Happy Spring! With April around the corner, we know this is one of busiest times of year for school leaders!

It’s a busy time for the Cahn Fellows Program as well! As the 2015 Fellows and Allies are diligently working on putting together the presentations of their yearlong project, we are in the process of selecting the next cohort of exemplary leaders. We had an excellent response to our solicitation this year, with almost 90 nominations combined from New York City and Chicago.

We would like to give a big “shout-out” to the many alumni who have volunteered and helped out with the reading of the applications and the site visits. The process has been going very smoothly and once all the visits are completed, we hope to be able to make our decisions by no later than the third week of April. Please stay tuned for the announcement and we hope that many of you will be able to join us at our Welcome Reception on Thursday, May 5th from 5-7pm as we warmly welcome the 2016 cohort into our family of Cahn Fellows!

We are working very hard to find ways to provide on-going support and networking opportunities for the alumni, fellows and allies at a time when this support is greatly needed – especially for our most experienced leaders who are usually the ones called upon to provide all of the support for others but who rarely receive needed support for themselves. We want to find resources to develop a post-fellowship program for those fellows/alumni who are thirsting to further hone their leadership and mentoring skills, as well as professional development opportunities for our Cahn allies to become strong future school leaders as a way to help the public school system to maintain, retain, and grow their leadership talent.

Most recently, we have reached out to businesses and foundations, as well as have applied for governmental grants. The reception has been hopeful and on March 16, 2016, I was invited by a few members of the City Council to testify in front of their Education Committee at their budget hearing to present our program for possible City Council support.

As fellows, allies and alumni who have benefitted from the program, it is also important that we support the program ourselves. Many of us may not have stayed as long in the system or continued to have done as well (myself included!) had it not been for the Cahn Fellows Program. We ask that you consider making a donation to the program - in whatever amount you are comfortable with and can afford - to help continue the work and bring more support and services (as well as the gift of friendship and camaraderie!) to all of you.

All donations are tax-deductible and can be made in one of two ways:

- By check, made out to: “Teachers College – Cahn Fellows Program” and sent to the following address: Cahn Fellows Program, Teachers College, 525 West 120th Street, Box 213, New York, New York 10027.
- On our new website: http://www.cahnfellows.org by clicking on the “donate/support” link on the upper right.

Thank you in advance and we hope to see all of you at our March 29th Alumni/Fellows Event from 5pm-7pm (see details on Page 3 of the newsletter) with guest speaker, Dr. Jeff McCausland on “Good Leadership Skills and Strategies – The Military/Government/Business/Public Schools – What do we have in common?”

Wishing you all the best!

Lify
Director & 2003 Cahn Fellow
THE 2016 WELCOME RECEPTION

May 5, 2016
5 – 7pm

Teachers College
Columbia University
Evertt Lounge
525 West 120th Street
New York, NY 10027

RSVP at cahnfellows@tc.edu

Invited Speakers Include:

Chuck Cahn
Founder and Chairman
Cahn Fellows Program

Carmen Farina
Chancellor
NYC Department of Education

Mark Cannizzaro
Executive Vice President
CSA

Susan Fuhrman
President
Teachers College
THE CAHN FELLOWS PROGRAM
IS PLEASED TO PRESENT A SPECIAL FUNDRAISER EVENT:

Good Leadership Skills and Strategies:
*The Military / Government / Business / Public Schools*
*What do we have in common?*

Keynote Speaker:

**Jeffrey D. McCausland, Ph.D.**
Founder & CEO, Diamond6 Leadership and Strategies, LLC
Military Consultant, CBS News

Dr. Jeffrey McCausland is a retired Army Colonel with over 30 years of unique and challenging leadership experiences. As a retired military officer and veteran, Jeff’s work has taken him all over the world to serve in a variety of command and staff positions in places such as on the National Security Council Staff, as part of the faculty in the U.S. Army War College and at the Pentagon.

Jeff has conducted leadership seminars for school districts all over the United States as well as for organizations such as the Association for School Business Officials International and the Columbia Business School.

Since 2003, Jeff has served as a national security consultant to CBS radio and television as a frequent commentator on the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Jeff has also appeared on MSNBC, CSPAN, CNN and the CBS Morning Show as well as interviewed by the NY Times, Wall Street Journal and the Boston Globe. Jeff was also the Gettysburg guide and expert for the Cahn Fellows during the early years of the Cahn Fellows Program.

For more information, and to register, please contact: CAHNFELLOWS@TC.EDU

**TUESDAY,**
**MARCH 29, 2016**
**5-7PM**
TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
CAHN FELLOWS SPOTLIGHT:
JEFF DASE

Principal, Cole Model for Excellence Language Academy, Chicago

INCREASING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT COLE ACADEMY
By 2015 Cahn Fellow Jeff Dase

Cahn faculty advisor Professor Carolyn Riehl conducted school visits with Chicago Fellows and Allies in February. My Cahn Ally and math teacher Victor Idowu and I had the pleasure of introducing Dr. Riehl to our class of algebra students at the Coles Language Academy (pictured center).

Dr. Riehl had a chance to sit down with the Coles Academy students and have discourse with them about how they feel about the school.

In addition to the students loving their overall school learning environment, students expressed that they have noticed an increase in volunteer involvement around the school which directly aligns with our Cahn Project which is to increase parental involvement.

Unlike in the past, parent volunteers can be easily identified throughout the school assisting in various ways, and now we are steadily building a better relationship between the parents and Coles school staff.

The Cahn Fellowship has made a lasting impression on my career as a school leader particularly because of the outstanding encouragement and motivation from everyone involved. The Cahn Fellowship has also given me a new sense of purpose after eight years at the same school.

The professional development has been some of the best I have received throughout my career. From each session, I have gained valuable insight that I have implemented back at my school.

The testimonies from fellows and allies have provided me with a resource bank of effective and proven practices that I have taken back to my school for immediate development and implementation.

With all the success there have been many pitfalls as well. The school has experienced some unheard of elements common to many urban school settings but has succeeded despite it all.

Our Cahn project relates to how working in an urban school setting has its differences and can be difficult while at the same time being extremely rewarding for all stakeholders.
Food & Finance High School Principal and 2015 Cahn Fellow Roger Turgeon (pictured in top right photo, far left) welcomed over 60 members of his cohort, Cahn faculty, alumni and staff to his specialized high school for their March study session.

Turgeon's culinary students not only prepared a delicious breakfast and lunch, they gave the 2015 Fellows a tour of their unique aquaponic lab and shared their lettuce harvest from their hydroponic garden (pictured right) as gifts.

Food & Finance is New York City's only culinary high school and 90% of its graduates go on to college or a culinary program. ABC-TV “Chew” host and celebrity chef Carla Hall, along with 25 of New York City's greatest chefs, celebrated Food & Finance’s student chefs at a VIP silent auction fundraiser at ESPACE on March 7th.

During the live and silent auction, the celebrity chefs offered a tasting bar of various delicacies while the Food & Finance students prepared hors d’oeuvres for the VIP event.

Principal Turgeon said, “This event helps with scholarships, enrichment programs, and most importantly, our internship program which allows our students a critical opportunity to experience real world exposure to the industry.”
New York City Department of Education Senior Deputy Chancellor Dorita Gibson has appointed 2007 Cahn Fellow Rahesha Amon-Harrison acting superintendent of Community District 16 in Brooklyn. Amon-Harrison replaces Evelyn Santiago, who recently retired as Superintendent for District 16.

Formerly the founding principal of Frederick Douglass Academy III, Rahesha has 22 years of service as a NYC educator. She has held many leadership positions including Teacher, Coach, Director, Assistant Principal, Principal, and most recently as the Principal Leadership Facilitator in District 16.

Amon-Harrison was selected as a 2007 Cahn Fellow during her 10-year tenure at FDA III in the Bronx. She also served as a 2005 Cahn Ally. Recently named a New York Daily News Hometown Hero, Aspen Institute Ideas scholar and a New York State Regent Fellow, Rahesha is an accomplished school leader who has been featured at various city, state and national education forums.

Her 2007 cohort member Michael Alcoff, who served as principal of M.S./H.S. 697 Teachers Preparatory School during their Cahn fellowship year, currently serves as Renewal High School Superintendent in Brooklyn.

2005 Cahn Fellow Barbara Freeman, the former principal of Don Pedro Albizu Campo School, P.S. 161 in Manhattan, is Community Superintendent of District 13 in Brooklyn. The former principal of P.S. 34 in Queens, 2010 Cahn Fellow Alicja Winnicki is the Community Superintendent of District 14.
CAHN ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:
MARGARET RUSSO
Principal, P.S. 160, The William T. Sampson School, Brooklyn

NAMES 2008 CAHN FELLOW MARGARET RUSSO 2016 IRISH PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

At its annual Scholarship Dinner Dance in March, the New York City Department of Education’s Emerald Society recognized several principals, teachers and students at Terrace on the Park in Queens. The Emerald Society is a professional community that celebrates Irish culture and honors educators for their contributions to NYC public schools. P.S. 160 Principal and 2008 Cahn Fellow Margaret Russo was named 2016 Irish Principal of the Year by Emerald Society members.

“Both of my parents were born in Ireland so this honor is near and dear to my heart.”

Margaret Russo
2008 Cahn Fellow

“This spring is the 100th anniversary of the Easter Uprising which was pivotal in Irish history. One of the major leaders in the Uprising was the headmaster of a local school, Padraig Pierce,” said Russo. “It’s nice to be recognized as a school leader during the anniversary of this significant historical event.”

“So many people from my school community came out to celebrate with me, our APs, school psychologist, social worker, guidance counselors, my parent coordinator, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, school aides, and our custodial worker and other district 20 colleagues. And that was in addition to my family and friends!”

Principal Russo added, “What a fun night, I even spoke a little Irish and did some Irish dancing!”
Who gets to love their job? When you do it and do it right... you get goosebumps.”

Ailene Mitchell
M.S. 88 Principal

BROOKLYN PRINCIPAL TRANSFORMED STRUGGLING SCHOOL INTO MODEL FOR INNOVATION

Story and Photo by DNA Info Reporter Leslie Albrecht

When 2012 Cahn Fellow and Principal Ailene Altman Mitchell came to M.S. 88 in 1999, the school was performing so poorly that the Department of Education was considering closing it.

But these days none other than Bill Gates is looking to the school for insight on the future of learning. The tech leader and philanthropist visited M.S. 88 in 2014 to see its School of One program, in which students get individualized math instruction based on their learning style and personal skill set. School of One is one of more than 40 special programs and partnerships now available at M.S. 88, which earned high marks for student achievement in its latest School Quality Snapshot.

The school’s dramatic turnaround was due in large part to Altman Mitchell, who worked closely with Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña, then the superintendent of District 15, to rebuild M.S. 88 from the ground up. Today M.S. 88 has 1,278 students who come from nearly every elementary school in District 15.

Altman Mitchell has put an emphasis on hiring "brilliant" teachers and cultivating partnerships with an array of private partners and universities, from the Billion Oyster Project to Columbia University's Earth Institute, she said. The principal now likes to call M.S. 88 a "research institute for teaching and learning." The school recently spent $3 million on two new science labs, and this year it's the first New York City school to pilot Basecamp, a software-based learning system developed partly by engineers from Facebook.

Altman Mitchell is now one of the DOE’s”master principals.” Despite nearly three decades of experience, she still gets excited talking about her job. “I still get so psyched when I come in here. I’m learning all the time. I never thought I would get up, 26 years later working for the NYC Department of Education and love what I do.”
How did you get started in education?

I never wanted to be a teacher. So I thought I would be a psychologist, but I was not a good psychologist. I got good training but it wasn’t something that I found my passion in. So my dad said, "Why don’t you try substitute teaching for a little while?" I said, "Alright, but I’m not going to do this for the rest of my life." Guess what happened? I totally fell in love. I fell in love with the kids, I fell in love with curriculum learning, curriculum writing, and trying to do and teach and develop methodologies in new and different ways.

What was M.S. 88 like when you got here and how did you go about changing the school?

It was probably the greatest experience of my life because it was creating a new school, a new environment, building a culture from the bottom up. [Around 2000] we were deemed a “school under review” and that was very sad. That means there’s a possibility that you might close. [M.S. 88 was taken off the SUR list by 2002.]

I was fortunate enough that Carmen Fariña, as District 15 superintendent, helped me plan this building. Carmen sat down with me and she said, "Ailene, this is what it might look like." This was her footprint, taking a large middle school and redesigning it into three small learning communities. [M.S. 88 is divided into three “houses” each with its own theme.]

I never want to say we got rid of teachers, because that sounds so callous, and it is so callous. I think we found wonderful teachers to build. They bought into the possibilities. When we talk about innovation, innovation isn't a program, it's a product of good practice. It's creating. All of my teachers have a license to create but they also have to execute and lead.

How does the school use technology with programs like Teach to One, Mastery Connect and ThinkCERCA?

We’re using it in very unique ways where it's not taking the place of the human being. It's supporting the professional development of the teachers. We’re using personalized learning so our students can really get into robust and rigorous [learning] and not have to wait. It [creates] equity and access. Our kids are learning how to get to things fast. How do we access what’s important and how do we delineate what we need to know? That’s what technology does. It gives us a variety of choices. If I had what these kids have, who knows where I’d be today? Sometimes our former English Language Learner students become our gifted students. Those are the kids that come back and say, "Oh I made it into medical school."
CAHN ALUMNI COUNCIL OF SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS’ OFFICERS

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ELOISE MESSINEO
ELI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
2008 Fellow

HENRY RUBIO
TREASURER
2007 Ally

SANA NASSER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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2006 Fellow

RAMON GONZALEZ
VICE PRESIDENT
2007 Fellow

WANDA SOTO
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
2008 Fellow
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PRINCIPAL – ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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2011 Fellow

PRINCIPAL – HS/ALT/ADULT ED
RANDY ASHER
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PRINCIPAL – ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
MARGARET M. RUSSO
2008 Fellow

PRINCIPAL -BRONX BOROUGH HS
RAMON NAMNUM
2012 Fellow

PRINCIPAL – HS/ALT/ADULT ED
EDWARD TOM
2011 Fellow

QUEENS BOROUGH HS
BESHIR ABDELLATIF
2013 Fellow

QUEENS BOROUGH HS
WILLIAM BASSELL
2010 Fellow
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MANHATTAN HS DISTRICT 1-2 CHAIR  
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DISTRICT 27 CHAIR
2013 Fellow

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2010 Fellow

DISTRICT 75
EXECUTIVE BOARD
HEATHER LEYKAM
2013 Fellow
Dear Cahn Fellows, Allies and Alumni:

I am delighted and excited to announce the publication of my new book, *Tell Me So I Can Hear You: A Developmental Approach to Feedback for Educators* (Harvard Education Press, 2016), which I co-authored with my colleague, Jessica Blum-DeStefano.

Given the mounting demands of new teacher and principal evaluation systems, the Common Core State Standards, Race to the Top, and other initiatives, our book offers effective, research-based strategies for deepening feedback, communication, and collaboration in our “new normal” world.

Specifically, it adds a new, developmental layer to giving and receiving feedback, and underscores (and will help you apply) the importance of intentionally differentiating feedback so that adults—who make sense of their experiences in qualitatively different ways—can best hear it, learn from it, and improve their instructional and leadership practice.

I am also thrilled to share that Jessica and I will be hosting a new offering of our Leadership Institute for School Change at Teachers College on June 6-7, 2016, that will feature our new book and developmental approach to feedback. This immersive, two-full-day Institute will be held at Teachers College in Grace Dodge 177/179, and will be preceded by an opening night cocktail reception on June 5th. I would truly love to see you there! For more information about the Leadership Institute, or to register, please visit [www.tc.columbia.edu/cps/leadership](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/cps/leadership).

Thank you for all you do, Heroes and Stars!

*Ellie Drago-Severson*
IN THE NEWS...

STUYVESANT CONCERT CHOIR
PERFORMS MOZART’S REQUIEM AT CARNEGIE HALL
The Stuyvesant High School Concert Choir featured once again at Carnegie Hall with Distinguished Concerts Singers International of New York

JIE ZHANG
2013 Cahn Fellow
Principal
STUYVESANT HIGH SCHOOL
Manhattan
SCHOOL EVENTS

PEGGY WYNNS MADISON
2013 CAHN FELLOW
Principal, P.S. 15 Brooklyn
Invites all to:

Please join Friends of PS 15 and the Red Hook community for the
2nd Annual RDHK ♥ PS15 Spring Gala
To benefit PS 15
The Patrick F. Daly Magnet School of the Arts
Thursday, March 31st, 2016
7:00 - 10:00 pm
PIONEERWORKS
159 Pioneer Street - Red Hook
Cocktails ♥ Music ♥ Dancing ♥ Prizes
To buy gala & raffle tickets, please click here
or email friendsof15gala@gmail.com

FRANCA CONTI
2011 CAHN FELLOW
Principal, P.S. 217 Brooklyn
Invites all to:

your wish is granted
Take a magic carpet ride to PS 217’s Magnet production of Aladdin
Saturday, March 19, 2016
Fair 1-4pm  Play 4pm
PS 217: 100 New York Avenue at Coney Island Avenue
Play: $5 Adults, $3 Children (12 and under)
MOVERS AND SHAKERS

CAHN-GRATULATIONS ON YOUR TEACHING APPOINTMENT!

JOYCE BROWN BUSH
2014 Cahn Fellow

NABE 2016 LEADERSHIP FORUM:
Preparing Multi-literate Global Citizens

NABE National Presidential Panel

What are the practices that you have instituted to ensure students graduate college and career ready?

RAMON NAMNUM
2012 Cahn Fellow

Principal
High School of World Cultures, Bronx
OPPORTUNITIES

Harlem Village Academies is seeking talented educators for the 2016-2017 school year with immediate openings as well in teaching (especially K-12 teachers in all subjects and school leaders), recruitment and operations.

Contact Lara Silvas in recruitment at HVA directly at lsilvas@harlemvillage.org