

Academic Affairs Update

YORK COLLEGE

Spring Convocation Addresses “Pathways” and Student Success



Spring Convocation at York this year was guided by the theme “Engaging, Enhancing, Empowering our Educational Enterprise.” The Convocation officially opened the semester with a cadre of faculty and administrators in attendance and participating.

President Marcia V. Keizs opened the event with encouraging news.

“We met and surpassed our enrollment goals by one percent,” said Dr. Keizs. “Students are [also] now participating more fully



Students and administrators during their skit at Spring Convocation - (Picture by Clloyd Smith)

[in college life] as they are full-time.”

The president added that budget constraints are still a concern for York, but she was delighted to report that Physician Assistant, Nursing and Clinical Laboratory Science re-

cently received re-accreditation.

Provost Ivelaw L. Griffith discussed “education imperatives” transfer students and the college to college disparity in General Education (Gen Ed) design.

“It contributes to stumbling blocks for our students,” said Dr. Griffith. “A Pathways common core will not dilute Gen Ed. There will be no diminution of quality.”

According to a recent report from the Pathways to Degree Comple-

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Special points of interest:

- *Town & Gown* meeting at York College
- *Mentoring Program*
- *Writing at CUNY*
- *New Nursing Simulation Labs*

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York Alum Receives CUNY’s First “Decade of Science” Award

Back in 2005 CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein declared that the next 10 years would be known as the “Decade of Science.” And in February 2012 he presented a York College alum with the first, “Decade of Science Award.”

At the CUNY Lunch-



Yisa Rumala (ctr.) with York College President Marcia V. Keizs and CUNY Executive Vice-Chancellor Jay Hershenson

eon, held in Albany during the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Caucus Weekend, Chancellor Goldstein presented the award to Yisa Rumala, of York’s Class of 2006.

Rumala who majored in Physics and Mathematics at York, also earned the M.S. in Elec-

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CUNY Chancellor Goldstein (l.) introducing Yisa Rumala (ctr.). Looking on, Executive Vice-Chancellor Jay Hershenson (seated, right).

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trical Engineering on the way to the Ph.D. in Applied Physics [both] at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He has attended the university on a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, University of Michigan Rackham Merit Fellowship, and University of Michigan Applied Physics Fellowship obtained while still at York;

His presentation at the luncheon, "From Brooklyn and the Farm to Optical Tornadoes: My Path Through the STEM Disciplines," highlights some of his dissertation work in optical and atomic physics. He will defend his dissertation this spring.

"My dissertation research work is on Light Beams which possess orbital angular momentum," Rumala explained. "The reason wind tornadoes revolve around is because they have orbital angular momentum. By using light's orbital angular momentum that, is the tornado-like properties of light, optical structures with different geometries and dynamic properties can be obtained."

Rumala created all these structures experimentally in the laboratory. They can then be used for fundamental

and applied research such as studying atomic and molecular structures, trapping particles or atoms to study their rotation dynamics ... and could in the long run enable new technologies for sensing toxic chemicals in the air, optical metrology, building gyroscopes to measure rotation, quantum information and more.

"I want to make an impact on society in science, health and education," said Rumala. "I was born in Brooklyn, but my parents sent me to [their homeland] Nigeria so I could learn the native culture, values and language. I learnt how to elevate my mind above all hardships."

In Nigeria, where Rumala lived with members of the extended family, he was required to help with farming duties. It was there that he learnt to respect physical labor and the rewards of seeds literally coming to fruition from that labor, to nourish family, community and nation. His research made for an engaging presentation in Albany.

After completing his high school education in Nigeria, Rumala's parents brought him back to New York to attend college. His older brother was already a student at

York and his parents wanted their younger son to attend college where another member of the family could look out for the then-16 year-old.

He soon found himself under the mentorship of Dr. Farley Mawyer, one of York's outstanding Mathematics professors, who nurtured the young scholar along with Physics professor Gregory Boutis, among others.

"He was my first official mentor," said Rumala of Professor Mawyer. "I enjoyed the research ... solving mathematics problems and his great mentorship."

In the packed room of CUNY officials, state and city legislators, students, faculty, staff and his highly-accomplished family, Rumala thanked York and CUNY for the outstanding opportunities he had as a York student and for the homecoming honor.

President Keizs was delighted.

"This is a signal honor, receiving the first Decade of Science Award," said Dr. Marcia V. Keizs, president of York College. "Yisa is indeed a worthy candidate as his presentation evidenced. It is a great day for York."

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President Keizs added that having the Chancellor introduce the honoree “brought distinction to the moment.”



CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein greeting the father of Mr. Yisa Rumala, who recently received the first CUNY “Decade of Science Award.”

AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER SPRING 2012 EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH 2012

FEBRUARY IS AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

ALL EVENTS ARE IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER (3B-04) UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

- Wednesday, March 7: 3-5 p.m. **NANA KIMATI DINIZULU**, Dinizulu Cultural Center: “Understanding the African-American Interest and Resurgence of African Cosmology through Artistic Expressions”
- Wednesday, March 14: 2-3:30 p.m. – **AFRICANA COLLOQUIUM SERIES** – Mark Schuller, Social Sciences. “Pa Manyen Fanm Nan Konsa: Intersectionality, Structural Violence, and Vulnerability Before and After the Earthquake.” Paper draft to be circulated March 7. E-mail kjosephs@york.cuny.edu or gwhite@york.cuny.edu
- Thursday, March 15: noon – 2 p.m. **FILM: Stevie Wonder - Live at Last (2009)**, Co-sponsored by the York College Music Club (2M05)
- Monday, March 19: 7 p.m. **PANEL DISCUSSION: “Life in the Key of Love” - The Impact of Stevie Wonder** (Martin Atangana, LaForrest Cope, Mychel Namphy, George White, and Tom Zlabinger)
- Friday, March 23: 7 p.m. **YORK COLLEGE BIG BAND SPOTLIGHT SERIES: A Tribute to Stevie Wonder.** Made possible by the York College Performing Arts Center (at the PAC, \$10 suggested donation)
- Tuesday, March 27: noon-2 p.m. – **DISTINGUISHED PROVOST LECTURE:** Elizabeth Nunez, Distinguished Professor, Hunter College – Reading and discussion of her new novel *Boundaries* (2D01)
- Wednesday, March 28: 6 p.m. **DEANNE BELL** – Ode to the Downpressor: A Psychological Portrait of Racism, Classism, Denial and Possibilities for Social Transformation in (Post)Colonial Jamaica. Organized by Ian Hansen, Psychology

CENTER HOURS – STOP BY THE CENTER (3B-04) FOR A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY OR TO RESEARCH

Mondays – Thursdays, 10a.m.-8p.m.

Fridays 10a.m-4p.m.

CLUB MEETINGS (as of September 7, 2011):

Tuesdays, noon-2 p.m.

African American Studies Club

Wednesdays, 6-8p.m.

Yoga and Meditation Club