Literary Arts Series Hosts Reading by Award-Winning Poet

By Brian Cordell

On Thursday, November 6, the Literary Arts Series is hosting a reading by award-winning poet Mary Ruefle. Throughout her prolific career, Ruefle’s poems have reflected a lightness and intimacy that render them both approachable and, at times, devastating.

Many of the poems Ruefle will be reading come from her latest collection, *Trances of the Blast*. While Ruefle’s poems often employ humor and many carry an odd sensibility, the poems in this collection navigate the terrain between loneliness and loss, searching for meaning and connection across the distances between where we begin and where we all must ultimately end. It is in that end, however, where the voices that inhabit her poems often find comfort in one another, and where we as readers might find some sort of comfort in the despair.

This comfort is, perhaps, best reflected in the opening lines of the final poem in the collection, “I light a few candles, so / the moon is no longer alone.” While Ruefle’s poems evoke a sense of loneliness, it is the poems themselves that become the candles, reminding us that we are not entirely alone.

Ruefle will be on campus for two events, beginning with a more intimate Q&A session about her work and poetry in general, which will be held at 11:00 a.m. in TEC-128. Following this, the poetry reading will be held at 1:45 in TEC-128 and will be followed by a book signing. Please join us for both events, encourage your students to attend and please consider bringing your classes to the Reading at 1:45.

For more information, visit the LAS website at http://www.literaryartsseries.org/2014/11/06/mary-ruefle/. If you are interested in reading and/or teaching Ruefle’s poems, a small selection of her work is available in A-330, and more can be found online at http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/mary-ruefle#about.

The author is an assistant professor in the Department of English. He can be reached at bcordell@bergen.edu or 201-689-7611.
Bergenstages’ Features Stephen Sondheim/George Furth’s “Company”

By Jim Bumgardner

Set firmly in, and often about, New York City, the musical “Company” follows five married, once married or soon to be married couples and their mutual friend, Robert, a 35-year-old bachelor who has been unable to connect in a long-term relationship.

The relationships are presented in a series of vignettes, primarily through Robert's eyes, so that we see the less-than-ideal aspects of commitment. However, it is obvious to the audience that the committed are happy. Eventually, Robert learns that while relationships aren't perfect, they are a necessary part of "being alive."

The show originally opened on Broadway in April, 1970 and laid the foundation for the Post-Golden Age Broadway Musicals and was the first successful non-linear, “concept” musical.

The Bergenstages production of “Company” will be directed by Jim Bumgardner, Musical Directed by Jess Abrams and choreographed by Janette Dishuk. The show will be performed in the Ciccone Theatre on Dec. 5, 6, 11, 12 & 13 at 7:30 p.m. and matinees on Dec. 6 & 13 at 2 p.m. Tickets are available at the Ciccone box office or online at tickets.bergen.edu.

The author is the director of Bergenstages, and a director and assistant professor of performing arts in the School of Arts, Humanities and Wellness. He can be reached at jbumgardner@bergen.edu or 201-493-3615.

Lyndhurst Launches Fourth Best-Practices Conference

By Sarah Shurts

On March 7, 2015, Bergen Community College at the Meadowlands will host the fourth annual Tri-State Best Practices Conference, dedicated to innovation and creativity in the college classroom. The theme of this year’s conference is Culture, Learning, and Learning Cultures: Teaching and Learning in a Diverse Environment.

College students come from diverse backgrounds and experiences in their communities, other colleges and professional lives and seek to transition into four-year colleges, new professions or a life of continuing education. The purpose of the conference is, therefore, to provide community college educators and four-year college educators with a forum to exchange successful strategies for meeting the needs of this diverse student body. In particular, the conference is intended to begin a regional conversation about diverse approaches to learning, including themes like recognition of cultural diversity, working with non-traditional students, diversification of instruction, interdisciplinary learning communities and using technology to link a diverse student body.

Last year, the conference program included over 90 presenters from 21 different two- and four-year colleges throughout New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. This year we hope to have a larger contingent of BCC presenters, and we encourage the faculty and staff here to submit proposals by the November 1 deadline. Each session will run for an hour and

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When I spoke at the Faculty Conference in September, I identified three academic initiatives that I would like to focus us on for the coming years: developmental education, suburban studies and learning communities. I believe these initiatives can play a significant role in the college’s commitment to student success by tapping into the expertise and innovative spirit of the faculty.

Regardless of what you may be hearing about Common Core, developmental education won’t be going away anytime soon. Developmental education in the future may look a bit different, but we will still have students coming to the community college who are not prepared to do college-level work in math and English. The efforts of our EBS and developmental math, especially in the areas of acceleration and self-paced classes, are helping students be more successful in their developmental courses. We need to continue to build on this success and develop additional ways to support these students so that they can navigate their developmental coursework and make it through to graduation.

My second academic initiative priority is the expansion on the Suburban Studies program. I’ve attended Suburban Studies events both on and off campus, and I truly think this is a unique initiative that elevates BCC above its peers. The Suburban Studies Program speaks to who we are as a community college in that it unites employees from all areas of the college, appeals to the intellectual curiosity and expertise of the faculty and represents one of those golden opportunities for the community college to engage with the community in meaningful ways.

Finally, the third academic initiative which I would like us to prioritize is learning communities (LCs). I had the great fortune to attend the National Summer Institute on Learning Communities at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington this past July with some incredibly talented BCC faculty and staff. When I began teaching in LCs nearly 15 years ago, there was no data that they were successful; however, those who taught in them had a deep feeling that, if done right, they could be truly transformative. Since that time, Vince Tinto and others have shown just how instrumental LCs can be in helping students to connect to the curriculum, each other, their instructors and the college. Opportunities to learn more about LCs will be coming in the near future.

Although there will always been a wide variety of activities going on here at BCC, I hope all faculty members will participate in one or more of the initiatives described above. These efforts will only serve to strengthen our institution.

The author is the Vice President of Academic Affairs. He may be reached at wmullaney@bergen.edu or 201-447-7190.
Business Administration Program Nominated for Prestigious Award

By Robert Saldarini

Bergen Community College has been nominated for the 2015 Bellwether Award for the Career Success: AAS Transfer to a BS in Professional Studies program. The program works in collaboration with Thomas Edison State College to provide Bergen students with AAS degrees the opportunity to obtain a bachelor’s degree from TESC.

The Bellwether Awards annually recognize outstanding and innovative programs and practices that are successfully leading community colleges into the future. BCC and TESC are among 30 colleges across the nation selected to present their innovative practices at the 2015 Community College Futures Assembly in January in Orlando.

The author is a professor and chair of the Department of Accounting, Finance and Business Administration. He can be reached at rsaldarini@bergen.edu or 201-447-7842.

Update: Sabbatical Progress Continues

By Dan Sheehan

I have written most of the music and lyrics for my sabbatical album project Tales From Earth, Inc., featuring songs about the worldwide impact of greed. I have thus far recorded the first entry and would love to share it with my colleagues. This is a song entitled "Black Gold" about the Ogoni Nine, who were hanged by the Nigerian military government of the 1990s; it can be downloaded on my website at http://dansheehan.net.

And I’m happy to announce that the Puffin Foundation has awarded a grant in support of the project. The Puffin Foundation helps artists making statements about non-mainstream material bring their projects to fruition. Since Tales from Earth is an album of songs about people around the world whose voices are often unheard or are purposely suppressed, the foundation has decided to help out with some of the production costs.

The complete album should be recorded by the summer of 2015, at which point I will begin focusing on the live presentation of Tales From Earth, Inc., featuring rock, classical and world musicians performing together. In the meantime, I am posting blogs about the stories behind the songs as I write them and will be posting lyrics and samples of the finished songs, which I invite colleagues and others to peruse at my website.

The author is an assistant professor of music in the Performing Arts Department. He can be reached at dsheehan@bergen.edu or (201) 493-3620.
Accelerated Learning Program Offered for Hard-Working English Basic Skills Students

By Iris Bucchino

It’s cutting edge, and students are carving a new path. After spending one successful semester in the lowest level of reading and writing, EBS-011 students have opportunities to progress into WRT-101 directly or through the EBS Accelerated Learning Program. Students are carefully evaluated for eligibility into college composition.

How do students accelerate? Those who receive an A in EBS-011 and 7 or higher on the EBS exit exam may move directly into WRT-101. Students who receive a B or higher in EBS-011, 6 or higher on the EBS exit exam and instructor recommendation may move into the Accelerated Learning Program (WRT-101 and EBS-033).

The EBS Accelerated Learning Program mainstreams developmental writers into a section of WRT-101. These same writers are required to register for a co-requisite course (EBS-033) which meets twice a week and is taught by the same instructor. In the companion course, the instructor facilitates a workshop to provide students with the extra support needed to succeed in college-level composition.

Recommended students from EBS-011 and those who have scored 235-239 on the Accuplacer are eligible for the program. The Accelerated Learning Program was initiated through the Title V grant and has been piloted since Fall 2011.

As of Spring 2014, the program boasts a 92 percent student pass rate, strong student approval and national recognition. Beginning Spring 2015, the EBS Department will officially implement the new program, offering 10 WRT-101/EBS-033 co-requisite sections, including two hybrids and one section in Lyndhurst.

We recognize that combining students’ abilities strengthens their motivation, confidence and persistence, and the stronger writers become models for college-level reading and writing. Our program is designed for active and deep learning, and ultimately success in WRT-101. Students engage in peer-to-peer learning, cooperative group work and shared activities with a strong focus on integrated reading and writing. We have seen our students work collaboratively in a diverse academic community that nurtures lasting relationships.

The author is an assistant professor of English Basic Skills and the EBS Accelerated Learning Program Coordinator. She can be reached at ibucchino@bergen.edu or (201) 493-8973.

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include an additional 15 minutes at the end for audience questions.

Proposals can be submitted for single presentations of 20 minutes, combined presentation time blocks of 40 minutes, or full panels of three presenters for the full hour. The submission proposal process is now electronic and the link can be found on the conference website http://www.bergen.edu/tristate under the call for papers. We look forward to seeing the many ways BCC faculty and staff appreciate diversity and hope to see everyone on March 7.

Conference organizers will grant a brief deadline extension upon request. To ask for such an extension, write to tristatebestpractices@gmail.com.

The author is an assistant professor in the Department of History and coordinator of the Tri-State Best Practices Conference. She can be reached at sshurts@bergen.edu or (201) 301-1261.
Each semester over the past four years, Bergenstages has held a poster design competition with the Graphic Design classes here at BCC.

The students in the classes are presented with the story of an upcoming Bergenstages production and are given some general ideas about the themes and major issues that are in the play. The students then work with their professor for three weeks on design concepts, during which time I, as Bergenstages’ producer, return to their classes to offer final critiques to help the students create their final design.

This semester students from the Graphic Design classes taught by Laina Leckie, Cristina Grisales and Guy-Serge Emmanuel competed for the best poster design for “Company,” the Stephen Sondheim/George Furth musical to be presented in the Ciccone Theatre Dec. 5 – 13.

There were 41 designs presented; the 14-member cast from the musical judged them and voted for the best design. This semester the winning designer is Marlena Gradowska. The winning design will have three lives; 11-by-17 posters distributed campus-wide, 7,000 postcards mailed to the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs mailing list, and the cover for the playbill for the performances.

The author is the director of Bergenstages, and a director and assistant professor of performing arts in the School of Arts, Humanities and Wellness. He can be reached at jbumgardner@bergen.edu or 201-493-3615.
BCC Library: Even Now, a Center for Discovery

By Joan Dalrymple

Does discovery still happen in the library? A recent report from Ithaka S+R, a sibling company of JSTOR, explored this question using data from surveys of faculty and academic library directors. With so many possible starting points for research, such as search engines, colleagues and scholarly databases, where does faculty begin? The report says “there is every reason to believe that many researchers would benefit tremendously from increased personalization in research.” Regardless of your discipline, the library supports your research in a variety of ways through personalized services and our digital and print collections.

Library Databases. Did you know that you can create alerts in many of our databases and have results sent to your email or RSS feed reader? ProQuest, for example, permits you to save a search and have results sent on a daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. Tables of contents can be sent to you as they become available in our databases. Start with the library’s “Journal Titles List” on the library’s homepage by exact journal title or search by subject to discover titles in our databases. The library has a research guide about how to set up alerts in various databases at http://bergen.libguides.com/alerts.

Some journal publishers and open source journals offer alert services on their websites as well.

Interlibrary Loan. As you discover more articles and resources through alerts, the library may not always have what you need. Through interlibrary loan, we can get them for you from another library. The request form is on the library homepage.

VALE Reciprocal Borrowing Program. Our library is part of a state-wide program that permits our faculty to have borrowing privileges at participating libraries such as Rutgers, Montclair, and William Paterson. You can request a form at our Service Desk. Borrowing privileges are for the duration of the academic year, through June 30, and they are renewable with a new form. More information about this program is available on our website.

Library Catalog. Many of us probably have discovered new ideas while browsing the shelves in a library. However, now we have thousands of e-books in our collection, and the best way to discover them is by searching or browsing the online catalog on our homepage. To search only for e-books, select the e-books tab above the search box, or you can use the limit button and select e-books.

Meet with your library liaison. Your department’s liaison can help you identify titles in your discipline, create customized alerts, and direct you to other resources to support your research. Contact your library liaison for personalized assistance. The library website lists the library liaisons by department.

So, does discovery still happen in the library? I believe that discovery is alive and well at the Sidney Silverman Library. We can help you navigate the ever-changing world of information as you continue your research efforts. If you have any questions, contact your library liaison, stop by the Reference Desk, or contact me.


The author is an associate professor and Head of Access Services in the Sidney Silverman Library. She can be reached at jdalrymple@bergen.edu or 201-612-5236.
REEL LINK FILMS PRESENTS

RACE TO NOWHERE

THE DARK SIDE OF AMERICA’S ACHIEVEMENT CULTURE

TedX Event

Film and Discussion

Tuesday, November 18
1:45-3:00pm
Room C313

For more information contact Ellen Feig at efeig@bergen.edu
Upcoming Faculty Development

Check out the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning calendar for exciting and innovative workshops, tutorials and guides.

CITL Homepage:
http://www.bergen.edu/citl

Calendar:

John & Suanne Roueche Excellence Award

Deadline: December 1, 2014

Celebrates “outstanding contributions and leadership by community college faculty and staff”

Call for submissions forthcoming

Innovation of the Year Award

Deadline: November 4, 2014

This award is designed to recognize innovative programs, practices, partnerships, policies, and activities that improve the ability of institutions to serve students and the community, and to honor the faculty, staff, and administrators who have created and implemented them. Granting this award provides a venue for showcasing these innovations and the dedicated community college educators who strive for excellence on a daily basis.

Details have been provided daily in the Bergen Daily

Important Calendar Dates

November 26—30—College Closed (Thanksgiving)

December 20—Fall 1, 2 & 3 Classes End

December 22 & 23—Make-up Days

December 24—College Closed

January 1 & 2—College Closed

January 3—Winterm Begin

January 19—MLK Day—College Closed

January 20—Spring Semester Begins (including Flex 1)

March 14—Flex 1 Ends

March 16-22—Spring Break
As the war in Iraq and Syria enters another grim year, and continues to spiral into a widening regional vortex, people have asked me why my wife and I traveled, in August of last year, to Syria. What was the point of undertaking such a potentially perilous journey?

We entered Syria just east of the Turkish border town Reyhanli, a zone nominally controlled by the Free Syrian Army but contested by the Syrian regime, various offshoots of Al-Qaeda and, now, the Islamic State. There, thousands of people, mostly women and children, cluster in tents and under tarps on a barren hilltop, seeking shelter from the elements and from the traumatic violence that had driven them to this place. Void of any stable infrastructure, the camp lacked security, electricity, medical care, sanitation and even reliable sources of food.

And yet, even in this desperate context, there were poignant reminders of a spirit of resilience: a row of sunflowers carefully cultivated in the baked earth; packets of instant coffee neatly arrayed on a plastic chair, a makeshift café that, our Syrian guide joked, would soon become a Starbucks. In a tent designated as the women’s center, we met a group of women who, having learned to knit, proudly put on their vests, scarves, and woolen handbags. Wearing them over their black niqabs, they offered an almost unimaginable testament to the enduring spirit of women: an impromptu fashion show.

Now, the flow of refugees from this distant conflict has reached our classrooms, as Syrian students enroll in increasing numbers at Bergen, a reminder that the Syrian people are with us, and we, with them.

The author is an Assistant Professor and a co-director of the Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation. He can be reached at tlapointe@bergen.edu or 201-674-2675.

Voices from the Syrian Border
By Thomas LaPointe

Additional Upcoming PJ&R Events

Monday, November 10
Sichan Siv
“From the Killing Fields to the White House”
11am PTK Discussion in room A-104
1:45pm Presentation, Dialogue & Discussion in room C210/211

Wednesday, November 19
Transgender Awareness Day
12:15pm – 1:00pm Panel Discussion
1:00pm-2:00pm Dialogue
2:00pm – 3:00pm Webinar
ELECTRIC CAR AND HYDROPONICS

Big kudos to Joseph Sivo for exposing STEM students to two amazing "hand-on" speakers this semester. I was lucky enough to attend both sessions to learn a lot about hydroponics and electric cars. Did you know BCC STEM students will be building their own electric car?

Check out our student, Brian Zlotkin, who has a hydroponics business. Sustainability Minute will be covering this student's work in our next episode but here is some preview material ---

Brian Zlotkin is a chemistry student at Bergen Community College. In Saddle River, Brian has built an aquaponic garden to grow vegetables and herbs to be served in one of the top 25 restaurants in New Jersey (njmonthly.com), The Saddle River Inn. Water from a fish pond is pumped through a river rock-filled grow bed, where plants absorb essential nutrients, and the plant-filtered water drains back into the pond. Because this sealed ecosystem uses 90% less water than soil-based agriculture, requires no added chemicals, and can be operated year-round in a greenhouse. Brian thinks that aquaponics may be the healthier, fresher, and more sustainable, future of food. For more info., check out Brian's Facebook page "zlotkin aquaponics".

1968 SAAB- Turned Electric
On Tuesday Oct 8th was the STEM workshop on "Electric Car Conversion" and it was wonderful. The person presenting, Brandon Hollinger (the principal of AmpReVOLT) seemed very experienced in building electric cars and will be helping our students build an electric car. Some of the points he stressed in the presentation was that electric cars have almost no maintenance and that they are cheaper to drive.

Date to remember: On 11/8/2014 the Environmental Club will be doing a hike. Please contact Dr. Charlie Sontag for more details. csontag@bergen.edu
Middle States Self-Study is Really About Questions

By Sony Tiwari

The Middle States Self Study process is constructed with questions. Open Bergen’s Self-Study Design, a template for the two-year process, and you’ll immediately notice how inquisitive it is: How does the College ensure that faculty are fairly evaluated? How do our educational offerings adequately prepare students for the marketplace? How do faculty innovations promote student learning and academic program development?

Those are the types of impactful questions that eight Working Groups are charged to answer. The question I’m asked most as Steering Committee Co-Chair? “How’s the self-study going?”

Why ask me? We currently have over 90 faculty, staff, administrators and students working on the Self-Study. As our Public Relations Director Larry Hlavenka told me when he succinctly answered his own question during a recent Studio Bergen interview, “It’s a pretty big deal.”

Ask any of my colleagues about the Self-Study – or me, for that matter – and they will be eager to share their progress. If you don’t ask, be prepared to find out soon enough. As Working Groups pivot from preparation into research, they are now conducting interviews with related faculty, staff and administrators across campus. Yes, more questions.

You may find yourself on the receiving end of such an encounter because this type of exchange doesn’t usually occur in a vacuum – say, the prop closet in Ender Hall. It is open and robust. Colleges are unique in the way they nurture intellectual independence and demand a deep respect for consensus. Nothing exhibits that dichotomy like the Self-Study. It makes the process so nerve-racking. And exciting.

Do you know what I love about questions? They bring us together, and take us farther than answers are ever able to. That’s not altruistic *kum ba yah* sentiment either. That’s the power of the questioning process working for the greater good, the first step in the pursuit of a common denominator.

Yes, the Self-Study is mostly inquisitive. What I’ve learned is that the most salient questions live within and without the report. For a list of every member of the Self-Study team at Bergen, please visit [http://www.bergen.edu/about-us/middle-states-self-study/members](http://www.bergen.edu/about-us/middle-states-self-study/members).

The author is an instructor of music in the Performing Arts Department. He can be reached at stiwari@bergen.edu or 201-447-7143.

The Faculty Senate feature written by Alan Kaufman will return next issue.

Faculty Scholarship Release Time Application announcement is forthcoming with a due date in December.