build our robots are old and broken," said Robotics Team coach and teacher, **Joseph Blay '09**.

The Lin brothers' donation will be used to build a new, larger Robotics Lab and purchase new equipment. "With this gift, we will be able to provide a completely different experience for our students and create a more successful Stuyvesant Robotics Team," said Blay.

During a visit to Stuyvesant, Edwin Lin saw these issues firsthand on a tour of the Robotics Lab with Principal Contreras. "The Team mentioned that they sometimes were forced to work in the hallways. It became clear that the current lab and resources did not satisfy their needs. After my visit, I called Alfred and told him, 'We should really do something for Stuyvesant.'"

The brothers also mentioned a stark shift at Stuyvesant compared to their time there. Edwin stated, "When I was at Stuyvesant, I attended many city,

state, and national competitions with the Math Team and never had to pay for administration fees, travel costs, or lodging. These days, I hear many Stuyvesant students can't afford to attend the competitions that they have worked so hard to qualify for because their families do not have the financial means to do so. How can that be right for society? Being able to provide resources for these deserving students was an important part of why we got involved."

Robotics competitions have a very large cost attached to them. Between registration fees, transportation, and hotel expenses, each competition can cost thousands of dollars. This figure is not even inclusive of the numerous specialized tools and equipment necessary to create the robots.

*continued on page 4*

The Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association is a **501(c)(3)** not-for-profit organization.

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## Message from the Principal, Eric Contreras

Dear Stuyvesant Alumni Community,

This was my third year serving as principal of Stuyvesant High School. In more than 22 years as an educator, nothing brings me greater satisfaction, fulfillment or intellectual stimulation as my daily service as principal to over 3,400 students, 200 staff members, and thousands of alumni that constitute our vibrant and dynamic family. I tell colleagues and friends that every day I see our students, dance, compete, debate, code, sing, perform, write, create, and problem solve at the highest academic levels. Our students do this with a commitment to excellence and quality. What is not always apparent is that they also do this work with a genuine spirit of collaboration and collective responsibility. The Stuyvesant experience is always greater than the sum of the individual parts because students work together to create something that is exponentially greater, be that robots, theater productions, SING! performances, or the most recent issue of *The Spectator*, our celebrated newspaper.

Our school continues to be the place where students come from across the city from humble beginnings to seek opportunity and pursue excellence. It is our long-standing narrative to be a school that has frequently served first-generation students, many who will be the first in their families to attend high school in this country, first to engage in professional careers, and first to move beyond their neighborhoods to colleges far away. Stuyvesant continues to open doors for all its students, as it has done since 1904. Our commitment to varied and rigorous intellectual pursuits, collaboration, and opportunity is one which our graduates take with them beyond their time at Stuyvesant. It is commitment I am compelled to bring to my work everyday. Our students inspire me daily to be a better student, citizen, and person. When asked why I work so hard at Stuyvesant, my honest and simple response is that, "My students and staff work harder, so it's the least I can do."

In my time as principal I have been grateful for all of the alumni support. I see firsthand how your contributions, mentorships, and volunteer efforts positively impact our students and create the opportunities they desire. As we continue to think about our next steps as a school, imagining new possibilities and programs we would like to establish, we are able to move forward because you have been generous and supportive as alumni. We are a complex and layered city, and every day students stay past the last bell in over 150 clubs, 40 teams, and countless special projects. To do this work, we count on you. Some of our current initiatives include:

The development of our new Robotics Lab was made possible with the generous support of alumni **Alfred ('90)** and **Edwin**

**Lin ('93)**. With this funding we will provide updated tools and resources, and will connect two existing rooms to create a space that will accommodate three robotics teams and the different engineering teams.

We are also expanding our computer science program by offering an Artificial Intelligence course for the first time this year. This brings us to seven computer science courses, making us the most comprehensive high school program in New York City. We are now exploring the modernization of our computer science labs and, if funding is available, will create an eighth course focusing on Cybersecurity. Our graduates who now attend top computer science programs tell us that our program gave them advance preparation for their work as undergraduates.

We are currently in the exploration phase of our environmental science initiative to support the intersection of biology, chemistry, and environmental studies. We hope to prepare students for careers in nascent fields of critical importance and to develop well-informed citizens on issues of the environment, sustainability, and policy. This year we began a pilot program offering Advanced Placement Environmental Science to incoming 9th-graders, using our surrounding environment as the laboratory space. This summer we offered an alumni-funded research program with a focus on environmental science research. To anchor our sustainability initiative we will seek funding to create a hydroponics environmental studies laboratory on the third floor. This lab, along with our new course and summer program, will help build partnerships between environmental universities, government, and industry organizations to create opportunities for students well beyond Stuyvesant.

Our arts program is also expanding. We are now offering an Artificial Intelligence music course, a guitar program, and a madrigal choir. This spring, with alumni support, we are set to add a Bell Choir to our choral program.

When I meet incoming 9th graders I encourage them to seek diverse opportunities and take advantage of the options available. It is through your support that students are able to explore their passions, discover their expertise, and prepare for their future endeavors. I tell them to be intellectually curious, be bold, and contribute to those around them with the knowledge and wisdom they get from their experiences at Stuyvesant. Together we make that possible.

Pro Scientia Atque Sapientia.



Eric Contreras

# Message from the President, Soo Kim '93

Dear Alumni,

I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of the entire Stuyvesant community, to show our appreciation to all of our donors and dues-paying members of the Association. We are a membership organization—formed of alumni who want to give back to our community—and **all that we do is made possible by your generosity.** Thank you.

As a reminder, we have a three-fold mission: to give to the school, to give to its students, and to build fellowship amongst alumni. Let me share with you why we find our mission compelling.

Contrary to popular belief, there is nothing “elite” about Stuyvesant from the Department of Education’s perspective. The school is funded no better than any other school in the state. In fact, the Fair Student Funding formula applied across the state tends to weigh against the largest urban schools like Stuyvesant. We draw our teachers and administrators from the same pools as other public schools, and they are subject to the same rules and regulations. Administratively, we are the same. **Yet the needs of the school are greater because Stuyvesant strives to meet its students at their ability.**

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the “new” building, don’t be fooled by outward appearances. Yes, the building itself is nicer than what many of us experienced on 15th Street. But did you know that when we moved, all of the old equipment from the shops and labs we remembered *moved with the students*? One of the most exciting things about the new **Irwin Zahn '44 Innovation Lab** is that we can finally retire some of the old lathes and presses we remember working on when we were students.

Over the past two years, we have given nearly \$400,000 to support the school. This number will ramp up considerably this year as the first dollars are spent on the new Robotics Lab made possible by the tremendous generosity of **Alfred Lin '90** and **Edwin Lin '93**.

But beyond the headline capital needs, we are regularly provided a list from school leaders and teachers of requests for supplemental funding for field trips, curricular materials, etc. from numerous departments supporting dozens of classes. These are met by all of your dues and donations, and unfortunately we can only meet a fraction of the ask.

That leads right into the second mission of the Association: to give to the students. According to the DOE, **44% of Stuyvesant students today come from families living below the poverty line.** It’s not something we ever talked about when we went to school, but it was a reality then too. Stuyvesant kids are, and have always been, the poor, smart, and hungry. They achieve despite the sharp resource disparities and the headwinds that accompany. I have never heard the students make an excuse.

So the Association gives to them, from scholarships to funding extra-curricular activities like clubs, teams and competitions. Over the past two years, we have given more than \$500,000 to the students and we hope we can do more. We close the gap so their achievements are not limited by the means of their families. Our amazing Parents Association works hard to raise monies to support the activities of their children, but to put their efforts in context, they raise approximately \$300,000 per year to support a school of 3,400 students. There are elementary schools in better neighborhoods in NYC that raise twice that amount for schools of less than 600 children, and of course none of these numbers compare to the support public schools in the suburbs or independent private schools of NYC receive from their parents.

I was a varsity fencer in school. I never could afford the electric vest that you need to wear during a bout, so I just borrowed one when I needed it. It didn’t prevent me from winning two city championships with the team, but I know firsthand that it’s too easy to take for granted what it takes to be competitive today. There are 200+ clubs filled with students wanting to do more than they have the resources to do. We help them close the gap.

Last, but definitely not least, our mission is to encourage fellowship amongst alums. As you may have heard me say, Stuyvesant is not the building, nor all of our wonderful teachers and administrators, and most certainly not the extraordinary support the school receives from the DOE. The school is, and has always been, its students. We are each others’ greatest competitive advantages. It is, and was, an amazing opportunity to be able to learn together.

We are the school. We pushed each other for the four years we were together, and we should stay close so we can do the same in the future. By creating our online database, maintaining a robust social media presence, our newsletters, our events and our reunions, we continue to build our community. It’s imperative. Stuyvesant doesn’t have to end after we leave for college and beyond. We—who made the decision to leave our neighborhood to come to this huge school in the middle of the greatest city in the world—are Stuyvesant.

Regards,



Soo Kim

## An appeal to the Stuyvesant HS alumni STEM network

The SHSAA is building on **Vanessa Liu's** (Stuy '92 and prior Westinghouse finalist) heroic efforts to gather Stuyvesant alumni who are able to support efforts in partnering bright and motivated students with research labs -- especially for the purpose of submitting an application to the Regeneron Science Talent Search (previously known as Westinghouse and Intel). It would be of immense value if those able to support fill out this short survey indicating your availability and capacity: <http://stuyalumni.thankyou4caring.org/research>. Please contact **Director Lillian Seu '01** at [Lillian.Seu@alumni.ucsf.edu](mailto:Lillian.Seu@alumni.ucsf.edu) with questions or comments.



# MILLION DOLLAR GIFT CHANGES STUYVESANT ROBOTICS

*continued from page 1*

With their donation, Alfred and Edwin hope to reduce many of the obstacles students face in pursuing their future endeavors. "What is most important is for students who have interest or a curiosity in robotics to be able to explore the field. It's not necessarily important to immediately excel at it. Life's journey affords everyone ample time to determine their true passion. If this Lab can make just one student more interested in robotics and that interest develops into a significant contribution to the world, we've succeeded," said Edwin. Alfred added, "Stuyvesant had a profound impact on our lives. Our experiences there gave us the confidence to believe that we can do anything in the world if we only work hard enough. We wanted to give back to Stuyvesant and provide an enriching experience for today's students so that they will look to their future with the same optimism and confidence we had."

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Interested in supporting the  
Pathway to Innovation Program?  
**Donate to the Stuy Fund today!**

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## Principal's Innovation Pathway

**Step 1:** Redesign of Mechanical Drafting Course  
to include software engineering design and 3-D fabrication

**Step 2:** Irwin Zahn Innovation Lab  
to host new engineering courses

**Step 3:** Robotics Lab Redesign  
to support the modernization of our robotics program

**Step 4:** Hydroponics Lab  
*ESTIMATED COST: \$200,000*

**Step 5:** Nanotechnology Lab  
*ESTIMATED COST: \$800,000*

**Step 6:** Energy Lab  
*ESTIMATED COST: \$300,000*

## Message from the Robotics Coach, Joseph Blay '09

Dear Stuyvesant Alumni,

I am writing to recognize **Edwin Lin '93** and **Alfred Lin '90** for their generous donation to Stuyvesant Robotics. With their help, we will take our Team to the next level. By renovating and expanding Stuyvesant's robotics facilities, we will give more students the chance to learn valuable lessons and skills while competing at a higher level than ever before.

Today's robotics room is so crowded, with so much demand to be on the team that many students have no choice but to work in the hallway. On top of that, many of the machines we use to prototype and build our robots are old and broken.

With this gift, we will be able to provide a completely different experience for our students and create a more successful Stuyvesant Robotics Team.

The additional space that this donation has made possible will enable the Team to work more effectively and efficiently. We will finally have a lecture

area big enough for the whole team! This includes a real practice space, a first aid area with an emergency shower and eyewash station, and new machines including a CNC router, a water jet, a lathe, and new drill presses and band saws! Students will gain experience using equipment similar to what they will encounter in engineering programs at the college level.

In addition to the many benefits to the Robotics Team, the new space and equipment will enable new classes in Engineering and Robotics, giving even more Stuyvesant students a valuable introduction to this field.

The Stuyvesant Robotics Team has worked extremely hard over the years to become one of the most successful teams in New York City. With a spacious, modern, and efficient facility, I believe we have the potential to be one of the best in the country.

As a Stuyvesant graduate myself, seeing the opportunities made possible with your support has been particularly meaningful. This Team has been my passion since I first joined it

as a student over a decade ago. Thank you again for your support and giving us the chance to make Stuyvesant Robotics as great as it can be!

Sincerely,



Joseph Blay '09



Joe Blay '09, Robotics Team coach & teacher

# MENTORING PROGRAM ADDS EXTENSIVE COLLEGE APPLICATION WORKSHOPS



Over a hundred students attended the Essay Writing Workshop on November 10th.



Alumni shared their experiences during a College Panel.

Since the launch of Stuyvesant's Alumni Mentoring Program in 2015, the program has completed six semesters of mentoring, providing guidance and professional training to over 500 students and supplying over 400 hours of in-person programming. Entering its seventh semester, Program Director **Eleonora Srugo '04** wished to grow the Program and provide a more impactful experience for students than ever before. With its largest class of 160+ students and 80+ mentors, the Program's seventh iteration is now a full-year program with new interactive workshops, group sessions, and additional supplementary activities, such as corporate office visits and a cooking class.

The program originally consisted of four group sessions followed by a series of industry panels, where the students learned how to craft resumes, market themselves in interviews, and develop a better understanding of career paths in different fields. But after several semesters of gathering feedback from the student mentees, Eleonora realized that the program should also provide more guidance and advice on the more immediate challenge for Stuyvesant students—the college application process they all go through in senior year.

Eleonora designed the College Application Workshops to be comprised of two four-hour sessions held on two Saturdays in November. The two-day sessions were attended by over a hundred students from the senior, junior, and sophomore classes. On the first day, the students listened to presentations that gave tips on essay-writing and best practices on how to tackle each component of college applications. The students and mentors then broke out into small groups where they brainstormed and discussed topics and ideas for their personal essays.

On the second Saturday, students heard from 20+ alumni on their college experiences. The alumni were grouped into panels defined by geographic proximity, school size, public/private institutions, and curriculum focus. The alumni participants came from a wide cross-section of different schools and careers. They recounted their college selection process, shared the best (and worst) parts of their college experience, and gave frank advice to the current students. The workshop concluded by breaking out into small groups to edit the draft essays that students prepared.

**Bill Weiss '80**, a mentor in the program for the past few years, took an active role in both days of the workshop. In

addition to being a speaker on the panel for NYC schools, Bill co-led the session on essay best practices. He spent hours helping students brainstorm ideas for their essays and edited their first drafts a week later. "I love hearing the students' stories and watching their ideas develop into essays. Occasionally, an essay will literally give me chills," said Bill. When asked what motivates him to dedicate eight hours for two weekends volunteering for the Mentoring Program, Bill replied "Participating in the program is one of the most gratifying things I've ever done, because I can see the difference it makes. As with the rest of the program, the workshops impart important skills that are not taught in the classroom or at home."

Program Founder **YanJie Hou '06** could not agree more on the need for alumni guidance, "The vast majority of the Stuyvesant student body comes from immigrant families. For many, they have never been coached on the best ways to write a compelling, memorable personal essay or how to prepare for college admissions interviews. The Mentoring Program hopes to capitalize on the experiences of our alumni network to narrow this knowledge gap and provide access to more opportunities for Stuyvesant's hard-working students."



# 2018 REUNION!

We are very excited to share a few photos from our Reunion 2018 events! Congratulations to all classes who celebrated a milestone this year. Please visit our website to see the full album:

<https://www.stuyalumni.org/news/reunion-2018-photos/>



Reunion 2018 opened with a special address from Principal Contreras.



Students led tours for new and old alumni throughout the day.



**1958 Reunion** (l to r): Don Moss, Harold Doshan, Roy Olsen and his wife, Adrian Brody and his wife, and David Pritzker and his wife



The Baume family and supporters celebrate the unveiling of the Baume Legacy Fund plaque.



**1993 Reunion** (l to r): Back Row - Shoel Perelman, Soo Kim, Brent's wife, Brent Spodek, Alex Li, Austin Woo; Second Row - Liz Borland, Anuradha Bhagwati, Melissa Yee, Molly Rhodes, Mark Lee, Rafeena Lee, Wayne Kye, Stanley Ho; Third row - Crystal Velasquez, Elite Chak, Judy Burke, Annie Thoms, Shana Carter, Mara Gerstein, Grace Meng; Front Row - Josh Brietbart, Alexis ("Ali") Chiu, Hannah Rosenzweig, Matt Wang, and Cindy Nieves



**1998 Reunion** (l to r): The '98 Peglegs - Jon Fass, Eric Olesh, Don Amlin, Rob Aboulafia, Andres Hernandez, Paul Bockwoldt, Arnab Daas, Malcolm Barrett, Matt Pinto, and Adeola Akinola



# 2018 REUNION!



**1968 Reunion** (l to r): Joel Lustig, Lou Maresca, Abe Gruenwald, Steven Glickel, Robert Schultz, Eric Treiber, Ronald Lustig, James Wong, Charles Chehebar, Scott Schwedock, Donald Vogelmann, Daniel Sendroff, George Hiller, Stephen Francis, Maurice Silverman, Tsun Tam, Jeffrey Stonehill, Alan Fraade, David Lee and Alan Sheiner



**2013 Reunion** (l to r): Amanda Boss, Danielle Freeman, Lauren Chan, Batya Zamansky, and Danish James



**2008 Reunion** (l to r): Paul Silverman, Evan Schwartz, Kasey Huizinga, Ezra Glenn, and Hannah Temkin



**2003 Reunion** (l to r): Kim Eldridge, Jenny Zhu, Shanyssa Findley, Kimberly Williams, and Daphney Gachette



**1988 Reunion** (l to r): Rick Nair, Eric Smith, Julie Huang, Leslie Ann Roldan, and Noel Maurer



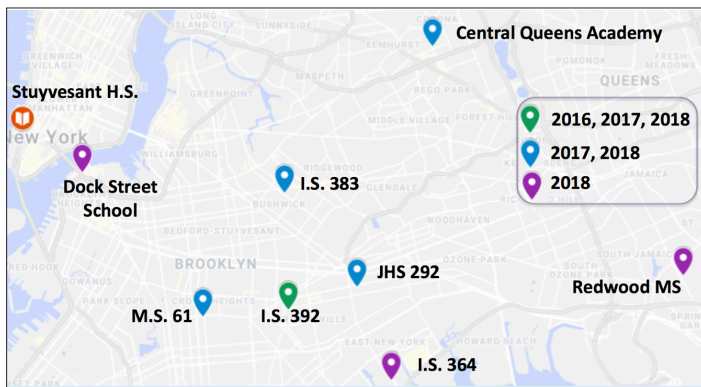
**1983 Reunion** (l to r): Tom Berton, Adam Ruderman, Julianne Stone, Raghu Rangachar, Ben Pesner, Tommy Leonardi, Farah Chandu, Rand Neveloff, Craig Morancie, Janis Brody, Sumana Chandrasekhar Rangachar, Christina Brown, Michele Ahern, Rosemary Grosse, Lisa Bryant, Sylvia Syracuse, Sandy Jones, Brian Bromberg, Shara Israel, Karyn Seroussi, Leo Marshall, George Borhegyi, Marc Rivlin, and Brian Schaffield



## STUYPREP COMPLETES THIRD YEAR

The Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) for the incoming Class of 2023 took place on October 21st and 22nd. Among the 30,000+ NYC eighth graders who took the exam this year were approximately 100 StuyPrep students. StuyPrep, currently in its third year, is a free SHSAT test-prep and mentoring program sponsored by the Alumni Association to help students in underrepresented neighborhoods of New York City gain admission to the specialized high schools. Making a commitment to diversity, the SHSAA has increased funding to provide the program to more students than ever before. When **Kent Kim '05** and **Christina Alfonso '01** first started the program in 2016, the inaugural class was composed of approximately 30 students from IS 392 in Brooklyn. This year, the program has expanded to 100+ students from seven middle schools throughout Brooklyn and Queens.

### Schools Served by StuyPrep



The program structure has grown to include not only professional test-prep classes taught by Kaplan, but additional small group tutoring and supplementary classes taught by current Stuy students and alumni volunteers. One alumni volunteer, **Ilya Tsinis '05**, teaches weekly classes at StuyPrep. Ilya's passion for education started when he was a senior at Stuyvesant. As Math Team captain, he was given the life-changing opportunity to teach a class of 20+ freshman by legendary Math teacher, Mr. Richard Geller.

One of Ilya's most hard-working students, Orion Morgan, attributed his 40% improvement in practice exam test scores to many of the tools and strategies that he learned from StuyPrep and Ilya himself. Orion is an eighth grade student at Dock Street Middle School in District 13 in



*Ilya Tsinis '05, StuyPrep Coach, leading a class during a Saturday session.*

Brooklyn. We asked Orion's mother, Cynthia McKnight, who is also the school's PTA President, about the impact of StuyPrep on Dock School students. "The program has been phenomenal. I have seen tremendous growth in not only my son, but his classmates. The program has been a life saver for me and the families at our school since it is free. Over 80% of our eighth graders are from very low income families. This has removed a tremendous barrier to families who cannot the afford the cost of the expensive test prep programs," Ms. McKnight said.

This year, StuyPrep was organized into two parts. The first part was a Kaplan-led course held in the local neighborhoods of our StuyPrep students, where they were taught a SHSAT curriculum in a formal classroom setting. During the second part of the program, all 100+ StuyPrep students met at Stuyvesant to review the material in small groups led by current Stuyvesant students and alumni.



*Cynthia (furthest right) and Orion (second from the right) seen with family and StuyPrep classmates Anaiya (furthest left) and Nitema (middle).*





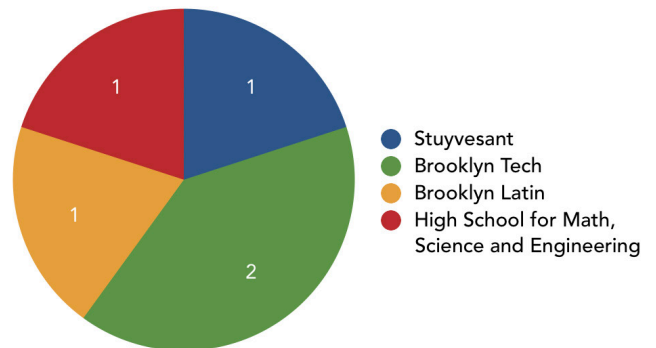
*StuyPrep students attentively listening to SHSAT math instructions.*

Orion found the second part of the program to be incredibly valuable. "This experience has helped me get an idea of what Stuyvesant was like and it drove me to focus and work harder to gain admission and succeed in that environment." His mother agreed, "It has been very impactful for the Dock Street students to come to the actual school. They can actually see themselves attending Stuyvesant High School which, is very powerful. I know this program will change the trajectory of many of our students and I have already told them to pay it forward. The generosity of time and resources by Stuyvesant alumni has become an important part of instilling the need to give back in our students."

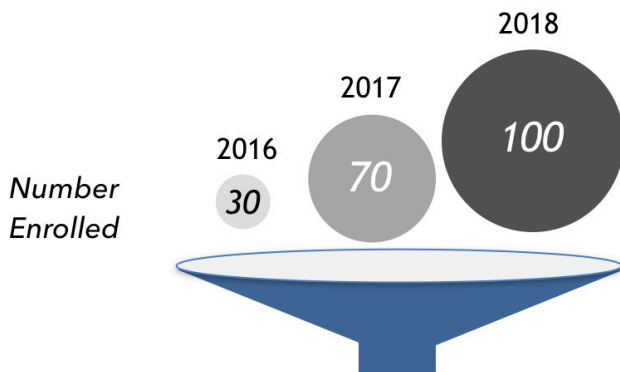
Last year, five StuyPrep students gained admission to specialized high schools including one student who got into Stuyvesant. We won't know the results of this year's tests until March 2019, but regardless of how many students end up getting into Specialized High Schools, StuyPrep has already left a lasting impact on its students. As Ilya observes, "The most important effect of StuyPrep might be the students' realization that deliberate practice can yield huge results. Even the students that don't end up getting into Specialized High Schools have seen this through their improvement in test scores with practice. These students also got to work with older Stuy mentors and alumni who truly believed in them and pushed them to fulfill their potential. These unquantifiable moments can manifest in remarkable ways for the rest of these students' lives. Sometimes all it takes is one educational encounter to alter somebody's entire life trajectory."

## 2018 Impact

Students admitted



## Number of Students in StuyPrep



*Current Stuyvesant students tutoring StuyPrep 8th-graders in small groups.*

**Help us grow StuyPrep and change more students' lives through the power of education. DONATE TO THE STUY FUND!**

## Library Gets New Signs



*New signs in the **Boaz R. Weinstein '91**  
Stuyvesant library*

The Alumni Association sponsored new signage for the library. Stuyvesant librarian, Christina Kennedy, commented, "They have elevated the appearance of the library and will make it easier for students to find materials independently."

## Stuy Goes to *Fiddler on the Roof*



*Stuyvesant students with the cast  
members of *Fiddler on the Roof**

The Alumni Association sponsored the Jewish History Class trip to see the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* in Yiddish! This critically acclaimed production put on by the National Yiddish Theater Folksbeine and directed by Joel Grey was incredibly powerful! Since the students were studying Sholem Aleichem's short stories (the writer behind the creation of Tevye), the early 20th century Russian Jewish experience, and the original Broadway production and film, they were able to really appreciate all the nuances and subtleties of the production. The highlight was a specially-arranged Q&A with the cast after the show for an hour-long conversation about acting, dance, Yiddish, and the musical's themes of tradition, assimilation, and anti-Semitism. It was an unforgettable event!

## Speech and Debate Team Dominates



*Speech & Debate Team triumph at Scarsdale*

This November, 80 students from the Speech & Debate team competed at two different competitions. At Scarsdale, Senior Claire Liu won the Lincoln Douglas Championship. At the Tri-League tournament at St. Francis Prep High School, students from all five boroughs and Long Island competed. Stuyvesant brought home two champions, Senior Will Lohier and Sophomore Touloupe Lawal, and won two team awards. Congratulations to all!

## Ultimate Frisbee City & State Champions



*At the Annual Alumni Ultimate Frisbee Tournament, where Alumni took victory for 2018*

The Stuyvesant Sticky Fingers (Stuyvesant's Ultimate Frisbee team) has a long history at Stuyvesant and is consistently a power team. Numerous times in the past, the Sticky Fingers have been State Champions, with the most recent being Spring 2018. Last season, the team also won the 2018 City Championships. This fall, the team made it to the finals of the New Jersey DEVYL regional tournament in late September. They also host an Annual Alumni Tournament, held this year on November 24. It represents one of the most important aspects of Ultimate: the unbreakable bonds and the tight-knit community that they value so dearly.

## Chess Team Wins Mayor's Cup!



*Cheng Chen, Jun Yan Li, Justin Chen,  
and Ann Zhang (all sophomores!)*

The Stuyvesant Chess Team won the 2018 Mayor's Cup! The Mayor's Cup is a citywide individual and team chess tournament. Stuy beat Brooklyn Tech to place first in the teams division, and Team Captain, sophomore Justin Chen, placed first in the individual standings with a score of 4 wins, 0 draws, and 0 losses. Justin Chen, Jun Yan Li, Cheng Chen and Ryan Chen got the high scores for Stuyvesant. In December, the Chess Team will travel to Orlando for the annual grade-level National Championships to defend their past titles!



# PLAYWRIGHT DAVID MURRELL'S BROADWAY DEBUT

By PAULINA KLUBOK '19

When given the opportunity to see the "The Lifespan of a Fact," a brilliant and compelling recent Broadway production co-written by **David Murrell '86**, I was stunned by the play's tangible relevance to today's world. "The Lifespan of a Fact" centers around Jim Fingal, a fact-checker, and John D'Agata, a famous writer. When one of D'Agata's essays is given to Jim to fact-check, the two characters clash and a new story is born. In the midst of their heated debate, a fundamental question arises—where do we draw the line between what is true and what feels true? Murrell has created an extraordinary work that explores the intricacies of the creative process and challenges the perceptions of ethical journalism.

## How did Stuyvesant shape who you are today?

My Stuyvesant experience has been formative to my entire life. I grew up lower middle class in a very dangerous part of Staten Island in the 70's and early 80's. It was clear to my family that there was a way out of that for my sister and me. My older sister took the specialized high school test and got into Stuyvesant, which formed a model for me. Stuyvesant was formative in that it provided a space where other high-achieving, idealistic and ambitious people all got together and felt safe - it was really a haven.

## When you were in high school did you know you wanted to be a writer?

No, I never saw myself as a writer. I thought of myself exclusively as a science person. I applied to college interested in neuroscience and biochemistry. I went to the University of Chicago, and they had a very strong theater and comedy scene that I encountered during my time there. It gradually crept into my mind and infected me—I was interested in telling stories and narratives. By the time that I graduated, I was an English major, and in common terms, minored in biochemistry. When I got out of there, I started writing scripts and screenplays.

A few years after that, I went through a Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program at Columbia University because I thought that I should become a doctor. I completed the program but never went to medical school because I had caught the bug of writing creatively.

## What draws you to writing?

I think it's almost like a buzzing—like if you're trying to get to sleep at night and there's a buzzing that will not let you alone and you need to turn the light on, grab your tennis racket, and kill the fly. That's kind of to me what writing is.

## How did you get involved with the *Lifespan of a Fact*?

In 2012, the book called *The Lifespan of a Fact* was published. One Sunday morning, I read the *New York Times* review of the book and then read the book itself. For many years, I was already thinking about projects and I was immediately struck that the form of *The Lifespan of a Fact* was an argument between two people - the fact checker, Jim, and the essayist, John. These are both real people - Jim Fingal and John D'Agata. It just struck me—'wow, this is classic—this is a play right here.'



David Murrell '86 at the opening night of "Lifespan of a Fact"

## What did the creative process look like?

It's hundreds and hundreds of hours of work, but it's that buzzing of the fly in your room at night. It is an interesting subject that brings you a certain amount of inherent pleasure to explore. We also happen to be very comic-oriented people, so anything that we pay attention to we will turn into something funny.

## The play examines what is true versus what feels true. How did you strike that balance in telling the story?

I did not feel bound by real life. When we sold this project to our producer, he immediately told us to do what we want with this. John D'Agata, the essayist, told us explicitly, 'This is your play. Do not feel bound by anything in the book. Take it as you will.' We were free to draw inspiration from the book but we were not bound by it. We have no responsibility to the real people involved. Jim and John themselves, the real people, are very much on record as saying that the versions of themselves in the book that the play is based on are creations. It's a tower of confabulations—embellishment and imagination atop embellishment and imagination. This play is the latest iteration of that.

## How do you define a fact?

As I established, I have a science background. For me, facts are just things that can be measured by a measuring instrument.

## Does that get in the way of writing?

For me, it does not. I love science; I love the scientific method; I love measuring things. However, I also love horror movies. I love the supernatural; I desperately wish there were werewolves and vampires, and that's a lot of what I write about. I write about many genres, but I separate my emotional urges and dreams from what my intellect thinks is true.

*"The Lifespan of a Fact," based on the book of the same name, is playing now. It currently stars Daniel Radcliffe, Bobby Carnevale and Cherry Jones, and is slated to run until February 2019. Visit Studio 54 in Manhattan to see the show!*

**1950:** From **Ivan Huber**: "I would like to hear from anyone who remembers me from the January 1950 graduating class. Those I remember are Stanley Gross and Ronald Hopper. Personal news: I became a Professor of Biology, specialty Entomology, and specifically cockroaches." You can reach Ivan at [ivan@randomtech.com](mailto:ivan@randomtech.com).

**Norman Goodman** is starting his 55th year at Stony Brook University after a stint in the U.S. Army and teaching briefly at Teachers College, Columbia and Queens College (CUNY). He is the first person at SUNY to be awarded two distinguished titles: SUNY Distinguished Professor of Teaching and SUNY Distinguished Professor of Service. He was chairman of the Department of Sociology for 20 years, twice president of the campus' University Senate, as well as vice-president/secretary of the SUNY University Faculty Senate and editor of that organization's Bulletin for over 20 years. He has published, either solely or jointly, a total of 9 books and over 20 articles in professional journals or book chapters. He recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Brooklyn College. He credits his lifetime commitment to education and scholarship to his experience at Stuyvesant High School.

**1951: Bob Schiffmann** co-authored the book "Microwave Chemical and Materials Processing" (Springer Nature, 2018). He was also re-elected president of the International Microwave Power Institute for his 19th term.

**1952:** Since retiring in 2001, **Norman Mendelsohn** has been auditing classes at Molloy College in Rockville Centre, NY for the past 17 years. Prior to retiring, he worked for Pfizer, Inc. for 20 years and 10 years at

Minerals Technologies, Inc. He now resides in Oceanside, NY with his wife of 52 years. They have travelled extensively, and have two children and four grandchildren. His email address is [norlyn1@msn.com](mailto:norlyn1@msn.com).

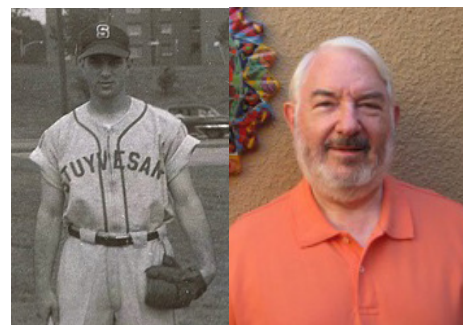
**1955:** In August, **Herbert Navarro** climbed to the top of Mt. Whitney. One month prior, he and his team reached the top of Mt. Elbrus, the highest mountain in Europe at 18,510 feet. "At the top of Mount Whitney, in the Sierras, at 14,505 ft. elevation, highest mountain in the lower 48. On August 29, using an Alpine climbing strategy -- start early, travel light, go for the summit in one day -- Kailash Murthi, my climbing partner, and I, started at 3:15 am from the Whitney Portal, summiting at 2:15 in the afternoon. One for the Pegleg!"



**Herbert Navarro '55** at the top of Mt. Whitney holding a Stuyvesant pennant.

**1957:** From **Ron Pinkus**: "Joel **Rogelberg** became a friend of mine when he was in my home room. He lived across the street in Stuyvesant, the school was at 15th St. and 1st Ave., and we frequently went over to his apartment to study. At CCNY, we were both engineering students. Joel passed away on April 15, 2018. He had cancer."

**1958: Ray Silverstein** sent in these photos in his 1958 SHS baseball team uniform and him today in Tucson, AZ.



**Ray Silverstein '58** in his baseball uniform (left) and today in Tucson (right).

**1969: Walter Hanclosky, PhD** donated 50 photographic portraits with interviews and 10 videos, on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in NYC, to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History for historical documentation, future research, publication, and exhibition. He also wrote *Friends in AID: Portrait of an Epidemic*.

**1973: John Putnam's** cover band Strange Land performed at The Bitter End in NYC in late September playing the music of Leon Russell.

**1976: Jerry Franklin** performed his full-length solo stage show "Wake-Up Call" in NYC in early November. He performed it professionally in San Francisco and in abbreviated form in several other cities. The show is an autobiography about the sudden death of his wife and how he survived his first year as a widower.

**1981:** In October, **Mark Sands, MD** was appointed the new Chief Medical Officer at Stony Brook University Hospital. He will oversee clinical operations while focusing on quality of care and patient safety, as well as clinical-care coordination and the development of new clinical-



information systems and physician-engagement protocols. Mark most recently served as Enterprise Associate Chief Quality Officer for the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. He earned his bachelor's of science and medical degrees from Northwestern University and an MBA from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management, and was responsible for "standardizing high-risk quality clinical operations" at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation.



**Mark Sands, MD '81**

**1984: Samson Hum** passed away on October 31st, 2018 due to a tragic car accident. After Stuyvesant, he attained a Bachelor's degree in Political Science plus a minor in AstroPhysics at NYU showing his interest in varied topics. Sam spoke warmly of his time at Stuyvesant. He is survived by his wife, Susan, and is lovingly missed by his siblings, friends and extended family.

**1985: Rachel Swarns** joined the faculty at New York University as an Associate Professor of Journalism in August 2018 after spending 22 years as a correspondent at the *New York Times*.



**Gary Shteyngart '85** | Photo credit: Ramin Talaie

**1991: Gary Shteyngart** was featured in *The Guardian* to promote his fourth novel, *Lake Success*. You can read more here: [www.stuyalumni.org/gary-shteyngart](http://www.stuyalumni.org/gary-shteyngart)

**1992: Roger K. Lee** won his 3rd Emmy Award earlier this year as a producer for *Good Morning America*.



Emmy Awards won by **Roger K. Lee '92**.

**1994: William Corwin's** exhibit *The Old Gods* was on display at Geary Contemporary in New York City in early fall. This was Corwin's second solo exhibition with Geary. William Corwin's work has been reviewed and written about in numerous publications, and he has exhibited at galleries nationally and internationally, including The Shiva Gallery at John Jay College, Zürcher Gallery, and Catinca Tabacaru in New York, and The Red Gate Gallery in Beijing, the FRISE Künstlerhaus in Hamburg, and the George and Jorgen Gallery and Gazelli Art House in London. Corwin is the recipient of a Jerome Foundation Grant, a Kress Foundation Grant, and residencies at the Clocktower Gallery, Art Omi,

Queens College Art Center, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and chashama. He has curated exhibitions at the Camera Club of New York, and the art galleries at Lafayette College, Albright College, and Seton Hall University. He has written for *Frieze*, *Artpapers* and *BOMB*. You can read more about William and his exhibit here:

[www.stuyalumni.org/william-corwin](http://www.stuyalumni.org/william-corwin)

**1998: Malcolm Barrett** and **Alice Kim** were on the show *The Price is Right*. While they weren't chosen to guess some prices, they had a great time in the audience!



**Malcolm Barrett '98 and Alice Kim '98** on *The Price is Right*

**David O'Leary** created and wrote a 10-episode show titled, *Project Blue Book*, that is set to release this year. The series chronicles actual U.S. Air Force-sponsored investigations into the reported sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) in America during the 1950s and 1960s. Game of Thrones alum Aidan Gillen plays the main character in the series, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, an astrophysicist, family man and UFO skeptic who is appointed as the Chief Scientific Advisor to Project Blue Book.

**2000: Damien LaRock** graduated from Teachers College, Columbia University on May 16, 2018 with

## CLASS NOTES

a Ph.D. in Special Education. He continues to work as an elementary special education teacher at P.S. 148 in East Elmhurst, Queens.

**Julien Laor** and **Ilona Potiha '05** are married! "We never overlapped at Stuy, but when we met in 2013, we knew that we had something special in common! Four years later we got engaged in the airport on the way to Japan and posed for pictures in front of Mt. Fuji from our onsen in our kimonos."



Newlyweds, **Julien Laor '00** and **Ilona Potiha '05**

**2002: Adriana Diaz** filled in on CBS *This Morning* on August 31, 2018. She was a CBS News' Asia correspondent based in Beijing until 2017 and is now a national correspondent based in Chicago for the same network.



**Adriana Diaz '02** (far right) on CBS *This Morning*.

## IN MEMORIAM

### The Alumni Association has received the following obituary notices:

1939: Albert Feinstein  
1953: William Pasinosky  
1955: Stanley Blau  
1957: Alfred Cancellieri  
1957: Jon Rantzman  
1957: Michael Spinelli  
1958: Sheldon Rashba  
1961: Andrew Gordon, PhD  
1963: Jonathan Alexander  
2002: Shaunya James

**Jerrold Meinwald '43**, the Goldwin Smith Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at Cornell University, passed away from cancer in April 2018 in Ithaca at the age of 91.

Born in New York City in 1927, he graduated from Stuyvesant, and briefly attended Brooklyn College and Queens College. After serving in the US Navy as an electronics technician, Meinwald earned a Ph.B. and B.S. in Chemistry at the University of Chicago, and an M.A. and Ph.D. at Harvard. In 1952 he went to Cornell, where he spent most of his career. He was named

Goldwin Smith Professor of Chemistry (1980-2005) and held the Andrew Mellon Foundation Professorship (1993-1995).

Meinwald trained generations of chemists and produced over 400 journal articles with some 200 collaborators. He lectured frequently, including at five national organic symposia of the American Chemical Society.

Popular and successful as a teacher at all levels, Meinwald loved sharing the joy of chemical discovery. His own passion for chemistry was sparked in childhood, when he encountered Michael Cava, reading a biochemistry textbook on the beach. The two would go on to produce homemade fireworks shows for neighbors, lecture to one another on a variety of chemical subjects, and synthesize dyes in Meinwald's home laboratory (using notes hand-copied from the New York Public Library). When a procedure required hours of refluxing, the two would play skeletal versions of

assorted orchestral suites on flute and trombone!

This began a long tradition of combining his two great interests, chemistry and music. Meinwald performed chamber music at International Society for Chemical Ecology meetings. He studied flute with Arthur Lora, James Pappoutsakis, and Marcel Moyse. Throughout his life, he enjoyed playing music with (and for) colleagues, friends, and family members, often with his wife Charlotte Greenspan at the keyboard.



In 2014, **Dr. Meinwald '43** received the National Medal of Science from President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony.

**Do you have news or updates that you would like to share with the Stuy community?**  
If yes, email us at [updates@shsaa.org](mailto:updates@shsaa.org) and you may be featured in our next edition of *The Alumni Spectator*!



# The Abe Baumel Legacy Fund

*To commemorate the 25th anniversary of Stuyvesant moving to its new location, the Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association is proud to announce the dedication of the pedestrian bridge over the West Side Highway to former Principal Abe Baumel. We thank all donors for their support of Stuyvesant High School and its reputation of excellence.*

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**Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association**

**P.O. Box 3531**

**New York, NY 10008-3531**

## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*For the latest updates on Alumni Association events, check out our website at [www.stuyalumni.org/events](http://www.stuyalumni.org/events)*

### **SAVE THE DATE: 1969 50th Reunion**

*June 21-23, 2019*

*Location TBA*

### **Spring 2019 Reunion**

We are currently in the process of setting the date for the 2019 Spring Reunion and are hosting a meeting for all organizers on Wednesday, December 19. If you or your class would like to participate, please contact us at [alumni@shsaa.org](mailto:alumni@shsaa.org) for further details.

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- Purchase **Stuyvesant-branded merchandise** from the School Store with discounts!
- **Submit updates** about yourself and your classmates to be shared in the Class Notes and Events sections of our upcoming Newsletter.
- **View our archives** of all past communication sent to alumni.
- **Stay up to date on the latest Stuyvesant happenings!** You'll gain access to exclusive member events and preferential ticket access.
- You can sign up today at [www.stuyalumni.org/mystuy](http://www.stuyalumni.org/mystuy).

*We are missing some copies of yearbooks. If you are so inclined, please donate your old yearbook to us. If you would like to do so, please let us know at [alumni@shsaa.org](mailto:alumni@shsaa.org).*

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