

# FINCH NEWS

October 2016

A Publication for Finch College Alumnae and Friends



## FINCH CELEBRATES ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL COSGRAVE AWARDS



Congrave Honoree Peggy Flaxman Millheiser (center) with family Robert, Dave, and Anne Millheiser, and Dr. Sara Arthur (right)

### LaGuardia President Kicks Off Cosgrave Awards

Finch Alumnae were thrilled to hear **Dr. Gail O'Connor Mellow**, president of LaGuardia Community College, give the opening remarks at the 22nd Annual Jessica Cosgrave Lifetime Achievement Awards. About 100 guests attended the reception/dinner May 17, 2016, at the Cosmopolitan Club in New York City.

The 23rd annual awards will be held Tuesday, May 16, 2017, at the club.

The five 2016 Cosgrave honorees—one faculty member and four alumnae:

- **Dr. Janice S. Lieberman**, New York, former Finch psychology professor.
- **Dale Anne Bourjaily**, of Bloemendaal, The Netherlands.
- **Peggy Flaxman Millheiser**, Dallas, Texas.
- **Rita Castora O'Hare**, Paramus, N.J.
- **Susan Rubenstein Reed**, Rochester, N.Y.

Dr. Mellow is a champion of community colleges. She received her A.A. degree from New York's Jamestown Community College before earning her B.A. from the State University of New York, Albany, and her master's and doctorate degrees in social psychology from George Washington University.

"More than half of U.S. undergraduates go to community colleges," she said. "It costs about \$5,000 to attend LaGuardia Community College, while elsewhere can cost up to \$67,000 (a year). We have to invest in community colleges, or we will end up with a society that is very poor and very rich, no middle class.

"Some students who walk to school and work at jobs hide the fact they are honor students. Their parents don't know. We have 50,000 students at

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2016 Cosgrave Honoree  
Dr. Janice S. Lieberman



2016 Cosgrave Honoree  
Dale Anne Bourjaily



Dr. Gail O'Connor Mellow

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE JESSICA COSGRAVE AWARDS

THE JESSICA COSGRAVE AWARD honors outstanding Finch College graduates and is the major fundraiser of the Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust. Save the date:

**Tuesday, May 16, 2017**  
**Cosmopolitan Club**  
122 East 66th Street  
New York City

You can nominate a friend to be honored in May by downloading the form at [FinchCollege.org](http://FinchCollege.org)

In addition to our annual gala evening, you will enjoy several days of museum visits, tours, cocktail receptions, and dinners preceding the awards dinner (Friday, May 12th through Monday, May 15th).

Do you have an idea for a tour, visit, or reception? Please contact Virginia Wattiker Sheerin at 212-605-5560 or [virginiasheerin@gmail.com](mailto:virginiasheerin@gmail.com).

*The fundraising efforts and events of the Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust help establish scholarships that enable outstanding young women to complete their college education.*



FCAAFT Co-chair Liz Glick Colin at podium, with co-chair Ceil Gavin Ainsworth (center) and Cosgrave Committee Chairman Virginia Wattiker Sheerin (right)

LaGuardia who speak 110 languages. We have to say to them: ‘We are behind you and that it doesn’t matter who your mother or father is. What matters is, that you care (about an education).’

Dr. Mellow was born in 1952 and has been president of LaGuardia in Long Island City since 2000. Her presence and participation in the Cosgrave Awards meant a great deal because many LaGuardia graduates receive Finch scholarships and go on to earn their B.A. degrees at top U.S. colleges and universities. All proceeds from the annual awards presentation go to the Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust to create more scholarships for community college graduates.

Following Dr. Mellow’s remarks, the Cosgrave honorees were introduced.

**Dr. Janice Lieberman** taught psychology at Finch from 1971 until the college closed at the end of 1975. Accepting her award, she said:

“I was fortunate to have a ‘dream job’ for a young mother with two young children. I had the choice of babysitters galore and my boys loved those girls and they loved them. I developed and taught the first Psychology of Women course at Finch. The college was quite alive intellectually and socially. There was opportunity to have lunch with other faculty members from different fields. The conversations were stimulating. I have so many warm memories. Those of you here tonight must have similar memories because you have bonded together more than 40 years without the college itself!

“Those were the days before we all had computers, ipads and cell phones. It was a time when students brought notebooks and pens to class and actually took notes.”

Because her field was psychology, students often sought her advice on whether they could manage a balancing act of marriage and family, graduate work and careers. Janice decided on further study and, after Finch, opened a private practice in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, which she still maintains.

“I owe a lot to those students with whom I was able to dialogue for this important change of career. I also thank Finch for its Museum of Art. I trained as a docent at the Whitney Museum of American Art and still give gallery talks (at the new site) after 27 years.”

Today’s world-wide chaos mirrors the years **Dale Anne Bourjaily** was at Finch, 1968-70.

“The peace movement, anti-war demonstrations and at Finch...daddy in the White House (Finch student **Patricia Nixon (Cox)** was the daughter of President Richard M. Nixon),” Dale Anne recalled when accepting her award. “The streets of Paris on fire, student protests, Black Panthers, the rise of Black consciousness and collective rage at political conventions.

“Looking back these were (supposed to be) the best years of our lives, the years of fun and promise. Or were they seminal years that awakened a sense of injustice about the status quo and

made us realize that it was indeed possible to affect change?”

Since marrying and moving to The Netherlands long ago, Dale Anne has made the world a safer and healthier place by raising millions of dollars to create a sustainable environment for people to work in underdeveloped countries. For instance the cashew farmer in Benin, West Africa, who had no idea of the value of his product, now works with professionals who pay him a living wage.

“The farmer knows to the penny what is paid for his produce and what other products can be made from them,” she said. “His wife is making jam for the local market from the cashew fruit with other farm wives and saving for a new house. And his kids are making him proud at school.”

Honoree **Peggy Flaxman Millheiser** followed with her remarks:

“Finch opened the door of learning for me and I walked in.”

The educational program at Finch was based on two principles, she said.

“A student must come to a full and realistic understanding of the world around her in order to take a responsible role in life, and each student must be helped to recognize and achieve her potential as an individual.”

Peggy, who humbly claimed “not to have accomplished a full understanding of the world,” is one of the top real estate agents in Dallas, Texas. She was a public school advocate for more

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2016 Cosgrave Honoree Susan Rubenstein Reed (second from left) with her mother Joan Rubenstein (left), 2015 Cosgrave Honoree Donna Miller Casey and Susan Warren



2016 Cosgrave Honoree Rita Castora O'Hare

books and summer camp when her children were in grade school. And she and her husband have assisted humanitarian efforts for refugees.

**In closing, Peggy stated the 10 Finch Maxims:**

1. Believing in people usually brings out the best in them.
2. Suspend judgment; there is always another side.
3. Do not waste time on self pity; there is always a solution.
4. Be considerate.
5. Be kind.
6. Be sincere.
7. Snobbishness of any kind is a sign of limitation.
8. Recreation must be to re-create for work.
9. You must be worthy and capable of love to be able to give or keep it.
10. Remember that you have a soul just as you have a body and social self. Do not starve it.

**Rita O'Hare's** 34 years of teaching Spanish to more than 4,000 middle and high school students earned her the 1986 New Jersey Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

She credits her Spanish professors at Finch, **Ray Senior**, **Dr. Linda Levine** and **Dr. Katherine Hampares** (2014 Cosgrave honoree and scholarship donor) for her love of the classroom.

"My main satisfaction continued to be classroom instruction," she said, "with all the crazy, wonderful activities to keep students involved and interacting. We marched and sang the Spanish alphabet to military cadence, we did scavenger hunts, made guacamole and gazpacho in the food labs. And field trips were a highlight: Lots of Latin music and dancing—Flamenco---and food, food, food!

"Finch proved to be a great academic fit for me. It afforded the luxury of small classes, friendships with faculty, great location, fun roommates and activities beyond the classroom. After sev-

eral hours of indoctrination in the house rules—early curfews come to mind—we were released to begin our journey into the cultural and social life of a Finch girl for the next four years. And what a wonderful life it was to be!"

The education she received at Finch gave **Susan Reed** the strength and momentum to overcome devastating challenges—a divorce and breast cancer--and move on to a positive and productive life. "My life's path has encompassed gerontology and art (in which she initiated successful projects for the elderly and for children), and now my Sweet Fortunes Cookie business (based in her hometown of Rochester, N.Y.)

"The thread that runs throughout each stage of my life has been the importance of educating myself and others. Life is a journey, dreams fulfilled, dreams shattered. But with many of life's lessons I learned from Finch, and the love and support from my family and friends, I have been able to create a new and fulfilled life."

To get herself in good physical shape to start a new business, Susan participated in an AIDS fundraiser that meant riding a bike from Boston to New York. She completed her "ride for renewal" to the congratulations of her children and friends. She soon founded her fortune cookie business, which is thriving with customers ranging from TV celebrities to homemaker party hosts.

"Now I am learning how to make gluten-free fortune cookies," she said.

After their acceptance speeches, Dr. Mellow and the honorees were each presented with an engraved Tiffany bowl, donated by **Frances Fish Tompkins**, as she has done for years.

Among those in the audience was **Rita Thompson**, a member of the first Cosgrave Awards Class of 1995. Her Finch colleagues are happy to have her back home in New York after 20 years of working as a producer for Oprah Winfrey in Chicago.

Several days of festivities preceded the Cosgrave dinner. Highlighting them was a reception at the elegant Upper West Side home of **Ginger Runes Najjar**. Among Finch Scholars (community college graduates pursuing their B.A. degrees with Finch scholarships) invited to attend: **Cristina Milhailescu**, **Zineb Bouizy**, **Danielle Jablonski**, **Najlaa Bouras**, **Chu M. Paing**, **Emily Barnes**, **Eun Jung Ella Shin** and her sister, **Hyo Jung Shin**.

Each young woman has applied her scholarship at an outstanding college or university offering a 4-year degree.

**Lois Moran Ziegler** manages the time-consuming Finch Scholar project and **Eileen Bluestone Sherman** is founder/director of a complementary mentoring program.

Other prelude events to the Cosgrave Awards: A visit to the Jewish Museum for the Isaac Mizrahi Retrospective; dinner at Doubles, Sherry-Netherland Hotel; Chelsea Art Tour; dinner at Pasquale's Rigoletto in the Bronx; tour of the Met Breuer museum; Wall Street Walking Tour, and visit to the Nohra Haime Gallery to hear Nohra, Finch alum, and artist Julie Hedrick speak (see article on page 6).

**Virginia Wattiker Sheerin** was chairman of the Cosgrave Awards Committee. Serving with her: **Ceil Gavin Ainsworth**, **Elizabeth Glick Colin**, **Denise Mularoni Decker** and **Cheryl Young Deknatel**.

Ceil and Elizabeth are also co-chairmen of the Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust Board of Trustees. Two Finch Scholars serve on the board: **Zineb Bouizy** and **Danielle Jablonski**.

*Article: Laura Hockaday*

*Photos: Margaret Stein Nakamura*

# CLASS NEWS

## 50s

**Suzanne ("Susie") Salomon** writes that she keeps busy taking art courses in New York City where she has an apartment. She also has a home in Rowayton, Connecticut. Visits to her children, and grandchildren are frequent. This year, she traveled to Scandinavian countries.

Susie's most recent course, on contemporary art, which is being taught by John Zinsser, requires that she visit many exhibits in Manhattan.

She would like to have a Finch gathering this fall, possibly to Storm King Art Center in New Windsor, NY (upstate in the Hudson Valley) or to the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens at PepsiCo's world headquarters in Purchase, NY.

## 70s

**Jane Foster** (Finch Class of 1970) is enjoying a second career as a successful writer. Her first book, *Below Sea Level*, won the *Illumination Book Award Bronze Medal*. Her second book, *Sliding*, won the *Eric Hoffer Gold Medal Finalist Award* for fiction. The third book, *Boulevard Beausejour*, is due out this fall.

**Francine LeFrak** (Finch Class of 1970) was mentioned in *AARP Magazine*, June/July 2016, as one of "25 People Who Bust the Myths" for her work as founder of *Same Sky Foundation*, an online jewelry business that employs survivors of the 1994 atrocity in Rwanda. Francine is quoted as saying "It is the irony of my life. I started a business to help women living in extreme poverty, and it enriched and transformed my life."

**Dr. Laura Stober Larsen** (Finch Class of 1974) has designed a very successful Arts & Alzheimer's Services program in Baton Rouge, LA. With her doctorate

in nursing and expertise in counseling, Laura lends her skills to this program, now in its third year. Laura also has a master's degree in art history and was a former art tour guide for several New York City museums. Laura received her training for leading art tours for those with Alzheimer's disease at the Museum of Modern Art and the Rubin Art Museum, as well as the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The concept behind these special art programs is based on the understanding that viewing art evokes memories and encourages socialization and communication.

## Faculty

Kathleen Cameron recently sent in this reminiscence of her mother, who taught at Finch in the 1950s. She said that, from a faculty child's perspective, Finch seemed to be a wonderful place.

My mother, **Bess Cameron**, taught in the Sociology Department at Finch in the early to mid-1950s. As a child, about 6 to 10 years old, I remember loving the faculty at Finch; they were funny, extremely social, and seemed to really enjoy each other.

My parents had many parties over the years, but they were especially fun when Mom taught at Finch. We lived in a brownstone (39 West 88<sup>th</sup> Street), on the first floor, and we had a little back yard. I had my own little log cabin in the yard. I think it came from Macy's. During the course of one of their parties, things got a bit uproarious, and the next thing I knew, my cabin was taken over by the Finch faculty. As I recall, a young professor named Rodney Felder was the leader, and I imagine that Margaret Hall and Mary Davis must have been involved. I remember thinking how funny it would be if I dropped the outside hook-and-eye lock. Much squawking ensued, but they were soon rescued, laughing so hard they could hardly withdraw.

Every year the families of the faculty would go to Christine Block's apple orchard, also a poison ivy orchard. I believe she was involved in costume design and/or drama, as I remember creating wild things with wonderful bolts of cloth and light-as-a-feather balsa wood. Ordinarily, kids might be expected to dread such occasions, but the Finch faculty had such wonderful childlike qualities that I never felt bored or left out. I couldn't believe that grownups could laugh so much, all the while avoiding the poison ivy.

Mom would often come home from work with wonderful stories about the school, and her favorite began with a sudden turn of the weather. Her friend, Shirley Carson—I believe the college psychologist—was leaving Finch one evening when she got to the front door and realized that an unexpected storm had begun. She'd be soaked and freezing by the time she got to the subway. A Finch student joined her by the front entrance, waiting to hop into the limo that was waiting for her. She stopped, realizing Shirley's predicament, and offered "Please take my coat, my car's right here." Shirley replied, "Oh, no, I couldn't, it's a mink coat." Replied the student, "No, please, *it's only my rainy day mink!*"

## Condolences

Our condolences to **Wesley Cullen Davidson** (Finch Class of 1969), who lost her son Graham on July 12, 2016 in Los Angeles. Those who attended the Cosgrave Awards in 2014 will remember her handsome son. Wesley thanks everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy.

Condolences also to **Ginger Runes Najjar** and **Charlene Saunders Nederlander** on the loss of their husbands.

*Compiled by Wesley Cullen Davidson*

## FINCH FALL EVENTS FOR 2016

*Several new and "tried and true" Finch events are planned:*

- **VISIT TO TEFAF AT THE ARMORY**, an elite fair of fine and decorative art from antiquity to 1920 (Sunday, October 23rd [to be confirmed], \$40); for information contact Ceil Ainsworth at 212-288-5653 or ceilains@aol.com
- **AN EVENING AT THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART** (150 West 17 Street, NYC), starting with a musical cocktail hour with tapas in their Lounge, followed by a docent-led tour of their Himalayan and Tibetan exhibits (Friday, November 4th, 6:00 PM; for information contact Liz Colin Glick at 845-359-2203 or chascolin@aol.com)
- **VISIT TO THE PARK AVENUE ARMORY** (Park Avenue at 68th Street, NYC) for the Salon Art + Design Show (Saturday, November 12th, 11:30 AM, \$40); for information contact Ceil Ainsworth at 212-288-5653 or ceilains@aol.com
- **COCKTAIL PARTY** at the NYC home of one of our Finch alumna (date to be announced)
- **TRIP TO CARAMOOR CENTER FOR MUSIC AND THE ARTS** (Katonah, NY) including house tour, musical performance, and afternoon tea; (Friday, December 9th, \$80 [round-trip transportation from NYC will be offered at additional cost]); for information contact Marjorie Shulman at 917-612-9889 or mrs1080@aol.com

# COSGRAVE AWARDS WEEKEND: A WHIRLWIND OF EVENTS!

Many interesting events took place in New York City the weekend before the Cosgrave Awards evening and were well attended by Finch alumni and friends.



Artist Julie Hedrick addresses the Finch group at Nohra Haime's gallery

## Reception at the Home of Ginger Runes Najar

On Sunday morning, May 15, the Finch group gathered for a wonderful docent-led tour of The New Met Breuer's exhibition, **Unfinished: Thoughts Left Visible**. That evening, a large group gathered at the lovely home of Finch alumna **Ginger (Reegen) Runes Najar**. Ginger, mother of three grown sons, and publisher of Philosophical Library, Inc., a family-run press, once again graciously hosted a reception for Finch. FCAAFT Co-chair **Ceil Ainsworth** introduced and thanked Ginger for hosting what was to be another very special evening, with delightful background music by a talented pianist; wonderful food and libation; gorgeous views that enhanced the perfect spring evening; and a very lively gathering of Finch alumni, family, and friends who had gathered from near and far. Many were current and past Jessica Cosgrave Lifetime Achievement honorees. Some, like Finch alum **Mary Jo Bautista**, were newcomers to the organization.

The highlight of the evening was the presence of a number of Finch Scholars, current and past, who offered fascinating and inspiring talks about their impressive successes. **Lois Moran Ziegler**, Chairperson of the FCAAFT Scholarship Committee, acknowledged the invaluable work of our able and dedicated panel of professors, **Dr. Tricia Lin**, **Dr. Cecilia Macheski**, and **Dr. Mary Raddock**; along with the generous contributions of donors including the Stern Family (in honor of



(Left to right) Margaret S. Nakamura, Mary Jo Bautista, Rita J. Thompson, and 2016 Cosgrave Honoree Dale J. Bourjaily at the reception at the home of Ginger Nunes Rajar

the late **Freya Moskowitz Stern**), **Dr. Katherine Hampares**, the **Dr. Margaret Maxwell** Scholarship (awarded to one who has had to overcome great adversity), and other benefactors in making these awards possible. Each scholarship recipient was introduced.

The first speaker was a familiar and welcome face, **Cristina Milhailescu**, who had come here from Romania, studied at LaGuardia Community College (after a gap of 17 years in schooling as a mother of two), and excelled in her studies

of business, focusing on "Sustainable Development." She received an FCAAFT scholarship in 2014 for her commendable studies at Columbia University where she made Dean's List, first semester.

In 2015, nine outstanding young women, many from humble or strife-ridden origins, received a FCAAFT scholarship. Three of them attended the reception and shared their amazing stories. **Najlaa Bouras**, a recipient of the Dr. Margaret

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Maxwell Scholarship, is originally from Toutan, Northern Morocco, where she struggled to receive an education. She was chosen (one of only eight in her country) in a U.S. Department of State-sponsored leadership training program to study in the U.S. She made the brave decision to defect; once a legal resident, Najlaa enrolled in Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn where she excelled in her studies, directing her passion for education to helping immigrants and underprivileged women and youngsters through CUNY Corps and other organizations. She has been accepted at Columbia University, where she will pursue further studies along with her civic engagement.

Najlaa's story was a hard act to follow, but the next speaker, **Eun Jung Shin**, did not disappoint. As a student of biotechnology at Queensborough Community College, NY, she participated in symposia, research projects at different universities, and internships at the Department of Environmental Protection. Having received a FCAAFT scholarship in 2014, Eun currently attends Queens College, where she majors in STEM studies (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and plans to earn a Ph.D. A first for Finch, Eun is one of two brilliant and accomplished sisters to be awarded a FCAAFT scholarship, and both were in attendance that evening. Eun's younger sister, Hyo, who spoke next, received her scholarship in 2015. **Hyo Jung Shin**, initially a business major, graduated from Queensborough Community College where she has been very active as a peer tutor, president of the QCC Chemistry Club, and member of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society. Now, with a 2015 Freya Moskowitz Stern Scholarship, she has matriculated to Queens College, where she plans to pursue a Ph.D combining biology and chemistry, with the goal of conducting research in biology and teaching.

Another gifted young science student who spoke to the group was **Emily June Mattson Barnes**, who had matriculated from Rowan College at Gloucester County, in Sewell, NJ, to Rowan University. Also a recipient of one of the four Freya Moskowitz Stern Scholarships in 2015, Emily, whose brilliance, scholarship, and self-discipline was unique even among outstanding students of her PTK Honor Society, served as a peer tutor in math, biology, and chemistry. With a focus impressive in someone so young, she will study Chemical Engineering at Rowan, with a dream of working with the Boeing Company of Philadelphia.

Finally, as an example of how these fine scholars have distinguished themselves after graduation, **Danielle Jablonski**, who graduated from Yale in 2014, offered an update about how she continues her passion for technology and business in the "real" world. Danielle, who currently serves on the FCAAFT Board of Trustees (along with another former Finch Scholarship recipient, **Zineb Bouizy**), is a business development manager at DOOR3, a boutique software consulting firm that designs and builds multimedia applica-



Finch College Foundation Scholarship Honorees past and present flank Finch's Ginger Runes Najjar and Lois Moran Ziegler

tions and serves such impressive clients as The Museum of Natural History, Fresh Direct, and World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE).

Finch graduate and mentor **Wesley Cullen Davidson** also addressed the Finch group. Wesley, whose undergraduate degree from Finch was in Art History, later studied at NYU and became an accomplished freelance writer and blogger. Her recent focus is on parenting gay children. Wesley contributes to The Finch News (please see "Class Notes") and serves on the Board; she spoke fondly and admiringly of the young scholar she is mentoring, Jessica Ryan, mother of five, and outstanding student at Smith College, where she will graduate in 2017. Jessica now plans to earn a doctorate in literature. Clearly, the match between the two is mutually fulfilling.

The evening came to a close with more refreshments and sharing stories, reminiscing, and re-connecting.

### Nohra Haime Gallery: Cocktails and Viewing

On Monday evening, a large group of Finch alumnae, family, and friends (some of whom had been on the exciting tour of the Wall Street area and a lunch at Delmonico's earlier that day) gathered at the prestigious **Nohra Haime Gallery**. Nohra, an outstanding and beloved Finch graduate, is a preeminent gallery owner and art expert who opened her New York gallery in 1981. She focuses primarily on an internationally diverse group of contemporary artists working in painting, sculpture, photography, conceptual art, and multimedia installation. (The NH Galerie in Cartegena de Indias, Colombia, opened in 2011). A great friend to all in the Finch family, Nohra has been a supporter of the FCAAFT through the years, with generous donations to the scholarship funds. She has hosted many memorable and informative private receptions, lectures, and talks at her gallery for her fellow Finch alumnae and friends.

That evening, Nohra hosted a delightful and elegant cocktail party (with delicious hors d'oeuvres), and also spoke to the group, along with her featured artist, **Julie Hedrick**. Julie's



Nohra Haime (left) and featured artist Julie Hedrick (right) at the gallery event

exhibition, **AIR: Ariadne's Thread**, is a collection of abstract oil paintings with textural surfaces, which seem at once as ethereal and energetic as the artist herself. A Canadian painter and poet who now lives and has a studio in a converted church in Kingston, NY, she is inspired by her surroundings. Julie explained that her new work, 58 paintings, whose collective title reflects an association with finding a path through a maze or labyrinth as a creative process, and in life, was directly inspired by the skies above the Hudson River Valley, the hallowed atmosphere of her studio, and her desire to create work of "limitless space, peacefulness and wonder" in a world of darkness and strife. She sometimes collaborates with her husband, the composer/musician Peter Wetzler, in work that reflects the natural and metaphysical world, notably "Depth Perception."

Both Julie and Nohra welcomed questions and discussion after the talk. Everyone in attendance greatly enjoyed the exhibition, other wonderful work in the gallery, Nohra's hospitality, and the inspiring evening!

*Article and photos: Margaret Stein Nakamura*

# MEET THE 2016 FINCH COLLEGE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

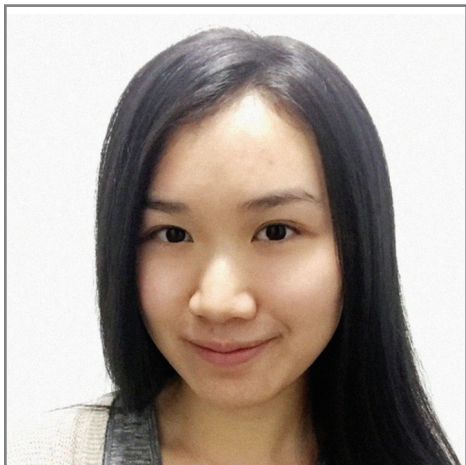
Fortunate and appreciative young women have been given the opportunity to complete their college education. Their new focus of study is STEM: science, technology, engineering, and math.



**NAA ODARTSOE TSOTSOE BRUCE**  
Essex County CC >> New Jersey City University

Growing up in Ghana, Naa began volunteering with The Red Cross, providing first aid to athletes during sports activities.

It was the belief that her father's early death resulted from a lack of adequate medical facilities and staff that sparked her interest in nursing. At New Jersey City University, she will pursue a pre-med major with a minor in chemistry. Her goal is to be a registered anesthetic nurse. She will graduate from Essex County Community College with a double Associates Degree in general science and the vigorous nursing program. Naa has also received the prestigious Health Research Services Administration Nursing Grant from The Department of Nursing at New Jersey City University. The baccalaureate program is coupled with a nursing residency at Jersey City Medical Center.



**YUELI CHEN**  
Queensborough CC >> Stony Brook University  
Freya Moskowitz Stern Scholarship

Yueli's insatiable curiosity about the understanding of science motivated her to follow research under the mentorship of two professors. One is determining the deposit of mercury in aquatic life. She was awarded a summer 2015 internship at the Materials Engineering Department of Boise State University and in 2016, the Chemistry Department of Boston University. She has tutored fellow Chemistry, Math and Physics students and has organized drives for the PTK club collecting food, clothing and books for the Hour Children and NY Food Bank. Yueli volunteers at her local church and is listed in Who's Who of Junior Colleges. She will study chemical engineering and will prepare for a career in science at Stony Brook University.



**ANGEE LIZETH GONZALEZ-BARRIO**  
Essex County CC >> Montclair State University  
Mr. & Mrs. Evan Stern Scholarship

When Angee arrived in the US from Colombia and Costa Rica at age 18, she did not speak English. After finding work as a housekeeper and home health aide and gaining confidence, she enrolled at a Florida community college. With her then boyfriend, (now husband), Angee booked a one-way flight to Shanghai. Exploring China, Taiwan, Myanmar, India, and Thailand, they were offered a volunteer position teaching English at an orphanage in Mongolia. This powerful experience brought great fulfillment. Heading back to the United States, she enrolled at Essex County Community College in pursuit of a teaching degree. She has been a volunteer tutor of Spanish and geography at an afterschool program. She has also established The Future Teachers Club and is a member of PTK Honorary Society,

as well as being selected as a Pearson Scholar, based upon civic engagement and academic excellence. Nominated by the college faculty to be one of two students for the All-New Jersey Academic Team, she has obtained a substitute teaching license and will work in Newark as she earns a BA in Teacher Certification. As she approaches her 30th birthday, Angee hopes to attain a Master's degree.



**BARBARA GRISE**  
Borough of Manhattan CC >> Smith College  
Freya Moskowitz Stern Scholarship

As soon as she graduated from high school at age 17, Barbara fled her abusive, unstable family and worked intermittently for ten years. She was a nanny, farmed, worked in construction, property caretaking and learned Spanish living with people in Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Mexico and French in France and Morocco. She earned money in places with strong economies and spent it backpacking, bicycle touring and long distance walking where savings would last. In July 2013, while working as a scuba dive-master on Koh Tao, Thailand, her mother wrote to say her grandfather had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. After moving to New York to care for her grandparents, a psychoanalyst in Brooklyn diagnosed her with PTSD. She began to think about school again. Through reading and writing, she began to find herself, and her way of interacting with the world. Barbara has maintained a 4.0 average, made Dean's List each semester, is a member of PTK, and last year was awarded the Gilman Scholarship to study in Quito, Ecuador. This year she received the Foundation Inc. Scholarship. She will study anthropology at Smith College.

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**CARMEN GUILLEN**  
Westchester CC >> Pace University

Carmen arrived from Cuba, via Mexico, without knowing a word of English. After enrolling in an English as a Second Language program, she started working at a law firm, and remained there for five years. With an additional part time job in retail, Carmen was able to buy a car. She enrolled in Westchester Community College where she received the Kathryn W. Davis Scholarship, allowing her to study full time. She volunteered in a Veterans Home in Beyond Bingo. As an accounting major, Carmen was elected President of The Accounting Club, which afforded her the opportunity to develop leadership and communication skills. She received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence, and recently received the Accounting Curriculum Award. She was selected to participate in The Student Leadership and Professional Development Program and The Workplace Culture Coaching Program. Carmen's goal is to become a CPA with one of the Big Four Accounting Firms.



**YI (JANE) JIANG**  
Queensborough CC >> Queens College  
*Mr. & Mrs. Evan Stern Scholarship*

Twenty seven year-old Jane returned to school, uncertain of what her future would hold. Majoring in liberal arts with a concentration in science, she explored biology, anatomy and physiology, chemistry, physics and calculus. She discovered a passion for research and plans to pursue a PhD degree in chemistry or physics and ultimately teach in a community college. Last summer she worked as an undergraduate researcher at a program at Vanderbilt University, working on bio-hybrid solar cell. This summer she embraced a

material science REU program at University of Pennsylvania. She has presented research projects at many conferences, is president of PTK and a CUNY Research Scholar and President of the local chapter of SACNAS, a national society of scientists dedicated to research.



**EKATERINA (KATY) JONES**  
Monroe CC >> Clemson University

Growing up in Siberia, Russia, Katy's parents never encouraged her to attend college, unlike her brother. She has had a second chance to study math, wants to prove that science can be for everyone and will enter Clemson University for a BA in math. She has been a member of PTK, where she participated in Leopold Day Care, giving gifts to needy children at Christmas. She was chosen to be a delegate of The Model United Nations, a very competitive program. After months of intense preparation, she went to New York City where her team won an Honorable Mention Delegation Award. Katy is a justice at MCC Student Government Association with responsibilities including attending various hearings as a student representative with a view toward becoming an actuary.



**TANYA MICHELE RITCHIE**  
Borough of Manhattan CC >> Smith College  
*Dr. Margaret Maxwell Scholarship*

A graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, Tanya was a theatrical writer and performer for seventeen years and managed theater and arts programs in addition to writing

for radio programs and performing off Broadway and on television. She won many awards under her theater name Tanya O'Debra, such as The Village Voice Best of New York Award and Best of San Francisco Fringe Festival. Now, after what she calls her untraditional life, Tanya is entering Smith College. Discovering that, without a degree, it was often difficult to find work, she enrolled at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, after not being in school for ten years. A vast change in her life came in 2014, driving to Boston to visit her family for Thanksgiving; Tanya was suddenly critically injured in a car crash. With over twenty bone fractures, collapsed lung and lacerated liver, she was told she would never walk again. After many months of physical therapy, now knowing a college education was really necessary, she became a PTK Honorary Society member, and was a finalist for both the Presidential Award and 2016 Victorian at Borough of Manhattan Community College.



**MARGURITE TARTAGLIO ROSANIA**  
Rowan College at Gloucester County >>  
Rowan University  
*Freya Moskowitz Stern Scholarship*

All her life, Margurite has dreamed of pursuing a career in law. This fall, she transfers to Rowan University to receive her bachelor's degree and then to Rutgers School of Law to finally become an attorney. She has studied pre-law at Rowan College at Gloucester County, a community college.

Life took an unexpected twist when, during her senior year of high school, she learned she was pregnant. She tried college at that time; however, the responsibility of her son came first. Obtaining employment as an executive assistant at one of the most prestigious Philadelphia law firms, she surrounded herself with law. Today, fast forward twenty years later, her son is entering college and Margurite is finally studying law full time.

At Rowan College at Gloucester County, she maintained a GPA of 4.0 the entire time while working full time in the law firm. She is Vice President of Membership for the PTK Honorary Society and recipient this year of the coveted President's Award for A.S. Pre Law Option. Her professor states, "She never ceases to amaze me with her enthusiasm, motivation, determination to succeed, and leadership ability."

*Continued on next page >*





**NAOMI ANTOINETTE SHIBUYA**

Westchester CC >> SUNY Cobleskill

Growing up, Naomi was underestimated academically. Thought to be a slow learner, she just worked harder in her own indefatigable way. After graduating from high school, she was accepted into The Next Generation Academy Program, a leadership-training program where participants learn and teach character development across the county and abroad. She found spending two months in Botswana, Africa to be a life-altering experience, overcoming personal obstacles such as public speaking. Despite holding two jobs while at Westchester Community College, she has maintained a GPA above 3.9, is on the President's List, is a member of PTK, and volunteers weekly with a local youth group. At SUNY Cobleskill (one of the most diverse agricultural programs in the United States, from Agricultural Business Management to Animal Science, with an ultra-modern agricultural complex that serves as a laboratory for hands-on skill building), Naomi will study the development of sustainable agricultural practice to help further human understanding of the disease-fighting properties that can help save the lives of millions.

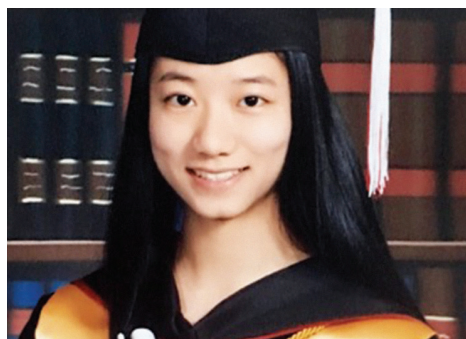


**AMEY SHUE**

LaGuardia CC >>  
New York University Steinhardt School  
Jonathan Stern Scholarship

As a nationally certified, licensed, and insured massage therapist, Amey has funded her college education through this private practice. Working full time, she is interested in the role nutrition plays in the prevention and treatment of chronic disease, and in biodiverse farming. She has managed health food stores and has volunteered at co-ops and community gardens. While returning to school as an adult has certainly presented its challenges, her determination to learn and

understand chemistry has paid off. She received an A+ on a recent exam in Organic Chemistry II. Her research won first place for her honor's biology research poster project. She is peer advisor for biology majors, for the capstone course, cell biology. During the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Amey volunteered to support first responders. She participated in Women in STEM panel discussion hosted by the Elsevier Scholarship Foundation. She is currently working on a video interviewing community college alumni within the NYC metropolitan area. As academics have progressed, they have increasingly become Amey's priority and work availability has decreased. Although flexible hours are an advantage, being self-supporting, she is determined to complete her Bachelor's degree and will transfer to New York University's Steinhardt School.



**JIAHUI ZHENG**

LaGuardia CC >> Baruch College  
Freya Moskowitz Stern Scholarship

In 2013, Jiahui and her family moved to New York, settling in her aunt's Chinatown apartment. As a child, she was lucky enough to have access to the nonprofit Chinatown Manpower Project, which improves language proficiency of children to learn English. Her adult parents were not entitled to such an education. This experience prompted Jiahui to obtain a better education to prepare for a financial career in a nonprofit organization. She is determined to make a difference in her community. In her first economics class she learned that the definition of scarcity is there are not enough "goods" to satisfy the people's "wants.". Nonprofit organizations have to face tradeoffs. Advanced knowledge in business and economics can resolve much of this. She ran for the Student Government Association and won a spot; she self-nominated as Executive Treasurer and proved date-driven analysis can succeed. To prepare, she has earned an essentially perfect GPA, taking the most challenging courses. Her professor writes that she has embraced the spirit of challenging herself to achieve personal growth. Currently employed as an intern at American Stock Transfer and Trust, she is looking forward to Baruch College this fall.

The Finch College Alumni Foundation is most appreciative of the generous Stern family and all graduates who have supported the scholarship program.

Article and photos: Lois Moran Ziegler

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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT: DR. SARA (“SALLY”) ARTHUR



Throughout her extensive career in academia, **Sally Arthur's** laser-like focus has been on students and student life. Her lifelong dedication to education likely got its start when her lawyer father sold a gas station in Watertown, NY that was owned by Harriet Ogsbury who, at the time, was the Finch College bursar. Actually, Sally had been teaching prior to that time at both public and private schools, including the prestigious Ethel Walker School in Simsbury, CT.

And, talk about “six degrees of separation,” Finch’s Dean, **Rodney O. Felder**, whom Sally first met at her interview for a position at Finch, hailed from neighboring Redwood, NY! Not only that, but Sally’s mother and Dr. Felder’s aunt served together on the local election board! In 1964, Finch’s President, **Roland DeMarco**, offered Sally the position of Secretary/Assistant to Finch Director of Admissions, **Eleanor Tarrant**, who had been a Vassar classmate of Finch English professor, **Dr. Jane Ross**.

In 1975, Sally helped ease the transfer of 60 Finch students to Marymount Manhattan College, along with all of Finch’s student transcripts.

She spent the next 10 years at MMC as Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs and received a doctorate in Education from Columbia University’s Teacher’s College.

From 1984-2003, Sally served as the Head of Student Life in the central administration at New York University. During that time, she was appointed by Dr. Margaret Maxwell as the first Board Chairperson of the Finch Alumnae Association (the current Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust) that was initiated by

Dr. Maxwell in 1993. She served as co-chair of the FCAAFT Board from 2013 to 2015.

Sally delights at the successful partnership Finch has forged with community colleges: “The Finch Trust does amazing things for the female graduates it serves,” she said. “It’s great that the community has become aware of and receptive to Finch’s continuing ability to help community college students further themselves academically in order to succeed in reaching their career goals.” Sally credits Lois Ziegler for fostering and furthering this effort, and **Louis Stern**, who, in memory of his late wife, Finch alum Freya Moskowitz Stern, continues to support these goals with his generous donations to the Finch scholarship program. Sally credits Dr. DeMarco as a “genius” in creating the Finch International Study Program (“FISP”) where, during the late 60’s and early 70’s, Finch students could spend their junior year studying in Madrid, Rome, Paris and London. In 1967, she headed up the Paris and London segments of this junior year abroad program.

Sally looks back upon Finch - where she was on the Academic Standards Committee - as being “a remarkable place” that fostered the camaraderie of its educators and its students. She says that Finch’s current partnership with Dr. Frank Carnabuci of the Birch Wathen Lenox School is not only important but also emblematic of the fact that both institutions always shared the inevitable diversity that results from living in New York, and is proud of the extent to which Jessica Cosgrave championed Finch women to succeed in both their academic and professional lives. “Mrs. Cosgrave was a pioneer in forging such a path for her graduates. Another hallmark of progress was the admissions of students of color from across the country, who were among Finch’s outstanding graduates and who are recent recipients of the Jessica Cosgrave Award.”

Sally has two brothers: one is 2 years younger; the “baby” of the family is 18 years her junior. These days, she happily divides her time between New York and Vero Beach, Florida.

*Article and photo: Wendy Glickstein*

## FINCH COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION TRUST GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS FOR 2017

Meetings of the FCAAFT will be held at the **Birch Wathen Lenox School**, 210 East 77 Street, New York, NY, at 6 PM on the following dates in 2017:

- January 11
- March 8
- June 7

We welcome all members and friends of Finch.

# FINCH ALUMNI WESLEY CULLEN DAVIDSON'S BOOK ABOUT PARENTING A GAY CHILD

**Wesley Cullen Davidson** (Finch Class of 1969), professional writer and past Jessica Cosgrave Award winner, had her first book published in June. *When Your Child Is Gay: What You Need To Know* is co-authored with Jonathan L. Tobkes, MD, a psychiatrist affiliated with New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

The book is written for straight parents who may be grappling with issues (denial, guilt, fear, anger, shame, loss) preventing them from total acceptance of their LGBT children. Through interviews with straight parents of different backgrounds and LGBT adults throughout the United States, parents whose children have come out will learn what to do next, how to react to their children, and what is best for the entire family.

Each chapter addresses a single topic and provides tips for resolution on that issue, particularly in "The Doctor Is In" section written by Dr. Tobkes at the end of each chapter.

"Love, listen, learn is the best advice to help parents," says Wesley. Unconditional love is essential for a child's self-esteem.

When Wesley decided to write this book, she



Wesley Cullen Davidson and Dr. Jonathan Tobkes

knew she would have to co-author with a psychiatrist. She advertised in The American Psychiatric Association's website and fortunately found Dr. Tobkes, who agreed with the need for the book.

Published by Sterling, the book is available at Barnes & Noble, Barnes & Noble.com, and Amazon.com.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Darcie Denkert Notkin**, who graduated from Finch in 1973, passed away on June 10, 2016.

Not only did Darcie have a brilliant career as top executive at MGM, lasting over 30 years, but she also was a life enhancer. She, like the sun's rays, spread warmth and light on all who were lucky enough to know her. She could dominate a room with the sheer force of her dynamic personality. Her kindness, sage advice, and generosity knew no bounds; she gave quietly with no fanfare. She was modest, she was funny, she was beautiful, she was a giver and never a taker. Darcie was loved and respected by all.

Darcie started her career as a Broadway theatre lawyer in New York City and then joined United Artists' legal department in 1976. She moved to Los Angeles in the early 1980s after MGM purchased United Artists and eventually rose to become the head of all legal and business affairs for MGM. Her love for live theatre was widely known, and with her long-time friend and business partner, Dean Stolber, she

brilliantly created MGM on Stage, using the film library to create such Broadway show hits as *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Legally Blonde*, and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. She never forgot those in the entertainment industry less fortunate than herself and was an invaluable member of the Motion Picture Home and the Motion Picture & Television Fund. Indeed, the proceeds of her celebrated book, *A Fine Romance* (which brilliantly describes the on-again, off-again musical love between Hollywood and Broadway) went exclusively to the Motion Picture & Television Fund and The Actors Fund. She also was a tireless advocate for the welfare of abused and neglected dogs.

In August 2002, Darcie married Alan Susman, founder of the law firm Rosenfeld, Meyer and Susman, who passed away in 2007. In May 2011, she married Shelby Notkin, Chairman of Private Client Services of The Capital Group.

Her courage during the last painful months of her life was an example for us all. Her only concern was for those whom she left behind: her pre-



Darcie Denkert Notkin

cious dogs Pumpkin and Pandora; her friends; her mother Renee; her stepdaughter Michelle; four Susman children; and her beloved husband Shelby. Her memory will continue to be with us for our lifetime.

*Obituary by Patricia Addiss*

# HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 2016 DUES YET?

The Finch College Alumni Association Foundation Trust needs your support to carry on its mission of granting scholarships to worthy candidates. Annual dues are \$50; lifetime membership is \$300. You can also have your friends and associates join as Friends of Finch. Dues are \$50 a year or \$300 for a lifetime membership. Your dues and donations are tax deductible, since we are a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Just go to the Finch College website [www.FinchCollege.org](http://www.FinchCollege.org) and click on Membership on the left of the home page to download a form and join. You can mail the form along with your dues to:

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