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Inside

The source for news and events at Teachers College, Columbia University

Equity Symposium asks: Is NCLB Getting it Done?

Only the Bathwater —Or the Baby, Too?

A range of views on just what about NCLB needs fixing

If there was a central question at issue during the College's recent two-day symposium on the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), it was whether the country should set its sights on more realistic (and potentially more meaningful) achievement targets than NCLB presently endorses, or whether the law's current goal—of universal student proficiency in reading and math by 2014—is the most powerful way to ensure improved outcomes for

poor, minority and disabled students.

TC Professor Amy Stuart Wells provided historical context for that question in the Symposium's opening presentation, in which she noted that unlike many other developed nations, the U.S. has traditionally focused on educational achievement as a primary means to better the lot of the economically disadvantaged. Where other nations have established broad social welfare systems, Wells said, the

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Newark Mayor Cory Booker, the Symposium keynote speaker, with TC President Fuhrman

The Gaps Don't Seem to Be Closing

"The researchers and discussants gathered here will focus on the most central concern in education today: the achievement gap between

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Building On Our Research Legacy

In November, Teachers College held its Homecoming and its second annual Symposium on Educational Equity on the same day—to my mind, a perfect convergence of events.

After all, the legacy of TC is doing great research that answers the practical concerns of educators and policymakers. Historically, from James Earl Russell, John Dewey and E.L. Thorndike to Edmund Gordon, Maxine Greene and Mort Deutsch—and including so many of our faculty and alumni in between—we have done the transformative inquiry in education and related fields. This year's Equity Symposium built on that legacy by taking a hard look at the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)—the most sweeping education law in our nation's history—and presenting new data that measured the law's effectiveness both in achieving its own goals and in closing the gap between America's most advantaged and disadvantaged students. Researchers at the Symposium pinpointed discrepancies in state definitions of teacher quality; traced oversight efforts by the U.S. Department of Education; delved into the law's impact on special education students; and scrutinized NCLB's track record in delivering on its equity goals. All of this should be enormously helpful to Congress when it begins debating reauthorization of the law next year.

There are plenty of other areas where our research can be of great value. We need to understand exactly what it is about teacher preparation that leads to good teaching. We need to understand the costs and benefits of various



**TC President
Susan Fuhrman**

approaches to professional development, to induction programs for teachers, and especially to retaining teachers, because 50 percent of our teachers quit during their first five years on the job.

To tackle these issues, TC must create more incentives and a better environment for faculty research. We must raise more scholarship money while altering our mix of full-time and part-time students, so that faculty will have fewer doctoral advisees and more student colleagues in research.

We must look at the basic incentives surrounding salary structure and research funding. In general, we must reduce hassles wherever possible.

Which brings me to one more important happening at TC this past month: TC's Office of Sponsored Programs, under the direction of Paul Kran, has added two new specialists who will provide improved grants management assistance to faculty who have been struggling with administrative paperwork. The specialists will track new grants and renewals, and eventually existing grants as well. They will function as budget administrators on the grants, with related responsibilities.

It's a small step, but judging from all the faculty members who emailed their thanks to Paul, a significant one. Now it's up to all of us to make the most of it. ♦

Susan Fuhrman

Loaded Conversations

A minority post-doc probes the difficulties of talking about race

When it comes to racial sensitivity, Linda Lin believes that one reason why so few people and institutions successfully “walk the talk” is that even *talking* the talk is no easy task.

Lin, minority postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of International and Transcultural Studies, has made conversations about race the focus of her study and found that even those with the best of intentions get into conflict situations when discussing racial issues.

As a doctoral student at Stanford, Lin focused her research on a group of dedicated individuals working in a school reform organization to close the achievement gap. In spite of their good intentions, they found that trying to talk about race resulted in conflict. When efforts were made to deal with conflict in public discussions on racial issues, many felt that the situation was made worse.

Eventually, “race conversations went underground,” Lin said. Private conversations about race centered on themes of dismay about being considered racist, about conversations being shut down when others became offended and about the dearth of conversations between white people and people of color. Through their efforts, the organization’s members were contributing to the very problem they were trying to address.

“It turns out that closing the achievement gap means different things to different people,” Lin explains. “We are in a culture that promises equality and systematically produces inequality, and that tension is reflected in our conversations about race. It is not news that these conversations are hard to have.”

Lin became interested in race conversations as a teacher, when she helped to organize workshops on multicultural education for other teachers. “They didn’t seem to work,” she said. “Either the conversation remained superficial and people went home feeling virtuous, or people got so upset that we wondered if they were completely turned off to diversity issues.”

Lin does not prescribe a set of guidelines for talking about race. Instead, she explains how conflicts arise and shows why each of them must be worked out on its own terms. “Guidelines are often too vague to be of much help,” she says.

Another study Lin did, on community organizing in schools, also revealed the depth of racial tensions. A community worker mentoring a multiracial group of interns worried that her treatment of African American interns could be considered racist. In another case, an Asian American teacher being mentored by a white teacher asked Lin, “How do I tell my mentor that I’m uncomfortable with the ways she teaches about *The Joy Luck Club*?” Lin discovered that in many instances race “feels too dangerous” to talk about, and that we struggle to deal with the ambiguities of race in our everyday lives.



TC student Linda Lin

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The Gaps Don't Seem to Be Closing

*Most at TC's Equity Symposium agree:
No Child Left Behind isn't living up to its name*

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wealthier, primarily white students and those from poor and typically minority backgrounds. And they will do so in the context of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, the most sweeping educational legislation in our nation's history.

"NCLB's goals are widely shared, but as we experience how the states are putting it into practice, concerns are being raised. Hopefully this symposium will generate new information that not only will help people in the field, but also inform the policymakers who are going to be debating the reauthorization of the law in 2007."

Thus Teachers College President Susan Fuhrman set the stage for a two-day marathon—sponsored by the Laurie M. Tisch Foundation—in which researchers presented new data about NCLB and debated whether and how to fix the law, which was first enacted in 2002. NCLB is now nearly halfway to its

target date of 2014, by which time the law stipulates that all U.S. students must be proficient in reading and math.

"Nothing is sacred, and we'll look at the Act in very profound and hard-hitting ways," said Michael Rebell, Executive Director of The Campaign for Educational Equity, which convened the event November 13–14. Other organizations, including a special commission of the Aspen Institute that has been holding hearings on NCLB, have also analyzed the law, Rebell said, "but they've already said they won't deal with issues of whether the law is inadequately funded and whether the 100 percent proficiency target is a practical goal. We will, and we're looking forward to rousing participatory discussions."

Rebell's own verdict was that NCLB, while created ostensibly to safeguard the equity vision inherent in the Supreme Court's landmark

school desegregation decision, isn't living up to its name. "NCLB's aims are good ones, but aspects of the law appear to be undermining that vision," Rebell said. Over the next two days, nine studies, presented by a slate of leading educational researchers, seemed to bear out his assessment by detailing poor progress under NCLB on student achievement, teacher quality, accountability and federal oversight.

AMONG THE KEY FINDINGS:

- While NCLB requires all students nationwide to be proficient in reading and math by 2014, this mandate may be more of an aspirational goal than a reality. The U.S. Department of Education has looked the other way as many states have claimed compliance with NCLB, requiring only low skill levels to pass standardized tests and demonstrate proficiency instead of challenging skill levels

From top to bottom: A TC student poses a question; Jeffrey Henig moderated a panel on standards and assessments; discussant Ronald Ferguson is leading an equity-focused initiative at Harvard University.

Equity

the law stipulates.

- The concept of “proficient” is so poorly defined by NCLB and varies so much from state to state that it has become a meaningless measure.
- There is a “complexity gap” in NCLB’s track record thus far—that is, small improvements have been achieved in lower grades where simple skills are tested, but those gains disappear when more complex conceptual thinking is tested in middle and high school students.

Yet, the Symposium also revealed enduring sentiment among many school leaders and members of minority groups that NCLB’s stated goals are ensuring that the needs of low-achieving students are not being ignored (see accompanying story). The researchers also reported some preliminary indications that the law may benefit special

education students by setting higher performance expectations that, in turn, require stronger curriculum and closer performance monitoring.

AMONG ITS ADDITIONAL FINDINGS:

- The percentage of students who were reported to be proficient or above on the state reading/English language arts assessments in Fourth Grade ranged from 35 percent in Missouri to 89 percent in Mississippi. For Eighth Grade, the range was 30 percent in South Carolina to 88 percent in North Carolina. The percentage of students who were reported to be proficient or above on the state mathematics assessments in Fourth Grade ranged from 39 percent in Maine and Wyoming to 92 percent in North Carolina. For Eighth Grade, the range was 16 percent in Missouri to 87

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“NCLB’s aims are good ones,
but aspects of the law appear to be
undermining that vision.”

~ MICHAEL REBEL

THE CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

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percent in Tennessee. Those ranges say more about the varying degree of rigor that states bring to their standards than it does about superior performance by states with more impressive numbers, according to researchers presenting at the Symposium.

- In 2006, one national study identified only 11 states with both strong content standards and assessments whose items closely matched the standards. In another study that looked at only 14 states, only one out of the 14 demonstrated high-quality standards and high-quality tests that were well aligned with the standards.
- In 2005, 44 states had at least three years of state assessment data for students with disabilities and 42 reported an upward trend in the percentage of students with disabilities who are benefiting from being instructed in more challenging grade-level subject matter and also making impressive gains.
- In California, the gap in third grade reading proficiency between general education and special education students—as measured by state reading assessments—grew by three percent (to 21 percent) between 1999 and 2005. In Maryland and New York, the achievement gap also has increased between general education and special education students. In 2004/05 the gap in reading in New York had reached nearly 50 percent while in Maryland, the gap stood at nearly 40 percentage points.
- As of May 2006, only two states had established an acceptable definition of “high quality teacher” under NCLB and were using that definition to determine the status of teachers of core subjects.
- As of May 2006, despite the legal requirements of NCLB, no states had in place a plan to ensure that poor or minority children were not being taught by inexperienced, unqualified or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other states.
- As of May 2006, only 13 states were fully compliant with NCLB in terms of providing parents and the public with accurate reports on the number and percentage of classes in core academic subjects taught by high quality teachers, and in notifying parents of students in Title I schools when their children had been assigned to, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a non-high quality teacher. ♦



From left to right: TC's Karen Zumwalt said that hard-to-staff schools must be made more desirable as places to work; Barnett Berry of the Center for Teaching Quality called for a Marshall Plan for training and producing teachers; Gail Sunderman represented the Harvard Civil Rights Project.

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U.S. has historically “laid the task of rectifying societal inequalities at the schoolhouse door.

“We’ve lagged behind other nations in having a social safety net,” Wells said, pointing out that—with the temporary exception of the New Deal—policy and programs to support the elderly were slower to emerge here than in Europe and that national health insurance “simply never happened at all.”

The result, Wells said, is that during the past half-century, the U.S. has emphasized meritocracy rather than egalitarian values; focused on equality of opportunity rather than equality of results; stressed excellence rather than equity in education; and increasingly, in its policies to bolster student achievement, wielded the stick rather than proffering the carrot. Throughout, education has been the primary expression of this emphasis, beginning with President Lyndon Johnson’s declaration that “we are going to eliminate poverty with education...This is not going to be a handout. People are going to learn their way out of poverty.”

Yet the gap in income between the nation’s richest and poorest families has grown during the past 30 years, Wells said, and the country has absorbed an enormous influx of immigrants, increasing the challenge facing schools.

“Can we really achieve equality of opportunity when the levels of well being are so unequal before children have even reached the schoolhouse door?” she asked. “We need to think about the types of supplementary policies needed outside of schools.”

TC Emeritus Professor Edmund W. Gordon, who spoke as a discussant following Wells’ presentation, echoed many of her main points.

“In a society where resources and opportunities are unevenly distributed, meritocracy becomes a means of maintaining the status quo,” he said, adding, “I’m convinced that the achievement gap in our schools reflects the fact that our society is now in the advanced stages of capitalism—a capitalism that says, ‘It is my right to exploit you.’ We don’t talk about that one much because it’s unpopular.”

There were few challenges to these arguments by other speakers—yet there was near-unanimous agreement that NCLB’s targets should be retained. In answer to moderator John Merrow, Executive Producer/Host and President of Learning Matters, Inc., who asked, “Is NCLB a positive benefit for poor children?”, speakers on one panel all agreed that the law’s focus on holding all students to high standards makes NCLB invaluable.

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Booker's Bottom Line: It's a Question of Desire

*Newark's Mayor believes the city
can turn its schools around*



Newark Mayor Cory Booker
talking about turning
“islands of excellence” into
“continents of success”

Not long after he was elected Mayor of Newark this past spring, Cory Booker dined with two young men who had spray-painted death threats to him on the wall of their school. The dinner went well—“they were good kids,” Booker told his listeners at the close of TC’s second annual Symposium on Educational Equity—but at one point, the Mayor realized that his guests couldn’t decipher their choice of entrees. The irony of the situation struck him as particularly poignant.

“In 1961 my father fought for the right to sit at lunch counters,” Booker said, “yet today, in 2006, I find myself sitting around a table in a restaurant with young black men from my neighborhood who can barely read the menu. Blacks may have won the right to sit at the table but clearly not the right to an education. We are failing to educate all our children. This is the great challenge for Newark and for our nation.”

Booker—a TC Trustee and former Rhodes Scholar—called the people of Newark “real Americans who believe in the value of education even though they may not have it for themselves.” Like all parents, “their hopes reside in their children,” he said. “They grab at the best possible education that they can get for their children. Inner-city parents are often

portrayed as not knowing or not caring—but this is not true. I know these parents—I see what lengths they go to get the best possible education for their children. They use a relative’s address to get their child into a school that is miles away from their home but with an excellent reputation. They break into sobs when their child is not selected through a lottery system for the award-winning charter school.”

Booker said he supported strong accountability systems for schools and added that he believes in the power of NCLB’s goals to motivate students, parents and schools. Nevertheless, he conceded that current accountability measures are problematic, noting that some 30 schools in Newark have been identified as not making “average yearly progress” for four or more years. Booker also told the audience that Newark has received hundreds of million dollars less in federal Title I funding than what was originally appropriated.

“We have some excellent schools in Newark that people stood up and fought for—there are islands of excellence that we need to expand into continents of success,” the Mayor said. “We will not tolerate failure or mediocrity. This is not a question of ability—it is a question of desire.” ❖

“We are likely to see all schools failing to meet AYP by 2014.”

~ PROFESSOR EMERITUS ROBERT LINN,
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER

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“NCLB is a progressive policy. After two decades of education reform, this is the first explicit statement of closing the achievement gap,” said Michael Nettles, the Edmund W. Gordon Chair for Policy Evaluation and Research at the Educational Testing Service. Nettles was speaking of the performance gap between black and white students, but other speakers said NCLB’s goals are providing similar benefits—albeit with some limitations—to special education students and English Language Learners (ELLs).

“NCLB sheds a bright light on the problem of the achievement gap,” said Eugene Garcia, Vice President for Education Partnerships, Arizona State University, but added that ELLs should be assessed differently than under the current law. “NCLB gets it wrong—outcomes should be about education, not simply about learning English,” said Garcia, who proposed a growth model that measures the progress of ELLs over a three- to four-year period.

“With NCLB there now is pressure that special education students be taught grade-level subject matter. In 42 of 44 states for which we have data, there is an upward trend in the percent of students with disabilities achieving proficiency. This improved performance, however, is seen in the lower grades but flattens out at upper grade levels,” said Margaret McLaughlin, Professor and Associate Director of the Institute for the Study of Exceptional Children and Youth, University of Maryland.

Others described the 100 percent proficiency goal as NCLB’s weakest link—either because they saw that goal as unattainable, or because proficiency standards vary too

widely across states, or both.

“We need to revive the discussion of national education standards,” said Robert Schwartz, Academic Dean and Professor of Practice, Harvard Graduate School of Education. “The need for this is even stronger now than it was before NCLB. One way to address the problem of national standards is to encourage national organizations, not the federal government, to come forward with proposed sets of voluntary model national standards.”

And Diane Ravitch, Research Professor of Education, New York University, stated emphatically: “I believe we should have national standards and tests.”

“One hundred percent proficient becomes increasingly unrealistic as we get closer to 2014,” said Robert Linn, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of Colorado at Boulder. “NCLB’s accountability system undermines its strengths. We are likely to see all schools failing to meet AYP [average yearly progress] by 2014.”

Richard Rothstein, Research Associate, Economic Policy Institute, said he believes that “nothing can save NCLB unless we jettison the incoherent demand that all students be proficient by 2014.” Rothstein focused on what he sees as a fundamental tautology in the law: “Standards cannot be simultaneously challenging and achievable for all students. Proficiency for all is an oxymoron.” Rothstein added that NCLB is “not simply trying to do something good and failing—it is doing enormous damage.”

Manuel J. Rivera, Superintendent for the Rochester City School District, New York, concurred, telling the audience about schools in his district that have made great

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Equity



From left to right: TC faculty members Amy Stuart Wells and Edmund Gordon discussed America's emphasis on education as a means to fight poverty; panel moderator John Merrow asked for a yea or nay on creating national education standards; Richard Rothstein of the Economic Policy Institute called the concept of 100 percent proficiency "an oxymoron."

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progress and even won awards for their performance, yet under NCLB's accountability system are still considered "in need of improvement."

"NCLB's accountability system undermines true educational reform and is a very demoralizing system for those of us working in the schools," said Rivera.

Other presenters at the Symposium suggested that NCLB's failure to deliver on its top-line goals stems from breakdowns in achieving smaller milestone goals. For example, NCLB promised that all students would be taught by highly qualified teachers (HQTs) by 2006, but to date no state has met the HQT target. Furthermore, NCLB gives so much latitude to the states in defining what constitutes a HQT that there is wide variation in what gets defined as HQT from state to state. "The federal government can help to increase the percentage of HQTs and reduce disparities, but the HQT provision in NCLB is a weak provision for controlling quality," said Susanna Loeb, Associate Professor, Stanford University School of Education.

Indeed, Loeb pointed out that there is little evidence that the specific components of HQT requirements are important for student learning. The effect of teacher certification—one of NCLB's primary measures of

HQT—on teacher effectiveness is inconclusive. Similarly, there is little evidence that coursework requirements for teachers effect student learning.

"Improving teacher quality will require more than NCLB's HQT provision. Give local actors more flexibility in deciding who the good, effective teachers are," said Loeb. "More local efforts are also needed to reduce the disparities in working conditions. Substantial structural changes are needed so that difficult-to-staff schools are more attractive to teachers."

In order to achieve the HQT equity goal, "we must make sure that hard-to-staff schools are more desirable places to work, said Karen Zumwalt, Evenden Professor of Education at TC. Barnett Barry, Founder and President, Center for Teaching Quality, called for a government funded "Marshall Plan" for training and producing teachers: "more than anything else, our nation needs an aggressive national teacher quality and supply policy."

Still others argued that NCLB's accountability mechanisms are not only failing to ensure compliance with the law, but are actively sowing problems.

"NCLB has become the primary means of regulating education policy in the U.S. This is a power grab by the



From left to right: David Shreve represented the National Conference of State Legislatures' Education Committee; Harvard's Richard F. Elmore called NCLB "a power grab by the federal government from state and local governments"; Michael T. Nettles of the Educational Testing Service praised NCLB's goals for calling attention to the achievement gap.

federal government from state and local governments," said Richard Elmore, Gregory R. Anrig Professor, Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

According to Elmore, this federal pre-emption has led to a one-size-fits-all accountability system that actually impedes student performance and school improvement. "Rather than treating all schools the same and imposing sanctions, school improvement requires a lot of support and differential treatment," said Elmore.

But Tom Loveless, Director of the Brown Center on Education Policy, Brookings Institution, defended NCLB's accountability system and argued that the scientific literature clearly shows that improved student performance is linked to states with accountability systems.

But for others, NCLB fails to provide support for the burdens it imposes.

"NCLB must be fairly funded," said Michael Rebell, Executive Director of The Campaign for Educational Equity. "The federal government is not looking at the cost of the increased demands on schools that are the result of NCLB." He called for a national "costing-out" study, much like those that have been conducted by states in school finance lawsuits, to determine precisely what resources would be required to achieve

NCLB's goals.

Coming full circle to the earlier arguments made by Wells and Gordon, Rebell also argued that schools cannot, by themselves, enable the most disadvantaged students to achieve at the same pace as their wealthier peers. "If NCLB's 100 percent proficiency is a mandate, then schools will have to work in concert with other institutional actors," he said. "There are basic services that all children need to excel in school—e.g., quality health care, decent housing, good nutrition—that are beyond the reach of schools."

The presenters did not reach any ultimate agreement about if and how NCLB should be revised. In fact, if there was a moment of unanimity at the Symposium, it came in response to closing remarks by Newark Mayor Cory Booker.

"I believe we need clear standards for what we want to achieve, sophisticated ways to measure progress toward those standards and consequences for failure," said Booker, who was elected this past spring. "I know the answers are out there, and I refuse to wait on tomorrow or next month. I want to press this now."

For perhaps the only time during the entire two days, the audience erupted in whole-hearted applause. ♦

Down in Duplicating, One of a Kind

Rocky Schwarz has made helping others his life work. He does a mean crossword puzzle, too

Rocky Schwarz, Manager of Document Services, can tell you which countries have blue and white flags. He knows plenty about British royalty, geography and 60s rock trivia—all of which has helped make him the crossword champion he is. But his real passion is the volunteer work he does to help educate disadvantaged children in Liberia.

Robert J. (“Rocky”) Schwarz came to TC by chance. In his ninth year as an elementary school teacher stationed in Liberia with the Peace Corps, he saw an advertisement on a Peace Corps bulletin board for a master’s program in International Educational Development. He figured he would spend a couple years at TC and eventually return to West Africa to continue his work. Two master’s degrees (he has another in mathematics education) and part of a doctorate later, he’s still here.

But he is still there, too. Schwarz continues to sponsor Liberian students, often bringing them to the U.S. to further their education, and, on occasion, putting them up at his house. He is the founder and guiding spirit of the Cathedral School Education Foundation, which sends computers and other educational supplies overseas, provides teacher training and awards scholarships to up to 40 children annually.

None of this has detracted from the energy Schwarz brings to his job. His office—located in the basement of Zankel Hall—is a high-pressure environment in which “having it done yesterday is usually not fast enough,” Schwarz says.

Since his start at TC almost three decades ago, when he was making \$3.75 an hour as a work-study student in the same department he runs today, Schwarz has guided the office through continuing expansion and change. Initially it concentrated on transcription services, then moved to word processing functions that teachers now provide themselves. Today, much of Schwarz’s work at TC is focused on helping



Rocky Schwarz teaching in Liberia during his service with the Peace Corps in the early 1970s

students put together their dissertations.

“Really, the most rewarding part of my job is what I can do to help people get their work done,” Schwarz says. “People come in and they’re spaced out and stressed, and you need to respect why their work is important to them and why they feel that way.”

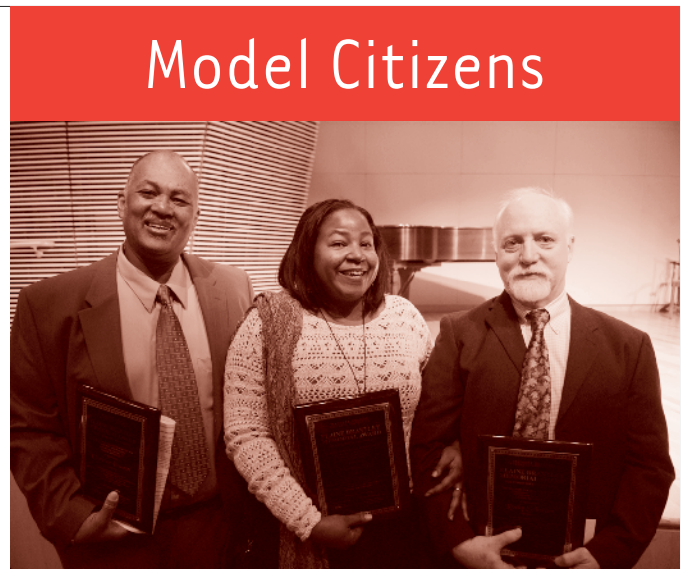
May—dissertation time—is Schwarz’s busiest time of year, and because of this, he has convinced himself year after year that he shouldn’t take the time to compete in the annual American Crossword Puzzle Tournament. This year, however, Schwarz decided to go.

“Finally I said, ‘How long is my life? I have to do it.’”

Two days and seven puzzles later (some of which the experts can complete in a mere five minutes), he finished 81st out of 500 competitors at the event, which was held in Stamford, Connecticut, and was awarded recognition as the fastest rookie over the age of 60.

“It was fun and nerve-wracking at the same time,” he says.

During his tenure at TC, Schwarz has left a positive impression not just through his work, but through his genial attitude and willingness to assist his colleagues. It’s not unusual to see him pulling all-nighters when things get swamped in Document Services, according to his co-worker Maudeline Swaray, who works as an information processor in TC’s Office of Development. Swaray, a Liberian herself,



The winners of the 2006-2007 Elaine Brantley Memorial Award for Community and Civility—Michelle Hill (center), Academic Secretary for the Curriculum and Teaching Department; Clarence Houston (left), Superintendent in the Department of Facilities; and Rocky Schwarz (right), Manager of Document Services—were honored in the Cowin Center auditorium in October. The Brantley Award recognizes Teachers College employees who, by virtue of their daily efforts and beyond the expectations of their position, promote a sense of community and a culture of civility at the College. The award, given annually, now includes a \$400 stipend. ❖

first came across Schwarz through his charity work and later reunited with him at the university.

“Rocky is a gem; he’s really rare, when it comes to looking at things from the standpoint of diversity and humanity,” Swaray says.

TC recognized Schwartz for these qualities in October with its Elaine Brantley Memorial Award for Community and Civility.

Yet, even in the rare moment when Schwarz that he was a deserving recipient, he modestly shifts the credit elsewhere.

“Once upon a time a woman worked for me who used to say things to me like, ‘Your Momma brought you up right,’” he said.

Few who have met him would argue otherwise. ❖

Honoring Her

Elvira Bitsóí Largie seeks an educational philosophy that blends her Navajo traditions

In New Mexico where Elvira Bitsóí Largie grew up and which she still calls home, the most important part of her life as a Navajo woman—and as a member of her Kinyaa'aanii clan—is “rising early and being in harmony with Mother Earth and Father Sky and the natural forces of the world: earth, wind, fire and water.”

These days, at Teachers College in often-hectic Manhattan, Largie values her Navajo traditions even more. “Maintaining harmony in my home, keeping my native language and culture alive, honoring my kinships and being able to greet the new day are important to me,” she says.

That Largie is here at all is a testimony to her remarkable determination, desire and hard work. She grew up in Tseyatí, a remote area of New Mexico that had no electricity, and where higher education wasn't on the radar for most people.

“After high school, I thought the only thing I could do was to have a family,” she said. She married her neighbor, had five children and continued to live with her mother, surrounded by relatives who were part of an extended family. Yet because it was her goal to be “the best mother in the world,” Largie took teacher education



**TC student
Elvira Bitsoi Largie**

courses at a branch college near her home and earned a pre-professional associate's degree.

That was when she began thinking about how to combine her hunger for education with her desire to live according to traditional beliefs. She began working as a teacher assistant, then as a teacher in a public school, then as administrator of a bilingual Navajo and Spanish program, and finally as a director of a multi-state (New Mexico, Arizona and Utah) technology program in the Four Corners region of the U.S. Somehow, through it all, she left home at 4:30 a.m. each Monday and returned at midnight after driving 200 miles to attend classes at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, where she eventually earned her M.A. in Education.

While attending her commencements, Largie was inspired with her next goal: to earn a doctorate—the one way she believed she could be influential in both her community and academia. Commuting 600 miles from her home to Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, she earned an Ed.D. in May 2003 in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. Her dissertation—“A Cost-Utility Analysis of Alternative Bilingual Education Programs in the State of New Mexico”—used a methodology she had found in a book by Teachers College Professor Henry M. Levin.

Her postdoctoral fellowship at Teachers College is Largie's first experience leaving home for an extended period. (She waited for her children to be grown before pursuing such an opportunity.) While it hasn't been easy to be away from her community and family, Largie is

Kinship

driven by a need to do what she can to improve education back home. Recently, she heard a senior faculty member talk about TC's remarkable library and the experts here on equity, justice and non-discrimination: "It made me wonder, 'How do I take these lofty ideas and add a pinch of economic opportunity and take it to my small community and to the greater Navajo Nation?'"

This semester, Largie is working on a research project that includes a cost utility analysis of higher education programs that serve Native American students. She will undertake a comparative study of schools that deliver alternative educational programs. In January, she plans to share her culture with TC students by teaching a course in educational leadership that incorporates Native American wisdom and knowledge.

"I would like to bring in Native American traditional speakers to talk about oral history and cultural knowledge and wisdom to teach leadership attributes from a Native American perspective," Largie says. She also hopes to show how concepts such as algebra are taught through Navajo rug weaving.

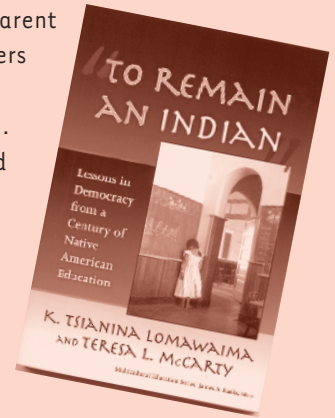
"In the world of academia it is competitive, while in my culture, everyone moves together," she said, reciting a creed that defines her cultural beliefs: "Wherever you go, don't forget who you are and where you are coming from. Go with a positive attitude and don't try to be who you are not or to be better than the other." As for Largie herself, no matter where she goes, she will always be a Navajo woman and part of her Kinyaa'aanii clan. ♦

TC Press

To Remain an Indian *Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education*

"Each and every [Lakota] parent was a teacher and...all elders were instructors of those younger than themselves.... We learned by watching and imitating examples placed before us. Slowly and naturally the faculties of observation and memory became highly trained...The training was largely of character...and continued through life. True Indian education was based on the development of individual qualities and recognition of rights."

-Luther Standing Bear (Lakota)



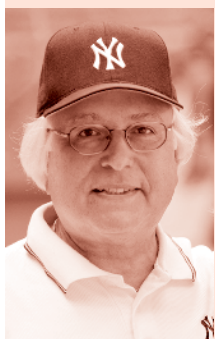
Too often, official history has silenced and pushed aside the voices and experiences of Native Americans.

A portrait of the journey of American Indian education over the past century, *To Remain an Indian* (TC Press, 2006) takes readers from instruction in Native homes and languages, to a critical evaluation of U.S. education policies and practices from the early 20th century, when schools were the center of efforts to "civilize" Natives, through the contemporary standards movement, which has led to the call for indigenous counter-standards and culturally responsive schools. In the process, the authors refute the notion of American Indians as one-dimensional learners and demonstrate the complexity of indigenous education as "language-rich, consciously designed systems based on indigenous theories of intellect and emotion." Also covered are the initiatives of the late 1960s and 1970s in which Native communities began to change Indian education from the inside out, developing their own bilingual and bicultural teaching staff, curricula and pedagogies. ♦

Farewell

Schnur Led a Decade of Growth

Fred Schnur, TC's longtime Vice President for Finance and Administration, said farewell to the College in December. When



Fred Schnur

Schnur arrived at the College in 1995, TC had recorded budget deficits in seven of the previous 10 years and had more than \$4 million in accumulated deficit. Since then, there have been major improvements in that picture, including a credit rating upgrade by Moody's Investor's Service. That, in turn, has helped facilitate an overhaul of the physical plant, including repairs to every classroom and the construction of a new student residence hall.

"All of these things contribute to attracting quality faculty members and students," said Interim Dean Bill Baldwin in delivering a tribute to Schnur at a recent faculty meeting. "And all of them reflect Fred's creative and intelligent leadership; his ability and his willingness to think big picture even while being a detail guy; and above all, his energy and commitment to TC."

Baldwin also noted that since the arrival at TC of Schnur—a vociferous Yankee fan—the Bronx Bombers "have been in the playoffs every year." ♦

GETTING DOWN, DIGITALLY In November, the Gottesman Libraries' EdLab team hosted Edit Jam, a multimedia event in the Design Center on the



library's fifth floor. About 50 people attended, including graphic designers, video artists, DJs, VJs, the Japanese textile artist Ai Kijima and a class of ninth and tenth graders from International High School at Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn. ♦

ELIZABETH SUMIDA HUAMAN (CONTINUED FROM BACK COVER)

While outsiders might contrast such learning with the "formal" education that goes on in classrooms, Huaman prefers the words used for education in her mother's native language, Quechua: *songo* for "heart" and *uma* for "head" or "mind." Being strong in both heart and mind "is what leads to a healthy, whole, productive person," she says—a goal that nearly all educators would agree they share.

Huaman's dissertation research focuses on practices within native cultures that are based on traditional ecological knowledge—pre-Colombian practices that lend themselves to sustainability. Her international comparative study of indigenous communities in Peru, Canada and New Mexico explores the ways that young people in these cultures are socialized through language and hands-on experiences such as farming as a way of passing on important cultural knowledge to future generations.

"With indigenous communities, communication is not only to other human beings but also to everything in creation—to everything around you, living and non-living," she explains. "Language carries a certain depth related to one's particular location."

Each culture has its own strengths, she adds, as well as its own archives and its own reasons for students to stay, appreciate and form a deeper understanding of the community in which they live.

For any culture, that sounds appropriate indeed. ♦

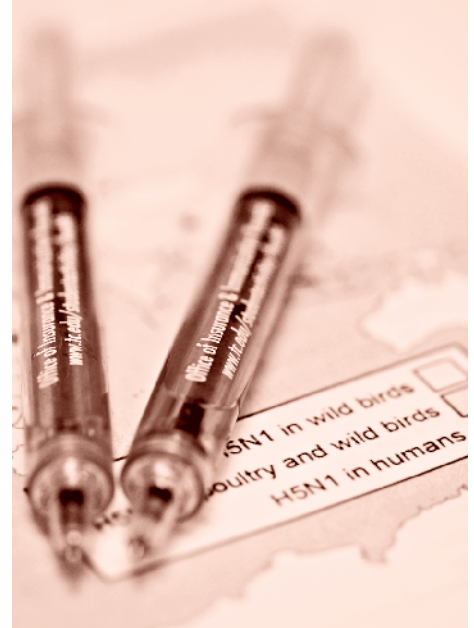
LINDA LIN (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

While at TC, Lin is continuing her research with teachers, social workers, counselors—anyone who does work involving diversity. In talking to people who deal with race and class in their work, Lin hopes to draw on their experiences to see how conflicts that surface are dealt with: "I want to talk with people doing this work on the ground. What are they seeing? What are the common challenges and how are people responding?"

Ultimately, Lin believes people have to decide if it is safe to say something about race and what the chances are that their saying something will result in the outcome they are looking for. "We all have to struggle to figure out how race matters and when," Lin says. "It is not a clean starting point and end point; life is more complicated than a clear problem and resolution, and I am interested in how we handle it in our everyday lives." ♦

What to Do About the Avian Flu

No one knows when or if an outbreak might occur, but a TC working group is preparing a plan of action



Since May, a working group representing 14 academic and administrative areas of the College has been updating the College's Disaster Response and Business Continuity Plan to include the threat of pandemic flu.

"Currently, there is concern about one strain of avian influenza, also known as the bird flu, because it is causing severe disease in wild birds, chickens and other poultry in several continents," says Jim Mitchell, Director of Residential Services and Campus Safety, who is heading up the Pandemic Preparedness Work Group. People who have had close contact with sick poultry have, in some instances, become infected and have died—since 2003, there have been 256 human cases of H5N1 worldwide that led to 151 deaths—and there is concern that the disease, also known as H5N1, will mutate into a form that is more easily spread from birds to humans and, ultimately, from human to human.

The working group has been meeting since June and is on course to provide a draft to the senior staff for review by the end of this semester. The Pandemic Preparedness Plan will be coordinated with the College's existing emergency response plans and will include a response for three levels of a potential pandemic. Level one will address human-to-human transmission outside of North America. Level two

will address human-to-human transmission within North America, and level three, will address human-to-human transmission within the tri-state area. Topics covered in the plan include: criteria used to determine when/if the College should be closed; the possibility of offering some courses online if it becomes impossible to hold classes on campus; and the evacuation of campus residence halls. The plan will also address healthy workplace behavior that helps reduce the spread of germs, such as washing/sanitizing hands after sneezing and wiping down telephone and work areas. More information will be available about the Pandemic Preparedness Plan in the near future.

The College hopes to have a finalized plan by January and thereafter, the work group will meet periodically to test the plan and keep it current.

"The College has a responsibility to maintain our business operations and the safety and health of students on campus," Mitchell says. "Everyone is encouraged to speak with their physician about an annual flu shot. While the flu shot will not protect you from the Avian Flu, it will help keep you healthy."

TC's Office of Human Resources offered free flu shots to staff this November. For more detailed information on individual and family flu planning, visit: www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/tab3.html. ♦

BLOGGING STUDENT LIFE AT TC

*The TC Annual Fund
follows four sponsored students*

TC Alumni who contribute to the TC Annual Fund can now read about their dollars at work by logging on to www.tc.edu/supportTC. There, they'll find accounts of life at TC blogged by four students—Jessica Cruz, Omari Keeles, Joe King and Sarah Norris—all of whom receive some Fund support.

"We struggle every semester to figure out who from the College should be signing the letters to our alumni asking them to make a gift," says Michael Sclafani, Director of the TC Fund. "Then we realized, who better to communicate the importance of contributing to the Annual Fund than the people who benefit directly from it?"

Cruz, who arrived in the U.S. speaking no English, is part of the International Education Development Program, focusing on bilingual bicultural education with a geographical concentration on South America. Keeles is a Howard University grad who wants to use his TC degree to return to Howard as a psychology professor. King, who uses a wheelchair, is pursuing a degree in social/developmental psychology and is interested in researching perceptions, stereotypes and stigmas associated with disability. Norris plans to return home to Seattle after completing her Master



TC bloggers (from left) Jessica Cruz, Omari Keeles, Joe King (seated) and Sarah Norris

of Arts in Higher and Postsecondary Education with the goal of working in development or admissions and transforming her knowledge into positive change when she re-enters the workforce.

"I'm interested to see what direction they'll take it in," Sclafani says about the students' education and future careers. "I would like to follow them to the point they start to use their degrees in the real world. Because when you make a gift to Teachers College, you're not only affecting the students and the faculty, you're affecting the communities they go out and work in." ♦

Inside

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To submit story ideas or other information of interest to the TC community, fill out and submit the form at: www.tc.edu/newsbureau/newsrequest.htm

News can also be sent through campus mail to: *Inside*, Office of External Affairs, Box 306. Please include your name and number.

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www.tc.edu/inside

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Alumni Awards

Teachers College Honors Four from Diverse Fields

In October, Teachers College gave its annual Distinguished Alumni Award to Barbara Storper (M.A., Nutrition Education, 1982), creator of the long-running children's ensemble theatre piece, "Foodplay," and other shows aimed at educating children about nutrition and health; Erick Gordon (Ed.M., Teaching of English, 2005; M.A., Teaching of English, 1996), a TC instructor and doctoral student who is the co-creator of the Teachers College Student Press Initiative (SPI), through which thousands of students in the Tri-State area have published and produced their own writings; TC Trustee Joyce Cowin (M.A., Curriculum and Teaching, 1952), a founder and supporter of the Heritage School (an arts-themed high school in East Harlem created by the College), and whose generosity also enabled TC to build a new conference center; and Rachel Moore (M.A., Arts Administration, 1994), Executive Director of the American Ballet Theatre.

Storper also is the creator of the Emmy-winning TV special, "Janey Junkfood's Fresh Adventure," and the touring live theater show, "This is Your Life," which helps adolescents address body image, eating disorders and tobacco-free living. Evaluations by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Center for Disease Control have shown that performances of Storper's "Foodplay" produce dramatic improvement in students' eating and exercise habits.

Gordon co-founded SPI in 2002 with TC Professor of English Education Ruth Vinz. The project has produced student-written publications about everything from social activism to the social problems that afflict incoming high school freshmen. SPI's most recent efforts include a compendium by high school students of oral histories taken from senior citizens in the Bronx, and two books of writings by young prisoners in New York City's Rikers Island facility.

Cowin provided important start-up funding to deliver advanced technology and facilitate special projects related to the arts curriculum at Heritage School, which was founded by TC Professor of Art Education Judith Burton and is run as a partnership between TC and the New York City Board of Education. She has served on the TC Board since 1980 and as a member of the TC Alumni Council.

Moore, whose dance career was cut short by injury, has served as Executive Director of Project Step, a training and educational program for disadvantaged children; taught Financial Management for Non-Profit Operations in the graduate program in Arts Administration at Boston University; and completed a National Arts Stabilization Fellowship at Stamford University. ♦



Student Profile

Strength of Heart and Mind

Elizabeth Sumida Huaman argues for schooling beyond the classroom

In a native community in Canada, Elizabeth Sumida Huaman designed a hunting program for boys that integrated tribal stories, songs and teachings.

“It was culturally appropriate,” Huaman said, “because it was teaching specifically for boys. In their culture, there are specific teachings for girls, too.”

“My interest is to work with communities to design and establish youth programs that are based in that particular culture, incorporating languages and using community resources,” says Huaman, now a second-year Ed.D. student in TC’s International Educational Development program who is studying education in native communities of North and South America.

Huaman’s mother is of the *Huanca* culture which is indigenous to Peru. She brought her family to the U.S. in the 1980s, when Peru was divided by civil war. Growing up in Los Angeles, Huaman became involved with American

Indian communities through urban Indian centers. At Dartmouth, a school with a strong Native program, she began to prepare for a career working with indigenous communities.

Huaman has since spent time with the Navajo and Pueblo peoples in New Mexico, as well as with the Oneida, Anishabe, and Delaware in Southwestern Ontario, Canada.

In each of these cultures, education is part of a very organized, structured way of living that everyone—from children to elders—participates in. “If you go to any of these communities, you can witness planting, maintenance of crops, and harvest time,” she says. “We think of education as being schooling in the classroom, but these types of educational systems, I argue, are just as important—and maybe more so—as mainstream western-based school.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16