

# Collegian

## What does it take to become an award-winning teacher? A Virtuoso's Agility and a Missionary's Zeal

BY SHERYL FLATOW

**Like a great jazz artist, Professor Peter Busher is a master of improvisation.**

"If I realize that my point is not getting across, I will stop and change my approach on the spot," he says. That sums up his approach to teaching. "I don't have one. I just go in and do it."

This ability to instantaneously switch gears comes with experience. Busher, chair of the Division of Natural Science at the College of General Studies and recipient of BU's 2009 Metcalf Award for Excellence in Teaching, has been a CGS faculty member since 1982. He came to the College for one semester and never left.

"I thought there was something very interesting going on in the College, and I really enjoyed the students," he says. "That's still true. I find the students so inherently interesting, as people and as learners. They stimulate me." Which is why this passionate scientist, a field biologist known for his research on population dynamics and social behavior of beavers, has devoted much of his career to teaching students who often have little interest initially in taking his courses. "I'm not going to make scientists out of them, but I'll make them think like scientists."

Financial analyst David Askenazi ('06, CAS'08) is one of Busher's many converts. "I hated science in high school," says Askenazi. "But Professor Busher's enthusiasm and passion immediately forced me to consider ideas that I never

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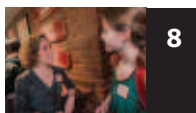


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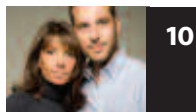
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## A VIRTUOSO'S AGILITY AND A MISSIONARY'S ZEAL

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would have without him. While his class didn't make me a scientist, it made me appreciate and think about everything that surrounds me with a completely new perspective, and rather embarrassing exhilaration. Never before would I have thought I would be eager to read about population growth dynamics."

Busher believes that nothing is more rewarding than the opportunity to reach young adults who are in a classroom not because they *want* to be there but because

**"How can you be an educated person, how can you be a conscientious consumer, if you don't understand science?"**

they *have* to be there. "I've learned that in many parts of American university education, the goal for faculty is to move away from teaching undergraduates, specifically first- or second-year undergraduates," he says. "For me, the opposite is true. You interact with these kids, and you don't realize the impact you have. A student wrote me a letter this year and said that I encouraged her to be interested in any class she was taking, even if she didn't like the class. I've become a zealot about teaching these students."

He's a man on a mission, he says, because "there's nothing more important in your life than science. It describes your life; it actually determines your life. You may

not realize that day-to-day, but it's true. Medicine, the environment—I want them to make these connections. Aside from that, how can you be an educated person, how can you be a conscientious consumer, if you don't understand science? How could you have decided whether to vote for McCain or Obama unless you knew what their positions were on science?"

In an effort to have his students experience science in a more immediate way, Busher established a study abroad program in London that began in 2004. For six summers, he has led a group of students to locations that are steeped in scientific history. In addition to museums,

they visit such sites as Darwin's house, Kew Gardens (a center of botanical research for the past two centuries), the Observatory in Greenwich, Stonehenge, and the chalk cliffs in Eastbourne. "Much of the program is experiential," he says. "Just being there is as important as anything I say to them."

Busher first became fascinated with science in his native California. His father, a minister who earned his theology degree from BU, built a cabin in the mountains where the family summered. "We were dirt poor and I don't know how he did it," says Busher. "But I spent my summers in the woods, and my real goal was to be a national park ranger." He grew up near the Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, and

also enjoyed spending time there. "I particularly loved the dioramas of mammals. I think those two things led me into science."

He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from San Francisco State University, and his PhD from the University of Nevada, Reno. While pursuing his master's degree, his advisor suggested he study beavers. Today, conservationists seek Busher's expertise in that field to help shape wildlife policy.

Busher's ceaseless quest to find new ways to engage his students, and his ability to open their minds and affect their lives, has not gone unnoticed over the years: he has been nominated for the Metcalf Award six times. Winning was unexpected. "It meant more to me than I realized," he says.

"Teaching at this college is not just my living, it's my life. So in some ways the award was a validation for what I've done with my whole life. It's not that I really needed it. I could have lived a very happy life without it. But I'm very honored by the award. It means a lot to me that good teaching is important, good teaching is appreciated." ●

### CGS Hall of Fame

Excellent teaching is a hallmark of the College of General Studies, and the University has recognized talented CGS faculty members five times since the Metcalf Awards were established in 1973.

**Peter Busher**  
Natural Science  
2009 Metcalf Award

**Thomas Underwood**  
Humanities & Rhetoric  
1997 Metcalf Cup & Prize

**Robert Wexelblatt**  
Humanities  
1983 Metcalf Cup & Prize

**Samuel Stern**  
Science & Mathematics  
1978 Metcalf Award

**Charles Fogg**  
Science  
1975 Metcalf Award

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### Into the Political News Arena

*Politico.com*—a favorite online hangout for political news junkies—has a new contributor: Associate Professor of Social Science Thomas Whalen. An expert in modern American politics, American foreign policy, and the American presidency, Whalen weighs in several times a week on the "Arena" section of the site.

Each day, the "Arena's" moderator sends Whalen and other contributors—current and former elected officials and political scholars and thinkers of all stripes—a question pertaining to a hot political issue. Any contributor who wishes can submit a brief answer to the question; their collective responses provide a snapshot of expert opinion on the topic.

To read Whalen's recent comments, visit [www.politico.com/arena](http://www.politico.com/arena) and choose his name from the list of "Arena Players." While you're there, check out the opinions of the other "Arena" contributors from BU: College of Communication Dean Thomas Fiedler (COM'71) and College of Arts & Sciences Professor of History and International Relations Andrew Bacevich.

### Watch Wex on the Web

Professor of Humanities Robert Wexelblatt's novel *Zublinka Among Women* received the 2008 Next Generation Indie Book Awards Grand Prize for Fiction. The book tells the story of an aging author and academic who comes to terms with his life after the fall of the Iron Curtain allows him to return to his homeland.

At a recent reading of the novel, Wexelblatt explained how a post-college trip to Prague inspired the setting for the book, how the character Zublinka first took shape two decades ago, and why both Wexelblatt and Zublinka often prefer to write under pseudonyms. To watch a video of the reading, visit [www.bu.edu/buniverse](http://www.bu.edu/buniverse) and search for the keyword "Wexelblatt."

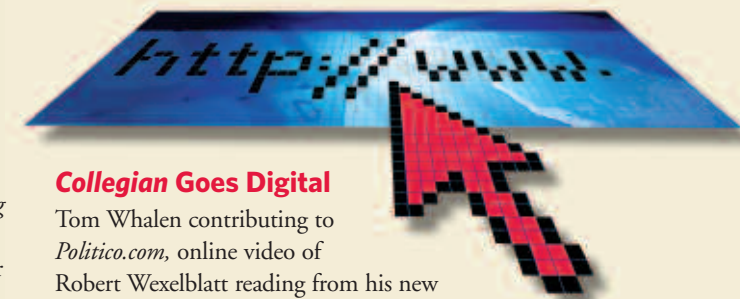


### Education in the 21st Century

With a \$150,000 grant from the Davis Educational Foundation, the College of General Studies is beginning a pilot program this fall to integrate electronic portfolios into the freshman curriculum. Faculty plan the e-portfolio integration into the sophomore curriculum next year.

Students will use e-portfolio software to save and present their coursework in digital form and to document study abroad trips and other educational experiences. The e-portfolios will help faculty track and report on student progress and will give students a tool for showcasing what they've learned during their years at CGS.

For demonstrations of the e-portfolio software, visit [www.digication.com](http://www.digication.com).



### Collegian Goes Digital

Tom Whalen contributing to *Politico.com*, online video of Robert Wexelblatt reading from his new book, students creating e-portfolios—the articles on this page have a common thread: CGS students and faculty taking advantage of the power of the Internet.

Now it's your turn.

Your next issue of *Collegian* will arrive not in your physical mailbox, but in your digital one. When this electronic CGS newsletter lands in your inbox in the spring, we encourage you to open it up, check it out, and let us know what you think. (And if we don't already have your e-mail address, please send it to [cgsalum@bu.edu](mailto:cgsalum@bu.edu) or go online to [www.bu.edu/alumni](http://www.bu.edu/alumni) to update your contact information today so you don't miss out on this exciting new e-newsletter.)



# Behind the Scenes

New movies are coming to a theater near you thanks to the efforts of some CGS alumni.

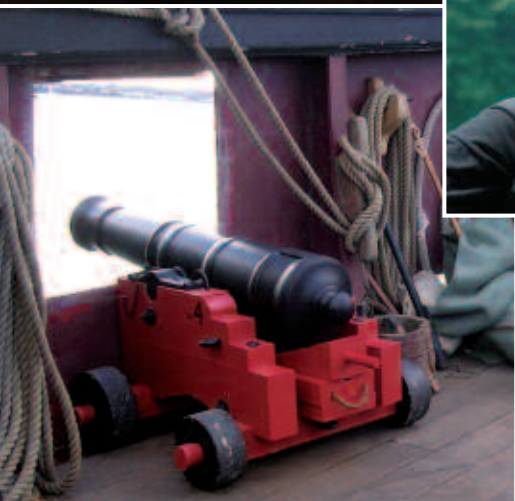
BY CORINNE STEINBRENNER

For most of us, movies are a Friday-night experience: reclining in a stadium seat, munching popcorn, gazing up at the giant screen. But these lucky CGS alumni get to experience the movies every day—from the privileged vantage point of those who work behind the scenes, bringing the magic of the movies to the rest of us.

Photos courtesy of Damian Siekonic



Damian Siekonic, pictured here during the filming of a National Geographic documentary, turned his passion for historic boats into a career.



## KEEPING IT REAL(ISTIC) Historical accuracy is his specialty

If you need an 18th-century schooner for your documentary on founding father Alexander Hamilton, Damian Siekonic ('89, COM'91) can find it for you. Looking for reproductions of colonial currency for your John Adams miniseries? He can provide that, too. Artillery for your Revolutionary War battle scene? Sure—he's got eight cannons stored in his barn.

Siekonic's obsession with early American history—"it's something of a terminal disease"—began at BU when a classmate from Cape Cod introduced him to tall ship sailing. Years later the pharmaceutical-executive-turned-professional-historian found himself increasingly renting his collection of histor-

ical artifacts and replicas to reenactment societies, festival organizers, and filmmakers, and he decided to make the props his full-time business. Privateer Media, his Pennsylvania-based company, now supplies guns, swords, coins, maps, medical instruments, tents, costumes, and boats of all shapes and sizes for historical projects along the East Coast.

"We've found something of a niche market in production work, doing historical films, documentaries—a lot of stuff for PBS and the History Channel," Siekonic says. Not all the props belong to him, of course. "Once you have a few good projects under your belt and people realize you're a responsible company, it's amazing who's willing to sign on with you," he says. Privateer Media now represents the fleets of several maritime museums and the inventory of Godwins Props, the prop provider for such major films as *Last of the Mohicans* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

While he prefers to remain off camera, Siekonic makes occasional appearances in his movies—dressed up in period costume, firing a cannon, or landing a boat through the surf. "It's not the most comfortable place for me to be," he says, "but sometimes the job requires it, so you do what the job requires."

## FEAR FACTOR Her goal: make 'em scream

Two masked murderers greet Sarah Smith ('03, COM'05) as she arrives at work each morning. "It definitely took me a couple of weeks to get used to them," she says.

The life-sized mannequins of Leatherface (the chainsaw-wielding killer in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* movies) and Jason Voorhees (the villain behind the white hockey mask in the *Friday the 13th* series) stand in the lobby of Platinum Dunes, a Santa Monica production company specializing in horror-film remakes. For the past year and a half, Smith has worked there as an assistant to producers Brad Fuller and Andrew Form, lending a hand in the making of the supernatural thriller *The Unborn*, the 2009 installment of the *Friday the 13th* saga, and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, a remake of the original Freddy Krueger movie (expected in theaters in 2010).

Smith's duties at the small company range from answering phones and scheduling appointments to reading scripts that

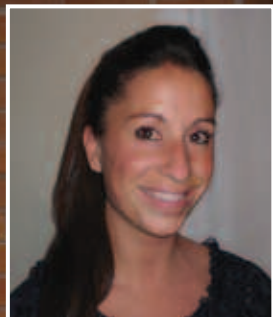


Photo courtesy of Sarah Smith

Sarah Smith has assisted with the production of several horror films and hopes to eventually produce thrillers of her own.

arrive in the mail and helping Fuller and Form choose designs for movie posters. What she loves about the job, she says, is having a front-row seat to the movie-making process.

"My bosses are really hands-on. They want to know about every little thing—the website, the wardrobe, everything." Observing these experienced producers make such a broad range of decisions is teaching her a lot about the business, says Smith. An aspiring producer, she hopes to use that knowledge to produce adrenaline-pumping movies of her own someday (no chick flicks for this gal).

Attending screenings for her previous employer's romantic comedies felt like extra work, she admits, but watching Platinum Dunes films is pure fun—especially when she gets to bring her friends along and watch them jump out of their seats. For Smith, there's nothing more exciting than making movies that have the power to thoroughly thrill an audience.

## LEARNING FROM A LEGEND Recent grad lands an enviable gig

Just weeks after finishing BU's Los Angeles Internship Program, Mark DiCristofaro ('06, COM'09) stepped onto Steven



Photo courtesy of Mark DiCristofaro

Recent BU graduate Mark DiCristofaro recently landed a job on legendary director Steven Spielberg's film crew.

Spielberg's (Hon.'09) movie set.

Thanks to his strong résumé and recommendations from film-industry friends, he'd been hired to fill a last-minute vacancy as the assistant script supervisor for Spielberg's latest project, *The Adventures of Tintin: Secret of the Unicorn*.

*Tintin*, expected in theaters in 2011, will be a product of 3D motion-capture technology and the efforts of two acclaimed directors: Spielberg and Peter Jackson (of *Lord of the Rings* fame). During several weeks of filming in Hollywood, Spielberg directed the work of live

actors whose movements were recorded by digital sensors. That digital recording is now in New Zealand, where a team led by Jackson is using it to create an animated movie. In addition to the digital record of the actors' movements, Jackson's crew also has reference footage of the actors from eight traditional cameras, which they'll consult as they attempt to make their animated characters as realistic as possible.

DiCristofaro's primary job on Spielberg's set was to log the movements of the reference cameras, creating an index of sorts for Jackson's crew. "I was keeping track of eight cameras all at once—where each camera was, who was being filmed, what the character was doing, how the camera was moving, what the camera angle was," says DiCristofaro. "It was a bit daunting at first."

He also helped Spielberg's script supervisor track script continuity—making note of which scenes were shot when and how actors and props appeared. "For any film," DiCristofaro explains, "continuity is a crucial component to ensure that the director's vision for the film stays consistent." (A character can't be bruised and battered in one scene, for example, and then magically appear healed in the next.)

This production was DiCristofaro's first experience working as an independent contractor in Hollywood, and he's confident it won't be his last. He's already busy making connections for his next major project.

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## BEHIND THE SCENES

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### THE SOUND OF MOVIES

They provide the pictures, he makes the music

After shooting is done and the editor has created a rough cut of the film, work begins for James Lavino ('93, CAS'95). He and the director discuss the movie scene by scene, deciding which types of music each one needs. Then Lavino downloads a digital file of the movie to his computer and starts composing.

Lavino, who majored in English at BU and then worked in publishing before his musical hobbies blossomed into a career, has composed musical

scores for documentaries, television series, and indie feature films, and recently completed the soundtrack for *Trust Us, This Is All Made Up*, a documentary from director Alex Karpovsky (UNI'97).

Lavino relishes the opportunities film composing offers to experiment with a variety of musical genres—writing bluegrass

music for one project and “something a bit more jazzy” for the next—and to collaborate with his musician friends (he recently recorded a score with members of the bands Radiohead and Clap Your Hands Say Yeah).

One of the challenges of film work is learning to communicate with various producers and directors. “Some directors know a lot about music and are very clear about ‘I don’t like the oboe there; that sounds like it’s in the wrong range,’” he says. “Other people say, ‘It sounds too much like dew on an open field, and we want a bayou at dusk,’ and you have to figure out what that means.”

Photo courtesy of Amanda Widoniak



Amanda Widoniak (second from left) is beginning her second year at Generate, a comedy production company in California. She's pictured here with production staff from the new WB.com series *The Lake*: Executive Producer Meredith Lavender (left), Director Jason Priestley, and Executive Producer Marcie Ulin (right).

Watching one of the movies he's scored in the theater is a thrill, Lavino says, and—despite the hours he's spent watching scenes on his computer screen—he often feels as if he's viewing the movie for the first time. “Seeing it on a huge screen, with the sound coming through the big speakers,” he says, “is always a revelation.”

### WHATEVER IT TAKES

Hand her a hat, she'll wear it

When actress Brooke Shields arrived on a day the parking lot was completely full, Amanda Widoniak ('05, COM'07) wrangled her a space. When the production crew realized they needed a replica of an Oscar statue for their next scene, Widoniak knew just where to find one. When the production budget was too tight to hire an on-set photographer, Widoniak—who had years of experience as a staff photographer for BU's *Daily Free Press*—offered to fill the role. When the company took on a new project and needed someone to do the accounting and make sure everyone got paid on time, Widoniak stepped up to do that, too.

“Anything that I can do, I want to do,” she says. “Because the more hats

you wear, the more essential you are to the company.” And the more experience you accumulate.

Officially, Widoniak is the assistant to Michael Petok, head of production for Generate, a Santa Monica-based production and management company that recently finished a series of comedy specials for Comedy Central and another for HBO. But in addition to her traditional assistant responsibilities, Widoniak volunteers to do “anything and everything” that allows her to be part of the action.

“That’s my favorite part,” she says. “When I’m on set and interacting with everyone and seeing how everything’s going and jumping in to fulfill any need that anyone has.”

Watching the completed DVD of one of Generate’s comedy specials and seeing her name roll with the credits is also extremely satisfying. “Maybe *that’s* my favorite part,” she says. “To look at a finished product and think, ‘I interacted with all these people and I helped make this happen.’” ●

# Telling Stories that Matter

From the nightly news to daily blogs, Allison Davis strives to promote change.

BY TRICIA BRICK

Allison Davis ('73, COM'75) has spent her career at the confluence of journalism, advocacy, and technology. For two decades as a multiple-E Emmy-nominated broadcast reporter and producer, Davis was dedicated to telling the kinds of stories that can change lives. “Some people will argue that it’s not our role as journalists, but I believe that we have to be advocates, to promote change,” she says. “And while I hope that my reporting and analysis were objective, I chose to tell the stories I chose for a reason. And even though I’m not working in journalism anymore, I’m still trying to tell those stories.”

Today, Davis tells her stories not in newspapers or broadcast programs but on Facebook and Twitter, blogs and websites,

the National Association of Black Journalists—has taught journalism at Howard University and the City College of New York and has worked for the Jackie Robinson Foundation, an organization that provides scholarship, mentoring, and leadership opportunities for young people of color. She also served as a founding board member and vice president of the National Visionary Leadership Project, a nonprofit that collects the stories of African American elders as video narratives.

Davis began associating advocacy with storytelling as a reporter for her high school newspaper, when she stepped

outside her journalist’s role to write an editorial seeking to educate her peers about the effects of racial stereotyping on the seven black students in her class of over 600. But it was at CGS, Davis says, that she learned the skills she would use throughout her career to bring together journalism and activism, storytelling and cutting-edge technologies. “The only way I can describe it, frankly, is as life-altering,”

she says. “The College lit a fire in

me that burns to this day. CGS allowed me to explore, to think multidimensionally. I learned to be a forward thinker.” ●

“Some people will argue that it's not our role as journalists, but I believe that we have to be advocates, to promote change.”

through her digital-media marketing and development production company, Coopty Productions. She founded the company—named for her sons, Cooper and Tyler—in 2007. “I wanted to help, particularly, not-for-profit organizations have the same level of digital opportunities as for-profits,” she says. “And I’m delighted to be able to use my time and my talent to further the mission of organizations that I believe in.”

Online storytelling is a natural fit for Davis, who was a pioneer in the movement to use digital technology to educate and inform. An early adopter of the personal computer and the Internet, she was posting original journalism online a decade before the birth of cable-online collaborations like MSNBC—of which she was, in 1996, one of the original architects.

Since leaving the broadcast world, Davis—who spent most of her career with NBC and CBS and helped found



Allison Davis, winner of the 2009 Boston University Alumni Award, helped NBC News get online in the 1990s, and today, as head of her own digital production company, she continues to use the Internet as a tool to educate and inform.



James Lavino has scored award-winning documentaries and recently composed music for the film *Trust Us, This Is All Made Up*. Listen to his work at [www.jameslavino.com](http://www.jameslavino.com).



# Thanks for the Memories

BY CORINNE STEINBRENNER

As they wrapped up their final semester at BU and prepared to venture into the world, former CGS students from the Class of 2009 were invited to the BU Pub to reconnect with CGS faculty members. In those hectic weeks before graduation, more than 150 students made time to attend the event and raise a glass to those who helped them along the way. Here's what a few of them had to say about their CGS professors.



Brendon Libby (center) with Academic Specialist Paul Thur (left) and Division of Rhetoric Chair Matthew Parfitt.

## BRENDON LIBBY ('07, SMG'09)

**Major:** Business Administration & Management (with a concentration in finance)

**On reconnecting with CGS faculty:** "I thoroughly enjoyed being in CGS. There was a sense of community within the school, and I wanted to catch up with some of my professors before graduating."

"Professor Parfitt was an extremely passionate teacher and really pushed to get the entire class involved in discussions. He helped me improve my writing skills and challenged me every day to give my best."



Frances Davoren (left) with Associate Professor of Natural Science Millard Baublitz, who taught her freshman natural science course.

## FRANCES DAVOREN ('07, CAS'09)

**Major:** Biology

**On CGS:** "Some of my favorite professors at BU were from CGS. They made me feel like I made the right decision in attending Boston University, a school so far from home." (Home: St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands)

"Professor Baublitz is very approachable, always willing to answer questions and help students expand their learning experience. I remember asking him so many questions about the astronomy section of the course. He didn't seem bothered at all by the numerous questions, or staying after lab to help us."



Shwetika Bajjal (left) and classmate Krupa Vithlani ('07, CAS'09) with Assistant Professor of Social Science John Mackey.

## SHWETIKA BAIJAL ('07, UNI'09)

**Major:** Cultural Analysis & South Asian Studies

**Senior Thesis Topic:** Glocalization in Contemporary India (globalization + localization = glocalization)

"Professor Mackey makes the material interesting, and sometimes even funny. His question of the day was an unconventional icebreaker that helped us freshmen get to know one another throughout the year."

## HENRY HINZ ('07, SMG'09)

**Major:** Business Administration & Management (with a concentration in finance)

**After BU:** Interviewing for jobs as a financial advisor

"I first met Assistant Dean Godnick during my summer orientation. She was extremely welcoming to the incoming freshmen, and it was clear early on she was truly there for the students."



Henry Hinz (right) with Assistant Dean Stacy Godnick, with whom he developed a friendship during his time as a CGS student advisor.



Christine Little (right) with Associate Professor of Rhetoric Davida Pines, who taught her freshman rhetoric course.

## CHRISTINE LITTLE ('07, CAS'09)

**Major:** American Studies

**After BU:** Working as the residency manager at the Beacon Hill Friends House, a cooperative residence in downtown Boston

"Professor Pines treats her students like adults and challenges them to write better than they thought they could."



## CLASS NOTES

### 1940s

**James Murray ('48, CAS'50)** has been retired for nearly 30 years and is "enjoying the good life in the Los Angeles area." He remembers his four years at Boston University as "happy and rewarding ones."

**Nancy (Horne) Rubenstein ('48, CAS'50)** retired as an executive editor at North Jersey Media Group in 2004, but she continues to write her column for the company's 34 weekly newspapers. The column, "Believe Me," has received more than 200 journalism awards since its inception in 1971. To read the latest installments, search online for "Nancy Rubenstein Neighbor News."

**Myron Hanson ('49)** writes, "At age 84, I'm not doing much work, but I'm in pretty good shape." He and his wife, Dorothea, will soon celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.

### 1950s

**Leonard Zola ('51, COM'53)** of Framingham, Mass., retired from a 50-year career in broadcasting, which included seven years as a news writer for the Boston radio station WHDH and "considerable years" with Boston's classical radio station WCRB. Zola helped found The Media Gang, a group of retired and veteran members of broadcasting and related media professions in Boston and throughout New England who get together twice a year for "Nostalgia Lunches." Zola has three children and four grandchildren.

**John Dunleavy ('55, COM'57)** retired as president and CEO of Holy Redeemer Hospital and Medical Center in Meadowbrook, Pa., and is now chairing the boards of his local chamber of commerce and YMCA.

**Robert Fine ('55, CAS'57)** recently completed his 50th year as an educator. Currently teaching family studies and Jewish studies at Arizona State University, he has also taught at New York University, Manhattan Community College, and Miami University of Ohio—among others.

"I retired in 1990 from Johnson State College in Vermont, but I saw no reason to stop teaching," he says. "I'm delighted to report that I have always regarded my time at CGE as the finest educational experience of my life, one that has served me as a model of excellence over all these years." Fine invites members of his class to write to him at [rfine@asu.edu](mailto:rfine@asu.edu).

**Mary Pecci ('57, SED'59)** has developed a simplified phonics method for teaching children to read. Her instructional materials are available at [www.onlinereadingteacher.com](http://www.onlinereadingteacher.com).

**Doris (Kaplan) Silk ('58)** continues to work in the television industry.

### 1960s

After working in the motion picture industry for 40 years, **Foster Denker ('60)** retired to start a party lighting business, Ambiance Party Lighting ([ambiancelighting.biz](http://ambiancelighting.biz)). He provides lighting for more than 100 weddings a year, as well as for many benefits and fundraisers in and around Pasadena, Calif.

**Barry Curseaden ('65, SED'67)** reports that after a 35-year career in school teaching and administration, he is now enjoying retirement in Surprise, Ariz. He returns to Boston every summer, he says, and fondly remembers his student days under deans Horatio LaFauci and Brendan Gilbane. "What a wonderful city to go to college in," he says, "and what a great opportunity Boston University provided me to grow. Our class was especially fortunate to be one of the last classes to attend the original CBS school behind the Boston Public Library and walk the original 'Marble.' Team teachers, student congress elections, basketball in the old gymnasium, and classes in the old medical teaching room...thank you, CBS/CGS, for playing a very important part in my life."

After leaving CGS (then CBS), **Bruce Hall ('66, COM'74)** spent four years in the Navy during the Vietnam War and later earned a master's degree in education administration from Harvard University. He recently retired from a career as a high school principal in suburban Connecticut and is now volunteering at the Norwalk Maritime Aquarium and teaching nature photography to budding naturalists.

**Randy Miller ('67, SMG'69)** invites his classmates to join him at Reunion Weekend this fall to celebrate their 40th reunion. "Phenomenal changes have occurred at BU in 40 years," he says, "so come see it once again!"

### 1970s

**Barbara Neiman ('70)** lives in New Paltz, N.Y., with her 16-year-old daughter and works as an occupational therapist and health coach. She's enjoyed several international adventures since her time at BU, including a trip to India in the 1980s to study meditation and yoga with guru Baba Muktananda, a trip to Russia in 1996 to adopt her daughter, and a trip to South Africa in 2002 to meet her ex-husband's family. Her career in health care has included establishing a contracting and recruiting company for occupational, physical, and speech therapists; 16 years of occupational therapy work with infants and toddlers; teaching therapists and parents about the mind-body connection; and publishing articles about holistic occupational therapy.

**Chris Rector ('71)** was elected last year to the Maine State Senate. He serves on the Business, Research, and Economic Development Committee; the Marine Resources Committee; and the Joint Select Committee on Maine's Energy Future. Rector previously served three terms in the Maine House of Representatives.

After several years of practice as an occupational therapist, **Janet (Perlmutter) Lesniak ('76, SAR'78)**

has joined her family in California to manage the family business, the Big Sur River Inn. "We are a small inn with a terrific restaurant, general store, 20 rooms, and a gas station—in essence, a small village on the coast of Central California," she says. "Come visit when you are traveling down the beautiful Big Sur coast!"

**David Buttolph ('77, CAS'79)** of New Canaan, Conn., is a managing director of the private investment firm The Brookside Group. "I am thrilled that my daughter Kristen is a freshman at CGS and is living in my old dorm," he wrote last spring. "I am amazed at all the new buildings Boston University has constructed, and I hope to tour the new dorms soon."

### 1980s

**Marie (Cardillo) Berke ('81, MET'84)** works part time as an accountant, and volunteers at a variety of organizations. She lives with her husband and two children in Austin, Tex., where she's enjoying not having to shovel snow in the winter.

**Danny Adlerman ('83, SMG'85)** and his wife, Kim, co-wrote a children's book, *Mommy's Having a Watermelon*, which was published in April.



Danny Adlerman performs his music for a group of children and parents.

Adlerman has also recorded a CD of winter holiday songs, titled *...and a Happy New Year*, with children's recording artists Yosi and Kevin Kammeraad.

**Tom Maloney ('84)** was recently appointed executive director of the Tejon Ranch Conservancy in Lebec, Calif. The conservancy's mission is to

preserve, enhance, and restore the native biologic diversity and ecosystem values of the Tejon Ranch and Tehachapi Range for the benefit of California's future generations.

### 1990s

**William Gardner ('90, CAS'92)** received a doctorate in clinical psychology in June and is now completing a postdoctoral fellowship in the San Francisco area. "I have also been doing quite a bit of adventuring," he says, "and have developed my skills as a wildlife and underwater photographer." View his photography at [www.wgimages.com](http://www.wgimages.com).

**Nicholas Hofgren ('90)** of London, England, and a group of business associates recently formed Westly House Partners, a boutique advisory firm for the private equity and real estate sectors.

**Marianna Lymberis ('93, CAS'95)** married Troy-Nicholas Malaxos on October 26, 2008, at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New York City. The ceremony was followed by a reception at Tavern on the Green.

**Jeff Bratton ('98, COM'01)** helped his mother write her memoir, *Stay Close: A Mother's Story of Her Son's Addiction*. The book is her account, he says, of "raising me through the chaotic and extraordinary years that were my teens and twenties."

The book was a kitchen-table project that, "through a pretty remarkable series of events, found its way into print," he says. "It talks, primarily, to the millions of Americans touched by addiction and alcoholism, but it also reaches people who've encountered hardships of all types." Available in



Jeff Bratton and his mother, Libby Cataldi, in a photograph for Cataldi's memoir, *Stay Close: A Mother's Story of Her Son's Addiction*.

bookstores nationwide, the book is a not-for-profit endeavor, with portions of the proceeds benefiting addiction treatment centers.

**Elizabeth (Pavlides) Lowery ('99, COM'01)** of Danbury, Conn., and her husband, **Wilson Layne Lowery (CAS'01)**, welcomed their first child, Wilson Orion Lowery, in February.

### 2000s

**Adam Marks ('00, COM'03)** and his wife, **Jessica Marks (CAS'02)**, recently relocated from Boston to Phoenixville, Pa., where Adam is starting a new career in personal training and Jessica is a social worker for the state of Pennsylvania. Adam's e-mail address is [amarks555@yahoo.com](mailto:amarks555@yahoo.com).

**Lauren Roberts ('00, CAS'02)** and her husband, Mark Comorosky, are the parents of twins, Aiden John and Belle Olivia, born December 11, 2008.

In June, **Andrea Phillips ('01, COM'03)** graduated from Brooklyn Law School, where she was president of the Brooklyn Entertainment & Sports Law Society.

**Igal Svet ('04, COM'06)** is a manager of development at BBC Worldwide in Los Angeles. The company produces television shows for various broadcast and cable networks, including ABC's *Dancing With the Stars* and NBC's *The Great American Road Trip*.

**James Boynton ('05, SMG'07)** has developed his own property and casualty insurance agency, Boynton Insurance, and also works as a financial planner with Commonwealth Financial. He lives in Brookline, Mass., and plays his saxophone with local bands and musicians.

**Michelle Conti ('06, CAS'08)** is enrolled in the clinical psychology doctoral program at Long Island University.

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Before their graduation, several members of the Class of 2009 made gifts to the CGS Fund in honor of faculty members who guided and inspired them. Two of the honorees—academic advisors Maureen Foley-Reese (right) and Alyse Bithavas-Glac—are pictured here with the certificates of appreciation that accompanied the student donations.



## DEAN'S MESSAGE



### Dear Friends,

While many colleges and universities are struggling to maintain enrollment in this difficult economic year, I'm pleased to report CGS is enrolling a full class of 720 freshmen this fall. Our retention of students into the sophomore year—93 to 94 percent—continues to be one of the best in the University. The external review of the CGS program conducted by the BU Board of Overseers in the last academic year reflected the positive reviews we hear routinely from students, parents, and alumni, who continue to be vocal in their support of our interdisciplinary liberal arts curriculum and close student/faculty contact.

After our spectacular lobby renovation, completed in 2008, we are now giving a facelift to faculty and advisor offices—replacing the dated black steel furniture and filing cabinets with contemporary wood office furniture. This upgrade, the first since the 1960s, should make their

offices far more attractive and comfortable. Next on the agenda for building improvements, planned for next summer, will be the conversion of one of our 60-person classrooms into a case-style classroom with graduated seating and state-of-the-art technology.

I want to take this opportunity to alert you to some changes we are planning to make to your alumni newsletter, *Collegian*. After consulting with alumni around the country, we have decided to go digital and phase out the printed version you now receive. Because of this development, it is important for us to have your current e-mail address. Please send this information to [cgsalum@bu.edu](mailto:cgsalum@bu.edu) or go online to [www.bu.edu/alumni](http://www.bu.edu/alumni) to update your contact information. We already have several class notes that we hope to share electronically, as we believe this will be a more dynamic way for all of us to communicate.

As always, we request that you stay in touch with the College, our faculty, and the classmates who shaped your experience here. I hope to see you whenever you are visiting campus or during my travels around the country.

You have my best wishes,

Linda Wells, Dean

SUPPLEMENT TO *BOSTONIA*

## Collegian

Boston University College of  
General Studies Alumni Newsletter

FALL 2009

Published by the College of General Studies  
for alumni and friends.

Produced by Boston University  
Creative Services.

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Director of Development & Alumni Relations  
Peri Onipede

Editor Corinne Steinbrenner (COM'06)

Contributing Writers Tricia Brick,  
Sheryl Flatlow

Designer Garyfallia Pagonis

Photography Boston University  
Photography, unless otherwise noted

Printed on recycled paper 0909 980824

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