



Alumni NEWS

From the Headmaster's Desk...

Long Range Strategic Planning

In our eighty-five year history, Garden School has often taken the step of examining where it wants to be and how it wants to get there. This year, our Board of Trustees has begun the process of drafting a strategic plan for the next five years. All schools have to do this periodically, as a way of responding to the changes and challenges of the environment and as a way of maintaining vitality throughout the life of the institution.

Our Board has begun examining a dozen important issues within the framework of a five year plan:

- * tuition
- *faculty salaries
- *admissions and marketing
- *the physical plant
- *faculty retention and development
- *staffing needs

- *technology
- *fundraising and development
- *optimum enrollment
- *the role of the library
- *curriculum
- *Board development

Each of the areas plays an important role in the culture of the school and has an impact on not only the daily life of the institution but the long-term growth as we continue to pursue our mission.

The process of long term-planning, of course, requires the participation of each segment of our community, including teachers, students, parents, administrators, trustees and alumni. As a total school endeavor, long-range planning brings the community together around issues and goals that continues and extends the school's mission into the twenty-first century with great skill and passion.

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Updates.....

Rachel Ross '92, and **Andy Hevesi '91**, are married – to each other! Theirs has to be the longest courtship in Garden School history! According to classmate and best friend **Amanda Coppola '92**, it all started when Rachel was in 7th grade and Andy in 8th. They celebrated their nuptials in October 2007. Congrats! **George Spanos '01** is engaged to Christie Weaver and they will wed in July of '09. They met while attending College Misericordia. **Charlie Savasatit '93** attended St. Johns University for a BS in Marketing

and an MBA in Finance. He is currently an insurance underwriter at AIG, unmarried and interested in martial arts and playing guitar. **Hany Mohamed '98** is a registered pharmacist for Walgreens and is still playing basketball and baseball, and traveling when he can. **Jamal Cummings '02** graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in Business Administration and is currently working for Merrill Lynch. He'd love to branch out into the music business. **Jay Himmelstein '99** is a financial representative

for Northwestern Mutual and recently served on the alumni committee that selected the Alexiou Travel Scholarship winner for 07-08. **Tamara Weiss '99** is a matrimonial/divorce attorney in a boutique law firm in midtown Manhattan. **Anna LaSorsa '96** and brother **Nicholas (Nicky) '99** are still living in Astoria. She is teaching elementary school and he is Vice President of the family's printing business. **Adam Weiss '94** graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in

Updates Cont...

2004 and practices general commercial litigation and white collar defense at a law firm in Manhattan.

Chris Kamm '92 has served with the U.S. Marine Corps since 1999 and has risen to the rank of Warrant Officer. For the last several years, he has lived with his wife, Amy, in North Carolina near Camp Lejeune. His daughter, Mackenzie, will be three years old next month and his son, Christopher, turned one earlier this year. Prior to Camp Lejeune, Chris was stationed in Okinawa, Japan and, after that, he was deployed in 2003 to the Middle East in support of Marine Corps operations in Iraq.

Name This Class....



Can you tell us the grade, the year and if you're really good.... the names of three students???
Email answers to mpetruso@gardenschool.org and reference "Photo" in the subject line

ALEXIOU TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP BROADENS STUDENTS' HORIZONS

In June 2002 Kathy Shin stood at the podium at graduation and received the first Melina Alexiou Scholarship. The award had been established that year as a memorial to Melina Alexiou who graduated from Garden School in 1996, attended and graduated from Hofstra University in June of 2000, and sadly passed away that summer as a result of injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident in Greece. Friends, family and faculty were stunned, and over time felt that something needed to be done to commemorate this vibrant young woman's life. A fund was

established and it has been providing opportunities for students to travel with Garden School for the past six years. **Kathy Shin'02** received a book – about Greece! But subsequent recipients have traveled, expenses completely or mostly paid by the scholarship. **Nathaly Spilotros '03** fulfilled a life-long dream of visiting Italy, **Joseph Sesin '04** went to Mexico, **Angelo Braun '06** went to Greece, **Lina Efremenkova '05** to Peru, **Ahmed Nassef '06** saw Paris and Amsterdam, **Daniela Triana '09** visited Spain, and this year, **Curtis Frederick '08** has traveled to Italy.

Every year at graduation the Alexiou Scholarship winner addresses the graduates and their friends and families and talks about the way the trip influenced their lives. Some express gratitude to the Alexiou family for being so generous, others talk about the things they saw or did that will stay with them forever. Needless to say, there are tears, but also a sense of continuity. Melina's memory is alive and well at Garden School, and those who contribute to the scholarship fund have much to be proud of. They have given more than money; they have

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It's a Small World.....

Dan Vellon'08 was sweating it out one recent day in February. He sat in the office of a Madison Avenue Law Firm facing the prospect of a grueling interview for his dream school. "Dan Vellon," and he was lead into the office of "Torquemada." It turned out to be a she.

"And you attended Garden School?"

"Yes....," Dan answered and was ready to explain us to the inquisitor.

"Yes, I know. Is Mr. Pigman still teaching there?" And suddenly Dan was in a different mode. Marianne Wang explained that she had attended Garden School in the 1980's, lived in Jackson Heights, and had a high opinion of Garden. Since that time Ms. Wang went to

Harvard, attended Law School, and began to practice law.

The interview went "Swimmingly," according to Dan. He awaits the results of his application, due out in April. Small world, eh?

Alexiou Scholarship Cont....

given young people a broader view of the world, of their own place in it, and at the same time created a tradition of 'giving back' to the Garden community that gave them so much.

How is a recipient chosen? Since this is an alumni scholarship, alumni make the selection. Each fall applications are distributed to students in grades nine through twelve. They are told something about Melina and her activities at Garden School. Interested students submit an essay about themselves, their place in Garden, their activities, interests, etc. Mr. Pigman and Mrs. Elkind contact alumni, usually three, who read the essays and then interview the students. The interviews are brief, ten minutes or so, and they are held at Garden School. Nervous

students giggle and pace around Mr. Pigman's room waiting to be called in by the alums. This year, Ann O'Connor '89, Anna La Sorsa '96, and Jay Himmelstein '99 conducted the interviews.

How are funds acquired for this scholarship? Donations from family, friends and faculty. Mr. Vogel, Mrs. Elkind, and Mr. Pigman have been regular donors, as have the Alexiou, Galatsanos, and Gravino families. Other members of the Garden community have contributed over the years, allowing the fund to provide these travel scholarships. Donations can be made at any time. Just call or write, and mark your donations specifically for the Alexiou Travel Scholarship Fund.



Alumni Notes—Where Are They Now????

Bad Boys, Bad Boys, Whatcha Gonna Do?

Sometimes they grow up to be good boys as was the case for three of Garden's own. **Andrew Ramsaran '02** is now a New York City Policeman. Joining him is **Marion Cuevas '03** on New York's Finest. And now, another of the legendary fun lovers has decided to go over to the good boys' side: **Jonathan Batista '03** is awaiting orders to begin the Police Academy training in Las Vegas, Nevada, hoping to move and settle in there by the summer. Jonathan was Student Council president at Garden and thinks that his leadership skills developed here will help him in law enforcement.

Still on the job in New York City is **Georgiana Macris '76**, and it is rumored that **Keith Mahoney '90** patrols Nassau County as a cop.

Manifest Destiny!

Linda Orhun '84 attended Garden School from 1977-1984. She received her B.A. in Communications from SUNY Albany in 1988. After college, Linda held jobs in a money market firm, a wholesale jewelry firm, and also worked for a social work organization. She also worked for a private catering company, where she learned about the hospitality business.

Linda's true passion is in holistic and alternative medicine. She acquired a certification in Usui Reiki level-3 in 2003. Reiki is "a form of energy healing that is truly effective for the mind, body and soul. Reiki can be practiced on humans and animals, and is becoming more widely accepted in medical circles and as an adjunct to traditional medicine."

Wanting to bring holistic healing to a wider audience, Linda embarked on her journey to open a spa. She took some continuing education classes in business

at Baruch College, and attended many seminars on the spa business. After 3 years of searching, she found the right spa, just steps away from Bloomingdale's.

Linda renamed the existing spa Destiny Beauty&Wellness Day Spa, and it will be celebrating its One Year Grand Reopening March 19, 2008. The newly renovated spa will be offering a 20% discount through April 31st, 2008. The spa offers classic services such as facials, massage, body wraps, manicures, pedicures and waxing. Linda performs reiki sessions by appointment. Garden Alumni are welcome at Destiny!

Destiny Beauty&Wellness Day Spa
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