

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR

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Photo illustration by Yipeng Huang and Angela Radulescu



OPINION, Page 8

Spectator Opinion reflects on two semesters worth of op-eds, columns, and staff editorials as the academic year comes to a close.



A&E, Page 10

Despite economic difficulties, the Columbia arts scene remained vibrant in 2008-2009. Student filmmakers and artists continued to produce on campus and around the city.



SPORTS, Page 11

While football has yet to reach the .500 mark it set in its 2006 campaign, the Lions improved its record this year to 2-5 in the Ivy League, nabbing wins against Dartmouth and Cornell.



SPORTS, Page 13

Men's tennis earned its second Ivy League title in three years, making it one of the two Columbia teams to win its conference championship this year. The other, men's golf, repeated as Ivy champions.



File photos

JUBILATION | Columbia students became heavily involved in campaigning activities, and, on the evening of Nov. 4, 2008, took to the streets to sing when Barack Obama, CC '83, was elected president.

Barack Obama, CC '83, becomes first Columbia College alumnus elected U.S. president

BY BETSY MORAIS
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The presidential race that captivated the country for months held a special resonance on campus, as Barack Obama, CC '83, became not only the first black person to win the office, but also the first Columbia College alumnus to do so.

Leading up to the election, members of the Columbia University College Democrats campaigned for Obama and other party politicians in Virginia, and when he won, students in Morningside Heights spilled out from the gates and into the streets, dancing up into Harlem with joyous zeal.

"This was a shining moment in America's history," University President Lee Bollinger said. "Columbia had a special connection to it and a feeling about it that, I felt, sort of resonated and rippled through the institution. And the little event that I held and organized on the steps was a really memorable moment."

Bollinger's "little event" drew a crowd of thousands to Low Plaza, as students, faculty, staff, and locals watched Obama's swearing-in ceremony on a jumbotron.

Around the neighborhood, New Yorkers also gathered together for the inauguration. Outside the Adam Clayton Powell building on 125th Street, Leon—a 31 year-old from Harlem—said that this was the first election in which he voted. "Growing up, I didn't think this would really have been possible," Leon said, adding, "I thought that maybe one day race relations would improve to the point where America could have a black president, but not this soon. You always have your doubts, but now we know that anything can happen."

"It's one of those moments where the right character is fitting the right moment," history professor David Eisenbach said. "It's almost like Barack Obama was made for this transitional moment in American

SEE ELECTION, page 7

University endowment dips by about 22 percent from \$7.15B

Columbia makes cuts to accommodate fallout from national economic crisis

BY ALEXA DAVIS
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Seeping into all areas of planning and budgeting, the economic crisis and the damage it did to Columbia's endowment was emblematic of the academic year.

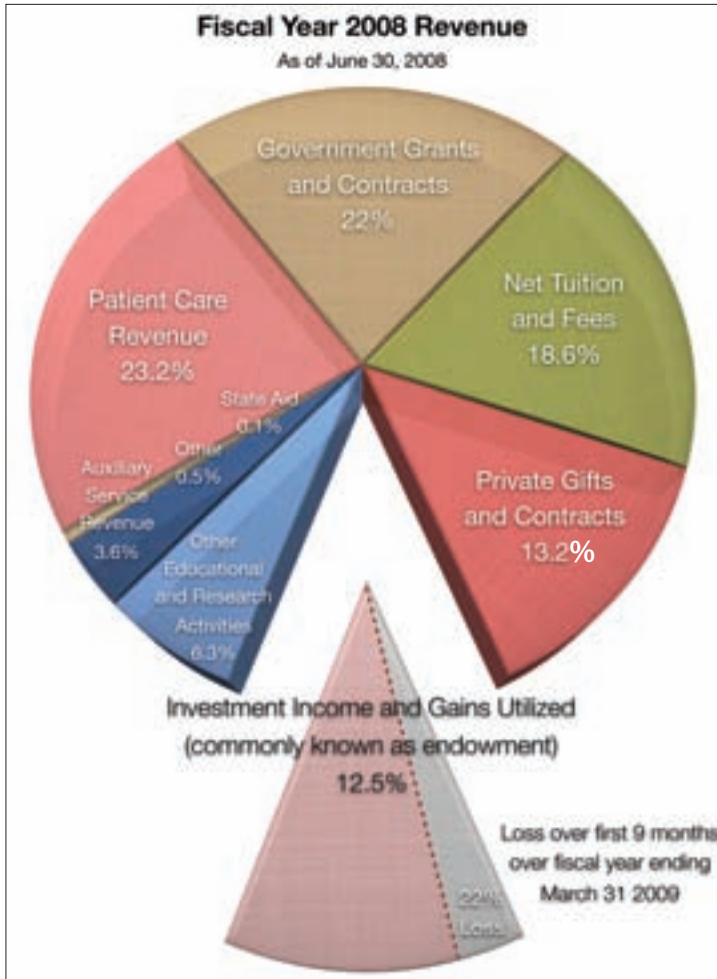
Columbia has had to undergo an across-the-board restructuring of its finances in response to the nation's financial turmoil, which began at almost the same time as the first classes of fall 2008. The main reason for the change—which has affected such disparate components of the University as student enrollment, budgetary spending, and faculty hiring—has been an overall 22-percent decline in Columbia's endowment, which has decreased the funds available to maintain usual practices and push forward major plans. In some cases, this has translated into merely delaying projects that were in the works for the future. In other cases, though, the endowment decline has immediate and significant changes in some of the University's longstanding practices,

Columbia's ebbing endowment

At the beginning of the academic year, University administrators were hopeful that Columbia's investment portfolio, which was then valued at \$7.15 billion, would experience only negligible, or at least repairable, losses.

"You're always taking 5 percent [in endowment payout] no matter what you make, because you figure some years you make 20 percent and some years you lose 10," University President Lee Bollinger said in October. "It all evens out over time."

But as time went on and the impact of the financial crisis became increasingly apparent, it was impossible to deny that Columbia's finances had been profoundly affected by the economic crisis, as had many of Columbia's peer institutions.



Information from Columbia Financial Reports / Graphic by Daniel Lasry

In late January, Bollinger sent a Columbia-wide e-mail reporting that the University had suffered a 15-percent decline in its portfolio over the six-month period that ended on Dec. 31.

"Let there be no doubt, we still have to face hard choices in the months ahead," Bollinger wrote, "Hopefully, by accepting and planning for this new reality, we will be in a position to move forward in strength."

Recently, it has become clear that the Columbia's financial woes are far from over. In another campus-wide e-mail, Bollinger announced on May 6 that the value of Columbia's endowment for the first nine months of the University's fiscal year ending March 31

has decreased by a total of 22 percent—a percentage loss comparable to those of other Ivy League universities.

While the prognosis for the future of Columbia's finances seemed grim, Bollinger has repeatedly asserted that the University is well poised to flourish during the recession when compared to its peers because of Columbia's institutional structure. The University relies on endowment funds for only 13 percent of its operating budget—the remainder primarily come from government grants, patient revenue, tuition, private gifts, and contracts—so a decreased endowment affects Columbia less than it

SEE ENDOWMENT, page 5

Academics expand with globalization, contract with budget cuts

Global Core, Global Centers introduced in 08-09; due to large expense, Columbia slashes Ph.D. programs by 10 percent

BY SCOTT LEVI AND AMBER TUNNELL
Columbia Daily Spectator

When Barnard history professor Owen Gutfreund, the popular, long-time director of the school's urban studies program, was denied tenure in December 2007, many students and faculty argued that he deserved better. But in fall 2008, Gutfreund received news suggesting his fate had been rewritten.

Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation and Faculty of Arts and Sciences offered the specialist in urban history a joint appointment. Yet as proof of the blow the financial crisis has dealt the University, FAS announced this spring it could not afford to pay its half of the appointment. Instead, Gutfreund is slated to take a position at Hunter College of the City University of New York this fall.

Gutfreund's story is not unique. Even as Columbia stays afloat in a market where universities flounder, financial concerns caused departures and prompted arrivals this year, and are now pervading the University's pursuit of its long-term academic goals. Some developments from the 2008-2009 school year, like the newfound autonomy of the School of International and Public Affairs, are not tied to the economic downturn. Others, including initiatives begun in previous years to globalize and refine bureaucracy, point to Columbia's constant awareness of the harm the current crisis is doing to higher education inside the gates and across the country.

Making the cuts

Data released this year suggests that as domestic and foreign financial troubles persist, students should expect to see fewer international and Ph.D. students on Columbia's campus next year. The American Language Program, whose English language instruction reaches vast South Korean, French, Chinese, and Japanese populations in Columbia's undergraduate and graduate schools, received fewer applications.

"Economic changes and fluctuations in currency rates have had a significant impact on Asian clientele," Peter Awn, dean of the

School of General Studies where the program is housed, said in February.

According to Nicholas Dirks, vice president for arts and sciences, the University is admitting 10 percent fewer doctoral students due to the high costs of operating doctorate programs, and the diminished job market for aspiring professors.

Going global

Amid reductions in international students, the University has sought to expand its horizons in the world platform in other ways.

In March, the Columbia Global Centers in Beijing and Amman, Jordan opened. They are meant to serve as research offices as opposed to the satellite campuses some peer institutions have opened.

University President Lee Bollinger told *Spectator* in February that the research held at these centers aims to "expand our global understanding and to make a contribution to the world but to do it in a way that's not local or regional, but linked globally."

Many view the openings as a tangible realization of Bollinger's "global university" initiative. According to Kenneth Prewitt, professor of public affairs at Columbia and director of the Global Centers, by establishing the centers Columbia is taking connections it already has established around the world turning them into "a global network." The bond between China and Columbia, for instance, goes back 100 years to an era in which Columbia became one of the first American schools to accept students from China.

The University is just beginning its global expansion and hopes to "cover every world region," including South Africa, South America, and Central Europe, according to Prewitt. He added that the next global centers will launch in India and Paris, the latter likely in conjunction with Columbia's Reid Hall for the study of French language and culture.

While administrators traveled to Beijing for the opening in March, Barnard held its first ever symposium there, titled "Women Changing China," featuring panelists such as English professor and women's advocate Wu Qing, novelist Geling Yan,

Chinese-American filmmaker Ruby Yang, and media entrepreneur Yang Lan. This ties into Spar's mission to increase the international student population found at Barnard.

Curricular reforms

Undergraduate education received its dose of globalization as well.

After last year's hunger strike demands capped an ongoing discussion about a change to the Major Cultures requirement, the Global Core premiered in mid-August to replace the old requirement. The Global Core was created to help solve the disunity of Major Cultures, which consisted of an array of courses ranging from broad introductory courses to language classes.

The Global Core requires Columbia College students to take two courses from one vast list of courses, which predominantly deal with examining cultures comparatively or examining one civilization in depth across time. This requirement is different from Major Cultures, which had students choose two courses from three different lists of classes. Many introductory courses which previously counted toward Major Cultures courses have been adopted by the Global Core, while only some specialized courses carry over to new requirement.

The Global Core aims to have students focus more on broad world cultures instead of only learning about one civilization.

The focus on broad introductory courses has increased average class size for these courses by eliminating some of the smaller, specialized courses from the requirement. In the future, Patricia Grieve, humanities professor and chair of the Committee on the Core and the Committee on Major Cultures, said she hopes the Global Core will achieve "parity with Contemporary Civilization and Literature Humanities" in regard to academic rigor and seminar format.

Presently, the class of 2011 and older classes may still elect to fulfill the Major Cultures requirement, while the classes of 2012 and younger must complete the Global Core instead.

Columbia is not the only one to have endeavored to make undergraduate education more relevant to the times. Barnard faculty is currently reviewing the Nine Ways

of Knowing, Barnard's general education requirements, which have not been reviewed in depth in more than a decade.

According to Muzna Ansari, representative to the Office of Academic Affairs and BC '10, professors have called several areas into question. One is the "Reason and Value" requirement—some, for example, want to ground it in more "moral and ethical reasoning." The courses that would fulfill this mandate would be more focused on urban studies and philosophy.

Sorting out the Columbia bureaucracy

Although the Faculty of Arts and Sciences responded to financial conditions by tightening its budget in a number of areas, two major efforts to streamline contained no direct link to economic downturn. Administrators revealed plans this year to demystify the bureaucracy that supervises 29 departments—or 650 professors.

A faculty-run review, begun in spring 2008 and brought to speed in the fall, seeks to address a culture of discontent among professors who express concerns that the labyrinth of governance committees decreases effective responses to their complaints.

"The faculty who have been involved for a long time largely agree that our current ... system relegates academic planning to a secondary role rather than a primary role, and leaves the faculty out of decision-making," astronomy department chair David Helfand said in an interview in January.

The current review seeks to make more effective use of the tangle of committees whose advisory status and lack of mutual communication has diminished faculty participation.

The Executive Committee of the Faculty of the Arts and Sciences, which is conducting the review, exemplifies the way governance has historically disheartened faculty, recycling a small group of unusually dedicated professors. Complaints range from minor inconveniences with faculty ID cards to administrative neglect to update professors on office relocation.

"Ultimately, the idea is to make people realize that the faculty committees

do do important work, and that more people should volunteer to be involved," Dirks said in January. "It has to be a broader group."

As the committee considers alternative models—including one that filters all proposals through a central body of faculty representatives—it is unclear whether major changes will be made to FAS's decentralized budget.

On the other hand, Dirks' office, which currently chooses how to allocate SIPA's funds, is to hand that responsibility over to the SIPA administration in the fall.

As 27 professors in SIPA are jointly appointed with other departments, SIPA dean John Coatsworth has said that freeing up the budget will increase transparency for donors while upholding significant curricular and research links. This comes at a time when SIPA revamps its degree programs, reducing the number of concentrations and offering regional specializations for students.

"SIPA will maintain close ties to the Arts and Sciences, but will have the financial and academic independence to develop in new and exciting ways," Coatsworth wrote in an e-mail to SIPA faculty in March.

Even so, SIPA is grappling with the issue of University expansion. Though administrators have stated that SIPA will resettle in a building on the Manhattanville campus in 2015, jointly appointed political Science and economics professors are torn between staying in their Morningside home departments and accompanying SIPA uptown.

"The links between political science, economics, and SIPA are very, very deep," political science professor Robert Jervis, who teaches at SIPA, said in April. "If econ and poli sci do move, that will, over the long run, change the intellectual nature of SIPA." His colleague, political science chair John Huber, has voiced his fear that a spatial disconnect could force SIPA to build its own specialized faculty.

No formal decisions have been made about office movement. In an interview in April, Coatsworth said that "over the course of the next 12 months, we'll know a lot more than we know now."

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After a year filled with appointments, Bollinger has yet to name his provost

BY ALEXA DAVIS
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

For University President Lee Bollinger, the past academic year has been rife with challenges, both internal and external.

Last year could be characterized as a time when Columbia was under the world's scrutiny, wheeling between controversies. While that aspect did not completely fade away this year, Bollinger largely focused on internal issues at the University. This inward turn included filling key administrative positions, building up the individual schools, and continuing projects such as the Manhattanville expansion and the capital campaign.

"Every year has its own character," Bollinger said in a May interview. "What has seemed to me called for this year has been a very much internal focus."

Both Bollinger and the University as a whole were put in the spotlight at the very

start of the academic year, when then-presidential nominees John McCain and Barack Obama, CC '83, spoke at Columbia in September as part of a ServiceNation summit. This event directed public attention to the University, due to both the impending election and Obama's status as a Columbia alumnus. Though the event was not sponsored by the University, Bollinger agreed to give ServiceNation the space, arguing that the event would have positive effects on Columbia's service initiatives.

In reference to Obama's inauguration, which elicited an unprecedented showing of school spirit, Bollinger noted the seemingly campus-wide sentiment that Columbia has been "part of a significant time in America's history," and that this feeling of connection to the inaugural events "resonated and rippled throughout the University."

Although the plan had already been

SEE BOLLINGER, page 6



File photo

HELLO, SPAR | With no prior experience at a women's college, Debora Spar came to lead Barnard College straight from Harvard Business School. In her debut year, she has created a faculty research fund and directed a school under financial pressures.

Spar's first year features contact with students, economic crisis

BY MADINA TOURE
Spectator Staff Writer

Debora Spar moved into Morningside Heights less than one year ago, bringing with her a family, a cat, and a chair from Harvard Business School.

But her first year as Barnard's president may have felt much longer. "When I look back at this year I will remember that it started with the market collapse and ended with the swine flu," Spar said in a recent interview. "In addition to the usual things that one would have to deal with in that position, there have been a lot of external events that have made it harder."

At her inauguration during the fall, Spar outlined her plan as president, which included increasing Barnard's presence abroad and providing more research support for faculty members. As the spring semester comes to a close, Spar has expressed a heightened understanding of Barnard, and students have recognized significant changes at the college—some of which Spar did not address at her inauguration.

Some of those unexpected changes, which have only come to the fore recently, include a restructuring of Barnard's administration. In a change that reflects Spar's more corporate tendencies, administrator Greg Brown's title will be changed from vice president for financial planning to chief operating officer. Additionally, associate dean Vivian Taylor, who previously has overseen Higher Education Opportunity Program and enrichment programs, will now be Spar's chief of staff in as well as vice president for community development. Michell Tollinchi-Michel will become the new director of academic support and enrichment programs, and Nikki Youngblood will serve as director for HEOP scholars.

Sarah Besnoff, Student Government

Association president and BC '09, said she is confident that the increased bureaucracy will not affect the administration's relationship with students.

"Changes definitely do make the structure more corporate. But the important thing is that little is actually changing in terms of access to Spar. She will continue to hold office hours, teas and fireside chats," Besnoff said. "Her chief of staff was created to ensure that someone from her office will be always be able to engage with students."

During her first year, Spar has developed a reputation for being in touch with students. "She follows through on everything," said Sharmin Ahmed, next year's vice president of finance for SGA and BC '10. "She picked up everything really fast. I've seen her at almost every event, wanting to get to know the student body."

"Even before she came in she was asking student groups and especially the student government on issues that are relevant to the campus," Reni Calister, sophomore class president and BC '11, added.

One of Spar's primary goals was to have more international students enroll at Barnard and send more Barnard students and faculty abroad. The Visiting International Students Program, which was created this semester, brought five visiting students to the college. "Those numbers will almost certainly increase next year," Spar said.

Spar has also done her part to personally reach out to students in other countries. "When she went to China, that was huge, absolutely enormous," Calister said, referring to Spar's trip to China, where she moderated a panel, spoke at the opening of Columbia's Global Center there, connected with alumnae, and recruited international students.

Spar also spent some of her energy on internal issues, including a proposal outlining plans for relaunching the Athena Center—

formerly called the Barnard Leadership Initiative—in September 2009. The center will focus on honing women's leadership skills, as the initiative had done in the past, but will better fit the framework of a liberal arts college, with changes such as a full-time director advised by a faculty advisory group, courses on different components of women's leadership, and a capstone seminar taught by the director.

Spar has also focused on faculty development, announcing that there will be a presidential research fund of \$100,000 to support research for faculty at all levels—an initiative she first announced at her inauguration.

But along with Spar's planned changes, she had to adjust the agenda in order to face the economic crisis. Barnard's endowment fell by about 25 percent, declining from \$200 to \$163 million as of Dec. 31, 2008. In response to unexpected financial need among students, it came to the fore that Barnard had underestimated its financial aid budget. Under Spar's leadership, and the guidance of Brown, whom she appointed, vice presidents skimmed from their budgets to put together the missing \$1.5 million. The economy might also be the cause of the slight decrease in applicants that Barnard saw this year.

Next year, Spar will work on improving faculty work life. "I think we need to look more closely that we can better manage faculty courseload," Spar said. "We also just created a new position—dean for faculty development and diversity—which will be held by Janet Jakobsen.

This year, on the other hand, Spar's focus was learning about life at Barnard.

"I think a lot of this year has been really information gathering," Besnoff said. "She's really reached out to students."

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File photo

REFLECTING | After the last academic year was marked with controversy and cast public light upon his office, Lee Bollinger described 2008-2009 as inwardly focused.



File photo

RENT | Local buildings like 3333 B'way could be affected by the Stewart-Cousins bill, which aims to protect affordable housing.

Schools face budget cuts, debate over mayoral control, and charter school drama

BY JESSICA HILLS
Spectator Staff Writer

This spring, as students, teachers, and administrators at local schools pack up their books and head off for summer vacation, many will still be wondering where they will learn or teach next year, who will be in charge of the education system, and what programs may no longer exist at their schools.

Budget cuts, charter school controversy, and debate over mayoral control are among the issues the New York City Department of Education has battled with this academic year. And as summer approaches, parents whose children remain on the waitlist for kindergarten spots anxiously await favorable solutions.

Budgetary constraints continue to shape the DOE's decisions. In mid-November, Gov. David Paterson, CC '83, proposed an \$838-million cut to the state's public education funding, which would amount to an average cut of \$252 per city student, according to the Campaign for Fiscal Equity.

While the city's public schools will still receive a \$450-million increase from last year—totaling a budget of \$8.1 million—that number is still 3.5 percent less than the \$705-million expected increase. Administrators are still trying to figure out how to balance their budgets while maintaining valuable programs.

The state has also affected the city's school system by approving the addition of 100 charter schools statewide. A significant number have opened up in Harlem.

Groups such as Harlem Parents United view charter schools, which are public schools that admit students by random lottery and often share buildings with regular public schools, as important vehicles for expanding school choice. In a district notorious for poor standardized test scores and low graduation rates in its public schools, parents like Kyesha Bennett, a founder of HPU, have said charters are “changing Harlem.”

“It’s a civil right to be educated at the highest level,” Bennett added. “Expanding choice means allowing more charters if people want and putting children first.”

“The idea behind charter schools ... is to give those families and communities that tend to have the fewest resources more choice,” Peter Anderson, head of school at Future Leaders Institute Charter School on West 122nd Street, said.

Still, the proliferation of charter schools has met controversy, particularly from community members who feel that the DOE should be dedicating resources to the improvement of the regular public schools instead of charters.

“New charter schools are going through growing pains,” Khadyjah Wilson, parent coordinator at P.S. 180 Hugo Newman, said in March.

Harriet Barnes, current president of the Community Education Council for District 5 in Harlem, said recently that while charters can be a positive addition to the school system, a problem remains over what to do with children who do not get spots. “Why can’t you take that same money and make that charter school

UWS rents rise as resale prices decline in the wake of national financial crisis

BY KATHERINE MEDUSKI
Spectator Staff Writer

Financial crisis impaired the city’s housing market this year, and locally threatened the preservation of affordable housing—an increasingly vexing problem in the diverse neighborhoods of Morningside Heights and Harlem.

According to the 2009 first quarter report of Streeteasy—a Web site that tracks real estate trends—Manhattan has seen the condo resale median price declined to \$895K, a 4.7 percent decrease since last quarter and 7.5 percent decline since last year, while co-op resale median prices declined by 11.3 percent compared to last quarter, and 16.7 percent since last year.

In Upper Manhattan, since last quarter, median sales prices declined by 11 percent, and co-op resales median price declined by 21.8 percent—almost twice the borough’s average. In this region, since last quarter, there has also been a 29.1 percent increase in condos that have lowered their prices, which is an

86.6-percent increase since quarter one of 2008.

Beyond the statistics, housing foreclosures have become a major issue citywide after the foreclosure moratorium ended in March. This, combined with fluctuating prices, has posed a threat to apartments with unregulated rents.

In February, city officials considered a permanent ownership amendment to the city’s Inclusionary Housing Program as part of Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s plan to provide housing for 500,000 New York residents by 2014. The proposed amendment, which would protect low- and middle-income families in rental apartments from rising property values, met mixed reviews.

Supporters of the amendment noted the stability it would provide for ethnically and economically diverse communities. Objectors to the amendment noted that the IHP already has incentives like tax breaks for participating housing builders, and over-regulation could hinder this.

The City Council is currently reviewing the amendment, and has 50 days from April 27 to make a decision.

At the state level, New York State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, who represents Yonkers, re-introduced legislation in March to protect affordable housing in buildings that participate in the Mitchell-Lama and Section 8 voucher state subsidy programs. The bill would re-regulate rent in buildings that were deregulated after 1974 and no longer subject to rent regulation according to Mitchell-Lama stipulations. This retroactive aspect of the bill would take away the incentive for landlords to try to push out tenants who pay regulated rents.

Locally, buildings such as 3333 Broadway between 135th and 136th streets—which left the Mitchell-Lama program in 2005—would be among those impacted by the Stewart-Cousins bill. The apartment was constructed after 1974, and not rent-regulated. “Coming out of Mitchell-Lama was a big mistake ... There is no government agency to oversee the landlord, no system to make the landlord match the occupancy on the voucher,” Amy Chan, Mitchell-Lama organizer for resident rights advocacy group Tenants & Neighbors, said. 3333 also houses

residents with vouchers for the Section 8 state-subsidized housing program.

State assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal, whose district includes the Upper West Side, was supposed to co-sponsor the bill for an Assembly Housing Committee hearing on April 23, but because of unarticulated complications, assembly member Gary Pretlow of Westchester will present the bill sometime in the near future.

There are about 46,000 Mitchell-Lama units remaining in the city, according to the Department of Housing Preservation and Development. According to Tenants & Neighbors, a resident rights advocacy group, there are 100,000 deregulated apartments in the city and one million that are regulated.

If the senate passes the Stewart-Cousins bill, tenants “would be able to continue paying the moderate rents they had been paying while the building was in the Mitchell-Lama program,” the assemblywoman said. “It offers protection so people will not find themselves looking for apartments they cannot afford.”

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File photo

TOMO NO MO’ | As small businesses in the Morningside Heights area have taken a hit from the economic crisis, certain restaurants have been hurt the most. For example, Tomo Sushi & Sake Bar, pictured above, has had to shut its doors.

Local retailers hit hard by recession

BY SAM LEVIN
Spectator Staff Writer

Local business in Morningside Heights and Harlem has taken a hit by the year’s economic downturn, and many streets—with boarded up store fronts and fading signs of retail activity—have the scars to prove it.

The recession has tested the limits of the neighborhood’s retailers. With such a wide spectrum of businesses targeting specific, narrow markets, the financial trouble has been selective in its damage. While some mainstays have weathered the storm, others have not survived increased rents and decreased patronage.

Local eateries, densely situated in this area, have noticeably diminished this year, with the majority of casualties on high-density Broadway.

Since the fall, the neighborhood has waved goodbye to local dining establishments on the avenue, including, from south to north, Tokyo Pop, Royal Kabab & Curry, Subconscious, Empanada Joe’s, Tomo Sushi and Sake Bar, and Caffé Swish.

Except for Caffé Swish, which has been replaced by the Japanese restaurant Vine, these closed-down businesses have left behind persisting retail vacancies.

These repeated cases are part of a larger trend in which Broadway rents have forced storeowners to charge high prices that locals are unwilling to pay, especially for foods like \$9 futomaki sushi or a \$3 bite-size rojo pulled pork empanada.

“They’ve tried very hard, but they couldn’t make it,” said Frank Brcha, manager of Famous Famiglia pizzeria next door to what was once Empanada Joe’s, whose sign continues to falsely advertise 3 months after it permanently closed its doors.

Max Tierno, a previous Tokyo Pop waiter, said the January closing was largely due to “the owner getting really cheap and cutting the menu in half and raising prices.”

But the past year also proved that sometimes salvation lies one avenue east, on Amsterdam Avenue. Cheaper rents, despite less foot traffic, can allow failed Broadway businesses to turn a profit. Royal Kabab & Curry lost their lease in January, but found a new, more affordable home on 105th Street and Amsterdam.

The academic year closed with one final retail casualty. Morningside Bookshop, an independent, family-owned business on 114th Street, announced early in May that after a five-year run, it will be permanently shut its doors this June. Owner Peter Soter said the closing has become financially inevitable. “I am completely broke, honestly,” Soter said.



File photos

While these restaurants and businesses struggled, a few thriving family businesses reported high enough returns to keep their doors open despite generally fewer customers.

Some of these strongholds, such as Hungarian Pastry Shop, Mondel Chocolates, Symposium, Tom’s Restaurant, and V&T Pizzeria, have weathered economic storm in the past and this year was no exception.

Still, stretches of storefront vacancies both west and east of Morningside Park remain. South of 110th Street on Broadway has looked particularly grim. The spaces at 2628 Broadway, between 99th and 100th streets, and across the street at 2625 total 21,263 square feet of unused property on one block. This area is at the center of many streets that continue to sport on average one to two vacancies per block.

Brokers and building owners agreed that viable businesses have feared signing a lease in this time of uncertainty. “We keep having issues with leases billing out,” said Elliott Dweck, a broker for Besen Retail, who represents two empty spaces

between 100th and 101st streets, said.

“We’ve had a few good leads, but there are always problems, sometimes with the tenants’ credit,” Dweck said. “You need money to make money.”

The story runs parallel on West Harlem’s 8th Avenue. This area, impacted by a larger trend of upcoming development and gentrification, remains mixed with closings and new vacant spaces that have never had any retail tenants since their recent construction.

“It is hard to run a business when you are paying \$4,000 for rent, \$7,000 for labor and \$1400 for electricity,” Saif Almari, manager of the Wise 99-Cent Discount Store on 114th Street and 8th Avenue, said. “With so few stores around here, there is no point.”

Meanwhile, some landlords have expressed they have no immediate financial need to fill their spaces.

“It is not a financial burden,” local building owner Harut Saganda said. “I own the whole building and have tenants paying rent. I could rent it out tomorrow



File photo

SCHOOL DRAMA | After outcry and a lawsuit, the Department of Education reversed the decision to close two Harlem charter schools, P.S. 241, pictured, and P.S. 194.

Student councils face NROTC, election policy issues in 2008-2009

BY ALIX PIANIN, ELIZABETH SCOTT, AND CARLY SILVER
Columbia Daily Spectator

Columbia College Student Council

While Columbia College Student Council did not pass more than a handful of measures this year, outgoing president George Krebs, CC '09, said that he was proud of the "wide breadth" of issues the council had the opportunity to address, and that he chalked up a largely smooth year to the council's ability to dodge controversy.

"I'm proud of the fact that we had the opportunity to fire on so many cylinders and tried to reach into a number of different areas of campus, which I think we will see the kind of fruits of ... in the coming years," Krebs said.

While they may not have been embroiled in controversy themselves, CCSC found themselves seemingly as moderators of sorts this fall during the renewed debate over the possible return of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. After then-Sen. Barack Obama, CC '83, and Sen. John McCain's ServiceNation visit to Columbia, where they both addressed on-campus reserve officer training, the debate sprang up across campus again in the forms of meetings, town halls, and speakers. And while CCSC didn't take sides, Krebs said he thought CCSC played an important role in furthering campus conversation.

As the council continues to adjust its elections and voting model, members have said that this year's elections, the first time the Columbia College student body voted in runoffs instead of by straight majority, did not completely succeed in what they had set out to do—that is, to draw in more candidates, and bring more voters to the polls. Kinks in the new voting system may become clearer when executive board tickets aren't running unopposed—the CCSC constitution says that presidents and vice presidents run in campaigns together, but a runoff system would elect candidates separately, a contradiction Krebs says hasn't yet been worked out.

And long efforts to get the Portal project, a system that would act as a centralized location for undergraduate-related information, off the ground have shaped up in the final semester. After meeting with Columbia University Information Technology, Columbia College Information Technology, and Columbia Student Affairs, CCSC representatives said that a prototype of the information aggregation service will be rolling out within the next couple of months.

Krebs will be succeeded by class of 2010 vice president Sue Yang.

Student Government Association

Barnard's Student Government Association worked with the new administration and the construction of the new Diana Student Center, the building formerly known as the Nexus. Members consistently met with Dorothy Denburg, dean of the Barnard College, to discuss updates to the school's internal structure. The entire dean of studies office met with students at a March town hall to consider academic support. Zeest Haider, BC '10, raised issues of transferring international credits to Barnard and advisers going on leave, to which administrators like Gretchen Young, dean for study abroad advising, proved responsive.

Interaction with administration proved key. Lisa Gamsu, Barnard's vice president for administration and capital planning, noted that Sulzberger Tower will be empty this summer so that new floors can be put in, and the Diana will include study lounges like those now found in the first

floor of Wollman Library inside Lehman Hall. Other on-campus locations will be changed: WBAR, the Barnard campus radio station, will possibly be moving and the second floor of Brooks Hall might become graduate-student housing. SGA also hoped to expand student understanding with the development of a series of videos about economic diversity on campus.

Sarah Besnoff, SGA president and BC '09, will leave her administration in the hands of Katie Palillo, current vice president of communications and BC '10.

Engineering Student Council

The Engineering Student Council oversaw a review of its constitution, opening up its closed-door internal elections for the public to sit in. While the elections themselves will happen behind closed doors—candidates are chosen for election by council members—ESC president Peter Valeiras, SEAS '09, said the new measures will hopefully allow for more transparency between the council and its constituents, and give students the opportunity to participate in the discussion.

But overall, Valeiras said that making SEAS an overall warmer place was one of the council's top priorities, as council members tried to brighten up Mudd and other engineering student haunts with a wider expanse of initiatives and activities.

Currently SEAS students are rarely allowed to pass/D/fail courses. Many SEAS students are clamoring for the option to uncover pass/D/fail grades as Columbia College students are currently allowed to do. While ESC plans to release a survey for SEAS students to weigh in, no conclusion had been drawn by the end of the year.

ESC also weighed in on the search for a new SEAS dean, a process that ended in the selection of University of Illinois professor Feniosky Peña-Mora to the post.

Whitney Green, SEAS '10, was recently elected ESC president.

General Studies Student Council

As the General Studies Student Council continues to press forward on long-term issues—namely financial aid, housing, and parity—members said that council this year has laid the groundwork to effectively tackle these problems in the coming semesters.

Vice President of Communications Katherine Edwards, who was recently elected as next year's president, said that this semester had seen major headway in the campaign for Latin diplomas for GS students after beginning to successfully appeal to alumni and solicit student support through petitions. Currently, GS students are issued diplomas in English, while CC students receive Latin diplomas.

GSSC has also made strides in publicizing the living conditions of GS students in University housing by documenting the rooms through photographs on their Web site, and gaining more than 80 additional beds for GS students this spring.

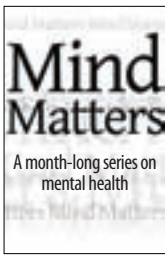
GSSC members have also pointed out the different facets of financial aid and debt burden for students—students with too many credits are also unable to get aid, they say, and the measurements of debt burden do not count those who drop out of school due to debt, and so may be underestimating the amount of debt General Studies students face.

Edwards wrote in an e-mail that GSSC adjusted its financial arrangement with the four councils, which would save about \$30,000 next year. The ratio that GSSC pays into collaborative events has been lowered to better reflect the size of the school's student body.

news@columbiaspectator.com

Death catalyzes campus mental health discussion

BY ALIX PIANIN
Spectator Senior Staff Writer



A candlelit memorial service in February drew out hundreds—family, friends, and faculty—all of whom had circled outside Low Library to remember the life of Eric Harms, the School of Engineering and Applied Science first-year who took his own life this past winter. As his loved ones remembered a warm and funny friend, devoted student leader, and talented musician, they also had a plea for his fellow students: to never suffer a silence as he had, and to avoid the devastating consequences.

Harms' death followed the suicide of SEAS senior Richard Ng in spring 2006. As students grappled with the loss of one of their own, a renewed spotlight was put on campus counseling offerings and efforts to erase the stigma of depression and mental illness.

"I never felt that there wasn't enough outreach," Judy Kim, recently elected 2012 Engineering Student Council president and who served with Harms on the ESC, said earlier in the semester.

Campus health service offerings and student-run support groups were better publicized than ever, but the campus was still faced with the question of how to keep that momentum for discussion going.

For Columbia's Counseling and Psychological Services and Barnard's

Furman Center, appealing to undergraduate students who may be in need was an ongoing difficulty, directors said, as the stigma of seeking counseling seemed to permeate the students of a large university more than their counterparts at smaller colleges.

In 2008, Furman saw 24 percent of the approximately 2,300 members of the Barnard student body, and CPS saw a combined 4,000 students from the 25,000 attending all schools within Columbia, both undergraduate and graduate—about 16 percent of the student body. CPS Director Richard Eichler said that undergraduates come "disproportionate to their numbers."

But even before Harms' death, the University had been making greater strides toward more encompassing health care on campus. CPS implemented a new program in September in which students coming to primary care medical services are given brief depression screenings, and student response to the screening has been largely positive.

Still, representatives from the Student Health Advisory Committee—a committee of student representatives from the Columbia College Student Council, ESC, and other student groups on campus, and contains a mental-health subcommittee—said that their offerings could be improved, especially in the wake of some criticism following Harms' death.



Courtesy of Facebook

ERIC HARMS

Campus Housing faces major changes on both sides of B'way

BY KIM KIRSCHENBAUM
Spectator Staff Writer

Columbia's ever-evolving residential system changed drastically this year.

In light of a dearth of dormitory space and flaws in the housing-selection process, students had a first taste of these changes as they lined up in John Jay Lounge and in Barnard's James Room to make their housing selections under revamped systems in early April. These changes will continue to be felt as students move into newly furnished buildings—with even one entirely new residence hall—next fall.

As dean of student affairs Kevin Shollenberger announced, the Columbia College class of 2013 will have 50 more students than previous classes. To accommodate the enrollment increase, some graduate housing in Harmony Hall on 110th Street between Broadway and Amsterdam was made available for the first time for CC and SEAS students participating in the General Selection housing process. The increase is part of a larger scale plan to increase the size of the college over time, which fell short due to lack of funding for a new dormitory.

And as the current economic climate takes its toll on the housing market, increasing numbers of students have opted for on-campus housing. Due to an increase in demand that exceeded housing space in the fall of 2008, several dozen Columbia students were housed in Barnard and University Apartment Housing. For the 2009-2010 school year, new layouts creating 30 doubles—and eliminating 30 singles—in Watt, McBain, and Ruggles will be made in order to address this problem.

But not all changes will be made in response to pressing economic issues. Rather, some changes will simply be made to make housing more comfortable. Entire floors will be redone in some dormitories. Some

students will move into suites that have new kitchens, flooring, and furniture. Those residing in Watt will finally have overhead lights in their rooms, as it remains one of the only buildings that does not have them. A few dormitories, including Carman and Furnald, will require the use of student id cards instead of Swiss keys to open rooms.

But these housing changes are not just limited to physical features. Columbia housing has instated a number of new rules in an effort to make what housing administrators hope will be a more fair process. Thirty-point groups of all seniors could pick before a group selecting a 30-point East Campus suite during their appointment time.

While many have responded positively to changes in the housing selection system, some changes have resulted in controversy. The same room/same suite policy, in which students could hold onto favorable dorms from one year to the next, has been eliminated because of some calling it unfair. Orthodox Jewish students, who had benefited from this policy because it allowed them to retain East Campus suites that would accommodate their dining and Sabbath observance needs, were made to relinquish these suites pending success in the lottery.

Barnard instituted several changes of its own. Following a room selection survey, suggestions made by Barnard's Housing Advisory Board, and a Student Government Association Town Hall meeting, changes intended to increase flexibility in suite selection were implemented.

Under the new system, students registered individually, and received a lottery number independent of that of their potential suitmates. After groups formed, each group's lottery number was the highest of anyone in the group. If the available housing options at the time of selection did not match a group's size, the group was then able to reform on the spot, in contrast to previous years.

"If we are neglecting our duty to detect the mental health problems within our student body, then we are not doing our job as well as we can," CCSC President George Krebs, CC '09, said in an e-mail this semester. "That may have been what happened in Eric's case."

The mental-health subcommittee is now working with resident advisers to improve the support system outside the administrative and academic realms and inside the dorms.

The renewed focus on campus mental health may provide a boost to groups that were struggling to gain support or attention for these causes. A campus chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness was started two years ago, but organizers had trouble sustaining interest in the group's events. Students Against Silence, a group formed in 2001 in response to the suicides on campus around that time, has been on hiatus. While SAS has stagnated with its two leaders currently studying abroad, co-president Saidah Adams, CC '10, said the group hopes to expand its scope by becoming a chapter of the national organization, Active Minds.

As students reassess and regroup for next year, campus counseling centers are still trying to draw in students to their sometimes underutilized services, despite sometimes mixed reviews from students.

"There's still a problem that people who could be served and may be suffering are not coming in," Mary Commerford, director of Furman, said.

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After a slew of appointments, several fresh faces join CU administration

BY JOY RESMOVITS

Administrative resignations and hires became a recurring feature of the 2008-2009 academic year, signaling a substantial turnover of Columbia's leadership. By September, the University will see fresh faces in many administrative posts. Eight years after becoming president, Lee Bollinger has set himself up to lead an institution run by deans he has appointed—most deans are selected after a search committee presents several finalists to Bollinger. After previous hires in the Medical Center, the School of International and Public Affairs, the School of the Arts, the Columbia Journalism School, and others, the selection of this year's newcomers capped off a series of key appointments. In fact, Bollinger joked in a recent interview, "I think we'll come to a point here where I will not have any more appointments to make." But that will only apply once he announces who the new provost will be.



Michele Moody-Adams

After two years on the hunt, the search committee and University President Lee Bollinger appointed Feniosky Peña-Mora—whom Bollinger calls "Fenny"—to the position of dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences in April. Currently the associate provost at the University of Illinois, Peña-Mora is known for his work in the field of disaster recovery. Hailing originally from the Dominican Republic, Peña-Mora's tenure will signify a return to his roots, as he spent some time in Washington Heights while he was growing up—he learned English at Teachers College. He said in an interview that he will bring a fresh approach to the long-term "Vision 2020," a plan formulated in 2007 during the tenure of former SEAS dean Zvi Galil to bolster the school's reputation. He added that he will emphasize interdisciplinary, the role of engineers as leaders, and the importance of the Core in ensuring the "synergy of various parts of the University. It's not a notion of us vs. them, engineering vs. the humanities." He is also noted for waving to students—even those he doesn't know—while on campus.



Daniel Barkowitz

Philosopher Michele Moody-Adams, who serves as vice provost for undergraduate education and professor at Cornell University, will be Columbia College's next dean, becoming the first woman and first African American to hold the post. Moody-Adams will also take on an additional title, vice president for undergraduate education, and will hold an appointment in the philosophy department, where she eventually hopes to teach. Members of the committee that chose her in February stressed that she bridges the worlds of academia and student affairs administration. Her Cornell colleagues cited the facilitation of a summer reading program among her accomplishments there, noting that she once assigned *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe—a move considered controversial in Cornell. That Moody-Adams shook things up at Cornell may speak to her openness with regard to the Core Curriculum.



Feniosky Peña-Mora

Daniel Barkowitz, director of student financial aid and employment at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will become the next dean of financial aid and associate dean of student affairs for Columbia College and the School of Engineering and Applied Science on June 1. Since the May 2007 firing of former dean of financial aid David Charlow for being found guilty of promoting loan companies that he benefited from, Nanette DiLauro served as director of the financial aid office. Barkowitz will be the first dean of financial aid since DiLauro's October departure to Barnard's financial aid office. According to his MIT blog, Barkowitz has a "budding career" as a "poet, philosopher, tarot card enthusiast, musical theater performer, and religious school instructor." Barkowitz maintains a separate poetry blog, and has written a book of poems called *Talking to Myself: Poetry From Now and Then*.



Austin Quigley

University Provost Alan Brinkley is leaving his administrative post to return to teaching in the history department full time. Brinkley, often seen strolling along 116th street in hats, has been Low Library's link to the faculty in his role as provost, or chief academic officer, over six years. Brinkley was asked to take the post after University President Lee Bollinger rejected the findings of an advisory search committee, and proposed to him over a Chinese dinner. Under Brinkley's leadership, the University has revamped its faculty housing system, re-evaluated the Core Curriculum, continued its precedent for ROTC, oversaw the unionization of graduate students, facilitated the opening of Columbia's middle school, created the office of the vice provost for diversity initiatives, and helped plan the Manhattanville expansion. Brinkley guided the faculty as the University weathered intense scrutiny throughout the Minuteman incident, controversy brought on by the David Project's protesting the practices of some professors in the Middle East and South Asian languages and cultures department, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speech, the hunger strike, and many contentious tenure cases.



Mary O'Neil Munding

Mary O'Neil Munding, dean of the School of Nursing, is stepping down this year. Munding took the post when the school was at a crossroads with a modest \$3 million endowment. University President Lee Bollinger and executive vice president for health and biomedical sciences and dean Lee Goldman wrote a March e-mail announcing her departure. Munding is leaving the school with an endowment greater than \$100 million.



Alan Brinkley

Bollinger focused on budgeting, hires, and Manhattanville

BOLLINGER from page 2

approved before this year's beginning, Bollinger continued to steer Columbia's large-scale expansion into Manhattanville, a project that has aroused controversy over Columbia's right to invoke eminent domain and the future consequences of the expansion on neighboring communities.

An even more contentious issue in which Bollinger has been involved is the question of Columbia's role concerning academic freedom and scholarly research in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Members of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences met in April to discuss the formation of an advisory committee that would use Columbia resources to tackle problems of travel facing Palestinians who wish to come to American colleges. The meeting was the culmination of letters and petitions in which they called on Bollinger to take a public stance, especially after he criticized the United Kingdom's professors' union for boycotting Israeli academic institutions in June 2007. But Bollinger declined to take sides on the debate this time around.

"I have always welcomed principled discussions about academic freedom and, in my own scholarship, have regularly addressed issues of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and academic freedom," Bollinger wrote in a letter to faculty members in March. "In general, however, I do not speak out nor does the University take official positions on specific actions by governments in the many ongoing conflicts around the world that might in some way also threaten academic freedom." Bollinger has declined to comment further on the topic.

Much of Bollinger's time has been focused on making appointments for several key administrative positions. This year, Michele Moody-Adams was appointed dean of Columbia College and Feniosky Peña-Mora was appointed dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science. A new University provost will be selected this month.

Each of these appointments signifies to Bollinger the opportunity to further pursue goals

that he has deemed important for Columbia.

Moody-Adams represents "our effort to try to have greater integration of the college into [Faculty of] Arts and Sciences," Bollinger said in May. He believes her appointment as made "for the benefit of the students and for the benefit of faculty."

Peña-Mora, whom Bollinger refers to as "Fenny," offers "the opportunity to have new leadership, to galvanize around [SEAS'] objectives, and to build." Specifically, he cited Peña-Mora's ambition for advancement in such areas as biomedical engineering, nanoscience, and computer science.

Bollinger also has a busy agenda in mind for the as-of-yet unannounced replacement for Alan Brinkley, the current provost who is stepping down at the end of the year.

"There will be many things that ... I'll want that person to get done, one of which will be looking at

the budget model across the whole University," Bollinger said of the incoming provost's responsibilities. Additionally, Bollinger expects the new provost to dedicate a large amount of time to advancing the Columbia Global Centers in China and Jordan, as well as working alongside Bollinger on Manhattanville and the University's capital campaign.

He seemed relieved at the prospect of finally announcing the new provost, because it will mark the end of his major administrative appointments of the year.

"I think we'll come to a point here where I will not have any more appointments to make," Bollinger said, laughing. By next year, the deanships of most of Columbia's schools and other top administrative positions will have been filled.

Much of Bollinger's time has been directed toward addressing the effects of the financial crisis on Columbia endowment and day-to-day operations.

A testament to the student body's curiosity about the University's economic standing is the fact that nearly every single one of Bollinger's fireside chats in the past academic year has been dominated by conversation about the crisis and what it means for students and faculty.

For instance, during his Feb. 12 chat, Bollinger stated that "the crisis is affecting us in all kinds of ways," which "may become visible" to students in future months and years.

Still, Bollinger maintains that budget-balancing has not taken priority over his main goal of internal organizing the University.

"I would say, on balance, trying to work internally with the key leaders has been the emphasis of the year."

Meanwhile, Bollinger has been working on a book about journalism, which is slated to be published next year.

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File photo

STILL FIGHTING | With the Manhattanville expansion moving into new planning stages, eminent domain continues to be a point of contention.

Despite city approval, disputes continue over M’ville expansion

BY MAGGIE ASTOR
Spectator Staff Writer

With the city’s approval process more than a year in the past, Columbia’s Manhattanville campus expansion has moved into new stages of planning.

This academic year was dominated not by controversy over city review of the project itself, but over logistics of land acquisition and construction.

The biggest news of the year came on Dec. 18, when the Empire State Development Corporation approved the use of eminent domain in the University’s 17-acre expansion site, eliminating the last procedural obstacle to construction. Eminent domain is the process by which the state can seize private property for the public good, and Columbia’s Manhattanville project drew criticism for receiving this civic designation.

Unless mutually agreeable deals can be reached with the two remaining local property holdouts who have refused to sell their land to Columbia—Tuck-It-Away Storage owner Nick Sprayregen and gas station owners Gurnam Singh and Parminder Kaur—eminent domain will be invoked and ownership of those properties will be transferred to the University with the understanding that the area is blighted and can be put to better public use as part of the planned campus.

Eminent domain law requires the University to pay the current owners market value for the properties.

Columbia and the ESDC both maintain that the expansion will benefit the community by creating jobs and revitalizing the neighborhood, a point some local activists strongly dispute.

“Columbia is one of New York’s largest employers, and this project will generate tens of thousands of jobs,” ESDC spokesperson Warner Johnston said at the December hearing.

But critics fear the expansion will lead to commercial and residential displacement, both directly and indirectly through gentrification and higher real estate prices.

Also, as has been the reaction to many public hearings regarding the Manhattanville expansion, some attendees complained that their voices were not acknowledged.

“This was just another dog and pony show,” Gwen Goodwin, chair of the Coalition to Save P.S. 109, said of the ESDC hearing. “It was just a different venue for people to speak to the wall and have the government dismiss us.”

Following the ESDC vote, the two property holdouts—Sprayregen and the Singhs—filed separate lawsuits to state appellate court in January, challenging the legality of using eminent domain in the expansion. The suits remain unsettled, but there is no indication that construction will be delayed while they are pending. Eminent domain also added a new dimension to an ongoing conflict between the University and Ramon Diaz, who owns Floridita Restaurant & Tapas Bar on Broadway and 125th Street. Columbia owns the building, and Diaz rents three storefronts under two separate leases.

A dispute with the University over rent payments was resolved in October, but an ESDC “Statement of Determinations and Findings” released Dec. 22 indicated that Diaz’s property could be subject to eminent domain even though Columbia already owns it. The primary lease on Floridita is good until 2015 and the secondary tapas bar lease must be renewed yearly, though Diaz fears eminent domain could invalidate these contracts.

Members of student activist group, Student Coalition on Expansion and Gentrification, joined with neighborhood protests to rally for Diaz in Manhattanville, and SCEG later submitted a petition with about 90 signatures calling upon the University to guarantee it would not prematurely terminate businesses leases around the expansion area.

Columbia Executive Vice President Robert Kasdin said the December statement was a formality, as eminent domain will be invoked as a matter of procedure on all properties in the expansion zone—even ones the University owns and vacant lots. Kasdin added in January, “We look forward to having active leases as long as possible.”

In February, University President Lee Bollinger stated at a University Senate meeting, “We are making the case that part of the stimulus package would be well-spent on Manhattanville.” Since then, SCEG and members of local activist group, Coalition to Preserve Community, have challenged that idea, particularly in the absence of details on how much money is being sought, from which government agencies, and for what specific purposes.

“Columbia shouldn’t be entitled to getting stimulus funding without a transparent process,” SCEG member Andrew Lyubarsky, CC ’09, said. “If Columbia were to get stimulus funding without anyone in the public knowing the content of their application, that would be a form of a blank check.”

“This is a non-profit educational research institution and we do what we do because there is a public benefit,” Bollinger said of SCEG’s protest, adding, “We have an assignment in this society, and it’s not to make a profit ... it’s just that’s not what we do. And so to be criticized for being selfish, it just doesn’t apply.”

The first week of May brought the most recent development for the Manhattanville project, with the release of the long-awaited Community Benefits Agreement, which allocated \$150 million from the University to the West Harlem community as a condition of the expansion. The CBA was negotiated over the past several years with the West Harlem Local Development Corporation—a group of neighborhood representatives—and designates Columbia funding for affordable housing, building a public school, and other local programs.

The 20-member LDC passed the CBA on May 8, with 15 votes in favor and three abstentions. On May 4, West Harlem’s Community Board 9 had voted unanimously against the agreement.

Of the total sum, \$76 million is “unencumbered,” meaning the local development corporation can choose to use it however it wants. Yet this open-ended allocation of money made some CB9 members uneasy. “This is a very loose document. It really is a bad agreement,” said CB9’s Savonna Bailey McClain, who asked for more details about how the \$76 million would be prioritized and spent. “It just looks like the community is going to fight over \$76 million.”

Though CB9 as well as CPC activists vocally opposed the agreement, others are optimistic.

Susan Russell, an LDC member and chief of staff for City Council member Robert Jackson, who represents West Harlem, called it “a very good agreement—in fact, it’s an outstanding agreement.”

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Facing a reduced budget, MTA strikes deal to reduce fare hike, service cuts

BY AARON KIERSH
Spectator Staff Writer

Faced with a nearly unprecedented deficit over the past year, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is poised to raise its base subway fare and implement what MTA officials themselves termed “doomsday” service cuts.

However, hopes were raised cautiously for the first time in months on May 5, when Gov. David Paterson, CC ’77, announced a state-funded rescue package that would reduce the \$2.50 base fare and extensive service reductions scheduled to be implemented on May 31. The state legislature approved the plan on May 6, but Elliot Sander, MTA chief executive officer, resigned the next day in a pair of events that turned the city’s public transportation system on its head.

Though only the MTA can set new transit fares, the state money is expected to alleviate the need for the previously planned measures, under which pay-per-ride and unlimited MetroCard prices would have increased by between 20 and 30 percent, and nighttime subway and bus service would have been drastically reduced. This relief will come through a new payroll tax—34 cents for every \$100 in wages—and a 50-cent surcharge on taxi rides in the city.

Most other city agencies will sustain \$1 billion in funding cuts if the New York City Council approves Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s proposed budget. But while last week’s state bailout brought the MTA above water, no other municipal entity has faced financial woes on the level of the MTA’s.

Gene Russianoff, staff attorney for the Straphangers Campaign—a riders’ advocacy group—outlined a bleak future for the MTA in April.

“The solution is challenging, but the problem is crystal clear,” Russianoff said at the time. “We are looking at higher fares, service cuts, and no money for future upgrades. But we shouldn’t just be looking at money for the agency. We need new checks and balances to make sure this never happens again.”



File photo

SLOWER, PRICIER? | New Yorkers were incensed when the MTA announced a fare hike and service cuts. Gov. David Paterson, CC ’77, recently announced a state rescue package to reduce the base fare.

The national economic crisis and the failure of state politicians until very recently to come to a workable compromise have exacerbated the MTA’s problems, which began even before the state fell into a multi-billion dollar budget deficit last September. In June 2008, realizing a crisis was imminent, Gov. Paterson commissioned Richard Ravitch, CC ’55 and a former MTA chairman, to lead an investigation into how to keep the agency running.

In December, Ravitch and his 13-member committee released a 19-page report advising the state to levy higher taxes and collect tolls on East River bridges. These measures, Ravitch maintained, would allow the MTA to reduce or even eliminate the worst of the proposed fare hikes and service cuts. Most politicians, including Paterson and Bloomberg, quickly warmed to the plan. However, political opposition from both parties in the state Senate prevented the plan from being adopted, as Democrats opposed

bridge tolls and Republicans vetoed tax hikes.

Meanwhile, President Barack Obama’s, CC ’83, federal stimulus package provided the city and state with billions of dollars for public projects, but the MTA did not receive enough money to fully compensate for its \$1.2 billion deficit. With no other recourse, the MTA announced over the summer that public transportation fares would increase by at least 23 percent, and warned of cuts in subway and bus service, particularly at night. The idea of eliminating nighttime service altogether was even briefly floated.

“We support the Ravitch plan as a way to divide revenue,” MTA spokesperson Aaron Donovan said earlier in the spring. But without state assistance, “we have no choice but to balance the budget the only way we can, with service cuts and fare increases.”

Locally, most concerns centered around the implications of the proposed cuts.

“We won’t mind a small fare increase, but please don’t cut

service,” said city council member Gale Brewer, who represents the Upper West Side. “We need buses and subways. We don’t have anything else. There are few cars around here. The seniors are desperate for buses.”

State assembly member Daniel O’Donnell, who represents Morningside Heights, echoed Brewer’s concerns. “The people I represent depend on public transportation,” he said in January. “If New York wants to remain a world capital, public transportation needs to continue to function. New York is a 24-hour city, and we need a 24-hour public transportation system.”

And while a resolution may now be on the horizon, students already feeling pinched by the recession are bracing for even more difficult times ahead.

“It’s definitely going to hit me,” Andres Bermudez, a student at the Columbia Journalism School, said. “My budget is really tight as it is. I don’t know what I’m going to do.”

news@columbiaspectator.com



OBAMANIA | Election fever took hold of Columbia until Nov. 4, when Barack Obama, CC ’83, became the first alumnus to be elected as president of the United States. In January, some students even ditched the first day of classes to view Obama’s inauguration on a jumbo-tron.

Inauguration fosters school spirit as students flock to Low steps

ELECTION from front page

politics—and it’s like he was made by this transitional moment in American politics. Where, for the first time, things are so crazy—up is down and down is up.

... It’s only possible where a guy like Barack Hussein Obama’s name can become president of the United States.”

Moreover, “Columbia University is freakin’ crazy about him,” New York State Coordinator for Students for Obama, Jared Walker, CC ’09, noted in anticipation of his arrival

for the ServiceNation Presidents Forum this fall.

Still, despite his popularity on campus, Obama did not particularly cater to the crowd at his alma mater.

“He doesn’t appear to make a big deal of his having gone to Columbia. In fact, he barely ever mentions it,” history professor Eric Foner said during the election.

At the ServiceNation forum, Obama said, “This is my alma mater. And I want to thank”—he was then cut off by overwhelming applause, and continued—“I was

saying, though, that the neighborhood’s changed. When I came here in 1980—some of the apartments around here didn’t look quite like what they look like now. And I could afford them. I don’t think I can now.”

Obama lived off-campus after transferring from Occidental College in Los Angeles. His political science classmate, Michael Ackerman, CC ’84, recalled him as “almost chameleon-like, spy-like, slipped in and out. He tried to keep to himself.”

But now that he has won his White House bid and finished

off his first 100 days, Obama may be back.

“He promised me he would come and speak. I think I’m the only person in the world he made that promise to,” Bollinger said.

Bollinger explained that Columbia officials are working on bringing the president to campus, though he noted the challenge in negotiating Obama’s schedule.

“I’m confident that will happen,” Bollinger added. “I don’t know when.”

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File photo

Local restaurants, including Tomo, Tokyo Pop, close due to money woes

CITY RETAIL from page 3

if we wanted to be flexible and lower the price. But there is no need.” Saganda owns an empty retail space on 120th Street.

In spite of the growing number of unused spaces hidden by newspaper-covered windows, there are a few signs of hope for the entire area’s retail.

From 97th Street to 100th Street, the Columbus Village Development—near its completion after three years of construction—is set to bring in a whole slew of new retail, ranging from big-box chains such as Whole Foods Market and Borders, as well as smaller businesses like

Crumbs Bake Shop and Michael’s Arts & Craft Store to an area that has been lifeless for around four years.

Still, this large influx of retail timed with the recession has raised concerns. “We began in a different economic climate, financing was much more readily available and everyone had a rosier outlook,” Columbus Village developer Peter Rosenberg of Stellar Management, said.

Meanwhile, the landmark Metro Theater space on Broadway between 99th and 100th streets will also become home to a chain outlet. Urban Outfitters signed a 20-year lease in January, and the popular store scheduled to

open there within seven to eight months. Commercial tenants hope that it will recharge this area, now defined by its vacancies.

As a legislative boost to the retail slump, New York City Council member Robert Jackson, who represents Morningside Heights, recently proposed the Small Business Survival Act, alongside 18 co-sponsors. Jackson said he expects the bill, which would grant commercial tenants additional rights during the lease renewal process, to move forward in September.

Since March, there have also been ongoing local discussions about the allocation of stimulus funding around the neighborhood. Congressman Charles

Rangel, who represents Upper Manhattan, said in a letter supplementing the release of a stimulus resource guide that billions of dollars will be used to support the area’s businesses.

Rangel is also proposing a federal bill to provide tax incentives to communities and entrepreneurs to help them spur economic activity.

In his letter, Rangel characterized the severity of the situation, while adding a hint of optimism. “We are faced with the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression,” though he added of the stimulus, “Help is on the way.”

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6	4	9	2	8	3	5	7	1
3	7	8	1	5	4	9	2	6
9	6	5	8	4	7	2	1	3
7	3	1	9	6	2	8	4	5
2	8	4	3	1	5	7	6	9
8	2	7	5	3	6	1	9	4
1	9	6	4	2	8	3	5	7
4	5	3	7	9	1	6	8	2

su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 grid contains the digits 1 through 9. That means that no number is repeated in any row, column or box.

2			7					
4		5	1	2				
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				5	7	1		6
				3				7

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Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

ACROSS

1 Momma's mate
6 Staircase part
10 Rum-soaked cake
14 Foundation
15 Ark builder
16 Like a happy dog's tail
17 Funny sketches
18 About, in legal memos
19 Lee seen in
20 Lust, gluttony, greed, etc.
23 "Charlotte's Web" author
26 Multi-room accommodations
27 Toy (with)
28 Blush fire operation, briefly
30 Fed. stipend
31 Roughly
32 Show proof of
34 Alabama team nickname
38 Raps on the door
39 Old wives' tale
42 ___ kwon do
45 Leg joint
46 "The Virginian" actor Joel, 1946
48 You might have to pay one to get cash
50 Malady
51 Ice cream flavor honoring a Grateful Dead icon
54 Matador's opponent
55 Quarterback's throw
56 Singing group
60 "Sign me up!"
61 "Editorially speaking," in e-mail
62 Multitude
63 Boston NBA'er, briefly
64 High schooler
65 Discontinued

DOWN

1 "Bill Nye the Science Guy" ainer
2 Strong wood

3 Trident-shaped Greek letter
4 Tool in a haystack
5 Attack vigorously
6 Like many a nasty remark
7 Author Morrison
8 Make, as a living
9 Bird served "under glass"
10 Lowest 56-
11 Anticipates
12 Noble's partner
13 Tennis great Andre
21 66, e.g.: Abbr.
22 Soap star Susan
23 DDE's WWII command
24 "It's freezing!"
25 Madison is its cap.
28 Draw forth
29 Rouge and blanc, on la carte
32 Opal suffix
33 Johnny Carson's sidekick
35 Comic book artist
36 House that sucks you dry, so to speak

37 Brontë heroine
40 Coffee break time
41 Chapeau
42 Strategem
43 Where telecommuters work
44 "Barn" chef
46 Karaoke singer's need, for short
47 Overused expression

49 Foremost part
50 Heated crime?
52 Sports contest
53 Tennis star for whom a stadium is named
57 Old California fort
58 Suffix with chlorine
59 The starts of this puzzle's three longest answers are shades of it

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

GET	STO	FIR	ST	BASE
IMAL	LIT	TLE	TEA	POT
STREETS	OF	FLARE	APOT	
SAWTO		UMBRA		
	AMP	IKI		
SLOT	CAR	DEDUCT	IONS	
TIVO	NEHIS	SAUL		
OMIT	TAO	INOA		
LOTS	RENTS	NOOK		
ENZYMES	IMOGENE			
	EDT	CEN		
TIRED		LEASH		
COUNTERATTACKED				
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FILM

Despite bleak economy and dearth of institutional support, Columbia filmmakers keep on rolling

BY PETER LABUZA
Spectator Staff Writer

While Hollywood cut back budgets and made fewer movies this year, Columbia filmmakers did the opposite.

The Columbia film scene has always been a small circle of people, but during the past year, both students and alumni have pushed toward expanding and establishing their ranks.

For some, this increase in opportunity has been thanks to groups like Columbia Undergraduate Film Productions, which have provided new access to filmmakers. CUFPP, in addition to lending out cameras as well as other equipment, added workshops for both writing and directing to help student filmmakers better understand narrative strategy and the visual language of cinema. Student filmmaker Victor Suarez, CC '11, who worked with CUFPP this year, wrote in an e-mail interview: "Two years ago, something like *Nel Reimu* [my film] would have been impossible, and so it's lucky that I came to Columbia when I did."



Courtesy of Victor Suarez

ACTION! | Although student filmmakers struggled to gain funding this year, some, like Victor Suarez, CC '11, got creative by searching for financial support abroad.

But other groups have struggled. Project Bluelight failed to make a feature this semester, and new groups like King Club

Productions have provided little help to undergraduate students. Many groups still lack funding, and it seems that student

filmmakers fared better this year finding funds from their own pockets or those of their parents. Suarez noted that the lack of alumni or simply graduate help has stilted the growth of Columbia student filmmakers this year, and hopes that this can change over the next year.

Outside of the 116th Street gates, Columbia alumni are becoming more commonly recognized than their NYU and USC counterparts. One strong example is Courtney Hunt, SoA '94, who made a strong showing this year with the film *Frozen River*. The independent feature starring Melissa Leo was a sensation at the Sundance Film Festival, and rode its success all the way to the Oscars, where it scored two nominations, including one for Hunt's screenplay.

Hunt is not the only graduate of Columbia's School of the Arts to make a name for herself in the film industry. The documentary *Man on Wire* was produced by adjunct professor Maureen Ryan, SoA '92, and won the Oscar for best documentary.

Greg Motola, SoA '91, had strong success with his indie feature *Adventureland* with Jesse Eisenberg and Kristen Stewart.

Kathryn Bigelow, SoA '81, who directed the cult classic *Point Break*, won a number of awards at last fall's Venice Film Festival with her Iraq War thriller *The Hurt Locker*, which is set for release this summer.

In addition, three faculty members, three alumni, and six current graduate students had their films play at the recently wrapped Tribeca Film Festival.

Perhaps the greatest success, though, is Ramin Bahrani, CC '96, who is the first truly successful filmmaker to graduate from Columbia College. Bahrani's third film, *Goodbye Solo*, was released in March and gained universal critical support, including a 94-percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Bahrani's three films were also featured in a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in March.

Why has Columbia done so well this year? It seems to be that as independent cinema continues to reshape the film industry, Columbia students and alumni are getting a piece of the action. One can only hope that Columbia undergraduate filmmakers will soon become household names.

MUSIC

Facing decreased sales, many city music stores close their doors

BY REBECCA PATTIZ
Spectator Staff Writer

The economy is one of those strange and abstract concepts that, like gravity or global warming, can be pretty much ignored until it affects us personally. This year, music stores throughout the city were sadly introduced to the current economic decline in an all too intimate way.

Joseph Patelson Music House is one of the world's most famous and beloved sheet music stores, and has made its home across from Carnegie Hall for 70 years.

The legendary store, to the shock and sorrow of many musicians, announced in April that due to financial troubles and the fact that more and more people are buying sheet music online, it would be closing its doors once all of the inventory sells. The *New York Times*, NPR, and music blogs and forums all grieved over the loss of this musical mecca.

A slew of record stores, arguably on the decline for over a decade since the advent of Napster, finally felt the combined force of hard times and a music world driven by online downloading. Ethera, a much-cherished independent record store on Avenue A that had been around since 1995, had to close in March when its lease was up.

Virgin Megastore in Times Square also closed in March, followed by an announcement that the British chain's Union Square location would close its doors on May 31st. The closing of these two gigantic purveyors of all things entertainment also heralds the loss of the last large-scale record stores in Manhattan, proving that all record stores, not just the small and independent ones, are struggling to survive.

The most personal closing of all, at least to Columbia students, is that of Kim's Video. The store famous for its immense collection of cult movies as well as an impressive array of used and new CDs and vinyl closed its world-renowned St. Mark's location, its Avenue A store, and, most lamentably for Columbia, its Morningside Heights outpost.

Kim's owner, Yongman Kim, who opened the store's first location in 1987, blamed Netflix and internet downloading for Kim's demise. He has donated all of the store's films to a town in Western Sicily called Salemi, where the movies will be housed in a former Jesuit college.

Though the closing of the store's St. Mark's location was the most talked about in wider New York media, the loss of the location now occupied by Ricky's was the most difficult for Columbia students.

Kim's was the only place to rent videos for blocks and the only place to buy CDs and records without having to get on the subway. Though many criticized the rude staff and the often-inaccessible method of organizing movies by director, Kims' pretentiousness was just part of its charm. The store employed several Columbia students, many of whom complained about their jobs, but then mourned the loss of the store.

Perhaps the death of music stores in New York was inevitable. The Internet has made getting music faster, easier, and, well, free. Still, music lovers can't help but grieve for the loss of real, brick-and-mortar music stores. Sifting through crates of records, searching for rare sheet music, and cowering before cooler-than-thou salespeople are experiences you just cannot get online.

ART

CU students and alumni take on the art world

CU's location and close artistic community means big opportunities for affiliates

BY HANNAH YUDKIN
Spectator Staff Writer

It is always surprising and somewhat comforting to find Columbia affiliates out there in the art world. And this year, they have been out there in droves, showing at high-end venues like the Armory Show and the Queens Museum.

A mere glance at the Alumni Arts calendar on the CU Arts Web page shows an impressive array of current students, alumni, and professors participating in exhibitions throughout the city. Out of 50 artists from 25 different countries, for example, two of our very own are featured in the New Museum's triennial show "The Generational: Younger Than Jesus": current MFA student Dineo Bopape and Matt Keegan, SoA '04.

The fact that Columbia is located in a hub of visual culture, of course, makes it somewhat easier for affiliates to stay connected to the art world. "At any given time we have five or six exhibitions of our alumni," said Gregory Amenoff, head of the visual arts program at the School of the Arts.

With ideal geography comes impressive faculty (at both the undergraduate and graduate level), many of whom are very active in the art world. Barnard visual arts professor John Miller not only took part in this year's Armory Show at Bruno



File photo



File photo

NOW YOU SEE IT | CU faculty, alumni, and students showed off their talent this year at venues as diverse as the Armory Show and the Painted Boy Gay Erotic Art Fair.

Delavallade's booth, but also curated an exhibit, "Regift," at the Swiss Institute, which closed in April. Similarly, many notable artists, such as Liam Gillick and Mark Dion, take part in SoA's mentor program, an "apprenticeship" program in which current SoA students work with a

high-profile artist for four weeks.

These opportunities seem to have had positive effects for recent alumni interested in visual art. Erich Erving, GS, for example, participated in this year's Gay Erotic Art Fair and proudly noted that many of his pieces were created in a class

taught by Kiki Smith, another notable faculty member at Columbia.

It seems as though faculty members as well as graduates tend to feel a sense of attachment to their Ivy roots even after they step outside Columbia's gates. This is why Amenoff called SoA's program a "cooperative community," stating his belief that, "these bonds extend into the world in a variety of ways." Some of those ways include opportunities to exhibit in museums and galleries, as well as grant and residency opportunities and access to studio spaces. The relationships created at SoA are the reasons why the "Columbia community extends itself effectively into the larger cultural community," said Amenoff.

Although Amenoff does focus on SoA's program, the idea of "cooperative community" can be extended to the undergraduate realm as well. Kristin Galetta, BC '08, noted that she had the opportunity to show her artwork at AIR gallery last year because of her Barnard visual arts professor, Joan Snitzer. "She'll try to find you an alumni that knows many things," Galetta said. Of course, Galetta still had to apply to be in the show—but having a strong relationship with her professor helped.

Thanks to this strong community, Columbia seems to be doing pretty well for itself in the art world this year.

TV

Columbians shift their gaze from the silver screen to the computer screen

BY CHRISTINE JORDAN
Spectator Staff Writer

For much of America, things are going to get a little crazy on June 12, when all television networks switch to digital signals.

But students—along with the rest of the internet-savvy population—are watching primarily digital media already, with the industry's increased emphasis on online TV content in the last year.

Shazeeda Bhola, BC '11, is one of the many students relying almost solely on the internet to keep up with her television. "Everything can be found online these days. Even when I'm at home, I feel like I still catch up on shows on my laptop instead," she said.

Zak Accuardi, CC '11, added that TVs aren't dorm room necessities anymore. From network sites to Netflix, "the computer makes it so easy to stream TV shows," he said. A television "would be a huge distraction on top of all others."

Networks have struggled to meet the demand for making TV episodes available online, trying to find a way to keep advertising revenues, ratings, and viewership high in an environment

where illegal online TV watching has become ubiquitous.

But slowly, they're adapting. Last week, the Walt Disney Company acquired a stake in Hulu, which will make ABC the third major network to post its shows on the popular video Web site, starting this summer.

Popular programs, too, are expanding their complete watching experience to the Internet. *Gossip Girl*'s Web series "Chasing Dorota" chronicles the love story of the Waldorfs' maid, Dorota, played by Zuzanna Szadkowski, BC '01. The minor romance is only referenced in passing on The CW drama's recent episodes, making the Web series a gift for fans looking to spend more time on the Upper East Side.

However, crossovers aren't always necessarily from TV screen to computer screen—sometimes they are the opposite. CollegeHumor's original Web series found a place in this season's prime time schedule with MTV's *The CollegeHumor Show*.

With such promise, filmmakers like Andrew Y. Park, CC '99, have launched series straight to the Internet. Park co-created "The Hayley Project," a Streamy Award-nominated Web series that tracks one sleuth's journey to shed light on her best friend's supposed suicide.

Along with his fellow producers David Evans, SEAS '99, and Paolo De Dios, SEAS '00, Park uploaded his series, which filmed in part on Columbia's campus, directly to YouTube. "In the beginning, we uploaded episodes to 'The Hayley Project' Web site, but found that we couldn't wait for viewers to come to us," Park said in a phone interview. "YouTube gave us a way to go to them."

Despite the expanding audience for Web series, Park said that there is still somewhat of a stigma attached them. "So many people still think that there are only videos of dogs and Frisbees on YouTube," he said.

Park also added that "there are the occasional 'trolls' who leave nasty comments on videos, but they've found a majority of their viewers to be "very supportive of the series."

As an open forum of this nature, YouTube has given students the chance to engage more with their television. As Bhola said, with Web series, "viewers get to feel like part of the process, that they're helping create or control the program they're watching."

And, certainly, it seems that online content has given students a fair helping of remote control.



Courtesy of the Hayley Project

MYTUBE | With an increase in Web-only network content, students continued to change the way they watch TV this year.





File photo
HIGH AND TIGHT | Despite the disappointing finish, Columbia showed moments of brilliance, especially on defense where the Lions earned two first-team All-Ivy honors for Lou Miller and Alex Gross.

CU football ties for sixth in Ivy League standings

BY MATT VELAZQUEZ
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The 2008 Columbia football season was bittersweet for the Light Blue. Its 2-5 Ivy League record landed it in a tie for sixth place in the Ancient Eight, which is a better than its last-place finish in 2007. But there is no doubt that the Lions could have achieved more.

“The season was disappointing,” head coach Norries Wilson said after the team’s final game against Brown. “I put this game away from the other nine because I thought in the other nine we weren’t out-toughed. We got out-toughed today ... I know we only won two of those previous nine games, but we didn’t get out-toughed in those seven games we lost previous to today and we had opportunities to win those games.”

The first five games of the season saw the Lions go 0-5, but each game was decided by fewer than 10 points. The Light Blue held fourth-quarter leads against Fordham and Princeton before dropping those games at home and fell just short in a shootout in the pouring rain against Towson. Strong defense kept the Lions close against Lafayette and Penn, but the offense was unable to seal the deal.

In the sixth game of the season the Lions broke into the win column when they beat Dartmouth, 21-13. Senior quarterback M.A. Olawale got his first start in that game and was able to carve through the Big Green defense. He was named Ivy League Player of the Week for the performance.

After losses to Yale and Harvard, the Light Blue beat Cornell, 17-7, in a game that the defense, which had been the team’s strong suit all season, dominated. It would be the team’s last win, as Columbia was trounced by league co-champion Brown in the final weekend of the season, 41-10.

Two Lions—junior defensive end Lou Miller and sophomore linebacker Alex Gross—received first-team all-Ivy League honors, and five others were given spots on other all-league teams. Miller led the league in sacks with eight and tackles for a loss with 19.5. Not to be outdone, Gross topped all other defenders with 101 tackles during the 2008 campaign.

The second team featured four Lions—three on offense and one on defense—while two spots on the defensive honorable-mention list were also snagged by Columbia players. Senior left tackle Michael Brune, junior wide receiver Austin Knowlin, and senior kicker Jon Rocholl represented the Light Blue on offense while senior linebacker Drew Quinn was recognized on defense. Rocholl was also named to the defensive honorable mention team as a punter along with freshman defensive tackle Owen Fraser. Fraser was the only freshman other than Rookie of the Year Matthew Hanson of Harvard to be selected for any all-Ivy team—an indication that he must have been highly considered for the top freshman honor.

CROSS COUNTRY

Team MVP: Megan Lessard

The Columbia cross country team consistently finished at the top of the pack this year, with both the men’s and women’s teams taking first at the Metropolitan Championships and second in the Ivy League Heptagonal Championships. Senior Megan Lessard went on to finish 58th overall at the NCAA championship in Terre Haute, Indiana.

FIELD HOCKEY

Overall record: 11-6

Ivy League record: 2-5

Team MVP: Megan Davidson

After coming in second place in the Ivy League last year, the Light Blue had a promising 5-0 start to the 2008 season. However, the Lions were unable to perform well against conference opponents, dropping five of their seven Ivy games and finishing fifth in the league. Four of Columbia’s Ivy losses were decided by one point.

VOLLEYBALL

Overall record: 6-18

Ivy League record: 0-14

Team MVP: Amalia Viti

Although it did not manage to pick up any conference victories this season, the Columbia volleyball team doubled its previous season’s overall win total with six triumphs. Senior Amalia Viti was named second-team all-Ivy after leading the league this year with 353 kills and setting a new school record with 1,256 kills over the course of her college career.

Columbia women’s soccer finishes third in the Ivy League as the title remains just out of reach

BY SARAH SOMMER
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Led by the eventual Ivy League Player of the Year, junior midfielder/forward Sophie Reiser, the Columbia women’s soccer team amassed a 4-2-1 record in conference play to finish third in the Ivy League. While their 2008 campaign was certainly noteworthy, the Lions had higher hopes after winning the Ivy title in 2006. Columbia headed into its final conference matchup with the chance to win at least a share of the championship, but fell short of the title at Harvard.

The Lions opened Ivy play with a 3-1 victory over Cornell. In its next league

matchup, Columbia outbattled Brown in a 2-1 overtime win. The Lions then endured a double-overtime game the following weekend that ended in a 1-1 tie with Penn.

Columbia gave an early own-goal to Princeton but came back just over six minutes later to knot the score at 1-1. The tie remained in place until the 108th minute of play, when Princeton found the back of the net for a sudden-death victory.

The Lions suffered another 2-1 double-overtime defeat when they closed their season at Harvard. The Crimson struck in the first half against the Lions, but Columbia did not answer until the 50th minute. Both defenses then clamped down to force two overtimes, and a draw seemed likely.

With only nine seconds remaining, however, an unexpected foul call against Columbia led to a Harvard penalty kick. Crimson defender Lizzy Nichols easily netted the final goal of the matchup to tilt the score in the Harvard’s favor, ending Columbia’s hopes of regaining the Ivy championship.

The Lions should be a serious contender for the conference title in 2009, as all but one starter will be returning. All-Ivy second-team goalkeeper Rebecca Taylor is graduating, but with Reiser at the helm and three other second-team players on the roster, the Lions will have a chance to truly dominate the league next season.



File photo
KEEP AWAY | Junior Sophie Reiser led the way as the women’s soccer team fell just short of a share in the Ivy title after losing to Harvard late in the season.

Men’s soccer defeats No. 6 UCSB in home opener, finishes seventh in Ancient Eight

BY SABINE SCHULZ
Spectator Staff Writer

The men’s soccer team finished its 2008 season seventh in the Ivy League with an overall record of 4-12-1 (2-5 Ivy). The team fought through a midseason slump, which culminated in a six game losing streak, to close out the season in a 2-0 shutout over Cornell at home.

Despite beginning their season with three losses on the road against nonconference opponents, the Lions defeated UC Santa Barbara, ranked No. 6 nationally, in their home opener on Sept. 14. Sophomore forward Bayo Adafin marked his first career hat trick, scoring off assists from senior Felipe Castrillon, freshman Francois Anderson, and even freshman goal keeper Alexander Aurichio. The Lions’ defense held strong under the direction of senior captain James Pounder, as Aurichio allowed only one goal in the 80th minute from the Gauchos.

After their triumph over UCSB and La Salle, the Lions dropped four consecutive matches, including a close 1-2 contest to No. 24 Brown. The team came back from the four game losing streak to take the lead and the win over No. 19 Penn. Senior Scott Strickland found the back of the net for the first time in his career, while Adafin added another tally for the Lions, securing a 2-0 lead. Though the Quakers consistently outshot the Lions, they managed only a single goal in the 84th minute, ending the game 2-1 for the Light Blue.

The Lions then dropped another six straight, including four to League opponents Dartmouth, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, leaving only one match left against Cornell. Adafin, the Lions’ leading scorer, netted one goal for the Light Blue in the first half while fellow sophomore Pepe Carotenuto added another. Aurichio and the defense held fast to end the game in a 2-0 shutout, the second of the season for the Light Blue. After the season, Adafin was named to the all-Ivy League second team for



File photo
GOAL!! | The Lions came away with impressive wins in 2009 over UCSB and La Salle.

his outstanding performance, while Carotenuto received an honorable mention.

While the Lions finished the season with two conference wins, the most since 2004, the team is losing four seniors, including Pounder, who held the defense together under intense pressure. Head coach Leo Chappel will also be leaving Columbia. He will be replaced by Kevin Anderson, a former assistant coach for the Lions who has played professionally in Major League Soccer. What Anderson can do with the team will be the question next season, which begins with an away game against Duke on Sept. 4.

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M. SWIMMING AND DIVING

Overall record: 5-6
Ivy League record: 3-4
Team MVP: Adam Powell

The Columbia men's swimming and diving team failed to match expectations, finishing a disappointing fifth in the Ivy League championships, a spot lower than last year. While Columbia was unable keep pace with the league's top teams this season, the future looks bright for the Lions as many swimmers posted impressive times at both the ECAC and EISL championships.

W. SWIMMING AND DIVING

Overall record: 9-2
Ivy League record: 5-2
Team MVP: Allison Hobbs

The women's swimming and diving team matched its best-ever dual-meet finish with an overall 9-2 record this year. At the Ivy League championship, the Lions finished fifth with Hannah Galey and Allison Hobbs picking up first-place finishes in the 100-meter freestyle and 100-meter butterfly, respectively.

INDOOR TRACK

Team MVP: Jeff Moriarty

Columbia indoor track and field had one of its best finishes at the Ivy League Indoor Heptagonal Championships in recent history. The Lions finished third, behind Cornell and Princeton, with several individuals winning their respective races. Sophomore Jeff Moriarty won the 1000-meter, junior Stefan Vutescu won the 60-meter dash, and the relay team won the 4x800-meter relay.

WRESTLING

Overall record: 3-14
Ivy League record: 1-4
Team MVP: Ryan Flores

Although they didn't notch an impressive season record, Columbia's wrestlers had strong showings in a number of competitive tournaments, including a third-place finish at the New York state championship. Sophomore Ryan Flores won the EIWA heavyweight title in thrilling fashion, but lost on the first day of the NCAA championship in St. Louis.

Fencing excels in tough, injury-ridden 2009 season

BY JONATHAN AUGUST
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

When a coach who just finished his 31st season at the helm of a team calls a season his toughest ever, you listen. For head coach George Kolombatovich and the Columbia fencing team, 2009 was one where injuries rocked many fencers over the course of the season, yet at the end the Lions finished in fourth place at the NCAA championships and second in the Ancient Eight.

The Light Blue opened the season against defending NCAA champion Ohio State and other top competition, with the women looking like the elite squad Columbia is used to seeing. Despite the strong start, when junior sabrist and former national champion Daria Schneider was injured, the team's chances at an Ivy title were damaged.

Columbia knew that it would be in a battle with other Ivy schools this year as the competition in the Ancient Eight had improved since the season before when the Lions swept their opponents. With injuries playing a major factor for the team, the Light Blue battled hard on the first day of the championship at Levien Gym, but still lost one match in both the men's and women's draws. The Lions would need help from other Ivy teams if they were to retain at least



File photo

ONE ON ONE | The Columbia fencing team proved yet again that it is a powerhouse in the Ivy League, finishing second in the Ancient Eight despite many injuries.

a share of the championship, but in the second weekend at Brown they received none, settling for respectable second-place finishes.

In the team's warm-up to the NCAA regionals, the Intercollegiate Fencing Association championship, Columbia had one of its most impressive outings,

earning three gold medals and a bronze and setting them up well for their run to the NCAA championships. At regionals, the Lions qualified 10 of a maximum 12 fencers, yet when selection day for the championship came, the Light Blue got a welcome surprise when sophomore Abby Caparros-Janto earned the team an at-large bid.

With 11 fencers making the trip to the NCAA championship, a number that was the best the team could have hoped for entering the event, Columbia played very well, scoring 151 victories. That total was only one short of their entire haul from a season ago when the team brought in the maximum 12 fencers. The 151 points was good enough for a fourth place finish overall, while Schneider and junior foilist Kurt Getz earned bronze medals in women's sabre and men's foil, respectively. In total, six fencers—Schneider, Getz, freshman Neely Brandfield-Harvey, sophomores Jackie Jacobson and Nicole Ross, and junior Jeff Spear—earned spots as either first- or second-team All-Americans, just one short of the 2008 total.

Overall, despite the injuries that plagued the team over the course of 2009, the Columbia fencing team once again proved its merits as one of the elite teams in the nation.

Men's basketball overcomes early-season doubt to finish 7-7 against Ivy rivals

BY MAX PURO
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Coming off two consecutive 7-7 Ivy League campaigns and facing the loss of four senior starters, the men's basketball team entered the 2008-2009 season with a bleak outlook.

To make matters worse, junior transfer Brian Grimes tore his ACL five minutes into the team's first practice. Grimes was expected to fill the role of departed three-time all-Ivy League performer John Baumann. With Grimes out for the season, the Lions were forced to rely on a number of inexperienced players.

Nevertheless, the Light Blue managed a third straight .500 league record and finished the campaign with a 12-16 overall record.

Columbia struggled in nonconference play early in the season and even lost in the championship game of the fourth annual Tyler Ugolyn Columbia Classic, marking the Lions' first loss in the tournament. Yet despite the poor start, the Light Blue was competitive in every game, including tough battles against the ACC's Virginia Tech and the Big East's Seton Hall.

The Lions also struggled in the opening games of Ivy League competition, dropping their first two contests to eventual Ancient Eight champion Cornell, including a tough 83-72 loss in Ithaca. But Columbia went on a run after that and picked up wins

in six of its next seven games, including a victory over Harvard in which Kevin Bulger hit a runner with only 4.2 seconds remaining in regulation time.

In the seven-game run, Columbia held its opponents to 56.4 points per contest, nearly six points below the team's season average, while improving its league record to 6-3.

Starters Patrick Foley (foot) and Asenso Ampim (ankle) were out with injuries for the final six games of the season.

The undermanned Lions came into the final weekend against Penn and Princeton in search of a third consecutive .500 season, and the possibility of improving on their record from the past two seasons. Against Princeton, they were able to erase a four-point halftime deficit en route to a 14-point win.

While Columbia remained in control against Penn throughout the majority of the season finale, the Lions were left heartbroken as Quaker guard Kevin Egee hit a 30-foot 3-pointer as time expired, giving Penn a 51-50 victory. The loss left the Light Blue sorely disappointed not to have finished over .500 in the league.

Nevertheless, the 7-7 conference record was quite impressive considering the losses of last year's seniors and coach Joe Jones' decision to give extensive court time to underclassman and senior Jason Miller, who rarely played in his first three years here. Furthermore, four potential starters (Foley, Ampim, Niko Scott, and Joe



File photo

ON PAR | For the third straight year, the Lions ended their season with a .500 conference record. Noruwa Agho (left) and Asenso Ampim had breakout seasons for Columbia.



File photo

Bova) missed a combined 32 games due to injury, noticeably hurting Columbia chances of winning, especially during the final stretch of the season.

Miller stepped up countless times this year. The forward averaged 9.8 points and 6.6 rebounds per game while shooting 53 percent from the field en route to earning second team all-Ivy League accolades. His presence down low will be missed next season.

Despite sitting out nine games due to injury, Foley led the Lions in scoring (10.8 points per game) and assists (2.5 per game).

Additionally, freshman Noruwa Agho emerged as a offensive threat.

The guard ranked third on the team in scoring (9.1 points per game) and 3-point shooting (35.7 percent), first in steals (1.3 per game), and second in minutes (27.7 per game). His ability to hit long-range shots and drive to the hoop makes him someone worth watching next year.

Prospects for next season are bright. Even with the loss of Miller, who is graduating, five players who played 20-plus minutes per game apiece will return. With that, the return of a healthy Grimes, and the addition of 7-foot transfer Max Craig from Loyola Marymount, Columbia will be a potential contender for the 2009-2010 Ivy League crown.

Inconsistency plagues Lions during league play

BY SARAH SOMMER
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The Columbia women's basketball team showed flashes of greatness during its 2008-2009 campaign, but the Lions were unable to dominate the Ivy League. Columbia (13-15, 6-8 Ivy) opened conference play with a hard-fought 47-44 win over Cornell, but the Light Blue faltered in the rematch, losing to the Big Red by a five-point margin in Ithaca.

Inconsistency defined Columbia during league competition. In their first back-to-back Ivy games of the season, for example, the Lions lost a 63-61 heartbreaker at Yale but followed that performance with a 76-51 win at Brown.

Columbia defeated Harvard, the eventual second-place Ivy squad, by three points on the road to begin a three-game winning streak. Its subsequent 88-57 win over Brown marked Columbia's greatest margin of victory in a conference game, while its 16-point win over Yale kept Columbia in the race for the league championship. All hopes of winning the Ivy title were dashed, however, when the squad fell by 13 points in its rematch with the Crimson. That defeat marked the start of a four-game skid to close out the season.

"It certainly left a little bit of a bad taste in our mouths as we headed into the offseason," head coach Paul Nixon said of Columbia's final four losses. "At the same time, we're using that disappointment as motivational fuel."

The Lions finished in a three-way tie for fourth place in the league standings, with sophomore forward



File photo


DRIVE TO THE HOOP | Sophomore forward Judie Lomax pulled down 14.3 rebounds per game this season, the most in the nation.

Judie Lomax pacing Columbia in her first season of eligibility. Lomax, a transfer from Oregon State, led the nation with 14.3 rebounds per game while ranking third in the league with 14.2 points per game. She ended the year as an all-Ivy first team selection.

"In terms of carrying the load, I thought she did a good job," Nixon said. "Our goal every season is to win the championship, so the fact that we couldn't do that with a player

of Judie's caliber was a disappointment ... We just have to be able to take that final step of getting the results that we want and not just always competing."

Despite the loss of senior starting guard Katrina Cragg, the Lions should once again contend for the conference title next year. In addition to Lomax, Ivy League Defensive Player of the Year Sara Yee and all-Ivy honorable-mention guard Danielle Browne will return to Columbia this fall.



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It's lonely at the top: men's tennis wins another title

BY KUNAL GUPTA
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The Columbia men's tennis team had one of its most successful seasons in recent memory, culminating in its second Ivy League championship in three years. The Lions won the Ivy title in their final match, defeating Princeton 7-0 and moving on to the NCAA tournament.

In addition to the team achievement, the Lions nabbed several individual accolades. Freshmen Haig Schneiderman, the Lions No. 5 singles player, won Ivy League Rookie of the Year, going 6-1 in Ivy play. Senior Bogdan Borta was named to the all-Ivy first team in singles, and Borta and Mihai Nichifor made the first team in doubles. Junior's Jon Wong and Nichifor were also given all-Ivy second-team honors in singles.

The Lions started off the fall season strong. Wong won the singles title at the Princeton Invitational, beating Nichifor in the finals. Wong also won the doubles title with Borta as his partner. Nichifor won the "A" singles flight of the Columbia Classic held at the Dick Savitt Tennis Center, and the Lions played even better in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association regional tournament. The Lions sent five players to the round of 16, two in the semifinals, and one in the finals. Both Wong and Borta advanced to the semifinals, where Wong was defeated by Harvard's Chris Clayton, and Borta beat Peter Capkovic from Princeton. Borta automatically advanced to ITA national tournament by reaching the finals, but was defeated in the finals by Clayton in a memorable three-set match that lasted nearly three-and-a-half hours.

The Lions continued to dominate in the spring season, as they beat Old Dominion,

5-1, in Virginia. They suffered their first defeat to No. 67 Radford, 4-0, but rebounded a week later to advance to the finals of the Eastern College Athletic Conference championships. It was here that Columbia would suffer its hardest loss of the season, dropping a 4-3 decision to host No. 49 Harvard. In that match, freshmen Ekin Sezgen held five championship points in the second set tiebreaker, but failed to convert, and ultimately lost the match in three sets. Sezgen and the Lions would get revenge later in the season.

The Lions traveled to Texas for their spring break training trip, where they went 1-2 against top competition. The Lions fell to No. 38 Texas Christian University, 7-0, and to Southern Methodist University, 6-1. They beat the University of Texas at Arlington for their final nonconference match.

Columbia got off to a quick start in Ivy play, beating Cornell 4-3. The next match at Harvard was its biggest one of the season. The Lions traveled to Cambridge and handed the Crimson their first Ivy loss at home since April 24, 2005, beating them 4-3. The Lions lost the doubles point easily, but rebounded to win at No. 3 through 6 singles. Nichifor, Schneiderman, Sezgen and freshmen Rajeev Deb-Sen were all victorious. Five of the six singles matches went to three sets, with Deb-Sen as the only victor in straight sets.

Columbia, however, fell flat against Brown, who handed the Lions their worst loss of the season. The Lions gave the tightly contested doubles point to Brown, and lost singles stalwart Wong in the process to leg cramps. Columbia got wins from Sezgen and Deb-Sen in straight sets, and Nichifor soon joined them as a three set victor. Brown was victorious at No. 6 and No. 4 singles, and the match came down to No. 1



File photo

NICE SLICE | The men's tennis team continued its solid play in the Ivy League, winning a second title in three years. In addition, the Lions earned another bid to the NCAA tournament.

singles where Borta faced off against Brown's Chris Lee. Borta rallied from a 5-1 deficit in the third set, and forced the match into a tiebreak, which Lee won 7-5.

Columbia, however, won the rest of their Ivy matches, including a win over No. 60 Yale the next day while Brown stumbled down the stretch losing three of their last four. Harvard also fell to Princeton, and the Lions won the title as they were the only Ivy team with one loss.

On May 8, the No. 22 University of Miami Hurricanes defeated Columbia, 4-0, in the first round of the NCAA tournament.



File photo

HEAVYWEIGHT ROWING

Current record: 11-2

Ivy League record: 4-0

Currently ranked 11th in the nation, heavyweight crew has had yet another impressive season. The Lions won six of seven races, including their first victory at the Childs Cup in 46 years. Next up for the Light Blue is the Eastern Sprints, where the Ivy title will be decided.

LIGHTWEIGHT ROWING

Current record: 3-9

Ivy League record: 1-5

Lightweight crew, which is ranked No. 7 in the nation, has had a better season than indicated by their record. Six of the squads the Lions fell to are ranked higher than Columbia. The Light Blue's most successful race this season was at the Subin Cup, where Columbia earned its first cup victory since 2006.

WOMEN'S ROWING

Current record: 8-8

Ivy League record: 0-6

After opening the season with a victory over Florida Tech at the Governor's Cup, the women struggled in their next two races. The Light Blue then pulled off a win at the George Washington Invitational. The Lions will compete in the Eastern Sprints on May 17, where they will look to qualify for the NCAA championships.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Overall record: 4-15

Ivy League record: 0-7

Team MVP: Marlena Hall

For the second straight season under head coach Ilene Weintraub, the women's team finished winless against Ivy opponents. The Lions notched wins over Florida Atlantic University, Cal State University at Fullerton and the University of Maryland-Baltimore County in nonconference play. The Lions were dominated in league competition, losing every match by either 6-1 or 7-0.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Overall record: 9-7

Ivy League record: 1-6

Team MVP: Brittany Shannon

Despite winning their first Ivy game in four years, the Lions were unable to escape the league cellar. Holly Glynn led the team with 45 goals in her senior season, and Brittany Shannon added 43 scores, 15 of those coming in Ivy play.

OUTDOOR TRACK

With the 2009 Ivy League Heptagonal Championship still on the horizon, the Columbia track and field team's season is far from over. At the Penn Invitational, freshman Monique Roberts tied the school record in the high jump and at the Penn Relays the 4x800-meter relay team consisting of Mike Mark, Christopher Hays, Kyle Merber, and Jeff Moriarty set a new school record with a final time of 7:21.27.

WOMEN'S GOLF

Team MVP: Sara Ovadia

The Columbia women's golf team took fourth at the Ivy League championships. On the final day of competition the Lions shot a 305, with senior Sara Ovadia shooting a 74 to lead the team. Ovadia would finish 14th in the tournament, while freshman Robin Lee tied for 12th. Columbia finished well behind third-place Princeton and edged out fifth-place Penn by a single stroke.

Men's golf repeats as Ivy League champs, earns bid to NCAA championship

BY KUNAL GUPTA
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

The men's golf team qualified for the NCAA championship in 2009 by winning the Ivy League for the second consecutive year. The Lions won the Ivy title in dramatic fashion, overtaking Penn, which led by three strokes going into the final round, on the last hole of the tournament.

"The field that has been announced [for the NCAA tournament] is very talented," head coach Rich Mueller said, "but we're becoming more and more accustomed to playing with these teams in the regular season."

The Lions' success started in the fall, with their third-place finish at the rain-shortened



File photo

SAY CHEESE | The men's golf team added another trophy to the collection in 2009.

Cornell Invitational. They followed up that strong performance two weeks later at the ECAC championship, where they finished

in second place among 15 teams. Yale took first in the tournament, beating the Light Blue by one stroke. The Lions finished the fall season by hosting the Columbia Invitational, where they placed 11th out of 15 teams, and were again the second-place Ivy team, this time behind Penn, which finished in sixth.

The Lions began the spring slate by finishing sixth out of nine teams at the Drake Invitational. Their best showing prior to the Ivy championship was at the Princeton Invitational on April 11, where the Lions finished in fourth place out of 14 teams. They then stumbled in the Boilermaker Invitational hosted by Purdue, finishing 15th out of 18 teams in the tournament.

Inconsistent baseball squad falls short in quest to repeat as league champions

BY JACOB SHAPIRO
Spectator Senior Staff Writer

Last season, the Columbia baseball team defeated Ivy League powerhouse Dartmouth en route to the school's first baseball championship since 1977. But in their quest to defend the title, the 2009 team fielded a weaker squad that had trouble winning big games.

Before stepping into Ivy League play, the Lions started the season with 18 nonconference games against tough opponents. Over the first few weeks of the season, Columbia battled Lamar and Charlotte and emerged with just one win in seven games.

For spring break, the Lions headed to California where they played 10 games against three different opponents. Columbia then lost to local rival St. John's in its home opener.

In Ivy play, the Lions got off to a fast start, sweeping Harvard in a doubleheader on March 28. But Dartmouth came to New York the next day and handed Columbia two losses. The same trend continued the following weekend when Columbia defeated Yale in both games at New Haven but was swept by Brown the day after at home.

On April 12, the Lions split a pair of games at Princeton, but dropped both contests to the Tigers the next day, slipping below .500 in conference play—a mark they would never attain again.

In a season-defining series, Columbia lost three of four games to Cornell at home on April 18-19. And although they had an outside chance at forcing a playoff for the Gehrig Division championship, the Lions again dropped three out of four games the next weekend to Ivy cellar-dweller Penn to end the season. The team finished with a lopsided 7-13 conference record (11-32 overall).

While the top teams in the Gehrig Division had mediocre 10-10 records, the Lions were unable to consistently produce on either side of the ball to win critical games. Columbia's offense finished dead last in the league, hitting .275 on the season.

The pitching staff didn't fare much better, finishing in sixth place with a bloated 6.78 ERA in 338 innings pitched. Light Blue hurlers allowed 445 hits and 138 walks, notching an eye-opening 1.72 WHIP for the campaign.



File photo

LINE DRIVE | The Lions did not repeat as champs, but next year's title is up for grabs.

While the Lions featured strong individual performances from several players, no Columbia batter or pitcher finished among the top 10 in the Ivy League. Freshman Jon Eisen led Light Blue regulars with a .331 batting average in his rookie season and was Ivy League Rookie of the Week several times this year.

Senior Joe Scarlata was strong in his final season with a 5.52 ERA and a 4-5 record overall. Scarlata threw five complete games—including one shutout—and was the only Lions pitcher to go the distance all season.

Sophomore outfielder Bobby O'Brien ignited the offense in the second half of the season, hitting .337 on the year with two homers and 20 RBI in just 22 starts.

Senior Ron Williams finished his collegiate career with 205 hits, breaking an all-time Columbia record that was set in 1995. Williams also led the Lions with 27 RBI this year and was one of only two players to start every game.

While the Lions displayed the ability to beat tough opponents, the team was generally inconsistent on the mound and at the plate. Columbia did not have the pitching depth that took the team to the championship in 2008 and an injury to star outfielder Jason Banos severely hampered Columbia's offense.

With seniors Scarlata, Williams, and Mike Roberts leaving, there will be sizeable gaps on Columbia's roster. However, Eisen and O'Brien both had breakout seasons and, in conjunction with a healthy Banos, could form the core of the Columbia offense in 2010.

While some players stepped up this year, the Lions will need to put a much more consistent team on the field next season if they want to reclaim the Ivy championship.



File photo

IT'S OUTTA HERE | The Columbia softball team will be returning many of its players next year, including Maggie Johnson, who led the team in home runs with six.

Softball unable to overcome small roster, lack of clutch hitting in 2009

BY MICHELE CLEARY
Spectator Staff Writer

The Columbia softball team (16-34, 4-16 Ivy) had another disappointing season, finishing last in the Ivy League. Despite the subpar team performance, there were a few individuals who had successful seasons.

Early on in the campaign, the Lions appeared to be playing better ball than last year. The Light Blue went 7-5 at the Rebel Spring Games this year, compared to 5-9 last season, but this strong spring break performance did not translate into success in the Ivy League as Columbia was only able to win one more Ivy game than last season.

The Lions didn't emerge with a series win against any of their seven conference opponents. The closest they came to taking a series from another Ivy squad were the doubleheaders they split with Brown and Harvard. The Light Blue was swept by Yale and Dartmouth in twin bills and by Princeton in a four-game series. Columbia dropped three games in both of its four-game sets against Penn and Cornell.

Three of the Lions' four Ivy victories were decided by two runs or fewer, including their first conference win of the season, a narrow 2-0 defeat over Harvard. This victory was due in large part to the excellent performance by sophomore pitcher Maggie Johnson, who not only pitched a complete-game shutout, but also knocked in two-run homer. Johnson led the team in homers this season with six, and

also posted the lowest ERA on the pitching staff, 3.67. She went 7-15 on the mound this season, while averaging .273 with 14 runs and 27 RBI at the plate.

Columbia's second conference win was a 6-5 triumph over Brown. In this matchup, senior shortstop Keli Leong led the Light Blue offense with three hits, three runs, and an RBI. Leong, who started all 50 games, put up impressive stats all season, including a .337 batting average, 29 runs, and 13 RBIs.

Junior left fielder Dani Pineda led Columbia to its third Ivy victory over Cornell, 8-2. Pineda went two-for-three and knocked in three of the Lions' seven earned runs. She averaged .263 on the season while scoring 23 runs and tying Johnson for the most RBIs on the team with 27.

The final conference win for the Light Blue came in a close game against Penn, 6-5. This victory was the result of a strong team effort as nine different Columbia players contributed at least one hit.

Several strong individual performances this season could not overcome two of the Light Blue's major weaknesses: poor clutch hitting and a small roster. The Lions stranded 307 runners this season, the second-most in the league. In addition, the team has only 13 players, making it one the smallest in the Ivy League. However, because the Light Blue is only losing two seniors (Leong and Chantee Dempsey), there is a good chance the squad will be able to field more players in 2010.



THE YEAR IN PICTURES

