

# NEXUS

*Nassau Community College*  
Where Success Starts . . . And Continues

## *Nassau Community College President*

*Dr. Sean A. Fanelli*

## *Receives National Award at the U.S. Supreme Court*



At a special ceremony at the United States Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. on January 23, Nassau Community College President Dr. Sean A. Fanelli received the prestigious William J. Brennan, Jr. Award. Presented by the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression, the William J. Brennan, Jr. Award honors the legacy of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brennan's devotion to the principles of free expression. The award, which is only given when a recipient is deemed worthy, recognizes those with a similar commitment. Such commitment might be shown by a single act or a lifetime of activity to enhance the liberties of free speech and press.

Dr. Fanelli is the first college president ever to receive the William J. Brennan, Jr. Award—all previous award recipients have

been lawyers. His name was placed on a plaque for display in Justice Brennan's United States Supreme Court chambers. Speaking at the award ceremony, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said, "Justice Brennan loved mercy and did justice for some 34 years on this Court. He retained throughout his full life a genuine fondness for people. He would have applauded Dr. Fanelli's caring, courageous endeavors to preserve and advance academic freedom. Dr. Fanelli, for your brave efforts, my congratulations and best wishes. May you continue to hold, as Justice Brennan did, a sparkling vision of the importance of freedom of inquiry to our nation and world."

As president of Nassau Community College since 1982, Dr. Fanelli has served not only as a strong educational leader, but also an eloquent and courageous defender of academic and intellectual freedom. In the

third year of his presidency, Fanelli refused to heed massive public pressure from many in the Catholic community to cancel a college production of the controversial but award-winning play *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You* by Christopher Durang. While conceding, "as a Catholic, I personally find the play offensive," he maintained that "cancellation would have a chilling effect upon academic freedom and freedom of speech as well." Fanelli also

fought a four-year court battle adamantly defending the College's refusal to disclose teaching materials used in a course entitled "Human Sexuality." The effort to obtain the materials led to a later attempt by critics outside the college to control the content of the course, to which Fanelli responded, "the concept of persons not in the College community deciding what the content of a course should be sets a dangerous precedent. It's just not appropriate to have an entity external to the college process come in and tell you how to construct a curriculum."

Presenting the award to Dr. Fanelli was Robert M. O'Neil, director of the Thomas Jefferson Center and past president of the

---

*"Dr. Fanelli, for your brave efforts, my congratulations and best wishes. May you continue to hold...a sparkling vision of the importance of freedom of inquiry to our nation and world."*

---

***Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg***

---

University of Virginia. The Thomas Jefferson Center, located in Charlottesville, Virginia, is a non profit, non partisan institution engaged in research, education, and intervention on behalf of the individual right of free expression.

William Domroe, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Nassau Community College, said, "To receive such a prestigious award at the U.S. Supreme Court was a momentous occasion and one of the highlights of Dr. Fanelli's career. His award is proudly shared by the entire College community, as well as the residents of Nassau County."

# Nassau Receives \$735,000 NYS Senate Grant

## FACULTY/STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Back (l-r): Kevin Saunders, Vice President, Academic/Student Services; Senator Kemp Hannon; Senator Dean Skelos; Dr. Sean A. Fanelli, President, NCC; Senator Fuschillo; Ezra Delaney, Vice President of Administration, NCC; Janis Schimsky, Director, Center for Students with Disabilities; Harold Bellinger, Affirmative Action Officer. Front row (l-r): NCC students Chris Morris, Jenny Brackenridge, Heidi Hacsí.

Senators Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (8<sup>th</sup> Senate District - Merrick), Kemp Hannon (6<sup>th</sup> SD - Garden City) and Dean Skelos (9<sup>th</sup> SD - Rockville Centre) were instrumental in obtaining a New York State Senate Grant of \$735,000 for Nassau Community College to help fund new electronic doors for improved access for disabled students.

"This grant will help limit barriers that disabled students face on campus and will allow them and others improved access to a higher education," Senator Fuschillo said. "Nassau Community College has nearly 600 students with disabilities currently enrolled at the College and they are entitled to receive an education without the frustration caused by obstacles that prevent them from getting to their classes on time and earning their degrees."

NCC students expressed their gratification to Senator Fuschillo, stating that new electronic doors will provide improved access around campus and help them get to classes promptly.

**Thomas Casserly, Financial Aid**, was elected as a Member at Large, Community College Representative to the State University of New York Financial Aid Professionals (SUNYFAP) Executive Council. His two-year term begins in April.

**Prof. Paul Doyle, English**, wrote a literary critique of Laurence Thornton for the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the library reference book *Contemporary Novelists*.

**Prof. Marcia McNair, English**, recently presented an overview of African-American writing with an emphasis on early slave narratives, the cultural rebirth of the Harlem Renaissance, and contemporary trends at Peninsula Public Library in Lawrence, NY.

**Dr. Tom O'Brien and Dr. Kumkum Prabhakar, Biology**, recently published an article entitled "Implementing Modified Pedagogy to Teach Biology" in the Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologist's winter 2001 issue of *IN VIVO*. Prof. O'Brien also published the article "Helping Students Develop Thinking Skills Using Environmental Topics" in the Empire State Association of Two-Year Colleges' Biologist Fall 2000 Journal.

**Prof. Judy Pestronk, Art**, displayed bronze medals in a traveling exhibition with the American Medallist Association's AMSA 2000, first at QCC Art Gallery, City University, and then at Iola and Milwaukee. She showed small sculptures at an invitational exhibit at the Donnell Library in NYC; presented a lecture on the influence of Greek architecture at the Long Beach Library; and received the Chaim Gross Award for alabaster carving at the Salmagundi Gallery in NYC.

**Prof. Patti Tana, English**, won first prize in the Long Island Poetry Collective Poetry Contest with her poem "Fools Rush In."

**Mikki Vicoli, Information Services**, was recognized by Wilton as the Eastern US Team Enrollment Winner of the Year for the year 2000 for her cake decorating classes. She teaches creative cake decorating at NCC and in the Bellmore school district.

### Nassau Community College Hosts 7th Annual Multicultural Fair Respecting Identity and Cultural Diversity Thursday — April 4, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

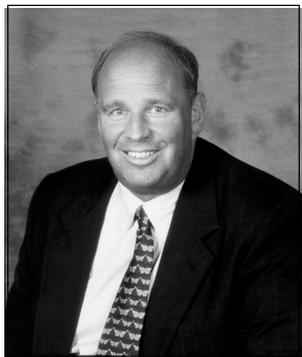
*This fair has something for everyone: music, folk dancing, films, departmental and student exhibits. The public is invited to attend this entertaining, educational and cultural experience. Admission is free. All NCC programs are accessible to the disabled. For more information about the NCC Multicultural Fair, please contact Rosemary Ortlieb-Padgett - (516) 572-7661, or Elizabeth Wood (516) 572 - 9661.*

*The Nassau Community College Foundation Honors Two Long Island Businessmen:*

# Richard Kessel and Bobby Kumar

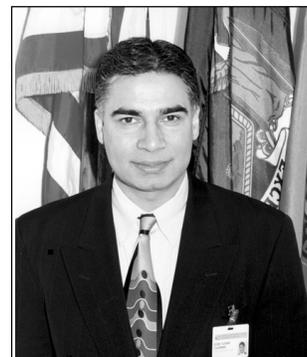
## *Spring Honoree Dinner The Vanderbilt, Plainview*

*Thursday, March 29, 2001 - 6:30 pm*



**Richard Kessel**  
Chairman of the Board and  
CEO of LIPA

*The Nassau Community College Foundation, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation established to provide the "Extra Margin of Excellence" at Nassau Community College. Working on behalf of the College since 1983, the Foundation provides a privately controlled, independent avenue of philanthropic aid to assist in the continuing development of the College and its programs. The primary focus of the Foundation's activities is its scholarship program. Additionally, programs in faculty development, cultural and leadership activities are undertaken through its auspices. For more information about the Nassau Community College Foundation, Inc. or the Spring Honoree Dinner, please call (516) 572-7830.*



**Bobby Kumar**  
President, Kumar Enterprises, Inc.  
Chairman, Nassau Health Care Corp.

## *Tuskegee Airmen Celebrate Black History Month at NCC*



*(L-R) Retired Lt. William M. Wheeler and Retired Major Victor W. Terrelonge display photos from WW II.*

During the month of February, the Nassau Community College Black History Month Committee presented a series of programs and events as a tribute to the black experience. One such program was a discussion by five of the original Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American group permitted to fly in the United States Air Force.

Even though African-Americans have been involved in all wars throughout America's history, they oftentimes were not given full credit and recognition for services rendered, and in most cases were isolated in all-African-American units. At the outbreak of World War II, black leaders and the black press increased their protest of the separate and significantly inferior access to training, facilities and preparation afforded to blacks in the military.

In their presentation, the former airmen spoke about their personal experiences in military and civilian life during the World War II years. They explained how they and others wanted to be patriotic and good soldiers, yet still had to face rampant discrimination and segregation. Because of their dedication and success, however, the federal government was forced to reassess its segregated military policy when the war ended. Eventually, President Truman was compelled to issue two executive orders that effectively paved the way for the integration of the Air Force.

The students, faculty and members of the community who attended the discussion by the Tuskegee airmen were motivated by their stories and inspired by their commitment to their country in the face of discrimination. The airmen also stressed the importance of education in the continuing effort to overcome racial and economic barriers.



*Tuskegee Airmen circa 1943*

# NCC Campus Calendar

## Nassau Community College Presents The 30th Annual Folk Festival

**TUESDAY-THURSDAY — APRIL 3, 4, 5**  
**8:00 PM - 12:00 AM**

*Scheduled acts include: Janis Ian, Oscar Brand, Dave Van Ronk  
(Blues), Harlem Blues & Jazz Band, C.J. Chenier (Zydeco), Moti  
Deren (Cuban Jewish), Eliza Carthy (British), Spider Nick &  
the Mad Dogs (Ska-L.I.), Johnnie Whelan (Irish)*



*Janis Ian*

*The NCC Folk Festival and daytime activities are free and the public is invited. All programs will be held in the Nassau Community College Center Building. They are sponsored by Nassau Concerts and the NCC Faculty/Student Association. For further information and schedule of the performers, please contact Phyllis Kurland at (516) 572-7153.*

### **NEXUS**

**NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
One Education Drive  
Garden City, New York 11530-6793

A Unit of the State University of New York

**PRESIDENT** ..... Sean A. Fanelli  
**PUBLISHER** ..... Reginald Tuggle  
**EDITOR** ..... Alicia Steger  
**PRODUCTION** ..... Robert Lohne  
**FACULTY/STAFF**  
**HIGHLIGHTS**.....Gail Ignacio  
**LAYOUT/ DESIGN** ..... Alicia Steger  
**SUPPORT STAFF** ..... Seri DiLapi  
..... Lisa Friel

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED  
BY THE OFFICE OF COLLEGE/  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS  
(516) 572-9634 FAX: (516) 572-7497  
E-Mail: NCC-Rel@sunynassau.edu

Non-Profit Org.  
Bulk Rate  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Garden City, N.Y.  
Permit No. 71

***Nassau Community College***  
***Where Success Starts . . . And Continues***