

PSC Retrospective 2000-2007



Grad Students

Graduate students in December 2007 gathering petition signatures for healthcare coverage, a demand subsequently won.



Hyland McCall

John Hyland and Cecelia McCall at a celebration in 2006 honoring them as they retire as PSC Secretary and Treasurer.

PICA plan saved, co-pays go up

City, unions reach health deal

By PETER HOGNESS

With a popular prescription drug plan about to run out of funds, municipal unions and the Bloomberg administration reached agreement December 18 on a range of changes in health insurance coverage. The deal saves the PICA program, which covers drugs for asthma, cancer and psychiatric conditions, and it will increase City payments to the unions' troubled welfare funds. But it also means increased co-pays and deductibles for those in GHI Blue Cross, co-pays for PICA drugs and a \$55 annual administrative fee for all workers. The changes take effect on April 1, 2004.

GOING BANQUET

The special drug plan was created in 2001 to cover so-called PICA medications (Psychotropic, Injectable, Chemotherapy and Asthma) — drugs that are often expensive and/or taken for life. The plan was created with few restrictions, at a time of rising drug costs.



A deal on health care for City workers will keep the PICA program, maintain benefits and help union welfare funds. At the table at a recent NYC negotiating session, fourth from left, James Hanley, city labor commissioner; third from right, David Weingarten, MLC chair; sixth from right, PSC President Barbara Bowen.

City Health Deal

Saving the PICA prescription drug plan.

“Labor Goes to the Movies”

PSC kicks off new film series

By JONATHAN BUCHSBAIM

Queens College

The PSC is kicking off a new cultural initiative this semester — a monthly film series devoted to labor and the cinema. The series is designed as a forum for discussion of issues facing labor and the union movement today.

Union cultural work has a long and distinguished pedigree, in this country and internationally. Work or film, theater and other art projects flourished during the 1930s, with Film and Photo Leagues and Federal Theater Projects. More recently, 1990s Bread and Roses Cultural Project has drawn praise for its wide range of activities, from plays to poetry readings to painting exhibitions. The founder and director of Bread and Roses, Moe Foner, passed away on January 10. A memorial service is being planned and Clarion will carry details.

“Labor Goes to the Movies” draws its specific inspiration from the theory and practice of Third Cinema. In the late 1960s, the Peruvian filmmaker, Fernando Solanas and Octavio



Day laborers ask a contractor for work in Le Ciudad (The City).

Labor Goes to the Movies

Eleven years ago, Labor Goes to the Movies began its run of monthly film showings at the PSC Union Hall

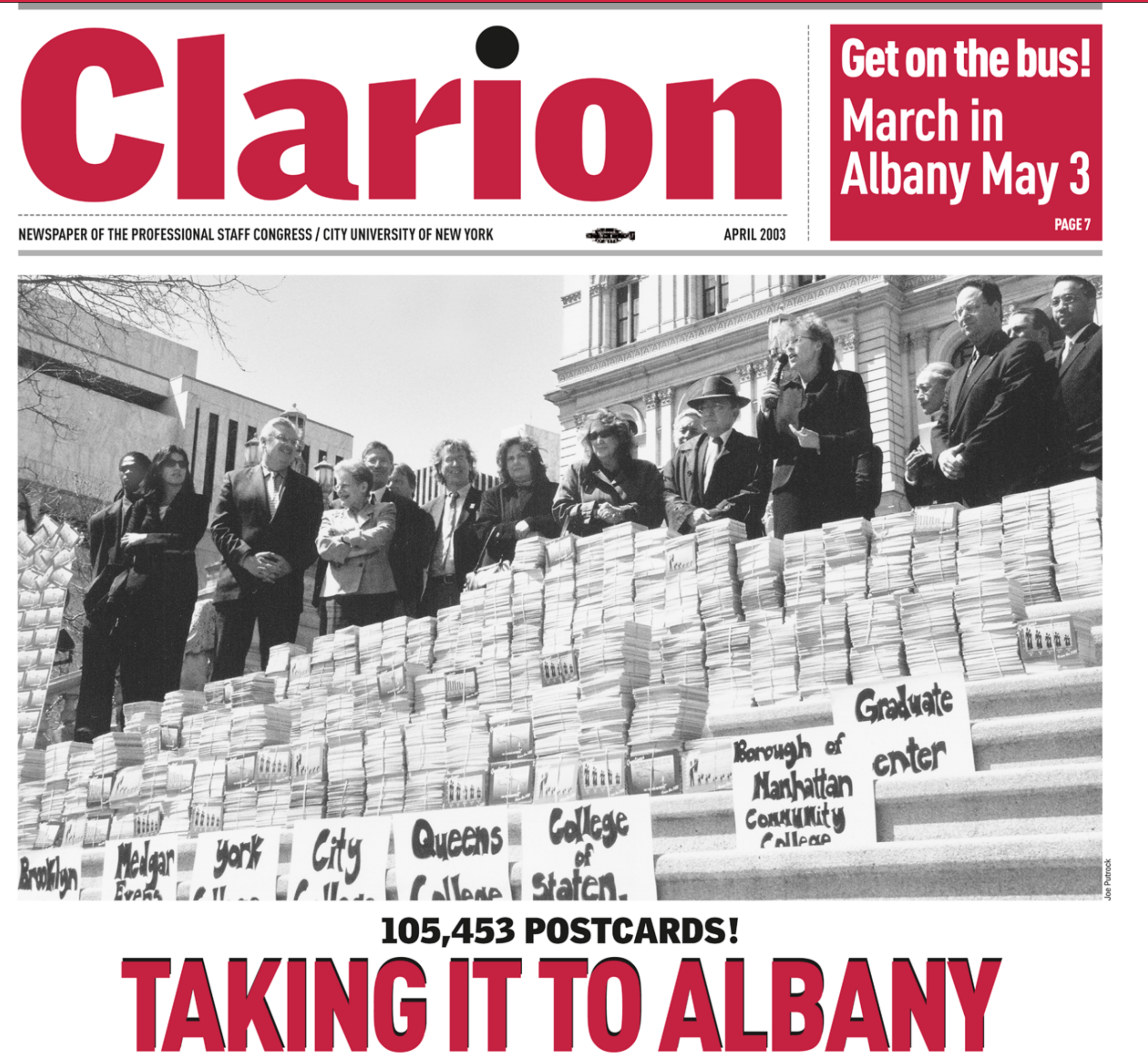
film shot entirely on location in Queens, will inaugurate the series on February 8 (see poster in this issue of Clarion for details). This film presents four fictional stories from the lives of Latino immigrants in New York City. The new immigrants, who speak little English, grapple with work problems as laborers and seamstresses, with the discrimination of modern urban life, with homelessness and the baffling bureaucracy of public social services. The filmmaker, David Riker, presents these stories without sentimentality or sensationalism, two familiar tropes affecting normal Hollywood conflict of Latino life.

The cast of largely non-professional actors became organizers for the film, convincing the owner of a neighborhood movie house in Queens to show it where it became a local hit) and talking with audience members after screenings in both Queens and Manhattan.

In La Promesse (1996), a Belgian film screening on March 8, a scrawny father enlists his young son in the lucrative smuggling, housing and employment of African and Eastern European men put to work as laborers. On April 12 the committee will show Live Nude Girls (United 2000), a documentary that follows the union organizing efforts of a group of mostly female workers at a San Francisco strip club, examining difficult issues about the ethics of women's control over their bodies. The spring semester series concludes on May 19 with the classic first film of Sergei Eisenstein Strike



PSC HEOs have a long history combating workplace harassment and bullying. HEOs at the Calandra Institute (Gloria Salerno and Emilise Aleandri, right, pictured with Cross Campus VP Iris DeLutro, left) won a million dollar workplace harassment suit against CUNY in 2005.



Albany Postcards

The PSC delivers over 100,000 postcards to protest the proposed Pataki budget cuts and tuition hikes in March, 2005.

One year after September 11

BMCC reflects and remembers

By TOMO GERON

The end of the Spring 2002 semester was welcome for Tricia Lin, assistant professor of English at BMCC. Like many BMCC faculty and staff, Lin was intensely busy all through the school year, getting students — and herself — through the trauma of attending school just blocks from Ground Zero. Two BMCC students died on September 11.

“We didn’t have a pause to think for the whole year,” says Lin. Like many faculty, she incorporated discussions of 9/11 into her classes. “At the end of the year I felt more tired than ever. Not physically, but psychologically.”

All of CUNY was deeply affected by the disaster. Seven members of the PSC’s bargaining unit lost their lives. More broadly, teaching, learning and ways of thinking were altered throughout the University in countless ways. But BMCC, located just blocks north of the World Trade Center, was hit hardest, and it did not reopen until October 1.

DIFFICULT MEMORIES

room windows looked down onto Ground Zero last Fall, was deeply affected. “I didn’t realize until weeks later that I was going through some of the loss of BMCC’s Florman Hall, located one block from Ground Zero. Student and faculty lounges and the cafeteria are still being used for classrooms. Temporary classroom buildings will be used again this fall. The trucks and barges filled with rubble from the World Trade Center are no longer right next door. A year after the terrorist attack,



As the Fall 2002 semester began, Borough of Manhattan Community College was more crowded than ever.

BMCC Remembers

A year later, BMCC remembers 9/11/01.

walking to and from classes was very difficult,” she says. “And it was very busy, inside and out, with the dumping taking place.” A number of her students dropped out, including one with severe asthma. “But she was persistent and completed her completion in the Spring,” Linster recalls. “That speaks to the quality of our students.”

After 9/11, BMCC moved some classes up town to City College. BMCC “now plans to keep running courses there” for the foreseeable future, says spokesperson Lou Anne Bink. In August, the college leased new space from the downtown campus of St. John’s University, near BMCC. Scott Anderson, BMCC’s Vice President for Administration and Finance, hopes to find more space, but says the 13 St. John’s classrooms will be a big help. “We’ll continue to look for spaces to build out or move into,” says Anderson. “It’s very distressing that [students] are standing up to eat because there’s nowhere for them to sit.”

The loss of Florman — officials still haven’t decided if it will be repaired or demolished — meant 570,000 square feet of space lost for a campus that was already one of CUNY’s most overcrowded before 9/11. “BMCC is in need of 600,000 square feet right now,” says Anderson.

While emotional, physical and economic strains led some students to stop attending classes last Fall, the next semester BMCC had its largest Spring enrollment ever.

Last year, Lamin Conteh was laid off from work and couldn’t afford to continue school. Conteh, who came to the US from Gambia five years ago, had to drop out after the year



Demonstration in February, 2005 at NYC Office of Labor Relations calling for funding of Adjunct healthcare.

Lawrence Kaplan Honored By Retirees Chapter



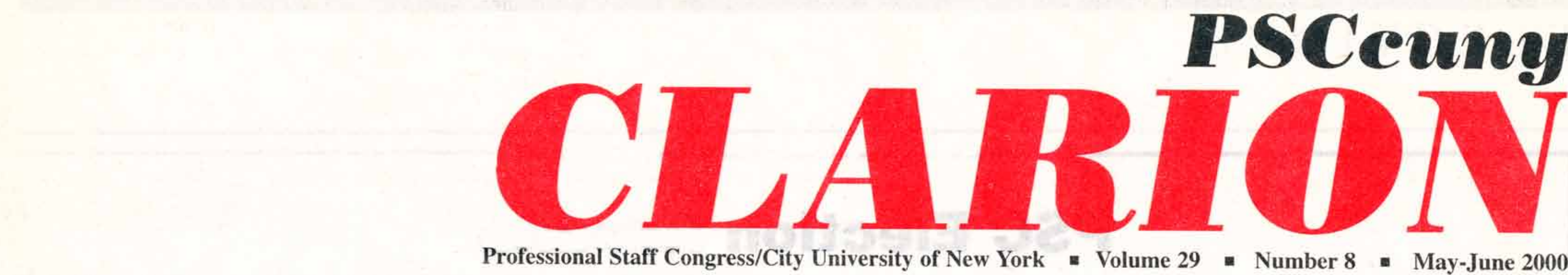
Lawrence Kaplan and Barbara Bowen.

The Retirees Chapter honored Lawrence Kaplan at its annual Winter Luncheon on January 8. A professor emeritus of economics at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Kaplan was stepping down as chair of the Retirees Chapter after leading it for nine years. “Larry Kaplan is a dynamo,” PSC President Barbara Bowen said after the event. “He sets a high standard for us all.”

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Kaplan Honored

Retirees chapter honors Larry Kaplan, January 2000.



Bowen, New Caucus are victors in PSC elections, winning 17 of 21 Executive Council seats

by Carol Sims

Prof. Barbara Bowen and New Caucus candidates decisively defeated Prof. Richard Boris and most of the City University Unity Caucus slate in elections held last month, taking control of the Professional Staff Congress. In their second try, the insurgents cap-

New Caucus Wins May 2000

From the May-June 2000 Clarion.

