U.S. Department of Education Awards $4.2 Million to Train Students in Educational Science Research

The U.S. Department of Education’s Institute for Education Sciences (IES) has awarded NYU a $4.2 million grant to fund a fellowship program to train doctoral students of diverse backgrounds to become outstanding researchers in the education sciences. The grant is administered through Steinhardt’s Institute of Human Development and Social Change (IHDSC), and is a collaboration involving the Steinhardt School, the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, and the Graduate School of Arts and Science. Over the course of the five-year grant, IHDSC will award fellowships to 28 doctoral students who will develop expertise in designing and conducting rigorous studies of teaching and learning, social and behavioral contexts of learning, and education policy. The 2008-09 IES fellows are Daisy Jackson and Karen McFadden (Steinhardt), Melissa Velez and Doreet Preiss (GSAS), and Jacob Leos-Urbel (Wagner). Larry Aber, professor of applied psychology and public policy, is the program director of the grant.

Policy Breakfast Explores Challenges That Can Inhibit School Readiness

NYU Steinhardt’s Education Policy Breakfast series, “Closing the Achievement Gap: Facing Challenges from Outside the Classroom,” kicked off this past November with a panel discussion on research into the challenges that inhibit school readiness among children. Following introductory remarks by Dean Mary Brabeck, Clancy Blair, Steinhardt professor of applied psychology, outlined current research into early childhood development and school readiness. Blair, a developmental psychologist who studies self-regulation and executive function in children, noted that self-regulation, manifested through turn-taking, attention, and social competence, is crucial for young children to succeed in school. He cited research that suggests environmental stressors, such as poverty, impede self-regulation in children and inhibit academic success.

Microsoft $1.5 Million Grant Creates Games for Learning Institute at NYU

Microsoft Research has made a grant of $1.5 million for a new Games For Learning Institute. The institute will be the first of its kind, multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional gaming research alliance that will provide the fundamental scientific evidence to support games as learning tools for math and science subjects among middle-school students. NYU and its consortium of partners — Columbia University, the City University of New York (CUNY), Dartmouth College, and the University of California, Los Angeles — will work together to create a research agenda in the area of educational games.
Jonathan Zimmerman Awarded NYU’s Distinguished Teaching Award

Jonathan Zimmerman, professor of educational history in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, has been awarded NYU’s Distinguished Teaching Award. Established in 1987, the award is presented annually to outstanding full-time faculty members in recognition of exceptional teaching, within and outside the classroom. Zimmerman was one of four professors chosen in a University-wide selection process.

Zimmerman’s books have been described as intellectual histories that challenge, provoke, and inspire ideas in readers. A former Peace Corps volunteer and high school teacher, Zimmerman is the author of four books including, Innocents Abroad: American Teachers in the American Century (Harvard, 2006), Whose America? Culture Wars in the Public Schools (Harvard, 2002), and Distilling Democracy: Alcohol Education in America’s Public Schools, 1880-1925 (Kansas, 1999). His academic articles have appeared in the Journal of American History, the Teachers College Record, and History of Education Quarterly, and he is a frequent op-ed contributor to The New York Times, The Washington Post, The New Republic, and other national newspapers and magazines.

At a Glance recently spoke with Zimmerman:

Do teachers have a moral responsibility to their students? Yes, absolutely. As a teacher, your duty is to help the student develop her or his own perspectives. Too often, I think, we try to instill or even impose our own views upon our students. And that’s an abdication of our moral responsibility.

What do you want your students to take from your course? I want the students to learn how to think: to analyze arguments and construct their own with rigorous attention to logic, facts, and detail. I also want them to acquire a spirit of tolerance and respect for opinions that they do not share.

What makes a good teacher? Enthusiasm for the subject — a desire to know more and to share both your knowledge and your passion for acquiring it, and concern for the student — constant attention to the needs, progress, and problems of the people under your charge. High standards for yourself and for your students.

How do you think you prepare students for life outside the classroom? Ninety-nine percent of my students will not become historians. But they will all become citizens, and I try to prepare them for that. A good history class should teach the skills that democratic citizenship demands: curiosity, critical thinking, and open-mindedness.

Doctoral Students Are Cambridge Fellows

Steinhardt doctoral students Wazhmah Osman of the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication and Carlos Santos of the Department of Applied Psychology have been awarded 2009 NYU-University of Cambridge Mainzer Fellowships in Gender Studies.

The eight-week fellowship provides an opportunity to study at the University of Cambridge, UK during spring semester 2009. The University of Cambridge Centre in Gender Studies, directed by Professor Juliet Mitchell, offers weekly seminars, and an opportunity for students to present their research and receive individual supervision from members of the faculty. Osman will be working on a dissertation which explores the gender battles erupting in Afghanistan as viewed through the lens of Afghan television. Santos is undertaking a longitudinal study on the development of middle school boys’ attitudes about gender as they transition through their middle school years.

Colloquium Honors Graduate Students’ Independent Research Ideas

Elizabeth Parvin (left), a student in the Department of Music and Performing Arts Professions, was among 15 students who presented research at Steinhardt’s annual Dean’s Grants for Graduate Student Research Colloquium. Parvin’s pilot study, “Auditory Cues and Spatial Displays: An Investigation of Short-Term Memory Enhancement,” researched our “natural ability to store acoustic and spatial information from sound sources.” The Dean’s Grants program offers graduate students up to $1,000 to explore a faculty-sponsored independent research project or a specific component of thesis or dissertation work and an opportunity to present their findings at the research colloquium.

NYU Steinhardt Welcomes New Faculty

The Coal Mine Politics: The Chihuahua in food safety at home. 
And in the meantime, buy local, buy organic, and be careful about wanting country-of-origin labeling to be taken seriously and enforced.

Tell them you want country-of-origin labeling to be taken seriously and enforced.
And in the meantime, buy local, buy organic, and be careful about food safety at home.

You have had a distinguished career writing about food and nutrition. Why have you turned your attention to pets at this time?
I hope you are not suggesting that food for pets is somehow less worthy of academic inquiry than food for people. I view pet foods as a logical extension of my work, not a departure. I am interested in the social and institutional forces that influence food production and consumption.

The same agricultural system that produces food for people also produces food for pets and farm animals. Animals eat the same foods we do — just the parts that we are unwilling to eat. For example, we slaughter 35 million beef cattle annually in this country but are willing to eat only about half the animal. The other half would be wasted if pets and farm animals didn’t eat it, which would present a monumental disposal problem. So: pet foods perform an important public service.

Can you talk about the pet food industry?
Americans own about 165 million dogs and cats. On the consumption side of the food chain, we buy about $17 billion worth of pet foods annually. Pet foods are big business. From a nutritional standpoint, they are especially interesting: like infant formula, they provide complete nutrition in one package. The products are branded, packaged, and marketed to appeal to pet owners as well as the animals. One other connection to human food is that most branded, packaged, and marketed to appeal to pet owners as well as the animals. One other connection to human food is that most branded, packaged, and marketed to appeal to pet owners as well as the animals. One other connection to human food is that most branded, packaged, and marketed to appeal to pet owners as well as the animals. One other connection to human food is that most brands are marketed by major food and consumer product companies: Nestlé (no relation), Mars, Del Monte, Procter & Gamble, and Colgate-Palmolive.

What can we do to protect our food supply?
I am hoping this book will turn readers into food safety advocates. This means grass roots political action and the exercise of democratic rights as citizens. Write your congressional representatives! Tell them you want a stronger and more effective FDA or, better yet, an independent food safety agency that oversees the food supply from farm to table. Tell them you won’t buy imported food from countries that don’t enforce food safety rules. Tell them you want country-of-origin labeling to be taken seriously and enforced. And in the meantime, buy local, buy organic, and be careful about food safety at home.

New Research Alliance Funded by Gates and Ford Foundations to Study Progress in City Schools

New York City Schools Chancellor Joel Klein joined officials from the teachers union, civic leaders, education researchers, and policymakers in October to take a new step to advance school improvement in New York City. The Research Alliance for New York City Schools at New York University, a non-partisan applied research center that is independent of city government and the Department of Education, will utilize recent advances in education science and draw on the expertise of the city’s and the nation’s top researchers to be a source of valid and reliable evidence about efforts to provide high quality education for all students.

Housed within the Steinhardt School, the Research Alliance will have close academic connections to other NYU schools — the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service — as well as to Columbia Teachers College and CUNY, and will work to forge connections with other research universities nationally.

To support the work of the alliance, Klein has ensured that the new center will have access to the Department of Education’s rich databases on student, personnel, and school characteristics and performance and that the department will collaborate on evaluations of initiatives aimed at improving the city’s schools.

“Many of our reforms reflect the power of data and high-quality analysis, and we believe that the Research Alliance will help us build on our progress by doing independent, high-quality analyses of which programs are working and which aren’t,” said Klein.

Initial funding will be provided by a $3 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and a $500,000 grant from the Ford Foundation.

The NYU Steinhardt Mission
NYU Steinhardt advances knowledge, creativity, and innovation at the crossroads of human learning, culture, development, and well-being. Through rigorous research and education, both within and across disciplines, the school’s faculty and students evaluate and redefine processes, practices, and policies in their respective fields and, from a global as well as community perspective, lead in an ever-changing world.
Dean Mary Brabeck has announced tenure and promotion decisions. Below are faculty members who excel in teaching and research and contribute in important ways to their professions, the NYU and Steinhardt communities, as well as our local and global society.

Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

Rodney Benson (Media, Culture, and Communication) is a sociologist who conducts research on comparative media systems, cultural globalization, and the framing of social problems in the news. He is an internationally recognized expert on the field theory of Pierre Bourdieu, and co-edited the volume Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field (Polity, 2005). His articles have appeared in the American Sociological Review, Political Communication, Theory and Society, and other leading journals. He is the author of the forthcoming book, Framing Immigration: How the French and American Media Shape Public Debate (Cambridge University Press). Benson has been a visiting professor at the Institute of Political Studies-Toulouse, Bauhaus University-Weimar, the University of Bremen, and the University of Copenhagen.

James Macinko (Nutrition, Food Studies, Public Health) is a social epidemiologist whose research on health disparities has been funded by the National Institutes of Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Macinko’s field experience includes evaluation of primary health care systems in Latin America and the Caribbean; development of micro-finance programs in Africa and Latin America; infectious disease prevention and control in Sub-Saharan Africa; as well as working with the Latino communities in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and New York City to identify and eliminate barriers to primary health care. In 2006, Macinko was the recipient of a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health and Society Scholar fellowship. He serves as director of the NYU Master’s Program in Global Public Health.

Promotion to Professor

Diane Hughes (Applied Psychology) is a community and developmental psychologist who studies the intersections of race, ethnicity, culture, and experiences across social contexts as they influence family processes and early adolescent development. She has focused her research on understanding the nature of parents’ and adolescents’ discrimination experiences across and within workplaces, schools, and peer groups, and on documenting the nature and consequences of messages parents transmit to children about race. She currently serves as co-director of the Center for Research on Culture, Development and Education. Her research has been supported by grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Science Foundation.

Catherine Milne (Teaching and Learning) began her career as a high school science teacher, then opted for a career in higher education so that she could better study questions about the philosophical and historic origins of school science. She is currently co-principal investigator on a collaborative multimedia and learning research project called “Molecules and Minds,” funded by the U.S. Department of Education. This project supports the development of multimedia simulations for chemistry education that have been integrated into chemistry curricula in New York and Texas. She has been published in numerous journals and is under contract for a book, Understanding Inquiry in the Science Classroom: Science as Separate and Connected Knowing (SENSE). Milne teaches courses in science curriculum, history of science, and chemistry for the science education program. She also serves on the editorial board of two premier science education journals, Journal of Research in Science Teaching and Research in Science Education.

Robert Teranishi (Administration, Leadership and Technology) studies the relationship between the social construction of race, the stratification of college opportunity, and the social mobility of racial minorities in American society. His research has informed important policy debates in the field of education, including the Higher Education Reauthorization Act, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, No Child Left Behind, and state policy related to college admissions. He has published widely and is the author of the forthcoming book, Asians in the Ivory Tower: Beyond a Single Story of Asian American and Pacific Islander Participation in U.S. Higher Education (Stanford University Press). Teranishi serves as principal investigator of the National Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Research in Education and is a faculty affiliate with the Steinhardt Institute for Higher Education Policy.

Promotion to Associate Professor

Natalie Jeremijenko (Art and Art Professions) is an artist whose background includes studies in biochemistry, physics, neuroscience, engineering, and environmental activism. Jeremijenko’s projects explore socio-technical change, and have been exhibited by several museums and galleries, including MASS MoCA, the Whitney, and the Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt. A 1999 Rockefeller Fellow, she was recently named one of the 40 most influential designers by I.D. Magazine. She is the co-author of Creative Biotecnology: A User’s Manual (L+ Publishing, 2004), and was included in the 2006 Whitney Biennial of American Art and the 2006 Cooper-Hewitt National Design Triennial.

Judith Schwartz (Art and Art Professions) is a critic, curator, artist, and author of Confrontational Ceramics (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). She is the director of Steinhardt’s sculpture in craft media area and teaches studio courses in ceramic art. Schwartz served as an educational consultant to the Lenox China Company and past president of both the University Council for
Music Instructor Saul Walker Honored for His Timeless API 550A Equalizer Design

You would be hard pressed to find anyone in the music industry who has not used the API 550A equalizer. The 550A, designed by Saul Walker, an adjunct instructor in the music technology program, has been used in recording studios throughout the world, among them the Record Plant and Sunset Sound, and by such musical greats as Phil Ramone, Jimmy Page, the Doobie Brothers, Stevie Wonder, Leon Russell, Frank Zappa, Marvin Gaye, Herbie Hancock, and Bob Dylan. This past October, API 550A was inducted into the Technology Hall of Fame at the annual Audio Engineering Society Convention in San Francisco.

Walker, a fellow of the Audio Engineering Society, designed the equalizer in 1968, and 40 years later it remains the standard against which other equalizers are measured. What accounts for its popularity and longevity? “The 550A design provides a fast, repeatable, and virtually foolproof mechanism to enhance or accentuate specific segments of the audio spectrum or to de-emphasize other tonalities while maintaining the essential integrity of the program material,” Walker says. He notes that though newer technology provides greater flexibility at lower cost, permitting more drastic alteration of the sound spectrum, many artists just prefer the sound of the original 550A.

Users of Walker’s equalizer are fond of its acoustic properties — the ‘sweet tonal change’ coursing through the mix and its settings that allow for ‘more bite or body’ in the basses. “An equalizer is, in a way, a musical instrument,” Walker says.

Saul Walker signs the ‘Saul Walker Signature Series’ equalizer at the API factory in Maryland.
**Policy Briefs**

**Dean Brabeck Leads Capitol Hill Briefing on Teacher Quality**

Dean Mary Brabeck recently visited Capitol Hill to lead a briefing for congressional staff about the importance of educational research in developing highly qualified teachers. The briefing, titled Teacher Quality: Research on the Science of Teaching and Learning, was hosted by the Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN) Coalition, a group of 17 deans from leading schools of education that advocate in support of federal investments into the scientific understanding of learning and human development.

“Education in the United States has changed significantly in recent decades, but we still do not have the research to determine what makes an effective teacher,” said Brabeck. “Congress must boost investment in the educational science agencies in order to answer some basic questions about teaching and learning. This is essential as we attempt to foster a highly educated workforce capable of competing in the integrated global economy,” she added.

The presentation was directed at congressional staff specializing in education policy. Next year Congress is expected to tackle two pieces of legislation, the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act and the reauthorization of the Institute for Education Sciences, that will focus on improving teacher quality and student learning outcomes.

Along with Brabeck, Stanford Dean Linda Darling-Hammond, University of Michigan Dean Debra Loewenberg Ball and University of Washington Dean Patricia Wasley also provided presentations on the need to boost federal investment in educational research.

**Policy Breakfast Series** continued from page 1

ability. Statistics indicate that 50 percent of teachers say more than half of school age children are not ready for school.

Blair was followed by Michael Rebell, an experienced litigator, researcher, and scholar in the field of education law, and co-founder of the Campaign for Educational Equity at Columbia Teachers College. Rebell noted that there is “real demand” for programs that address the achievement gap, citing that nationally only 13 percent of low-income children participate in after-school programs. In suggesting ways in which to turn successful pilot programs into policy, Rebell advocated for framing the issue in terms of a child’s right to a comprehensive education.

Carola Suárez-Orozco, Steinhardt professor of applied psychology and co-director of Immigration Studies@NYU, was the event’s discussant, noting that “policy makers must develop culturally and developmentally informed policies grounded in the demographic realities of today’s student population, preparing them for the educational necessities of the 21st century.”

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**Students Volunteer by Painting, Sewing, Serving Local Communities**

More than 90 students volunteered for Steinhardt’s Day of Service in October. At Pless Hall, students created instructional surgery dolls for children at local hospitals (below), and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the Bowery Mission. Working with Publicolor, students painted primer onto the back of a public school in the Bronx, staffed a halloween carnival in Brooklyn, and served lunch at St. Joseph’s Soup Kitchen. The semi-annual event was sponsored by Steinhardt’s Undergraduate Student Government (USG), and “brought the many majors in Steinhardt closer together as a larger Steinhardt community,” said Carrie Goldberg, co-public relations chair.

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**Nutrition Professor Receives Grant**

Niyati Parekh, assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, was recently awarded a $100,000 grant from the National Cancer Institute to study the links between obesity and cancer mortality.

Working with co-collaborator Grace Lu-Yao, a cancer epidemiologist at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Parekh aims to investigate the impact of metabolic syndrome, which includes conditions associated with obesity, such as insulin resistance, high triglyceride levels, hypertension, and others.

Secondary aims of the study are to evaluate the impacts of lifestyle risk factors, such as physical activity, low calorie diets, and the use of aspirin, on cancer mortality among individuals with metabolic syndrome.

The study is the first large, national, longitudinal effort of its kind. Parekh’s findings will be instrumental in designing future intervention trials and will aid in the design of individualized cancer treatments.

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Visit [www.steinhardt.nyu.edu/gogreen](http://www.steinhardt.nyu.edu/gogreen) to go green today!
I am a first year graduate student at NYU, and I hope to be a French teacher in the United States. Right now I am teaching English to an immigrant population from Africa, the district of Paris to a diverse middle school in the 19th district. This is my first official teaching job.

Teaching English in France has been an adventure from day one: On my first day of teaching at Claude Chappe, I arrived early, eager to teach. I went to the room number printed on my schedule, but was surprised to find it empty. I had nothing to do, apparently, because the teacher that I was supposed to be assisting had a rendezvous somewhere (nobody explained) so I went back to the teacher’s lounge.

There was a strike going on! I spent the next four hours sitting on a painfully uncomfortable chair, killing time until the teachers decided to resume teaching.

At Henri Bergson, a much larger middle school than Claude Chappe, the teachers have that contradictory manner of being extremely down to earth (there are often a few of them rolling cigarettes in the teachers’ lounge), while at the same time leaping into passionate conversations and debates with their colleagues. Any small occurrence with a student, or change in the government, will have these teachers convening in a heartbeat. They rush to get their cappuccinos from the espresso machine, and then sit together discussing topics with impressive alertness.

There are as many differences as there are miles between us! And with almost every difference, I find myself siding with the French, and yet I feel so proud to be American...The students are a mirror of myself. When I see them struggling to communicate in English, I see myself struggling in French. Despite the strikes (yes, there have been more), and the sometimes chaotic atmosphere of the schools, I relish my time spent in the classroom. My students have an amazing amount of energy, and it is my job to figure out how I can channel that energy into learning.

“My students simply cannot tolerate being bored,” says graduate student Karie Von Fang. “So, I have integrated role playing, skits, and word searches into my lesson plan. I find myself enjoying my class a lot more this way.”

Microsoft Grant Creates Games for Learning Institute

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Parsons The New School for Design, Polytechnic Institute of NYU, the Rochester Institute of Technology, and Teachers College are matching Microsoft’s investment, for a combined $3 million fund. The first three years of the institute’s research will focus on evaluating computer games as potential learning tools for science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects during the middle-school years. The institute will work with a range of student populations, yet focus on underrepresented middle-school students, such as girls and minorities.

Video games, with their popularity and singular ability to engage young people, are showing promise as a way to excite and prepare the Net Generation, the current crop of students who have grown up on technology. This generation, though well-versed in using technology for social networking and Internet research, is continuing a decline in proficiency and interest in math and sciences — the very skills needed to prepare them for the new demands and requirements of the 21st century.

NYU Steinhardt’s Jan Plass, associate professor of educational communication and technology, will co-direct the institute with Ken Perlin, professor of computer science in NYU’s Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

“Middle school is a critical stage for students, a time when many are introduced to advanced math and science concepts,” said Perlin. “Many students become discouraged or uninterested and pour their time at home into gaming. Ironically, we think gaming is our starting point to draw them into math, science and technology-based programs.”

NYU and the consortium of academic partners will address these questions from a multidisciplinary angle, exploring what makes certain games compelling and playable and what elements make them effective, providing critically important information to researchers, game developers, and educators to support a new era of using games for educational purposes.

STATE-OF-THE-ART SPEECH CLINIC IS FLOURISHING

Business is booming at the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology’s clinic, where 150 members of the local community have taken advantage of therapy appointments with students training to work as speech-language pathologists. The clinic offers services to infants, toddlers, children, adolescents, and adults with various disorders of speech, language, and hearing. Members of the community who are interested in receiving more information should call 212 998 5230.
It was standing room only at the Skirball Center for Performing Arts in November when Alan Menken and Sir Tim Rice were inducted into NYU’s Musical Theatre Hall of Fame. The highlight of the evening was a performance of the team’s oratorio King David, adapted for the Steinhardt stage by Menken and directed by Steinhardt faculty member Bill Wesbrooks.

Featuring more than 100 students from Steinhardt’s Program in Vocal Performance and the NYU Symphony Orchestra, the production celebrated the journey of the Biblical monarch from his humble beginnings as a poor shepherd boy to his ultimate place as ruler of a great nation. “It’s been tremendous to revisit this work and see it at NYU,” Menken said. “To work with young people on the foothills of success is particularly rewarding,” Rice added.

Steinhardt Students Perform King David for Its Creators, Alan Menken and Sir Tim Rice

Jay Armstrong Johnson (as David) preparing to assume the throne of a united Israel. He is surrounded by (counterclockwise from left): Jordan Stanley, Jacob Bichachi, Marvin Avila, Rich Krakowski, and Gregory Williams.

(clockwise from top): Courtiers Bryna O’Neill, Meghan Cork, and Nicole Mercer celebrating the death of Goliath at the hand of David; Shane Quinn as King Saul; Bronson Murphy (as Joab) and Nic Rouleau (as Jonathan) recalling to Shane Quinn (as King Saul) the triumph of David over Goliath.