DEAN’S LETTER
Welcome back! This spring term we welcomed, of course, our new President, Andrew Hamilton. For those of you who frequent the Silver Center, be on the lookout: as a member of our very own faculty in the Department of Chemistry, he may even be sharing a packed elevator with you as you head to class!

I always like it when research gives inspiration for us to work harder and be better. “Turning the Tide,” a January 2016 report from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, found students who experience high quality civic learning are more tolerant of others, more willing to listen to differing points of view, take greater responsibility for their actions, and work to improve their communities. These are essential skills for any of us, especially tomorrow’s leaders. In that spirit, I want to point out two features of life in the College.

Our Upstander initiative (highlighted in this issue) has played a central role in fostering and promoting more meaningful service to and connection with others for our students. Open to the entire University community, the Upstander Dialogue series has created a space for our students to come together and model civility through open dialogue with their peers. To be productive citizens in a global society where we encounter diversity in all forms—socio-economic status, age, gender, nation, creed, sexual orientation, religion—we need to live and learn in diverse intellectual communities and prepare ourselves for the dynamics of difference.

Similarly, we have prioritized our commitment to sustainability in recognition of the individual roles we play as stewards of our natural resources. Towards this end, the College has promoted and engaged student research around sustainability. A team of our undergraduates (supported through the Dean’s Undergraduate Research Fund) has developed a waste characterization study and helped in initiating the collection of compost in the Silver Center ground floor lounges and ninth floor administrative areas. The enthusiasm with which students and staffers have engaged with and in these projects illustrates an inclination towards the common good. We will work together to see that good come alive. And note our new Forest Stewardship Council® certified, 100% post-consumer paper.

I welcome anyone wishing to participate in any of these projects to contact us and, similarly, encourage any of your own ideas on how we might achieve this goal together.

Best wishes for the semester,
G. Gabrielle Starr
cas.dean@nyu.edu

INSIDE Spotlight on Research, Bentson Dean’s Lectures, and more!
Student Profiles

Undergraduate research in CAS comes in all shapes and sizes. Students dig through archives, conduct sociological surveys, and perform experiments in cutting edge labs. Here, we profile two recipients of a Dean’s Undergraduate Research Fund (DURF) grant: Joy Madubuonwu (Global Public Health/Anthropology) and Shivali Patel (Biochemistry).

Shivali Patel has received three DURF grants in all, most recently for her project, “Towards the Molecular Basis of Fragile X Syndrome,” conducted in Professor Alexander Serganov’s lab (NYU School of Medicine).

How did you become involved in undergraduate research?

In my volunteer work I attended a support group for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. There I witnessed the long struggling journeys these children and their families had undergone. My volunteer work inspired me to pursue a path in medicine. I thought I could learn to act on the problems that I had witnessed. However, I soon came to realize that biological research is essential to better understand how to confront diseases. While looking for a laboratory, I came across Dr. Serganov’s studies on Fragile X syndrome (FXS). His research caught my interest since FXS is one of the leading causes of inherited mental retardation and a known genetic form of autism.

How have your DURF grants helped with your research?

The DURF grants have been a huge aid in allowing me to further my research. With each grant I have been able to build on my foundational experiment, performing more advanced experiments.

How has your research experience helped prepare you for life after CAS?

Doing research can be very challenging at times. You will spend months trying to obtain data, repeating experiments, attempt novel methods and unfortunately attain inconclusive results. Every time I face a challenge I take it as a chance to cultivate my skills and knowledge on a deeper, more critical level as I dissect and troubleshoot my methodology.

Would you encourage other students to pursue undergraduate research?

Absolutely, undergraduate research is essential. I understand that it may seem like a time commitment but it is worth it. It’s a great opportunity to build on your knowledge and to see if the research field is a right fit for you.

I thought I could learn to act on the problems that I had witnessed.
Joy Madubuonwu received a DURF grant for her project, “Female and Minority Inclusion in Clinical Trials,” conducted under the guidance of Professor Nina Parikh (Global Public Health).

How did you become involved in undergraduate research?
During junior year, I had Dr. Bernadette Boden-Albala as a professor for Epidemiology. I arranged a meeting with her and next thing I knew I was a founding member of the Social Epidemiology and Research in Community Health Lab (SEARCH lab). I have always been very interested in studying the state of healthcare in the United States, especially among ethnic minority groups and women. Working with my mentor I was able to craft a research project examining the inclusion of diverse groups in clinical trials.

How has your DURF grant helped with your research?
The grant allowed me to support myself this summer while doing my research and get literature on the topic. I think that the financial support that the grant offers breaks down many barriers preventing a student from pursuing a research project.

What have you enjoyed most about undergraduate research?
Being able to work closely with my mentors and brilliant people (Dr. Nina Parikh, Lauren Southwick, and Dr. Boden-Albala). The DURF grant really encourages students to tackle a project that is important to them. I really appreciate the amount of responsibility and trust that it puts in the individual student.

How has your research experience shaped your postgraduate plans?
I think my research has definitely encouraged me to consider a PhD program, something I never considered before. Although research can be a tedious process, it is always so rewarding when you discover new things not only about the topic but also about yourself.

Would you encourage other students to pursue undergraduate research?
I am currently an RA and I always encourage my residents and colleagues to apply to the DURF. I believe it is an awesome and extremely empowering experience for everyone.
The Dean’s Service Honor Corps (DSHC) is the student-led, community service component of the CAS Presidential Scholars program. Whether it is students volunteering at the Door, University Beacon/Settlement, or the GO Project, the DSHC places special emphasis on service learning. Student volunteers gain greater understanding of issues by coming together to investigate a topic of community importance and then putting those ideas into practice. This is where service learning begins.

On December 4th, alumna and former DSHC member, Emily Ong (CAS ’14), gave a presentation on inequality in public education. Ms. Ong began by asking her audience to discuss daily challenges faced by students in NYC public schools—from school bullying to a diminished emphasis on pursuing academic opportunities. She then shared with the group her experiences as a professional coordinator for the GO Project, an organization dedicated to expanding the educational opportunities of underprivileged children in NYC. This is a great example of CAS alumni mentorship in action.

Overcoming the lack of access to educational opportunity in city schools is an ongoing project for the DSHC. Members volunteer as English and math tutors in classrooms of 12 to 20 students with a teacher present.

Interested CAS students are welcome to participate in DSHC projects. For more information, visit: cas.nyu.edu/page/studentlife.servicecorps.

DSHC members discussing challenges faced by students in NYC public schools.

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LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE . . . FREE.
NO COST. NO GRADES. NO PRESSURE.
Sandra Endo (CAS ’99) is a reporter for FOX 11 News in Los Angeles, CA. Prior to joining FOX 11, she spent five years working for CNN based in Washington DC. Her stories have appeared on shows such as AC360 with Anderson Cooper and The Situation Room. Prior to joining CNN, Endo was a political reporter, host and anchor for NY1.

**What was your NYU experience as a whole?**
What attracted me to NYU was everything that it had to offer. I had the best of so many different worlds. I was accepted to the Presidential Honors Scholar program. I was on the swim team, and I was in Journalism and Politics. I got a little bit of everything at NYU. I really loved my experience there. The fact that I was right in the city meant that I had everything at my fingertips.

**Did you always know that you wanted to be a reporter?**
I knew going to New York that I wanted to study journalism. I double majored in Politics and Journalism, because I wanted to learn practical skills: how to write for television, how to put together a newscast, all those technical, practical skills that you need as a journalist. But I also wanted to be an expert at something, so that’s why I majored in Politics as well.

I figured, if I want to be a voice for the people or question authority, I needed to know what makes our government tick and how it works. I knew right from the beginning that I wanted to get hands-on experience as a journalist, so I interned at WNBC, ABC News and NY1. I also minored in East Asian studies, as a Japanese language minor. I think growing up in a Japanese-American family—I am a second and a half generation Japanese-American—you always worry that you are going to lose part of yourself, but I feel like NYU really helped me keep a part of who I am and where I came from.

**What has been the most challenging story that you have covered?**
I would say that the most challenging but also the most rewarding was 9/11, covering such a tragedy in a city I loved. At least a piece of my heart will always be in New York because I started there and I covered the biggest story of my life there. I was a junior political reporter at NY1 at the time. Seeing all of the men and women of the Fire Department responding, seeing a lot of faces of defeat, but then being able to cover the stories of triumph after. That experience shaped me and will always be a part of me. I saw the best of people that day and, following that day, the strength in people, the compassion and the heroism. That story has shaped my career too.

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**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.
The Proud to Be First Program is in its second semester of programming and mentoring first-generation college students. The Proud to Be First mentors will again host one off-campus excursion each that will assist students in exploring New York City and host one workshop encouraging student success during the Spring 2016 semester. Fall 2015 programming provided vital information geared toward leadership, college transition, and building relationships. Events included kayaking, professional development workshops, and yoga and stress management activities. In addition, the mentors helped mentees become better acclimated to University life.

We are thrilled to report there are now over 65 Proud to Be First Advocates (proudtobefirst.cas.nyu.edu/page/advocates) who are available to provide first-generation college students with support and guidance. The buzz around campus has steadily grown as students, faculty, and administrators become more acquainted with this new initiative.

The spring semester is geared to build on the eventful first half of the year, with a host of programming including a spring kick-off, a trip to NYU DC, Building Your Personal Leadership Advisory Board workshop, and additional activities to serve and support our Proud to Be First students.

To learn more about the Proud to Be First program visit, proudtobefirst.cas.nyu.edu.
CAS SUMMER ABROAD

Earn Academic Credit. Explore the World.

Venture off the beaten path and learn something new!

The application for 2016 CAS Summer Abroad programs is now live with upcoming application deadlines on March 1 and rolling admission until April 15. Choose among eleven programs in eight different cities: Accra, Athens, Berlin, Dublin, Florence, London, Madrid, and Paris. Guided by a faculty director with local knowledge and expertise, programs offer students the opportunity to earn up to 8 credits.

For more information, application, and funding resources, visit: www.nyu.edu/summer/abroad/cas.

PHOTO CREDIT: Yazmin Lancaster, Writers in Florence program

CAS BACCALAUREATE

Celebrating the Class of 2016

THE MOMENT THEY’VE ALL BEEN WORKING FOR!

We are proud to announce that the 2016 College of Arts and Science Baccalaureate Ceremonies will be held on Thursday, May 19 at 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM in New York’s iconic Radio City Music Hall. The celebrations for our Seniors begin on Tuesday evening, May 17 from 5:00 until 8:00 pm with Grad Alley, continue with All-University Commencement at Yankee Stadium on Wednesday, May 18 at 11:00 AM, and culminate in every CAS Senior’s proudest moment, the CAS Baccalaureate Ceremony where each College senior’s name is called in tribute to their accomplishment. Graduates can choose to attend either the morning or the afternoon ceremony. For more information, visit: seniors.cas.nyu.edu/page/baccinfo.
Each year, the CAS Dean’s Office invites current faculty—including full- and part-time CAS professors, visiting professors, and colleagues from across the University—to deliver several Bentson Dean’s Lectures to our students and the entire NYU community.

Designed to foster a strong sense of community and offer compelling cultural programming for our students, Bentson Lectures showcase a broad range of faculty research. Past topics have focused on everything from the evolution of the modern work-world to new queer cinema to the origins of the Harlem Rattlers and their role in integrating America’s armed forces.

Our roster of Bentson Lecturers for this academic year is impressive. This past November, Robin Nagle, clinical associate professor of Anthropology and Environmental Studies, and faculty fellow in residence, delivered “The Wonder of Waste: Urban Legacies of Collective Forgetfulness.” Among the many issues discussed, Nagle described her experiences—including driving a garbage truck—as the anthropologist-in-residence of the NYC Department of Sanitation. Professor Phil Harper’s February Bentson Lecture is entitled, “What’s So Great About Keeping It Real? Social Critique in African American Culture.” Harper, the Erich Maria Remarque Professor of Literature at NYU, analyzes the limits of how well realist representation can further racial and political critique. Katepalli Sreenivasan, President, NYU Tandon School of Engineering, Dean of Engineering at NYU, is preparing a lecture scheduled for late March on the work of two great scientists, both Nobel Laureates from the Indian subcontinent and with distinguished careers in the West, showcasing the importance of diversity in scientific research by weaving the markers of their rich lives with elements of their work. Finally, award-winning journalist Pamela Newkirk, professor in our Journalism department and its Director of Undergraduate Studies, will present her Bentson Lecture on April 5, “Why Ota Benga Matters.” Professor Newkirk’s book, Spectacle: The Astonishing Life of Ota Benga, tells the story of a young Congolese male who in 1906 became an international sensation when he was exhibited as a “Pygmy” in the Bronx Zoo Monkey House. The book exposes century-old secrets surrounding the circumstances of Ota Benga’s life while charting the evolution of race and science and raising difficult questions about attitudes that persist today.

All Bentson Dean’s Lectures are free and open to the public; for information, contact ken.kidd@nyu.edu.
Students participating in the Presidential Honors Scholars Program have the opportunity to develop research skills and enrich their academic and cultural experience in the College. Scholar seminars are led by teams of faculty, graduate students, and CAS advisors. Each January, scholars explore the historical and cultural diversity of NYU sites abroad. This year 400 CAS scholars traveled to NYU sites in Abu Dhabi, Accra, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Florence, Madrid, Paris, and Prague. These trips allow students to engage in discussions and lectures, connect with members of the community, and visit historical sites and museums.

Scholars traveling to Paris focused on science with Professor Claude Desplan. They connected with Parisian students at Magistere de Genetique/Paris VII University where they shared research ideas and learned about how scientific research is funded and pursued in France. In addition, for their community project they spent a day tutoring elementary and junior high students at the Martin Luther King School that serves some of the neediest immigrant families in Paris.

Professor Renee Blake led scholars to Accra, Ghana, where students attended lectures on Ghanaian history, traditional medicine, and Pan-Africanism. They also partnered with BASICS International on a community service project working with teenagers and visited Elmina Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. First established as a trade settlement, the castle later became one of the stops on the route of the Atlantic slave trade.

While in Prague, Professor Lynne Haney’s students attended a lecture by Jan Urban, journalist and former political dissident. The group was also introduced to the country’s complex history during their visit to Terezin, a Jewish Ghetto and World War II era transit camp for prisoners bound for Auschwitz.

Students traveling to Abu Dhabi with Professor Charles Seife were introduced to the country’s past, present, and future by visiting Al Ain, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. They participated in a discussion concerning labor issues in the region and toured the Masdar Institute, dedicated to research on sustainable technologies and energy.

Professor Sarah Pearce’s tours of Madrid introduced students to the city’s rich, multicultural past as reflected in the city’s Islamic, Christian, and Jewish architecture. Students also experienced contemporary Spanish culture by attending the Los Reyes Parade and a Real Madrid soccer game.

Professor Tom Ertman took students on a tour of Berlin’s Potsdamer Platz, formerly the site of the Gestapo Headquarters, Luftwaffe Ministry, and Hitler’s Bunker. Students also attended a concert at the Berliner Philharmonie.

In Buenos Aires, Professor Lourdes Davila led students through the different European immigrant communities within the city. They learned about the days of the Peron government and the famous First Lady, Evita Peron. Lectures explored the turbulent times of the military junta in the late 1970’s when many individuals, “the Disappeared” were kidnapped. Later, they visited the ex ESMA where these “dissident” prisoners were sent and never returned.
After a successful fall semester and restful winter break, the CAS Student Council is ready to hit the ground running on a power-packed Spring semester. My name is Rijul Asri (CAS ’16), and as the Student-body President of the College, I’m back to talk about our big plans for this semester!

Our Vice President, Rebecca K. Cruz (CAS ’16), is spearheading a variety of traditions this semester. We will be participating in the All-University Games this year, and with our CAS and Chocolate Factory theme we know we will win the trophy for the College! She is also hard-at-work planning our College Achievement and Service Awards, and our annual CAS Formal.

Class Presidents Juhi Patel (CAS ’16), Hamza Muhammad (CAS ’17), Nick Cho (CAS ’18), and Ximena Tellez (CAS ’19) are starting their own traditions with innovative programs. From a Sophomore Networking Mixer to a Senior Celebration Series, we plan to generate some class spirit!

Graphic Designer Sarah Bigler (CAS ’16), Webmaster Neha Srivatsa (CAS ’16), and Secretary Sanjana Prakash (CAS ’16) are improving how we communicate with the student body. By designing an interactive newsletter students will know what we are doing and how they can get involved.

Service Chair Hannah Garcia (CAS ’19) is working with various organizations around the city to provide the opportunity for CAS students to engage in service projects. She is also planning some amazing fundraisers to raise money for our Relay for Life team—be sure to check them out!

Transfer Student Representative Daniella Haviv (CAS ’17) will continue her amazing work to create a unified transfer student community. She is planning events that help Spring Transfers explore the city in new and exciting ways!

Treasurer Shela Wu (CAS ’18) and Club Council Chair Uzma Nawaz (CAS ’17) are working to strengthen our club cosponsorship network, ensuring that all of our clubs and events are well-funded through collaboration with other university offices.

Alumni Relations Chair Saagar Chitale (CAS ’19) and Curriculum Chair Chris Hyman (CAS ’16) will offer students several opportunities to interact with alumni and faculty this semester. From our Student Alumni Banquet to Student Faculty Game Night, we hope that we can create a cohesive CAS community.

Senator Amanda Ezechi (CAS ’17), Advocacy Chair Noah Bierbrier (CAS ’18), and Alternate Senator Sofiya Andreyeva (CAS ’17) will be working internally on our Council’s constitution, making sure it is as efficient as possible. They are also continuing to work on university-wide projects, specifically those on affordability and diversity, to ensure the perspective of the College is represented.

We are very proud of our work and cannot wait to work with you to achieve even more. Stop by a General Assembly meeting (Tuesdays at 6:30PM, 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 Power of Difference

Entering its second year, the Upstander initiative (cas.nyu.edu/page/upstander) has hit its stride with the Dialogue series. Each semester, the CAS Dean’s Office and CAS Student Council host an Upstander Dialogue to provide students with an open space to understand and discuss contemporary issues that are important to their experience. The structure of the event is simple and student-centric. The evening begins with an introduction to the issue by a faculty facilitator; students are then lead in small groups by fellow student co-facilitators through a series of discussion questions. Attendees then reassemble to share their take-aways from the break-outs.

Additionally, every reading day the Upstander team sets up a Finals Study Break on the LL1 of Bobst to offer students some much needed fuel—free sugar and caffeine!—to power through the end of term, solicit feedback, collect your Everyday Hero stories, and introduce the next Dialogue theme. See you May 10!

The spring Dialogue, “The Power of Difference” features our very own Dean Gabi Starr in conversation with her colleague, Dr. Amy Belfi, framing the discussion on why diversity matters and ultimately leads to a better education. A humanist and scientist, respectively, Dr. Starr and Dr. Belfi demonstrate in their own collaboration how problems are solved more accurately and creatively in diverse groupings and, furthermore, help evade confirmation bias. Come together and learn how to leverage all of our differences to take us to deeper levels of understanding, achievement, and community.

As President Obama noted in his recent State of the Union Address:

“...democracy does require basic bonds of trust between its citizens. It doesn’t work if we think the people who disagree with us are all motivated by malice... Democracy grinds to a halt without a willingness to compromise, or when even basic facts are contested, or when we listen only to those who agree with us. Our public life withers when only the most extreme voices get all the attention.”

Upstander gives students the space to exercise their civic voice.

We always want to hear from you! Submit your Everyday Hero Stories and your suggestions for the fall 2016 Upstander Dialogue to beupstanding@nyu.edu. As always, our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/BeUpstandingNYU/) offers additional information on each of the Dialogue topics, allowing you to dig deeper and explore the issue from multiple perspectives.

Have a wonderful spring semester, and, as always, #BeUpstandingNYU!

Students share Upstander stories and receive free t-shirts.

CAS Student Council President at Finals Study Break.
COLLEGE COHORT PROGRAM

Leadership Training

Sophomore Cohort Presidents, who take over leadership of their cohorts in their second year on campus, have just completed the first half of the Cohort Program’s Leadership Development Series. Along with plenty of team-building and bonding exercises, the presidents were trained on leadership styles using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, event planning, inclusive leadership techniques and allyship, and engaged with dynamic guest speakers like writer, media consultant, and LGBTQ advocate Tiq Milan.

After spending their first semester together learning about their own leadership styles, Cohort Presidents will spend the spring exploring ways to implement these lessons towards professional goals. Presidents will each work on a Capstone, a semester-long exercise that will allow them to set goals, develop, and complete a tangible project in their field of interest. Presidents will be supported in their Capstone process by CAS Alumni Mentors, who they have been paired with according to areas of interest and expertise. Cohort Presidents and Alumni Mentors will celebrate their work at our year-end Alumni Mixer in April. If you would like to join them, please email cas.ccp@nyu.edu for more information.

IMPORTANT DATES

Upcoming in Spring 2016

Friday, April 1
Last day to Withdraw from a course
Last day to elect or revoke Pass/Fail option

Monday, April 11
Registration for Fall 2016 courses begins

Monday, March 14–Sunday, March 20
Spring Recess

Monday, May 9
Last day of classes

Tuesday, May 10
Reading Day

Wednesday, May 11–Tuesday, May 17
Examination period

Wednesday, May 18
University Commencement

Thursday, May 19
CAS Baccalaureate