DEAN’S LETTER

It is hard to believe we are already in the midterm crunch! It seems just yesterday that we welcomed the class of 2019. Our year began on a different key this year, shifting off-campus to catch a ball game in Staten Island. The Staten Island Yankees welcomed our first-year students by giving them free reign over the stadium for a pre-game Convocation. President Sexton addressed the entire class, and our College Leaders featured prominently in the proceedings: Afua Yeboah (CAS ’18) sang the Star-Spangled Banner and Sahaana Sundar (CAS ’18) gave a speech of welcome. With a striking view of downtown Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty, the students had an impressive first glance of life “in and of the city” (as Albert Gallatin first described it).

Beyond the glamour of the city lights, the CAS Cohort Program continued its tradition of bringing together the freshman class in a day of service. With our partnership with the NYC Parks Department, the class of 2019 planted and cared for almost 2,000 city trees over two days. This early exposure to community service does not wane following the first year. Through the Dean’s Service Honor Corps, through student clubs and organizations, fraternities and sororities, and across much of our curriculum, students volunteer extensively throughout the College and the city. To take one example: pre-health students volunteer in the Peer Health Exchange, an organization that trains students to lead health education curricula in local underserved schools (where those programs are often nonexistent).

Service is not restricted stateside—our students have opportunities to continue to work for the greater good at our global sites too. For the past three years, students who travel with the Sophomore Presidential Scholars to France have visited the Martin Luther King Middle School in Villiers-le-Bel north of Paris. These scholars meet with middle school students for English language practice. Our students learned about life in this small town, and met dynamic students who were eager to engage in cultural exchange. In Accra, volunteer opportunities abound. On the Presidential Scholars trip, students worked with the children of BASICS International, where they led activities that focused on the importance of recycling and the environment.

Our faculty also find ways of linking service to learning. In our Expository Writing Program, the popular elective Writing in Community gathers students who are passionate about both writing and service. In addition to studying writers, artists, and filmmakers whose work documents and reflects on important social concerns, students volunteer at a local school to teach writing skills.

With the Thanksgiving season approaching, I hope that we can all take a moment to embrace the best of the holiday and find a way to make our own impact through service, wherever we are.

Best wishes for the fall semester,

G. Gabrielle Starr
cas.dean@nyu.edu

INSIDE Faculty Profile, Convocation Speech, Proud to Be First, and more!
Good afternoon everyone. My name is Sahaana, and I am honored to speak to you as a peer who was in your shoes just one year ago. Before we begin, take a second to absorb your surroundings. Look to your neighbor on your left, your right, behind you, in front of you, and then, look forward at the Manhattan skyline. You’re finally here in New York City and at NYU. You should be proud. You did it, and no matter where you’re coming from, you deserve to be sitting where you are sitting right now. These are going to be some of the most fun, most trying, and most rewarding years of your lives. One of those neighbors you just looked at might be a financial advisor on Wall Street. That other person you looked at might be a computer scientist. That student, an anthropologist. And the person behind you might’ve said they’re premed. In two months they might switch and in six they might’ve switched back. No matter what path you choose, you will be receiving one of the most well-rounded college educations in all of America just by being exposed to so many different disciplines through the Core Curriculum.

A year ago, when I was where you were, I didn’t find that appealing. As the first child of an immigrant family and as a competitive premed student, I wasn’t interested in what I perceived to be “deviations” from my future career. I came in thinking that my four years of undergrad would be solely science and math courses. My advisor wanted me to take a Cultures and Contexts class? Initially, I thought, um, no thanks! But I could not have been more wrong. I now understand that CAS prepares you to enter the “real world” with one of the most comprehensive educations provided by any university. I have come to learn that these core subjects we learn in college like economics, biology, and anthropology—are only isolated by name. By drawing connections between the strangest of disciplines you will find that learning one can help in understanding the other. So be excited that as your college life progresses, you will become not only an encyclopedic and informed student, but a global citizen.

I found myself by peers who had internship positions, job opportunities, or detailed study abroad plans. Being the first child of my family to go through the American college experience meant I didn’t have any precedence to look towards, and I felt lost. But the invaluable lesson I’ve learned is that no matter how confused you may be, or how lost you may believe you are, just keep moving. At this point, it doesn’t matter if you’re unsure exactly what you’re moving towards. Just move. Welcome to New York City where the opportunities are infinite: Volunteer at a nonprofit. Shadow a politician. Apply for a research position. You won’t know what you can do now, or have the potential to do in the future unless you try! So be that student who raises their hand. Be the one to start the conversation. Use the intimidation as motivation. And for those of you who think you know exactly what you’re going to do the next four years here, I encourage you to open your minds to new and exciting opportunities. Chances are, you’re not going to stick to Plan A. With the influx of information you’ll be receiving here, you’re probably going to graduate with Plan G. No matter what, get ready for the greatest experience in the greatest city. Welcome to NYU.

ABOUT: Hailing from Alpharetta, Georgia, Sahaana is a CAS sophomore and college leader on the pre-med track, majoring in Neural Science. While working part-time in the NYU Alumni Relations Office, she became an undergradate research assistant in Prof. Wendy Suzuki’s neuroscience lab. She is president and founder of the not-for-profit corporation, Let’s Build a Future, which aims to establish an egalitarian educational model for underserved youth. Sahaana volunteers as a tutor at GO Project NYC, acts as Social Impact Liaison with Stern Cares, and was co-president of CAS Entrepreneurship Association. This summer, Sahaana founded NYU Focus, a photography club.
The College of Arts and Science welcomed our new students to campus during Orientation from August 30th through September 1st. Throughout orientation, students participated in a number of activities with their cohorts, allowing them to connect with one another and explore the Washington Square campus. Students also traveled beyond the Square and built community across the city, as 1,700 first-year and transfer students took the Staten Island Ferry to Richmond County Bank Ballpark for New Student Convocation on August 30th.

The ceremony kicked off with NYU President John Sexton and CAS Dean G. Gabrielle Starr each offering welcoming words. Our students also shared in leading the Convocation ceremony, with College Leader Sahaana Sundar (CAS ‘18) delivering an outstanding address and College Leader Afua Yeboah (CAS ‘18) singing NYU’s alma mater and the national anthem. As Convocation festivities wrapped up, students settled in to watch the Staten Island Yankees take on the Connecticut Tigers and enjoy an all-you-can-eat lunch (the Yankees won).

For the fourth consecutive year, we partnered with the NYC Parks Department on Days 2 and 3 of Orientation to coordinate the class-wide service project for our 1,500 first-year students. Our students, guided by their College Leaders, took the subway with their cohorts to the East New York neighborhood of Brooklyn, where they provided care for “street trees” throughout the area. The work done by our students and Parks staff was part of MillionTreesNYC, a program with the goal of planting and caring for one million trees over a decade throughout the five boroughs. CAS students contributed to this goal with a record-setting number of trees cared for in a MillionTreesNYC East New York project. Over our two days in East New York, students cared for a total of 1,862 trees!

Since the beginning of the fall semester, students from all years have continued to engage in community-building Cohort Program activities—while upper-class students participated in Welcome Back events planned by their Class Presidents and Boards, first-year students engaged in the Cohort Cup, a year-long friendly competition between cohorts. Be on the lookout for updates on the hotly contested race for the Cohort Cup in future editions of College News!
CAS students can choose to participate in one of eleven Summer Abroad programs in eight different cities: Accra, Athens, Berlin, Dublin, Florence, London, Madrid, and Paris. Each program is carefully designed to offer a rigorous academic experience that engages with that city’s history and culture.

Guided by a faculty director with local knowledge and expertise, CAS Summer Abroad programs offer students the opportunity to earn up to 8 credits. Check out all CAS Summer Abroad programs at: www.nyu.edu/summer/abroad/cas

In 2015 CAS announced the inaugural Creativity Contest, in which students submit their photos, poems, essays or other creative work inspired by their experience abroad. This year’s submissions were judged by the CAS administration and the winners are shared below.

Clockwise from top left: 1st place, Joshua Tay (’17) Athens; 2nd place (tie), Michael Frazier, Jr. (’17) Florence; 3rd place, Michelle Aboodi (’15) Florence; 2nd place (tie), Gabriela Zarifa (’18) Dublin
New York and Buenos Aires have more in common than one might think. Both are New World port cities that took in huge waves of immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century. Both have a rich tradition of radicalism and social activism. And both are the cultural capitals—in the case of Buenos Aires, the political capital as well—of their respective countries, which also share colonial pasts. The aim of the new “networked” course—one offered concurrently at two or more NYU global academic centers—called Queer Cultures and Democracy was to tell the stories of these extraordinary cities through the lens of queer experience and activism.

You could say that the course was at least twenty years in the making. Gabriel Giorgi, presently an associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese in the College, left Argentina and came to NYU as a graduate student in the mid-1990s. It was a moment of tremendous cultural and political ferment in Argentina as the country fully emerged from military dictatorship. LGBT and queer organizing grew in tandem with the unleashing of democracy, and Giorgi realized he and his fellow citizens needed more critical tools to understand the changing situation and drive it forward. At NYU, he studied critical and queer theory with the celebrated Argentine writer and critic Sylvia Molloy. He also saw American queer activism firsthand.

Last spring, Queer Cultures and Democracy brought together CAS students in New York and at NYU Buenos Aires, with Giorgi in charge of the Washington Square classroom. The course covered the 1960s through the present. Ten students took the course in each location, using a specially equipped videoconference room; they sat in a semicircle and faced three video monitors that allowed them to clearly see and speak with the instructor and students in the other hemisphere, for a “fluid” and exciting experience. Yes, undergraduates in snowy New York in February and March did envy their peers in warm, sunny Argentina—many of them now hope to study at Buenos Aires in the future—but this never got in the way of holding seamless discussions that translated more often than not into the illusion of one class in one classroom, not two.

“The protagonists of the course,” Giorgi explains, “were New York City and Buenos Aires.” For all they have in common, the latter is a more politicized city overall, and class discussion brought to light how in Argentina the transition to democracy centered on issues of human rights. The country passed a same-sex marriage law in 2011 while the United States is just catching up—due, in part, to the USA’s stronger tradition of civil rather than human rights. Giorgi notes that contrasting Argentina and the USA can complicate assumptions that progress starts in Europe and North America and then migrates to other nations. American students often found themselves rethinking their previous views and ideas about Latin American culture, history, and identity.

For students at Washington Square, the course also put New York in another light. “Students,” Giorgi notes, came to “understand the historical density of the very place where we are sitting.” After all, Stonewall is just a stone’s throw from Silver Center and Bobst. As part of the work of the course in both cities, students went to Stonewall and other important locations to conduct interviews with queer activists and take photos. They produced high-quality audio and images and shared their hard work—part journalism, part oral history—with their counterparts half a world away. (It is now all archived on the Web.)

Giorgi is looking ahead to once again co-teaching the course in spring 2016 with Mariano López Seoane, his counterpart at NYU Buenos Aires and an Assistant Professor in Latin American literature and cultural studies. His enthusiasm when talking about the class is palpable, and we are not surprised that he found his students to be as intellectually “excited” about the experience as he was. As he recalls, his initial concerns that he would have to rely on something like Skype were soon—and decisively—put to rest. College News wishes Professor Giorgi well for the repeat performance next semester.
We kicked off the year with a bang! The CAS Student Council has had an amazing start to the semester, and we know that it will only get better. My name is Rijul Asri (CAS ’16), and as the Student-body President of the College, I am excited to share what our Council has accomplished and where we hope to go!

The year started with a round of elections, and I am proud to present our newest officers: Christopher Hyman (CAS ’16) will serve as our Curriculum Chair; Hannah Garcia (CAS ’19) will serve as our Community Service Chair; Saagar Chilate (CAS ’19) will serve as our Alumni Relations Chair; Sanjana Prakash (CAS 16) will serve as our Secretary; Sofiya Andreyeva (CAS 17) will serve as our Alternate Senator; Uzma Nawaz (CAS 17) will serve as our Club Council Chair; and Ximena Tellez (CAS 19) will serve as our Freshman Class President. They are all ready to bring the College fresh perspectives and innovative programs!

Our Vice President, Rebecca K. Cruz (CAS ’16), and Class Presidents, Juhi Patel (CAS ’16), Hamza Muhammad (CAS ’17), and Nick Cho (CAS ’18), welcomed back the students of CAS with open arms through Bun Week! Each Class President hosted a large-scale kickoff event during the week, where students were able to get a sense of class spirit and receive an awesome class shirt! Attendance at these events was through-the-roof, with seniors winning the week with an attendance count of 325!

We welcomed the Class of 2019 with our College Olympics, and it was a smashing success! All 44 of the College’s cohorts competed intensely in games ranging from tug-of-war to musical chairs to limbo. All of the participants earned points for their cohort toward the Cohort Cup, and Cohorts 3 and 31 emerged as the two victors. Everyone had a great time, and I definitely see this as a tradition to continue for years to come!

After leading campus tours for new transfer students, our Transfer Student Representative, Daniella Haviv (CAS ’17), hosted an exciting welcome picnic in Washington Square Park for all transfer students. The tours went amazingly, and the ambiance at the picnic reflected that—we feel that we are making strides in building a true transfer student community within the College.

Our Senator, Amanda Ezeci (CAS ’17), continued her work with Smoke-Free NYU, the initiative to improve campus health by reducing the presence of smoke in front of NYU buildings. She, alongside LiveWellNYU and the Inter-Residence Hall Council, piloted a perimeter system and hopes to expand the scope of the initiative to other areas of campus. She and our Student Advocacy Chair Noah Bierbrier (CAS ’18) are looking at the question of NYU Affordability, and will be hosting an open forum to identify non-tuition and non-residence costs incurred by students of the College.

Our Treasurer, Shela Wu (CAS ’18), has refined our co-sponsorship process, and since the beginning of the semester we have decided to co-sponsor with the 2018 and 2019 Class Activities Boards. We hope to continue to build our network and work with several other organizations this year!

Finally, our Graphic Designer Sarah Bigler and Webmaster Neha Srivatsa launched our new website: cas.nyu.edu/page/cas.student.council. We hope to use it as a space to chronicle our events and to advertise our mission.

We are super proud of what we have accomplished and cannot wait to work with you to achieve even more. Stop by a General Assembly meeting (Tuesdays at 6:30 pm in the Heights Alumni Lounge) and follow us on Facebook (NYU CAS Student Council) and Twitter (@NYUCASSC) to hear more and join in on the fun!
The Proud to Be First program launched in September 2015 specifically welcoming first-generation college students to the College and New York University. The College is committed to supporting, engaging, and empowering students on their journey to be in the first generation of their families to earn a college degree. Challenging realities for first-generation students may arise. For example, students may not have family members to help guide and direct them through the college selection to college transition process by drawing from their own experiences. Proud to Be First ensures first-generation students know they are not alone and are encouraged to be proud to be first.

This year, 19% of NYU’s freshman class are first-generation college students. Being a first-generation college student can be challenging, but it also builds strength, fosters resilience, and motivates students to succeed.

Proud to Be First seeks to inspire and cultivate these characteristics by supporting students through intentional peer mentoring, faculty and staff advocates, and programming. Undergraduate peer mentors are the first line of support for students. Mentors are upper-class students charged with planning socials, workshops, and bi-weekly check-ins for their first-generation mentees. Proud to Be First advocates are faculty and staff who self-identify as first-generation students or have a specific interest in supporting first-generation students. Advocates are available for support and guidance. Programming rounds out the Proud to Be First support system. During the fall semester there are three flagship programs: Proud to Be First Kick-Off, Ask Me Anything [pictured below] where upperclass first-generation students provide advice and guidance to other first-generation students, and Faculty Reveal the Secrets to Success where faculty panelists share the realities of their educational journey and academic tips and tricks.

To learn more about the Proud to Be First program visit, proudtobefirst.cas.nyu.edu. Here, you can learn more about the undergraduate student mentors, faculty and staff advocates, upcoming events, and spotlights.
On October 24th, 2015, the College Alumni Association presented the Alumni Achievement award to Mark Knoller, (ARTS ’73) at the Dean’s Luncheon on Alumni and Parents Day. Knoller is an award-winning White House Correspondent for CBS News. During his 40 years in the nation’s capital, he has covered all or part of every presidency since Gerald Ford. Knoller’s reporting has appeared on CBS Radio and TV, including seven years of featured weekly reports from the White House on the CBS Saturday Morning broadcasts. Since 2009, he has reported online. His Twitter feed has over 172,000 followers. A cover story in Politico Magazine said Knoller had “employed Twitter to provide some of the quickest and most colorful reporting out of the White House.” He credits his NYU internship at WNEW Radio in 1972 as the gateway to his career.

ALUMNI RELATIONS STAFF
Keep in touch and stay connected! Phone: (212) 998-6880 or email: cas.alumni@nyu.edu.

Ann Marie Ladisa
Senior Director of Alumni Relations

Heather Seltzer
Assistant Director of Alumni Relations

Marta Wallien
Administrative Aide

We are always looking for alumni, student or faculty interest stories as well as guest bloggers for the NYU Arts and Science Alumni Blog. The NYU CAS Alumni Association Facebook page and NYU CAS Alumni Linkedin Group are wonderful resources for those alumni looking to network and engage in conversations with each other and with the alumni office. Follow us on Twitter @artsandscience and Instagram (nyuartsandscience).

This office is responsible for all alumni efforts on behalf of the College of Arts and Science, Liberal Studies, and the Graduate School of Arts and Science.

IMPORTANT DATES

Upcoming in Fall 2015

Monday, November 16
Registration for Spring 2016 courses begins

Wednesday, November 25–Friday, November 27
Thanksgiving Recess

Tuesday, December 15
Last day of classes

Wednesday, December 16
Reading Day

Thursday, December 17–Wednesday, December 23
Examination period
The ability to do careful, thorough research is a lifelong advantage. Every year hundreds of undergraduate researchers receive funding through the Dean’s Undergraduate Research Fund (DURF) to carry out their research projects. Students also present the results of those projects at the College’s annual Undergraduate Research Conference (URC) in the spring semester. Contact Joel Ward, Assistant Dean for Students at jsw298@nyu.edu for information.

**DURF**

Each year there are three chances to receive funding (research grants up to $1000; freshman and sophomore training up to $500) for original research or program of training through the Dean’s Undergraduate Research Fund. Students formulate a research or training project in conjunction with a faculty mentor, and then, using our online application system, tell us what that project is, why it is significant, and what will be needed in terms of time and resources to make it happen. Proposals are reviewed by a faculty panel in the broad disciplinary area. If the student proposal is judged to be both feasible and important, then in most cases it is funded. For more information and submission forms, visit www.cas.nyu.edu/page/deansresearchfund. Check online for the times and locations of workshops and information sessions designed to help frame and refine funding proposals. Whether a student is working on a senior thesis, an independent study, or an independent project—applying for a DURF grant is highly recommended.

**URC**

There is no better place to find out about the sort of projects that receive DURF awards than the Undergraduate Research Conference held at CAS each spring. All winners of DURF Research Grants present their work at the conference, but any undergraduate in the College is eligible to apply. A popular event with both students and faculty, nearly 300 undergraduates presented last year at the poster and panel sessions. Faculty members attended each session, and offered comments and questions based on the presentations. The Undergraduate Research Conference provides one of the most fun and effective ways to develop your presentation skills, as well as being a venue to learn what student peers are doing in departments throughout the College. This year’s conference will be held all day on April 22 in the Silver Center and the Waverly Building. Visit www.cas.nyu.edu/page/researchconference for the online application and program from last year’s conference.

---

**Scenes from the Spring 2015 Undergraduate Research Conference**
It’s been an exciting year so far for CAS international students! The CAS Advising International Team has hosted an active roster of Fall 2015 semester events. The weekly CAS International Student Coffee Hours have included lively and informative discussions about intercultural communication, study away, preparing for graduate school, and the job search. The International Team has also led two successful and fun-filled events this term. In September, international students took in a baseball game at famous Yankee Stadium as the playoff-bound Yankees defeated the Chicago White Sox 3–2. In October, a large group of students had an empanada picnic in Central Park before visiting the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a tour of the Art of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia galleries. Upcoming events include a Halloween-themed Coffee Hour, a trip to the Metropolitan Opera for a performance of Tosca, and a visit to the Grey Art Gallery to see the current exhibit: “For a New World To Come: Experiments in Japanese Art and Photography, 1968–1979.” In addition, the CAS International Student Club (ISC) has had a busy fall semester with a number of stellar events, such as an outing to Lincoln Center to watch renowned Italian pianist Carlo Grante, an excursion to Smorgasburg in Brooklyn to sample delicious artisanal food, and an Elected Board annual retreat with the CAS Advising International Team to kick off the year. The International Team in CAS Advising looks forward to continuing this trend of dynamic programming for the College’s international students.

SCHOLARS LECTURE SERIES

Upcoming Lectures

The Scholars Lecture Series is designed to encourage and promote the exchange of ideas among our faculty and students in the College of Arts and Science. All lectures take place in the Irving H. Jurow Lecture Hall, 101A Silver Center, at 5:00 pm.

**Thursday, November 12:** Contingent Migrations: Of Birds and Ballast in the Nineteenth-Century Novel
Elaine Freedgood, Professor of English

**Wednesday, December 2:** The Mind as a Meaning Machine: Uncovering the Neurobiology of Combinatory Semantics in Language Processing
Liina Pylkkänen, Associate Professor of Linguistics and Psychology and Director of Graduate Studies for Linguistics

**Wednesday, February 3:** Imagining a Modern Iran and the Human Sciences
Ali Mirsepassi, Professor of Sociology and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and Director of the Iranian Studies Initiative

**Tuesday, February 23:** Road Girls and Wild Boys in Depression-Era U.S. Popular Culture
Michele Mitchell, Associate Professor of History

**Wednesday, March 2:** “The Pacific Solution”: Historical and Literary Perspectives on Australian Refugee Detention
Jini Kim Watson, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature and Director of Undergraduate Honors for English

**Tuesday, March 22:** The Economics of Energy Efficiency
Hunt Allcott, Assistant Professor of Economics

**Tuesday, March 29:** Revolutionary Dissent: The Founding Generation and Freedom of Speech
Stephen D. Solomon, Associate Professor of Journalism and Associate Director, Carter Journalism Institute
UPSTANDER

Community Dialogue

The Upstander campaign continues to grow and develop as more students become aware and participate. Upstander is a collaboration between the CAS Dean’s Office and CAS Student Council that offers a forum and the tools to come together and dialogue as a university community—modeling civility and countering the “bystander effect.” To achieve this end, each semester an Upstander Dialogue is hosted at CAS to provide students with an open space to understand and discuss contemporary issues important to their experience as students. The inaugural Dialogue in spring 2015 featured Imam Khalid Latif reflected on the importance of taking responsible action—not just to prevent bad things from happening but to create good. Imam Latif stressed that in order to stand for others, we have to learn to be with each other, despite our differences.

The Upstander team, which includes CAS Student Senator Amanda Ezechi (CAS ’17), the CAS Student Council President Rijul Asri (CAS ’16), and the CAS Dean’s Office, identified sexual respect as the topic of interest for this semester’s community Dialogue. Instead of approaching the issue from the viewpoint of health or policy, the team brought in the expertise of Stephen Schulhofer, Professor of Law at NYU, to discuss the implications of the new university sexual misconduct policy on the daily lives of students. With his expertise and the support of four of his students, Dialogue attendees were encouraged to openly discuss the role of the university community as an adjudicating body, and the role of policy as a tool to change culture. Students left the discussion with a new perspective on the issue of sexual misconduct, and Student Senator Ezechi hopes to carry these perspectives with her as she works with the new policy through Student Senators Council.

The Upstander team plans to continue the discussion of this topic, and looks forward to hosting Dialogues and other events about a range of issues affecting our community. Look out for the Upstander table in Bobst LL1 for our final Student Break in December and learn more about our next Dialogue topic. For news and events visit our Facebook page (Upstanders).

Students left the discussion with a new perspective...

Panelists at the September 2015 Upstander Dialogue in the CAS Silver Center.

FINALS STUDY BREAK

Wednesday, December 16
5:00-7:00 pm
Bobst LL1 Snack Area

#BeUpstandingNYU
cas.nyu.edu/page/Upstander

Free coffee and Insomnia cookies to help you power through finals!

nyuspeakingfreely

speakingfreely.cas.nyu.edu

LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE . . . FREE
NO COST. NO GRADES. NO PRESSURE

NYU CAS